

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: A DRIVER FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES, BUSINESS GROWTH FOR ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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Abstract: Tourism entrepreneurship entails offering creative and hospitable services to tourists in the different tourist destinations, yet realizing returns on investment. This study brings to limelight how sustainable tourism drives job opportunities and business growth among south west entrepreneurs. Qualitative data and interviews were conducted among tourism business operators at the Osun Osogbo festival in Osun State, business operators at Ojude oba and business operators of the Eyo festival in Lagos state. The study reveals that Nigeria tourist Centre are well known for their culture and heritage although our museums are not properly managed. About 80 percent of the respondents revealed that tourism industries have created lots of jobs opportunities for either the skilled and unskilled labor. Analysis of the results shows that Nigerian arts and culture, major festivals and government policies influences business growth, While culture and heritage, historical centres and national monuments, major festivals and government policies have a negative effect on job opportunities, this is shown by their p-value (0.128, 0.989, 0.594 and 0.417) and at 10% significance level (0.10). This implies that managing museums and Nigerian arts and crafts influence job opportunities.

Keywords: sustainable tourism, job opportunities, business growth, entrepreneurs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism is defined as all forms of activities, management and development of tourism that preserve natural, economic and social integrity and guarantee maintenance of natural and cultural resources. One of its principles requires ensuring viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation (UNEP 2004).

Entrepreneurship in the face of sustainable tourism plays a significant role in the growth and development of any contemporary economy. Entrepreneurship is seen as the engine of economic growth and a driving force of decentralization, economic restructuring and movement in the direction of market economy. The notion of entrepreneurship was first recognized in the 1700s, since then the significance of entrepreneurship has developed ever since (Pahuja, 2015). Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) has empirically identified Nigeria as one of the most entrepreneurial countries in the world. The study showed that 35 out of every 100 Nigerians (over a third) are engaged in some kind of entrepreneurial activity or the other.

Nigeria is a vast and fascinating country with varying geographical regions and ecological zones. It has diverse and amiable climates rich in biological diversity like waterfalls, cultural heritage, national parks, art and craft, pleasant and distinctive sceneries. The country is rich in natural beauty like, long blue beaches, rivers and lakes, forests, breath-taking views of the waterfalls and soothing environment. The natural beauty is a main factor behind the up gradation of Nigeria tourism. Nigeria is located in West Africa, with a population of over 180 million people, (Lagos live, 2016).

Tourism Industry involves firms in tourism business, these are hotels, accommodation, resort centers, film and home video production; these firms provide tourism services and goods to visitors, including: hospitality (hotels, restaurants, etc.), transport, tour operators and travel agents and other branches (Raimi & Towobola 2011). Tourism is a major force in any economy in the world; it is one sector of the economy that has a global importance. In this world of globalization where change is constant, tourism tends to improve the economy of the third world countries and also have an impact upon the host community. According to Ramukumba, Mmbengwa, Mwamayi & Groenewald (2014) found that tourism reduces poverty, but improved earnings.

There are countless festivals and carnivals organized across the 36 states of the federation which could be strengthened as income-yielding sources such as Eyo festival in Lagos, Osun festival in Osogbo, Ogun festival in Oyo, Ojude-Oba festival in Ijebu, Ofala festival in Anambra, Yam festival in Abuja/Suleja; Akpap Okoyong, Mgbe Cult, Mnikom Dance, Ekeledi Dance in Cross-river; Vwana Dance and Ngaraguta Leather Works in Plateau state all in Nigeria (Ajibola, 2013; Abubakar, 2014).

When a conducive environment is created for entrepreneurs in tourism industry, unemployment, underemployment and rural-urban migration which has become a global phenomenon of the 21st century and has increased the rate of social vices like robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, human trafficking, child abuse and unfair labour practices (Ryan, Mottiar, & Quinn 2012) will reduce drastically, Hence the need for this study to analyse how sustainable tourism drives job opportunity and business growth for entrepreneurs.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study population cuts across all the tourism business operators and National Tourism Board officials in Osun, Ogun and Lagos States respectively, while the target population are tourism operators at the Osun Osogbo festival in Osun State, business operators at Ojude oba and business operators of the Eyo festival in Lagos state making 340 respondents. The study adopted the mixed method which comprises of the quantitative and qualitative method due to the purpose and nature of this study, adopted probability sampling technique which is simple random.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted for the analysis of data gathered through the questionnaire. The descriptive analysis makes use of tables, frequency distributions and percentages, mean and standard deviation. Multiple regression was adopted to test the hypotheses. While the interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis (NVIVO).

