

Trends, Opportunities and Challenges of the Tourism Industry in the Republic of Guinea

Babady Diakite¹, Ma Bao Jian^{1*}, Mukete Beckline², Lilian Duyile³, Kang Kerian⁴, Bakia Samuel⁵

¹School of Landscape Architecture, Beijing Forestry University, Qinghua East Road, Haidian District, Beijing, China

²School of Forestry, Beijing Forestry University, Qinghua East Road, Haidian District, Beijing, China

³Faculty of Sciences, University of Copenhagen, Bülowsvej, Copenhagen, Denmark

⁴Institute of Health Sciences and Wellbeing, University of Sunderland, Chester Road, Sunderland, United Kingdom

⁵Faculty of Sciences and Bioengineering Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Brussels, Boulevard de la Plaine, Ixelles, Belgium

*Corresponding author: baojianma@bjfu.edu.cn

Received March 03, 2020; Revised April 18, 2020; Accepted April 27, 2020

Abstract This paper examines the trends, opportunities offered and challenges faced by the tourism industry in the Republic of Guinea. The paper examines Guinea as a tourist destination, it identifies the main tourist destinations, and how these if harnessed may impact local as well as national growth and development. To achieve this goal, a comprehensive review of published literature was performed using Web of Science, Semantic Scholar, Researchgate and Google Scholar. It was found that, although the tourism industry is still in its infancy, underexploited and recovering from shocks such as the Ebola and conflicts in the Sahel region, the sector is a source of employment for individuals. The tourism industry is also a major source of financial returns for the state having generated over 416 million US\$ in 2018. This study concluded that, the tourism industry's contribution to the nation's economic growth and infrastructural development can be attained if appropriate management strategies are properly and judiciously implemented. This is because economic growth and infrastructural development do not only increase state income through taxes but also serve as a means for the rural and urban poor to escape the poverty trap.

Keywords: *tourism industry, economic growth, guinea, poverty alleviation*

Cite This Article: Babady Diakite, Ma Bao Jian, Mukete Beckline, Lilian Duyile, Kang Kerian, and Bakia Samuel, "Trends, Opportunities and Challenges of the Tourism Industry in the Republic of Guinea." *Social and Economic Geography*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2020): 7-14. doi: 10.12691/seg-5-1-2.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Global Tourism Industry

Tourism began around the 1600s but it was only in the 1800s that international tourism developed into a global industry currently serving about 1 billion consumers annually. From about 1 million in 1950, the number of tourists rose to 166 million in 1970, 435 million in 1990 and 1.4 billion in 2018. The industry was worth about 1.7 trillion US\$ or an estimated 2% of total global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018. A majority of these tourists travel from economically and technologically advanced countries to economically deprived countries [1,2].

Though presenting a complex nature and by virtue of its relative premise, the tourism industry is of particular importance in the social, economic, cultural and political landscape of every country. Due to this diverse nature, the tourism industry is often considered a major contributor to the national economy. This is often and particularly related to the growth of various aspects of this industry including transport, lodging, handicraft and escort services which are directly or indirectly connected to both the

growth and development levels of other sectors of the economy [3,4].

These branching-out aspects of the tourism industry into several structures of the economy, gives tourism a dichotomous nature associated and interconnected with other branches of the economy. This dichotomous nature explains the scale and complexity of the links between tourism and various components of a country's economy [3].

While the economies of several countries mainly rely on the tourism sector, for others it is a contributing factor to the economy. For instance, with an estimated population of about 37381 inhabitants, the British Virgin Islands are a popular destination for tourists from the United States of America. The industry is thought to contribute over 45% of the country's national income and serves as the largest employer [5,6]. Similarly, about 9.6 billion US\$ or approximately 18.8% of Croatia's gross domestic product (GDP) is derived from tourism. This figure puts Croatia far above the European Union's 2.1% average across the continent making Croatia, Europe's most tourism-dependent nation. These trends are most often due to government strategies which reduce value added tax (VAT) and tax cuts on several services related to the tourism industry [7].

