

## POTENTIALS OF THE TELEVISION IN REINVENTING THE NIGERIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY

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### **Abstract**

*This paper explores the potentiality of the television medium in reinventing the tourism industry in Nigeria. In the wake of the recent global economic meltdown which started in the United States of America and has spread across the world, there is an emerging consensus that sustainable economic growth and development might best be promoted through, among others, the development of tourist prospects in the developed and developing areas of the world. In particular, tourism development is being encouraged to create jobs, preserve nature and man-made treasures as well as address the scathing poverty that is prevalent in the globe, especially in the third world countries where economic anaemia is endemic. It is in this regard that this paper employs the evaluative approach to reflect on how the media, particularly the television could help reinvent tourism for sustainable growth and development in Nigeria. It concludes that the versatility of the television medium could be the rallying inspiration the lethargic tourism business is waiting for in Nigeria.*

### **Introduction**

The 21st century world is much more multidimensional and much more interrelated than the bipolar and the unipolar power syndromes are over forever. This is because the world is increasingly multi-polar and has many fronts space technology, education, medicine, sports, commerce and tourism, bio-fuel research, to mention a few, where many countries could competently and confidently hold their grounds. This scenario was unthinkable some decades ago when only the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the United States of America (USA) and a few others had political, military and socioeconomic hegemony over the world. Today with the rise of countries such as India, Iran, South Africa, China, Libya, Pakistan, Japan, North Korea and other "Asia Tigers", the world appears to be engaged in a fierce competition with itself. Apart from the continuous depletion of the ozone layer, that has been precipitated by industrial pollution and the technological craze of these countries, many of them are engaged in the economics of protectionism and military adventurism, which is threatening world peace by the day.

Incidentally, this has culminated in the worst ever global economic recession the world has witnessed in recent history. People of different races, ideological persuasions and religions seem to have agreed that there is the need for global solidarity to promote the sustenance of the environment for generations unborn. The human

race is now trying to explore the diversities of the world with a view to engendering community solidarity, stability and creativity, national and transnational integration as well as global peace (Joseph Eboreime in the Nigerian Television Authority programme, "One on One" , 2009). In essence, there appears to be a growing global consensus which is probably best couched in the expression, "We don't have elsewhere to go so let's preserve the earth for our good and the good of our children". Developing tourism prospects in different parts of the globe has been identified as one of the surest strategies to jumpstart the slowdown in the different economies of the world (Cable News Network [CNN], 2009). Apart from ensuring sustainable growth and development, tourism promotes the preservation of natural and man-made treasures which are, in turn, capable of keeping the earth safe. It is in this sense that this paper canvasses the use of the television medium to reinvent tourism for sustainable growth and development in a developing economy such as Nigeria.

Theoretically, this paper is predicated on the development media theory which advocates that the media could be used to facilitate the process of socioeconomic development of a country (Baran and Davis, 1995). The theoretical construct further holds that by supporting development efforts, the media could be an aid to society at large. In other words, the media particularly the broadcast media could and should be used to rally people, infrastructure and institutions in aid of national development in modern societies. Hence, the media particularly the television medium can help to prioritize societal issues, including tourism development issues in Nigeria.

### **Television: A Versatile Medium**

The World Book Encyclopaedia (1987) explains "television" as a derivative of the Greek, "tele" meaning "at a distance", and the Latin "videre", meaning "to see". Thus television means "a seeing at a distance". It is considered to be one of the greatest technological strides of 20th century which possesses the ability to take viewers out of this world to explore the outer space. The television medium is such a captivating medium that has created an intimate relationship between the audience and itself. Through television programmes, "we (the audience) gain insights into politics, history, current events, and culture (Awake!, 2006). It has a variety of applications in society, business, and science. The most common use of television is as a source of information and entertainment for viewers in their homes.

Security personnel also use televisions to monitor buildings, manufacturing plants, and numerous public facilities. Public utility employees use television to monitor the condition of an underground sewer line, using a camera attached to a robot arm or remote-control vehicle. Doctors can probe the interior of a human body with a microscopic television camera without having to conduct major surgery on the patient. Educators use television to reach students throughout the world. Perhaps, it is this awesomeness of television in terms of functionality that impelled Antonoff (2008) to assert that:

Television is a system of sending and receiving pictures and sound by means of electronic signals transmitted through wires and optical fibres or by electromagnetic radiation. These signals are usually broadcast from a central source, a television station, to reception devices such as television sets in homes or relay stations such as those used by cable television service providers. Television is the most widespread form of communication in the world. Though most people will never meet the leader of a country, travel to the moon, or participate in a war, they can observe these experiences through the images on their television.

