



PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE TOURISM: A PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN ILARO, OGUN STATE.

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Abstract

The study's overarching goal is to investigate the potential of creative tourism in Ilaro, and to determine how it might be used to encourage the continued improvement of the tourism industry. This study used a descriptive survey approach. Fifty people were chosen at random to participate in the study's sample. Members of the Ilaro community's academic and public service establishments were sampled. The information gathered for this research was analysed using descriptive statistics. The information was laid out in tables so that the outcomes could be grasped quickly and easily. Five-sixths of respondents agree with the conclusion reached by Ayeni and Eboho, 2012, that creative tourism is properly packaged to aid in the growth and sustainability of the industry in Ilaro; however, the absence of enough superstructure and facilities is most glaring in Ilaro, where the most of destinations are sited, and is compounded by the failure to sustain the little that are available, rather than multiply those facilities in capitals and large towns. The findings suggest that creative tourism might attract a diverse group of people in search of novel experiences as there is a growing interaction between the tourist economy and the arts. The research also suggests that to allow the sustainability of tourism in Ilaro, proper infrastructure should be put into place.

Keywords: Creative Tourism, Development, Panacea, Promotion, Sustainable Tourism.

Introduction

Recently, originality has been advocated as a panacea for many problems. In addition to luring the creative class, which might assist restore the economy, creative cities, clusters, industries, and sectors have the ability to connect and renew local communities. There's potential for people of many interests and backgrounds to achieve success in the tourism sector (Richards, 2011). The field of arts and culture tourism is rapidly developing. Changing traditional societies' emphasis from a material legacy to a focus on the meaning of daily life may have required a leap of imagination (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

Foreign visitors visiting a nation other than their own may have significant positive effects on the host country's economy, politics, and culture. The future of creative tourism is uncertain, despite its rising popularity in metropolitan areas and smaller communities alike. Popular monuments bring throngs of visitors at the cost of the experience's quality, while "serious" culture-seekers flee from historic city centers, creating a "vicious circle" (Russo, 2002) in the area of cultural tourism. To ensure the sustainability of cultural tourism, several locations have begun using largely identical strategies (Richards and Wilson, 2006). Many locations are now actively looking for creative approaches to cultural tourist integration that will enhance rather than water down local customs.

Creative development tactics emerged, spread, and were criticized in tandem with the boom in cultural tourism in the 1980s and '90s. In addition, creative tourism is often considered an offshoot of cultural travel. Topics like "economic sustainability and Practice of tourism" provide a useful framework for discussing and analyzing the many facets of the rapidly growing area of "creative tourism," as well as its many regional manifestations. Although there have been challenges to the expansion of creative tourism, most debates focus on the positive outcomes that may result from it. So, it's fair to wonder whether creative tourism is simply another part of the creativity hype, or if unconventional approaches to the industry's growth could really be more fruitful. To assess the theoretical merits and practical importance of creative tourism, one needs a more in-depth familiarity with the concept (Onah, 2013, p.23).

One definition of "creative tourism" is "travel that emphasizes immersion in local culture by providing opportunities for direct participation in its arts, traditions, or distinctive qualities." Engaged and genuine tourism is defined by UNESCO as travel that aims to learn about a destination's arts, history, or unique character by direct participation and interaction with locals. Ohridshka-Olson (2010) asserted that creative tourism is a subset of cultural heritage. UNESCO defines it as "travel with a purpose, involving active participation in learning about the ancient materials, values, customs or distinctive feature of a destination, and establishing a personal relationship with the people who live in that destination and help to make that destination what it is" (2006). The majority of experts prostrate that many key factors led to the transformation of cultural tourism into creative tourism. "The increasing merger of



enterprise and culture, and consequently the experience economy, are important aspects of the creative, where heritage and culture becomes a tool for sustenance and progress," (Andersson and Thomsen 2008).

The Ilaro people's extensive history and culture make them a prime spot for innovative tourism. The "Bolojo "and the "Gelede" celebrations have their roots among the Ilaro people. Songs called "EFE" are sung during Gelede dances, and its primary purpose is to call attention to and remedy wrongdoing in the community. If you want to know that your every misstep is being recorded and transformed into song, you'll have to go to a witness Bolojo perform or watch the Gelede dance during the special occasion. If you listen to the EFE, you'll have a reason to chuckle, relieving yourself of both tension and sadness. Masks and breastplates are the costumes for the Gelede, the costume is special during the dance performance and they are carved by a particular family. The Bolojo dance is performed in Oronna hall or other places on special events such as National festival, cultural festival, and the anniversary of the country's independence.

