
**FARMERS-HERDERS
CRISIS AND ITS
IMPLICATION TO
SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT IN
NORTH CENTRAL
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Despite all these tourism potentials in the North central region, currently, they are facing multiple security challenges like Bandit, Boko Haram, herders, and farmers' crisis, kidnapping, communal conflict. But the most troublesome of them all is the farmers-herders conflict, which hinders accessing those attractions for potential visitors. Not accessing these numerous attractions in the region has negative economic and social-cultural implications for sustainable tourism development in the North central region, knowing the amount of revenue the industry would have added to the Nigerian economy when harnessed for tourist consumption. This paper

interrogates the theoretical underpinnings of the conflicts and analyses the implications of the crisis towards sustainable tourism development in the study area. For this reason, the research saw the need to examine the farmers-herders' conflict and its implication to sustainable tourism development in North Central Nigeria. To achieve the set objective, the researcher employed a qualitative method. By using a qualitative technique, a documented approach was adopted to gather information or data in the study area. By adopting a qualitative approach, problems identified in the study area include climatic change, depleting space for farming and lack of political will to tackle the crisis, and recommendations on how to stop the farmers-herders conflict in the North central region were proffered.

Keywords: Farmers-Herders, Crisis, Sustainable Tourism Development, North Central

Introduction

The decline of oil price due to the recent pandemic Coronavirus (Covid-19) has proven that Nigeria as a nation has not got it right for over fifty years of her nationhood and this can be attributed to the mono-economy being run since the discovering of oil in Niger Delta region towards the end of colonialism era in 1956 at Oloibiri, Bayelsa

State. According to the United Nations, World Tourism Organization (2002) global economy is presently being driven by three key sectors telecommunication, technology, and tourism. Oil is seriously phasing out and the evidence is the recent pronouncement by the major automobile industries across the world to switch to energy-powered vehicles by 2030-2040. This pandemic (Covid-19) has shown that all we need to do right now is to switch to tourism as one of the trending key sectors of the world economy and without a doubt, we are blessed with cultural, natural, and manmade attractions across the country. The direct economic contribution of the tourism industry alone to the global economy has reached two trillion US dollars generating more than 100 million jobs. When the impacts induced in auxiliary sectors are also considered, the number of jobs increases to 260 million, yielding to 9% global Gross Domestic Products (WTTC, 2012a).

Despite huge tourism deposits in the six geo-political zones in Nigeria ranging from cultural, natural, and manmade attractions, yet those tourism potentials are yet to be harnessed to enable Nigeria to take her share of the global GDP due to multiple challenges. The most recent challenge is the insecurity outbreak in almost all six

regions. It is obvious that insecurity and tourism do not collaborate and will never. Security and tourism are like twins of the same coin whatever affects one affects the other. Security is the mechanism put in place to avoid, prevent, reduce, or resolve violent conflicts, and threats that originate from other states, non-state actors, or structural sociopolitical and economic conditions (Umana, 2019). Insecurity, on the other hand, is seen as a breach of peace and security; whether historical, religious, ethnic, regional, civil, social, economic, and political that contributes to recurring conflicts, and leads to wanton destruction of lives and property (Dele et al. 2018), which on a long run can hinder attainment of sustainable development goal in every given area.

North-central Nigeria which comprises, Federal Capital Territory FCT, Kogi, Benue, Kwara, Niger, Nasarawa, and Plateau states are blessed with huge tourism potentials, ranging from the famous Lord Lugard colonial rest house and museum of colonial history in Kogi state, Sheraton hotel and Aso Rock villa in Abuja, Jos wildlife park, and Pandam Game Reserve in Plateau state, Dajo pottery Makurdi and Enemabia Warm spring in Benue state, Zuma Rock and Bina Footprints in Niger state, Eggon Hills, and National Gallery of

Art Lafia in Nasarawa state, The first National Museum in Nigeria (Esie Museum), Imoleboja Rock shelter and Dada pottery in Kwara state, etc. Despite all these tourism potentials in the region, they are currently facing with multiple security challenges like Bandit, Boko Haram, herders and farmers crisis, kidnapping, communal conflict, but the most worrisome of them all is the farmers-herders crisis Which hinders accessing those attractions for potential visitors.

