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LIBRARIANSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM: SPECIAL FOCUS ON BIBLIOTOURISM

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ABSTRACT

The contextual environment of library in the 21st century has given way to diversity of library services. The library has moved from the era of being a place where people come to conduct research or reading to what is now known all over the globe as infonomics; moving from the era of thinking and talking of library information materials as asset but, giving it the economic value that it actually worth. In the same vein, library, no doubt has prominent role to play in sustainability of hospitality and tourism development which has great influence on the nation's economic growth and sustainability. Hospitality and tourism can be promoted and sustained through bibliotourism. This paper therefore, expounds the concept of bibliotourism and its influence on sustainability of hospitality and tourism development. For libraries in Nigeria to successfully court tourism to harness bibliotourism, concerted effort must be made by the government and all stakeholders in information profession to make our libraries centers of excellence and attraction. The paper therefore recommends that the library must be architecturally imposing exuding beauty and awe as is usually found of libraries in other nations and offer dynamic services and resources that catch the fancy of all people.

Keywords: Bibliotourism, Librarianship, Library, Sustainable tourism development, Sustainable hospitality development.

INTRODUCTION

Librarianship which according to Herold (2001) has being in existence before both documentation and computing, has to do with the professional management of library resources and services. Library Science, evolving from the application of scientific method to the field of bibliography (Herold, 2001) and being a multidisciplinary field, “applies the practices, perspectives, and tools of management, information technology, education, and other areas to libraries” (“Library Science”, 2018). The library, which can be a physical building or a virtual space, is the collection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information bearing materials. The library has evolved with human civilization and dated back to as long as man began to codify information in written form such as the clay tablets.

The link between library and tourism can be understood from the components of library that define its purpose in the society. Such components as library being a place, physical or virtual, or the collection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information resources, make the role of library the more important to the tourism sector. In fact, Ksenija and Ivo (2017) have described library as the store house of works of cultural heritage that promote consciousness of the cultural identity of places. They further opined that libraries contribute to the economic development of societies through such programmes and services that arise from their cultural, educational and information functions. Tourism like librarianship is multidisciplinary and has thus given rise to new disciplines and areas of endeavours such as agritourism, ecotourism, e-tourism, gastrotourism, sports tourism and so on. The intermarriage of tourism and librarianship has brought about the emerging concept of bibliotourism.

Smith (2004) explained that tourism is as old as man and it is a normal and pleasurable feature of humans. Tourism and travel are often used interchangeably; in fact, the United States of America will

prefer travel for tourism (Page & Connell, 2009). According to Nyankey (2012) travel has become an important aspect of people in modern times. Tourism, nonetheless, is associated with three travel issues: travelling away from one's home for 24 hours, using one's leisure time to travel and take holiday, and travelling for business. Although, tourism has its root in developed western economies, it has today become a part of a global process of change and development known as globalization (Page & Connell, 2009).

It has been reported that tourism is the world fastest growing industry and "one of the world's largest single industries, experiencing rapid expansion in recent decades" (Nyankey, 2012). The number of international tourist arrivals grew from 441 million in 1990 to 903 million in 2007 (WTO, 2008). Describing tourism as one of the most important global industries, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) reported that it was worth \$733 billion in 2003 and employed 234.3 million people in 2006, a sharp rise from 112 million people it hired in 1991 (WTO, 2008). To further assert the fast pace of growth the industry has been enjoying, 982 million people were reported to have traveled internationally in 2011 with international tourism receipts surpassing \$1 trillion in the same year (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2012).

DEFINITION AND KINDS OF TOURISM

With broad base in diverse disciplines, the definition of tourism has always taken root in the field in which it is being defined. Buckart and Medlik (1981) have highlighted five main characteristics of the concept of tourism:

They are:

1. tourism arises from the movement of people to and their stay in various destinations
2. there are two elements in all tourism: the journey to the destination and the stay including activities at the destination.
3. the journey and the stay take place outside the normal place of residence and work, so that tourism give rise to activities which are distinct from those of the residents and working populations of the places through which tourists travel and in which they stay.
4. the movement to destination is of a temporary short-term character, with the intention to return home within a few days, weeks or months.
5. destinations are visited for purposes other than taking up permanent residence or employment remunerated from within the place visited.