People in the United States of America have the most television sets per person of any country, with 835 sets per 1,000 people as of 2000. Canadians possessed 710 sets per 1,000 people during the same year. Japan, Germany, Denmark, and Finland follow North America in the number of sets per person (Encarta Encyclopaedia, 2008). Similarly, in Africa there are a growing number of persons who own television sets. In Nigeria for instance, about a quarter of households own televisions, with over half of urban households and 14 percent of rural households owning sets (National Population Commission, 2000; Hodges, 2001). These figures are increasing by the day.

As one of man's most important means of communication, it has become an object of reverence, a kind of shrine, with its viewers as the "devotees" of the "god" which it is. It has the potentials of bringing pictures and sounds from around the world into millions of homes; hence the World Book Encyclopaedia (1987) refers to it as "the device that brings the world into the home". Through this versatile medium, viewers, be they old or young; literate or illiterate; rich or poor; black or white; rural or urban; deaf or dumb, comfortably sitting at home can see and learn about people, places and things in far away lands. This is probably why Fiske and Hartley (1982) coined the idea of television being "our own culture's bard". To them, its centralization speaks to all members of our highly fragmented society. It seems, then, that television functions as a social ritual, overriding individual distinctions with its collective self (Leach, 1976).

As a matter of fact, television is the world's most popular art. Its artistic, socio-political as well as socioeconomic functions can only grow and mature, and as they do, so must its popularity. It is this demonstrable enormous versatility and potentiality of the television medium that has made different countries take to the deployment of both terrestrial and satellite television in the promotion of their tourism industries. However, exploring the versatility and potentiality of television to reinvent tourism in a developing country such as Nigeria remains the focus of this paper. But before we delve into that, it may not be out of place to examine the global economic effects of tourism, the various forms of tourism in Nigeria as well as have a panoramic survey of tourism promoting programmes on television as a way of foregrounding the discussion.

## Global Economic Effects of Tourism

The idea of tourism may have started in the Garden of Eden. The Bible (Genesis, 1-3) notes that the garden was strewn with lush and luxuriant vegetation, exquisite waterfalls, imposing mountains, exotic fauna and other alluring phenomena. However, modern man in an attempt to economically and socially empower himself has sought to redefine tourism. Indeed, tourism is big business to the 21st century man. Today, many countries are reinventing and redefining their history, ecology, culture, religion, to mention a few, with a view to harnessing the tourist potentialities for economic gain. A clear example is the Pyramids of Egypt which are thronged yearly by tourists from all over the world. Another is the various sites in Saudi Arabia, Israel and Rome which are swarmed by both Christian and Muslim pilgrims yearly. These countries rack in millions of dollars every year. Awake! (2005a); Aimiwu (2007) affirm that “worldwide, tourism generates an estimated four trillion dollars annually” and this, of course, has made it “the world’s number one employer”.

In relation to developing areas of the world, Osawaru and Eghafona (2004) observe that tourism is poised to be one of the most decisive factors for promoting trade with developing nations and helping to reduce poverty, but to achieve this it needs to be given greater recognition. The volume of economic activities that tourism spawns is massive and these are all tied to the three main components of tourism which are travels, hotels and tourist destinations (Dimma, 2005). Consequently, people avail themselves of the opportunity to travel and know of other people’s cultures, which may be different from their own. Awake! (2005a) made this point when it noted that:

*Often, travellers (tourists) come to appreciate that negative views about others are not true. Their travel contributes to understanding people of other races and cultures and developing treasured friendships.*

The global economic impact of tourism is not all positive. Some observers have expressed fear that the growth of tourism, apart from been a possible threat to the environment, may be contributing to child abuse, terrorism and other socioeconomic problems in different parts of the world. CNN (2004) reported that: “Reliable estimates point to 16,000 20,000 child sex victims in Mexico, largely in border, urban, and tourist areas”. There are many other reports on child sex trade which seem to be attracting some tourists to tourist destinations in India, Malaysia, Madagascar and elsewhere. Also, CNN (2008) in another relatively recent programme entitled “Inside the Mind of a Terrorist”, observes that terrorist attacks in Bali, Indonesia in 2002, Nairobi, Kenya in 2001 and other tourist destinations led to the death of many people, both nationals of these countries and others who were touring. In other words, terrorism may have turned many tourist sites to risk areas which must be avoided.

