

Sectoral Performance and the Development of Rural Communities in Africa: An Appraisal of the Potentials of the Ogbunike Cave in Nigeria

Oriaku, Christian C.

*Department of Business Administration,
Veritas University, Abuja*

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Abstract

Tourism has been described as “the liquid gold for all generations”. This is to say that 'tourism' has the potentials to transform an ailing economy to a developed economy. Given Nigeria as its focus, this paper examined the extent to which the potentials of 'tourism' as an industry, has been harnessed for purposes of the transformation of rural communities in Nigeria. Data was obtained from secondary and primary materials. The primary sources include a structured interview schedule administered on fifty residents of Ogbunike and indeed the Idemmili local council area, while the secondary sources ranged from books, journals, periodicals, newspapers, the internet, etc. It was a survey in which simple percentages, frequency tables and pie charts were employed for analysis. The Pluket Tourist system theory (Chaisawat, 2003) was adopted as the theoretical framework. Results showed that the tourist and business potentials of the Ogbunike cave have not been fully tapped to add value to the business activities of the area. Therefore, the study recommended that both the federal and the state government should take advantage of the business potentials inherent in the Ogbunike tourist attraction.

Keywords: *Sectoral performance, Potentials, Development, Rural communities, Tourism.*

Corresponding Author: Oriaku, Christian C.

Background to the Study

Many developing and developed nations of the world today acknowledge 'tourism' as an option for the sustainable development of their nations. This is owing to the fact that the sub-sector has over the years proved to be a “surprisingly strong and resilient economic activity and fundamental contributor to economic growth of many nations by generating billions of dollars in exports and creating millions of jobs” (Yusuf and Akinde, 2015). It has grown to be the world's largest industry and one of its fastest growing economic activities. A publication of World Travel & Tourism Council (WTC, 2010) revealed that, “in 2013 travel and tourism's total contribution to the global economy rose to US \$7 trillion, about 9.5 percent of global GDP, not only outpacing the wider economy but also growing faster than other significant sectors such as financial and Business services, Transport and manufacturing and its total contribution to employment was nearly 266 million jobs, about 8.9 percent of world employment”.

Tourism has potentially vital role to play in the Nigerian economy in the areas of employment creation, foreign exchange, attraction of investors, education and environmental conservation. However, industry indicators suggest that tourism is still in its infancy stage in Nigeria. (Omofonwan, 1993; Lammed, 1999; NPS, 2000). Hence, Olugbamila (2005) opined that, “Nigeria, which is richly blessed and endowed with both physical and cultural tourism potentials, has been relatively insignificant on the world tourism map”. The truth is that the nation's overreliance on oil has forced it to neglect other sectors such as tourism.

Countries like Kenya, Tanzania, etc. are known to be experiencing a good measure of contributions from the tourism sub-sector to their GDP. Nigeria is yet to command such contributions from its tourism for some reasons of neglect as mentioned above. This is inspite of its numerous tourist attractions some of which may be listed as follows – Agbokin Water falls, Agodi Gardens, Aso Rock, Bar Beach Lagos, Benue River, Biu Plateau, Chad Basin, Cross River National Park, Emotan Statue, Ezeagu water falls, Ibeno Beach, Idanre Hill, Kainji Dam, Mambilla Plateau, Millennium Part (Abuja), Isaac Boro Park, Obudu Plateau, Obudu Cattle Ranch, and the Ogbunike cave, to mention a few. The bone of contention in this paper is that the above – listed tourist attractions have the potentials to turn the Nigerian economy around. However, this is far from being the case. Against this background, the paper seeks to assess the contribution of the tourism sub-sector to national development in the Nigerian context. The major focus of the study is the Ogbunike Cave in Anambra state.

Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to assess the contribution of the Ogbunike cave to the development of Anambra state. Specifically, the study will strive to:

- (a) Ascertain the effect of the Ogbunike cave to the infrastructural development of the town and its environs.
- (b) Assess the extent to which the sub-sector has contributed to employment generation in the area.

