

10.5281/zenodo.15379359

Vol. 08 Issue 04 April - 2025

Manuscript ID: #1916

## Tourism Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Nigerian Startups: A Conceptual Review

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### ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the opportunities for Nigerian startups in the field of tourism entrepreneurship. It examines the literature on the topic with an aim of reviewing entrepreneurial opportunities for utilisation by tourism graduates in Nigeria as well as providing a summary of institutions offering tourism and hospitality courses in Nigeria while also highlighting the importance of tourism studies as an entrepreneurial education for national development, self-sufficiency, actualization of prospects for youths in the country. . The review shows that there are many potential opportunities for Nigerian startups in the field of tourism, such as tour guiding, lodging, cottage industries and other allied services. The results suggest that there are broad range of tourism entrepreneurship skills training opportunities available to Nigerian startups, along with access to education, skill acquisition and a mild supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem. However, the results also highlight some of the challenges that Nigerian startups may encounter in the tourism sector, such as a lack of access to business finance, absence of mentorship programs in the sector and the limited availability of financial resources. The findings suggest that there is potential for Nigerian startups to take advantage of tourism entrepreneurship opportunities, as some of the business can be started with little or no capital but with a creative mind and capacity to deliver.

### Keywords:

Tourism, Entrepreneurship, Opportunities, Nigeria.

**How to cite:** Alamai, M., & Hassan, S. (2025). Tourism Entrepreneurial Opportunities for Nigerian Startups: A Conceptual Review. *GPH-International Journal of Business Management*, 8(04), 01-15.  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15379359>



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## 1.0 Introduction

Entrepreneurship as observed by Varostis (2022) involves the dynamic process of creating value by taking risks aimed at financial and self-fulfilling gratification. Broadly, the term has elements of innovation, management, risk-taking, enterprise decision-making, perseverance, and perspicacity in the face of new economic prospect. While the personality of the entrepreneur exhibits special traits, that includes the need for achievement, autonomy, creation, vision, foresight, and positive thinking. As entrepreneurship is also driven by perception of opportunities. In this context, Scholars like Rao (2020) have further advanced entrepreneurship to cover not only creating new ventures that creatively solve problems but also powerful agents of cultural change capable of transforming their societies through consciously incorporating social goals into entrepreneurs strategic thinking as a means to maximize personal and collective benefits. The tourism sector is highly dependent on entrepreneurship because its survival is closely linked to entrepreneurial activities and sustainability. Tourism as a business has been recognized globally to be a source of creating wealth, opportunities, employment, development as well as creativity on its part. Nongsiej and Shimray(2017) argued further that tourism entrepreneurship has been recognized as the basic way to provide strategic support for maintaining business development especially in rural areas since entrepreneurship is considered a critical factor in development both regionally and globally. **So also activities of services providers in tourism sectors such as accommodation, transport, and hospitality, entertainment, and other tourism associated industries will also provide jobs to citizens (Jude et al., 2025).** Lita, Ranny, Faisal and Meuthia (2020) equally added that tourism is based on the interactivity of the provider (producer of tourism services) and receiver (tourist); therefore, the satisfaction of the latter depends on the human relationships that develop during the provision of the tourism services. Thus, one needs to note that the tourism industry consists of a wide range of businesses that provide a variety of services required by tourists in their place of origin, during the journey and at destination. Tourist agents and businesses are thus summarized into three areas of activity not minding the ownership or entrepreneurial structure.

The aim of this paper is to review entrepreneurial opportunities for utilisation by tourism graduates in Nigeria as well as provide a summary of institutions offering tourism and hospitality courses in Nigeria while also highlighting the importance of tourism studies as an entrepreneurial education for national development, self-sufficiency, actualization of prospects for youths in the country.

The next section presents the research literature that covers entrepreneurship education, tourism and tourism industry, entrepreneurial opportunities in tourism, institutions offering tourism in Nigeria, followed by a section comprising discussion of the empirical research. The last part of the paper concludes by highlighting practical and managerial implications of the research, as well as some possible future research directions.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Entrepreneurship Education

