

Harnessing Tourism Potentials for Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Akwuke Sand Beach and Adada River, Enugu State

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Abstract— *The tourism industry in Nigeria plays a significant role in the country's socio-economic development. Some tourist destinations in Nigeria, it could be said, lack the basic care needed to thrive and encourage socio-economic growth. However, increasing and promoting the tourist potential for attraction and patronization are suggested strategies to realize the crucial responsibilities of tourism. This article explores the possibilities of AKWUKE SAND BEACH AND ADADA RIVER for the socioeconomic development of the host communities, the state, and the country in general in order to ensure sustainable tourism growth. The paper goes on to discuss the notion of tourism as well as the advantages of tourist potential for host communities, states, and the country as a whole. The potential problems and future prospects were also discussed. As a primary source of data collection, observation and interviews were used to obtain information from the communities, and online journals and books were also consulted as a secondary source of data collection. The findings show that the socioeconomic impact on the communities is less than anticipated. The conclusion reached was that long-term tourism development is visible and feasible if the government can devote a little more attention to it.*

Keywords— *Tourism, Sustainable, Socio-Economic Development, and Potential.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Increased competition in many aspects of life, including the migration of people for leisure purposes, has been a prominent characteristic of the globalizing world. While other regions are more organized and benefiting from the global economy's increased competitiveness, Africa's status in the global market is becoming increasingly ambiguous. On the one hand, Africa's growing marginalization is reflected in its diminishing share of global commerce, overseas development assistance (ODA), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and the loss of its prior comparative advantage in the provision of goods and services and supplies of raw materials. Africa's reliance on the global market and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) is, on the other hand, increasing. This unpredictability in the global economy has had unfavorable implications, such as the stagnation or loss of Africa's economies as a result of market liberalization, while the economies of other areas expand. The need to look within and examine the development processes of African countries is particularly critical at this moment, especially when it comes to the necessity for economic diversification.

Tourism is one segment of the various economies in Africa that is struggling, mostly in Nigeria, despite the fact that its

importance in the twenty-first century cannot be overstated. Tourism has recently emerged as a critical component and the fourth largest industry in the global economy, providing not only economic benefits to individuals, organisations, and governments, but also the potential to bring peace and prosperity to developing countries. Nigeria's diversified tourism opportunities and rich cultural history have yet to be mainstreamed and tapped by the global tourism sector. Nigeria as a country has both natural and material resources that can be used to help the country's economic development by generating revenue and foreign cash. Many countries' socioeconomic progress is influenced by tourism. This is due to the fact that it helps to alleviate the significant political, social, and economic issues that plague rural communities. It also aids in the development of metropolitan areas. Tourism has been identified as a critical tool for poverty reduction, achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and sustainable development. As a result, many developing countries' governments have begun to devote significant financial resources to the sector.

Tourism is a tool for rural and urban development, as well as job creation at all levels of government in both developed and developing countries. Tourism is critical to the prosperity of any local economy, state government, or national government. Tourism is regarded to be one of the world's fastest expanding economic sectors. If given proper attention, it has been estimated to be one of the world's top foreign exchange earners. It has the potential to contribute to environmental preservation if it is planned and implemented in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. Tourism as a potential instrument for spurring economic development while also benefiting the environment and improving local socioeconomic conditions without causing harm to the ecosystem. It's an activity that helps people learn more about different locations, people, and cultures.

Before the arrival of oil in the 1970s, the Nigerian lifestyle and economy were exclusively dependent on agriculture. Tourism is a long-standing economic sector that has been overlooked due to a lack of understanding of its potential. Until recently, when the Nigerian government began to develop it as a method of enhancing the Nigerian people's socioeconomic well-being and diversifying the country's economic basis. The success of Nigeria's tourist business is contingent on its long-term viability. As a result, tourism must adhere to economic,

social, environmental, and ethnic factors in the host regions in order to be sustainable.

