



ROLE OF FASHION TOURISM IN INFLUENCING GROWTH OF TOURISM IN NIGERIA

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Received: 20 th August 2024	<i>This paper focused on the role of fashion tourism in influencing the growth of tourism in Nigeria. The paper highlighted the present state of the tourism industry in Nigeria; potentials of Nigeria fashion industry in revenue generation; Nigerian fashion designers who are impacting the fashion industry; challenges of Nigerian fashion industry, and ways to overcome the challenges, fashion tourism in Nigeria and its implication in the growth of tourism. Suggestions were made on how to create enabling environment for the fashion industry in order for fashion tourism to thrive; thereby influencing tourism growth in Nigeria. The suggestions made based on the reviewed studies among others are: Government should adequately fund the fashion industry by providing grants to the stakeholders in the industry to boost the production of high quality clothing and to also sponsor fashion events; Government should formulate policies that are favourable to the fashion industry and also establish synergy between the fashion industry and the ministries of Trade and Industry/Culture and Tourism.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the business of attracting and serving the needs of people traveling outside their home for business and leisure(Ivanovic et al., 2010). Tourism is the business activity connected with providing hospitality services which include accomodation, food and entertainment for people who are visiting a place for pleasure and business (Montazer&Bidok, 2017). The activity which involves people travelling to places outside their usual place of residence for the purpose of leisure or business is referred to as tourism. A person who spends at least one night in a place but does not live there for more than one year is called a tourist.

Fashion is the style of clothing and accessories worn at any given time or period by a group of people. Fashion also refers to the newest creation of clothing by designers. Fashion as an aspect of tourism is new, and much attention is being given to it through the fashion week, organized by fashion designers both locally and globally. Fashion week is a fashion industry event which usually last for one week, in which fashion designers showcase their latest clothing and accessories designs, and the event usually attract tourists who travel to experience the fashion of other cultures outside theirs, which is now known as fashion tourism. Fashion tourism is a niche market that is a combination of cultural tourism, creative tourism, and shopping tourism. This kind of tourism creates opportunity for people to travel to experience the physical attraction of a destination such as the mountains, waterfalls, the cultural and creative attractions, as well as experience the fashion shows and shop for clothes, fashion accessories and handicraft from other cultures, thereby giving room for inter-cultural exchange.

Asley et al. (2000) opined that, tourism offers several opportunities to diversify local economies and encourage small scale businesses compared to other non-agricultural activities, and also contribute to the growth of other sectors of the economy. There are various studies that focused on the development and promotion of tourism as a means of diversifying the economy of nations for sustainable growth, but the link between the fashion industry and tourism, and fashion tourism as a niche market for diversification of the economy and promorion of tourism in Nigeria has not received much attention. This paper therefore focused on the following: Tourism industry in Nigerian; potentials of Nigerian fashion industry in revenue generation; challenges of Nigerian fashion industry; ways to overcome the challenges, the link between fashion and tourism;Fashion tourism in Nigeria and its implication in the growth of tourism.

Tourism Industry in Nigeria.

Tourism became officially recognised as an industry in Nigeria in the year 1959, when the British colonial government set up an adhoc advisory committee in the promotion of tourism in Nigeria, in 1962, based on the

recommendation of the committee, the Nigeria Tourist Association (NTA) was established. The Nigeria Tourist Association was later replaced with the Nigeria Tourist Board (NTB) in 1979. The federal government reorganized the NTB in 1989 and created the department for Tourism in the Ministry of Trade and renamed it Ministry of Trade and Tourism, and in 1992, decree 81 was used to establish the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), which is still responsible for the development of tourism industry in Nigeria till date (Jemirade, 2021). Alikor (2022) and Achibong (2004) noted that tourism in Nigeria centres majorly on events due to the country's about 250 ethnic groups with diverse cultures, arts and unique natural attractions which include rainforest, waterfalls, mountains and savannah. There are a good number of tourist destinations in Nigeria, they include Obudu mountain resort, Tinapa business resort, Agbokim waterfalls (Cross River State); Ibeno beach (Akwa Ibom State); Yankari game reserve (Bauchi State); Bar beach, Elegushi beach, Badagry coconut beach, Nike art gallery (Lagos State); Shiroro waterfalls, Osun-Osogbo grove (Osun State), Ogbunike cave (Enugu State) to mention but a few.