Not accessing these numerous those attractions in the region has negative economic and social-cultural implications to sustainable tourism development in the region and Nigeria at large, knowing the huge amount of revenue the industry would have added to our economy when harnessed for tourist consumption. This paper interrogates the theoretical underpinnings of the conflicts and analyses the trends of the conflict towards tourism development in the study area. For this reason, this paper saw the need to examine the farmers-herders' crisis and its implication to sustainable tourism development in North Central Nigeria. The later parts of this research include; conceptualization of terms, methodology, review of related literature, and causes of farmers-herders crisis, its implications to sustainable

tourism development and dynamics recommendations are proffered as well.

Conceptualization Of Terms

Insecurity:

The concept of insecurity has a different meaning to different individuals; there is no generally agreed definition of insecurity since it is regularly initiated from alternative viewpoint security. United Nations Development Programme (1994) sees human security to incorporate constant danger like appetite sickness and other constraints of life. The condition of dread or tension originating from an absolute or claimed absence of security or lacking opportunity from risk is viewed as insecurity (Beland, 2005). According to Achumba et al (2013), insecurity is a condition of being liable to threat, presented to hazard or tension. A man of property is said to be secured when not being presented to any peril or danger of real or bad animosity, misfortune, burglary, or breakdown (Eme and Anyadike, 2015). For this research, we adopt the Dele et al definition of insecurity which captured our area of interest. They defined insecurity as a breach of peace and security whether historical, religious, and ethnic-regional, civil, social, economic, cultural, and political unrest that contributes to the

wanton destruction of lives and properties (Dele, et al 2018).

Sustainability

There is a recent trend on the concept of tourism, sustainability, and development, regarding the current management practice of tourism destinations that may lead to the destruction of the goods that lay the golden eggs and other economic viability of the host community or nation (WTO, 1996; Huyber and Benneth, 2003). This is likely to take place where there is unplanned tourism development. It is the failure of various development theories in different economic sectors that lead to the new idea about development concept or as Harris (2000) puts it, the failure of development in many areas has dictated the need for reform or radical rethinking of the concept of development and changes are required in both goals and methods. The growing awareness of these challenges to traditional development doctrines has led to the increasingly wide acceptance of a new concept- that of sustainable development (Onodugo, 2016). In our point of view, sustainability is the act or condition in which both material and non-material cultural practices are being preserved for posterity purposes.

Tourism

Tourism is one of the leading sectors in the world economy outside telecommunication and technology. According to United World Tourism Organization (2008) tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors which may be either tourists or excursionists. (Residence or non-residence) and tourism has to do with the activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure at the visited destination (UNWTO, 2008). The definition of tourism is best understood in two standpoints; the 'conceptual' definition of tourism, dealing with the core meaning of tourism, and the 'technical' definition of tourism, focused on evaluating and measuring the value of tourism which is primarily changeable in different tourism destination across countries of the world. In a conceptual standpoint, tourism is defined as the temporary-short term movement of people to a destination outside the place of residents and actions during their stay at these destinations; it includes movement for all-purpose as well as day visit and excursion, while from technical standpoint tourism is defined as the activities of persons during their travel and stay in a destination outside their usual place or

location, for a continuous period of less than one year, for leisure, business and other related purposes (UNWTO, 2013).

Based on the above, tourism can be defined as the movement of people from one place to another for a purpose which may include, both tangible and intangible cultural resources like the festival, sightseeing, gastronomy, dance, crafts, hunting, visit the natural landscape, scenic areas, business and other purposes for not less than twenty-four hours in the place visited, the money spent must be drive from home and he/she must go back to his place of residence after the visit. Tourism can be demotic (Within the traveler's own country or international across one geographical border).

Development

A nation cannot progress without adequate infrastructural development and human empowerment that anchored on even development in every sector of the economy. The development itself can be seen as the process by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people and as well as anticipate for a better future for the incoming generations. It is a general improvement in the economic, social, and political conditions of the whole society in terms of reduction or elimination of poverty and unemployment within the context of a

growing economy (Openjuru, 2004). Development can also be defined as a process of economic and social advancement in terms of the quality of human life. It can be measured in terms of culture, wealth, education, healthcare, opportunities and can be commonly classified by the following terms: HDI-human development index, a UN standardized measure based on three factors: life expectancy, literacy/education, and standard of living, GDP-Gross domestic product, values of goods and services divided by the number of people in the country (www.mytutor.co.uk, 2018).