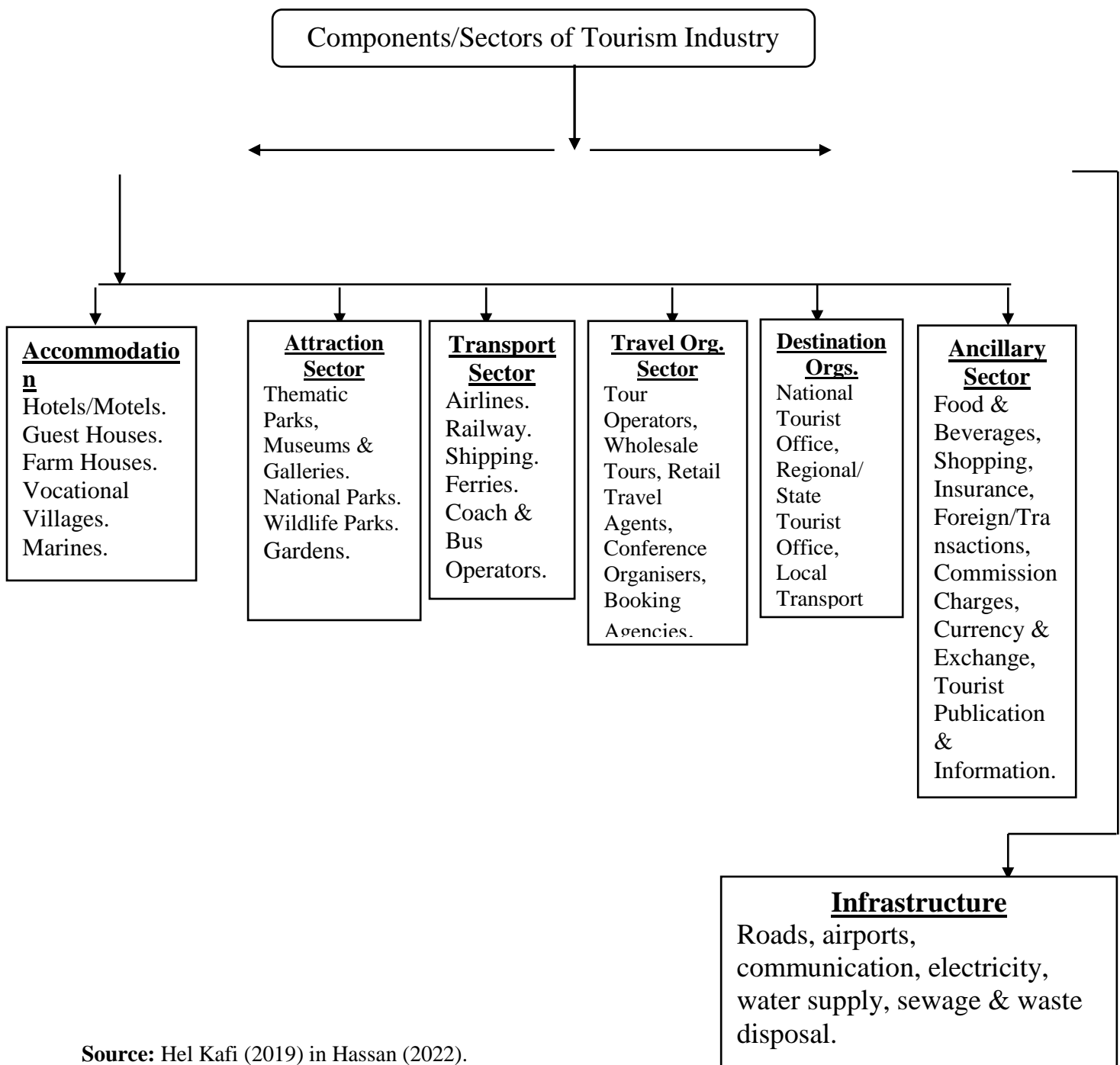
Entrepreneurship is connected with the formal education to enable graduates to learn the necessary skills and competencies for self-reliance. The increasing trend in entrepreneurial activities globally, emerging from the academic institutions, therefore left the institutions without any options than to re-innovate entrepreneurial activities (Pane and Kumar, 2015). Innovation is becoming necessary to equip the institutions and their graduates to adjust to the dynamic shifts in technologies and globalization. Interestingly, support from educational environment and family have been identified to enhance the interests of the entrepreneurs (Mariani and Anom, 2020). On the other hand, hospitality and tourism education focus on building the industries' future manpower (Chand, 2016) to enable it function efficiently. This is to enable the institutions' programmes to link and fit their graduates with

the industry's needs. Correspondingly, Hassan (2016) posits that there is need to establish a close link between the education, real work life and training to bridge the gap of job skilling through innovative approaches at all levels.

Below is the diagramme for the main components of the tourism and hospitality industries and how they are related and coordinated in providing their services to the tourists (Hassan, 2022)

**Figure No.1**

**The Main Components of Sectors of Tourism Industry**



**Source:** Hel Kafi (2019) in Hassan (2022).

Moreover, there is need to connect and bridge the gap between the industry needs and the education to provide the right skills and knowledge to the students (graduates) necessary for the industry. Hassan (2023) highlights on the need to provide a link between what the industry needs and what schools provide, to bridge the skills gaps in the various organisations.