There are numerous natural tourism sites and attractions in Nigeria. These places include the Okpoama beach, Agge sand beach in Bayelsa state, the Rivers State tourist beach, Mudi beach in Abraka Delta state, Awhum (ohum) cave in Enugu state, the Ogba Ukwu waterfall and cave in Anambra state, among others. All of these natural sites and attractions, if properly developed, have the potential to boost the Enugu states revenue, also Nigeria's economic development and assure its long-term viability. This study examines the neglect of AKWUKE SAND BEACH and the Adada River in Enugu State, as well as how they can be developed to boost the economy of the host communities, the state and as well as ensuring sustainable tourism in Nigeria.

II. CONCEPT OF TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing industries, and it is a substantial source of foreign cash and jobs for many countries. It's one of the most incredible economic and social events in history. The word "tour" is derived from the Latin word "tornus," which meaning "circle-making procedure. Because of its variety, everyday, and widely accepted expansion, tourism is happily viewed as research in motion. "Tourism" is also described as "the movement of individuals from their usual place of residence to another area (with the aim of returning) for a length of time ranging from twenty-four hours to six months only for the purpose of leisure and enjoyment." A person or a group of people who go to a location outside of their typical environment for less than a year and whose primary aim of travel is not to engage in a compensated activity within the destination is also referred to as tourism. This is the most prevalent interpretation of the phrase used in this article, and it includes both leisure and business travel, but not migrant labour. Day trippers make up a large portion of "newcomer" domestic tourism, according to the WTO definition. Tourism is a socioeconomic phenomenon that describes the behaviours and views of tourists and visitors away from their native environment who are served by the travel and tourism sector and their host place.

The sum of all of these activities, experiences, and services is referred to as a tourism product. The tourist technique can be described using supply and demand. Aiming for a balance between supply and demand should be the goal of tourism planning. This involves a knowledge of both market characteristics and patterns, as well as the planning mechanism utilised to meet market demands. The supply side includes all services, programmes, attractions, and land uses planned and maintained for visitors; the demand side is frequently characterised as tourists from core generating markets. The supply-side can be influenced by private enterprise, non-profit organisations, and the government. New and inventive types of collaborations are emerging to secure the long-term growth and management of tourism-related investments. On the supply and demand side, flows of resources such as money, labour, supplies, and tourist expenditures into the destination, as well as lows in marketing, promotion, tourist artefacts, and experiences from the destination back into the tourist

generating area, can be considered as connected. Furthermore, by repatriation of earnings by international tourism investors and compensation for superior goods and services supplied to guests at the destination, some tourist expenditure can be channeled back into visitor-generating sectors.

Various modes of transportation, tourism-related infrastructure, tourist information, and marketing and promotion are the primary components of the supply side for planning purposes. The political and institutional foundations for supporting tourism are provided by the community of communities within the visitor's destination location. The tourism system is both competitive and complex due to many factors linked with it and the presence of different industries contributing to its success. These elements and sectors are relevant to the tourism industry's supply of a visitor experience, as well as the development of revenue and markets. Because of the competitive nature of the tourism business, it is vital to regularly assess the external and internal surroundings of destinations and make necessary adjustments to sustain a stable and viable sector. As a result, it is now commonly accepted that tourist production cannot be carried out in isolation from the environment and local communities, nor can it be carried out without concern for tourism's social and cultural ramifications.

Types of Tourism

Tourism comes in a variety of forms, depending on the purpose of the visit and other variables. The following are some instances of different tourism types:

- * Recreational or leisure tourism is a type of tourism that allows individuals to get away from the monotony of everyday life. People spend their free time hiking, going to the beach, and other activities in this condition.
- * Cultural tourism: this type of tourism caters to guests' cultural and intellectual interests by allowing them to see ancient monuments, historical or religious places, and so on.
- * Sports/Adventure: This category includes vacations done with the goal of golfing, skiing, or hiking.
- * health: People go to this category for medical treatment or to visit sites that have healing properties, such as hot springs, spa yoga, and so on.
- * Convention tourism: As the travel industry grows, this sort of tourism is becoming increasingly significant. People travel to conferences connected to their profession, vocation, or pastime both domestically and internationally.
- * Incentive Tourism: Large firms reward dealers and salespeople who meet sales targets with holiday trips. This is a new and rapidly expanding tourism trend. These are given in place of cash prizes or gifts.

