

Tourism Readiness, Investment Promotion, Economic Growth and Development in South East Nigeria: An Expose and Proposal

By

Chukwuemeka U. Okoye
Department of Agricultural Economic
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Introduction

Up until 1966, the economy of then Eastern Nigeria was one of the fastest growing in the world, finding peers among Malaysia, Indonesia and Brazil, etc. By then, Eastern Nigeria dominated both commerce and the Federal bureaucracy in Nigeria. Today, South East Nigeria is a much smaller enclave, encompassing a geographical space made up of five states (Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi) and exclusively inhabited by the Igbo, relative to the former Eastern Nigeria, which included the Efik, Ibibio, and Ijaw of Cross River, Rivers, and Bayelsa states. Economic growth in the South East has contracted to the extent that it is now attributed with the least aggregate Gross State Product in Nigeria (of ₦754.40bn). Again, ranking of Nigerian states by ease of doing business has seen the South East States at the bottom of the ladder. The concerns about lack of investments, which largely inform the regular expression of concern by individuals, group and institutions in the zone (Ohanaeze Ndi Igbo, South East Economic Summit Group, and South East Nigeria Economic Commission) include the poor state of employment, low industrial development, insecurity, dearth of critical infrastructure among others. Reasons for this are economic, social, political and otherwise, but it does appear, as indeed many may know, that we should look more closely at what made Eastern Nigeria, particularly the Igbo Nation of the present South East Zone so vibrant before 1966, and what happened to it during and after the Civil War of 1966-1970.

Now though the commonest retorts in exasperation relate to the symptom (low investment at home), rather than the causes, such as the overbearing burden/wedge placed on the region by war-induced marginalization, deliberate avoidance in allocation of Federal infrastructure and industries/projects, structural/political imbalance, etc, have induced a rational capital flight away from the zone to zones of opportunity and prosperity (Lagos, Kano, Port Harcourt, Abuja, etc). Interestingly, the region, in spite of these, continues to be attributed with the lowest poverty level in Nigeria. In addition to the rational choice explanation for low investments in the zone, it should be noted that the pre-civil war enabling organizational structure, the organizing principles and strategies of South Easterners (championed by the then Igbo Union, now most imperfectly mimicked by Ohanaeze Ndigbo) were terribly shaken by the fallouts of the war, and this has spiraled into temporary self-doubt, self-negating

stereotyping and so on, but nobody can deny that the natural entrepreneurial instincts, the resilience and determination of the South Easterner remain potent today, waiting to be optimally ignited again! The Igbo State Union was actually a socio-cultural platform for regional economic integration of the Igbo, which we have failed to reinvent after the Civil War and the balkanization of the Igbo nation into several states.

This conference is about *promoting regional integration and tourism within West African sub-region*. Regional integration is about the harmonization of trade, commerce, investments, cultures and institutions among given regional entities within the framework of clear rules, agreements and regulations. However, contemporary regional integration tendencies can be said to be primarily driven by trade, investments and tourism. There is no doubt that increasing the level of foreign direct and domestic investments, especially in strategic infrastructure, commercial and knowledge intensive digital sectors would help the zone. While there is understandable excitement over the recently realized Akanu Ibiam International Airport, and the expectation of the planned Sam Mbakwe International Cargo Airport, Onitsha Inland Water Port, Second Niger Bridge, etc, one critical question, however, as posed in the concept paper of the 2013 South East Economic Summit is: “do we have what it takes to open our doors and embrace the world?” Put more succinctly, how ready is the South East on all the indices of competitiveness, as a destination for investment of all scales, to attract and retain such investment by indigenes of the zone and outsiders alike? Among other needful focus areas, this conference should, even if tangentially, identify what will make our investment climate conducive, drive trade and investment (skills, technology, markets, etc); identify areas of investment potential, look at the enabling environment, business and social control laws, regulations; how can the informal sector take advantage? These focus areas, as I shall argue, resonate strongly with the idea of tourism readiness, which I anchor on the belief that if our ‘total environment’ is ‘cleaned up’ physically and attitudinally, it will begin to create conditions for any location to retain its own and attract outsiders who appreciate excellence in service delivery, certainty, security, decency, peace, leisure and amenity, all of which will address investment growth, poverty, *et cetera*. Among the options that are available to the people of the South East, tourism has the potential to address all those issues at a low cost, allowing us to harvest the low hanging fruits first.

Direction and Intent

A pertinent question we need to ask at this juncture is, if the central government and private citizens are not investing enough in a particular subsidiary federating unit, why are the indigenes of the zone, state or community not doing so despite their acknowledged capabilities, as in the case of South Easterners, who do same in other places? Could the answer be in their economics, sociology or politics or all? We think that there is nothing wrong with any of these. While large scale mostly Federal-enabled infrastructure and other lumpen investments

could dramatically transform the fortunes of the South East, we have seen that these things take too long, sometimes even more than a generation, to materialize because of politics. People should continue fighting and agitating for large scale Federal investments, which is their right, but there are lower hanging fruits which they have not yet plucked. To bring this home, we rely on the 'smoking' comments of Aniedobe (2011); "...we did not need Abuja to make Nollywood; we did not need Abuja to create Innoson Motors. We don't need Abuja to build small IPPs; to revive Nkalagu Cement factory; to build world class convention centers and hotels; to sensitize our Diaspora brothers and sisters to invest at home; to revamp the tourist grounds of Oguta Lake; to build the best technical schools in all of Africa...". Indeed, we do not need Abuja to build knowledge centers where our young IT graduates will compete with Asian software developers; to deal with our security issues using a fusion of the approaches of the current vigilantes and those of the abandoned 'Bakassi Boys' and 'Boys Oye'; etc, etc. Our salvation lies in committing to small experiments that demonstrate to the average citizen that there is economic benefit from replicating those that result in benefits!

A central belief expressed in this paper is that talk about integration and 'think home' admonitions to local investors as approaches to unchain the potentials of South East Nigeria has come a long way. However, the 'think home' philosophy is a non-starter, since people tend to act first as rational economic beings before buying into populist sermons, especially when the conditions for surviving and thriving at home are not just there.

Given the urgency of the situation, it is time for less talk and more action. It is time to interrogate why the hitherto proposed economic development and investment approaches and strategies either failed or why they did not find a berth for practical testing and demonstrations. We think that the frameworks for organizing development interventions in the kind of circumstances South East finds itself need not be weaved around governments, most of which have failed to galvanise the people for development. Nor must such a framework and strategy be underpinned by the conventional recourse to, for example, 'building industries', which become easily unsustainable in a "primitive" physical, social and political environment that characterise Nigeria today. Any model of investment promotion in such an environment must be one that is pro-poor, exhibits clearly defined but broad-based ownership, finds propulsion from the innate competitive endowments of the people, builds a measure of populism, relies less on external capital, promotes local market deepening, is voraciously hankered after by the people, and can remain relevant and potent under conditions of wider country, regional or global economic crisis.

Perhaps, what various in-country zones such as South East Nigeria, as well as their constituent communities need more now may be a microeconomic, bottom-up stimulant that is aligned with the organizational behavior of the inhabitants of the area, in this case, the Igbo, in addition to the hackneyed, text book prescriptions on development that are overly dependent on external

macroeconomic stimuli and romanticized stereotypes in the form of infrastructure and other heavy social overhead capital investments, some with questionable distributional impacts. An inward-looking development strategy that is built on local strengths, competitive/comparative advantages might be a more beneficial and sustainable option. The South East, for example, needs to look more inwards, at itself, to galvanise and marshal the competitive spirit of the Igbo and channel it towards initiatives to deal with the social, cultural and institutional constraints to service excellence and tourism asset discovery, development and marketing.

Decades of out migration by South Easterners in search of opportunities has left their homeland unattended to, and denied it the investment of the energy of its youth, which has been exported elsewhere. Competition among the microenterprises in the zone is very high but not controlled and nurtured enough with appropriate governance and regulations, thereby leading to irresponsible use of common resources, and a 'tragedy of the commons' in both physical, social and spiritual senses, a Spartan lifestyle devoid of leisure and passive demand for excellence in community services. In contrast, while Cross River State cannot be said to have received Federal Investments to an extent that is significantly different from states in the South East, it (Cross River) has however, succeeded in tapping its people's natural spirit and habit of hospitality excellence, organizing around it, towards a greater goal of economic renaissance primarily through investments in tourism, and creating a self-driven, even if slow for now, sustainable brand in economic growth and development.

Considering all the above issues, this paper:

1. Argues that the success of regional integration at the ECOWAS or other higher level is dependent on the integration of in-country zones, states, local governments and communities based on commercialisation and integration of their economic, cultural and other assets;
2. Denominates the success of ECOWAS on prosperity of the communities constituting the member-countries. with particular focus on bringing back the discourse on development of the South East Nigeria to a focus on the agency, the organizational structure and the organizing principles that make the Igbo successful in entrepreneurship, science and technology, community governance and commerce;
3. Explores a development strategy that elicits the best in the known tendencies of the Igbo man while at the same time creating economic benefits, a strategy to be recommended to the South East in all other areas of development;
4. Presents a counterpoise to the more widely acclaimed conventional wisdom, that economic growth more readily happens when you drop a large hard asset and manage it for profit;

5. Proposes competitiveness and organized competitions as tools for South East resurgence and applies it immediately to tourism to attract and retain investments in the zone;
6. Proposes an inward-looking development strategy that is based on tourism at this stage of the development of South East Nigeria and similar constituencies;
7. Proposes public sector and public-private sector-funded practical small experimentations;
8. Conveys the fact, with evidence, that tourism drives, rather than its being driven, by investment in other sectors (manufacturing, etc), and that tourism creates a better income distribution than other industrial types;
9. Argues that domestic tourism can bring more resources to communities than the foreign visitor numbers for which we are poorly prepared anyway; and,
10. Suggests that states in the South East, Local Governments and Communities should turn to tourism development to 'clean up' the zone, improve the services, make it a liveable place which will lead first to the retention of their own bored local populations, and for attracting outsiders/foreigners from elsewhere.