3.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 1: Characteristics of the Respondents' Demographic Information

Variables	Items	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	133	39.1
	Female	207	60.9
Total		340	100
Age	19 and below	52	15.3
	20 -29	110	32.4
	30 – 39	118	34.7
	40 – 49	36	10.6
	50 – 59	20	5.9
	60 above	4	1.2
Total		340	100
Marital Status	Single	208	61.2
	Married	121	35.6
	Divorced	11	3.2
		340	100
Tribe	Yoruba	138	40.6
	Igbo	88	25.9
	Hausa	9	2.6
	Others	105	30.9
Total		340	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Tables 1 shows that 67.1percent of the respondents are youth between ages 20-39 and 61.2 percent are singles.. This shows entrepreneurial capacity of the youths in south western Nigeria and the need for the government and private investors to harness this opportunity in the tourism sector of Nigeria.

3.2 Sustainable Tourism

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents' Response on Sustainable Tourism

S/N	Sustainable Tourism	Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Every tourist Centre portrays their culture and heritage	SD	15	4.4
		D	32	9.4
		N	81	23.8
		A	118	34.7
		SA	94	27.6
2	Historical Centre's and national monuments are kept for the future generation to learn from	SD	9	2.6
		D	12	3.5
		N	60	17.6
		A	136	40.0
		SA	123	36.2
3	Our museum are not properly managed	SD	9	2.6
		D	23	6.8
		N	65	19.1
		A	119	35.0
		SA	124	36.5
4	Nigerian arts and culture are well known globally	SD	48	14.1
		D	143	42.1
		N	54	15.9
		A	54	15.9
		SA	41	12.1
5	Major festivals in Nigeria are properly showcased	SD	90	26.5
		D	132	38.8
		N	27	7.9
		A	43	12.6
		SA	48	14.1
6	Government policy are not promoting sustainable tourism	SD	89	26.2
		D	135	39.7
		N	26	7.6
		A	49	14.4
		SA	41	12.1

Source: Field Survey, 2022

34.7% agree, while 27.6% strongly agree that every tourist centre portrays their culture and heritage. This shows that Nigeria tourist Centre are well known for their culture and heritage.

Also 40.0% respondents agree and 36.2% of the respondents strongly agree that historical centres' and national monuments are kept for the future generation to learn from which shows that values are place on these monuments. Furthermore, 35.0% agree and 36.5% of respondents strongly agree that our museum is not properly managed in Nigeria. Proper management in the museum is very vital, because this is where historical, artistic, artifacts, cultural interest etc. are kept for exhibition or preservation for future generations to benefit from it.

Table 2 shows that 42.1 percent do not agree that Nigerian arts and culture are not well known globally. This shows the present and future of Nigerian arts and culture and can be showcased more in a meaningful and colorful way. Meanwhile 55.3 percent of the respondents strongly disagree and disagree that the major festivals in Nigeria are not properly showcased. This means that the range and number of local festivals and dances reflect the rich diversity that exists within Nigeria and do provide tourists with a unique opportunity to sample and flavor Nigerian culture in some of its purest forms.

Lastly higher percentage of the respondents disagree that government policy are not promoting sustainable tourism, this implies that the tourism stakeholder recognizes government effort in promoting tourism especially in their locality.

3.3 Hypothesis One

Ho₁ Sustainable tourism does not have significant effect on business growth in tourism industry

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.235 ^a	.055	.038	2.74362

a. Predictors: (Constant), Government policies, Culture and heritage, Nigerian arts and crafts, Historical canter and national monuments, Major festivals, Managing museums

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Model summary table 3 shows that the coefficient of multiple determinations with R square is 0.055 which is 5% of the variation in sustainable tourism variable (government policies, culture and heritage, Nigerian arts and crafts, historical Centre's and national monuments, major festivals, managing museums), is explained by the variables in the model, while the remaining 95% may be due to other variables that is not included in the model. Hence, this analytical result of the regression (model formulated) is found useful for making predictions since the value of R² is close to 1.

Table 4: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	146.799	6	24.467	3.250	.004 ^b
Residual	2506.645	333	7.527		
Total	2653.444	339			

a. Dependent Variable: Total Business Growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Government policies, Culture and heritage, Nigerian arts and crafts, Historical centres and national monuments, Major festivals, Managing museums

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 5: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	21.309	1.249		17.064	.000
Culture and heritage	.174	.137	.069	1.267	.206
Historical centres and national monuments	-.205	.162	-.070	-1.264	.207
1 Managing museums	.102	.151	.038	.678	.498
Nigerian arts and crafts	-.277	.123	-.123	-2.252	.025
Major festivals	.193	.112	.095	1.727	.085
Government policies	.270	.115	.129	2.359	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Total Business Growth

Source: Field Survey, 2022

While information culture and heritage, historical centre's and national monuments and managing museums have a negative effect on business growth, this is shown by its probability value (0.206, 0.207 and 0.498) which is greater than 10% significance level. This means that impact of Nigerian arts and culture, major festivals and government policies influences business growth. This implies that null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis was accepted. Thus sustainable tourism has a significant effect on business growth in tourism industry in Nigeria.