III. DEVELOPMENT

Positive socioeconomic change is commonly associated with development. It entails progressing to a better future than the present. According to Ebiyefa (2021), "Development is empowerment; it's about local people taking charge of their own lives, voicing their own desires, and solving their own issues." Also, "Development entails a qualitative shift in how a society conducts its business, such as through more progressive population attitudes, the adoption of more effective social

structures, and the acceptance of advanced technologies developed abroad" (Kayumovich, 2022). The term "development," as defined by Khayrulloevna (2020), refers to a person's growth during the course of his or her life, from conception to death. As a result, economic development is the process of generating marketable goods and services by mobilising human, financial, capital, physical, and national resources. As stated by Stavrianea & Kamenidou (2022), economic development, from a policy standpoint, can be characterised as attempts to improve a community's economic well-being and quality of life through creating and/or maintaining jobs, as well as supporting or growing incomes and tax bases. Wu & Tong (2022), also viewed economic development as the process of improving a country's, state's, or local economy's productive capability, which includes land, labour, capital, and technology. From Scheyvens & Biddulph (2018) point of view, Economic development is the growth of a country's or region's economic wealth for the benefit of its people. It is the process by which a country's people improve their economic, political, and social well-being.

IV. SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism planning necessitates sustainability because its growth typically puts increasing strain on the destination's natural, cultural, and socioeconomic settings. It's worth noting that, in addition to its social and environmental components, sustainability has an economic component. Meeting the demands of current tourists and host places while conserving and developing future prospects is what sustainable tourism development entails. The environmental, socio-cultural, and economic components of sustainable tourism are all intertwined. Sustainability entails long-term viability, optimal resource utilisation, including biological variety, minimising of ecological, cultural, and social consequences, and maximisation of conservation and community benefits. It also refers to the managerial structures required to do this. As a result, long-term viability encompasses all three aspects of economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Economic sustainability

When a country's real production capital income rises over time, as measured by changes in gross national product (GNP), it is said to be economically sustainable. Tourism has become a major component of the service sector as a result of its ongoing and rapid growth in the global economy. The economic side, on the other hand, is concerned with the preservation and utilisation of economic or productive capital in order to maintain its long-term viability. For long-term economic sustainability, economic capital should not be abused or depleted without replacement.

Socio-cultural sustainability

The phrase "socio-cultural" combines two terms: social and cultural. The term "social" simply refers to a person's social rank and standing. Culture, on the other hand, "consists of acquired and transmitted patterns of behaviour, knowledge, and values through generations." Socio-cultural sustainability is defined as the act of sustaining and safeguarding a society's

rank and standing, as well as its culture, for current and future generations. All living souls are stated to be equal and make no difference under this element of sustainability, regardless of the community they belong to, the culture they practise, the language they speak, or whatever they do. Mutual interest, tolerance, patience, love, honesty, discipline, ethics, general acceptable rules and regulations, law, and information can all help to ensure socio-cultural sustainability.

Environmental sustainability

"Environment is a relative concept that encompasses cultural, social, political, and economic factors. However, tourism development requires a high-quality natural environment, which must be maintained. The amount of people who consume natural resources partly explains the negative effects of tourism, which is also a justification for environmental sustainability. Carrying capacity analysis: The World Tourism Organization introduced and characterised this technique as "essential to environmental conservation and sustainable development." It therefore refers to the maximum utilisation of any tourist location or place without establishing or causing any negative effects on resources, decreasing visitor satisfaction, or adding to an unfavourable impact on the area's community, economics, or culture. Limits on carrying capabilities can be difficult to determine at times, but they are crucial in tourism and leisure planning.

V. ROLES OF TOURISM IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The importance of tourism in the economic development of a community, state, or country cannot be understated. In the sense that individuals are hired to give services to tourists, the tourism industry has become a job generator, both for service-oriented and product-oriented businesses. This translates to higher revenue from job creation, which will gradually boost people's living standards. It is also emphasised that diversifying numerous new economic activity can help to alleviate the social problem of unemployment. Infrastructure like as roads, hotels, power, and pipe-borne water, among other things, must be created for effective tourism development. One of the possible benefits of well-planned and managed tourism is that it can benefit host communities economically, help to alleviate poverty, and protect natural and cultural treasures.