Literature

The creative tourism business is built on the back of heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is part of cultural aspect of tourism; the findings of Obeta and Onah (2013) are cited. Meaning "travel with a purpose, this style of vacation "creates a connection along people who living the place and come up with this cultural heritage with collaboration such as engaging with the creative sector, cultural materials, or spectacular feature of a tourism destination (UNESCO, 2006). Most analysts believe that the development of creative tourism, as against to common cultural form, may be attributable to numerous interrelated reasons. Anderson et al (2008) claim that the new joining of culture and enterprise and the new dimension of economy is the finest incarnation of the 'creative' movement, in which culture is exploited as an instrument for economic sustenance.

Sustainable cultural tourism seeks to understand and strengthen human environment interactions and likeness-engaged in a way that is mutually beneficial to locals and tourists alike, and it does so by hosting smaller events that are more ideally suited to being conceived as part of a CREATOR-planned activity. The purpose of creative tourism is to provide an alternative to larger cities, hence it must be competitive with smaller towns. However, there are still numerous gaps in our knowledge of the nature of creative tourism, the role of sustainable techniques in community-driven tourism and local sustainable tourism development, the evolutionary dynamics of sustainable approaches, and the strategies for developing sustainable approaches. This article places creative thinking into this broader framework for discussion.

The tourism business is part of the top three fast developing industries in the world, thus its importance cannot be overstated. Internet and mobile phone technology are also part of this triad. Tourist revenue is second only to crude oil in terms of global exports (Ajayi, 2012). According to the World Bank 2014, Nigeria economy is still developing, with \$262.6 billion GDP. Her market is varied since she has both a developing and mature economy. The financial sector, the media, and the entertainment business are all expanding in her economy (Mmaduabuchukwu, 2013:85). Exports of oil are a major contributor to Nigeria's GDP (Okezie and Amir, 2006: 369). There have been major political and economic changes in the country since she became independent in 1960. It went from an impoverished agricultural economy with a per capita income of US \$130 in 1969 to a moderately wealthy oil-influenced economy with a GDP of US \$370 million in 2005 (Okezie and Amir, 2006). Usman Shamsudeen of Ayeni (2013) reports that the country's GDP was N3, 915.56 billion in June of 2008. The sale of oil brought in N3, 133.00 billion, or around 33% of the total.

Aim and objectives

The study's aim is to examine the creative tourism phenomenon from many angles and determine how it may be used to sustain tourism industry in Ilaro.

The study's objectives are as follows:

- To track shifts in creative tourism and ecotourism in Ilaro.
- To consider the potential impact of creative tourism on Ilaro's development as a tourist location
- To alert the government to the issues that have been plaguing the tourist industry, in the hope that they would be fixed.



Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey approach. Since this is an empirical method that will provide a reliable account of the event by collecting all necessary first-hand facts and making sure no observable elements are changed, it is admissible. Educated respondents in Ilaro were selected at random to take part in the survey because they were identified by researcher as individual with necessary information on the data needed. Fifty (50) students, public servants, and civil employees from Ilaro participated in the study. To address the study's core issues on the topic of creative tourism, the researchers draw from a variety of primary and secondary resources. Secondary sources included a wide variety of publications such as journals, magazines, periodicals, eBooks, textbooks, the internet, seminar papers, finalized projects, and proceedings from prior conferences. The study's core data came from surveys the researcher handed out. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The information was laid out in tables so that the outcomes could be grasped quickly and easily.

Result

SECTION A: ILARO'S CREATIVE TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In the table below the results are broken down by percentage of agreement with the statement that "Creative Tourism is well packaged to help developed and sustain tourism in Ilaro" (56%) vs. "disagree" (20%), "strongly disagree" (16%), and "unsure" (8%)

Table 1: Ilaro's tourist industry may thank its creative tourism packages for its success and continued growth.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	8	16.0	16.0
Disagree	10	20.0	20.0
Undecided	4	8.0	8.0
Agree	15	30.0	30.0
Strongly Agree	13	26.0	26.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

From the data in Table 2, we can see that 32% of respondents are in agreement and 46% are completely in agreement that employment opportunities exist in the creative tourism industry.

Table 2: The worth of artistic tourism in Ilaro has been noticed by a large number of tourists.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	5	10.0	10.0
Disagree	12	24.0	24.0
Undecided	10	20.0	20.0
Agree	9	18.0	18.0
Strongly agree	14	28.0	28.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 3 reveals that 16% strongly opposed, 20% disagreed, 85% were unsure, 30% agreed, and 26% strongly agreed that appropriate measures were in place to encourage creative tourism.

Table 3: Ilaro has the necessary infrastructure to support the expansion of its tourist industry.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	14	28.0	28.0
Disagree	15	30.0	30.0
Undecided	8	16.0	16.0
Agree	7	14.0	14.0
Strongly agree	6	12.0	12.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0



Table 4 reveals that 24% of respondents are extremely opposed to the idea that most tourist attractions in Ilaro are well developed, while 12% are opposed, 20% are undecided, 38% agree, and 6% are strongly agree.

