

Tourism and Sustainable Development: Effects on the Local Communities

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Abstract:- Tourism is defined as the movement of people to a particular place of interest without the intention of settling down permanently or earning a living from the places visited. Tourism is also an economic activity with a unique growth potential that, if properly managed, may be a valuable tool for assuring long-term development and promoting and supporting local communities. The rise of tourism in the past enhanced awareness of the impact of tourism on the environment among policymakers, local governments, tourists, and host communities. As a result, developing a sustainable tourist industry has become a requirement in today's world. This paper attempts to describe the consequences of tourism at the community level, as well as the potential for a relationship between tourism and sustainable development, with an emphasis on the crucial components of ecotourism in sustainable tourism, notably rural and agro tourism. However, international cooperation in the field of tourism, including exchanges related to tourism's sustainable development, is lacking, which would aid, support, and assist national and local governments in improving their environmental and socio-cultural performance in relation to the tourism industry. Finally, the report suggests that tourist activities be developed using local communities' own resources; that local communities maintain control over tourism development in their regions; and that complete community participation will be a critical aspect in achieving long-term tourism sustainability.

Keywords:- Ecotourism; local communities; rural tourism; tourism; sustainable development.

I. INTRODUCTION

Because of its ability to produce new income, develop new enterprises, enhance property values, supply infrastructure, and improve services for citizens, tourism has been an important source of income for many local, regional, and national economies. In many areas, mass tourism has resulted in unplanned development, causing natural, social, and cultural resources to deteriorate. As a result of this unchecked expansion, customer behavior in the tourism industry has shifted. As the number of social groupings increased and fragmented, the tourism market became increasingly segmented and varied (Munster, 2008).

Traveling with the goal of having a good impact on the environment, society, and economy while avoiding negative consequences is known as sustainable tourism. This seems to be the case in every situation, yet it is not always the case. More importantly, mass tourism has had a negative

influence on some host countries, and the economic benefits often do not trickle down to the local level (Catalin, 2014). As a result, adventure tourism, such as travels to previously unexplored tourist hotspots, luxury tourism, and various forms of sustainable tourism, have grown increasingly appealing. In this regard, a rise in public awareness of societal environmental challenges, combined with an increase in public responsibility for environmental and resource protection, has motivated and prompted many individuals to engage in various forms of sustainable tourism.

Sustainable tourism development refers to "reaching the kind of tourism growth that prevents environmental damage, because such facts could have major effects on future quality of life" (Nijkamp, 1999). In this regard, in the 1980s, sustainable tourism became a very prominent subject of study (Liu, 2013). According to Nijkamp (1999), sustainable tourism means that the needs of a growing number of tourists are met in a way that continues to attract tourists, while the needs of host communities are met through improved living standards, the environment, and the destination's cultural heritage are preserved. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this study tries to describe a number of implications of sustainable tourism at the community level, as well as the relationship between tourism and sustainable development.

Air travel, theaters, events/festivals, cinemas, sporting activities, and religious gatherings have all been badly impacted by the epidemic due to the requirement for social separation in order to minimize its spread. Despite the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on travel and tourism, it has provided a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for reflection and re-calibration in order to properly develop travel and tourism, which is uniquely positioned to contribute to global recovery efforts that extend beyond tourism. Nigeria, as a nation and a member of the international community, should study and implement homegrown and practical recovery measures that are tailored to our specific environment and policy objectives. Healing for people, prosperity, and destinations, as well as health, employment, and the environment, are among them.

II. PROMOTION OF LONG-TERM TOURISM

One of the key principles is sustainable development, which tries to reduce tensions, imbalances, and environmental degradation that might arise from interactions and overlaps between the tourism sector and tourists on the one hand, and the environment and local residents on the other (Hall, 2000). Sustainable tourism development, as

defined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 2004, is "tourism that serves the requirements of current tourists and host regions while safeguarding and enhancing opportunities for the future." It is a mindset that leads to resource management that meets economic, social, and aesthetic needs while preserving cultural integration and life support systems (<https://www.worldtourism.org/sustainableconcepts>).

A. Sustainable Tourism's Objectives

The following are some of the objectives of sustainable tourism:

- Environmental protection, natural resource conservation, and community legacy preservation
- Providing the basic requirements of the local community and raise the standards of living;
- Applying the principle of justice at the level of the present generation, as well as the coming generations in order to use the environmental resources and distribute the income
- Providing standards of environmental accounting and control over the environmental tourism;
- the basic environment and the development of services in local communities;
- creating a climate for investment to provide income and work for the local community.
- Developing the environmental awareness among tourists, workers and local communities and providing new markets for local products.

