

ROAD DEVELOPMENT: A KEY MOTIVATOR FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN EBONYI STATE

OGBOAGHA CALLISTER ORIEOMA

Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism
Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic Unwana Afikpo, Ebonyi state, Nigeria
Email: aghacallister@gmail.com. Phone number: +2347033694697

Abstract

This study assessed road development: a key motivator for tourism development in Ebonyi State. Three research objectives were formulated for the study. The population for the study was seventy-four (74), which comprised staff of selected transport companies in the state. Questionnaire and oral interview were the instruments used for data collection. The data were analyzed using tabulation and simple percentage while chi-square statistical tool was used for hypothesis testing. The findings of this study showed that road development made traveling easy, reduced transportation cost. Also, road transport was part of tourist attraction, aids in enhancing tourist experience and helps in the development of infrastructural facilities. Based on the findings recommendations were made.

Keywords: road development, tourism and development tourism

Introduction

Transportation as a means of conveyance of good, services and man for age long decade has been a vital element of tourism. People travel for different reasons, ranging from pleasure, commerce, education, relaxation, exploration, events and even for the fun of it through different modes such as air, land and water (Page and Yue 2015). Among the various modes of transportation, road transport is the most common means of travelling particularly in developing nations. Roads in the form of track ways, human and pathways, were used from the pre-historic times, since then, many improvements have been made to ensure easy, safe and comfortable trips. Ashamu (2017) noted that traveling dates back to the existence of man and it was in the course of traveling that tourism was discovered. Okoli (2012) observed that tourism and transportation are two Siemens twins. While transport motivates tourism, tourism sustains transport. Therefore, tourism can only thrive if the means of reaching the destinations are convenience, safe, comfortable and available. Most Nigerians prefers traveling by road not only because it is the safest, but tends to be the cheapest after water transportation. Transportation has made much impact in the development of tourism industry in Nigeria, Particularly in the rural areas like Ebonyi State. Good and accessible road motivates tourists to embark on tourism. This will in return improve the economic and social life of the host community.

With the recent development in the infrastructure especially in the area of road construction and rehabilitation, tourism industry has witnessed tremendous changes as the urge to travel to Ebonyi state by tourists have increased. Mazrekaj (2020) opined that among the various means of transportation in Nigeria, travelling by road is the most convenient and cheapest means. It is both used by tourist to move from one station to the destination and also a means of moving round their destination.

In Nigeria, it is obvious that, despite the contributions of road transport to the development of tourism, many roads have not been properly constructed. Some roads have been left to damage to the extent that it has become a dead trap to tourists. In Ebonyi State, a lot of work has been done on either the existing roads or the construction of new ones especially in the rural areas where tourism potentials are domiciled, thus stimulating the growth of tourism industry in the state. Nwaze, (2021) observed that the state of Nigerian road has remained poor for a number of reasons, such reason includes facility designs, lack of drainage and very thin coatings, which was easily washed away, excessive use of the road network, given the underdeveloped nature of water-ways and railways which could serve as alternate means of transport obscene of an articulated road program and inadequate funding for road transport.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the numerous benefits of road transport to the economic development, the deplorable state of Nigerian roads keeps posing a challenge on the success of tourism in Nigeria. Many tourists are discouraged due to the bad state of the roads leading to tourist sites. Some tourists, on imaging the risks of traveling on bad roads, coupled with the after-effect of it as after such trips feels discourage. Also, many tourism investors and as well as tourists have been discouraged from visiting tourist sites in Nigeria particularly the rural areas like Ebonyi state where the tourism potentials are situated. Poor road transportation management is one major problem affecting the growth of the tourism industry. This has led to the ineffectiveness and collapse of the Nigeria road system that supposes to carry bulk of goods from one city to another and has made inflation to be high.

In Ebonyi State, road transport is the commonest and cheapest means of traveling, but the dilapidated state of urban and rural roads in Ebonyi state from the creation of the state since 1996, has been a dead trap for both tourists and non-tourists alike. The poor and inaccessible roads have discouraged many travelers from visiting the state. With the recent development in the area of road rehabilitation by the present Ebonyi state government road transport has improved and road is serving as a major means of accessing tourist destinations within the state. In fact, the efforts of the government of Ebonyi state led by Eng. Apostle Dave Umahi in road construction and rehabilitation have given tourism activities a new face, thus increasing the number of tourists visiting the state. With total rehabilitation of urban and rural roads in Ebonyi state, many tourists and visitors have been attracted to the state. This has improved the economy of the state through revenue generation and stimulation of other businesses.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of road development in tourism development in Ebonyi state. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To know if road development aids in attracting more tourists to Ebonyi state
2. To find out whether road development is part of the tourist attractions
3. To know whether road development makes tourist destinations accessible in Ebonyi state

