



A review of strategic implementation of Nigeria tourism master plan: an issue for economic development

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Abstract

The implementation of Nigeria tourism master plan which was developed from 2006 – 2008 did not commence as expected. This resulted to the inability to harness areas identified by the master plan. In this regard the study objective is to examine the factors that affected the strategic implementation of the tourism master plan for economic development. The study used secondary data. And literature analysis was done. The findings revealed that the inability to implement the plan in the time it is originally allocated could be as a result of the initiators of the strategy leaving the organization or some problems which were not identified earlier surfaced during the implementation. The study concluded and recommended that there should be involvement of all stakeholders in the formulation of the strategic plan among others.

Keywords: development, tourism, strategic, master plan, implementation, designation

Introduction

The tourism master plan's goal is to enhance the Nigerian people's socioeconomic situations and diversify the country's economic basis. The tourism master plan's goal is to enhance the tourist industry's long-term growth by strengthening the federal government's capabilities and making strategic suggestions in the following areas: Due to the issues that Nigeria faces as a destination, the master plan offered strategic recommendations with an action plan for execution in areas where particular intervention is required in the tourist sector. The central bank of Nigeria should be involved in the establishment of a tourist satellite account for the country in 2008. The government should establish the Nigeria Tourism Authority to implement government policies, as well as new laws to specify the duties of federal and state institutions in tourism. To make it simpler to enter the nation, the rules for getting a visa should be modified. The issue of incompetent workers in the tourist industry will be addressed by upgrading higher education facilities and offering MSc programs at universities. Advertise segmentation, branding, and partnerships with foreign travel operators will be used to market and promote Nigeria. The government should stimulate the building of three-star hotels in the country's six geopolitical zones. The advice for implementing a tourism information system to collect tourist statistics indicates that it should be done. Airports should be upgraded, and buses and vehicle rental services should be made available, according to the master plans. Investors should be offered loans, reduced taxes, and grant programs as incentives (NTMP, 2005) [13]. NTMP (National Telecommunications and Multimedia Project) (NTMP, 2005) [13] The tourist master plan implementation organization, which includes officials from the ministry of culture and tourism, the ministry of finance, the business

sector, and the financial sectors, as well as a full-time executive chairman, was tasked with carrying out the activity. The action plan will necessitate the assistance of foreign advisors. For the first three years (2006-2008), the implementation organization would be in place, but the duties would be progressively passed to NTA, which would be in charge of tourist development and marketing. The government of Nigeria and international funding organizations will provide funds for the execution of the tourist master plan (UNDP, World bank, European Union).

Statement of the problem

Political instability, access and internal transportation, a weak marketing approach, an ineffective tourism information system, low accommodation quality, untrained personnel in the sector, insecurity, and Nigeria's negative image abroad are some of the challenges that the country faces as a tourist destination. The tourist master plan was created, with implementation set to take place between 2006 and 2008. The implementation, on the other hand, did not get off to a good start. The master plan's areas of development have yet to be fully used. Ineffective coordination between the ministry and the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation was reportedly reported. The master plan's execution was further hampered by the country's political transition.

Objective of the study

1. To review strategic implementation of Nigeria tourism plan
2. To identify factors that affected strategic implementation of the Nigeria tourism master plan.
3. Proffer solution for economic development.

Research Methodology

The study used secondary data. This is based on literatures

from existing books, journals and other seminar materials on the subject mater.

Strategy Implementation

It takes longer to put a strategy into action than it does to formulate one (Hrebmak, 2006) [10]. A strategy implementation plan consists of processes, activities, and action plans that enable a business to deploy its resources to take advantage of market opportunities (Harrington, 2006) [8]. Strategy execution refers to the step-by-step process of carrying out the operations (Singh, 1998). As a result, strategic implementation may be characterized as a process that involves managers and people making various decisions and engaging in various actions in order to attain strategic goals. (Li *et al.*, 2008) [11]. The most challenging component of a strategy is its implementation, not its conception (Zaribaf *et al.* 2008; Tribe 2010) [21]. At the moment, strategy implementation is a big difficulty for enterprises; 83 percent of companies do not properly apply their strategies, and just 17 percent do so consistently (Allio, 2006).