Table 4: Tourism destinations in Ilaro are developed to attract tourist

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	12	24.0	24.0
Disagree	6	12.0	12.0
Undecided	10	20.0	20.0
Agree	19	38.0	38.0
Strongly agree	3	6.0	6.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

SECTION B: PROBLEMS THAT PLAGUES THE TOURISM BUSINESS

The limited development of infrastructure in Ilaro is identified as a obvious barrier to the development of creative tourism, as shown by the data presented in Table 5. The responses indicate that 8% of the participants strongly disagreed, 10% disagreed, 8% were unsure, 14% agreed, and the majority, 60%, greatly agreed with this assertion. The creative tourism sector in Ilaro is facing challenges attributed to insufficient infrastructure.

Table 5: Creative tourism in Ilaro is being hampered by a lack of facilities.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	4	8.0	8.0
Disagree	5	10.0	10.0
Undecided	4	8.0	8.0
Agree	7	14.0	14.0
Strongly agree	30	60.0	60.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Based on the data shown in Table 6, it can be seen that 6% of the respondents expressed strong disagreement, while another 6% expressed disagreement. Additionally, 12% of the respondents were uncertain about their stance, but 34% agreed and 42% strongly agreed that the absence of assistance from the local government is impeding the development of creative tourism in Ilaro. The absence of adequate government financing is a hindrance to the development of Ilaro as a cultural tourist attraction.

Table 6: Creative tourism in Ilaro is suffering from a lack of state backing

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	6.0	6.0
Disagree	3	6.0	6.0
Undecided	6	12.0	12.0
Agree	17	34.0	34.0
Strongly agree	21	42.0	42.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

In Table 7, we see that although 44% believe that safety concerns are holding back efforts to market and expand creative tourism in Ilaro, only 12% are in full agreement with this assessment. Promotional efforts aimed at attracting art tourists to Ilaro have been impeded by fears about the safety of its visitors.

Table 7: Ilaro's potential as a hub for innovative tourism is being hampered by rising insecurity.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	6	12.0	12.0
Disagree	6	12.0	12.0
Undecided	3	6.0	6.0



Agree	13	26.0	26.0
Strongly agree	22	44.0	44.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Table 8 shows that although 46% of respondents strongly agreed that a lack of knowledge and sensitization was not affecting tourism in Ilaro, 28% agreed, and 16% were doubtful. The creative tourism industry in Ilaro is struggling due to a lack of marketing and information dissemination.

Table 8: The creative tourism industry in Ilaro is suffering due to a lack of publicity and education.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid Strongly disagree	3	6.0	6.0
Disagree	2	4.0	4.0
Undecided	8	16.0	16.0
Agree	14	28.0	28.0
Strongly agree	23	46.0	46.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

Discussion

It has been found that 56% of respondents agree with the conclusion drawn by Ayeni and Eboho, 2012, that clever packaging of creative tourism will contribute to the growth and viability of the industry in Ilaro. Rural regions, where the great majority of attractions are situated, suffer the most from a lack of basic infrastructure, and this problem is compounded by the inability to maintain the little facilities that do exist. The nation's risk deterred foreign direct investment (Katircioglu, Arasli, and Ekiz 2007:43), which might have dampened investor enthusiasm for the country. In the same way that Nigeria's major cities are working to upgrade the country's tourism infrastructure, the rural Ilaro village is being neglected. The government must nonetheless encourage foreign investment notwithstanding the tiny size of the local market, particularly in export-oriented sectors. Furthermore, the majority of respondents said that a lack of education and awareness contributed to Ilaro's declining tourist industry, this needs an urgent attention.

Conclusion

Creative advocacy has been considered as a panacea for a variety of problems, including Ilaro's tourist industry's long-term viability. In addition to luring the creative class, which might assist restore the economy, cities, enterprises, and sectors have the ability to connect and renew host communities. The findings suggest that creative tourism might attract a diverse group of people in search of novel experiences. There is a growing interaction between the tourist economy and the arts. Some may argue that innovation was crucial in shifting attention from material history to the role that routine activities played in forging indigenous worldviews. However, many contemporary studies of creativity have a pessimistic tone that is being replicated in the travel business. However, the lack of investment in the upkeep of the already-in-place ones and the inability to reproduce similar situations outside of cities and metropolitan regions are the most visible causes of infrastructure difficulties.

Recommendations

1. One major recommendation is the need of investing in proper infrastructure in order for Ilaro to attract a higher proportion of creative tourism.
2. The study also suggests that the Ilaro administration should promote and foster the development of creative tourism in the area.
3. Lastly, the research suggests examining the potential for cultural tourism in the area should be conducted in more depth.



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