Rethinking the Mix of Policies and Programmes for Investment Promotion in the South East

It is a fact that investments in industrial production are often considered to be the spur that would generate economic activities that will in turn grow tourism. The reverse may, however, be the case in many places. In the South East particularly, we have a region that is suffering from long term marginalization in the allocation of Federal investments; a region avoided by its indigenes and foreign investors alike mainly because of infrastructure failure and lack of opportunities for employment and leisure, which heightens insecurity and scars away domestic and foreign visitors and investment. Also, the zone is surrounded by nationalities who hardly invest their own regions (which denies the zone diversity in Nigerian domestic investment, which would have increased its resilience).

A region that finds itself in the above-mentioned circumstances should adopt an eclectic approach to development planning and implementation, but with a strong focus on internally constructed strategies, while still looking outwards for applicable models and initiatives. In view of the fact that current investment promotion strategies appear not to be working, there is need to identify novel and innovative alternatives. In that regard, one of our carefully considered strategies is a deliberate move to change the mindset of technocrats and politicians to the extent that the development policies and strategies they propose will no longer inordinately be concentrated in the traditional champion areas such as agriculture, industries, infrastructure and so on. Enterprises,

institutions, and companies built under this paradigm have often failed dismally as a result of lack of the 'enabling environment', a phrase that encapsulates issues ranging from inappropriate/poor government promotional and regulatory strategies, failed infrastructure, social discontent/insecurity, dented ethical values to poor sense of service excellence among others. In view of these, we need to take action to clear these issues even as we build factories and commercial enterprises. We need supporting policy interventions in what may be called facilitating functional areas, a good example being travel and tourism, which can provide the atmosphere for a success of policies and programmes in the champion sectors while generating high levels of broad-based employment, income and shared prosperity. This is in the sense that if we can become tourism ready, many of the causes of failure would disappear. It is the same thing as using policy reforms to create a conducive investment climate in order to attract more investments. In the process, we find that it will be beneficial to activating social and cultural forces and sentiments within the South East, while using them to support tourism readiness actions. We must recognise that it is commerce, manufacturing and trade facilitated by tourism readiness, and not just the availability of natural resources, that is the key necessity for economic prosperity and development.

Looking at our position as a component of policies that can drive political, social and economic integration in any setting, we find resonance in Draper's (2010) advocacy for an endogenous African model of integration that is more in line with the political, economic and capacity realities of the continent. Draper believes that a limited agenda, focused on trade facilitation and regulatory cooperation in areas related primarily to doing business is what Africa needs most urgently, and not formal institution-intensive arrangements, which entail major capacity and funding challenges.

The History of, and Hunger for Regional Integration in South East Nigeria

Immediately after independence in Nigeria, the integration of the component parts of the Igbo speaking parts of the then Eastern Nigeria was seamlessly achieved through the republican organs of governance of the Igbo. The then archetype of those organs, the Igbo State Union, through its structures and activities, probably provided all the necessary socio-economic, cultural and political binding force to integrate and propel the Igbo in an unprecedented fashion in all spheres. After the Nigerian Civil War, economic disorganization, the burden of surrender and 'defeat', and the creation of states and the six geopolitical zones, curtailed seriously the ability of the Igbo to unite as they used to before the war.

The desire and calls for the Igbo to re-invent their pre-war unity and integrate for progress has been on for decades, and many see it as an antidote for the zone's political and economic backwardness. Despite numerous and resounding calls by think tanks, conferences, and individuals for integration in the South East, little or nothing has come out of it. The pervading apathy has frustrated some of the

governors who wanted to do something about it outside of structured, policy-guided conditions but failed to get the cooperation of their colleagues. For instance, as noted by News Agency of Nigeria (NAN, 2016), over the years, in the quest for integration in the South East, the political leaders and governments have disappointed the people. We note that they have also disappointed themselves as well, as evidenced in some recent comments of Dr Chris Ngige, the former governor of Anambra State: *“During my time as Governor of Anambra State, we embarked on building federal roads that passed through our state because they were impassable from Niger Bridge. I told my fellow governors then, that we should consider South-East regional road integration in view of the fact that our people are traders and like to move. I picked a major road project from Igbo Ukwu up to Isuochi. I asked my Abia state counterpart to move it from there into Umuahia and Aba but it was not done,” he said. Ngige said other governors in the zone never bought into the idea, but that he insisted on getting the work done in Anambra State axis.*

Hopefully, Ngige’s frustration would end with reported new-found desire by the Governors of South East States to seriously begin a journey towards integration in the zone. Regional integration cannot happen without continuous and open rapprochement among the political elite who take the key decisions. It has taken more than 16 years since 1999 when the South East Governors Forum was formed for the Governors to finally meet in February, 2017, where, as usual, there appeared to be strong desire to integrate, as one way to tackle the socio-economic problems of the zone. As a clear condemnation of the lame duck attitude of political leaders in the South East, comments that integrate states in the zone recently came from outside the zone; precisely from former President Olusegun Obasanjo. According to Njoku, (2017), Obasanjo attributed the woes of the zone to its leaders’ inability “to reinvent the industrious, entrepreneurial and adventurous spirit of the people.” He asserted that the economic development of the zone rests with the leaders, stressing that tapping into the enormous natural potentials that abound in the zone was the only thing required to make the zone the economic hub of Africa. “Ebonyi is producing rice, well enough to feed the entire state and for export. Abia is producing made in Aba shoes. We have oil here, we have gas, and we have vast arable farmlands; we have the ingenuity and the Igbo spirit to excel. Why can’t these initiatives be supported? South East must use their uniqueness to walk the zone into the line of development.

Obasanjo’s comments are a fitting epitaph and justification for urgent action by the leaders of the zone, but the presumption that it is the leaders that should reinvent the ‘industrious, and entrepreneurial spirit of the people’ may not be entirely correct, although they have a major role to play. What is often condemned as ‘spirit of individualism’ is actually the competitive spirit which should thrive side by side with, and even be encouraged with appropriate incentives, regulations and controls to explore areas government is not fit to deal

with. Difficulty to integrate states in Nigeria, in all zones appears to be a special problem, and not a peculiar South East phenomenon. In the South West, no meaningful collaboration among the states exists, and they are still struggling to institute it.

Tourism in Economic Development

Tourism is described by United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). as a network of activities of persons, who travel to and stay at destinations outside where they normally live and work for not more than one consecutive year, for pleasure, business and other purposes (Ugurlu, 2012) 'Our suggestion for the immediate application of the competitions stimulus via tourism is informed by empirical research evidence of tourism's superior, quick and well distributed benefits. Tourism is an important driver of economic, social, and cultural development in both developed and developing countries (Long (2012), and widely acknowledged as one of the fastest growing industries globally (Lanza and Pigliaru, 1999; Raymond, 2001; Newsome et al, 2002; Basu, 2003, Ozgen, 2003; Chockalingam and Ganesh, 2010; Jennie, 2012). Thus, tourism has become a major source of economic growth, employment, earnings, and foreign exchange for many countries (Vaugeois, 2000; Basu, 2003) and a main source of development and growth for local economies (Hodur et al, 2005; Haller, 2012). Indeed, tourism has a range of benefits both to the individual tourist, tourism organizations, and the local economies and communities in terms of employment, income, and enhancement to the quality of life (Besculides et al, 2002; Oh, 2005). More specifically, tourism presents the following unique advantages:

- i. Unlike traditional industries (e.g. manufacturing, communications, financial services, etc.), tourism can be a significant economic driver in remote areas of countries far from economic centers;
- ii. employment and GDP generated from tourism activities are more evenly distributed across regions within the economies with the exception only of education;
- iii. tourism is a particularly attractive option to stimulate development in rural and low income countries and regions that previously relied heavily on agriculture and natural resource extraction;
- iv. the industry cuts across and is linked to many other industries in the economy, generating additional demand in a wide range of services and professions;
- v. In addition to the direct and indirect effects, tourism also generates valuable spinoff benefits by developing infrastructure including roads, airports, harbours, electricity, sewage, potable water, and communication infrastructure

- that other industries can use, and by boosting trade, skills, and investments in other industries that are not directly related;
- vi. the increased connectivity that comes with tourism can drive domestic and foreign direct investment, and enhance a region's attractiveness as a place to locate a headquarters, distribution or manufacturing centre;
 - vii. tourism supports economic development via intense inter-industry linkages, remittances, and cultural heritage preservation. In terms of its multiplier effects, tourism outperforms majority of the key sectors (communications, financial services, education, agriculture, and mining) across the entire economy (WTTC (2012). Only chemicals and auto manufacturing have higher multipliers across the 20 countries analysed;
 - viii. for the 20 countries analysed in the WTTC study, tourism generated direct employment 6, 4, 5, 2, and 3 times greater than the mining, chemicals, automotive manufacturing, communications and financial services sectors respectively;
 - ix. tourism tends to generate the most household income and retain a higher share of expenditure within the local economy after accounting for imports. On the aggregate, for 20 countries studied, the share of retained Tourism spending is greater than in the mining, chemicals, and auto manufacturing sectors;
 - x. tourism which accounted directly or indirectly for one in every 20 jobs in Sub Saharan Africa in 2011 is one of the few industries on the continent in which women are well represented as employees and managers (World Bank, 2010).
 - xi. Tourism can grow and be sustained when host communities have a positive attitude towards it and when they see their role in the process of the tourism development as being rewarding and vital to their personal and community growth (Ajake (2015).
 - xii. when properly developed and managed, tourism can serve as a mechanism for protecting natural environments; preserving historical, archaeological and religious monuments; and, stimulating the practice of local cultures, folklore, traditions, arts and crafts, and cuisine.