Although the economic benefits of tourism to these countries are known, the question on whether tourism impacts are beneficial or detrimental always arises. Often attributed to the economic benefits are the adverse sociocultural, economic, and environmental impacts which differ from nation to nation. According to modern theoretical thought based on economics, tourism development in developing countries improves the local economy through the creation of employment and educational opportunities, improvement of living standards, and infrastructural reinforcement. Meanwhile, the dependency theoretical thought espouses that, this type of development is far more beneficial to the capitalist-tourism generating countries and not for the self-generating host developing countries [1,7].

1.2. Importance of the Study

The present study may form a baseline for national governments to design effective tourism friendly policies aimed at luring tourists, investors and entrepreneurs of the tourism industry. Hence, the knowledge derived from the present study, may serve as a panacea for the planning, development and management of the tourism industry across the African continent in general and the Republic of Guinea in particular. For instance, it would reawaken the government's growth and investment policy within the travel and accommodation sectors. This reawakening through the investment and construction of more accommodation could provide for an increase from 413 hotels in 2016 to over 500 in 2025. The present study could stir the government into reviewing and relaxing its visa policies for the 163 countries requiring business and tourist visas.

1.3. Methodology of the Study

In order to derive a comprehensive overview of the tourism industry across Guinea in particular and the African continent in general, a comprehensive review of published literature was performed using Web of Science, Semantic Scholar, Researchgate, and Google scholar. The keywords used included Guinea Conakry, tourism industry in Africa, tourism sector, challenges to tourism, economic growth, employment creation and infrastructure development. The Republic of Guinea is the country of interest while the tourism industry is the major contributor to economic growth and infrastructure development.

Scientific and other online media publications for over 20 years were selected and examined such as to obtain an inclusive and comprehensive search. About 500 online items were derived and which were further streamlined to tourism, trends, opportunities, challenges, economic growth and infrastructure development. In this regard, only documents relevant to tourism, trends, opportunities, challenges, economic growth and infrastructure development around the globe, Africa and Guinea were examined. Majority of the derived documents covered other topics irrelevant and/or were unrelated to the categories of choice. For example, documents involving studies on ecotourism, sustainable tourism, biodiversity and tourism or which possessed dead ends to the trends, opportunities, challenges, economic growth and infrastructure development in the tourism industry were discarded.

A total of 70 publications had examined the tourism industry and its role in economic growth and infrastructure development. The information derived from these publications was used to present a social and economic perspective of the global tourism industry with particular reference to the Republic of Guinea. Similarly, the contribution of the tourism industry to global, African and Guinean economic growth and development was examined. The paper is divided into two sections with the first looking at the global tourism industry where trends, opportunities and challenges are explored. In the second section, the trends, opportunities and challenges of the tourism industry with reference to the Republic of Guinea are presented.

1.4. Trends of the Tourism Industry in Africa

As African governments continue to encourage business initiatives, the continent has seen its tourism industry become the world's second largest after Asia Pacific. In 2018, the industry accounted for over 194.2 billion US\$ or about 8.5% of the continent's GDP. According to [8], over 67 million tourists visited Africa in 2018 or a 7% increase from 63 million in 2017 and 58 million in 2016 while creating about 24.3 million or 6.7% of total employment across Africa.

Table 1. Top 10 tourist destinations across Africa for 2018

Country	Number of Tourists (in Millions)
Morocco	11
South Africa	10.2
Tunisia	5.9
Algeria	2.4
Zimbabwe	2.4
Mozambique	1.6
Namibia	1.5
Kenya	1.4
Tanzania	1.3
Uganda	1.3

Across the continent, leisure-driven tourism accounts for over 71% of tourism while 29% represents business tourism spending. Meanwhile, income from domestic tourism topped 56% and international tourism 44% which comprised 9.6% of the region's total exports, worth \$58.5 billion US\$ [9,10]. This boom is partly due to security improvement in North Africa, the development and implementation of travel friendly policies that promote and facilitate traveling. For instance, Ethiopia is thought to be the world's and Africa's fastest growing travel economy, growing by 48.6% and a net worth of over 7.4 billion US\$ with international travel and tourism accounting for 61.0% of the country's exports. This trend is attributed, in part, to Ethiopia's improved connectivity as a regional transport hub and to recent policies of visa relaxation. Elsewhere in Egypt, the tourism sector witnessed a 16.5% increase in 2018 with international visitor spending accounting for 27.3% of exports. This was particularly due to major security and safety improvements across the country and in major tourist destinations such as Sharm El-Sheikh which helped to

seduce international tourists back to the northern seaport area [8,10,11].

