



## **NIGERIA'S TOURISM MASTER PLAN AND ISSUES ON ITS STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION**

**ELDAH EPHRAIM BUBA; FLORENCE ELMA; AGASI &  
SANUSI ABUBAKAR SADIQ**

*Department of Leisure and Tourism Management, Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi,  
Bauchi State, Nigeria.*

### **Abstract**

*There are some challenges facing Nigeria as a tourist destination, these are; political instability, access and internal transportation, weak marketing approach, ineffective tourism information system, low quality of accommodation, untrained personnel in the sector, insecurity and the negative image of Nigeria abroad. This study is aimed at identifying the factors that hindered the implementation of the tourism master plan in Nigeria. Secondary data was used for the study; this includes reports, newspaper articles, documented audio interviews and previous studies. The study found out that the Nigeria tourism master plan had issues of soft factors, hard factors and mixed factors. These factors affected its strategic implementation and delayed a lot of activities as stated in the plan. Governments come up with a tourism strategy that would deal with the current issues in the tourism sector. There should be involvement of all stake holders in the formulation of the strategy to avoid the conflict that the master plan faced. The actions in the new strategy should be monitored to ensure that it is carried out effectively. Nigeria will be one of the leading destinations for tourism if the country seriously takes the issues of tourism important.*

**Keywords**— *Masterplan, Strategic, Implementation, Tourism.*

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is a country that is located in West Africa, it has a population of 155,892,000 million people out of which 90 million live below 1\$ per day. The country is blessed with tourist attractions ranging from cultural attractions, waterfalls, historical monuments, wildlife and beaches (Oyakhilome, 2011). The country's major income is from crude oil, in year 2011 the country made \$95.9 billion on crude oil exports. Because of the country's reliance on petroleum products for its income the government in 2005 decided to find an alternative contributor to the country's economy. It is as a result of this that the government sorts out the assistance of the

United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the formulation of a tourism master plan.

Nigeria as a destination has its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The table below outlined the SWOT of the countries situation as far as tourism is concern.

Table 1.1.SWOT analysis of Nigeria as a tourist destination

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cultural attractions</b></li> <li>• <b>Beaches</b></li> <li>• <b>Ecotourism</b></li> <li>• <b>Presidential action committee on tourism</b></li> <li>• <b>Beautiful scenery</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete vulnerability</li> <li>• marketing approach</li> <li>• Visa regime</li> <li>• Promotions</li> <li>• Foreign tour operators</li> <li>• Government legislation</li> <li>• Private sector involvement</li> <li>• Tourism information system</li> <li>• Internal transportation</li> <li>• Quality of hotels</li> <li>• Insecurity</li> <li>• Technological advancement</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Market</b></li> <li>• <b>Improved national parks</b></li> <li>• <b>cultural diversity</b></li> <li>• <b>Special interest tourism</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism</li> <li>• Political instability</li> <li>• Increased competition</li> <li>• Incentive and investment</li> <li>• Access and international transport</li> <li>• Technological advancement</li> <li>• Negative image of Nigeria</li> </ul>

The above table shows how Nigeria is blessed with tourist's resources, these resources consist of cultural attraction derived from over 260 ethnic groups, and there are 11 national parks in Nigeria which makes it to be rich in eco-tourism. There are some challenges facing Nigeria as a tourist destination, these are; political instability, access and internal transportation, weak marketing approach, ineffective tourism information system, low quality of accommodation, untrained personnel in the sector, insecurity and the negative image of Nigeria abroad. As a result of the

above strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats, UNTW at the request of the government of Nigeria and with the support of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) formulated the tourism master plan and developed some strategic plan on how Nigeria will be a marketable tourist destination (NTMP, 2005). The aim of the tourism master plan is to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Nigerian people and diversify its economy base. The objective of the tourism master plan is to promote the sustainable development of the tourism sector through capacity building of the federal government by providing strategic recommendations in the areas below:

The master plan had areas for concentration on the action plan due to the challenges facing Nigeria as a destination, the master plan made strategic recommendations with action plan for the implementation in areas which require special intervention in the tourism sector. It recommended that there should be introduction of a tourism satellite account for the country in the year 2008 with the involvement of the central bank of Nigeria. The recommendations on organisation and legislation are for new legislation to be enacted to identify clear roles of the federal and state agencies in tourism, the government should establish Nigeria tourism Authority to implement government policy. The requirements for obtaining a visa should be changed to make accessibility into the country easier. The problem of incompetent personnel in the tourism sector is to be tackled by upgrading facilities in higher institutions and introducing MSc programmes in the universities. The marketing and promotion is to be done by identifying markets for Nigeria, market segmentation, branding and partnership with international tour operators. Product development was to be flagged in the six geo-political zones in the country; the government should encourage the development of three star hotels. The tourism information system recommendation states that there should be implementation of tourism information system to collect tourist statistics. The master plans recommended the upgrading of airports and provision of coaches and car hire services. Incentives should be provided to investors in terms of loans, reduced taxes and grants schemes (NTMP, 2005).

NTMP (2005)The implementation action was planned to be carried out by the tourism master plan implementation organization headed by the presidential nominated leadership for access to the president, representatives from the ministry of culture and tourism, ministry of finance, private sector, financial sectors and a full time executive chairman. The services of international consultants will be needed for the action plan. The implementation organization would remain in place for the first three years (2006-2008) the responsibilities would be transferred gradually to NTA who would be responsible for tourism development and marketing. The funding for the implementation of the tourism master plan would be generated from two main

sources; the government of Nigeria and International funding agencies (UNDP, World bank, European Union).

### **Problem of the Study**

The tourism master plan was formulated and implantation was supposed to from the year 2006-2008. However, the implementation did not commence as expected. The areas of development by the master plan is still not been harnessed. There were reports of ineffective coordination between the ministry and the Nigeria tourism development corporation. The political change in the country also contributed in negatively affecting the implementation of the master plan. It is in regards to this that this study examined the strategic implementation of the Nigeria tourism master plan.

### **Objective of the Study**

1. To examine the factors that affected the strategic implementation of the Nigeria tourism master plan.

### **Methodology**

The study is non-empirical which is often associated in people's minds with the 'humanities' and 'natural philosophy' this includes the review of existing literature as explained by Clarke (2003). Clarke (2003) further stated that a comprehensive and a critical analysis of the literature should be provided that illustrates the different theoretical perspectives, trends or debates with regard to the phenomenon under investigation. The literature analysis for the philosophical analysis aims at analyzing arguments or debates in favour or against a particular position. Secondary data are data used for a study that was originally collected a different purpose. Secondary data can be literature from existing study related to the current study (Robinson, 2002; Saunders et al, 2012). The study used secondary data from other similar studies to meet the objectives of the current study.

Data was collected through the following search portals; Science Direct and Google Scholar. This is because the portals have quality studies that have theories and can give better explanation to the problem. Searches for literatures in the portals were conducted between 2013-2014. Key words used for the search were; Nigeria tourism Master plan, strategic implementation, tourism factors affecting strategic implementation. The results for the search were used to review literature on the study; the articles from the search were used to examine the different factors affecting the implementation of the NTMP using Li et al (2008) factors responsible for strategy implementation which are divided into soft, mixed and hard factors. Other works used are NTMP (2005), NTDC, (2010), Tribe (2010), Mustapha (2011),

Allio (2005) and Dredge and Jenkins (2007). The data from the literature were categorized into the three factors identified by Li et al (2008).

### **Factors Affecting Tourism Strategy Implementation**

Strategic implementation takes longer process than formulation of a strategy (Hrebiniak, 2006). Strategy implementation is a plan of actions for strategy implementation, these includes procedures, activities of action plans that let an organization to use its resources to take advantage of openings in the competitive market (Harrington, 2006). The step by step of the implementation of the activities is called Strategy execution (Singh, 1998). Therefore strategic implementation can be defined as a process which comprises different decisions and activities by managers and employees to achieve strategic objectives. (Li et al, 2008) The most difficult aspect of a strategy is not its formulation but its implementation (Zaribaf et al, 2008; Tribe, 2010) Strategy implementation is a major challenge experience by organizations at the moment, 83% of organizations do not implement their strategy successfully and only 17% have consistent strategy implementation (Allio, 2006)

Li et al (2008) divided factors that affect the successful implementation of strategy into three parts, soft, hard and mixed factors. The soft factors are people oriented factors, this include all the people that are responsible for the execution, the communication activities, implementation tactics and the commitment to the strategy. The hard factors involve institutional factors which consist of organization structure and the administrative systems. The mixed factors are issues that relate to the way the strategy was formulated which combines the soft and the hard factors. How the different parts of the organization relate and the different stages of a strategy are also considered as a mixed factor. For the purpose of this study the Li et al (2008) factors would be used.