The following are some of the benefits of tourism:

- * Rural areas benefit from revenue and diversification. This is due to the fact that foreign currency stays in the local economy.
- * Foreigner tax revenue can be utilised to improve some facilities, such as swimming pools, golf courses, restaurants, and retail malls.
- * Some of the tourist events will pique the interest of residents in the host community.
- * Because of the high level of services and recreational opportunities available, it invites businesses to locate there.
- * If the country is a desirable location to live, foreigners may become permanent residents.

However, despite all of these benefits, there are also some drawbacks that impede tourism development. These are some of them:

- * It requires a significant amount of capital.

- * Puts demand on government services.
- * Promotion, marketing, and time are all required.

VI. METHODS OF STUDY

The study examines the potential of AKWUKE SAND BEACH AND ADADA RIVER as tourist destinations and attractions for Enugu State's long-term development. Data was gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The research approach, on the other hand, includes observation of the study areas followed by interviews with local residents. With the assistance of an assistant, this was completed between March 24th, 2021 and December 24th, 2021. This is due to the fact that most tourists visit these locations during the dry and festive seasons, with the exception of a handful who travel at any time of year (for example, students and associations on excursion). Journals, textbooks, magazines, and other sources of information were also used. In order to establish the influence of tourism on the socio-economic development of host communities in terms of job creation, infrastructure provision, and improvement in living standards.

VII. THE CASE STUDY AREAS

Akwuke is one of the 174 communities in Enugu State, Nigeria. Akwuke has an estimated population of 28,000 people, disaggregated into 12,500 men and boys and 15,500 women and girls. Located in the town of Akwuke along the Enugu Port Harcourt Expressway in Enugu South Local Government Area of Enugu State. The study area is located between Latitude 6° 22' 34" north and Longitude 7°29' 47.4 " east of the equator. The Akwuke sand beach has natural resources such as coal, granite, clay, and sand that serve as a tourist attraction and a potential source of income, as they are abundant in the Akwuke community. The Akwuke beach is not just a natural attraction for tourism or a potential for generating revenue, but also a means of livelihood for the locals. It serves as a means for laundry, bathing, washing of dishes, and a source of water.

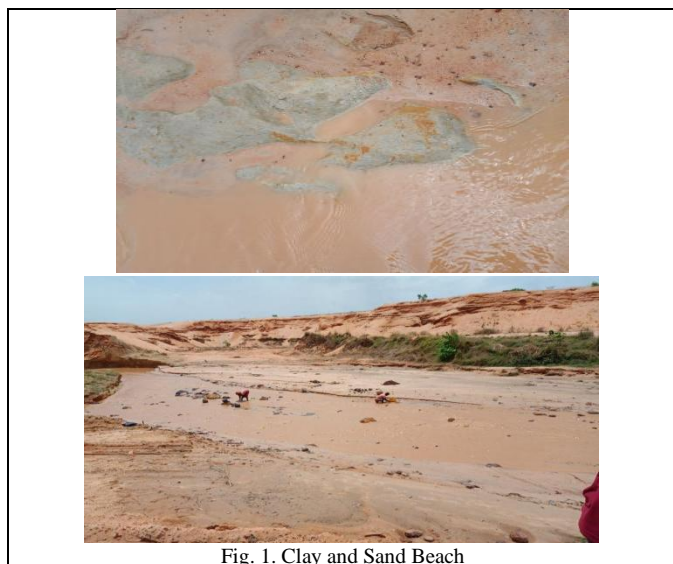


Fig. 1. Clay and Sand Beach

The Akwuke beach has a beautiful view for sightseers and fun seekers. In fact, the beach is blessed with hills and lush vegetation provided by the surrounding.