According to the [9,12], African countries can be classified into four tourism performance categories including pre-emergent, potential, emerging, and consolidating tourism destinations. This performance was based on indicators such as the tourism receipts per long-haul arrivals; the ease of doing business; the competitiveness in terms of tourism regulation, infrastructure, and resources; the international arrival per head of population and the forecast of growth in tourism arrivals. In the pre-emerging nations such as Somalia and Sudan, severe security and governance challenges influence low government commitments to the tourism sector. Meanwhile, for potential nations including Gabon, Ethiopia and Madagascar, there is relative interest and initiative in the tourism industry but governance challenges and market limitations still loom. In the emerging countries such as Rwanda and the Seychelles, there is prioritization and scaling up of the tourism industry thus creating relative competitiveness. Furthermore, in the tourism consolidating countries which include Morocco, South Africa, and Mauritius, the tourism industry is relatively stable and very mature.

Some of Africa's top tourist destinations and attractions include Zanzibar which is located in the Indian Ocean just off the coast of Tanzania; the Omo River region in Ethiopia; the Pyramids especially the Great Pyramid of Giza and the Sphinx of Egypt; the Victoria Falls located in southern Africa between Zambia and Zimbabwe; the Masai Mara National Reserve of Kenya which is Africa's Greatest Wildlife Reserve; Marrakech in Morocco, found at the foot of the ice covered Atlas mountains, Cape Town's Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve of South Africa; Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and Mount Fako in south west Cameroon [11,13].

1.5. Opportunities Offered by the Tourism Industry in Africa

For many emerging economies around the globe, the tourism industry remains a key driver of economic growth and job creation. From this perspective and due to her natural landscapes and unique history, much focus is now on Africa as the global and local cultural and heritage which thus increases development tourism. Many countries across the continent present enormous promises of becoming and remaining exciting hosts for entrepreneurs, investors and tourists which may propel and enhance employment creation for unskilled, low-skilled and skilled workers while serving as economic corridors for both youth and women empowerment [9,14].

This is because international tourists who travel to emerging countries pump large amounts of wealth into national economies either as private and public sector investments and development assistance. For instance, in 2015 alone, foreign direct investment to Africa amounted to about 54 billion US\$ while development assistance was estimated at about 51.04 billion US\$. On the other hand, the tourism industry generated over 39.2 billion US\$ and created an estimated 15 million direct and indirect jobs within and without the industry. These figures clearly demonstrate that tourism plays an increasingly primordial

role in the African economy through national income generation (GDP), employment creation and service exports [8,14].

Generally, investments have been focused on countries with well-developed infrastructure, easily navigable travel policies, and business-friendly environments. Greater opportunities and potentials of increasing tourism-related investments across Africa are also being implemented. These include among others, the decision by the 15 member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to introduce a free visa policy. This visa policy, allows for the free movement of humans, goods and services across the borders of the 15 member states. Similarly, the African continent's efforts to increase integration and free movement through an implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, will create a more stable business environment for which investors and entrepreneurs will exploit to tap from the continent's tourism potentials [9].

Across Africa, emerging economies such as Rwanda are moving away from the dependence on the agricultural and commodities sectors toward the promotion of service industries. The tourism sector has therefore become a primary focus for both local, national and international growth and development strategic policy plans. It is estimated that by 2030, the tourism, hospitality, and recreation industry in Africa will generate about 261.77 billion US\$ up from the 137.87 billion US\$ recorded in 2015 [10].