#### ***Soft Factors***

These factors involve the people that implement the strategy, how they carry out the different task. The communication of information and the level of commitment put in the implementation (Li et al, 2008). The hard factors are classified into five different types as examined below.

#### ***Poor information and communication system***

Information system in strategy implementation deals with how information is passed within the organization. Managers need to effectively pass information regarding the strategy to all the parties concerned. If information is ambiguous then understanding the action would not be possible. There are four important aspect of information,

these are the quality of the information, the appropriateness of the information, and the importance of the information to the people that the message is sent across (Zaribaf et al, 2005; Johnson, 2002). Another way poor communication can serve as barrier to strategy implementation is when the information is not passed to the members of the implementation or when the information is passed to the wrong people (Noble, 1999). Alexander (1985) explains that communication has been mentioned by many authors as a key element to successful strategy implementation, this includes explaining the responsibilities, task and duties to be carried out by the employees and the right time. Tribe (2010) talks about how effective communication is the heart of strategic implementation. Peng and Litteljohn (2001) elaborated more on the how effective communication can make strategic implementation succeed, it stated that communication plays important role in training, information distribution and learning throughout the period of strategy implementation. Communication is important in all the areas of strategy execution because it helps in organizing procedures, organizational context and implementation objectives which, in turn, have an effect on the process of implementation. Studies have identified communication barriers as a major factor that affects successful implementation of a strategy (Li et al, 2008). Tribe (2010) explains that despite the importance of communication in strategic implementation, democratic communication may be difficult to reach agreement and coordinate which can result in time consumption.

### ***Ineffective Human resource managements***

Tribe (2010) states that strategic plans will have consequence for human resources, there should be consideration for man power development and training needs. There should be programmes which communicate with the workforce. Managers must make sure there are essential operating staff (required human resources) at all the stages of the strategy implementation. Managers and all involved must have good interpersonal skills and human skills because all activities of implementation involve all personnel in the organization. Effectiveness of strategy implementation is affected by the quality of people involved in the process of executing the strategy (Govindarajan, 1989). This includes the skills, attitudes, capabilities, experiences and other characteristics of people required by a specific task or position (Peng & Litteljohn, 2001). If implementation staffs were not capable of handling the responsibilities assigned to them it can affect the success of the implementation of the strategy, there is need for each personnel involved in a strategy implementation to be skilful in the area he or she is going to participate. If the staffs responsible for strategy implementation lack the above mention attributes, it will be very difficult for the strategy to succeed (Govindarajan, 1989). Incapable employee's involvement for

the execution of the strategy can affect the success of the implementation too. (Al-Ghandi, 1998) The tourism master plan has failed to train people that will participate in the execution of the master plan despite identifying the fact that the staffs in the tourism sector are not trained; the master plan also failed in identifying strategies for the training of the tourism educators in the country. Though it stated that the higher institutions should be encouraged to start tourism programmes there is nowhere in the master plan that listed the ministry of education as either a lead or a support ministry for the implementation of the strategic recommendations on tourism education and training. Lack of expertise in the execution process affected the success of the tourism master plan. Nigeria is a country that have limited number of experts in the tourism industry; the problem of not involving personnel has contributed to the failure of the implementation of the master plan.

#### ***Lack of commitment from the leaders and executors***

There are three major problems that employees face is the inability to perform their duties, there are staff that are not well trained, managers also do not have the required leadership skills to run an organization There are the most disturbing problems that personnel face during implementation of a strategy as far as human resources is concern. Li et al, (2008). Nutt (1986) is of the opinion that managers' procedures and leadership style can play a vital part in the implementation of a strategy. Alexandra (1985) explains that when employees are committed and involved to the task assigned to them it can promote successful strategy implementation. Strategy commitment is said to be how a manager understands and supports the goals and objectives of a marketing strategy, the employees must be determined to carry out their individual implementation role effectively.