Notwithstanding, there has been the need to find more technical definitions of tourism (Page & Connell, 2009). An appropriate definition was recommended by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) at the International Conference of Travel and Tourism in Ottawa, Canada in 1991.

The definition comprised of three technical issues:

- (a) Purpose of travel;
- (b) The time dimension, a minimum stay of more than 24 hours away from home and a maximum of less than a year;
- (c) Situation where tourist may or may not be included as tourist e.g. as cruise-ship passengers.

Summarily, the WTO definition stated that "tourism comprises of the activities of a person travelling outside his or her usual environment for less than a specified period of time and whose main purpose of travel is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from the place visited" (WTO, 1991).

Different kinds of tourism have been identified: international tourism, which consist of inbound tourism, visit to a country by non-residents, and outbound tourism, residents of a country visiting another country. Internal tourism involves residents of a country visiting their own country (Page & Connell, 2009).

IMPACT OF TOURISM

The impact of tourism has been broadly classified into three, namely: economic impact, sociocultural impact and environmental impact (Fadipe, 2014; Page & Connell, 2009, Mason, 2008). The economic impact of tourism and its contribution to national prosperity cannot be overemphasized. Governments develop the tourist potentials of their countries for their economic gains. It has been shown that the economic benefits of tourism improved balance of payments bringing foreign spending to the local economy, enhancing national income and increasing the gross domestic product of the country. Employment which may be direct, indirect or induced are also created.

Social and cultural impact relate to changes in societal value system, individual behavior, social relationship, lifestyles, and modes of expression and community structures. Apart from luggage, Sharpley (1994) opined that "all tourists to a lesser or greater extent, inevitably take on holiday their own beliefs, values and behavioral modes: what may be termed cultural baggage". In the same vein people in host communities interact with tourists. The result of host communities peoples 'direct or indirect interaction with tourist has been termed sociocultural impact of tourism by Mathieson and Wall (1982). So, these impacts may be felt on language, religion and other aspects of the people's culture.

Environmental impacts can be positive or negative. Since the groundbreaking work, "*Tourism: Blessing or Blight*" by Young(1973) there have been many studies on the environmental impact of tourism (Krippendorf, 1987; Wood & House, 1991). Holden (2008) has linked the debate on environmental consequences of tourism and the desirability of further development to the growth of tourism.

Although, there seem to be a symbiotic relationship between tourism and the environment such that without an attractive environment, there would be no tourism (Mathieson & Wall, 1982), the negative effect of tourism on the environment cannot be ignored. Page and Connell (2009) citing Grossling(2002) reported that tourism contributes to changes in land use, energy use, extinction of wild species, the geographical spread of disease and changes to the perception of the environment. However, they discussed the nature and scope of environmental impacts of tourism which they hinged on three broad aspects of tourism: travel, tourism destination development and tourism associated activities. All these put together has necessitated the birth of sustainable tourism development.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The growth of the tourism industry and its attendant impacts on, especially, the environment gave rise to the concept of sustainability of tourism development which is a derivative of sustainable development. Sustainable development has been well discussed in literature. In fact, the erstwhile global goal, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), have matured into Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNDP, 2016). This is to emphasize the importance of sustainable development.

Sustainable development is a derivative of the broader term, sustainability. Afolabi (2006) gave the A-Z ways in which sustainability can be defined. He opined first and foremost that, sustainability is what exists when a society wants to continue to derive benefits from the earth's resources without jeopardizing the future availability of resources while preserving the integrity of natural and man-made systems.

Historically, the idea of sustainable development is rooted in sustainable forest management developed in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Blewitt, 2015). Sustainable Development is defined as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland Report, 1987). It is also seen as positive change that does not undermine the environmental or social systems on which we depend. It also means balancing the fulfillment of human needs with the protection of the natural environment.

Sustainable tourism development derives from sustainable development. Whereas, large volumes of literature exist on the topic, sustainable tourism is reported to be the most researched areas of tourism (Meek & Sullivan, 2012). Although, there is no consensus on the definition of sustainable tourism, WTO (2004) has identified three major elements that underlie the meaning of sustainable tourism, viz: making optimal use of environmental resources, respecting the sociocultural authenticity of host communities, and ensuring viable, long – term economic operations providing socioeconomic benefits to all stakeholders.