Review of Related Literature

Transportation is the movement of goods and persons from place to place and the various means by which such movement is accomplished. (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020). Transport has direct implications in the social sphere influencing and ensuring travel. It is mainly by the reason of the improvement of transportation that tourism has expanded (Odeku, 2020). Among all the means of transportation, air, water and land, road transport is the most common means of traveling as it is the movement of people or goods via road.

Tourism is defined as "the operation of, and interaction between, transport modes, ways and terminals that support tourism resorts in terms of passenger and freight flows into and out of destinations, and the provision of connecting transport modes in the tourism generating region"

Therefore, transport is the first manifestation of tourism consumption and therefore its psychological impact on the tourist, in an attempt to create the best image of the tourist product, is decisive. In other words, the tourist has the first contact with the product he has purchased through the travel service (Page and Yue, 2015). Transport as an essential component of the tourism system and therefore, must be accessible, safe and comfortable for tourism to thrive.

Transport is one of the main branches of any national economy. This is precisely why special attention is paid to developing and modernizing transport and increasing the economic efficiency of activity in this important branch of the economy (Ana-Maria, 2018). Transport is acknowledged as one of the most significant factors to have contributed to the international development of tourism (Page and Yue, 2015). It provides the essential link between tourist origin and tourist destination and facilitates the movements of holidaymakers, business travelers, people that are visiting relatives in other countries. Hayley (2021)

identified transportation modes and management as the "important ingredients of the international tourism system," recognizing that connection by air, sea and land means is important for the operations as well as the availability of support services such as fuel stations, auto repair, motels and rest facilities for land travel.

Road transportation and Tourism Development

Road transport holds the first place in tourism, has the longest age and the widest spread. Motor vehicles are characterized by special mobility, not being connected to special fixed installations such as rail transport, for example. Because of this, they can penetrate places where other means of transport have no accessibility, building an indispensable component of multimodal transports. The bus and coach are a more and more used means of transport, especially for group tourism. Car transport is the main type in world tourism (77% of all journeys), especially because of many advantages like flexibility, price, and independence. Tourists often rent cars to drive to their destinations, which triggered an active grouping of companies which rent cars. It is generally cheaper than any types of transportation. It is the only transportation method that does not require transfers, in the sense that the entire journey, from one location to other can be achieved. Among all the mode of transportation, road transportation is the most common and easy mode with which people move from one place to another for a variety of purposes. Road development makes a huge contribution to economic development, and bring important social benefits too.

Roads allow people to travel for business and leisure purposes: visiting friends or accessing a town or city for shopping, eating out, and other entertainment. This has positive economic and social impacts. Without roads, movement of people would be much more difficult. This is why Held that It is difficult for a nation to grow and develop without roads.

Importance of Transportation in Tourism Development

The development of tourist destination is conditioned by the existence of appropriate means of reaching the destination. This means of reaching the destination covers roads, motorways, railway lines, stations, bus stations, river and sea ports, airports, etc. Today, tourism has developed much due to the modernization and diversification of modes and means of transport. The progress made in this area has facilitated the inclusion in the tourism sphere of resources at appreciable distances from the tourist-emitting centers or the overcoming of some natural obstacles.

Developing tourism and transport are two interdependent issues: tourists need the transport services, for which they pay from their own budget, to be safe, fast and comfortable. Without transportation there won't be travel and tourism industry, people won't have means to reach another places that they desire to see. This is why Mazrekaj (2020), held "that transport and tourism are Siamese twins": the development on transportation is linked to the development of tourism, international tourism grows, international transportation also grows. For tourists to reach their destination, a mode of transport that is safe, convenience and fast must be a factor to consider among other many factors.

HYPOTHESIS

Ho: there is no significant different between road development and tourism development in ebonyi state.