III. A SYNTHESIS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM APPROACHES

Sustainable tourism is defined as the growth of all types of tourism, tourist management, and tourism marketing that considers natural, social, and economic environmental integrity while ensuring the exploitation of natural and cultural resources for future generations (Olowookere and Taiwo, 2020). Alternative methodology is based on the idea that "sustainable tourism meets the requirements of present travelers and the tourism industry while preserving the environment and future opportunities, attempting to address all tourism actors' demands of an economic, social, aesthetic, nature, and maintaining cultural and ecological integrity, biological diversity, and all life-supporting systems, while maintaining the cultural and ecological integrity, biological diversity, and all life-supporting structures" (Adedeji et al, 2019). Following the same line of thought, Omotoba (2019) highlights that sustainable tourism encompasses "all forms of development that allow for the satisfaction of one's own needs and achievement of one's own objectives without jeopardizing future generations' ability to meet their own needs and achieve their own objectives."

In the speciality literature, there are a number of approaches to the concept of sustainable tourism, which are summarized as follows:

- Blanganje, 1999: sustainable tourism applied in a particular area is any form of development, provision of amenities, or tourist events that considers community respect and long-term preservation of natural, cultural, and

social resources, and positively and justifiably contributes to the economic improvement and well-being of the human societies that reside, work, and live in such regions;

- Taiwo, et al 2018: sustainable tourism is based on the principles of environmental, social, and economic sustainability;
- Omotoba, 2019: sustainable tourism entails all forms of tourism development, tourism management, and tourism activity that allow for the long-term operation of the cultural activity known as tourism, implying a set of tourism products that are compatible with the preservation of natural, cultural, and anthropogenic heritage resources, all of which make tourism possible;
- Akinyosoye, 2016: sustainable tourism necessitates a censure of the tourism industry;

The conclusion of Olowookere et al. (2020) that the idea of sustainable tourism arose as an attempt to achieve a precise estimate of tourism's negative impact on host communities is an excellent summary of the many methods to sustainable tourism development. It's also worth noting that the definitions, in general, highlight features connected with sustainable development as emphasized in government papers (e.g., the Brundtland Report), such as ecosystem integrity, economic development, and equity within and between generations. Also promoted are the concepts of equity, environment, and development; these elements are best highlighted in the so-called "magic pentagon" of sustainable tourism, which is defined as a system that balances economic welfare, visitor satisfaction, local community welfare, local resource protection, and cultural preservation. (Mitrut and Constantin, 2009).

IV. PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Leisure industry and travel sector, among other things, acts as a catalytic agent for sustainable development. As a result, it makes a significant contribution and has a significant economic, social, and ecological potential in the development of all nations, particularly emerging countries (Olowookere, 2020). Sustainable tourism development necessitates a variety of outcomes, including increased exploitation of tourism resources (economic), increased employment, development and preservation of traditional crafts (social), recycling, and environmental preservation (ecological). Pitoska, 2009; Choi & Murray, 2010; Ruhanen, 2012; Saufi, O'Brien & Wilkins, 2014) underlined the following basic factors in order to achieve various types of performance and establish a sustainable tourism.

- The implementation of a international and unified methodology that allows for the identification and emphasizing of tourism's impact at all levels, as well as the integration of tourism into all activities that have an influence on society and the environment, i.e. the stages of tourist planning and development
- long-term tourism planning that takes into account the needs of current and future generations;
- preservation and even improvement of local communities' prosperity and quality of life, despite any changes that may occur; minimization of resource use

- and waste production, as well as preservation and capitalization of natural and cultural heritage;
- full participation of local communities as a key factor for a sustainable tourism in the region;
- tourism should contribute to the creation and development of new jobs for the inhabitants, implicitly to an increase in the living standard and quality of life of local communities;
- International cooperation in the field of tourism, including exchanges related to tourism's sustainable development, is needed to help, support, and assist national and local governments in improving their environmental and socio-cultural performance in relation to the tourism industry;
- tourism's sustainable development can only be achieved collectively, by putting together "ecological alliances" between political institutions.