Research Questions

The following questions will be answered in this study:

- (a) Has the Ogbunike cave as a tourist attraction contributed to the infrastructural development of its environs?
- (b) To what extent has the Ogbunike cave enhanced employment generation in Ogbunike town and its environs?

Literature Review

Conceptual Literature

Development: Given the economic perspective, Schumpeter (1984, 1985, 1989), used the term development as “evolution, unfolding revelation and innovation. For Rostow (1971) in his seminal work, development may be viewed as “a process of evolutionary succession in stages, where human societies leave a rudimentary model until they arrive at a Western industrialized civilization consumption model, which is considered unique and universal”. However, development is not entirely an economic phenomenon. According to Burkey (1993), economic and political development must translate into social development. This implies that development is a broad concept which entails social, economic, political and human development.

Community: The term community may be viewed from the perspective of the local people. Thus, Giddens (1971) argues that “the local is where culture and knowledge are produced and where acts of reproduction of the social structure rule – and “resources occur” (Thompson, 2005). The nature of community in the municipalities reveals that the term community is part of a highly complex process of identity construction.

Rural: According to Mendelson and Bollman (1998), “rural and small town (RST) refers to the population living outside the community zones of larger urban centres – specifically, outside Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAS) and Census Agglomerations (CAS)”. The United States Census (2000) defines rural areas as comprising open country and settlements with fewer than 2,500 residents.

Performance: Scholars have continuously insisted that there is no consensus on the meaning of the term 'performance'. However, Samsonowa (2012) posits that all definitions of the term involve “effectiveness and efficiency”; effectiveness as an indicator of the degree of a goal attainment, and efficiency as an indicator of the resources that were consumed to reach the level of achievement. In the words of Cordero (1989), while 'effectiveness' measures output to determine if they help accomplish objectives, 'efficiency' measures resources to determine whether minimum amounts are used in the production of these outputs. In the views of Rolstadas (1998), “performance is a complex interrelationship between seven performance criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, quality of work life, innovation, and profitability/budget ability. In his own contribution, Didier (2002), believes that, “performance consists in achieving the goals that were given to you in convergence of enterprise orientations”. Thus, he observes that “performance is not merely finding of an outcome, but rather it is the result of a comparison between the outcome and the objective”.

Empirical Literature

Past and current works on potentials of Tourism National Development.

Table 1: This section presents past and current works on the potentials of tourism in National Development in a tabular format as followings:

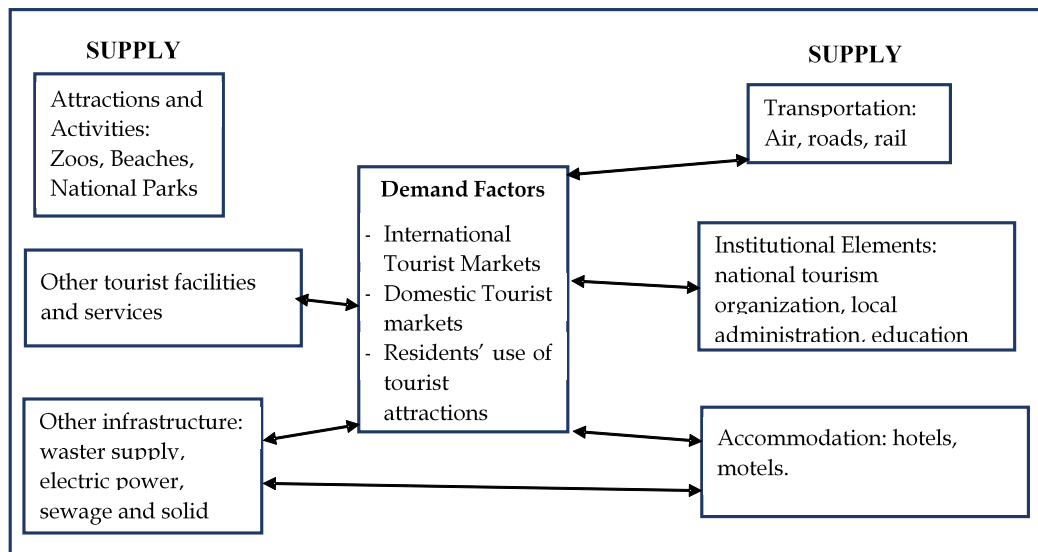
| Name of Researcher(s)/year, title of study | Geographical scope and content covered | Data source and analytical tool | Findings/recommendations, conclusion |
|---|---|--|--|
| Oloyede, (2000). Tourism: A key to sustainable national economic development. | Nigeria: Tourism and National Development, (2000-2016). | Secondary sources - journals, trade publications, books. It employed a historical research design. | Nigeria has the least tourism - GDP; Tourism - employment contributions among many other African countries studied. It recommended among others that government must take steps to curb social vices like kidnapping, etc. |
| Eneji (2016). Diversification of Nigeria's Economy: Impact of Tourism on Sustainable Development in Nigeria. | Nigeria: Tourism and Sustainable Development | Both primary and secondary sources of data were employed. The primary data was obtained through structured questionnaires while secondary materials employed include - data on literature available. Descriptive statistics and simple percentages were employed for evaluation. | Tourism has significant positive impact on the Nigerian economy; however, the sector is still under-harnessed. It recommended that Nigeria should turn to agriculture and tourism to revamp her ailing economy. |
| Nnabuogor (2017). An Empirical Assessment of Tourism Development and Planning in Nigeria: a Sustainability Approach | Nigeria: Tourism and National Development | Both primary and secondary sources of data were employed. Analysis was by simple deductive logic - inductive reasoning. | The study revealed that the pace of tourism awareness and development are still at the embryonic state. It was also revealed that some bureaucratic bottlenecks were hampering the planning of the tourism industry. |
| Majebi&Abutu (2015). Nigerian Tourism: A catalyst for Sustainable National Development. | Nigeria: Tourism and National Development | Secondary materials were employed for data collection. | The study observes that Nigeria policy on national development can hardly be achieved if the country does not develop its tourism sub-sector. |

Theoretical Framework

Tourism Theory (Chaisawat, 2002)

The Webster Online Dictionary (WOD, 2014) defines 'theory' as the general or abstract principles on which a body of knowledge is founded. It may be viewed as an intellectual perspective on some phenomenon under study. Based on Inkeep's (1991) view of tourism as 'a single system which comprise of interrelated parts, Chaisawat (2002), outlined some basic ideas and principles - the Phuket Tourism System. In line with this thinking, the system may be viewed as an interrelated system of demand and supply factors. Thus, while the demand factors of Phuket tourism system are international tourist markets, domestic tourist markets, and residents' use of tourist attractions, facilities and services, the supply factors comprise attractions and activities, accommodations, transportation, other tourist facilities and services, infrastructure, and institutional elements as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Phuket Tourism System and its Relationships among Tourism Stakeholders



Source: Chaisawat (2003)

According to Inskeep (1991), supply factors can be classified and described as tourism components as follows:

1. Tourist attractions and activities – All those natural, cultural and special features and related activities of an area that attract tourists to visit.
2. Accommodation: Hotels and other types of facilities including tour and travel operations (also called receptive services), restaurants and other types of eating establishments, retail outlets for handicraft, souvenir, specialty, and convenience goods, banks, money exchange, and other financial facilities and services, tourist information offices, personal offices such as barbers and beauticians, medical facilities and services, public safety facilities and services of police and fire protection, entry and exit travel facilitation of customs and immigration.
3. Transportation facilities and services, i.e. Transportation access into the country, region, or development area, the internal transportation system linking the attractions and development areas, including all types of facilities and services related to land, water, and air transportation.
4. Other infrastructure: e.g. water supply, electric power, sewage and solid waste disposal, telecommunications of telephone, telegraph, telex, and telefax, and sometimes radio; at the development area level, drainage is also an important infrastructure consideration.
5. Institutional elements: these are necessary to develop and manage tourism, including manpower planning, education and training programs marketing strategies and promotion programs, public and private sector tourism organization structures, tourism-related legislation and regulations, public and private sector investment policies, and economic, environmental, and sociocultural programs and impact controls.