In spite of these dire challenges tourism industry is booming in Brazil, Peru, Tanzania, Indonesia, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, United States of America, South Africa and other regions of the world. In fact, many

countries are now counting on the tourism industry to wade through the global economic meltdown. Quest (2008) may have been thinking along this line when he asked a million dollar question that “can tourism be the saviour of New York, the city that never sleeps”. In The Gambia, tourism is the fastest growing sector. It is the biggest foreign exchange earner and a major source of employment, accounting for about 16 per cent of the country's GDP (Business Travel, 2009). In the same vein, Runsewe in Taire (2009) asserts that South Africa with about 58 million people generates 66 million dollars per annum in tourism. Any country that generates such money develops the strength of its people and allied economic infrastructure. Nigeria must think along this line, especially now that the global oil price has become very erratic. This view is supported by the observation of Dimma (2004) which advises that instead of focussing on oil, which has become a bone of contention in various states and communities, the promotion of tourism should be given priority in Nigeria.

### **Forms of Tourism in Nigeria**

Like the television, tourism has become a global phenomenon which is being embraced by different people for obvious reasons. The Nigerian tourism industry offers wide range of opportunities to local and foreign entrepreneurs/ tourists to invest/ luxuriate in the various sectors of the industry. The following are the major sectors/forms of tourism in Nigeria:

- (a) Eco- tourism: Eco- tourism resources are found in the forests, savannahs, shrines, groves, rivers, mountains and other areas of the Nigerian eco-system. Eboime in the Nigerian Television Authority programme, “One on One” (2009) avidly refers to eco-tourism as “museum without walls”. The major eco-tourism sites and destinations in Nigeria include the eight national parks, numerous games and forest resources, wetlands, sanctuaries and other conservation centres. The popular ones are Yankari National Park in Bauchi State; Gashaka Gumti National Park in Adamawa and Taraba States; Chad Basin National Park in Bornu and Yobe States; Kainji Lake National Park in Niger and Kwara States; Cross River National Park in Cross River State; Kamuku National Park in Kaduna State; Okomu National Park in Edo State and Old Oyo National Park in Oyo State.

Other eco-tourism attractions as identified by the Online Nigeria.com (2007) are Obudu Cattle Ranch in Cross River State; Bar Beach, Lekki Beach, Whispering Palms/Badagary Beach, Akodo Beach in Lagos State; Ibeno Beach in Akwa Ibom, Port Harcourt Tourist Beach in Rivers State; Abraka River Resort in Delta State; The Perching Rocks in Ebonyi State; Azumini Blue River Rose in Abia State; Birnin Kudu Rock Painting in Jigawa State; Olumo Rock in Ogun State; Farinwa Waterfalls in Nasarawa State; Ososo Tourist Centre in Edo State; Confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue in Kogi State; Gurara Waterfalls in Niger State, Birikisu Sungbo Shrine in Ogun State; Ikogosi Warm & Cold Spring in Ondo State; the Millennium Park in Abuja, National Theatre in Lagos State, Assop Waterfall in Plateau State, Igun Bronze Casting Guilds in Edo State; National Commission for Museum and Monuments sites across the country, to mention a few. These centres provide opportunities for the preservation of the ecological resources, holiday camping, sightseeing and picnicking, canoeing, honeymooning,

swimming, climbing, angling, yachting and other gaming and recreational activities which, in turn, could easily and steadily provide jobs and empowerment platforms for many Nigerians if well tapped.