There can be no question that all the above benefits can be experienced in large as well as small jurisdictions, but reliable empirical data on tourism does not exist for Nigerian geopolitical zones, not to talk of Local Governments or communities.

Overview of the Travel and Tourism Sector in Nigeria

5.1. Institutions, Policies and Implementation

The salient defining elements (policy, institutions, problems) of the state of Nigerian tourism policy and practice are captured in the Nigeria Tourism

Development Master Plan (NTDMP) 2006. This plan is meant to promote the sustainable development of the tourism industry through capacity building in the areas of human resource development, research and development, improved sectoral planning and governance. The plan also provides for capacity building at the local/state level in promoting tourism development at the community level by encouraging local community participation, ownership and management of the tourism sector. For purposes of this paper, the relevant findings of the survey preceding the plan, and the strategic recommendations in the plan are as follows:

- i. while the incidence of domestic leisure travel may be low, the sheer size of Nigeria's population means that there is a significant contribution to the demand for tourism services from domestic travel activity;
- ii. the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) is overstaffed with untrained and inexperienced people, badly equipped, with very poor office accommodation and an inadequate budget, resulting in an ineffective organisation;
- iii. the National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism (NIHOTOUR) is grossly overstaffed and ineffective with no credible on-site practice facilities nor has it any experience of delivering skilled personnel to the workforce. The conditions in the training institutes are very poor, dirty, ill equipped, badly maintained and are under-funded;
- iv. the conditions of funding schemes targeting SME enterprises and available to applicants in the tourism sector, are currently too restrictive to effectively foster investment in the sector;
- v. Many of Nigeria's historic and cultural sites are in a dilapidated state, have no interpretation or Signposting;
- vi. The deplorable state of the Nigerian physical environment is a strategic competitive disadvantage;
- vii. The range and number of festivals and events can be a highly marketable product but they require some strategic improvement to make them more marketable;
- viii. The hospitality sectors are lagging far behind in terms of quality, standards and skills delivery. There is a lack of balance between management and supervisory training and craft skills training;
- ix. Public/Private relationships are non-existent;
- x. Current marketing activities are under-funded, inadequate and ineffective; the tourist products are not organized or packaged for the market place and Nigeria's tourist attractions are unknown to the international travel trade;
- xi. The image of Nigeria abroad is very negative and is not being addressed;

- xii. The development of tourism in Nigeria is officially concentrated in five clusters: Tropical Rainforest, Conference Capital Atlantic Gateway, Scenic Nature, and Sahara Gateway. The associated Flagship Projects in the clusters are: Tinapa Business, Leisure and Conference Resort (Tropical Rainforest), Cross River Tropical Rainforest (Tropical Rainforest), Development of Conference, Meetings and Event Management Capability (Conference Capital), Farin Ruwa Eco Tourism Project (Conference Capital), Olokola Cultural Resort (Atlantic Gateway), Museum of Traditional Nigerian Architecture (Scenic Nature), Ancient City of Kano (Sahara Gateway).

A number of issues are critical here. None of the Flagship Tourism Projects selected is from the South East zone. The comment on dirty NIHOTOUR, earlier alluded to by the consultants that prepared Nigeria's Tourism Masterplan, is a sharp mirror of the state of most of Nigeria's urban and suburban space. With the state of Nigeria's living environment, it will be difficult to increase international visitor numbers. A Zimbabwean worker in one of the multilateral agencies was once taken to Sabon Gari in Kano, to the pepper soup, beer and what have you bazaar but she was not impressed alluding to the poor hygiene in the place. Recently, a big Church had its premises sealed by a state government for breaching environmental laws on hygiene and refuse disposal. On many counts, we are not just ready for tourists whether foreign or domestic. Last year, the World Bank reported that 94% of the population in Nigeria is exposed to air pollution levels that exceed WHO guidelines (compared to 72% on average in Sub-Saharan Africa in general) and air pollution damage costs about 1% post of Gross National Income (Point Blank News 2016).

A close examination of these elements throws up the key factors hampering national tourism growth. Two points need to be emphasized here, which have implications for our propositions in this paper; namely, neglect of the South East in the National Tourism Master Plan, poor state of tourism assets and products, undeveloped nature of domestic tourism despite its clear promise, poor physical environment, inadequacy of National policy making, governance and training institutions. If this is so at the National level, we can imagine how the state level fairs. The South East can neither get inspiration nor assistance from the Federal tourism governance, organization, management/marketing of tourism assets, and legislation. Following stakeholders' disenchantment with NTDMP resulting from its failure to achieve its objectives, the Federal Government set up a technical committee in December 2016, to review the plan, particularly in the area of the legislation governing tourism in Nigeria so as to bring it at sync with global standards.

Also, from the foregoing, it appears that tourism development planning and implementation, even as weak and disjointed as they are, appear to be mostly Federal affairs. It also appears that state and local government levels, even

though mentioned in the NTDMP, cannot receive adequate support from the Federal establishment, which may justify its shortcoming by alluding to the absence of consciousness to pursue tourism development and tourism planning at such local levels. With particular reference to the South East, the fact of being not even awarded a gateway recognition, which may be symptomatic of a more general marginalization of the zone in tourism development resource allocation, partly justifies the need for resort to self-help. This has far reaching positive implications in terms of various states, LGAs and communities becoming more active and innovative in promoting their own natural/physical, cultural and synthetic assets for own development. Other urgent reasons states in the South East should resort to self-help through the most beneficial, broad-based routes are mentioned elsewhere in this paper.

Statistics

Statistics on Tourism in Nigeria that would make meaning are scarce and unreliable, but the following have been mentioned.

- i. Contribution to GDP (residents, non-residents and government): 3.3% (2011), to rise by 10.8% in 2012; 4.6% (2014); and 4.5% (2015) and subsequently at 7% per annum by 2022 (WTTC, 2012; WTTC, 2016).
- ii. Contribution to direct employment generation: 1.4% (2011); 2.6% (2012); 3.6% or 2,198,500 jobs (2014).
- iii. Foreign visitor numbers: 838,500 (2011), 897,500 (2012); 1,984,000 (2013 forecast) compared with Kenya at 12,000,000 and South Africa at 15,000,000.
- iv. Nigerians spend ₦78bn on medical tourism annually (EN Vision 26/9/13); Over 5,000 Nigerians travel to India and other countries for medical treatment on monthly basis and Nigeria loses over \$500 million (₦78 billion) annually (NMA, 2013).

The relative low foreign arrivals figures quoted for Nigeria is no surprise, given the dismal state of the environment, services, heritage sites, governance institutions, tourism training outfits, lack of skills in crafts and hospitality practice. More seriously, Nigeria has always been a hard sell to pleasure seeking tourists, given civil strife (eg Boko Haram), and the infrastructural morass. Websites like Trip Advisor, an interactive travel website that assists customers in gathering travel information and reviews of hotels across countries, is replete with negative commentaries about Nigeria, prompting pleasure seekers to find alternative destinations in West African countries like Ghana, The Gambia and Senegal. As more Nigerians shun traditional holiday spots like the United States and United Kingdom owing to cost consideration and visa hassles, and go for new destinations across West Africa, Nigeria comes out the loser.

These tourism figures for Nigeria mentioned above represent high end indicators. Domestic tourism support services offered by MSMEs are not captured there. There are very scanty domestic tourism statistics for Nigeria, but the findings of the tourism master plan suggest that it is high. Also, the revenue

value of the impact of domestic tourism is unknown, but the sheer number of Nigerians who travel to Ghana alone for the Easter and Christmas holidays is a pointer to the lost income from domestic tourism. Why can't Ghanaians and others come to the South East for holidays just as people of the West Coast do come to the South East commercial centers although for business, not pleasure? Business travel is so sharply different from leisure or business/leisure travel in the South East. Largely because the zone is not tourism-ready. It is important for South East to target the tourism stream from the West Coast of Africa, where records show that Igbos constitute a very large chunk of Nigerian residents and business travelers. In addition to those hinted in the NTDMP together with the associated commentaries, factors hampering growth of domestic tourism include the poor attitude of Nigerians to rest and relaxation, poor coordination, weak regulatory oversight, non-demanding nature of the average Nigerian for excellence, the nostalgic longing for far flung places.

The Competitive Advantages and Disadvantages of South East Nigeria

Advantages

The following fundamentals of geography, religion, psychology, history, demography and political economy currently characterize the South East and imbue it with tremendous potentials and opportunities for the growth of domestic tourism.