If key employees do not have a feeling of ownership in the execution plans of a strategy it can delay it implementation and damage the effort of others. (Li et al, 2008) Heracleous (2000) is also of the opinion that that if some employees do not thing the strategy is the suitable one or if they lack the skills for the implementation they may likely frustrate it, some employees may oppose the implementation of a strategy if it will reduce their power. Mustapha (2011) states in a recent interview with the director of Nigeria tourism development corporation that the reason why the master plan did not succeed is because the NTDC were not involved in the plan and being the organization saddled with the responsibility of developing and promoting tourism in Nigeria it felt it should be included in the formulation and implementation of the strategy. He also stated lack of commitment from the leaders for the implementation programme can also affect the success of a master plan, the Nigerian government is being termed as weak internationally, and the presidential action

committee for tourism is being headed by the president who hardly has time for the members of the tourism master plan implementation organization. The recommendation of the master plan that talks about tourism organization and legislations is all about removing the powers of the Nigerian tourism development corporation by creating NTA. All these conflicts between the ministry and the corporation contributed in rendering the master plan ineffective.

#### ***Inappropriate financial resource planning to execute the strategy***

Tribe (2010) explains that it is important to have budgets prepared which shows how actions in the strategy are going to be financed. The sources of funds and the logistics of finance must be identified to ensure coordination between income and expenditure. Al-Ghandi (1998) finds out that insufficient financial resources can affect the implementation of a strategy as strategy implementation requires funds. Li et al (2008) elaborated that despite having the funds for the implementation if the funds are not used for the right purpose at the right time a strategy will not be successful. The part of the problems that affected the Nigeria tourism master plan is that budget is not implemented in Nigeria effectively. Mustapha (2011) states that there is no organization in Nigeria from the federal, state to local governments that has implemented 45% of its budget in the past five years. He said Nigerians are good in planning but implantation is a problem in the country. The issue of corruption in Nigeria is also a point to note, Nigerians are not disciplined with public funds, anyone given the responsibility which involves using public funds end of stealing the funds rather than using the money for the execution of the programme it is intended to. A lot of Nigerian key officers are facing many corruption charges in the country and some parts of the world.

#### ***Key implementation tasks and activities were not sufficiently defined***

Alexander (1985) for a strategy to have successful implementation, it must contain involve good ideas or concepts in its formulation. If a strategy will succeed it is not only how good it is implemented but how good its strategic input is (Allio, 2005). However good a strategy is implemented if its strategic plans are not good enough for the system the strategy will definitely fail (Hrebiniak, 2006). The Nigeria master plan has some issues in its actions, despite the fact that the implementation organization put some adverts on the CNN to promote Nigeria as a destination, nothing has been done in terms of using the right marketing approach to address the issue of promotion. The target markets in the strategy are UK, USA, South America, Caribbean, ECOWAS and South Africa. All that the implementation committee did in targeting its market is attending the Arabian travel marketing Dubai and the

London world travel market (NTDC, 2010). No strategy was put in place to sell Nigeria to tour operators in the target market. The issue of competition from the Gambia and Senegal were all not addressed.

### ***Hard Factors***

The hard factors according to Li et al (2008) are the factors that deal with the different institutions, organization culture and the organization structure while the strategy is implemented. The factors for this study are discussed as follows:

#### ***Poor organization structure***

There is need for organization structure to be drafted to suit the needs of the strategy. There is a strong relationship between strategy and structure, this relationship is in terms of providing facilities for the implementation. It is important that the structure of the organization should be considered when formulating a strategy if not there will be confusion and conflict Therefore within the organization (Li et al, 2008). Tribe (2010) explains that any emerging strategy will be strongly influenced by the existing organizational structure. In Nigeria there is a ministry of culture and tourism and there is also Nigeria tourism development corporation who are responsible for development and promotion of tourism (Oyahkilome, 2005). Having the two organizations make their roles to be conflicting and the tourism master plan did not include the Nigeria tourism development corporation in any part of the implementation, this made the director of the corporation to fault the implementation of the master plan by saying the master plan was produced in a hurry (Mustapha, 2011). One wonders why an organization which is responsible for the development and marketing tourism products are not included in the implementation of the master plan. The above problems are in accordance with Al-Ghandi (1998) who illustrates that if the role of each person in the organization structure is not understood it can affect the design and the execution of a strategy.