1.6. Challenges facing the Growth and Expansion of the Tourism Industry in Africa

Despite exhibiting enormous potentials and with the continent's rich natural and cultural heritage resources, several challenges retard the growth and expansion of Africa's tourism industry. For instance, tourism infrastructure is underdeveloped while there is inadequate air travel between African countries. Additionally, there exist little or no appropriate promotional marketing strategies especially for an area such as religious tourism. Similarly, African countries have little investment budgets to support and develop their tourism infrastructure. From another perspective, foreign mainstream media outlets unfortunately portray and brand Africa as a land of war, disease, poverty, hunger, anguish and desperation thus, limiting tourist interests through negative perceptions of the continent [9,15]. In a related study, [16] used a Rapid Situation Analysis to examine the effects of the Ebola Virus Disease Epidemic (EVDE) on the tourism industry in the Gambia. Their study espoused the importance of consumer perception, preparedness and management failures as contributors to the indirect threat of epidemics on tourism in developing countries.

Similarly, harassment, high visa fees, corruption and bribes are major hindrances to the growth of the tourism industry in Africa. Bribes for instance have to be paid at entry points even with valid visas or travel permits. Also for potential investors and foreign workers of the tourism industry, there are enormous costs, delays and hurdles encountered in the acquisition of local and national licensing requirements, work and residence permits. In the

Democratic Republic of Congo for instance, to be able to cross borders, over 35% visitors have to pay bribes while about 20% are harassed by border authorities. In other countries such as Tanzania, aside these hurdles, the costs of visa fees, work and residency permits are very high. Although Tanzanian law requires residence permit fees to range from 200 US\$ to US\$3000 US\$, these fees in practice range from 1000 US\$ to 5000 US\$ [17].

Elsewhere in Zambia, visitors particularly business tourists and cross-border migrants are verbally threatened, arrested, detained and bribes collected from them. Additionally, women between the ages of 12 and 50 are often sexually harassed by immigration, customs and numerous government border control officials. These threats and harassment are inclusive for both visa and non-visa holders and therefore noncompliance is tantamount to a reduction in the visa duration in Zambia.

This is very frequent because the cost of money transfer is very high and visitors are always obliged to carry cash. This also because, visitors most often have to first convert their currency into US dollars before reconverting this into the local currency of the host country. This practice paves the way and exposes visitors to burglary, theft, exchange losses, and extra conversion costs. From another perspective, this absence of financial and payment services creates a barrier for many visitors as it favours the creation, implantation and entrenchment of illegal currency markets at these borders. According to [17], globally, Sub-Saharan Africa has the most expensive cost

for remittances services. Therefore, potential visitors face the challenge of high cost for remittances services which thus affects movement and hence the tourism industry.

2. The Tourism Industry in Guinea

2.1. Biophysical Perspectives of Guinea

Guinea is a country located along the coast of West Africa (9°31'N 13°42'W), with a 320 km long coastline and 3400 km of land border. The country shares its borders with Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, and Mali to the north; Ivory Coast to the east, Liberia and Sierra Leone to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west [18].

The population of Guinea is estimated at about 12527440 inhabitants distributed across a total surface area of about 245857 km² and four natural regions. These geographical regions include the Maritime Guinea (Lower Guinea or Basse-Coté lowlands); Middle Guinea (cooler and mountainous Fouta Djallon); the Sahelian Haute-Guinea to the northeast and the forested jungle regions in the southeast. Guinea's mountains (at 1752 m, Mount Nimba is highest point), are a source for many rivers on the African continent such as the Niger, the Gambia, Senegal rivers, and several others flowing to the sea through the west side of the mountain ranges in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast [19,20,21].



Figure 1. Map of Guinea (Source: Theodora Maps, 2020)

The climate is tropical with two alternating seasons which are a dry season from November to March and a wet (rainy) season from April to October. The arrival of the migratory intertropical convergence zone (ITCZ) in June brings the heaviest rainfall of the wet season. As the ITCZ shifts southward in November, the hot and dry wind often referred to as the Harmattan blows from the northeast off the Sahara. Mean annual temperatures range from 25°C in the Middle and mountainous Fouta Djallon zone to about 38°C in the Sahelian Haute-Guinea. Similarly, mean annual rainfall varies from about 1500 mm in the Sahelian Haute-Guinea to about 4300 mm in the forested jungle regions in the southeast. Conakry is the capital and largest city while other major cities include Nzerekore, Kissidougou, Labe, Kankan, Kindia and Boke [5,18,19].