- i. With a land area of about 40,000 km² and a 2015 estimated population of 40 million (compared with Ghana with 27 million people in 2016), and density of 400/km², spread over mangrove, rain forest and Savannah vegetation zones, South East Nigeria could support a variety of products and muster a large consumer demand. Population density in the zone is highest in the country, which means a large reservoir of potential tourists. It is believed that the population of the zone is under-estimated in Nigeria's National censuses, and that it should be the highest of the six zones, and considerably scattered in the 'domestic Diaspora' in the West, North and South South, which can be turned into a strong tourist stream once the zone cleans out and becomes tourism ready.
- ii. The zone has a huge reserve of natural resources including coal, limestone, oil and gas, etc.
- iii. The zone sits strategically as the connecting bridge between Northern Nigeria and the South South.
- iv. Homogeneity and common history of the population makes for easier marketing of heritage/cultural endowments.
- v. A highly entrepreneurial population waiting for incentives and opportunities to be activated. Recent examples of where this competitive spirit prevailed include the number one position attained by the region when the registration of Community Banks was thrown open in the early 1990s, and how the indices Directorate for Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) showed the South East consistently

- oversubscribing the matching grants policy of the Directorate and delivering more completed roads than any other zone in Nigeria.
- vi. Already, the home return tradition of the people during Christmas, Easter, August Meeting and others assures a continuous influx that a sweet experience of home would encourage to repeat visits at times other than during these events.
 - vii. Some industrial clusters (automotive manufacturing, automotive and machine tools manufacturing, garments/apparels and leather/shoes, technical services, film making (Nollywood), beverage making) are already an established part of the zone, with Aba in Abia State being described as the 'SME capital' of Nigeria.
 - viii. The zone has a wealth of assets that differentiate it from other destinations around Nigeria and the world, including unique landscapes and nature-based tourism offerings; indigenous culture and heritage; and a friendly, tolerant, culturally diverse population.
 - ix. The literacy and gender empowerment levels are about the highest in Nigeria. The zone is attributed with the highest number of professors in Nigeria and a highly skilled population.
 - x. The people are very adventurous and venturesome. Outmigration of the indigenes of the zone could be an advantage given the large remittances received from them.
 - xi. The zone is home to an enlightened and relatively very skilled technical labour force.
 - xii. The general multicultural tolerance of the indigenes, and the relative near absence of spontaneous and violent sectarian conflicts is a plus.
 - xiii. Growing and perhaps best network of asphalted roads in Nigeria.
 - xiv. Lowest poverty rate in Nigeria, as a result, in addition to other reasons, of having a very high stake through outmigration in all parts of Nigeria, including particularly in the economically strongest states in Nigeria (Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Rivers, etc).
 - xv. The lure of the North for South Easterners has been severely curtailed by Boko Haram insurgency, and forced a large number of them back home, or to other less volatile parts. This may constitute an initial threat (more unemployment) but could also foster the growth of more MSMEs at home in the medium to long term.
 - xvi. The recent opening of Akanu Ibiam International Airport gives tourists the convenience and security of direct international flights into the zone
 - xvii. The zone is home to several internationally famous personages (Nnamdi Azikiwe, Power Mike, Rev. Fr Iwene Tansi) whose resting places and legacies are of interest to international scholars and other visitors.

All these attributes are however yet to be exploited with appropriate tourism promotion and development policies, and programmes.

Disadvantages

Despite the many positive factors going for the South East, it suffers significant competitive disadvantage as a result of the fact that:

- i. three of the zone's major cities, Onitsha, Aba, and Umuahia, have been adjudged among the 20 most polluted places in the World by air quality, coming 1st, 6th and 16th respectively (WHO, 2016). Onitsha recorded roughly 30 times more than the WHO's recommended levels of particulate matter;
- ii. environmental degradations, particularly the menace of gully erosion, is a major threat to farmlands, economic activities, and homes in the zone. With regard to pollution (in the air or land), the situation escalates because of the rapid economic development and via small scale industrial enterprise in the area, without the right technology, the necessary environmental regulations and weak enforcement of existing ones. The very reason you think you can develop and attract tourists foist conditions that create a barrier;
- iii. many citizens of the zone tend to shun it due to security concerns, with many preferring to spend the night in neighbouring Delta, Cross River and Akwa Ibom, commuting home from there for duties they came home to perform;
- iv. long term neglect of critical infrastructure limits its appeal;
 - v. low visitor numbers to the zone is a serious constraint. For example a study (Ajake, 2015) found out that 70% of the lodgings in hotels in Enugu City were by local residents while the remaining 30% was recorded by visitors from outside the state and that only 20% of the hotels have recreational facilities;
- vi. within the hospitality (hotels) tourism axis of the zone, we find that the lack of an appropriately skilled workforce hinders the development of a high-quality tourism offers. Relevant market-driven skills (e.g. front office skills, analysing market needs to create new offers and the ability to identify and employ optimal marketing strategies) and service delivery skills (e.g. gathering, analysing and interpreting customer feedback) are rather scarce.
- vi. conflicts in Northern Nigeria is curtailing net remittances into the zone. Of late, with the deportation of South Easterners by the Lagos State Government, there may be reasons to be cautious about residency in the South West. The contagion of conflicts in the extreme North may affect the Middle Belt, but for other reasons than Boko Haram insurgency, thus further affecting remittances and foisting pressures on the zone due to large number of expected returnees to the zone who had hitherto settled in the Middle Belt.
- vii. Non-inclusion of any project from the South East among the flagship tourism projects for implementation in five clusters identified by the

National Tourism Masterplan is symptomatic of lingering marginalization of the zone in National resource distribution.

- viii. Unnecessary loss of confidence among some South Easterners who have become sold to the negative. Stereotyping of people of the zone as 'greedy' by people who cannot stand the competitive energy/spirit of the Igbo.
- ix. You go to South West because of industrial/administrative headquarters clustering, international maritime and air transport reach, population, etc. You go to North because of 'space' /ecotourism, business; you go to South South because of oil-induced prosperity in Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom and Delta, cultural/hospitality, natural/ecotourism in Obudu, etc Calabar/Tinapa. You turn to the South East, as outsiders, for virtually nothing other than commerce, and the emerging technotourism made possible by the industrial clusters at Aba, Nnewi, Enugu, Onitsha but which, to a large extent are dependent on resources from other zones for production of goods. Sadly too, these positive elements come at a very high transaction cost due mainly to failure of infrastructure. More seriously, the atmosphere for socio-economic interaction appear to be so Spartan that only very determined visitors can stand it, which stifles tourism and even commerce.
- x. The zone has a lack luster attitude to the establishment of iconic images/sculptures of its great and heroic personages (ancient and modern). Existing synthetic monuments are mostly left in tatters soon after building them. The people's sense of art, their idea of monuments remain mediocre to the extent that the choice of concept and size of many of the monuments erected tend to be shallow, compared with those imposing and inspiring pieces of art you encounter in some other places such as Cross River State! The statues of Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Zik of Africa*, and one of the zone's greatest political icons till date, are in tatters everywhere.

Tourism Assets and Products of South East Nigeria

Tourism assets and products in South East Nigeria can generally be classified into natural heritage, synthetic assets, symbolic/cultural events, festivals and conferences, as in the rest of Nigeria. Due to several factors, we are aware mostly of the natural heritage sites as tourist attractions. One thing is clear though, we have not even discovered, developed and marketed as much as 5% of the tourism assets we have in the zone. In the various states of the zone, the popular staid knowledge is majorly *about the following*

Table 1: Some Tourism Assets of South East Nigeria

| STATE | TOURIS ASSET | DESCRIPTION/COMMENT |
|---------------|--|---|
| ABIA STATE | National War Museum Umuahia | , (has three galleries; traditional warfare, the armed forces and the Nigerian civil war weapon), |
| | National Museum of Colonial History, Aba | (showcases Nigeria of colonial era, and contains relics of slave trade, European imperialism, etc.) |
| | Arochukwu Cave | , (this was used for consultative purposes and as a court of law during the slave trade era). |
| | Museum of Antiquities | , Ujari (contains relics of the slave trade, a big bell of 1892, ancient chandeliers, canons, metal gongs, handcuffs, basins, buckets, brass plates, silver plates etc.), |
| | Azumini Blue River | (a sparkling blue river which is surrounded by fine sands and glassy stones. By its banks are beautiful beaches which provide pleasant places for leisure, fishing, boating, yachting and skiing) |
| | | |
| | Akwete Weavers (Akwete | Akwete is a small town known for its speciality in the production of Akwete cloth using fabricated handlooms. This traditional cloth has beautiful designs made from various materials as cotton, silk etc. The cloth is used in producing assorted styles of wears and souvenirs item like caps, head-gears, hand bags, shoes etc.). |
| | OTHERS | long juju of Arochukwu, the Amakama Wooden cave, the Uloitiri (slave cell), the isi Imo Tourist site in Umunneochi, Umunneochi Cave in Ahaba Imenyi, the Ngodo Cave in Isuochi, Eke igbere sacred forest, The slave Market at Eluama Uzuuakoli, the Eziofri Cave at Amaekpu Ohafia, among others. |
| | | |
| ANAMBRA STATE | Egbe Cham | Dane guns used for hunting and ceremonies in pre-colonial days and most of these are of cast iron and locally made, and powered by gun powder and were used by the Igbo even before recorded history |
| | Aluminium | (production here involves a high level of |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | Pot Molding | artistry and efficiency which is shown by the large number of finished products crafted on daily basis). |
| | Igbo-Ukwu Bronzes | (Igbo-Ukwu an ancient town and renowned cradle of Igbo civilisation is home bronze artefacts dating back to the 9th century A.D which was first discovered in 1938). |
| | Ogba Waterfalls Owerre-Ezukala | (the astonishing part of this attractive waterfall is that the water that falls on the heap of rock below forms a glittering rainbow colour that leaves a tourist gaping in wonder). |
| | Rojenny Tourist Village | , Oba (provides exotic tropical atmosphere for relaxation, picnicking, cultural entertainment and nature conservation). |
| | Agulu Lake | (natural lake with a width of about 7km and it is rich in aquatic life, such as rare species of crocodiles, fish etc.). |
| | Idemili Cultural Centre | (a magnificent building owned by the Chief Priest of Agulu Lake and it presents a beautiful panoramic view of the lake). |
| | Odinani Museum | (core collections here include a wide array of sculptural works, paintings, carvings, pottery, traditional costumes, ancient war equipment and metal works). |
| | Ikenga Virgin Forest | (the only known virgin forest in Nigeria as the thick forest reserve, composed of tall evergreens, climbers and thick shrubs recognised to be the home of many species of animals that have gone extinct in other regions of the country) |
| | Butu Lake, Omogho | . (provides water for irrigation of nearby rice and vegetable farmsteads during the hot/dry season). |
| | Okpu Ana Natural Spring, Ukpor | (forms a stream at the bottom, which has a beautiful bet of white clay, presenting an exclusively surreal atmosphere). |
| | Obu Ofo-Nri Museum | (has a wide range of collections of works of arts with other crafts hips and galleries in Nri where tourist can easily purchase various works of arts on display). |