From the foregoing, Page and Connell identified the need for a balanced relationship between the local community or host, the visitors and the environment. They further outlined the rationale for sustainable tourism. Apart from stimulating awareness of tourism impact and planning well to identify limits of acceptable change/carrying capacities, the rest of the rationale outlined by them focus on the local communities. Such focus includes employment generation among locals, viability of local enterprises, income retention, respect for the integrity of the local environment among others. Others are minimization of negative impact and help with conservation of national and built environment.

In the same vein, Page and Connell (2009) reviewed tools and schemes for sustainability in tourism development viz: corporate environmental management, environmental impact assessment for both large and small projects, and environmental auditing to evaluate existing tourism business practice in relation to environmental performance. Others are: development of environmental policies and statements by stakeholders, growth management strategies, visitor management to protect the environment and guarantee enjoyment for visitors, and carrying capacity and limits of acceptable change measurement.

At the heart of all these is the need for information and data. The world has never demonstrated the thirst for data than now. The Library is the storehouse of data and information thus, the relationship between the librarianship and sustainable tourism development.

LIBRARY AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The library is a core component of the tourism industry with enormous potential to contribute to its sustainability. The Corporate Committee for Library Investment (CCLDI) in their advocacy against reduction in Federal funding of American libraries for fiscal year 2017 described library as “critical national infrastructure: ubiquitous, indispensable, and economically essential”. In fact, they reported that the more than 120,000 libraries of all types in America received visitors 1.4 billion times a year. This projects libraries as first and foremost a critical part of the tourism industry.

In addition, as cultural institution, the library helps preserve the history of the communities it serves in the most sustainable way. Through its preservation and archival services, library avails historical resources for the users of today and the future. This is a key element of sustainability. In fact, locals are often employed in public libraries to undertake certain parts of their services such as the story telling services. The Library of Congress, the largest library in the world, for instance, has staff and volunteers who guide tourists/visitors through the historic library located at the heart of Washington, D.C. Also, libraries keep information materials called collections that can help tourists understand the tourists ‘sites they visit. Through their reference collections such as guides, directories and magazines, prospective tourists can gain access to useful information to make tourist decisions which Sobalaje and Ogunmodede (2015) called marketing of tourism.

Public Libraries have started loaning “materials more than book” such as sewing machine (Garrison, 2015). Many other technologies such as computers and internet connectivity services are rendered by libraries. This may enhance sustainable tourism as tourist need not bother themselves with the issue of carrying about information gadgets and/or connectivity in foreign lands. In fact, libraries now circulate technologies such as mobile Wi-Fi, phones/tablets which can be taken to travel for the

entire loan period. In the US, as at 2012, 91% of libraries offer free wireless Internet to their patrons; and 90% offer formal or informal technology training (Hoffman, Bertot & Davis, 2012). A lot of libraries today operate virtually to meet the information needs of people with the ease of technology. This has brought about digital or virtual libraries which host lots of tourist friendly information for ease of access and at all times.

In addition, libraries play critical role in literacy of all kinds, from information to media literacy and now environmental literacy. Making information available on sustainable use of the environment is part of the major commitment of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) in support of the SDGs (Bradley, 2012). She reported that “IFLA has a SIG focused on environmental and sustainability issues” and that IFLA sees “increased access to information and knowledge, underpinned by universal literacy” as a main frame of sustainable development.

In the same vein, libraries have been very active in the training and development of human capital and capacity. The Corporate Committee for Library Investment (CCLI) (2017) reported that 90% of libraries train children and adults in computer literacy and other online skills and that 48% provide entrepreneurs and small business owners with online resources. They averred that the “health of businesses”, including the tourism industry, “workers and communities is inextricably linked to the health of libraries”. All these functionalities of libraries are apart from their capabilities to serve as tourist destinations themselves.