2.2. Socioeconomic Perspectives of the Tourism Industry in Guinea

In the past decade, the tourism industry in Guinea has witnessed a steady increase after the decline observed particularly as a result of the recent Ebola outbreak [20]. For instance, from a mere 12400 tourists in 2010, the country received a total of 99000 tourists in 2017 generating over 416 million US\$ or about 0.37% of the country's GDP [22,23].

In Guinea, tourism opportunities abound due to the country's flourishing vegetation and diverse natural landscapes. The country's extensive 300 km coastline, an 80 nautical miles offshore and a 56000 km² continental shelf provides for interesting development conditions for most types of tourism. From wide coastal beaches to dense forests embedded with nature's secrets at the foothills of the Fouta Djallon Mountain to the vast plains drained by the River Niger and its tributaries. This rich biodiversity is complimented by significant aesthetic, natural parks, aquariums and natural hot springs, handicrafts, endemic flora and fauna, gorges, mountains, rapids and river basins [18]. Aside landscape dynamics, the people of Guinea also possess a strong hospitable tradition as embedded in their rich and dynamic history and civilization, making the country a pleasant tourist destination.

Across the country, numerous diverse touristic attractions and various forms of tourism exist including; Travel and discovery tourism provided by the Soumba Waterfalls, the Bridal Veil Falls, the gorges and falls of Kinkon and Kambadaga; Health tourism provided by the station of Dalaba and the Foulamory thermal spring; Adventure tourism which is provided through Trekking particularly in the Fouta Djallon mountains of Middle Guinea and supported by the Fouta Djallon Trekking Association. Adventure tourism is also provided by the Sangaréah Bay in Maritime Guinea in an area of about 30000 hectares (ha) made up of mudflats, avifauna, gorgeously green islands and crocodile habitats. The Nimba mountains at the borders with Liberia and Cote D'Ivoire offer one of the most beautiful and luxurious forests on earth. The country is also endowed with numerous national parks such as The Badiar Park covering a total area of about 38200 ha and located at the foothills of the Fouta Djallon Mountains and the Upper Niger Park covering an estimated 186000 ha

and through which Africa's third longest river, the River Niger flows [18,19].

In Guinea, there are four distinct zones as reflected in the country's rich landscape, history and traditions. These distinct zones provide the country with different and excellent opportunities toward the emerging niche markets of African tourism including ecotourism, adventure tourism and cultural tourism. These include the Lower Guinea which stretches along the Atlantic Ocean shoreline as well as the Fouta Djallon mountains. It is a region of lush vegetation, dense forests, mangrove swamps and coconut islands; the Offshore Islands consisting of idyllic scenery with miles of pristine sandy beaches and rivers with broad estuaries [18,20]. With easy access by boat, these islands offer warm gentle breezes on beautiful white sandy beaches for relaxation and recreational activities; the Middle Guinea which constitutes large mountains and high plateaus endowed with a temperate climate. This temperate climate has earned the area the title *Switzerland of Africa*. The area is also the *Water Tower* of west Africa due to many rivers arising from the region. These flowing rivers and churning rapids, running down the mountains create beautiful waterfalls and the Upper Guinea zone which includes plateaus with vegetation and wooded savannahs in a dry climate [24,25].

Aside these natural touristic sites, cultural and historical sites such as the African Middle Ages sites found in Niani (old capital of the Empire of Mali), the famous slave market memory sites of Dominyah and Farinyah. Other historical sites include the Vestiges of resistance to European colonial conquests found in Bissandugu and Timbo [25].

According to the Republic of Guinea's National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP, 2016-2020), the tourism sector is one of the main pillars of the country's socioeconomic development. The NESDP is collaborating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in providing technical assistance and the formulation of a National Tourism Development Strategy with particular emphasis on tourism development. This strategy would provide recommendations for the development and professionalization of the tourism industry in terms of strategic planning, management, product development, marketing and promotion. It will also develop and provide the legal and administrative framework aimed at supporting the overall economic, social and environmental sustainability of the tourism sector. Launched in November 2018, the project activities reviewed the current status of the tourism sector, and identified the strengths, opportunities and constraints which would be addressed through the strategy. The strategy paper was presented to stakeholders during a consultative national and regional workshop in February, 2019 [22,25].