Despite the numerous tourists sites and other tourist attractions such as cultural festivals which have the potentials for tourism to flourish in Nigeria, the World Economic Forum (2017), "Travel and Tourism Competitive Report" ranked Nigeria as low as 129th out of the 136 African countries, compared to Ghana which ranked 120th and South Africa which ranked 3rd in travel and tourism. It was also reported that tourism contributed only 2 percent to Nigerian GDP while Ghana and South Africa were 3 percent respectively; Kenya, 4 percent; Mauritius, 12 percent; Cape Verde, 17 percent; and Seychelles, 20 percent. Also, World Economic Forum (2021), "Travel and Tourism Development Index" overall ranking, placed Nigeria in 110 position out of 117 countries compared to other African countries such as South Africa which ranked 68th; Botswana ranked 76th; Kenya ranked 78th; Tanzanian ranked 81st; Zambia ranked 98th; and Ghana ranked 101 position. The low ranking of Nigeria was attributed to factors which include: low prioritisation of tourism industry by the Nigeria government, insecurity, and poor infrastructural facilities (World Economic Forum, Travel and Tourism Competitive report, 2017).

Crude oil was discovered in Nigeria in 1956. Few years later, Nigeria gained independence from the British colonial government in 1960, she neglected other sources of revenue and foreign exchange earnings which include agriculture, mining, and tourism sectors, and relied mainly on crude oil export as a major source of revenue and foreign exchange. The drop in global oil prices over the past years has exposed the vulnerability of Nigeria's over dependence on crude oil revenue (Agusto & Co., 2017). Jemirade (2021) argues that the concentration on petroleum resources as a major export and source of revenue is largely responsible for the neglect and under developed state of Nigerian tourism sector. Adora (2010) stated that other factors concerning insecurity which include kidnapping and terrorism, violent crime, militancy and civil unrest have hindered the development of tourism in Nigeria. Alikor (2022) argued that, diversifying the economy from oil and gas, to other sectors can drive sustainable growth, increase revenue sources and create job opportunities for youths. The same writer suggested that the unique and multi-cultural structure of Nigeria avails her the rich cultural and tourism potentials that can drive growth if properly harnessed. It was further noted that tourism industry contributes two percent of Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP), and can do better if properly tapped, as tourist sites in Nigeria have the capacity to sustain the economy of some states. For instance, Cross River State was estimated to make 1.7 billion naira and attracted about 2 million tourists in 2017 from only carnivals and festivals (Alikor, 2022).

Potentials of Nigerian Fashion Industry in Revenue Generation

Gachanja (2019) asserted that, Nigeria is a "fashion power house" both in the continent of Africa and globally. Akinsola (2019) pointed out that the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reported that Euromonitor indicated that Nigeria fashion market account for about 15 percent of sub-sahara fashion market that is worth 31 billion US dollars. The same writer noted that Nigeria's fashion industry has developed in the last decades, attracting global attention which has resulted in an upward growth of 17 percent per annum and that, the surge was made possible because of the run-way shows such as Lagos fashion week and African fashion week organized annually by some Nigerian fashion designers, who have confidently made their way into the global fashion market. Nigeria fashion designers have created awareness of the link between fashion industry and tourism through fashion week (fashion shows) held annually in Lagos, and have also taken part in fashion exhibitions across some African nations, and globally in fashion capitals of the world which include Paris, Milan, London, New York and others, to showcase the Nigerian fashion culture. These events have placed Nigeria in the world fashion map.