Gautam and Singh (2015) in an analysis of the different concepts and ideas that define entrepreneurship education, advanced that it is a kind of educational training process that is aimed at influencing individuals' attitudes, behaviours, values or intentions towards entrepreneurship either as a possible career or to enhance among them an appreciation of its role in the community. In addition, Fayolle (2009) stated that entrepreneurship education includes all activities aiming to foster entrepreneurial mindsets, attitudes and skills and covering a range of aspects such as idea generation, start-up, growth and innovation. Thus, as a discipline entrepreneurship education tends to always inculcate some elements of skill so that an individual can play a role of a catalyst for socio economic change in a society while also shaping the future of the society and the individual too.

Therefore, entrepreneurship, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), Incubators and Ecosystem are among the main bedrock of entrepreneurship identified as 'Business Incubation. Business Incubator' or 'innovation ecosystem, as argued by (Mariani & Anom, 2019; Mubarak & Busler, 2014; Datta & Adesola, 2018) are centred in tertiary institutions or other higher institutions of learning. And the business incubators focus on nurturing the process of small and micro enterprises developments with assistance on business developments and multi – talent facilities in shared office services (Al-Mubarak, and Busler, 2014). They are necessary for the survival of tourism and hospitality industries to enable them provide for the needs of the tourists at a destination (Hassan, 2022). These components are working together to produce the much-desired success of business enterprises as group.

Equally in advancing reasons for entrepreneurial education in schools, Scholars like Arnaut (2022) stressed that for small transition countries such as Nigeria, it is important that universities, Polytechnics and Monotechnic operate under policies that encourage entrepreneurship and innovation. The education of young people about entrepreneurship represents a highly valuable preparation for constant changes in the labour market. Entrepreneurial education is crucial to help young people develop entrepreneurial skills, attributes, and behaviour, as well as to embrace entrepreneurship as a career option. Entrepreneurship is important because it leads to increased economic efficiencies, brings innovation to market, creates new jobs, and raises employment levels (Karimi, Biemans, Lans, Mulder & Chizari 2012).

While entrepreneurship in business and management education has been studied for long, it is a new topic in the tourism industry and education, as such the relevant literature still remains limited as observed by Gatten (2019) where it was highlighted that the main areas of discussion by tourism scholars were on dominance on lifestyle and sustainable forms of tourism entrepreneurship without considering the impact of technology innovation. This has meant a lack of transdisciplinary research that considers different theoretical frameworks and perspective. While Alhamad (2020) also observed that the majority of studies focused on the scope of other areas (tourism, hospitality and general scopes) rather than on entrepreneurship scope. This has its effects on the contribution to the entrepreneurship.

On the contrary, Işika, Küçükaltanb, Çelebic, Çalkınd, Ensere and Çelik. (2019) argued that entrepreneurship research was initially pursued within the established disciplines like economics, psychology, sociology and management and the array of dependent variables that entrepreneurship researches used reflects that the field lacked a unifying theory or the complexity associated with entrepreneurship as an area of management scholarship. Equally, entrepreneurship in tourism studies which initially emerged in the rural tourism areas and contributed to the economy tend to leave their

place to the entrepreneurship studies which are considered to be a part of sustainable tourism, SMEs and niche tourism, where there is a wide range of literature on entrepreneurship in tourism, particularly in the context of sustainable tourism, including sustainable community development and social entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs and SMEs.

However, Ghutam and Sighn (2015) have recognised that entrepreneurship helps potential entrepreneurs to identify and pursue opportunities and not limited to boosting start-ups, innovative ventures and new jobs, but enhances competency for all while helping young people to become creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake, the tendency of getting more literature on tourism entrepreneurship is thus gradually developing and taking shape as a distinct sector of the tourism discipline. Consequently, scholars (such as Kirby, 2004; Kuratka & Harnsby, 1996; Vesper & William, 1997; Kuratka & Jennings, 1999; McGrath, MacMillan & Scheinberg, 1992; Gundary & Kickal, 1998) in their various studies of entrepreneurial education, have agreed to the concept being versatile and having traits that range from its function of being innovative, fostering leadership, having the qualities of organisational building, enterprise creation & operation, likewise giving sense of achievement or fulfilment as well as creation of value for customers through opportunities. Others include having strong and positive orientation towards growth in wealth, knowledge and employment, attitudinal change, risk taking abilities and turning idea into actions. Which are also elements that are sought out in tourism entrepreneurs.