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| | Agulu/Nanka Erosion Site | (gully of about 200metres deep and extensive site covering several square kilometres). |
| | The River Niger Bridge | (is the gateway between the east and western Nigeria, spanning across River Niger). |
| | National Museum Igbo-Ukwu | |
| | Onitsha Main Market | (acclaimed to be the largest market in West Africa |
| | the trinity tree | at Enugu Otu Aguleri |
| | OTHERS | Ogbunike cave, Nri museum, Owerre-Ezukala cave , Ufuma waterfalls,, Ajalli Cave, Obutu Lake, Ndi Kelionwo (Orumba North LGA),, Iyiocha/Amaekpala Lake (Aguata LGA), Ezu Nwobinagu Lake, Nawfia, Otuocha Sand Beach. |
| EBONYI STATE | Amanchore Cave | (its height is about 3m with multiple narrow tunnels, which extend to different directions). |
| | Unwana and Ndibe Sand Beaches | (found in Afikpo North LGA, the two beaches are part of widespread scenic golden sand beaches along Cross River basin and are ideal centres for relaxation, sunbathing, swimming, sport fishing, canoe-racing, and yachting) |
| | Abakaliki Golf Course | (has a modern golfing terrain with its undulating knolls). |
| | Fati Abubakar Park | (beautifully built in the traditional culture of Ebonyi State, the park offers a place for amusement and relaxation for children and adults). |
| | Abakaliki Green Lake | (served as a leisure and relaxation centre for the colonial masters). |
| | Ogbody Conical Mound | (served as a pre-colonial defence and military observation post). |
| | Slave Market Route | , Ezza (market route was where slaves were traded before being moved to places for trade during the slave and intertribal war years). |
| | Salt Lake Mmahi | |
| | | |

| | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---|
| ENUGU STATE | Nike Lake Resort , Enugu | (an ideal spot for relaxation, picnicking, weddings, private parties and banquets). |
| | Iheneke Lake | (a tropical lake with maximum density during the warmest season, and is a comfortable for rest and relaxation). |
| | Opi Lake Complex | (is a conglomerate of eight natural lakes within a community in an intricate arrangement beautified by the surrounding wooded environment and breathtaking landscape inhabited by crocodiles). |
| | Silicon Hill | (which is more than 300m above sea level and almost half a kilometer long has strong "silica" deposit which an important raw material for the manufacture of glasses |
| | Awhum Waterfall | . (The waterfall is as a result of massive outcrop of granite rock with water cascading over the top forming a stream) |
| | Milken Hills | (about 100m above sea level, offering beautiful standpoint for a panoramic view of Enugu metropolis, especially at dawn and dusk). |
| | Enugu Museum | (houses artefacts dating back from the Stone Age to post-colonial era). |
| | Ogelube Lake | (a tropical oligotrophic lake having a desmid dominated phytoplankton with maximum density during the warmest season). |
| | Polo Amusement Park | (now converted to a huge shopping mall, 'Shoprite', is ideal place for people wanting to shop and relax after a busy day on a visit to Enugu). |
| | OTHERS | Africa Princess Resort, Ezeagu Tourist Complex, Ugwueme/Udi Hills, Ani Ozalla Lake. Macdavos Resort, Eastern region parliamentary building, The old government lodge, Enugu golf course, Enugu zoological garden, Bona Gallery, Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) sculptural garden and art gallery, The University of Nigeria, Onuiyi Haven, Ngwo Palm Forest, Iva Valley Coal Mine Museum, Nike Lake |
| | | |

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| IMO STATE | Oguta Lake, Oguta | (Oguta Lake is the largest natural lake in Imo State and is believed to have originated from a natural depression). |
| | Imo Wonderlake Resort | Oguta (second largest freshwater lake in Nigeria and it is surrounded with evergreen environs of the poetic beauty). |
| | Amadioha Shrine | (mysterious shrine with many more mysterious destinations). |
| | Abadaba Lake Resort | (has a fresh and muddy colour water body which is festooned with a luxuriant raffia palm and bamboo trees adding to its aestheticism). |
| | Nekede Zoo | (a biological garden complex that has stock of diverse animals stretching from Lions, Pythons, Monkey, Ostrich, Cattle Egret, Guerrilla, and different birds). |
| | Ngwu Spring Natural Water | (a sparkling natural water, pure and crystal-like formed by the cascading spring water with a mysterious character of high volume in dry season). |
| | Ada Palm Plantation Complex | (established in 1974, remains the biggest and most productive oil palm plantation in West Africa) |
| | Asumpta Cathedral | (is acclaimed to be the biggest Catholic Church in West Africa, built in Italian architectural design) |
| | Mbari Cultural & Art Centre | , Owerri (an open air museum that houses enormous arts that portrays peace, prosperity and social life in Igbo land). |
| | Eze Silver Ibenyi Ugbala II Palace | , Orlu (a traditional court palace with its mysteries, historical and archeological discoveries which serves as a custodian of Igbo culture and traditions). |
| | Palm Beach Holiday Resort | Awo-Omama (is a beach that is concomitant with palm trees and gorgeous environment for relaxation). |
| | | Rolling Hills, Okigwe, The Sources of Urashi River, Iyi Ogidi Spring, iyi Okwu Spring, Edemili Lake, Amusement Park, Owerri |

Source: Composed with information from *Your Local Guide to the South East Region of Nigeria* (<https://www.mydestinationnigeria.com/regionalinfo/south-east-region>)

The lack of imagination and innovation by government officials is the reason things like the Aba shoe industry cluster is not mentioned as a tourist attraction. Similarly, for Anambra State in particular, the Onitsha market support base for Nollywood film production and marketing should be of tourism interest.

Commentary on the Tourism Assets

- i. The purpose of the contents of table 1 is to show that there are actually so much the South East can offer. But that is even a tip of the ice berg because they are the older, more popular attractions. Many newer ones are being identified continuously.
- ii. Many of these assets have over the years remained as potentials, with limited effort to be preserved, documented, developed and sold to the outside world as a way of promoting tourism. They have mostly remained either undeveloped or, if developed, soon fall back into disuse after episodes of poor refurbishment and maintenance. Whatever is invested goes to waste because they cannot attract adequate patronage, assets are poorly maintained, require refurbishing sooner than later, and government managers are not capable on this score.
- iii. There is a preponderance of natural phenomena among the tourist attractions. Designation of newer heritage sites is lacking except, perhaps in Anambra State, with a recent sweeping recognition and proposed development of several iconic sites.
- iv. Running through most of the states in the zone, except perhaps Anambra, is the limited recognition of the abodes of Iconic personages, living or dead. Even in Anambra, we do not see much well packaged information location marketing strategy about personages like Nnamdi Azikiwe, whose existing statues remain mostly tattered; Rev. Fr. Iwene Tansi, Power Mike (World Heavy Weight Wrestling Champion); Chinua Achebe; Stephen Osita Osadebe etc., which can be packaged even for local visitors not to talk of potential outside visitors.
- v. The teeming cultural festivals calendar is not packaged properly and included.
- vi. Aspects of the more modern and contemporary synthetic assets associated with things like commerce (eg. Innosson Motors, the first Nigerian indigenous car factory); the Onitsha innovation hub for Nollywood, the Nnewi reverse engineering technology and improvisation cluster, the Aba leather goods and clothes cluster and others have not been packaged.
- vii. In terms of ownership structure and spread of investment in tourism, it is only now that public private partnership platforms are beginning to be exploited for tourism development especially in the development of resorts such as Agulu Lake, etc which was marked for development at the same time that Nike Lake Resort was planned many years ago. For

- most tourism assets in the zone, ownership structure is a disincentive to efficiency.
- viii. Tourism assets value proposition have been supply side oriented with imperfect products that are not even tourism-readied enough.
 - ix. There is no sustained profitable management of tourism assets.
 - x. There is low level of investment in cultural assets.
 - xi. There is very little marketing of the products, probably because government officials do not even understand or believe in the products.

Novel Tourism Promotion/Development Efforts in the South East

An examination of South East state governments' tourism development/promotion policies and projects, reveals that while they are generally in order, there is a certain concentration on the improvement of 'islands' of potential leisure that are not complemented with initiatives to position the support structures: the people, the environment, the ethics, the attitudes, and the maintenance culture. Concerted innovative marketing of the destinations and artifacts may help. The typical Nigerian would like to visit a place if there is sufficient incentive, possibly as direct economic benefit. Natural sites must have associated activities that would arrest the interest of Nigerians. Most Nigerians are not culturally attuned, or heeled enough or have the orientation to 'waste' precious time visiting natural sites just to look/see. A very serious problem is that government officials in charge of tourism promotion are often ignorant of what it takes to drive the industry. Some states' tourism development board websites carry representations that are so simplistic, bare and unappealing that they cannot present a window to excite any potential visitor. There are either no or poor choice of flagship representations of the states. For instance, when you put the picture of a smallish art work or sculpture in a small poorly maintained roundabout as 'symbol' of a state, you put a dramatic end to nostalgia when a visitor eventually views the uninspiring site. However, we are encouraged that beyond the staid, age-old talk about developing the tourism potentials of the zone, we are beginning to witness efforts by the governments in a number of positive novel initiatives/incentive schemes in tourism development. There has certainly been a little perception and policy shift in the zone which have heralded new concept tourism assets and products including:

- i. Increasing recognition of the need to celebrate and build monuments for the zone's great personages (Okpara, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chinua Achebe, Power Mike, etc), whose exploits have had defining imprint in modern Nigerian history. Their homes and final resting places should be veritable tourist attractions. Sadly, the neglect of the Nsukka home of Zik of Africa, which should be a tourist attraction, together with the road leading to it, which has been cut off by erosion for more than three years now, call to question the extent the Federal and Enugu State

Governments, for instance, understand the power of such endowment for development and image making.