Asare (2022) reported that at the occasion of the World Tourism Day (WTD) held in Cross River State, the Nigerian Minister for Information and culture, Lai Mohammed, stated that though Nigeria is known for film and music but in terms of receipt, the fashion industry yields the highest revenue among the creative industries in Nigeria. The Minister stated that "while music generated about 300 billion naira a year, and film about 179 billion naira, the fashion industry has about 2 trillion naira in annual revenue". On a previous occasion, Oyeyemi (2020) reported that while declaring open a fashion exhibition entitled "Cycles of Fashion" held in Lagos in 2020, to celebrate the diamond jubilee of Nigeria, the minister of Information and Culture, Lai Mohammed in his opening speech, stated that "according to the report of a post-covid-19 initiative committee on the creative industry headed by Alli Baba, the fashion industry's annual revenue is around 2 trillion naira, while the industry comprises about 1,000 businesses that employ over 30,000 practitioners, compare this with the film industry, with an annual revenue of 140 billion naira or the music industry with an annual revenue of 300 billion naira, and you will understand how huge the fashion industry is". The minister noted that the

industry is underrated due to lack of adequate information about the sector. The minister further noted that the fashion industry is seriously underrated, especially in its capacity and ability to help advance the government economic diversification policy, job and wealth creation. The minister, Lai Mohammed indicated that, as Nigeria seeks to diversify her economy away from oil, and create jobs and wealth for the youths, the government cannot afford to neglect the creative industry (which is the second employer of labour after the Agriculture industry in Nigeria) in general, and the fashion industry in particular.

Nigerian Fashion Designers Who are Impacting The Fashion Industry

The Director General of Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), Coker (2022) noted that, what is now seen as a modern fashion industry in Nigeria, stands tall on the shoulders of matriarchs like Shade Thomas-Fahm, who came into the fashion scene in early 1960s in Lagos, Nigeria after training in United Kingdom. She created her brand using traditional African textile in styles that adopted the western orientation. She is also credited to have created the boubou (which is a female version of men's agbada), and other unique apparel such as asooke dresses, ankara shirts, and beaded shoes (Coker, 2022). The same writer further noted that other fashion designers who impacted Nigerian fashion from the 1970s include Folorunsho Alakija, Abah Folawiyo, and Nike Okundaye. Gachanja (2019) listed notable Nigerian fashion designers making wave globally to include: Folake Folarin-Coker; Deola Sagoe; Ituen Basi; Duro Olowu; Lisa Folawiyo; Soares Anthony; Ade Bakare; Frank Oshodi; Lola Faturoti; Zizi Cardow; Mai Atafo to mention a few. The same writer further stated that these Nigerian fashion designers and others not mentioned here, have won awards for their roles in showcasing Nigeria culture through fashion. Nigerian fashion designers have also gone digital, they have developed online platform for marketing their products globally.

Challenges of the Fashion Industry in Nigeria

Though Nigeria fashion designers have doggedly and persistently found their way into the global fashion market and into the world fashion map, the journey has not been without insurmountable challenges. Ukpabio (2022) reported that the challenges confronting the fashion industry in Nigeria as enumerated by the Fashion Designers Association of Nigeria (FADAN), to the World Bank in 2016, include poor funding. The government and private organisations such as banks are hesitant to fund the fashion industry as they do not believe it can yield much revenue, and when they occasionally give grants, they are usually few, therefore the industry is left to be funded by the few affluent individuals who have great interest for fashion, this leads to low productivity in the fashion industry. Lack of skilled labour, a lot of people offering service of fashion designing are not skilled and not capable of rendering quality services, as such the industry is not taken seriously. Poor electricity supply, as a result of the epileptic and irregular electricity in Nigeria, fashion designers have to run their business each day using personal electricity generators for long hours, consequently the cost of fueling the electricity generator increases the cost of producing the clothing items. The Nigeria government policy does not provide enabling environment for the fashion industry to thrive. Oyeyemi (2020) reported that the Nigerian Minister of Information and Culture also listed some of the challenges of the fashion industry in his opening speech at the fashion exhibition held in Lagos in 2020 to celebrate the Nigeria independent diamond jubilee, which were; extensive skill gaps at all levels of the value chain; lack of access to raw materials, poor supply chain; poor funding; and poor intellectual property protection.

Ways to Overcome The Challenges.