Fig. 2. Hills and vegetation

Adada River

The Adada River, which is located Uzo-Uwani LGA, flows through the key rice-producing areas of Enugu State's Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area and Anambra State's Omor. It is used both in the home and in agriculture. The Adada River is situated between latitudes 6O 25' – 6O 45' N and 7 O 00' E – 7 O 23' E. The area falls within Eastern Nigeria's fourth climatic zone, with a population estimated at 170,123,740. On the Adada River, which also has an on-going dam project, a major tourism potential. Residents of Enugu state were overjoyed when the Adada River dam project was launched in 2011. They hope that the dam will provide energy, provide jobs for the youths, boost farming activities, and, at the very least, ensure that their villages have access to safe drinking water. The Adada river dam in Nigeria's Enugu State is around 60 to 70% constructed and projected to be completed and operational, however the project is now on hold. Past and current leaders have made allegations and counterclaims about why such a life-changing endeavour has continued to face obstacles. Following the heavy return of the Adada river after 40 years of disappearance in some parts, a rapid rise in water level compelled workmen to release the dam, which swept out the Adada bridge connecting Uzo-Uwani and Igbo-Etiti. The quick rise in water level, which the contractors regarded as "abnormal," brought government officials' attention to the dam site, and a short bridge was built, albeit it remains unfinished to this day.

If finished, the US \$10.08 million construction project will increase tourism-related socio-economic activities in rural communities across Enugu State's Udi, Uzo-Uwani, and Igbo-Etiti local council areas, as well as provide power from the dam. The Adada river dam is expected to generate and store a maximum of 1.3 million cubic metres of water over the course of a year, helping to alleviate local water shortages. The dam project will provide employment possibilities during and after

construction, in addition to serving and adding value to the lives of the many communities.



VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the findings Rural tourism is a relatively new phenomena in Nigeria that is only now getting policymakers' attention. Local communities can profit more from tourist growth since they will have more job options and will be able to earn some money from it. Rural tourism is one of the most effective strategies to open up rural areas, especially when infrastructure is in place. Nature and the rural environment are the most important prerequisites for the growth of rural tourism. Rural tourism benefits local craftsmen by increasing sales of their wares. This would either directly or indirectly teach tourists about the handicraft and provide them with the option to purchase it. Tourism has the potential to revitalize depressed rural areas and enhance people's living conditions. The expansion of rural tourism benefits local residents, who frequently live relatively solitary lives in agricultural villages, by increasing the amount of opportunities for social interaction.

Akwuke beach

Natural attraction is one of the most important sectors chosen by both public and commercial players in developing nations to address concerns of cultural heritage sustainability,

livelihood, and biodiversity conservation. The Akwuke beach is not just a tourist attraction, but also a source of income and livelihood for the people. It is used for laundry, bathing, dishwashing, and as a source of water. The Akwuke beach has a beautiful view for sightseers and fun seekers. In fact, the beach is blessed with clay, and hills and lush vegetation provided by the surrounding. Also It was found that the Akwuke Sand beach provides employment for the local community and empowers the local people in a way. According to the guardians of the beach who served as the key informant, Akwuke beach is not controlled by the government, or used to be a government owned beach. It has been controlled by the community, the local residents. This beach is solely manage by the members of the community, being viewed as a potential tourist attraction, the locals in Akwuke 'beach' community is greatly advantaged, at community levels, tourism offers opportunities for direct, indirect and induced employment and income, spurring regional and local economic development. This is the case among the residents around Akwuke beach. Findings from this research implies that Akwuke beach highly contributes to the economic development of the community and creates employment for the locals. Akwuke beach generates revenue to the community in-terms of gate fee charges for tourist and fun seekers and other explorers. The revenue also comes in from different activities such as sale of sand, private picnic teams, and students on excursion among others.