- ii. There are intentions to erect memorials on great historical events (Atuchukwu House in Amichi, Nnewi South LGA of Anambra State, where the terms of the Civil war cease fire were agreed and signed; (see Onurah, 2015) Oye Agu Abagana as the famous Abagana Sector during the Nigerian Civil war, etc). Oye Agu Abagana is being designated, developed and marketed as one of South East historical/heritage symbols of its anthroposocial evolution. Designation of Oye Agu as a tourism site, called *Abagana sector*, draws strength from its popularity during the Nigerian civil war. Other interesting moves include the building of a house to immortalise where Ata of Igala took off to other parts of the country, and the construction of a monument where the first Igbo man took off from. Both are in Enugu Otu Aguleri. in Anambra State; New investments in modern state of the art global brands such as SabMiller and Shoprite of South Africa, and the Agulu Lake Resort Hotel, etc.. SabMiller, the South African brewery giant is building the second to the largest of their plants in Onitsha, Anambra State. Both developments are applying the PPP framework
- iv. Development of game reserve/open zoo at Itakwu, Enugu State
- vi. Designation of 9th Mile Corner in Enugu State as a free trade zone.
- vii. Recognition and promotion of new cultural festivals such as Aghalieaku festival at Ozubulu in Anambra State.
- viii. Developing an increasing and fascinating array of asphalted roads crisis-crossing the length and breadth of the South East States. The enhanced intra-accessibility of the states, so to speak, has the effect of unveiling their geo-physical, historical, and socio-cultural attractions for exploration.
- ix. Rejigging of folk ceremonies and traditional institutions (eg the Ofala festival, the mmanwu festival, new yam festival, Odunke in Igbo-Ukwu, and Aghalieaku in Ozubulu. These embodiments of the people's heritage are significant for their theatre, colour, music, dance and social commentary.
- x. Hyping the exhibition value of Natural disaster sites (eg Anambra's multiple erosion sites) are guaranteed to attract local and international attention.
- xi. Rehabilitation and concessioning of abandoned industries like Golden Guinea Breweries, Umuahia, etc.
- xii. Some states (eg Abia) are developing the tourist attractions as MDG projects. This is very interesting as it shows their awareness of the quick benefits tourism can bring.

Undoubtedly, the successful execution of the above-mentioned and similar projects will be of immense benefit to the South East states and their populace.

In spite of these interesting signs of growth, however, caution is still in order as resources invested in these novel assets may go the way of the older ones, if the attitudes of government officials and the people to tourism generally remain unchanged. A broad-based initiative weaved around education, participation, incentives and profit is one of the most important elements that can ensure the sustainability and expansion of these new initiatives.

What to Do?

Simple! Clean out the environment, make the services work, change attitudes, and improve security. Just imagine what you would normally do when you expect visitors in your house, perhaps because a wedding, funeral or other public event is about to be done. So, idiomatically speaking, let us clean our toilets, kitchens, wash the linens, kill the bedbugs, trim the grass around the house, fill up the potholes, provide water, ensure that the electric generator is serviced and ready, and that the house help puts on a clean dress. In a sense, these examples point to some of the kind of things we need to do to brand our communities, cities, states and region, and we can be said to be tourism ready. We point out here that the approach to investment generation, business development and retention that the South East should pursue should be an inward looking one, anchored primarily on tourism readiness activities, together with procedures/practices to enthrone performance excellence in all that we do. This idea is expanded in the next section.

The Concepts of Tourism and Tourism Readiness the South East Should Embrace

Our central thesis in this paper is that investment growth and retention in the South East, or indeed any other sub-national jurisdiction should be tourism-led in view of the empirical evidence (revised in section 4) of the superiority of tourism as producer of broad-based prosperity and development. We outline here the concepts of tourism readiness which should be promoted for this purpose. Tourism readiness (or Market readiness) refers to having the products and experiences you offer to your target customer groups ready to go to market in a fashion that will lead to customer satisfaction, and make you some money in the process. It entails displaying reasonable excellence in the provision of municipal/community services; the display of behavior patterns and popular culture which demand respect for value, customs and decency of language; a high sense of hospitality, enthusiasm, affection and loving spirit. By way of further explication of the concept, we should:

- i. see tourism as being about the marketing of the enjoyable and other features of a place or travel destination, and the provision of facilities and services for the pleasure of travelers (tourists). It spurns activities in a wide range of service industries including transportation services (airlines, taxi cabs and commercial motorcycle ('okada') services; hospitality services (accommodations, including hotels and resorts); and

- entertainment venues (such as amusement parks, casinos, shopping malls and markets); music (cultural events) venues, and theatres;
- ii. not view tourism as an idea that is associated with hotels and out-bound enjoyment alone. The perception of 'place' in tourism should not convey the impression of a far flung destination only. Nor should it be seen in terms of just specific places, natural resources (eg Ogbunike cave) only. Our youth and visitors these days are becoming more discerning, knowledgeable and tech-savvy, and this is changing the ways that our communities/destinations must relate to them. We need to effectively and consistently deliver the memorable and quality moments that we ourselves and visitors cherish. Those places that plan for and adjust to these changes are more likely to generate the income, jobs and benefits that go with a healthy visitor economy and increase local business prosperity;
 - iii. think of tourism readiness as the management of anything that can catch the fancy of visitors (domestic or foreign), and impress/interest them to such an extent that they want to experience it again. Basically tourism should be about what unique products (artifacts, crafts, food, etc) we have, how clean the environment is, how well planned our communities are, how cultured, courteous and receptive people are to outsiders;
 - iv. have a strong focus first on activities to satisfy the local internal (Nigerian/South East) tourism stream first, which is one of the things that will make our destinations unique and attractive to others;
 - v. recognize that tourists cannot be imprisoned inside our 'tourist attractions'; they travel to get there; they meet people, they use services around, etc and feel the 'pulse' of civilization of the people. We can look at developing, first or along the way, tourism infrastructure (physical and otherwise) that interest local populations, improve our culture, promote local tourism! For instance, someone from Anambra could go to Enugu or Ebonyi to enjoy the hospitality; the functional services, the peace, the business friendliness, etc or go to some where there are fewer clogged, putrid drains, fewer potholes, fewer ramshackles on the streets, the electricity is regular, water flows from the taps, the people are courteous, and not too much in a hurry, and there is relative security; and,
 - vi. understand that ideas about successful tourism promotion must necessarily come from within, not without, and we must consciously brand our states, cities, main streets, communities, neighbourhoods to attract visitors and investment.

What the Managers/Leaders of Various Jurisdictions Should do to Achieve Tourism Readiness

In common with all types of economic development, travel and tourism must proceed in a planned, orderly fashion. Unlike other major industries, tourism is

highly fragmented. A planned approach to tourism product development and marketing is essential if the tourism sector is to realise its full economic potential (Tourism Development International, 2017).

For us (every state, local government area and community) to be tourism ready, we:

- i. need to go through a visioning process and have an overall community vision, economic development plan, towns development plan, infrastructure development plan with link to the larger state strategic plan, and then a Strategic Tourism Master Plan much the same way as we have the National Tourism Development Master Plan (NTDMP). Conducting a community assessment helps to determine viable economic strategies, projects, and entrepreneurial opportunities that exist, based on the assets and the capacities in each community, upon which tourism is to be based, and for determining if it is a good fit for the community. Some community development associations (CDAs) are already engaging in such activities;
- ii. must have a tourism management entity in place (state, local government and community levels);
- iii. must have the necessary infrastructure (facilities and services) needed to host visitors in the community (roads, sewers, water, electricity, etc.) and do you have all the services (police/vigilante, visitor information center, internet, etc.) you need to serve and manage visitors?;
- iv. need local support and endorsement from citizens, government and financial services suppliers?;
- v. need to have the entrepreneurship spirit among the population;
- vi. should provide the security and human resource needs of visitors and have the capacity to manage associated social problems;
- vii. should have a large enough trained work force or volunteers needed to support tourism businesses and services?;
- viii. regular event for public enlightenment on the strategic tourism development plan of the community to show how everybody gains, among other issues; and,
- ix. should be able to deal with the effects of tourism on the environmental and social components of the community

It has to be made clear that all of the above terms, processes and arrangements do not discriminate scale, thus even a local community can go through pretty the same processes and institute similar organs, not necessarily state of the art or of best practice standard. But as soon as these organs are established, and if there is commitment to improving community tourism product development and marketing and visitor experiences, the quality of these organs and processes is bound to gradually improve. Indeed, as noted above, some Community Development Associations already have a modicum of such structures and processes but not directed specifically towards tourism.