Ukpabio (2022) reported that the Fashion Designers Association of Nigeria (FADAN) demanded that the government should support the fashion value chain through policy and legal framework. The association suggested that the National Intellectual Property offices should be continually strengthened to establish effective synergies with various ministries and government agencies such as the ministries of Trade and Industry/ Culture and Tourism, in formulating national policies incorporating the fashion industry. FADAN also listed the lack of cross border cooperation between industry associations in Africa countries as also one of the challenges of the industry. FADAN suggested that this can be addressed by establishing cross-border IP licensing platforms, government can facilitate and support these types of industry initiatives. FADAN also suggested that government should be involved in organising training seminars on the value added benefits of the fashion industry, and on the registration procedures of the rights that are relevant to fashion designing.

The Link Between Fashion and Tourism

The Director General of Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation, Coker (2002) stated that fashion has always been closely linked to tourism and that the relationship between fashion and tourism is more pronounced on the global scene through the huge fashion shows that are regularly put up in the fashion capitals of the world such as New York, Paris, Milan and lately Los Angeles, Madrid, Toronto, Istanbul, Dubai and Berlin. The writer noted that these cities have created a distinct consumer experience now known as fashion tourism. Protochic team (2017) stated that, Nigerian government should not underrate the ability of fashion to drive tourism and eventually drive gross domestic product, as a strong fashion industry attracts creative business leaders, trade partners and technological innovations. Shopping is one of the major activities of interest for tourists on leisure trips, destination marketers are aware of it, as such they provide special shopping packages for tourists. These groups of tourists see shopping for fashion and souvenirs as a part of the trip. Harsh (2018) asserted that tourists are no more only interested in natural features as tourism packages, thus destinations world wide are changing their approach to attract more tourists, examples of such modification is the shopping festival of cities like Dubai, Hong Kong, Milan to attract tourists globally. Gatawa (2006) indicated that fashion has the potentials to significantly add value to existing tourism attractions in a destination. Fashion shows, exhibitions and fashion museum can be incorporated as part of the tourist site cultural attractions, to give added value. Lazeretti

and Olivia (2018) reported that 11% of visitors to Florence in Italy were motivated by fashion. Shopping is one of the main activities that is of interest to fashion lovers who travel for leisure or business, as such fashion tourism is becoming popular.

Fashion Tourism

People in this era are so materialistic that they travel beyond their place of origin or residence to experience the fashion of other cultures. Farsani and Jamshidi (2020) noted that the motivation for many tourists who travel to destinations, is to experience the fashion of the people in the destination. Hamstech (2017) opined that fashion tourism is the travel people do to indulge in different activities related to fashion. It is also seen as shopping tourism, which involves people visiting fashion museums, learning and observing trends in fashion designing in various places and attending fashion shows, which are all parts of fashion tourism. Fashion tourism is also a type of cultural tourism which involves people's visit to places to learn about the culture and ways of dressing, and draw inspiration from them (Hamstech, 2017). This implies that fashion tourism is a combination of both shopping tourism and cultural tourism. Cabrera (2013) confirmed this, by stating that, fashion tourism is intertwined with creative cultural tourism, and shopping tourism. Harsh (2018) was also of the opinion that fashion tourism is a niche market (a specialized market) that is a combination of cultural tourism and shopping tourism. Fashion tourism involves the interaction between destination marketing organisations, trade associations and tourism suppliers, this creates opportunity for countries to use their indigenous cultural industry to develop tourism and boost the economy in the global market (Hamstech, 2017).

Farsani and Jamshidi(2020) observed that events such as fashion shows and exhibitions attract the attention of tourists to natural features, architecture and handicrafts of the host community. The same researcher noted that in fashion tourism, tourists are looking forward to meet world fashion designers, experience the fashion trends, the colour of the year, new designs of major brands of the world, traditional clothes designs and cultural products of the host communities. Fashion tourism attracts tourist for business and leisure, it creates opportunity to network and explore business potentials of the host community.

The positive socio-economic impact of fashion tourism include increasing creativity and innovation; empowerment of local communities; economic prosperity to host communities; entrepreneurship; increasing the diversity of sources of revenue; contributing to the promotion of cultural values and reviving forgotten culture; reviving the local textile industry; incorporating cultural components to fashion design; it creates job opportunities for youths; and also creates a forum for fashion designers to network as they market their products (Farsani & Jamshidi, 2020).

Fashion Tourism in Nigeria and its implication in the growth of Tourism.