## **2.2 Tourism and Tourism Industry**

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors of the Nigeria's economy, with varied tourists' attractions across the country (Osuoha et al., 2025). Tourism industry is an interrelated amalgamation of those businesses and agencies which totally or in part provide the means of transport, goods, services, and other facilities for travel outside of home or community for any purpose not related to day-to-day activity. It can also be seen as a collection of organizations and establishments that drive all or significant portion of their income from providing goods and services purchased on a trip to the traveller. Sofronov (2018) added the growing volume and complexity of tourism services have generated the development of a real tourist industry that justifies treating the phenomenon of tourism as a distinct branch of the growing economy in the world. By its nature, the tourism phenomenon is particularly complex, with profound social, political, cultural and economic implications. These complex arrangements of services as outlined by Sofronov includes but not limited to hotel chains, cruise lines and seaports, airports and airlines turning over billions of dollars every year, to individuals running a bed and breakfast, teaching a cooking class or leading a tour through their local community. Thinking of the industry in such a way allows us to picture not only the vast economic impact that it has at the global level, but also to consider the life-transforming effects it can have on real people in destinations across the world.

Tourism as a business system includes a variety of tourism services which when combined will be categorized as a tourism industry, the tourism industry means covering a wide range of service sectors, and each sector includes a range of business items (Andrianto & Suigaima 2016). Sometimes called Clusters and Clustering of the Hospitality and Tourism Industries. Porter, in 1998, went on to define clusters as geographical concentrations of inter-connected companies and institutions in a particular field, linked by commonalities and complementarities (Mircetic, Vukotic & Cvijanovic, 2019). With the development of cluster and cluster configurations, tourism destinations' competitiveness improves within international, regional, national, as well as the local markets (Lohmann & Netto, 2017), and many benefits will be derived from the association.

Consequently, the need for the hospitality and tourism stakeholders to identify various tools and approaches in order to present tourist destinations to the markets, through developing effective

Models will enable them become competitive by forming clusters of tourism and hospitality (Mircetic, et al , 2019). It is therefore important for groups of tourism firms or companies to be close together geographically with each other to support and compete in establishing strategic alliance for developing tourism competitiveness in a region (Lohmann & Netto, 2017). Moreover, cluster of tourism and hospitality enterprises at the destination stimulates their performance and lower the numbers of their exit in the market (Brouder, 2013). Porter (1998) in Hassan (2022) further stressed that In a typical tourism cluster, for example, the quality of a visitor's experience depends not on the appeal of the primary attractions but also on the quality and efficiency of complementary businesses such as hotels, restaurants, shopping outlets and transportation facilities (Hassan, 2022). Thus, cluster, as well as ecosystems, are a necessary ingredient that will enable individual enterprises joined together as a group to develop and prosper by benefitting with one another.

These clusters, as added by Cooper (2000), are grouped as the 4A's of tourism comprising attraction; accommodation; accessibility and amenities. Other scholars added a fifth one to include ancillary services. There is quite a difference between tourism entrepreneurship and other types of entrepreneurships. Tourism entrepreneurs are attracted more towards the tourism sector to attain a higher standard of life because of many more opportunities and more profits. Tourism businesses are mainly small to medium-sized enterprises and are initiated by entrepreneurs who supply leisure and recreational opportunities.

### 2.3 Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Tourism

Entrepreneurial opportunities in the tourism industry are numerous and this depends on an individual's ability, capacity and imitateness to venture into any idea he/she has generated likewise implement and see to its growth through nurturing it. The travels and tourism industry provide jobs directly or indirectly to countless numbers of entrepreneurs all over the globe. The opportunities that is available in the industry cuts across service deliveries and product sales, amongst others. The industry is open to both big time investors who have the financial capacity to invest in the aviation industry and also aspiring entrepreneurs who just want to make a living but don't have start capital.

Equally, Nure, Bazini and Madani (2020) supported the argument by saying tourism, as one of the most promising growth drivers for the world economy, can play an important role in driving the transition to a greener economy, and contributing to more sustainable development. Investing and financing is an essential part of this. Opportunities are broader, and include public and private investment in low carbon transportation options and building resource-efficient tourism infrastructure, as well as initiatives to support innovation, promote business responsibility management, and encourage integration of which the following trades are SME's that provide job opportunities in tourism for all classes of people (Skilled, Semi-skilled and Unskilled) (Nure 2020).

Gyanko (2021) then outlined the following types of businesses anyone interested in tourism entrepreneurship can go into amongst plenty.

