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SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING IN ANAMBRA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

Tourism as we know is one of the economic supports of some nations in this century, such as Jerusalem that harbours religious sites, Dubai that turned its desert country to a world tourist attraction, etc. In an environment with many attraction sites that do not function due to its dilapidated state and lack of maintenance, it is necessary that the government takes advantage of the economic gain of tourism and rearrange these sites, and also for the preservation of these sites for natural sustainability, through making policies that will encourage and support tourism.

Keywords:

tourism, attraction, sustainability, development, awareness.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. It is an increasingly important source of income, employment and wealth in many countries. The sustainable tourism first entered the language of tourism development policy some two decades ago. Reflecting the emergence and subsequent widespread adoption of sustainable development more generally, it was seen as an appropriate response to the challenges posed by the scale, scope and consequences of tourism development in particular. That is, since the mid-1960s, the rapid growth of tourism, particularly international mass tourism, and the inexorable global spread of the so-called „pleasure periphery“ (Turner & Ash, 1975) had been accompanied by increasing calls for restraint in its development. By the early 1990s, the attention paid to both the perceived negative impacts of tourism and to alternative approaches to its development had become re-focused through the specific lens of sustainable tourism and, since then, it has maintained a dominant position in both the academic study of tourism and in tourism policy and planning processes (Ashley, et al, 2001).

The impact of tourism is extremely varied. On one hand, it plays an important and certainly positive role in the socio-economic and political development in destination countries by, for instance, offering new employment opportunities, it may contribute to a broader cultural understanding by creating awareness, respecting the diversity of cultures and ways of life. On the other hand, as a tool to create jobs, it has not fulfilled its expectations. At the same time, complaints from tourist destinations

concerning massive negative impacts upon environment, culture and residents“ ways of life have given rise to a demand for a more sustainable development in tourism. Different parties will have to be involved in the process of developing sustainable tourism (UNCSD NGO,1999).

The notion of sustainable development has expanded to cover all forms of development and economic activities including tourism. The interpretation of the concept of sustainable development in tourism remains vague and a number of different approaches have been proposed in an effort to define what constitutes sustainable development in tourism and what not. Coccossis (1996), recognizes four different interpretations of sustainable tourism. These four perspectives are the “economic sustainability of tourism”, the “ecologically sustainable tourism”, “sustainable tourism development” where although the need for environmental quality is apparent; the focus is on the long-term viability of the industry- and “tourism as a part of a strategy for sustainable development”.

Nigeria is endowed with abundant natural and cultural resources which are located all over the states especially Anambra state. The nation’s tourism potentials which are lying in situ and or wasting in their natural states, if harnessed can produce a distinctive.



Plate 1.0 Ogba-Ukwu Cave and waterfalls Owerre Ezukala, Anambra state.

Source: <http://www.glimpse.ng/tourists-centres-in-anambra-state> Date: 10th July, 2020.

Anambra state as a tourist centre is fast developing in its tourism industry. Tourists cannot resist the tempting leisure of some of the magnificent hotel structures dispersed all over the town for relaxation and enjoyment purposes of the scenic beauty of the town. In other words, tourism development in Anambra state is channelled majorly towards accommodation and amenities which comprises the construction of hotels and infrastructural development not limited to accessible roads, electricity, constant water supply etc. Unfortunately, no effort is made to harness the unique resources of the town especially, the natives of the land who have turned the beautiful sites of former river path of Obibia Ngene in Umubele and Umuike villages respectively into refuse dump which could serve as a good tourist site

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

A high level of environmental quality is also very important for the local residents to

enjoy. Tourism can help make residents more aware of the quality of their environment and support its maintenance and, where necessary, improvement. Natural resource depletion and environmental degradation associated with tourism activities are sometimes serious problems in tourism-rich regions.

Neto (2002), stated that with increasing urbanization, destinations in both industrialized and developing countries with significant natural features, scenery, cultural heritage or biodiversity are becoming increasingly popular sites for tourist destinations. Efforts to preserve, enhance the natural environments and the scale of tourism grows; the resource use threatens to become unsustainable.