Soft, hard, and mixed elements were identified by Li *et al* (2008) [11] as influencing the effective execution of strategy. All of the individuals who are responsible for the execution, communication efforts, implementation methods, and devotion to the plan are considered soft factors. Institutional elements, such as organizational structure and administrative processes, are among the difficult things to overcome. The mixed variables are concerns about the strategy's formulation, which incorporates both soft and hard factors. A mixed factor is how the many sections of an organization interact with one another, as well as the different stages of a plan. Li *et al* (2008) [11] criteria will be employed in this investigation.

Soft Factors

The personnel who carry out the plan, as well as how they carry out the various tasks, are all aspects to consider. The amount of dedication shown in the implementation and the delivery of information (Li *et al.*, 2008) [11]. The hard elements are divided into five categories, which are discussed more below.

Poor information and communication system

In strategy implementation, the information system is concerned with the flow of information throughout the company. Managers must effectively communicate strategy-related information to all stakeholders. Understanding the action will be impossible if the information is vague. The quality of the information, its appropriateness, and its importance to the people to whom the message is sent are the four most important aspects of information (Zaribaf *et al.*, 2005; Johnson, 2002). When information is not given to the members of the implementation team or is passed to the incorrect individuals, poor communication can act as a roadblock to strategy implementation (Noble, 1999) [14]. Many writers have cited communication as a vital component of successful strategy implementation, according to Alexander (1985). This involves outlining the responsibilities, tasks, and obligations to be performed by personnel, as well as the appropriate time.

Effective communication is at the foundation of strategy execution, according to Tribe (2010) [21]. Peng and Litteljohn (2001) [18] went into further detail on how good communication may help strategic implementation succeed, stating that communication is crucial in training, information distribution, and learning during the strategy implementation process. Communication is critical in all aspects of strategy implementation since it aids in the structuring of processes, organizational environment, and implementation objectives, all of which influence the implementation process. Communication difficulties have been highlighted as a crucial element influencing the effectiveness of a strategy's implementation in studies (Li *et al.*, 2008) [11]. According to Tribe (2010) [21], despite the significance of communication in strategic execution, democratic communication can be difficult to agree on and coordinate, resulting in time waste.

Human resource managements

Despite identifying the fact that the tourism sector's staff is under-trained, the tourism master plan failed to identify strategies for training the country's tourism educators. Though the master plan indicated that higher education institutions should be encouraged to create tourism programs, the ministry of education is not designated as a lead or support ministry for the execution of the Strategic recommendations on tourist education and training. The tourism master plan's success was hindered by a lack of expertise in the execution process. Nigeria has a small number of tourism professionals, which has contributed to the master plan's failure. According to Tube (2010), strategic plans would have an impact on human resources, hence manpower development and training requirements should be taken into account. Communication with the workers should be a part of the program. At all phases of the plan execution, managers must ensure that key operating staff (required human resources) is present. Because all implementation efforts engage all workers in the organization, managers and everyone involved must have excellent interpersonal and human skills. The quality of the individuals participating in the strategy implementation process has an impact on the strategy's effectiveness (Govindaraj an, 1989) [7]. Tb refers to the skills, attitudes, capacities, experiences, and other personal attributes that are necessary for a certain activity or position (Peng & Litteljohn, 2001) [18]. Because the effectiveness of the strategy implementation might be harmed if implementation staffs are not capable of managing the obligations allocated to them, each individual participating in the strategy implementation must be knowledgeable in the area in which he or she will participate. It will be very difficult for the plan to succeed if the people in charge of implementing the strategy lack the qualities mentioned above (Govindarajan, 1989) [7]. Involvement of incompetent employees in the strategy's execution might also have a negative impact on the project's performance (Al-Ghandi, 1998) [1].

Leaders and executors

If key employees do not feel invested in a strategy's execution plans, it will be delayed, and others' efforts will be harmed.