**Tourist Guide:** One of the travels and tourism related businesses that an entrepreneur can successfully start with little or no money is to become a tourist guide. All that is required to successfully launch this type of business is to ensure that you can speak at least one or more foreign languages or local dialects.

**Restaurants and Bars:** Restaurant and bar is yet another business that is part of the business value chain of the travels and tourism industry. Although, most tourists may prefer to eat the food they are familiar with, but it wouldn't be out of place if you could also include some local delicacy as part of the food you sell in your restaurant.

***Taxi and Bus Shuttle Business:*** Taxi and bus shuttle business is another fantastic travels and tourism related business idea that thrives pretty well in a tourist town.

***Vehicle Rental Business:*** This is yet another travels and tourism related business that is viable and profitable in a tourist town. There are several stuffs that tourists could rent when they visit tourist sites. It could be a car, scooter, speed boat, canoe or even horse, donkey or camel.

***Photography:*** Photography business is an added business venture in the value chain of travels and tourism industry. Although, most tourists would always travel with their cameras to capture beautiful sites and moments albeit in an armature manner.

***Souvenir Shops:*** Souvenir shop is yet another travels and tours business idea that is highly profitable in any tourist town. Loads of visitors would prefer to buy local crafts, unique gifts or native wears, et al from a tourist town as a mark of remembrance.

***Night Club:*** Night club is another business idea in the business value chain of the travels and tourism industry that an investor or entrepreneur who is looking towards starting business in the industry should consider starting. This type of business can do pretty well in a tourist town. This type of business is profitable, but it may not thrive in all tourist towns, especially smaller towns with quiet lifestyle.

***Luggage Delivery Service:*** Another travels and tourism related business idea that an entrepreneur who is looking towards starting a business in the industry should consider starting is luggage delivery services. Luggage delivery business is all about helping travelers to avoid the hassles of baggage merry-go-round waiting and security checks.

***Welcoming Service:*** Another easy to establish travels and tourism related business that an entrepreneur who is looking towards starting a business in the industry should consider starting. Welcoming services is all about welcoming tourists to a tourist town and in turn giving them useful information and of course package of coupons, samples from local businesses, and other opportunities that are available in the town.

***Language Translation Service:*** Language translation services is yet another thriving and profitable business that an entrepreneur who is looking towards starting a business in the travels and tourism industry. All that is required to successfully launch this type of business is to ensure that you can speak at least one or more foreign languages.

***Start a Travel and Tourism Related Radio Talk show:*** Of course, it is more expensive to buy slots on TV than it is for radio.

***Start Blogging on Tourism and Travels Related Topics:*** Another means of earning income from the business value chain of the travels and tourism industry that an entrepreneur can successfully launch with little or no start – up capital is to start blogging on travels and tourism related topics.

***Supply Body Guards to Tourists:*** Another profitable and of course thriving business that an entrepreneur who is interested in earning money from the business value chain in the travels and tourism industry should consider starting is to start supplying bodyguards to tourists especially celebrities who are visiting tourist locations.

***Open a Community Museum (Arts and Culture):*** If you are interested in arts and culture, one of the travels and tourism related business ideas that you should consider starting is to open a community museum; a place where the art and culture of your community will be preserved.

***Start a Business That organizes excursions for school children:*** It is the tradition in most schools especially primary and secondary school to take their students on excursion once in a while.

***Start the rental of Canoes and Speed Boats:*** Another thriving and profitable business venture that an entrepreneur who is interested in starting a business in the travels and tourism business should consider starting is to start the rental of canoes and speed boats. If you live in the Caribbean or a riverine area that attracts tourists.

Other sets of entrepreneurial business include Travel agency business, airline operations business, organizing trade shows, conferences, being a meeting planner, event planner, organizing tours for musicians, students exchange programmes, organizing pilgrimages tours to religious sites, travel directory and a lot more once the individual is creative and innovative.

### **Characteristics of Tourism Entrepreneurial activities**

There is no single universal definition of tourism enterprises as these differ across countries, and these businesses often cater to both visitors and local residents. However, a general approach adopted by tourism researchers is to categorize businesses as tourism enterprises if their predominant source of revenue comes from tourism-related activities. Tourism enterprises are diverse and cut across various sectors, including accommodation (e.g., hotels, motels, B&Bs), visitor attractions, restaurants and cafes, pubs/bars/taverns, transport, motor vehicle hire, arts and recreation, events, retail trade, travel agents, and tour operators. To add to the complexity, the wide range of enterprises operate in diverse sectors of tourism, including adventure tourism, ecotours, nature-based tourism, indigenous tourism, sport tourism, wine tourism, gastronomic tourism, cultural tourism, and festivals and events (McKercher, 2016).