1.2 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim is to understand the exploration, challenges and proper strategies of integrating tourism development as a means

of achieving sustainable environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources in Anambra state.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

- a. To examine and review the relationship between environmental sustainability and tourism architecture.
- b. To establish the underlying risk factor confronting the role of integrated tourism planning and management.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Sustainable tourism is to ensure that development brings a positive experience for local people, tourism companies and the tourists themselves. Tourism planning can be seen to reflect the need for a comprehensive analysis and management of sustainable tourism both as business and experience. Tourism is actually one part of the effort to achieve overall sustainable development.

1.5 STUDY AREA

Anambra is a state in south-eastern Nigeria. Its name is an anglicized version of the original ‘Oma Mbala’, the native name of the Anambra River. The capital and seat of government is Awka. Onitsha is by far the largest urban area. The state’s theme is “Light of the nation. Anambra state is blessed with lots of undeveloped tourist sites which can generate huge revenue for the state if developed

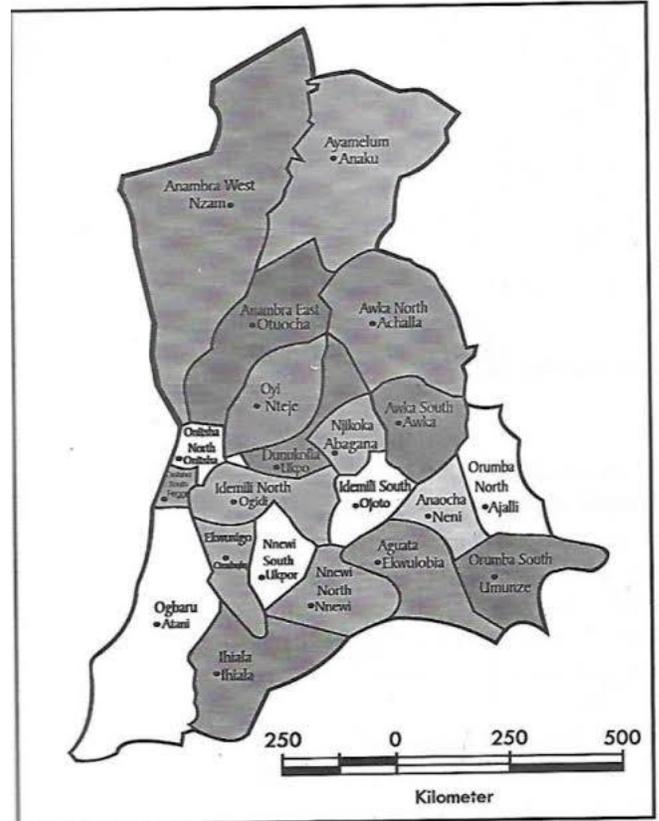


Fig 2.0 Map of Anambra state showing the Local Government

Source: Universal Journal of Educational Research 8 (2): 638-651, 2020

1.6 METHODOLOGY

Research Strategy

It is of great importance to define research from start to finish. As indicated by Denzin and Lincoln 2000a:371, research strategy therefore connects the researcher to accurate and specific methods and approaches for collecting and analysing data. Data Sources and Sampling Techniques Both primary and secondary sources of data would be used for the project. Data Collection would be done through interviews and questionnaire administration.

Sampling Design; The sampling design to be used, will be the combination of stratified

random, simple random and purposive sampling methods. Purposive sampling method would be adopted for conducting and administering the interviews and questionnaires respectively.

Research Approach

In order to conduct a thorough research, the aims and objectives would be addressed by adopting the appropriate epistemological and ontological approach to help in the collection of the required data followed by the analysis and interpretation of the findings. Due to the nature of the research, there would be a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodological approach. Blaikie (2003) stated that data obtained quantitatively commonly begin in words which are converted into numeric data, subjected into different levels of statistical manipulation and are described back in both numbers and words that is from words to numbers and back to words.