As a way to promote fashion tourism in Nigeria, Ronke Ademiluyi founded the African Fashion Week London in 2011 and African Fashion week Nigeria in 2014. Ronke has been able to use the African fashion week to provide a platform for Nigerian fashion designers to showcase their creativity in Lagos, London, New York and other parts of the world. Okeke-Korieocha (2021) reported that, in the collaboration with Queen Moremi Ajasoro beauty pageant (QMA), most of the costumes and outfits the participants wore were fabrics that were made at AdireOodua Textile hub, the adire textile was made in creative and innovative ways, to promote the use of Nigerian indigenous textiles globally. The event helped to showcase the indigenous culture and fashion of Osun State, Nigeria. Okeke-Korieocha (2021) noted that tourism at Ife is gradually gaining momentum as tourists from various parts of the world travel to Osun State to experience its annual renowned cultural show with the theme "cultural pageant and African fashion week". The same writer reported that experts have said that, the consistent involvement of many nationalities with diverse cultural background at the African fashion week, can facilitate relationships which can boost tourism. Bamidele and Yusuf (2014) observed that the city of Osogbo in Western Nigeria, which is known for the mass production of indigenous textiles such as adire batik, tie and dye attract tourists from Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad, United States and other nations to visit the city to buy the indigenous textile as souvenirs, especially during the celebration of the Osun-Osogbo heritage festival, thereby contributing to the tourist travel experience. Also noted was that, the indigenous textiles (adire batik, tie and dye, and aso-oke) are being used by Nigerian fashion designers to produce apparels that are showcased locally and international, in "fashion week" to portray Nigeria's culture.

The "Lagos fashion week" was founded by Omoyemi Akerele in 2011. According to Ossai (2022), the objective of the Lagos fashion week was to attract fashion enthusiasts, buyers, investors, and the media to African designers and their collections. The event give Nigerian and African fashion industry international recognition. The Lagos fashion week just like the African fashion week helps to place Nigeria as the country with the leading fashion industry in Africa (Ossai, 2022). The fashion weeks promote tourism in Nigeria as the events attracts visitors or participants from all over the world.

Laurel (2021) asserted that African fashion weeks over the years have become a top-rated platform for promoting brands, displaying originality, and announcing fashion trends. Nigerian rich clothing designs, craft, and culture can improve to tourists travel experience. The colourful indigenous textiles which are adire batik, tie and dye, aso-oke and ankara are being used by Nigeria fashion designers to produce apparels that are appreciated globally. The inclusion of fashion events as part of tourist products will attract more visitors to Nigeria as a tourist destination.

CONCLUSION

Based on the evidence from the reviewed studies, it may be concluded that fashion events are providing competitive advantage for tourist destinations in Nigeria. The huge potentials of the fashion industry to make vital contributions to tourism growth and development in Nigeria should encourage or motivate the government to recognise and properly

position the industry, by establishing synergy between the industry and the ministry of culture and tourism, and also formulate national policies incorporating the fashion industry. The organization of "fashion week" have been proven to be an effective strategy to boost tourism growth and development.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Government should adequately fund the fashion industry by providing grants to the stakeholder in the industry to enable them produce high quality clothing, and organise fashion events such as the fashion week.
2. "Fashion week" could be combined with cultural festivals as part of tourist's products, and organised bi-annually instead of the annual events, this will help attract more local and international tourists to the destination.
3. Banks should make it easy for stakeholders in the fashion industry to get access to loans, as huge capital is required to make good quality designs and market them.
4. Government should provide an enabling environment for the fashion industry to thrive by formulating policies that will be favourable for the expansion of the industry, and also improve on the maintenance of infrastructure such as electricity to reduce the designers' cost of producing clothing items.
5. Government should invest in the local textile industries to encourage the production of high quality and quantity of indigenous textiles, to help fashion designers have easy access to affordable high quality fabrics.
6. Lagos could be promoted as a fashion city by establishing a fashion museum in the city, as part of tourist's attraction.
7. Renowned fashion designers should frequently organise training courses, workshops and seminars to help the upcoming fashion designers update and perfect their sewing and designing skills. Also the existing fashion schools should be well equipped for adequate training. This will help to reduce the problem of lack of skilled labour in the industry.

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