Therefore, Hallak and Lee (2023) advanced that several characteristics distinguish tourism enterprises from businesses in other sectors. These include the following (Hallak & Lee, 2023,

1. Tourism enterprises operate in an industry that is dominated by small firms, including microenterprises.
2. Tourism enterprises are normally independently owned and financed.
3. Tourism enterprises operate in an industry with high competition and relatively low barriers to entry – that is, low skill requirements and startup costs.
4. Tourism businesses are often created by individuals with lifestyle objectives, rather than for profit.
5. Tourism offers diverse opportunities for starting up various types of business, which appeals to both sole proprietors and families.
6. Tourism enterprises, being small in size, are more nimble and agile and can adapt quickly, especially in niche tourism markets.
7. Tourism enterprises may be exposed to a range of uncertainties originating in other parts of the supply chain or in other countries that negatively affect demand and revenue.
8. Tourism enterprises operate simultaneously in local and international markets, and therefore face a highly competitive and dynamic environment

### **The Necessary On-Demand Skills for Tourism Entrepreneurship (Soft and Hard):**

Tourism enterprises, both Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, as well as their large, or corporations need to adopt innovations and technologies, most especially the digital ones, to enable them strive and be resilient in the turbulent futures. In view of this, the entire hotel industry will



therefore need to aggressively invest much in digital technologies for the future, innovations and also enhance their marketing strategies in order to remain competitive (Proshare Research, 2021). Due to embracing technologies, a salient role is identified for moving the Nigerian tourism and hospitality industries forward, then before the Corona Pandemic era (Coker, 2021) in (Hassan, 2022). Hospitality and tourism firms need to be innovative in order to compete as well as develop in the emerging global competitive markets (Hassan, 2023). With the emergence of, and the rapid development in technology, innovation becomes synonymous with the technology. Thus, they use to complement each other in many instances as many innovations are derived from technology and many technologies are products of innovations. They are all employed to help improve the performance of the tourism and hospitality organisations, particularly small enterprises, in the competitive markets (Tigu et al, 2013). The recent Pandemic crises, helped to accelerate the adoption of mobile and digital tools, which are parts of the main source of inspirations for travel planning and decisions (Curran, 2020 Nov.4). This highlights the need for both innovations and emerging technologies in hospitality and tourism firms or businesses across the globe.

Other skills include; resilience, talent management, digital skills, marketing skills, leadership skills, etc. The tourism and hospitality industry, is therefore highly labor-intensive, seasonal and contain a very diverse complement of employees (Blayney, 2009). The sector needs certain specific skills and competencies based on its nature and service demands. In the hospitality industry, flexibility and quick reaction are deemed critical skills due to continuous dynamic market conditions (Hassan and Oluwafemi, 2022). As a result, various skills are needed to enable the organization to adapt and become resilient in a dynamic period. Similarly, skills-based assessment of talents provides organizational leaders with some additional insights on demanded skills like analytics, information, security, artificial intelligence (AI), designs and cloud, etc (Carlin, Gardner, Hancock & Weddle, 2019). Organisations, particularly in hospitality and tourism, should identify their peculiar and generic skills and apply them to provide synergy to help them achieve their various goals. In addition, they should also identify their skills-gap in different sections of their organisations as well as provide (hire) the necessary staff to fill those gaps (Hassan & Oluwafem, 2022).

## **2.4 Importance of Tourism Entrepreneurship**

Nuer (2020) summarized the importance of tourism entrepreneurship by saying tourism plays a role in providing opportunities for low-skilled and low-skilled workers, ethnic minority and migrant groups, unemployed youth, long-term unemployed, and women with family responsibilities who can only get part-time work. Being a labor-intensive sector, tourism offers employment opportunities for those who enter the labor market for the first time or have difficulty finding employment elsewhere. The tourism labor market has a dynamic nature, is high turnover of work among organizations, wide range of levels of remuneration and schemes, seasonality, etc, where SMEs are the main contributors to employment, as a key engine for generating jobs and the overall economy of a country, region or community.

Secondly, a job in the tourism industry creates about one and a half additional (indirect) jobs in the tourism-related economy. Thus, this multiplier effect of tourism means that it stimulates job creation in all sectors of the area concerned. Employment in the tourism industries involves a disproportionately high degree of employers / owners / owners as well as self-employed (i.e. self-employed) employees.

Thirdly, entrepreneurship plays a vital role in tourism development, especially in rural communities. Entrepreneurs start new businesses in the area, such as a hotel that employs local people, benefiting both the local people and the tourists.