Therefore, many investment opportunities under the Public-Private Partnerships and Private Investment scheme as prescribed by NESDP will generate business development ideas into the country's tourism industry. For instance, the UNWTO forecasts tourism in West African parks would increase by of 3.3% between 2010 and 2020 with about 4.62 million visitors projected in 2020 or approximately 6% of total visits on the African continent [22].

Similarly, the country's mining industry particularly its important sources of bauxite, is a potential source of attraction for business tourists from around the globe. Here, several foreign companies have heavily invested in the Guinean mining industry. When adequately, effectively and properly exploited along a stable political and healthier business tangent, it could propel economic diversification and improvements in transportation hence, increase in tourism streams into the country [25,26]. Additionally, in 2012, the Guinean government cleared its external debt thus liberating the country's resources for economic development. In particular, it increased investment in construction projects within the transportation and travel accommodation categories. These provided more business tourists with accommodation which culminated in 2016 into 413 hotels, 5507 rooms and 6310 beds [25]. This growth is attributed to the political will and ambition of the Guinean government to develop a variety of tourism products such as seaside tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, discovery and adventure tourism.

2.3. Constraints to the Tourism Industry Development in Guinea

Despite being endowed with immense natural tourism opportunities, the country's tourism sector still experiences lots of eclipses and with a virtually untapped tourism potential. For instance, due to corruption and failure in financial accountability, incomes generated from the vast parks and other tourism sites are still marginal and unable to develop the country's tourism industry.

Other major challenges are the gender gaps in the areas of education, employment and decision-making opportunities. Taken together, these factors diminish women's prospects and undermine the country's growth trajectory. Other major constraints in the tourism industry are weak human capital particularly low literacy rates, a poor health system, weak and underdeveloped tourism sector, little or no access to finance for local tourism investors, inefficient and inadequate local government management capacity [27].

Despite the positive performances seen in Guinea's travel and tourism industry between 2010 and 2017, the Ebola outbreak has posed a major threat to its development, with travel restrictions dampening the economy of the region. This has given Guinea the image of being a country stricken with diseases, poverty, hunger, war and starvation. In addition, the country's tourism infrastructure is underdeveloped with poor road and air transport networks compounded by lack of adequate electricity supply. Furthermore, there is poor intra air, road and maritime transport connection between Guinea and other African countries. This is also because Africa is poorly connected to herself which gives the global perception of Africa being a country and not a continent. Similarly, Guinea lacks a strategically or an integrated tourism industry product that can be developed and marketed. Visa restrictions and tough requirements for foreigners wishing to visit the country impacts and reflects on the nation's tourism industry. Also, government support for the tourism industry is weak and marginal.

Where this exists, it is marred by corruption, bureaucracy, mismanagement and misappropriation of allocated funds.

2.4. Sustaining the Development of the Tourism Industry in Guinea

Given the important role that the tourism industry plays in economic growth and development, it is important to address these constraints to the sector's development. In particular, Guinea has to develop all sectors of its tourism infrastructure including air, road and maritime transport systems. The country needs to also improve on its electricity supply through the creation and investment in alternative forms of energy such as wind and solar. The country has to improve on its connection to other African countries and also ease visa restrictions and conditions. This will ease traveling for business and investment in the tourism sector.

Furthermore, it is necessary for Guinea to strategically develop an integrated tourism industry product that can be marketed. This will prompt lots of tourists to visit every year just to see these products. Also, the Religious tourism sector should be developed and marketed such that tourists could visit places like the African Relic Middle Ages sites of Niani. The town of Niani, located in northeast Guinean Kankan prefecture and region, is often believed to have been the birth place of Emperor Sundiata Keita and also to have served as one of the ancient capitals of the Mali Empire [28].

As Guinea strives to maintain a profitable tourism sector for both the government and investors, the government should invest adequate funds to boost the tourism sector and thus enable it generate or contribute more to the country's GDP. Also, the government should facilitate access by investors to finance from local and international banks or loan agencies where the government can serve as a guarantor. From another perspective, Guinea should strive to cleanse its national image of a country stricken by diseases (Ebola), poverty, hunger, war and starvation. Because these images shape the way foreigners perceive the country, it is a stumbling block to the growth and development of the tourism industry in Guinea.