Okpoko and Ezeadichie (2002:3) defined development as 'positive change in both the material and non-material aspect of human life within the framework of available cultural and natural resources'. World Commission on Environment and Development (1978) in Okpoko and Ezeadichie (2002:4) defined development from a sustainable perspective as 'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs'. Based on the above, development can be defined as bringing about social change that allows present inhabitants of a place to achieve their human potentials without foreclosing the ability of the

incoming generations from achieving their potentials from the same available cultural and natural resources inherited as a member of that particular group.

Sustainable Tourism Development

According to World Tourism Organization WTO (2013) sustainable tourism is viewed as the application of a sustainable development point of view in the tourism sector, tourism development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. Weaver (2006:33) in a similar note asserts that 'sustainable tourism involves the minimization of negative impacts of tourism and the maximization of positive impacts in a destination'. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia (2004) in Eze-Uzomaka (2006:96) notes that 'sustainable tourism development is a process that allows developers to take place without degrading or depleting the resources which made the development possible'. It is in line with the concept that United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1970) defined sustainable tourism development as tourism that respects the local people and the traveler, cultural heritage, and the environment. It seeks to provide people with an exciting and educational holiday

that is also of benefit to the people of the host country or nation.

Based on the aforementioned, we adopt the WTO (1998) definition which sees sustainable tourism development as tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the incoming ones. It is a perception that leads to management of all resources in a way that could meet the economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems of the people (www.wordtourism.org/sustainableconcepts)

Methodology

A qualitative technique was employed to achieve the above research objective. A qualitative method is a research technique that allows a researcher to source information or data directly in the research area with the help of naked eyes (first hand) or other documented materials done by other scholars of likewise mindset (second hand). By using the qualitative technique, a documented approach (second hand) was used to gather information or data in the research area. Such documents came in forms of textbooks, journals, newspapers and magazines, and other archive material

that has relevant information to the research interest.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Tourism can only triumph in a secure environment and governments across the globe have seen the need by doing everything possible to have a secured environment which is the key that drives every successful tourism industry. According to Asongu and Kodila-Tedila (2017) over thirty percent (30%) of the global annual GDP is spent on fighting and preventing insecurity-related issues. This substantial portion of the world GDP represents the combined annual wealth produced by a significant number of technically advanced nations namely; Brazil, France, Germany, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The study also projected global negative externalities to rise in the coming year (Asongu, et al. 2019). This projection and report are in line with the contemporary report from the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime. According to UNODC (2013) violence, murder, crimes, and political instability represent growing policy syndromes that need to be prevented and mitigated if

resources are to be diverted to more valuable policy initiatives that are reflected in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. This is vital because, on one hand, public expenditure is substantially diverted from the provision of public services and on the other hand, insecurity related externalities have detrimental effects on the sound development of many economic sectors. For instance, the most affected sector by insecurity and other related crime and violent activities in the tourism industry (Asongu, et al, 2019).

The tourism industry is highly associated with risk perceptions that unavoidably determine the arrival of tourists to every given tourism destinations. In this regard, scholars posit in a sympathetic to the perspective that standards of safety in tourism destinations are essentials in determining the decisions of travelers on destinations that are safe related to those that are unsafe (Kingsbury and Brunn, 2004; Pizam and Fleischer, 2002; Sonnmez, et al 1999). According to Lepp et al (2001) the unfavorable ramifications of the underpinning concerns of security influence tourist perception of risk in a host country. Consequently, such perceptions of risks are not exclusively country-focused because in a situation where a particular tourist destination is not directly strife and