METHODOLOGY

Field survey research design was used for this study as a pattern to achieve the desired objectives. In the study, samples of the staff of the three hotels were selected to obtain relevant information about the impact of road transport on sustainable tourism development in Ebonyi State. Three transport companies (Romchi transit, Peace Mass Transit and Ehugbo Mass Transit) located in Ebonyi State were used as the study areas. The population for the study was 100 respondents which comprised (30 from Romchi, 30 from Peace and 14 Ehugbo Mass Transit.). Using Taro Yamane formula, the sample size obtained was 100. Data for the study were gathered from both primary and secondary sources using both oral interview and questionnaire.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher used tables and simple percentage for data analysis and presentation and chi-square was used for testing the hypothesis

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Table 1. Analysis to know if road development aids in attracting more tourists to the state

Responses	Romchi Mass Transit	Peace Mass Transit	Ehugbo Mass Transit	Total	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	10	3	28	47
Agree	8	5	3	16	27
Undecided	-	-	-	-	-
Disagree	2	2	2	6	10
Strongly disagree	5	3	2	10	16
Total				60	100

Source: field survey, 2022

The table shows that 47% representing 38 respondents strongly agreed that road development aids in attracting more tourists to the state, while 27% representing 16 respondents agree, 10% representing 6 respondents disagree and 16% representing 10 respondents strongly disagreed.

Table 2 Analysis to know if road development is part of tourists attraction in Ebonyi State

Responses	Romchi Mass Transit	Peace Mass Transit	Ehugbo Mass Transit	Total	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	10	5	30	50
Agree	10	7	4	21	35
Undecided	-	-	-	-	-
Disagree	3		1	4	7
Strongly disagree	2	3		5	8
Total				60	100

Source: field survey, 2022

The table indicated that 50% representing 30 respondents strongly agree that road development is part of tourists attraction, while 35% representing 21 respondents agree, 7% representing 4 respondents disagree and 8% representing 5 respondents strongly disagree.

Table 3. Analysis to know if road development makes tourists attractions accessible.

Responses	Romchi Mass Transit	Peace Mass Transit	Ehugbo Mass Transit	Total	Percentage
Strongly agree	20	10	6	36	60
Agree	10	5	4	19	31
Undecided	-	-	-	-	-
Disagree		3		3	5
Strongly disagree		2		2	4
Total				60	100

Source: field survey, 2022

The table shows that 60% representing 36 respondents strongly agree that road development makes tourists attraction accessible, while 31% representing 19 respondents agree, 5% representing 3 respondents disagree, 4% representing 2 respondents strongly disagree and undecided is non.

Test of Hypothesis

The chi square (χ^2) distribution is used for analyzing the data formula

$$\chi^2_{cal} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(o_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

Compensation of chi-square (χ^2) value question

On table 1

Question: Does road development aids in attracting more tourist to Ebony state?

Responses	Romchi Mass Transit	Peace Mass Transit	Ehugbo Mass Transit	Total	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	10	3	28	47
Agree	8	5	3	16	27
Undecided	-	-	-	-	-
Disagree	2	2	2	6	10
Strongly disagree	5	3	2	10	16
Total	30	20	10	60	100

Romchi

$$S/A = \frac{28 \times 30}{60} = 14$$

$$\text{Agreed} = \frac{16 \times 30}{60} = 8$$

$$\text{Disagree} = \frac{6 \times 30}{60} = 3$$

$$\text{Strongly disagree} = \frac{10 \times 30}{60} = 5$$

Peace mass transit

$$S/A = \frac{28 \times 20}{60} = 9.6$$

$$\text{Agreed} = \frac{16 \times 20}{60} = 9$$

$$\text{Disagree} = \frac{6 \times 20}{60} = 2$$

$$\text{Strongly disagree} = \frac{10 \times 20}{60} = 3.3$$

Ehugbo

$$\text{Strongly Agree} = \frac{28 \times 10}{60} = 5$$

$$\text{Agree} = \frac{16 \times 10}{60} = 3$$

$$\text{Disagree} = \frac{6 \times 10}{60} = 1$$

$$\text{Strongly disagree} = \frac{10 \times 10}{60} = 2$$

Hypothesis test at 0.05 value

Description	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i -E _i) ²	(O _i -E _i) ² /E _i
Romchi					
SA	28	14	14	196	14
A	16	8	8	68	21.3
U					
D	6	3	3	9	3
SD	10	5	5	25	5
Peace					
SA	28	9.6	18.4	338.6	35.27
A	16	9	7	49	5.44
U					
D	6	2	4	16	8
SD	10	3-3	6-7	44.89	14
Ehugbo					
SA	28	5	23	529	105.8
A	16	3	13	169	56.3
D	6	1	5	25	25
SD	10	2	8	65	32
TOTAL	60				325.11

$$x^2_{cal}=325.11$$

$$x^2_{tab}= (r-1) (c-i)$$

$$x_{0.05}(5-1) (3-1) =x_{0.05}====10.5966$$

Decision rule

Reject H_0 if x^2 calculated is greater than x^2 tabulated.