- (b) Cultural and religious tourism: Nigeria is blessed with rich and diverse cultural and religious resources including events, festivals and ceremonies, which are celebrated by different tribes/religious groups at different times in the different regions of the country. Some of the memorable ones are Argungu Fishing Festival in Zamfara State; Igue Festival in Edo State; Eyo Masquerade Festival in Lagos State; Abuja Carnival in Abuja; Calabar Christmas Festival in Cross River State; Osun-Osogbo Festival in Osun State; the several Durbar Festivals across the northern states; Mmanwu Festival in Anambra State; Synagogue Church of All Nations' retreats in Lagos; Uholo Festival of the Dakakari in Sokoto State; Awon Mass Wedding of Awon in Kwara State; Sharo of the Fulanis in northern Nigeria; Igbabonelimhin Masquerade of the Esan in Edo State, Shiloh Festival in Canaan Land by the Winners Chapel/Living Faith Church; Holy Ghost Service of the Redeemed Church; Night of Bliss of Believers Love world Ministries/Christ Embassy; Fire Conference of the Omega Fire Ministry; Leboku Festival of the Ugep in Cross River State, among others. These cultural and religious assets are amongst the most fascinating in Africa.

The periodic celebrations are significant in the life of the people and their communities for a number of reasons. First, the events provide templates for the transmission of ideas, aspirations and the philosophy of/among the diverse Nigerian cultures/religions which make life meaningful. Second, virtually all the celebrations are a re-enactment of historical, religious and traditional events which serve as factors of interaction, cohesion and mobilisation in these societies (Culture and its manifestations: Know Nigeria series 3, 1991). Besides, these cultural events aggregate Nigeria's contribution to world cultural civilization which is worth displaying through different avenues, including tourism. Aimiuwu (2007) succinctly made this point when he noted that "culture defines a people's mileposts in the journey to the Promised Land. It is both the mark and marker of civilization".

- (c) Sports and conference tourism: While sports is one of the rapidly growing sectors of domestic and international tourism in Nigeria, conference tourism, is an emerging sector in the Nigerian tourism industry. Active and leisure sports such as football, chess, boxing, lawn and table tennis, polo and golf, athletics, basketball, cricket are popular across Nigeria. With the hosting of competitions in some of these sporting activities, Nigeria provides opportunities for the setting up, management and sponsorship of state of the art sport facilities, clubs, shops, hotels, theatre halls, transport and catering facilities. This, in turn, provides an enabling and conducive environment for international sports meet, conferences, workshops and seminars to hold in places like Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Jos, Kaduna, Bauchi, Benin, among many other cities. Sports and conference tourism attracts and makes people to converge on a venue which is ultimately used as a platform for communicating, networking and negotiating business

portfolios, proposals and ideas. The economic multiplier effect of sports and conference tourism activities cannot be measured in monetary and material terms. Ononome (2009) made this point when he asserted that the role of tourism in national development cannot be quantified.

### **A Panoramic Survey of Programmes/Advertisements Promoting Tourism on Satellite and Terrestrial Television Networks**

Satellite and terrestrial television channels are awash with myriads of programmes/advertisements by countries and corporate entities aimed at promoting national and regional tourist sites. A cursory survey of television channels and networks such as Euro News, Fox News, NTA News 24, Sky News, SABC, Aljazeera, AIT, HITV, STV, among others, reveals that a number of countries and tourism corporations are striving to outdo one another in tourism “advert-mania”. From “The Truly Asia” advert of Malaysia to the “Incredible India” advert of India. From “The Heart of Africa” advert of Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) to Mexico Tourism Board's “Where Souls Fall in Love” advert. Though the list of tourism promoting programmes running on television networks is inexhaustible, the following should suffice for the purpose of this paper which is back-dropped on the dictum that the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

- Morte Negro's “Experience Wild Beauty” on CNN and Euro News
- South Africa's “It's Possible” on CNN, SABC and Aljazeera
- Karzastan's “The Land that Brings the World Together” on CNN
- Nigerian Breweries' Ultimate Search 1 (Snake Island, Lagos) on NTA
- Nigerian Breweries' Ultimate Search 2 (Obudu Ranch, Cross River) on NTA and STV
- Nigerian Breweries' Ultimate Search 3 (NIFOR, Benin) on NTA and STV
- Nigerian Breweries' Ultimate Search 4 (Shere Hills, Jos) on NTA and STV
- Nigerian Breweries' Ultimate Search 6 (Omodo Forest, Ada) on NTA and STV
- Abuja Cultural Carnival 2005 Edition Live on NTA
- Abuja Cultural Carnival 2006 Edition Live on NTA
- Abuja Cultural Carnival 2007 Edition Live on NTA
- Abuja Cultural Carnival 2008 Edition Live on NTA
- Abuja Cultural Carnival 2009 Edition Live on NTA
- National Festival of Art and Culture (NAFEST 2007) Live on NTA
- The Argungu Fishing Festival Live 2006 Edition on NTA
- The Argungu Fishing Festival Live 2007 Edition on NTA
- The Argungu Fishing Festival Live 2008 Edition on NTA
- The Argungu Fishing Festival Live 2009 Edition on NTA
- “Goge Africa” on AIT and NTA
- “African Pot” on NTA
- “The Demystification of Zuma Rock by Mountaineers” on NTA
- “Voyage of Discovery” on NTA
- “Nature Trail” on NTA