BIBLIOTOURISM: LIBRARY AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION

Fleur Morrison in her June 25, 2017 blog post titled “*Library Tourism Could Be The Next Big Trend*” hinted on the next big thing in travel which she coined as bibliotourism. Bibliotourism refers to visiting literary landmarks (Zimmerman, 2012). It may also involve visits to bookstores and libraries. Reading, which library represents, is traveling (Aleph, 2018). He noted that one of the surest routes to the literary heart of a community is to visit its library. To him a booklover or bibliophile is a tourist.

Relying on basic commonalities between the library and other tourist attractions, Morris (2017) narrated how visiting New York made her consider libraries as tourist attractions. This is in connection with her assertion that, like any tourist attraction, libraries speak much about a place. This view is corroborated by Aleph who related the feelings a tourist has at any tourist site to that of the library that possess “a charming spirit that will always offer something magnetic, at least, to those who appreciate books, their production processes, the paper of their pages and even their unmistakable smell”. In addition, according to Morris, library might be a gathering place for the local community, or a hallowed space of hush and grandeur. Their design can vary greatly, from modern domes to historic reading rooms of walnut and gold, depending on the era and place in which the library was built. In many cities, the library stands as a monument to the history of design and scholarship.

Such libraries, as described above, attract more visitors than other regular tourist sites and events especially in America and Europe. For instance, with 37 million visitors in 2014, the New York Public Libraries had more users than many professional sports, performing arts, museums, natural gardens and zoos combined (Dwyer, 2015). This was corroborated by a blogger who stated that “of the city’s many destinations, New York libraries have the most visitors” (Cueto, 2015). Also, the Library of Congress in 2017 had 1.9 million visitors. In addition, libraries played significant roles in civilizations. Relics and/or modernized versions of ancient libraries remain top national monuments of ancient civilizations.

- Aleph listed some of the world’s six top libraries mostly visited as bibliotourist sites. They are:
1. The Vatican Library, founded in 1475, has the oldest complete manuscript of the Bible and about 75,000 ancient codices;
 2. British Museum Reading Room, opened in 1857, used by the likes of Karl Marx, Mahatma

Gandhi;

3. Bodleian Library, the main research library of the University of Oxford, opened in 1602.
4. New York Public Library, with the entrance guarded by two enormous lions, Patience and Fortitude, the third largest library in the world, with more than 50 million titles;
5. Library of Alexandria, the largest and most important repository in the ancient world, the current Egyptian library is a tribute to what is today but a dream of the past;
6. Marciana Library, founded in 1468, in Venice, home to one of the most important collections of classical texts in the world, including codices and ancient manuscripts from all cultures.

Despite this huge potential, the Nigerian libraries are far cry from what is obtainable elsewhere Adegbilero-Iwari (2017).

THE NIGERIAN CASE? WHAT THERE IS, WHAT THERE CAN BE AND A CALL TO ACTION

According to Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), there are just over 316 public libraries in Nigeria and as many libraries as the higher institutions that there exist. Altogether, they will be in few thousands, less than two, to estimate. So, there is a huge lacuna between the population and the public libraries that are available to serve them. Ekiti State for instance, has just one unattractive public library to serve over 2 million people. The story is more worrisome at the Federal level. Although, about 26 branches of the National Library of Nigeria (NLN) exist across the nation, yet efforts to build a befitting headquarters in Abuja remain static since it was conceived more than a decade ago. Senator Gbenga Ashafa lamented on the floor of the Senate the abysmal state of the project last year as reported by the Punch of November 1, 2017.

On what there can be, a monumental National Library building can be constructed to reflect the history of Nigeria in relation to education and culture. The Library must be architecturally imposing, exuding beauty and awe as is usually found of libraries of such stature in other nations. This way, it can become a landmark for bibliotourism center in the nation's capital. Also, state governments can also, on their own, embark on bibliotourism projects by building public libraries that will arouse reading culture and also serve as states' monuments for tourist attraction.

CONCLUSION

The library is a very important sector to sustainable tourism development. The idea of bibliotourism should excite stakeholders in the tourism industry and spur them to join efforts with librarians to activate the potentials of the library in Nigeria. A call to action is now being made to all stakeholders to explore the new possibilities of bibliotourism as an avenue for sustainable tourism development in Nigeria. Strong emphasis must be placed on library development. Modernisation and beautification of libraries must take priority position in the budget of governments and activities of stakeholders.

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