Adada River

The Adada River and Dam have great tourist potential for generating revenue, employment, rural development, environmental restoration, and stimulating infrastructure development in the community, and will also attract foreign exchange in the future, according to the interview and observation conducted. The Adada River attracts students, visitors, and excursionists. The Adada River provides a beautiful backdrop for tourist attractions, including an incomplete dam that, if completed, will alleviate water shortages inside and around the community. When the Adada River project was unveiled in 2011, residents of Enugu state were pleased, according to an informant. They hope that the dam will provide energy, provide jobs for the youth, boost farming activities, and, at the very least, ensure that their villages have access to safe drinking water. During the farming season, the majority of indigenous peoples spend a considerable percentage of their hard-earned money, usually from farm business, on water vendors. This has had a significant impact on most indigenous people's finances, as they are now finding it difficult to meet their family's needs due to increased water costs and lower income from farming.

It was also discovered that most farmers can no longer afford to farm during the dry season due to the high cost of obtaining water for their operations. The bulk of farmers were totally reliant on the farm for their livelihood. Most of them would want to cultivate it all year if they had the wherewithal. According to the 2006 census, Nsukka is one of the largest towns in Enugu state, with a population of 309,633. (though currently estimated at 1,500,000). The Asho, Aje, Iyi-Nsukka, and Ikwoka Obimo springs, all located in separate parts of

town, provide the "cleanest" water. Nsukka is home to Nigeria's most prestigious university and has a wealth of human and natural resources, yet the town is beset by severe water shortages that appear to defy government efforts. The springs fall far short of supplying the community's water needs, and the lone government-owned borehole is inadequately reticulated and rarely used. As a result, wealthy individuals are increasingly supplying water to the public by drilling boreholes and selling it at ridiculous prices. The majority of these water sources are untreated and harmful to people's health.

It's no surprise that the people were ecstatic about the award and the subsequent start of work on the Adada River dam project in 2011. The contract for the construction of the Adada River dam and accompanying works was approved by the Federal Executive Council and granted to an indigenous contractor, ROUDO Nigeria Limited, in 2010, according to the Bureau for Public Procurement. According to the BPE, the project will cost N2,578,472,343.28. The project was planned to be completed in 24 months and would be built in three phases: damming, water treatment plant, and reticulation with a capacity of around 1.4 million cubic metres of water per year. Work on the dam did not begin until June 2011, when the project was marked off by a government delegation led by Godknows Igali, the then permanent secretary of the federal ministry of water resources. The dam is still not operating as of this writing. If the dam had been built to its full potential, it would have provided potable water, electricity, and irrigation for agricultural activities, as well as stimulated tourists in the neighborhood and surrounding areas, generating cash internally.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tourism has long been regarded as a sector that may help a country's economy grow. The AKWUKE SAND BEACH AND ADADA RIVER is a significant tourist attraction that can be developed to boost the economic activities of the host communities by providing jobs and allowing residents to participate in activities such as selling foods, local materials, beverages, and providing services to tourists in restaurants and hotels, among other things. Improvements in economic activity will improve the residents' level of living and well-being. This research attempted to emphasise the importance of developing tourist sites, since it is a vital issue for long-term tourism. According to the findings, AKWUKE SAND BEACH AND ADADA RIVER have yet to have a substantial impact on the socio-economic development of the host community's residents and the state as a whole. Tourism promotion, especially at AKWUKE SAND BEACH AND ADADA RIVER, will benefit the entire town, state, and country. As a result, the

government should pay it some attention based on its potential, encouraging investors and stakeholders to develop both the sites and the host towns. To encourage growth and accessibility, the government must ensure that the Adada River DAM project is completed, as well as the provision of basic amenities such as electricity, clean water, a functional communication system, adequate roads, and other amenities closer to the study areas. Furthermore, visitors' modes of transportation must be improved, made easier, and more convenient. This, in turn, will promote long-term growth and increase the well-being of the host communities' citizens. Furthermore, indigenous knowledge, community engagement, and support for local capacities are all cultural and educational exchanges with tourists that would aid in the preservation of the studied areas' cultural and natural resources. Other towns with similar tourist sites could replicate this type of participation. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) should work together to develop the research areas in order to improve long-term sustainability. In order to have a holistic management approach to sustainable tourism growth, there is also a need to combine ecological, economic, and institutional studies across time. Tourism must make adequate use of environmental resources while sustaining important ecological processes and contributing to the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity in order to be sustainable. This will help with tourism growth and management in a big way.

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