Kosovo's "The Young Europeans" on Euro News and CNN  
 Azerbaijan's "The European Charm of the Orient" on CNN, Aljazeera and Euro News  
 Greece Tourism Board's "My True Experience" on Euro News and CNN  
 Bulgaria Tourism Corporation's "Nature Welcomes You" on CNN  
 Ukraine's "Beautifully yours" on CNN  
 Egypt's "Where the Sun Lives" on CNN  
 Jordan's "Takes you Beyond" on Aljazeera, CNN and Euro News  
 Kenya's "Discover the Magic of Africa" on CNN and SABC  
 Abu Dhabi's "Travellers' Welcome" on CNN  
 Taiwan's "Touch your Heart" on CNN  
 Armenia's "Noah's Route, Your Route" on CNN,  
 Poland's "Fall in Love with Warsaw" on CNN,  
 Cyprus' "The Year Round Island" on CNN  
 Ethiopia's "The New Spirit of Africa" on CNN  
 Croatia's "Mediterranean as it once was" on Aljazeera, CNN and Euro News  
 Angola's "I Believe" on SABC and CNN, among others.

These programmes capture exotic sights and sounds of various tourist destinations and sites across the world. Many corporations bankroll the bills of these promotional programmes, which have become veritable platforms where potential and external tourists are constantly appealed to and persuaded to visit choice tourist destinations in their countries of operations. This "craze" cannot be wished away as wasteful spending because statistics (as earlier noted) indicate that tourism is capable of spawning an all round socioeconomic growth and development.

### **Reinventing Nigerian Tourism through Television**

Tourism has become a modern boon in the hands of modern nations that wish to diversify their economies to create jobs and make other opportunities available for their teeming populaces. Many of these countries deploy the media, particularly television to get the attention of potential tourists in and outside their borders. Television thrives on events and events are made by people, their culture, their religion, their tradition and other observances. These events could readily be turned into visual footages/television programmes by reason of technology for the purpose of awareness creation. Television is capable of taking viewers on a regular global navigation by showing them places, events, peoples and cultures in an exciting kaleidoscope. Here lies the connection between television and tourism. In fact, television is the spontaneous and ubiquitous tour guide which engenders education, information and entertainment in a refreshing manner. It is also within this productive dynamics we seek to explore the interventionist potentialities of television in tourism development in Nigeria. Television's intervention in reinventing Nigerian tourism may include but not limited to the following spheres:



- (a) Dousing and displacing the virulent “fear factor”: Nigerian television programmers should develop programmes aimed at dousing and displacing the pervasive “fear factor” about Nigeria in both local and international circles. Many people, Nigerians and non-Nigerians in and outside the country have negative impressions about Nigeria and are scared of the security situation in the country. This is particularly along the lines of religious and ethnic militias especially in the north and the Niger Delta areas. Most international media networks tend to portray the issues of religious intolerance, kidnapping, road accidents, corruption in government circles as though those are the only things happening in Nigeria. But the truth remains that in an increasingly globalized world, every country has its own “share” of violence that globalization has spawned. For instance, South Africa inundates us daily with news about rape and burglary. Israel and Palestine are embroiled in a seemingly intractable crisis in the Middle East. There have been terrorist attacks in India, Indonesia and Kenya and bomb scare in several other places. Interestingly, many of these countries still tab into tourism as a way of boosting and sustaining their economies.