significant risks of insecurity factors may constrain tourists to avoid such tourist destinations because of potential transnational insecurity accidents (Lepp and Gibson, 2005; Yaya, 2009). And this puts Honey (1999) right when he observes how externalities of the Gulf war influenced tourist decision to travel to Kenya and Tanzania as alternative destinations, and recently the incidence of the Syria war on Jordanian tourism corporation (Liu et al, 2016). According to Drako and Kutan (2003), Kapusinski and Richard (2006) the factors of perceived risks on potential travelers fundamental builds on the fact that violence, crime, and political strife instill fear on people's desires to visit affected areas. In a similar note, Hoffman (2006) posit that negative psychological effects of terror in a destination will pass a wrong signal to potential visitors, Shin (2005) added on the creation of psychological chaos associated with violence and perceived risks from tourist. Pizam and Manfeld (2006) established the continuous articulation of hot spots of violence and crime in risky tourist destinations reduces long-run perceptions of risk in corresponding tourist destinations. Saha and Yap (2014) observed that countries which are associated with moderately significant low levels of terror activities and political strife are

unexpectedly also linked with moderately significant arrival of tourist. Violence and crime vary from one destination to another. It also has to do with time factor; terror incidents prompt short term unfavorable effects on tourist arrival (Coshell 2005; Liv and Pratt 2017). While Sonmez and Graete (1998), Saha, and Yap (2014) posit that such consequences of conflicts persist over time. This is consistent with Sonmez (1998) who had earlier established that political strife substantially affects long-run decisions on the choice of travel destinations. Typical examples are in the work of Alvarez and Campo (2016) who posits that the longstanding crisis between Israel and Palestine affects the decision of tourists to travel to the countries in conflicts. Another good example according to Rittichainuwat and Rattanphinanchai (2015) is the strife between South Korea and North Korea has significantly affected the long-run decision image of both countries and by extension tourist arrival in these two countries. Sharply (2013) and Farmaki et al (2015) established that the 1974 invasion of Cyprus by Turkey considerably determine the arrival of tourist while Mehmmod et al (2016) has documented that the war in Syria has wiped out the country's tourism industry.

Thus, Africa and most importantly our dear nation Nigeria is no exemption from this outbreak called insecurity, and this puts Achumba, et al (2013) right when they distinguished two noteworthy sources of different insecurity of institutional limit bringing about government disappointment, inescapable material disparities and injustice, ethno-religious clashes, the struggle of discernment between the society and government, feeble security framework, less of social-social and public esteem encouragement. Then secondly, prompt and proximate variables include a porous border in both local and urban areas, political recklessness of organizations, terror-mongering, and joblessness, and hardship among the citizens. The resultant effects of the aforementioned uncertainty have crippled the little effort put in place over the years by tourism developers in resuscitating our dying tourism industry which North-central Nigeria have in large quantity.

Causes of the herders and farmers crisis in north central

Nigeria.

Since the return to democracy in 1999, Nigeria has been grappling with diverse security challenges, chief among them are insurgency, election violence, kidnapping, and most recently the herder-farmers crisis.

The north-central states of Nigeria, the Benue state, plateau and Nasarawa, and other north-central states have experienced a crisis that led to thousands of deaths and displacements as a result of clashes between pastoralists (herders) and local farmers in several communities. In January 2018 alone, an amnesty international report indicates that 168 people were killed as a result of herders-farmers clashes. Struggle over grazing land and scarce resources have over the years resulted in perennial and growing violent conflict in terms of frequency, intensity and geographic scope underpinning the escalation in frequency of conflicts in Nigeria is a confluence of environmental and demographic forces, especially desertification caused by climate change and population explosion. Expectedly with the depletion of arable land for subsistence farming largely as a result of increasing urbanization and the adverse effect of climate change, especially along the Lake Chad basin, there is increased struggle between farmers and herders leading to violent confrontation and conflicts, deaths, and forced displacements as well as the destruction of agriculture and livestock.

The persistent attack in Benue state has had a spillover effect on the neighboring state of Nasarawa in January 2018. The news

agency of Nigeria reported that over 18,000 internally displaced persons (IDP) were in 11 camps in Nasarawa state. A major cause for the escalating intensity of the increasing proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria given that the host community (including farmers) also has access to sophisticated weapons minor disagreements or provocation often degenerates into violent clashes destroying property and human casualties.