Actionable Proposal: The South East Nigeria Regional Competitiveness and Competitions Strategy (SENRCCS)

This paper proposes that investment growth could be achieved in the South East by being tourism ready, and that this tourism readiness can be achieved by enthroning a properly coordinated Regional Competitiveness and Competitions Strategy. A regional (state, local government or community) strategy is a powerful lever for speeding up the process of economic upgrading and promotion of interest and investment in any region by the locals and outsiders as well. The competitiveness and prosperity of the entire South East, and its economic growth can be enhanced by coordinating tourism readiness policy and competitions among the states, local governments and communities within the zone. The SENRCC South East regional tourism readiness competitions strategy will create gains not only from internal trade and investment but also from policy coordination to create mutual benefits for productivity in all the states and communities through specialization.

Some Theoretical and Hypothetical Underpinnings of the Competitions Promotion Strategy

As mentioned elsewhere, our prescriptions here are as much about tourism readiness in particular as they are about the enthronement of organized/managed competitions in all aspects of South East endeavors as a tool for rapid socioeconomic development and growth. 'Competition', the process of rivalry between entities, is central to the operation of markets, and fosters innovation, productivity and growth, all of which create wealth and reduce poverty. Here we are not necessarily talking about a 'competition policy' as generally used in economics. Both theoretical and empirical research in recent years have emphasized the productive and dynamic efficiency gains from competition (Oxford Economics, 2011). Competition gives entities continuing incentives to make their activities, production and distribution more efficient; to adopt better technology, and to innovate. Any contrived competition activity or policy is therefore a pro-innovation initiative (Harvard Business Review, 2009). These sources of productivity improvement lead to growth and poverty reduction. Innovation is strongly influenced by competition.

According to the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Harvard Business School, USA (2009), the microeconomic foundations of economic development are embodied in the factor conditions, demand conditions, context for firm strategy and rivalry, and related/supporting institutions. Innovative capacity in a nation or region is heavily rooted in its microeconomic environment, in areas such as the intensity of scientists and engineers in the workforce, the degree of protection of intellectual property, the degree of participation in economic activities, and the depth of clusters. Microeconomics, more than macroeconomic structures, is arguably the more potent broad-based potent mobilizer of resources. A nation's, region's or community's prosperity depends on its competitiveness. For a nation, competitiveness goes beyond sound macroeconomic policies and stable political and legal institutions. While these are necessary, they are not sufficient conditions to ensure prosperity. Prosperity is rooted more in a nation's microeconomic fundamentals—the quality of the microeconomic/local business environment in which economic entities compete. States and cities need economic strategies (etched in the quantity and quality of specialized skills, infrastructure, and technology), not just nations. South East Nigeria could be viewed as a distressed inner city within Nigeria. Revitalizing the economically distressed South East and its communities cannot be defined only in social terms and social programs, nor on heavy subsidies and on distortion or blunting of market forces. Economic development there must be approached from the competitiveness perspective, that fishes out business opportunities that are genuinely profitable, around which private sector (or PPP) entities are motivated and guided to compete.

In order to tap into the above theoretical potential, as reflected earlier, each region (community) needs a distinctive strategy that reflects its unique strengths, its particular mix of clusters, and which integrates its economy with the closest prosperity (mostly urban) centers. A regional strategy is a powerful lever for speeding up the process of economic upgrading, and promotion of interest and investment in the South East by the locals and the international community. The competitiveness, growth and prosperity of the entire South East can be enhanced by coordinating tourism readiness policy and competitions among communities within the zone. The South East regional tourism readiness competitions strategy which is envisioned here will generate gains not only from internal trade and investment but also from policy coordination to create mutual benefits to productivity in all the states and communities through specialization.

The Tourism Readiness Competitions

Before concluding on our proposal, we present in Table 2, a summary of the remedies to key observed constraints to tourism assets development and marketing in South East Nigeria (see sections 5,7, and 8).

Table 2: Major Constraints to Tourism in South East Nigeria.

| Problems/issues/Symptoms | Causes | Prescriptions |
|--|---|--|
| Poor perception about tourism and its assets | South Easterners' poor attitude to leisure/relaxation. Misconception that tourist sites need to be natural endowments only (caves, waterfalls, lakes, etc). | Use education and expand perception to appreciate cultural/historical, artificial, and human iconic assets Weave profitable events around those icons |
| Low level of investment in cultural assets. | Government neglect (Federal and State). Community ownership responsibilities not activated. Poor perception of potential monetary returns. | Use PPP and local community participation |
| Whatever is invested tends to go to waste | Because you cannot attract adequate patronage, assets are poorly maintained, require refurbishing sooner than later, government managers not capable. | Use PPP Involve local community |
| Low level marketing | Government officials do not believe in the assets and visitor experience being marketed. Community does not have a stake. | Use PPP Involve local community |
| Unsustainable, non-profitable management of tourism assets | Low patronage. South Easterners go elsewhere. Sites are not presentable and secure, cannot meet acceptable norms of hygiene, serenity, security and. | Use PPP Involve community Start small with innovative local initiatives |

With the proposed tourism competitions, which will enthrone community participation, most of the problems identified in Table 1 will be solved, leading to a more vibrant tourism sector. First of all, with the tourism readiness competitions, increasing the flow of domestic tourism will be a short to medium term reality, while the multiplier there from should generate investments and foreign tourist interests in the medium to long term.

Some Fundamental Realities/Principles That Underpin and Recommend the Tourism Readiness Competitions

Competitions, as mentioned earlier, are fundamental in human interactions but need to be managed with incentives and restraining ropes here and there to protect the weak. We shall leave issues of policies to government but go straight to our simple proposition on *Tourism Readiness Competitions*. The principle of eliciting excellence through competitions is common knowledge. The critical thing is to give the competitions credibility and make them 'state-of-the-art' and contemporary (and even futuristic) in conception, execution and hyping. For the South East, a competitions strategy is proposed bearing in mind the following:

- i. the fabled entrepreneurial and competitive spirit that South Easterners unarguably possess, if managed, controlled and channeled properly can yield surprisingly positive results;
- ii. tourism readiness for investment creation must start with self-focus and the targeting of domestic interests. When Nollywood started, the pioneering directors, promoters and actors did not aim to please any foreigner. They built a brand anchored on local realities, a niche and uniqueness that attracted first the interest/curiosity of locals and then outsiders;
- iii. bottom-up development (readiness) should compliment approaches that rely on a few heavy 'elitist' investments with often unrealized promise of trickle down, some even with 'trickle-destroy' effects;
- iv. South Easterners are rational and appreciate excellence, goodness and the good life, and will spend resources to obtain them. They are waiting for who will bell the cat. They can safeguard and be proud of their heritage, if it is presented in an excellent manner that promotes income generation at the same time;
- v. tourism destination branding for local consumption may be more crucial initially for assisting desired attitudinal change than striving for exotic/foreign value creation and demand satisfaction. The prevailing poor attitude to excellence in all spheres of life in Nigeria is one of the reasons for the failure of tourism assets to generate sustainable visitor numbers, and eventual loss of vitality and profitability;
- vi. while inter-regional (particularly the North-South corridor) travel and tourism movements may be stalling in Nigeria, due to terrorism or other crisis (eg the increasing militancy by Fulani herdsmen) and uncertainty, intra-regional movements within South East can only be expected to increase. Governments and people of the region should take advantage of this reversal by creating institutions and processes to ready their tourism assets (infrastructure, the diversity of terrain, traditions, artefacts, cultural festivals, business clusters, business and environmental laws and regulations.;

- vii. small and medium enterprises will drive the creation of tourism readiness better than big business. Investing in tourism readiness programmes either singly or within the ambit of south East Regional Integration will guarantee quicker improvement in attitudinal change needed to support the retention of the relatively more sophisticated entrepreneurs with very demanding standards of service excellence, civilized and ethically sound public conduct; and,
- viii. key issues to compete on will include environmental sanitation, service excellence, level of pollution, control of environmental degradation, cultural civilization, noise pollution, ease of doing business (with so many indices encapsulated).

Indicative Process, Plans and Span

- i. Set up a Regional Tourism Readiness Competitions Committee with representations from all the states in the region to work out a joint policy-framework and a mutually-supportive tourism roadmap that has the capacity to make the region a choice tourism destination. Such committees should also be replicated at state, LGA, and community levels.
- ii. Commission a study to collate what and how communities, individuals and corporate/faith-based organizations are doing in terms of tourism readiness as defined here. The study should propose strategies to harmonise, expand, learn lessons from the findings.
- iii. Extract commitment from governments, communities and individuals and make them sign unto and begin concrete action on tourism readiness activities.
- iv. States would sign on to participation in an annual competition on tourism readiness, LGAs sign on to half yearly competitions, and communities sign on to quarterly competitions.
- v. Take concrete action to have relevant stakeholders design a framework or frameworks to be adopted and applied by states and communities across the South East to enhance their tourism readiness. Such frameworks should: recognize the need for a dual track approach: recognizing the strengths and support that governments can bring and those in which private entities can do better, and pursue both;
- vi. The competitions management committee should have representatives from the constituent localities at all various levels but in the spirit of PPP, a private consulting firm(s) should oversee the implementation of committee decisions.
- vii. Implement competitions among the component states and communities in the zone and build in a peer review mechanism for assessment of performance as well as manage rewards/prizes for excellence in tourism readiness among them.