(2008, Li *et al.*)^[11] Some employees may oppose the implementation of a strategy if it reduces their power, according to Heracleous (2000)^[9]. In a recent interview with the director of the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation, Mustapha (2011)^[16] claims that the master plan failed because the NTDC was not involved in the development and promotion of tourism in Nigeria, and that as the organization charged with developing and promoting tourism in Nigeria, it felt it should be included in the strategy formulation and implementation. He also stated that a master plan's success is influenced by the leaders' commitment to the implementation program, that the Nigerian government is regarded as weak internationally, and that the president's action committee for tourism is led by a president who has little time for the members of the tourism master plan implementation organization. The master plan's suggestion on tourism organization and law is to disband the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) and replace it with the Nigerian Tourism Authority (NTA). All of these disagreements between the ministry and the company hampered the master plan's effectiveness. Employees confront three key issues: incapacity to fulfill their responsibilities, poorly trained workers, and supervisors who lack the necessary leadership abilities to run a business. In terms of human resources, the most troubling issues that employees confront throughout the execution of a plan are as follows (Li *et al.*, 2008)^[11]. Managerial processes and leadership style, according to Nutt (1986)^[15], can have a significant impact on the strategy's execution. According to Alexandra (1985)^[5], good strategy execution may be aided by personnel who are devoted and immersed in the task at hand. Employees must be determined to carry out their unique implementation roles effectively. Strategy commitment is defined as how a management understands and supports the aims and objectives of a marketing strategy.

Financial resource planning

Nigerians are not disciplined with public finances, and anyone given the task of handling public funds ends up stealing the cash rather than using the money to carry out the program. In Nigeria and other areas of the world, a number of Nigerian top officials are facing several corruption allegations. According to Tribe (2010)^[21], having budgets produced that illustrate how the strategy's actions will be funded is critical. To achieve coordination between revenue and spending, the sources of cash and the mechanics of finance must be recognized. Insufficient financial resources, according to Al-Ghandi (1998)^[1], might stymie plan implementation since strategy execution necessitates finances. According to Li *et al.* (2008)^[11], even if funds are available for execution, a plan will fail if the funds are not allocated to the correct purpose at the right time. One of the issues that has hampered Nigeria's tourism master plan is that the country's budget has not been properly applied. According to Mustapha (2011)^[16], no Nigerian entity has executed 45 percent of its budget in the last five years, from the federal to state to local governments. Nigerians are adept at planning, he claims, but implementation is a challenge.

Implementation tasks

Despite the fact that the implementation organization placed some advertisements on CNN to promote Nigeria as a destination, nothing has been done to address the issue of promotion using the correct marketing method. UK, USA, South America, Caribbean, ECOWAS, and South Africa are the strategy's target markets. The only thing the implementation committee did to target its market was go to the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai and the London World Travel Market in London (NTDC, 2010). There was no plan in place to advertise Nigeria to the target market's travel operators. The Gambia and Senegal were not mentioned as competitors. According to Alexander (1985), excellent ideas or concepts must be included in the creation of a strategy for it to be effective. It is not only how well a strategy is implemented that determines its success, but also how well the strategic input is (Allio, 2005)^[2]. If a strategy's strategic plans aren't good enough for the system, it will fail (Hrebiniak, 2006)^[10].

Poor organization structure

According to Tribe (2010)^[21], any new strategy will be heavily impacted by the existing organizational structure. There is a ministry of culture and tourism in Nigeria, as well as a Nigeria tourist development company that is in charge of tourism development and promotion (Oyahkhilome. 2005)^[17]. The conflicting roles of the two organizations, as well as the fact that the tourism master plan did not include the Nigeria tourism development corporation in any part of the implementation, led the corporation's director to criticize the master plan's implementation, claiming that it was produced in a hurry (Mustapha, 2011)^[16]. Why isn't a tourism development and marketing organization included in the master plan's implementation? According to Al-Ghandi (1998)^[1], if the role of each individual in the organization structure is not understood, it might have an impact on the strategy's design and implementation. To meet the strategy's requirements, an organization structure must be created. Strategy and structure have a significant link in terms of providing resources for implementation. When developing a strategy, it is critical to examine the structure of the organization; otherwise, there would be confusion and conflict (Li *et al.*, 2008)^[11].