An overview of the various methods that would be adopted to realize the aim of the research are as follows:

Objective 1

(To examine and review the relationship between environmental sustainability and tourism).

Examining and review of extensive literature from academic journals, articles, newsletter, and textbooks, examine case studies and informal discussions with notable building experts to establish a relationship between environmental sustainability and tourism.

Objective 2

(To establish the underlying risk factor confronting the role of integrated tourism planning and management.)

Qualitative and quantitative approach will be used to gather information from the built environment to ascertain the risk factors in

adopting an integrated tourism planning for environmental sustainability.

1.7 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The quality of the environment both natural and man-made is essential to tourism but due to the negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy the environment resources on which it depends and put pressure on the area leading to impacts such as soil erosion, increased pollution, discharges into sea, natural habitat loss etal. Creating awareness of environmental value and sustainability can contribute to environmental protection of natural area and conservation of resources thereby increase economic importance.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Necessary information should be made available to tourists to enable them understand the environmental impact of tourism and related aspects (e.g., human rights situation), their responsibilities towards host communities and respecting the cultural and natural heritage of destination areas.
- Create sustainable transport strategies that encourage walking, and cycling to destinations close by to curb emissions on CO₂ to the atmosphere.
- Reduce unnecessary importation thereby promoting the use of resources within the locale.
- Promote reuse and recycling of waste by creating proper waste disposal collector at strategic points.
- Employ tour guards to understand his/her responsibility towards environmental sustainability and encourage multi-cultural education and exchange.

Sustainable tourism should make optimal use of environmental resources which are key to tourism development, thereby maintaining ecological processes and helping conserving natural heritage and diversity, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of the local community, in order to preserve its cultural heritage and traditional values and to contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance; and ensure viable, long-term economic operations, in order to provide socio-economic benefits and their fair distribution to all stakeholders, including employment and income opportunities as well as social services to the local community Frank (2006).

Williams and Shaw (1991), proposed a four-strategy approach which are;

1. Consumer awareness and education: Although the average consumer has been sensitised to environmental issues, such as global warming, depletion of ozone layer, more needs to be done to develop an awareness of tourists' responsibility to preserve and enhance environmental quality of the destination. It is essential to promote ethical standards concerning the use of natural and cultural resources and to assist consumers in choosing tour operators who follow conservation guidelines.
2. Tourism industry action: The private sector is responsible for delivering the products and services to tourists and therefore, they should take the responsibility for the protection of biosphere by minimising pollution, which causes environmental damage. The industry should also work together to develop guidelines for resort developments and concession operations which utilise low-impact design criteria and the latest

technologies for recycling and conserving resources.

3. Destination planning and development: Government and non-government organisations need to share responsibilities for ecotourism development. Listed below are some of the responsibilities that should be assigned to the government and non-government organisations.
 - Governments: Undertake research into the environmental, economic and cultural areas of tourism. Support the development of tourism economic models to help define appropriate levels of economic activities. Assist and support lower levels of government to develop their own tourism development strategies. Apply a sectoral and / or regional environmental accounting system for the tourism industry. Educate the public on issues of sustainable tourism development. Regulate and control tourism in environmentally and culturally sensitive areas.
 - Non-government: Be part of sustainable tourism advisory boards at all levels. Seek local support for appropriate sustainable development. Promote education of the public on the economic importance of sustainable tourism development and environment protection. Be encouraged to identify and communicate to the appropriate agencies those issues related to sustainable development as well as solutions to those problems.
4. An extended concept of marketing ecotourism: Traditional marketing has been described as the four Ps:

Price: assigned to the product or service offered to tourists
Promotion: a range of communication and sales activities are needed to stimulate actual potential customers to become aware

of ecotourism products and buy it.
Place: the distribution system in which the customers buy ecotourism products. This includes for-profit and non-profit organisations. Product: is a mixture of benefits, products and services.

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