The creation of sustainable tourism policies could be a very effective strategy to support the creation of new enterprises and jobs while also promoting environmental conservation and protection (Castellani & Sala, 2010). As a result, in addition to the aforesaid ideologies, a number of policy-related mechanisms that can be utilized to aid in the operation of sustainable tourism can be highlighted.

- the engagement of governments in the stimulation of companies for the development of environmentally friendly behavior, using various instruments such as subsidies or taxes to enhance people's, tourists', and companies' knowledge of environmental issues and their role in society;
- supply of infrastructure (for example, waste treatment facilities) to facilitate the growth of environmentally responsible behavior among individuals and businesses. Public authorities, corporate actors, or both can supply such infrastructure through various forms of collaboration, including as public-private partnerships and agreements.

However, agreeing to Blagajne (1999), a variety of components and instruments are critical for maintaining a balance between tourism and long-term territorial development. Included are the following:

- tourism activities must be planned to allow for the incorporation of various socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental components at all stages;
- the environmental, social, and traditional value and capability of each region must be appreciated;
- tourism events must be subjected to mandatory eco-friendly assessments;
- in the case of coastal areas, an incorporated areas administration is required; this management shall form the basis of a justifiable growth that would alleviate the effects of climate change.

V. VARIANTS OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: LOCAL COMMUNITY CONSEQUENCES

Ecotourism is the most significant component in the subject of sustainable tourism, as it is viewed as a tool for a sustainable "use" of wild lands, as well as fostering environmental responsibility and sensitivity (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2010). A type of tourism that describes the relationship amid tourists, the environment, and beliefs, and is centered on a set of doctrines including minimal environmental impact, minimal impact on local culture, maximum respect for local culture, maximum economic benefits for local hosts, and maximum recreational satisfaction for tourists. However, Omotoba (2019) defined it as a type of sustainable tourism based on natural resources, focused mostly on direct contact with nature and learning varied natural knowledge, and that should have a low environmental impact, with no consumption, and aimed at the welfare of local communities (control capability, benefits, dimensions). It's also a type of tourism that takes place in natural regions and has to contribute to their conservation and protection.

Based on the foregoing, it can be deduced that ecotourism emphasizes the fact that it takes place in natural and cultural areas, has a minor impact on the environment, is based on conservation principles, improves natural, cultural, and in general environmental resources, promotes the involvement of local communities, contributes to the improvement of local communities' welfare, and involves the attainment of high levels of tourist satisfaction through direct contact. In this regard, a tourism plan for this type of tourism is required. The areas where ecotourism is practiced must be of continental or global interest; must be a part of the Earth's tourist heritage; the negative effects on the natural environment and local communities must be mitigated through ecotourism; ecotourism must generate economic and social benefits to local communities (Omotoba, 2019). As a result, ecotourism is seen as an important aspect in the growth of the local economy.

The involvement of the local population, economic prospects for the local community, and eco-development are all examples of links between ecotourism and ecosystems in this regard. The integrity of ecosystems is a critical aspect in sustainable development projects, emphasizing the relevance of the natural environment in achieving tourism advantages. As a result, such benefits are impossible to achieve without the participation of the local community. Because the economic options for local communities are diverse, earnings from tourism activities must be used to fund the continuation and support of existing programs, as well as the creation of new projects that benefit the community.