Enablers Of The Of Farmers And Herders Crises

Several factors combine to escalate the conflict among the identified actors. Some of these include; climate change and environmental degradation depleting arable land for farming, and lack of political will to tackle the challenges.

Climate Change

Climate is a critical factor in the activities of herdsmen and farmers. The changing climatic condition, generally referred to as global warming, is no doubt taking a toll on the survival of herdsmen and farmers business. The desert encroachment from the Sahara towards the Sahel region and other associated climatic conditions have continued to affect the livelihood of

herdsmen as they push further south in search of available space. Pitching them against farmers and host communities, this global phenomenon is currently affecting many parts of the world with attendant consequences including the herdsmen-farmers conflict.

Depleting Space For Farming

Constant urbanization and demographic shifts in the present day world has increased the tendency and livelihood of farmers to further afield for farming activities in a reserved land for ranching

Lack Of Political Will To Tackle The Crisis

Some of the political leaders in the affected areas do not have the political will to tackle the crisis, reason being that the crisis might be benefiting them in one way or the other especially during elective period.

Herder-Farmer Crisis; Its Implications To Sustainable Tourism Development

Farmers-Herders Crisis its implications to sustainable tourism development in the study area, as stated from the onset of this research, tourism and security work together. Whatever affects one affects the other. And no tourist or visitor will visit a destination that poses a security threat no matter the number of attractions the destination display. The Farmers-Herders

crisis has affected once-blooming tourism activities in the North Central region, and this has gone a long way to hinder the realization of sustainable tourism development in the north-central region and Nigeria at large.

The Farmers-Herders crisis in the North Central has social-cultural, social-economic implications. For instance, Jos in Plateau state used to be a tourism destination that attracts both international and domestic tourists to the area for sightseeing and environmental tourism. The Farmers-Herders crisis cum Jos crisis have made once Europe (Jos) of Africa no going area, and many residents have to flee for the safety of their lives, and we all know that the tourism industry is peoples intensive. Its people that make tourism to happen, therefore, without both the residents and the tourists, tourism industry make no sense at all in the North central region.

Secondly, the farmers-herders crisis has a negative implication on socio-economic activities since the outbreak of this crisis in the North Central region. For instance, farmers who largely depend on agricultural products to survive are losing because of the conflict. Also, they cannot cultivate their land nor market their goods freely any more due to fear of the unknown. Besides

this, tourists who patronize their products are not forthcoming due to the crisis, therefore, subjecting the region and the entire nation to the shortage of food that has economic demerit to the North-Central region and Nigeria at large.

Conclusion

Propelled by the desertification, insecurity, and the loss of grazing land to expanding settlements, the southward migration of Nigerian herders are causing violence and completion over the land with local farmers. Against this backdrop, the alarming insecurity caused by the crisis between the farmers and herders has over time; limit the economic advantage which Tourism coffered on North-central Nigeria owing to its topography. The near silence from the federal government of Nigeria and inadequate response from the state governments have left the affected communities in despair. Farmers-herders conflicts have persisted for too long hence the need to address the root cause and prevent further degeneration into chaos. When the solution is achieved, the sustainable tourism development will be economically witnessed by the North-central and Nigeria at larger. Therefore, the following recommendation will be helpful;

(1)Traditional and local leaders should form a committee that will be well involved

in finding solutions to farmer herdsman conflict. The committees proposed above must have representatives of local leadership.

(2) A multi-stage conflict management framework is required to curb the danger posed by the farmer- herdsman conflict and tourism site should be upgraded in all its locations in the north-central regions.

(3) Education among the two parties should be realistically encouraged and youth should be encouraged to venture into tourism as a lucrative business.

(4) The social attitude of sharing and cultural exchanges should be encouraged between various ethnic groups even if during the peace era. The government, civil society leaders, and parents should be at the forefront in enforcing this to their respective communities. Politicians should desist from engendering differences between people but encourage togetherness despite political differences. Those involved in the allocation of land for farming should imbibe responsibility and not allocate along cattle route or over grazing land.

(5) The government should establish grazing land reserves in the North-Central regions and also encourage private investors to invest in large grazing areas.

This will enable herders to stop encroaching or invading on the farmlands.

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