#### ***Ineffective management***

Managers play significant role in every strategy implementation, they motivate people and develop the skills of their employees to ensure that there is effective execution of strategic plans this is very difficult to achieve because most of the time this becomes an obstacle in strategy implementation (Li et al, 2008). Hrebiniak (2005) finds out that managerial commitments to a firms strategy always leads to greater commitment on the part of the firms strategies and goals, this leads to successful implementation of the organizations strategy. There was actually no commitment from Nigeria in respect to the implantation of the master plan from both

the ministry and the corporation. The the governments' neglect on the tourism industry is discouraging to the key players in the industry. Most of the managerial positions in the industry are handled by non-professionals, this makes day to day coordination and supervision to be ineffective.

### ***Mixed Factors***

Mixed factors in this assignment are as categorized by Li et al (2008) to mean the time frame for the implementation of the strategy, government regulations and legislations and how the different organizations relates.

### ***Poor government regulation***

If government laws and legislations do not suit a strategy there is no way the strategy would succeed (Al-Ghandi, 1998). For effective strategy implementation in tourism, there should be a good tourism policy in place the institutional framework for tourism administration must be in place and made functional (Dredge and Jenkins, 2007). The tourism policy in Nigeria has a lot of overlapping responsibilities and some functions are duplicated. (Oyahkhilome, 2005) The visa regime in Nigeria is a hindrance to tourism, before tourist are given a visa they must present letter of invitation to Nigeria from a company or host accepting immigration responsibility, the process of acquiring a tourist visa to Nigeria takes a period of four working days during the period of the implementation of the master plan (Nigerian High commission, 2012). However, Nigeria is now granting visa on arrival to tourists and visitors. There is no clearly defined policy for tourism in Nigeria, the role of the government in the policy is to grant financial incentives to participants in the sector and giving of tax exclusions, but presently the hoteliers face numerous taxation from the federal state and local governments. All provisions in the Constitution which touch indirectly on the business of Tourism and Hospitality fall short of stipulating with certainty the legislative competence of the Federal Government in that regard. The recent Tourism Master plan which is to point the way forward, perhaps as a result of the little or non-involvement of experienced Nigeria based Industry experts in its making regrettably fails to picture out some issues in the sector, except for a brief mention of the splitting of roles between the federal and State agencies, the legal and regulatory framework necessary for the realization of the various recommendations and action plans set (Mustapha, 2011).

### ***Took more time than originally allocated***

Strategy is formulated to achieve some organizational goals at a given period of time. A strategy is supposed to have time including actions to be carried out at a

specific time (Tribe, 2010) Inability to implement strategy 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. If a strategy is not implemented in the specific period of time for its implementation then the outcome of the strategy would not be effective (Al-Ghandi, 1998). The implementation of the Nigerian master plan was supposed to commence in 2006 but due to the lack of interest from the part of the government and the implementation of the strategy did not start at the appointed time. The implementation later commenced in 2008 which by then problem of terrorism has become a serious concern for both Nigerians and visitors. There were problems of kidnapping of foreigners by the local inhabitants who seek a ransom for their release. The insecurity in the nation became a threat to the neighboring countries who feel the growing terrorism will reach their country (Mustapha, 2011). The issues above made the government attention to be diverted to fighting terrorism and securing the lives of people. The master plan implementation became a shadow of itself. Dredge and Dredge (2005) states that implementation results in direct and total resolution to problem, problems changes as social, economic, technological, political and environmental conditions change. Where there is change the former solution may not fit into the formulated strategy, leading to a mismatch between problem and solution.

### **Conclusion**

Though the present administration has informed the general public on its plan to partner with UNWTO to implement the tourism master plan, there is still no evidence on ground to show that there are programmes on ground to show that the implementation process has been revisited. Nigeria is blessed with tourism resources which if developed and marketed appropriately tourism will sure be richer than oil in Nigeria. Having seen how the tourism master plan implementation was not effective, the study would like to suggest that the government come up with a tourism strategy that would deal with the current issues in the tourism sector. There should be involvement of all stake holders in the formulation of the strategy to avoid the conflict that the master plan faced. The actions in the new strategy should be monitored to ensure that it carried out effectively. Nigeria will be one of the leading destinations for tourism if the country seriously takes the issues of tourism important.

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