

## **CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

### **5.1 Introduction.**

This research project has shown that although Nigeria has a great potential for the expansion and development of tourism, no concrete steps have been taken to exploit it. It has also been observed that the country's turbulent political history may have been very crucial in arresting investment, particularly in the tourism sector.

Additionally, the existence of institutional and administrative inefficiency, lack of physical infrastructure, inadequate coordination among agencies, negative publicity in the media about Nigeria and lack of political will have apparently aggravated the already weak political and economic situation in the country. It has also been observed that despite its vast economic potential, Nigeria has persistently relied on the oil revenues to finance her recurring developmental programmes. This has not been easy given that the oil prices on the international market have occasionally been unstable and that the country is heavily indebted to various international creditors. Hence, it is now clear that the adoption and institution of sound policies, and an efficient administrative system to promote and develop tourism can help to provide jobs, foreign exchange, diversify the economy, preserve and protect the environment and eliminate any regional economic imbalances within the country.

## **5.2 Recommendations.**

In order to promote, improve and develop an efficient administrative and management system for tourism development in Nigeria, the following recommendations are suggested.

### **(i) Development of physical infrastructure.**

Presently, Nigeria's tourism sector is faced with the problems of inefficient and poorly maintained physical infrastructure facilities like roads, railways, hotels, posts and telecommunications, airports and power stations. These problems largely emanate from poor public funding, administrative inefficiency, lack of coordination and political will. Hence, in order to promote and develop the tourism sector, the Nigerian government will have to reorganise the above facilities and their management. Privatising some of the inefficient and unprofitable companies like the Nigerian airways, hotels, railways and breaking the monopoly of the electricity company are recommended. In addition, privatising these companies may help to reduce inefficiency and allow the government to concentrate on areas which appear to be unprofitable for the private sector for example road construction. All this will depend on political will. It may appear difficult for a country like Nigeria, which has a long history of administrative inefficiency and political patronage to conduct a transparent privatisation exercise, which will give a boost to the tourism sector. However, while privatisation is recommended, it is also very necessary for it to be transparent to have full positive economic impact on tourism.

**(ii) Promotion of domestic tourism.**

Similarly with some developing countries, Nigeria has persistently focused only on international tourism with less attention given to domestic tourism. However, given the need to receive foreign exchange from international tourism and the low residual income of the working class, which hampers the local people's participation in local leisure activities, Nigeria's lackadaisical attitude towards domestic tourism can be understood. In addition, inadequate physical infrastructure like power, roads, railways and airports have also prevented the development of domestic tourism in Nigeria.

Therefore, in order to promote Nigeria's domestic tourism, the government will have to work towards poverty reduction as to improve the purchasing power of Nigerians, build roads to link up places, carry out rural electrification, promote art and crafts and provide an efficient transport system even within the urban centers and cities. An improved urban transport system can contribute significantly to domestic tourism. The availability of a good urban transport and road maps showing places of interest will help to bring tourist sites to the attention of potential domestic and international tourists.

**(iii) Countering negative international media reporting.**

With the recent technological breakthroughs in the telecommunications sector, there have been massive flows of information in the world. This scenario has also given the media an important and powerful position in the new world of information technology. International investors, tourists and business personalities are relying on the international

media organisations such as the (Cable News Network (CNN), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Reuters to make their decisions. It is in this context that countries that have experienced political instability, civil wars, dictatorship and human rights abuses, have been portrayed by the media as chaotic and unsuitable for investment. In the same manner, Nigeria is one country which has received negative publications from the international mass media.. At least this was the case during the military rule in the country. This in turn has had negative implications on its economic development, particularly the tourism industry.

Thus the authorities in Nigeria ought to conduct vigorous campaigns internationally to fight against those negative media reporting and assure the international tourists and investors that Nigeria is a safe place to visit and invest. In addition, the present civilian government in Nigeria needs all the support it can get from the international community, so that the country's democratic credentials are not internationally questioned continually.

The advanced fee fraud has contributed a lot in giving the country a bad image. This is perpetrated by some Nigerians who write dubious letters to foreigners promising to transfer money to their account if only the recipient would pay some fees for processing the transfer to carry out this fraudulent activity. These cheating offences have duped many foreigners. The Nigerian government should intensify efforts in informing foreigners about such fraudulent activities where Nigerian citizens have been implicated. The culprits should be traced, caught and prosecuted in large numbers to show the

seriousness of the authorities. Needless to say, such incidents have been highlighted in international media and have portrayed Nigeria negatively. Such bad publicity will ultimately negate any positive steps by the government to enhance tourism in Nigeria. Nigerian government needs therefore, to incorporate the education of foreigners and even Nigerians on these negative activities and what the government is doing to counter such publicity.

**(iv) Tourism publicity.**

Nigeria can attract a large number of tourists to improve its economy if more serious efforts are put in place. These efforts should be multi-faceted. A major one concerns publicity. Publicising Nigerian tourism has not been carried out in a conscientious manner to show that it is an integral part of the administration and promotion of the tourism sector. A constant reminder of tourist attractions in the form of publications; jingles; radio, newspaper, television and billboard advertisements within the country will awake the consciousness of the masses to the need to exploit the tourist spots. For the locals, everything about a tourist attraction being advertised should be explained. This should include the route to the place, cost of transport, lodging, entry fees, the attractions themselves and other incidental expenses that may be incurred. All these are to be done in a manner as to make domestic tourism attractive and subtly engage Nigerians into being part of the publicity chain about tourist attractions in the country.