Decision/discussion

Since the calculated chi-square (x^2) value of 325.11 is greater than the chi square (x^2) tabulated value of 10.5966 from the table, null hypothesis (H_0) is therefore rejected while hypothesis (H_a) is therefore accepted. Thus, road development aids in attracting more tourists to Ebonyi state

Discussion of Findings

In table1, majority of the respondents (38) representing 47% strongly agreed that road development aids in attracting more tourists to ebonyi state. . Therefore, it is clear that road development is a strong tool for tourism development since it is established that it helps in attracting more tourists to the destinations. This confirms the previous work done by Ekechukwu (2006) who opined that transport and tourism are inextricably linked. Transports proceeds tourism while tourism development sustains transport.

Also in the table 2 about 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that road development is part of the tourists attraction. This confirms the previous work done by Opata (2006). The author opined that road transport is part of tourist attraction.

. Conversely, table .3, result showed that higher percentage (60%) strongly agreed that road development makes tourist destinations accessible. This is agreement with the research work carried out by, who found out that the accessibility of any tourist destination is made possible when the roads are okay.

Result of Hypothesis Testing

Since the calculated chi-square (x^2) value of 325.11 is greater than the chi square (x^2) tabulated value of 10.5966 from the table, null hypothesis (H₀) is therefore rejected while hypothesis (H₁) is therefore accepted.

Summary

Based on findings above, the researcher summarized as following;

Since the majority of the respondents strongly agreed on the questions, it is clear that road development aids in attracting more tourist to tourists destinations in Ebonyi state. Also, it was found from the result of the analysis that road development was part of tourist attraction. Finally, it was found that the road development makes tourist destinations accessible in the area.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

Based on the findings, above the researcher wishes to recommends as follows;

1. Since road development aids in attracting more tourists, governments of all tiers and tourism stakeholder should endeavor to develop and maintain road infrastructure.. Ebonyi state.
2. Also since road development is part of the tourist attraction as it enhances tourist experiences, tourism operators should form a strong partnership with government to ensure that roads are always accessible.
3. Also, since road development makes tourist destination accessible, efforts should be made by all tourism stakeholders to ensure that all roads leading to tourist destinations are constructed, rehabilitated and maintained.

REFERENCES

- Ashamu, A. (2017) Transportation Federal Highway Administration. Available at www.frogin.notour.com. Retrieved 20 September 2019.
- Asika N, M (1991) Research methodology in behavioral science. Nigeria: Longman plc.
- Encyclopedia Britannica (2020). Transportation technology. www.britannica.com
- Emeafor, O (2019). Tourism development in Ebonyi State: Insight into the challenges confronting the ministry of culture and tourism. www.iiste.org ISSN (Paper) 2312-5187 ISSN (Online) 2312-5179 An International Peer-reviewed Journal DOI: 10.7176/JTHS Vol.41, 2019.
- Haeley, S (2020) Importance of road transportation on tourism <https://tourismteacher.com/importance-of-road-transport/H>
- Mazrekaj, R., (2020). Impact of road infrastructure on tourism development in Kosovo. *International journal of management*, 11(4), 2020, pp. 466-474. www.papers.ssrn.com
- Nwaze, F, (2021). Ebonyi roads, solid as rock of Gibraltar: The Umahi magic. [https:// www.sunnewsonline.com/ebonyi-roads-solid-as-rock-of-gibraltar-the-umahi-magic](https://www.sunnewsonline.com/ebonyi-roads-solid-as-rock-of-gibraltar-the-umahi-magic)
- Odeku, K. O, (2020). Poor road infrastructure: An impediment to tourism development in Nigeria. *African journal of hospitality, tourism and leisure*, vol. 9(2), 2020:2223-814x. <http://www.ajhti.com>
- Okoli (2012)), [The Book of Inventions](#), Washington, DC: [National Geographic Society](#), p. 277, ISBN 978-0-7922-8296-9, retrieved 23 June 2020
- Page, S, and Yue, G., (2015), Transportation and tourism: a symbiotic relationship.
- Ana-Maria, D. (2018). The Importance of transportation to tourism Development <https://ideas.repec.org/a/khe/scajes/v4y2018i4p183-187.html> .