Fourthly, tourism Entrepreneurship will help in enhancing the transferable needed technology for the rapid transformation of the rural environment (Okeke 2019).

Fifthly, the objective of promoting tourism entrepreneurship is to lessen the severity of the rural-urban migrating. The migration of rural dwellers to cities in search of jobs has resulted in congested, high incidence of crimes.

## **2.5 Educational Institutions offering Tourism and its allied courses in Nigeria**

In the recent decades paralleled with other countries regarding an increase attention toward entrepreneurship and the benefits of tourism to developing nations with vast and wide natural, cultural diversity and resources, Nigeria as a nation has also witnessed and showed a significant interest in various entrepreneurship fields and education, both in higher educational settings, policy making and business. Accordingly, measures and mechanisms have been proposed to develop entrepreneurship in the public and private sectors as well as universities, Polytechnics and colleges as they relate to specific and unique disciplines such as tourism and Hospitality. These measures as well the presence of a high unemployment rate of university graduates have led many private and public universities and polytechnics to consider offering entrepreneurship education to their students in such unique disciplines.

According to National Universities commission (NUC 2022) there are 170 universities in Nigeria with over 1.8 million undergraduate students and 242 post graduate students and the number of academic programmes (undergraduate) in the Universities is 5,454 while NBTE in 2022 said it has about 159 polytechnics in Nigeria out of which 40 are federal while the rest are state and privately owned. Equally from the statistics reeled out by NUC in 2022 only 12 universities offer Hospitality and Tourism management programmes at undergraduate levels, out of which 5 are federal universities, 4 are state universities and 3 are private universities; 7 other universities offer Tourism Studies and 10 offer Transport and Logistics management courses. Whereas in the polytechnic sector, out of the 159 polytechnics, 37 offer varying levels of tourism, hospitality, wildlife management, Eco-tourism and transport courses at National Diploma and Higher National Diploma respectively out of an enrollment of over 700 thousand undergraduates across the country.

## **2. 6. Challenges of Tourism Entrepreneurship Startups in Nigeria.**

Tourism enterprises operate in dynamic market environments synonymous with high business failures, seasonality and revenue fluctuations, low barriers to entry, and high competition. They must deal with diverse challenges throughout the entrepreneurship life cycle, including accessing finance, resource constraints, human resource management, staff acquisition and retention, limited expertise in digital marketing, etc.

Against this backdrop, first thing lacking is the entrepreneurial spirit amongst graduates in Nigerian high institutions from where the attitude and skill will follow. Entrepreneurs need the indefatigable energy and incurable optimism that enables them to take the road less travelled and convert their dreams into reality. It is a force that beckons an individual to pursue countless opportunities. Entrepreneurs must learn how to overcome the risk of failure, or of vulnerability. Entrepreneurship education as such offer them these valuable insights and also teachers, educators need to support them in this area for the country to benefit from the creative minds of our teeming youths.

This was also emphasized by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO,2012) that focus of education should not only be on preparing students for employment but more important towards developing employability skills. Today, the focus is on rote learning and the education system does not actively encourage students to think on their own and take on responsibilities. However, Hassan (2022) argues that due to global calls for the revival of SMEs

incubators, and an awareness about different tourism and hospitality activities would be strengthened through bringing together the cluster of their enterprises in a close area, or building for the amalgamated enterprises to thrive and prosper.

Secondly, innovation and entrepreneurship lack encouragement at social levels, Governmental levels and Managerial levels in Nigeria. There must be a social attitude that views innovations with positive attitude. The role that the government can play in the encouragement of entrepreneurial efforts is through development of policies concerning educational and financial support which though has been started through a review of educational curriculum of tertiary institutions to make entrepreneurship education a compulsory course, there is a need to develop entrepreneurship hubs and clinics in all public tertiary institutions in conjunction with private sector, and creative industries.

Thirdly, the protocol, policies, guidelines and access to finance by startups and creative mindsets for entrepreneurship is bogus, ambiguous, difficult and at most times inaccessible to genuine and real startups who are innovators, creative and willing to take risks to set up entrepreneurial ventures (Manzuma-Ndaaba, Haraba & Aminulislam 2014). The development of the tourism industry has been very slow because the available funds through federal and state governments' budgetary allocations are inadequate (Esu 2015).

Fourthly, on the demand side, tourists have increasing travel experience and expect perfect service during their leisure time while, on the supply side, young Nigerians strive for higher education, however serving as apprentices and volunteers have an image problem in general and especially within the field of tourism, where the connotation is hard work, high need for mobility and modest wages. The result: a lack of young motivated apprentices willing to learn and deliver professional service to the experienced tourist that calls for fundamental modifications in the Nigerian educational system.