3.4 Hypothesis Two

Ho₂ Sustainable tourism has no significant relationship on job opportunities in tourism industry in Nigeria

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.243 ^a	.059	.042	2.38915

a. Predictors: (Constant), Government policies, Culture and heritage, Nigerian arts and crafts, Historical centres and national monuments, Major festivals, Managing museums

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 7: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	118.806	6	19.801	3.469	.002 ^b
Residual	1900.782	333	5.708		
Total	2019.588	339			

a. Dependent Variable: Total Job Opportunity

a. Predictors: (Constant), Government policies, Culture and heritage, Nigerian arts and crafts, Historical centres and national monuments, Major festivals, Managing museums

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 8: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	24.738	1.087		22.750	.000
Culture and heritage	.182	.120	.082	1.524	.128
Historical centres and national monuments	-.002	.141	-.001	-.013	.989
1 Managing museum	-.392	.132	-.166	-2.975	.003
Nigerian arts and crafts	.373	.107	.190	3.481	.001
Major festivals	.052	.097	.029	.534	.594
Government policies	-.081	.100	-.044	-.812	.417

a. Dependent Variable: Total Job Opportunity

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Regression coefficients table 8 shows the model coefficient (that is, the intercept and the slope) which reveals the effect of sustainable tourism on the probability of increasing job opportunities. The result shows independent variable sustaining tourist (managing museums and Nigerian arts and crafts) have a significant effect on job opportunity. This is shown by their probability value (0.003 and 0.001) being less than the chosen 10% significance level (0.10).

While culture and heritage, historical centres and national monuments, major festivals and government policies have a negative effect on job opportunities, this is shown by their p-value (0.128, 0.989, 0.594 and 0.417) being more than the chosen 10% significance level (0.10). This implies that managing museums and Nigerian arts and crafts influence job opportunities. Therefore, null hypothesis was accepted that states sustainable tourism has no significant relationship on job opportunities in tourism industry but alternative hypothesis was rejected which states that sustainable tourism has a significant relationship on job opportunities in tourism industry.

3.5 Thematic Analysis of the Interview Responses

The thematic analysis was carried out using interview to provide information to confirm and the result of the quantitative data which addressed the sustainable tourism as it relates to job opportunities, business growth for entrepreneur. Using interview as a source of data help to explore the past, understand the present as well as predicting the future. Table 9 shows the distribution of the respondent's demographic information for interviewers. These include their positions, address and date of interview.

Table 9: Distribution of the Respondents' Demographic Information for Interviewers

List of Respondents	Position	Address of Respondents	Date of Interview
Respondent 1	Business owners	Ogun State	18/8/2022
Respondent 2	Tourism participant	Osogbo, Osun State	18/8/2022
Respondent 3	Staff (NTB)	Ijebu Ode Ogun State	18/8/2022
Respondent 4	Tourist business owner	Modakeke, Osun State	19/8/2022
Respondent 5	Tourist	Badagry, Lagos	19/8/2022
Respondent 6	Staff (NTB)	Obagun Osun State	19/8/2022
Respondent 7	Tourism participants	Nike Art Gallery, Ibadan Osun State	20/8/2022
Respondent 8	Tourist	Ogbomoso, Oyo State	20/8/2022
Respondent 9	Tourist business owner	Lagos State	4/8/2022
Respondent 10	Staff (NTB)	Lagos State	4/8/2022

Field Survey, (2022)