Ineffective management

Managers play an important part in the implementation of any strategy; they inspire employees and help them improve their abilities so that strategic goals may be carried out effectively. This is extremely tough to do since it frequently becomes a roadblock in the implementation of a strategy (Li *et al.*, 2008)^[11]. According to Hrebiniak (2005), managerial commitment to a firm's strategy always leads to stronger dedication from the firm's strategies and goals, resulting in the strategy's effective execution. Nigeria, both the government and the company, had made no commitments about the implementation of the master plan. The tourist industry's main stakeholders are discouraged by the government's negligence. The majority of management roles in the sector are held by non-professionals, resulting in

inefficient day-to-day coordination and oversight.

Mixed Factors

The time limit for implementing the plan, government rules and legislations, and how the many organizations link are all mixed aspects in this assignment, according to Li *et al* (2008) ^[11].

Poor government regulation

There is no possibility for a plan to succeed if government laws and legislation are incompatible with it (Al-Ghandi, 1998) ^[1] There should be a robust tourist policy in place for effective plan execution in tourism. The tourist administration institutional structure must be put in place and made operational. (Jenkins and Dredge, 2007) ^[6] There are a number of overlapping roles in Nigeria's tourist strategy, and certain functions are duplicated (Oyahkilome, 2005) ^[17]. The visa regime in Nigeria is a barrier to tourism; tourists must present a letter of invitation to Nigeria from a company or host accepting immigration responsibility before being granted a visa; the process of obtaining a tourist visa to Nigeria takes four working days during the master plan's implementation period (Nigerian High commission, 2012) ^[12]. However, Nigeria is now granting visas on arrival to tourists and visitors. Although there is no clearly defined tourism policy in Nigeria, the government's role in the policy is to provide financial incentives to participants in the sector and tax exemptions, hoteliers are currently subject to a slew of taxes from the federal, state, and local governments. All of the Constitution's articles that deal with tourism and hospitality in some way fall short of establishing the Federal Government's legislative authority in that area with certainty. The recent Tourism Master Plan, which is supposed to point the way forward, regrettably fails to picture out some issues in the sector except for a brief mention of the splitting of roles between federal and state agencies, the legal and regulatory framework necessary for the realization of the van recommendations and action plans set forth, perhaps as a result of the little or non-involvement of experienced Nigeria-based Industry experts in its making (Mustapha, 2011) ^[16].

Timing

Terrorism has become a big issue for both Nigerians and foreigners by the time the implementation began in 2008. Foreigners have been kidnapped by locals for a ransom. The country's instability has become a menace to neighboring countries, who are concerned that rising terrorism would spread to them (Mustapha, 2011) ^[16]. Due to the aforementioned challenges, the government's focus has shifted to combating terrorism and protecting people's lives. The master plan's implementation deteriorated into a phantom. According to Dredge and Dredge (2005), implementation leads to a direct and complete resolution of the problem; yet, problems evolve as social, economic, technical, political, and environmental factors change. When there is a change, the previous solution may not fit into the defined plan, resulting in a problem-solution mismatch. A strategy is created to help an organization accomplish specific objectives over a specific

time period. Time is meant to be included in a plan, as well as tasks to be completed at a specified time (Tribe, 2010) ^[21]. The inability to implement the strategy in the period allotted might be due to the strategy's creators departing the company with some issues that were not detected prior to implementation and appeared during implementation. The conclusion of a strategy will not be effective if it is not implemented within the specified time frame (Al-Ghandi, 1998) ^[1]. The Nigerian master plan was scheduled to be implemented in 2006, however owing to the government's lack of interest, the strategy was not implemented on time.

Conclusion and Recommendation

To prevent the dispute that the master plan experienced, all stakeholders should be involved in the creation of the strategy. To ensure that the new plan is carried out properly, the activities in it should be monitored. Nigeria will become one of the most popular tourist destinations if the country addresses tourism concerns seriously. Despite the fact that the current administration has notified the public about its plan to work with UNWTO to implement the tourist master plan, there is still no proof on the ground that the implementation process has been revised. Nigeria is endowed with tourist resources that, if properly developed and promoted, will make the country wealthy than oil. Following the failure of the tourist master plan, the research recommends that the government develop a tourism strategy to address the industry's present problems.

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