According to [29], access to education especially for women such as to bridge the gender gap should be encouraged. This is because women are very often the natural leaders in their local society, very sensitive to the issues related to the environment, society, heritage, and sense of place. Hence, the tourism industry can provide opportunities for women to find a sustainable way of living. This is because participation of women in the development of the tourism industry at the local level involves managing accommodation services, restaurants, and shops to working with handicraft, art and food processing. The government should also encourage women to participate in building international tourism networks and projects. This will improve ways to overcome the challenges that women encounter, give them access to more information and opportunities to showcase their work to broader audiences outside their local community [29].

Several shortcomings were encountered in this study such as the difficulties in obtaining up-to-date

information due to the lack of scientific literatures from the study area. This study sourced 500 online publications and only 70 were appropriate for the purpose of this study. In addition, there are little field studies which could be used to evaluate and quantify the tourism industry in Guinea. Additional field work is therefore necessary in order to provide quantitative segments in income distribution, employment, value creation and production of accessible goods and services of the tourism industry to mainstream the Guinean economy. To compliment this study, areas of further studies could examine the role of women in the tourism industry and its impact on the Guinean economy. Also, the sociopolitical determinants influencing expansion of the tourism industry in Guinea could also be researched.

3. Conclusion

This study has examined the trends, opportunities and challenges of the tourism industry in Africa with particular emphasis on the Republic of Guinea. From the study, Guinea is endowed with enormous touristic potentials that if enhanced could be a source of income for the government and investors, employment for the local people and development for the country.

This is mostly possible if the necessary tourism related infrastructure and support are provided and facilitated by the government through investments, policies and strategies which favour investment and marketable tourism products. Although the constraints to the development of the tourism sector in Guinea necessitates stringent monitoring and evaluation, setbacks such as lack of access to credit schemes for investors or support from the government, lower level of education and visa policies require more attention. At the local level, tourism development is constrained by poor infrastructure in transportation and communication which restricts the expansion of tourism enterprises that may prove locally profitable. Thus understanding their functioning and state will help define, develop and implement adequate government policies.