6. As outlined by Chaisawat (2002), the Phuket tourist system provides a good framework for studies on tourism as it highlights the interrelatedness of various activities in the sub-system. Such interrelatedness is the basis for the potentials of tourism in national development. Hence its adoption as the theoretical framework of this current investigation.

Research methodology

This study is a descriptive survey of the influence of tourism and its potentials on the development of the Ogbunike/Idemili Local Government Area of Anambra State – and indeed the state and nation at large. As the study involves the use of primary and secondary data, simple percentages, frequency tables and pie charts will be combined for analysis of primary data while deductive logical approach is employed for the secondary data.

Research Question One (1): Has the existence of the Ogbunike cave added value to the infrastructural base in the area?

In response to research question one (1), the response rate was 84% as eight (8) persons declined comments. A total of 50 persons were interviewed. The responses were then compiled to obtain the frequency based on the population of 181, 651 (NPC, 2009). Table below.

Table 1: Facilities attracted to the area between 1980-2020

| Facilities | Excellent | Very good | % | Good | Average | % | Poor | % |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----|------|---------|----|------|---|
| Hospitals | | | | | 40 | 80 | 2 | 4 |
| Hotels | | | | | 40 | 80 | 2 | 4 |
| Markets | | 42 | 34 | | | | | |
| Water supply | | | | | 38 | 76 | 4 | 8 |
| Power (electricity) | | | | | 41 | 82 | 1 | 2 |
| Roads | | | | | 38 | 16 | 4 | 8 |

Source: Compiled by Researcher

Table 2: Employment generation potential in the area between 1980-2020

| Type of employment | Excellent | Very good | % | Good | % | Average | % | Poor | % |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----|------|----|---------|----|------|----|
| Hospital | | | | 2 | 4 | 32 | 64 | 6 | 12 |
| Hotel attendants | | 2 | 4 | 30 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 16 |
| Markets (trading) | | 42 | 44 | | | | | | |
| Transport workers | | 4 | 8 | 34 | 68 | 4 | 8 | | |
| Vigilante/local security | | | | 1 | 2 | 5 | 10 | 36 | 72 |

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The researcher was unable to obtain specific data on each town in the Oyi L.G.A. Thus, the sampling of interviewees was purposive by technique while the responses on table I indicated as follows:

- (a) Two prominent hospitals were established in the area within the period and residents appear satisfied with their services. Only a negligible (4%) percentage appeared dissatisfied.
- (b) The situation with hospitals replicated itself with regards to hotels. There are quite a good number of average hotels in the area that are established to address the needs of visitors.
- (c) The markets are quite enough going by the responses obtained and these can adequately contain the needs of any visitors. 84% responses are in support.
- (d) Water supply, electricity and road network are acknowledged to be on the average according to 76% and 82% respondents respectively.

The above responses reveal that, while the cave has attracted some infrastructures in the area, there is need to improve on the situation as these facilities are still far from being adequate.

On the other hand, data obtained from secondary sources also reveal the state of inadequacy of the facilities and the extent to which the Ogbunike cave potentials have been harnessed. In this vein, a case study of Agu-Owuru cave in Ezeagu by Okonkwo, Ezekaka and Igwemadu (2017), the paper argued that if the cave is developed for tourism, it will create job opportunities, improve the living standard of host community and enhance infrastructural development. Due to neglect, none of the caves in Anambra has developed and their potentials have not been fully tapped. This is also the case with the Ogbunike cave as respondents also point to neglect on table 1.

Research Question Two (2): To what extent has the Ogbunike cave enhanced employment generation in Ogbunike town and its environs?