### **3.0 Discussions**

There is a high prospects of entrepreneurship in the Nigeria's tourism sector due to the diverse tourists' attractions scattered across the six Geopolitical Zones. However, much need to be done to harness it. The entire tourism industry needs an overhaul; policies to develop it, government's supports, effective marketing and awareness about those attractions, community involvement, and private-people-government partnerships among others. Interestingly, there are enough manpower needed in the tourism and hospitality sectors, though there are no right placements of the skilled labour in the industry. Meanwhile, in the midst of continuous growth in the number of Polytechnics, universities, monotechnic and private institutions offering tourism and its allied courses, large numbers have opined whether tourism entrepreneurial goals can be achieved and enhanced through education and training, or whether certain people are born to be tourism entrepreneur or to act entrepreneurially. Some people still argue that it is not possible to teach tourism entrepreneurship. For them, tourism entrepreneurship is a matter of personality and psychological characteristics being that it is a highly dependent service sector where seller and buyer are always interacting and it's the experience of such interactions that are being sold mostly as against what is being practiced in other businesses. One of the arguments that have been advanced is that talent and temperament cannot be taught (Fayolle et al, 2008; Thompson, 2004). But one could argue that this is true for many professions and professional situations. Nobody will dispute the fact that medicine, law, engineering and teaching skills can be taught and yet there are doctors, lawyers, engineers and teachers who are talented and others who are not. A similar argument can be made for entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs in tourism and hospitality.

It is a result of the above that scholars like Matlay and Mitra (2002) categorised entrepreneurship education in the following three different ways: i. Education about enterprise (Awareness Creation),

ii. Education for enterprise (The preparation of aspiring entrepreneurs for innovation); and iii Education in enterprise (The growth and development training for established entrepreneurs). Which will help to mitigate some of the observed anomalies. Entrepreneurship teaching/education may not necessarily provide answers, but supports learners to identify the right questions while also helping them to push boundaries, encouraging learners to think creatively and be confident enough in their own ability to take the risks necessary to succeed. Creative environments in learning situations also give room to support failure where mistakes can often prove to be the greatest lessons. Thus, Entrepreneurship Education requires the use of active learning method that places the learner at the centre of educational process and enables them to take responsibility for their own learning to experiment and learn about themselves. Teachers as such, need the professional competencies to be able to guide student through the learning process rather than, as in traditional method, communicating knowledge and information mainly through 'chalk and talk' (European Commission.2013).

#### **4.0 Conclusions**

In Nigeria, 33.3 percent of its population are unemployed and youth unemployment is about 42.5 percent while More than one quarter (26.3%) of Nigerians are multidimensionally poor and live in a household with a child between the ages of 6 and 15 that is not attending school are living below poverty level (National Bureau for Statistics May 2023 NBS). Though the country is blessed with numerous natural, cultural and heritage resources which if properly harnessed and tapped will go a long way in enhancing its developmental strides thus improving standard of living as well as creating more entrepreneurial opportunities, employments etc. Therefore, in order to meet this challenge, the federal government of Nigeria through the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) has launched through its over 47 polytechnics it is regulating across the nation, the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF), with the objectives of establish pathways and progression from informal short courses provided by various government agencies, NGOs and industry, to formal TVET programmes, and narrowing the gaps between what TVET graduates know and can do and the skills and knowledge that employers say they need (NBTE 2023)

#### **5.0 Implications Recommendations and Limitations**

Practically, the study provides valuable information and insight for those who formulate, deliver and evaluate educational programs to increase the entrepreneurial intention of students. Our findings strongly suggest that participation in entrepreneurship education programs can shape and foster entrepreneurial abilities for the teeming youths in the country, while also the findings relates that there is potential gold mine in tourism for Nigerian startups to take advantage of entrepreneurship opportunities, utilize and implement even with little or no capital as long as one is creative and has acquired the basic knowledge about entrepreneurship. Though it was observed that mentorship programmes for tourism entrepreneurship are virtually lacking unlike like in other trades and skills in the country.

The current study has several limitations as we only concentrated on the opportunities and potentials of tourism entrepreneurship in Nigeria and formal education institutions at tertiary level that offer tourism courses with entrepreneurial tendencies. Further research can be conducted on the opportunities and challenges of tourism entrepreneurship ecosystem in Nigeria, and also analysis of established SMEs in tourism that fosters entrepreneurship in Nigeria as well as Mentorship systems in tourism entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

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