Much of this feat is achieved through the innovative use of the media, particularly the television by these countries. Nigeria should likewise deploy television; both terrestrial and satellite, to douse and displace the “fear” people associate with Nigeria through programmes which purvey positive images about Nigeria. There is a popular saying that “for every negative report, many positive news may have occurred which the people are not aware of”. This line of thought may have informed the “Good People, Great Nation” rebranding effort of the Yar’Adua’s administration. However propagandist it may look, its capacity of reorientation is limitless. Many more of such programmes should be designed to run on both local and global television circuits in consonance with Nigeria’s attributes which readily stand it out and emblematised it on people’s consciousness. The transformational effect of such an effort in the short and long terms would be worth its salt. Television programmers should package programmes which are aimed at rediscovering and projecting the many positive sides, sights and sounds of Nigeria in an increasingly competitive global world. In this manner, television would have helped in mobilising both Nigerians and non Nigerians to explore, enjoy and possibly invest in Nigeria’s rich tourism offerings. Overtime, Nigeria as a “destination image” would become a strong brand because the whole concept/idea of destination image plays an influential role in tourism development (Michailidis & Chatzitheodoridis, 2006).

- (b) Lobbying the national legislature to draft and pass diversification of economy act into law: The “Udojie” windfall in the 1970s reminds all discerning people that at a point in the history of Nigeria, military/political leaders felt the country had too much money and did not know what to spend it on. Today, a combination of this lack of foresight, rabid corruption and sickening indolence has put the country in an economic morass, where everything is centred on the government. The government runs an economy which is crude oil dependent and other productive sectors are paid lip service. Opportunities which abound in agriculture,

tourism and education have not been optimally explored and exploited to attain the much desired diversification of the economy. In fact, most federating states that make up Nigeria are not economically viable because they depend on crude oil money from Abuja and as such innovative ways of generating wealth are asphyxiated. Aside from Lagos and a couple of other states the rest depend on the mainstay of the economy: petroleum, pronto! To reverse this unpleasant situation, the media, particularly television operators and programmers should make concerted effort at lobbying, through programming and other potent means, the national legislature to consider legislation in the area of compulsive diversification of the Nigerian economy into tourism, agriculture and other non-oil sources of income.

The consequences of not taking such a smart step now could be dire for the whole of Nigeria tomorrow. A few instances may suffice in driving home the point being made. When the Wall Street slumped in the United States of America, a severe blow was dealt the global economy as the price of crude oil came crashing down. Oil-revenue dependent economies such as Nigeria began to fidget and scamper for a breather. This need not be so as the country is endowed with more than enough human and material resources to be a poly-economy. By poly-economy we mean an economy which is branched out in such a way that it is not dependent on any single sector at any point in time for survival. The opposite of this is what we call mono-economy which, regrettably, currently obtains in Nigeria as over 95% of its earnings are from oil sources. This is a shameful report in a 21st century world where economies like Egypt, Kenya, Israel, the Asia Tigers and South Africa are reaping the gains of agriculture, tourism and other resources.

(c) Another is the fact that the so-called crude oil is an exhaustible resource and as such there is the need to plan for the post-oil Nigeria. According to *Awake!* (2005b), the world already consumes 75 million barrels of oil a day. Of the world's total oil reserves, which are estimated to have been some 2 trillion barrels in volume, approximately 900 billion barrels have already been consumed. At present production rates, oil supplies are expected to last another 40 years. With specific reference to the Nigerian situation, African Independent Television (AIT) in its *Kakaaki: the African Voice* programme (2009) notes that the Nigerian oil reserve is expected to finish in about 50 years time. The trillion naira question is what happens to Nigeria if it continues to solely depend on oil revenue? As things stand any possible answer would be ominous. To avoid this, television programmers must insistently drum it into the ears of policy makers in Nigeria that it is high time we made concrete plans and investments in non-oil sectors such as tourism for the good of all. Apart from creating wealth for the teeming Nigerian populace that may be involved in one aspect or the other of tourism, environmentally friendly culture would be entrenched overtime. Uka (2009) may have been thinking along this line when he asserted that tourism could be an effective inward strategy capable of reducing dependence on oil and brain drain at the same time encouraging Nigerians to appreciate their various tourist attractions.