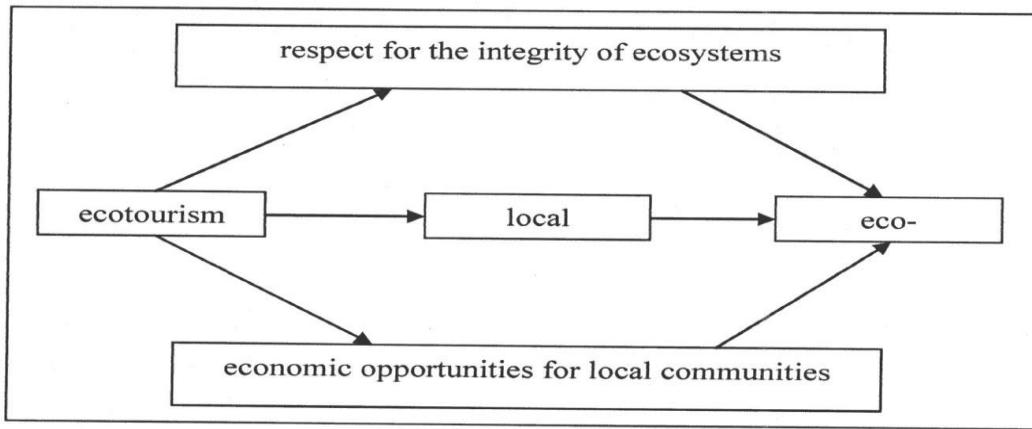


Fig. 1: Ecosystems, local participation, and local community development

Source: Dinu, 2002

Rural tourism, religious tourism, and pilgrimage trips are all examples of ecotourism. Rural tourism is perhaps the most popular of all, as a result of socioeconomic development and the remarkable cultural attraction of the rural environment, which has led and continues to contribute to an increasing number of tourists choosing rural tourism (Simion, 2011). Furthermore, it was argued that rural tourism has distinct characteristics, such as proximity to nature, serenity, intimate knowledge of places and local communities, familiarity with local businesses, the possibility of integration into the local community during the stay, and contact with local people and government officials.

An increasing number of tourists are choosing rural tourism due to a revaluation of cultural values and landscape importance, as well as an increase in personal mobility and the ability to freely manage their leisure time. Rural tourism is attracting an increasing number of visitors since it is seen by experts as a source of diversification for rural economies (Vogelij, 2004). There are particular elements related with the supply, not only the demand, in this regard. Changes in the field of rural area planning by developing new tourism constructions and information kiosks, sport facilities, changes in the structure of crops, avoidance of village depopulation by creating new jobs, development of small rural businesses that capitalize agricultural products, revival of traditional crafts, and so on are all triggered by the growth of rural tourism (Cocean, Vlăsceanu and Negoescu, 2002). Rural tourism also helps to increased local tourism circulation, villagers' cultural, educational, and civilization levels rising, local communities' economic growth, and regional development. According to Dinu (2002), the issue of putting in place new institutions to allow for the economic, social, and cultural rehabilitation of local communities, as well as their prosperity, is becoming increasingly urgent, with tourism as a potential answer. Tourism is seen as a way to re-establish the economic and demographic balance of local communities by those who work on developing and implementing local development plans.

Furthermore, tourism is a key component of many municipal development agencies' strategies. In this regard, a

number of organizations such as the Nigerian Tourism Board, state ministries of tourism and culture, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work to promote Nigeria's cultural, social, historical, natural, and environmental heritage through a tourism concept based on direct contact and interaction with local communities, in the context of sustainable rural and tourism development. One of the most popular types of tourism in rural areas is agrotourism. Agro tourism is a multifaceted form of tourism that combines natural resources, lodging facilities, and agro tourism services to capitalize on natural resources and the economic potential of local families through the development of lodging services and the marketing of local produce and products. Furthermore, travelers who engage in rural tourism participate in a variety of household activities, as well as communal and regional activities, and indirectly in the economic prosperity of the region (Dinu, 2002). This explains why the Federal and State Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development include special provisions in the creation, improvement, and diversification of tourism facilities and attractions aimed at diversifying the rural economy and improving the quality of life in rural areas, as well as an emphasis on the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage of rural areas.

VI. CONCLUSION

If properly managed, tourism can play a significant role in ensuring long-term development that benefits and sustains local populations. Ecotourism, which has a low environmental impact and is based on conservation principles, is one of the most representative and significant components of sustainable tourism. It promotes the involvement of local communities and contributes to their welfare. By preserving, safeguarding, and even improving the natural environment, ecotourism can be an important component for local growth. As a result, there are several connections between ecotourism and ecosystems, as well as local participation, economic prospects, and eco-development. Most sustainable development projects highlight the importance of the natural environment in getting tourism advantages, which emphasizes the need of ecosystem integrity. Such benefits cannot be reached without the participation of the local population, as

economic opportunities for local communities are derived from tourism income, which are utilized to continue and maintain existing programs as well as to build new projects that benefit the local community.

Local communities can also benefit from different positive changes by promoting different forms of sustainable tourism within ecotourism, such as rural tourism and agro tourism, such as an appropriate capitalization of village-related resources, changes in the field of rural area planning by developing new tourism constructions and information kiosks and sport facilities, changes in the structure of crops, avoidance of village depopulation by creating new jobs, development of new tourism infrastructure, and development of new tourism infrastructure.

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