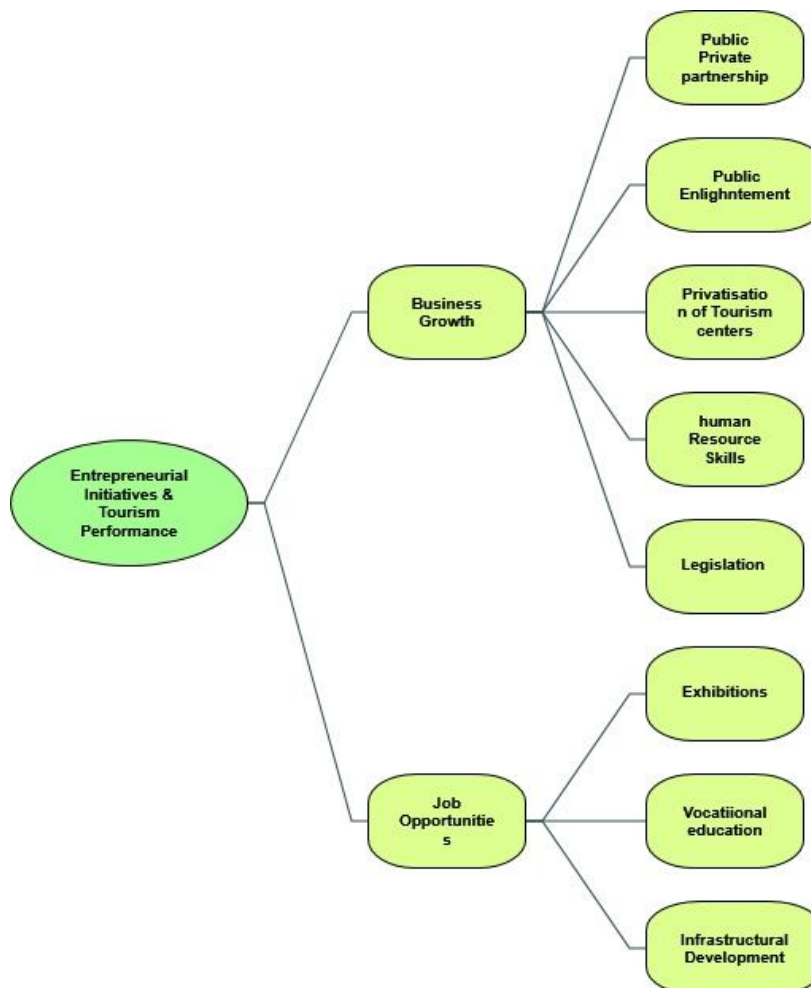


Figure 1: Thematic Representation of the Study.

Source: Author's Field Survey (2022)

The interview data was analyzed thematically and the following findings, for which each theme answered each research question, anchored on the relationship between entrepreneurial perspectives and the performance of tourism in South-western States, Nigeria discovered two themes, eight sub-themes.

3.6 Theme One: Entrepreneurial perspectives on Business Growth

3.6.1 Public private partnership and Privatization of Tourism Centers

The respondents see the need for public private partnership, which can be aided through starting a tourism program just to show the significance of tourism because they know that majority of Nigerians don't know the importance of tourism activities. It was gathered that affairs handled by the government especially in the tourism sector are not properly handled and most times they are not overseen by competent hands so signing a contract with private investors to oversee the affairs of tourism business for some years can bring in their ideas to develop the industry. Also proper financing of this sector by government is key this will attract, private investors were to invest in such business. Lastly the respondents opined that government should let private investors have a sense of ownership to help them put in their best and entrust neglected tourism centres can be handled by private investors to resuscitate them. “

3.6.2 Public Enlightenments

The interview revealed public enlightenment as element of entrepreneurship. The respondents explain that is the only way to know of the importance of tourism especially through the help of media houses, social media platforms this will attract more tourist that will also tell their friends and family about their experience . Need to enlighten younger generation to embrace our culture and heritage, inculcating our culture into the curriculum in the schools was well stressed. marketing.”

3.6.3 Human Resource Skills

Respondents explain that high work force is required to provide services for the tourist. Due to this, tourism and hospitality sectors with the supporting industries provide a diversified employment opportunity which requires the employment of qualified personnel to oversee the affairs of the industry and there must be transparency in achieving this..

3.6.4 Legislation on Tourism

It was gathered that they would encourage the government to developing legislations that give interested tourism entrepreneurs the opportunity to own their own tourist centers in their various specialization with proper inventory of attractions, festivals, monuments, arts and crafts, national parks and the animals well documented through relevant ministry. Meanwhile such information should be published in magazines, fliers, internet advert so that it will open to all and not some set of people.

3.7 Theme Two: Entrepreneurial Initiatives and Job opportunities

On job opportunities, about 80 percent of respondent explains that Tourism industries have created lots of jobs opportunities for either the skilled and unskilled labor. Also it was gathered that sustainable tourism can create job opportunities among Nigerian graduates, if all our tourism sites are properly renovated and value is being added. Tourism entrepreneurs have helped in economic diversification according to the respondents; there have been a little shift from the oil sector. Lastly, Tourism industry have high potential to stimulate other sectors in the country through its forward and backward linkages, this can create various job openings for job seekers.

4. CONCLUSION

Majority of the respondents falls within the age bracket of 20 – 49years; this implies that tourism participants in South-western States, Nigeria are majorly youths and we have new breed of youths that are interested in the tourism industry of Nigeria and in focus south western Nigeria. The findings show that sustainable tourism has a significant effect on job opportunities in tourism industry. Overall, this also shows that managing museums and Nigerian arts and crafts have a significant effect on job opportunity. This conforms to the findings of Iuliana, Carmen, & Alexandrina, (2015) the connection with entrepreneurship takes into account the economic development of tourist areas aiming to create new sustainable businesses by increasing the capacity and willingness of enterprises to develop. However, culture and heritage, historical centres and national monuments, major festivals and government policies have a negative effect on job opportunities. Therefore, tourism industry needs to attract investment into managing our National museum and promoting the country's arts and craft.

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