- (d) Finding a way to help beef up security in the country through surveillance activities:  
It is a settled fact in media studies that television serves as a means of surveillance (Dominick, 1996; Antonoff, 2008). Issuing from this is the need to encourage grassroots media reporting in Nigeria as a fast and potent way to globalize the local as well as localize the global (Omoera, 2006). Practically speaking, television programmers and proprietors could assist, in more ways than one, through synergic networking with the police and other security agencies to promptly report crimes and other socially unacceptable behaviours with a view to nipping them in the bud for the greater good of the country. Overtime, potential tourists, both internal and foreign will begin to feel safe enough to spend their vacations in the available tourist destinations of their choice in any part of Nigeria. The expectation is that the more security alerts and assurances provided by concerned authorities the more people will feel safe. Take South Africa with all its crime news; it still remains tourists' delight, a haven that everyone wishes to savour. This is largely made possible because of that country's ability to promptly respond to distress calls. Nigeria must borrow a leaf from this and television operators must help in assuring and reassuring potential domestic and external tourists through prompt reportage of risk areas as well as working in concert with security agencies to guarantee the safety of well people across the country.
- (e) Developing and encouraging holiday making culture among Nigerians: Most Nigerians know very little about tourism and their country because of poverty and little incomes. Hence, to say that most Nigerians do not have holiday making in their menu of activities would be stating the obvious. This attitude has a way of impinging on the growth and development of tourism in the country as domestic tourism is a critical component in all the countries where tourism is flourishing. More so, holiday making culture is a strong bulwark in the development of tourism. Television programmers must, then, necessary come in to help in creating awareness among the people as well as playing up the immanent benefits in adopting recreational and holiday making attitude in television programming. In fact, television should be used to de-school millions of Nigerians from the workaday attitude of pursuing money all year round without time for rest or relaxation. Television management/operators should design programmes in the mode of what Uyo (1987) calls "telethon", a most extraordinary kind of programme, used for especial causes or campaigns that are invested with tremendous public or community interest. Such dedicated programmes would help leapfrog many Nigerians into the plane of holiday making consciousness thereby boosting tourism in the long run.
- (f) The development of information and decision management systems as well as investment in tourism industry: Television stations/operators, tourism developers/operators and the government at various levels should begin to develop and strengthen information and decision management systems with regard to the Nigerian tourism industry. In doing this, television should be deployed to create and develop markets, forecast and test trends as well as radically refocus tourist activities for the better interest of

diversifying the Nigerian economy and the creation of eco-friendly, culture-friendly, religion-friendly employment opportunities for teeming Nigerians. Tourism is not only about building five-star hotels, but also about having proper data and a system that works. Hence, the Nigerian Tourism and Development Corporation (NTDC), a government body charged with the responsibility of coordinating activities in the tourism sector in Nigeria and the Federation of Tourism Association of Nigeria (FTAN), an umbrella body of tourism operators in Nigeria in concert with television operators should channel efforts at evolving an information and communication system which is reliable and dependable.

In the same breath, television management/operators should invest in tourism related ventures. For instance, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) has a directorate of marketing which it uses to float enterprises such as “NTA Arena”, “NTA Bandstand”, among others. The Silverbird Television (STV), an arm of the Silverbird group floats events such as “Living Nigerian Legends”, “Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria Pageant” and so on. Independent Television (ITV), Benin organises “Old School Boogie”, which draw people from all walks of life. These television networks should further strategize on ways to set up businesses in the core areas of tourism such as site/destination development, hotels, travels, among other areas. More television owners/operators should establish entrepreneurial arms which could readily and easily synergize with established tourist operators or even “start ups” in medium and long term development programmes geared towards scaling up business activities in the critical tourism areas that Dimma recognized as hospitality, travels and tourist destinations (2005).

## **Conclusion**

This paper has explored the potentiality of using television to radically reposition tourism in Nigeria. Tourism has been considered as being able to make value added contributions to the environment, the economy as well as have a significant foreign exchange and employment creation potentials for/in developed and developing nations of the world. Nigeria must realize that the kinship between television and tourism canvassed here is a multiple productive interface which innovative economies have keyed into to solidify their hold on a highly globalized world which is moored on knowledge. This is particularly germane as the World Tourism Organization (WTO) is increasingly determined to encourage developing countries to develop their tourism potentials as veritable tools for poverty alleviation, wealth creation and the promotion of culture of peace (Umar-Buratai, 2009). Tourism is poised to be a decisive dynamic in helping to reduce poverty in Nigerian. All that is left to harness the gains of this goldmine is to, among other means, use the media, specifically the television, to put tourism issues on the public agenda. This is owing to the fact that the television medium has grown to become an innovative as well as a tremendous mobilizer of people and resources in an age where information technology reigns supreme.

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