**(v) Conference Tourism.**

Hosting of international conferences especially those related to tours and travel is a good

form of publicity for the country. Presently Nigeria hosts many conferences especially at the African regional level but it needs to host more of world class events because the tourists come mainly from Europe, America and Japan. These conferences should be used as platforms for exposing the country's tourist attractions. Malaysia for instance, uses such conferences to full advantage in terms of advertisements. Malaysia will be hosting the Pacific Asia Travel Association's annual conference in April 2001 and "for Malaysia in particular, it is a golden chance to showcase what the country has to offer and to lure the tourists who are spoilt for choice places to visit in the region. The conference is also the best venue for the country's tour and travel agencies to form strategic alliances with their counterparts from different parts of the world in order to attract more tourists" (The Sun: March 25, 2001). Every effort should be made to put Nigeria on the world tourist map and the country needs all the positive publicity it can get.

#### **(vi) The Role of Education in Tourism**

Tourism development requires well directed educational and training programmes for the tour operators, tourist guides, hotel managers, immigration officers, tourists, policy makers, planners and those working in other tourist related sectors. The form of information given to the tourist is to let him know what tourist attractions exist, how much of each is available, what are their main attractive features, location, how to get there, what costs are involved, and when those attractions are available. Tour guides need to be very well informed about the tourist attractions to enable them to better inform the tourists and provide quality guidance to the satisfaction of the tourists. Some tourist attractions have educational significance and it would be necessary to inform the tourists

on such qualities especially as some tourists travel for the purpose of knowledge and curiosity. That is why education is a key element in tourism promotion. In a country like Nigeria where tourism promotion and development is still a new phenomenon, deliberate and concerted efforts should be made to diversify the education system to include courses related to hospitality and hotel management. Efforts should also be made to educate government officials and the public on various tourism related aspects and why tourists need to be treated with great courtesy. The government should also educate Nigerians to keep tourist places clean and comfortable. Tourist related services especially those offered by the tour guides in various states should be easily accessible.

**(vii) Private Sector Participation.**

Of late, private sector participation in economic development has become an important policy issue in many developing countries. This has come as a result of the failure of the initial approach where governments were directly involved in the management of the economy. In Nigeria, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have recommended to the government to privatise many of the unprofitable parastatals. In addition, these two financial institutions have strongly urged the Nigerian government to concentrate on areas, which the private sector has found unprofitable, strengthen the regulatory frameworks and provide a conducive environment for investment.

Since the Nigerian government is still owning and operating most of the tourist infrastructure in the country, it would be sensible to sell off these facilities to attract private capital and investment as suggested by the World Bank and IMF. In addition, this

would enable government to reduce its bureaucratic tendencies and offer more incentive to the private sector.

**(viii) Sustainable tourism.**

In many Third World countries, tourism has been largely pursued for economic reasons. That is, creation of employment, earning foreign exchange, diversifying the economy and reducing regional economic imbalance. It is only recently that some governments have started recognising the negative impacts of the industry on the host country. In countries like Thailand and Philippines where tourism has been associated with prostitution, with the spread of sexually transmitted diseases like Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and the problem of environmental degradation, concrete steps have been taken to correct and arrest the situation. In addition, there have been various international initiations taken to adopt environmentally friendly development approaches. Such approaches have often been propagated through the concept of sustainable development. In the same vein, recent international calls for the development of tourism have been accomplished with the application of various concepts such as sustainable tourism, ecotourism and green tourism, which are intended to incorporate environmental aspects into the tourism projects.

Hence Nigeria, which is struggling to promote and develop tourism, will have to adopt similar programmes so as to avoid the negative impacts associated with the industry. The government will have to make concrete plans to promote ecotourism, sustainable tourism and green tourism in Nigeria. Curbing child sex trade which is rapidly growing in many

emerging global tourist markets should also be of utmost concern.

### **5.3 Conclusion.**

The Nigerian government is beginning to realise that there are many economic sectors which were initially ignored in solving the country's economic problems and tourism is one of them. However, in order to promote and develop the tourism sector in Nigeria, the government will have to reorganise its administrative machinery and coordinate its efforts with the private sector. This means that the government will concentrate on building the basic infrastructure like roads and schools, institute a sound regulatory framework, offer incentives to the private sector and guarantee peace and stability. In addition, the government will have to institute deliberate measures to solve the negative aspects associated with tourism. These include pollution, prostitution, spread of sexually transmitted diseases and cultural erosion.

The study therefore concluded that the administration and development of tourism in Nigeria seems to have been faulty. This explains why the contribution of tourism to the economy has been minimal. It is expected that with the new democratic government in Nigeria and its recent creation of a Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the sector will start receiving due attention. It is only when this happens, along with massive infrastructural rehabilitation, that Nigeria can expect to place itself where it deserves in the tourist map of the world.