It is common experience that the Tourism sub-sector generates employment and means of livelihood for many people globally. The Ogbunike cave has shown great potentials in this regard. Responses to the interview conducted with fifty persons in the area shows that respectively, 64%, 68%, 84%, 76% favor that the sub-sector has offered employment to many as hospital workers, Hotel workers, traders in the markets, transport workers, etc. A few and insignificant percentage of the respondents 12%, 16%, 72% say the employment potential is poor in Hospitals, Hotels, and security services (table 2). A study by Oloyede (2020), reveals that Nigeria has the least tourism - GDP; tourism - employment contributions among many other African countries studied. The study recommended that government must take steps to curb social vices like kidnapping which helps in making Nigerian tourism less attractive.

There are many scholarly views on the contribution of tourism to employment generation and overall growth and development. Shone (2008) posits that:

To bolster economic development, tourism makes a major contribution to the income of the destination areas, creates employment opportunities, supports diverse range of industries, helps to diversify local economies and supports existing and helps fund the development of new infrastructure.

According to the UN World Tourism Organization (2014),

Over the last decade, tourism spurred by foreign direct investment, has evolved into a key economic driver from many destinations, promoting income growth and job creation in local economies. While global tourism has grown rapidly, there is tremendous future potential; international tourist arrivals worldwide are projected to increase about 70% between 2013 and 2030, reaching 1.8 billion.

The study by Orekoya (2018), on Nigerian tourism industry as a key driver in employment generation, concluded that, "tourism is one of the best positioned economic sectors to drive socioeconomic growth, promote peace and understanding, provide sustainable livelihoods for women, youth in local and regional, communities, and help to protect our environment". Ovat (2003) in his empirical investigation on tourism and economic development in Nigeria, asserts that, "in spite of Nigeria's tourist potentials, the contribution of the sub-sector to economic development, leaves much to be desired". Serious government intervention is needed to harness the sector's potentials".

Findings

1. The presence of the Ogbunike cave provided the stimulant for certain infrastructures to spring up and develop. This supports the assertion that tourism enhances infrastructural development.
2. Ogbunike cave has enormous potentials which are far from being harnessed. This is the case with other tourist attractions in Nigeria.
3. Many residents of the area are employed and earn their livelihood in activities emanating from the tourist attractions of the Ogbunike cave.

4. There are many caves and tourist attractions which are yet to be discovered and recognized by the relevant authorities.
5. Tourism has the potentials to enhance the recovery and growth of any ailing economy if properly harnessed.
6. The neglect of tourism in Nigeria is a matter of concern that should receive very urgent attention.

Conclusion

Tourism has become a major sector in many developed and developing economies of the world. The sub-sector has featured prominently in the Mediterranean – Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania and even the Bahamas due to its contribution to balance of payments, employment and revenue generation and infrastructural development. Hence, the MANILA DECLARATION ON THE WORLD TOURISM OF 1980, recognized tourism as, “an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, education, and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations”. Hence, Allcock, 1986; Lea, 1988, and Poirier, 2001; Tosun, 2001; Var & Imam, 2001) observed that;

evidence from many developing countries in the Mediterranean basin, such as the former Yugoslavia, Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria, shows that tourism has been playing an important role in industrialization and economic growth at the cost of regional, class and inter/intra-generation equality since the 1970.

In examining the performance of tourism as a sub-sector of the Nigerian economy, this paper notes that the potentials of the sector in achieving the feat in other economics like those in the Mediterranean basin, are obvious. However, since the sector is yet to receive the required boost from the government, such potentials are far from being realized. In spite of this scenario, caves like Ogbunike in Oyi Local Government Area of Anambra State, are observed to be stimulating economic activities in the area as it offers employment and stimulates the establishment of some infrastructural facilities. Against this background, a number of suggestions may be made.

Suggestions

1. Government should do all it takes to enhance the status of the Ogbunike cave as a way of boosting infrastructural development of the area.
2. There is an urgent need for government to employ the services of local chieftains across the country, to discover many caves and tourist centres which are not yet listed by the Tourism Board.
3. The Nigerian Tourism Board should take over the running of the Ogbunike cave.
4. Employees in the area should be properly taxed and such payments should be used as part of revenue for developing the cave. This will make the development of these tourist sites a matter of competition among the indigenes of these sites. It will also reduce the burden of government financially.

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