- viii. help each community to grow a tourism development fund for sustained pursuit of tourism readiness goals.
- ix. each community to develop a tourism business plan of action by itself and not wait for outsiders to do so for it. This plan will include issues on enterprise promotion, youth/women empowerment and skill development for production of unique products (souvenirs, articles and mementos, etc); If you go to Igbo-Ukwu, for example, the environment, atmosphere and interior of the National Museum there is always so deplorable and uninviting. In the spirit of our proposal, why can't the community develop and present its own, alone or in partnership with government, museum/cultural artifact exhibitions, that are well managed, presented and marketed.
- x. build in attitude change campaigns because we realize that 'attitude is everything', but jingle-based campaigns may not succeed as much as directly observable demonstrations of success.
- xi. Very exhaustive, clear and widely agreed criteria and procedures for assessment and judgment to guide scoring/behavior and decisions about winning/losing.
- xii. Serious prizes should be established (including such things as training of selected indigenes of the winning town/LGA/State in specific skills (eg. hospitality management, etc).
- xiii. Prize giving during December, August or other time but make the process itself a tourist event, with the location of the event finales rotated among the participating entities.
- xiv. The framework for economic cooperation through tourism must be based on rules agreed to by all participating states. The rules of the competition will mandate openness and peer review of every member state in terms of minimum expectations on the management of travel and tourism and prescribe fines and penalties for non-compliant states
- xv. Funding and assistance, we are sure can come from a variety of sources, apart from subscriptions by participating entities. Some multilateral agencies like the UN World Tourism Organisation, United Nations Development Programme, and many others, if approached with a proposal will surely help.
- xvi. Run a pilot first.

Who Should Implement this Plan?

With what has been outlined in section 12.4, the question of who should implement the plan might sound rhetorical, as many of them have been mentioned there. However, we need some emphasis here because to implement the plan, a number of critical resource/knowledge areas must be covered, including the political will, technocratic/bureaucratic competences, financing, research capability, advocacy, grassroots education and mobilisation.

Without doubt, governments of the South East, by virtue of their coercive and financial muscles, can be expected to lead this experiment, most fittingly within the ambit of a South East Nigeria regional integration initiative. However, this call is not necessarily on governments alone. A multilayer, multilevel engagement with the plan is most desirable, whereby we can expect bodies like Ohanaeze Ndigbo, South East Nigeria Economic Commission (SENEC), Aka Ikenga, Ndigbo Lagos, World Igbo Congress, Ifeanyi Ubah Foundation, Obinna Uzor Foundation, Association of South East Town Unions, community development associations or town unions, and the numerous cultural, political, market, religious, kinship, and other interest groups to singly or collaboratively support and weigh in on aspects of the planning and implementation at all levels, and to the extents they may be interested, provided a broad-based consultation and buy-in is achieved by the promoters. One interesting fact is that, like the competition that ensued when Community banking debuted in 1990, with every community striving not to be left out, we can expect a high level of commitment and participation in this process from community-level stakeholders.

It is also possible for non-government entities to champion economic integration in the South East, in which case bodies like SENEK, acting in concert with other interested ones, could, to whatever extent resources at their disposal, their articles of engagement could avail them, engage in various kinds and levels of integration activities that by-pass government. In other words, while we understandably keep calling on governments of the zone to make policies and take action to integrate, it is possible to carry on without them. With careful planning, it is possible for promoters of such integration to receive some benefits (or even make profit) while doing so. Donors could put in small funds to support planning, and experimentation along these lines.

The awareness, participation and involvement of the communities and citizens of the zones is more important than the cooperation of their state governments in the sustenance of non-state directed integration activities.

Conclusions

We have tried in this paper to provide a partial answer to the question that was posed in the 2013 South East Economic Summit Group Concept Paper, "do we have what it takes to open our doors and embrace the world?" Put more succinctly, how ready is the South East on all the indices of competitiveness, as a destination for investment of all scales, to attract and retain such investment by indigenes of the zone and outsiders alike? We have argued that tourism is an important driver of trade and investments, with multiplier effects that are much higher than those of traditional industries all over the world. South East Nigeria has a plethora of tourism assets that have either not been discovered, or well managed, presented and marketed over the years. The zone needs to be tourism

ready in order to nurture, attract, and retain investments. Tourism readiness actions encourage us to develop the tourism assets of states and communities first for local consumption before focusing on external visitors. Every community shall be encouraged to prepare and market its endowment. All kinds of small community things should be promoted: heritage endowments, traditional medical capabilities (eg bone setting, rehabilitation of mental cases, etc), unique natural resources and so on.

While there is strong merit in the pursuit of macro-level investments in the area of infrastructure, power, water, transportation and others, perhaps a stronger case can be made for the power of micro-level investments to exercise a broad-based pull for economic growth and development. A competitiveness and competitions policy is advocated in this paper, not just for application to a tourism-led investments growth strategy, but as a tool for use in other spheres of development activity, and particularly as one of the key strategic options that should be pursued under the much needed regional integration of the South East zone. This strategy is recommended particularly by the widely acclaimed competitive spirit of the people of the South East. The competitions strategy, when applied to tourism, or indeed any other area of endeavor, can dramatically turn the fortunes of the zone and help tackle the evil triad of poverty, youth unemployment, and insecurity. If properly and successfully implemented, the tourism readiness competitions will mark the beginning of practical economic cooperation among south East States, local governments and communities. The plan will not cost much. It is doable. The possible impact is clear. It however needs be noted that any effort in this regard can only yield the desired result if politics is kept at bay and stakeholders (host communities, private sector, tourism practitioners, the media, skilled manpower, traditional institutions and policy makers) are allowed to co-own the process.

References

- Anim O. Ajake (2015), Assessing the Impacts of Hospitality Industry in Enugu City, Nigeria, *American Journal of Tourism Management*, Vol. 4 No. 3, 2015, pp. 43-53.
- Aniedobe Chris (2011) *The South East Zone and the Nigerian Political Equation: Now and in the Future*. Report of the 2011 South East Economic Summit, September, 2011.
- Ayeni, Dorcas (2012). *Exploring Sustainable Tourism in Nigeria for Developmental Growth*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Department of Architecture, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria.
- Besculides, A., Lee, M. E., & McCormick.(2002). Residents Perceptions of the Cultural Benefits of Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(2), 303-319.
- Basu, P. K. (2003). Is Sustainable Tourism Development Possible? Broad Issues Concerning Australia And Papua Guinea. In R. N. Ghosh, M. A. B.

- Saddique & B. Gabbay (Eds.), *Tourism and Economic Development: Case Study From Indian Region*. Hampshire, England.
- Chockalingam, M., & Ganesh, A. A. (2010). Problems Encountered by Tourists *Business and Economic Horizons*, 3(3), 68-72.
- Peter Draper, (2010) Rethinking the (European) foundations of Sub-Saharan African Regional Economic Integration: A political economy essay, OECD Working Paper No 293, September 2010
- Lanza, A., & Pigliaru, F. (1999). *Why are Tourism Countries Small and Fast Growing?* Retrieved from <http://www.veprint.unica.it/:56/1/99-6.pdf> Accessed on 11/09/2012.
- Newsome, D., Moore, S. A., & Dowling, R. K. (2002). *Natural Area Tourism: Ecology, Impacts and Management*. NY: Channel View Publication.
- NAN (2016) 'Ngige tasks South-East governors on regional integration' News Agency of Nigeria 15 April 2016 10:39 am
- Njoku, Lawrence (2017) 'South East Governors' Forum, Umahi and regional integration'. The Guardian, 09 March 2017.
- Onuora, Chijioke (2015) The Making of History and National Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution Amichi. *Journal of Tourism and Heritage Studies*. Vol. 4. Nos 1&2 September, 2015.
- World Travel and Tourism Council (2012) *Travel and Tourism Economic Impact on Nigeria*, WTTC, 2012.
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Nigerian_states_by_GDP, retrieved 13th October 2013.
- Tugberk Ugurlu (2012) 'Definintion of Tourism (UNWTO Definition of Tourism) / What Is Tourism ?' Retrieved from <http://www.tugberkugurlu.com/archive/definintion-of-tourism-unwto-definition-of-tourism-what-is-tourism> 13/10/13
- Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, Competition and Economic Development Harvard Business School, USA
- Godfrey Nick (2008) Why is competition important for growth and poverty reduction? Global Forum on International Investment, 22-28 March 2008.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2006). *Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan Final Report Institutional Capacity Strengthening to the Tourism Sector in Nigeria*.
- Hodur, N. M., Leistrizt, F. L., & Wolfe, K. L. (2005). Assessing the Economic Development Potential of Nature. *Natural and Social Sciences*, 15(Fall), 279-296.

- World Travel and Tourism Council (2012). *The Comparative Economic Impact of Travel & Tourism*.
- Oxford Economics (2011) "Aviation: The Real World Wide Web."
- Point Blank News (2016) World Most polluted, Dirtiest City Found in Nigeria... Onitsha, Kaduna, Aba Named. Retrieved from <http://pointblanknews.com/pbn/exclusive/world-polluted-dirtiest-city-found-nigeria-onitsha-kaduna-aba-named/> 01/01/17.
- Raymond, Y. C. (2001). Estimating the Impact of Economic Factors on Tourism; Evidence from Hong Kong. *Tourism Economics*, 7(3), 277-293.
- Tourism Development International (2017)
- This Day (Lagos) (2016) *Nigeria: Tourism Master Plan, UNWTO and Lai Mohammed's Aspiration*'11 December.,
- Harvard Business Review Analytic Services for British Airways, (2009), "Managing across distance in today's economic climate: The value of face-to-face communications.
- Vaugeois, N. (2000). *Tourism in Developing Countries: Refining a Useful Tool For Economic Development*. Paper presented at the 6th World Leisure Congress, Bilbao, Spain.
- WTTC. 2011. "Business Travel: A Catalyst for Economic Performance. World Travel & Tourism Council. May 2011.
- Oxford Economics.(2011). "Aviation: The Real World Wide Web."
- World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) (2015) *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2015, Nigeria report*..
- IATA. (2006) "IATA Economics Briefing No 3" International Air Transport Association.