References

- [1] Khan, M (1997). Tourism Development and Dependency Theory: Mass Tourism vs. Ecotourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 24(4): 988-991.
- [2] Blackall, M (2019). Global tourism hits record highs - but who goes where on holiday? Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jul/01/global-tourism-hits-record-highs-but-who-goes-where-on-holiday>. Retrieved 15th March, 2020.
- [3] Bunghez, L (2016). The Importance of Tourism to a Destination's Economy. *The Importance of Tourism to a Destination's Economy. Journal of Eastern Europe Research in Business & Economics* 2016: 143495.
- [4] Nermin, K (2018). A Strategic Approach to Sustainable Tourism Development Using the A'WOT Hybrid Method: A Case Study of Zonguldak, Turkey. *Sustainability* 2019, 11: 964.
- [5] CIA (2020). Central Intelligence Agency, Central America: The British Virgin Islands. *The World Factbook*. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/vi.html>. Retrieved 14th March, 2020.
- [6] Encyclopedia Britannica (2020). British Virgin Islands, Caribbean Sea. Available at <https://www.britannica.com/place/British-Virgin-Islands>. Retrieved 14th March, 2020.
- [7] Orovic, J (2018). Has Croatia Crossed from Tourism Dependency to Tourism Addiction? Available at <https://www.total-croatia-news.com/lifestyle/29064-has-croatia-crossed-from-tourism-dependency-to-tourism-addiction>. Retrieved 11th September, 2019.
- [8] African Business Magazine (2019). Across Africa tourism is booming. Available at <https://africanbusinessmagazine.com/sectors/tourism/across-africa-tourism-is-booming/>. Retrieved 15th March, 2020.
- [9] World Bank (2013). Tourism in Africa: Harnessing Tourism for Growth and Improved Livelihoods. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Africa/Report/africa-tourism-report-2013-overview.pdf>. Retrieved 20th June, 2019.
- [10] Signé, L (2019). Africa's tourism: A global destination for investment and entrepreneurship. Available at <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/03/05/africas-tourism-a-global-destination-for-investment-and-entrepreneurship/>. Retrieved 30th June, 2019.
- [11] Otieno, V (2018). Tourism in Africa information: Facts, Statistics, Tourism in Africa by Country 2018. *TINA Magazine*. Available at <https://tinamagazine.com/2018/07/tourism-in-africa-facts.html>. Retrieved 11th September, 2019.
- [12] Signé, L (2018). Africa's tourism potential Trends, drivers, opportunities, and strategies. Available at <https://www.brookings.edu/research/africas-tourism-potential/>. Retrieved 30th June, 2019.
- [13] Mukete, B., Sun, Y., Etongo, D., Sajjad, S., Ngoe, M and Tamungang, R (2018a). Cameroon must focus on SDGs in its economic development plans. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 60 (2): 25-32.
- [14] WTTC (2013). World Travel and Tourism Council. *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2013 Sub Saharan Africa*. WTTC London, United Kingdom.
- [15] Modern Ghana (2016). The Challenges Facing the Growth of Tourism in Africa. Available at <https://www.modernghana.com/news/732774/the-challenges-facing-the-growth-of-tourism-in.html>. Retrieved 18th March, 2019.
- [16] Novelli, M., Burgess, L., Jones, A and Ritchie, B (2018). No Ebola...still doomed' – The Ebola-induced tourism crisis. *Annals of Tourism Research* 70 (2018): 76-87.
- [17] Grover, A and Dihel, N (2016). The unexplored potential of trade in services in Africa: from hair stylists and teachers to accountants and doctors. Available at <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/477321469182630728/The-unexplored-potential-of-trade-in-services-in-Africa-from-hair-stylists-and-teachers-to-accountants-and-doctors>. Retrieved 27th March, 2019.
- [18] Diallo, K (2010). *Tourisme et développement local au Fouta-Djalon*. Thèse de doctorat. Département de Géographie, Aménagement et Environnement. Université de Toulouse-Jean Jaurès, France.
- [19] O'Toole, T (2020). Guinea. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Available at <https://www.britannica.com/place/Guinea>. Retrieved 17th September, 2019.
- [20] Kamara, K (2019). Guinea trying to attract more tourists. <http://www.rfi.fr/en/20190225-reportage-guinea-tourism-bring-more-tourists-post-ebola>. Retrieved 4th March, 2020.
- [21] Theodora Maps (2020). Maps of Guinea. Available at https://geographic.org/maps/new2/guinea_maps.html. Retrieved 7th October, 2019.
- [22] WTO (2019). World Tourism Organization. A compendium of tourist statistics database. Available at <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.5555/unwtotfb0324010020142018201912>. Retrieved 20th December, 2019.
- [23] World Bank (2018). International tourism, number of departures, Guinea. Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.DPRT>. Retrieved 11th September, 2019.
- [24] Diekmann A and Barry, T (2014). Guinea, tourism. In: Jafari J., Xiao H. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Tourism*. Springer, Cham.
- [25] Republic of Guinea (2017). Hospitality and Tourism. Available at <https://www.invest.gov.gn/page/tourism>. Retrieved 11th March, 2019.

- [26] Diallo, A., Yin, H and Mukete, B (2017). Assessing the Socioeconomic Impacts of the Informal Sector in Guinea, West Africa. *Open Access Library Journal*, 4: e3290.
- [27] World Bank (2019). Overview of the World Bank in Guinea. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/guinea/overview>. Retrieved 30th December, 2019.
- [28] Pascal, J and Gavin, H (2008). *Historical Dictionary of Mali*. Scarecrow Press America. Page 231
- [29] Zareba, D (2017). Women and Ecotourism: the Role of Women Leaders in Supporting Development of Ecotourism in Rural Areas of Central and Eastern Europe. 4th european ecotourism conference, 17th to 18th April, 2017 Safranbolu, Turkey. Available at https://www.academia.edu/42162622/Women_And_Ecotourism_The_Role_Of_Women_Leaders_In_Supporting_Development_Of_Ecotourism_In_Rural_Areas_Of_Central_And_Eastern_Europe. Retrieved 2nd May, 2019.



© The Author(s) 2020. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).