SAFETY AND SECURITY ISSUES IN AKANU IBIAM INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ENUGU: IMPLICATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This research is centered on safety and security issues in Akanu Ibiam International Airport Enugu: implication for sustainable Tourism Development, the research objective includes to examine the safety and security issues at the Akanu Ibiam Airport and to look at its implication to sustainable Tourism development, this study is descriptive in nature as it attemptes to explain safety & security, sustainable Tourism Development, the Roles and function of Aviation Agencies toward safety and security of Akanu Ibiam International Airport and the Implications of Airport safety to sustainable Tourism development in Enugu state. The study further showed that for safety and security of lives and properties of travelers at the airport to be attained various rules and regulations guiding air travel operations have to be adhered to and government need to maintain the security equipment and replace in due time so as to ensure the protection of lives and properties.

Keywords: Safety, Security, Sustainable Tourism Development, implication

Introduction

An international airport is an important asset of a nation with customs and border control facilities that are charged with the role of transporting passengers and cargo from one region, nation to another, Airports usually consist of a landing area, which comprises an aerially accessible open space including at least one operationally active surface such as a runway for a plane to take off and to land or a helipad and often includes adjacent utility buildings such as control towers, hangars and terminals, to maintain and monitor aircraft, larger airports may have airport aprons, taxiway bridges, air traffic control centres, passenger facilities such as restaurants lounges and emergency services. In recent times, the number of aircraft movements and the fervour of passengers going to different places for various reasons, is increasing, people are enthusiastic about embarking on journeys, Hence, creating overcrowding and delays at stations, thereby posing a safety risk to airport users, there is need for safety and security operations of air transport.

The operations of the airport are sensitive, and therefore, requires careful handling of the air passengers and operators involved in the process, hence airport operations comprise several components of the airport area where safety and security are paramount for an efficient and effective operation, these operations are carried out in the various component of the airport which includes air side, terminal building and landside, these three major areas of the airport are linked with operational activities requiring the safety and security of passengers, cargo and aircraft in Akanu Ibiam international airport Enugu.

Research Method

Research Method deals with the technique the researcher used during the research to collect data and in this research qualitative research method was utilized due to its relevance to the study, according to Veal (2006) qualitative refers to the method of data collection that is based on the descriptive or non-numerical.

Research Objective

The principal objectives of this study are:

1. To examine various safety and security issues at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport.
2. To look at its implication to sustainable tourism development in Enugu State.

Conceptualization

Safety and security

Safety and security are often seen as being completely different fields of expertise and study, separated from each other, while other views might more underline the similarities that are to

be found between the two concept. Safety is the set of measures deployed to protect property and people from accidents and disasters caused by natural causes such as fire or natural disasters. Nwankwo (2013) defined safety as a situation of being safe from security issues in the environment, looking at the concept of security, it refers to the defensive measures deployed to prevent acts of human malice, to protect goods and people from their consequences such as theft or attacks. Security involves the protection of lives and properties at the tourist's destination (Nwankwo, 2007). Furthermore, some studies (i.e. Buzan, Weavor & Wude, 1998; Smith & Brooks, 2013) see safety and security studies as not only pertaining to military or other national security intelligence, but also human society, human environment and other sectors of the economy, they maintained that the concept of safety and security can be viewed from different dimensions but with the central aim of securing and making safe. State are fully responsible for the protection of all persons within their territories regardless of their status whether tourists or members of host communities, and for ensuring public order and security from threats, human rights and humanitarian actors must advocate with the national authorities to assume their responsibilities to provide effective security. The Akanu Ibiam International Airport is under the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria: an umbrella body that regulate the activities of airport in Nigeria with the government and the manager of Akanu Ibiam need to work together to ensure the safety and security role in sustainable development of Tourism in the state.

Background Information

This examine the physical background of the study area which is Akanu Ibiam International Airport. It is also known as Enugu Airport, is an airport serving Enugu the Capital City of Enugu state of Nigeria and nearby cities such as Onitsha, Nnewi Awka, Abakaliki, Afikpo, Okigwe, Nsukka, Orlu, Otukpo and Ogoja, the airport is named after the late Akanu Ibiam (1906 – 1995), a medical doctor and stateman who hailed from Afikpo in Ebonyi State, the airport was initially built in 1961, a year after Nigeria's Independence in the year 1960, during the regime of the first indigenous president of Nigeria in the person of Late Rt. Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, at present, most of the airlines that commenced operations at that time at the airport have ceased to operate, while some have changed their base of operations, Airlines that operate presently at the airport include, Arik Air, Aero contractors, Air peace, Med view Airline, Ethiopian Airlines etc. the Akanu Ibiam airport accommodates commercial airliners as well as private non-commercial aircrafts which land and take off from time to time at the airport.

In the year 2010, precisely on February 10, 2010, the airport was closed down by the federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) for the first phase of a major renovation and expansion works and was later re-opened on 16th December 2010 after the second and third phase of the constitution work was completed (www.faan.gov.ng accessed July 15, 2018).

Organizational Information/Socio-Economic Importance

The Akanu Ibiam International Airport is administered by the Federal Airport Authority of Ngieria (FAAN), a Service organization statutorily charged with the management of all commercial airports in Nigeria and with the provision of essential as well as sundry services to both passenger and cargo airlines, this agency which is under the federal ministry of aviation is headquartered in the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Ikeja, Nigeria, among the services provided by FAAN are maintenance, research, logistics etc. The Akanu Ibiam International Airport is one of the Twenty Six (26) listed airports currently owned and operated by the organization (FAAN) and one of the five functional international airports in that regard.

The Akanu Ibiam International Airport, through its operations has contributed to the development of Emene, the town where it was cited as well as that of Enugu state and the nation as a whole. Prior to the sighting of the airport as its location , there was no residential building in that part of Emene; with the coming of the Airport there as from the year 1960, development activities began to emerge around the area as a result of the operations and activities of the airport.

Examples of such activities include the sighting of factories, filling stations, industrial estates and establishments, such as the Anammco spare parts and vehicle assembly company which is a stone throw away the Airport, also there is the fact of the countless number of houses that have now been built in Emene as well as the significant revenue source that the Airport represents for the state and for the federation, the foregoing are in addition to the tourism potentials and contributions that the Airport represents for Enugu state, with a good number of visitors, foreigners inclusive, passing through the airport regularly, people were also employ in different unit of the Airport.

Sustainable Tourism Development

The United Nation defines sustainable tourism as that which takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities (UREP and UNWTO 2005:12), according to the world body", sustainable development has emerged as the guiding principle for Long-term global development, while the importance of sustainable tourism development is

increasingly being stressed, the sustainability of Tourism has also increasingly been called into question, especially due to rising insecurity which can reduce and/or redirect flows of Tourists (Hall, Timothy and Duval, 2003), Pizam and Mansfeld 1996), following many organizations and scholars are stressing the need for "touristic security" define here as the practice of securing tourists to sustain Tourism, there is no tourism without tourists and tourist tend to be risk adverse, nowadays traveling has become the significant and profitable industry which creates huge revenue to all countries around the world, each country has its own characteristic and outstanding features to attract visitors, one of the most important factors that keep the visitors visiting the destination is the safety and security of the place, safety and security is one of the keys to sustainable tourism development and insecurity constitutes a challenges top tourism development globally.

Increasingly also, nations of the world are realizing the importance of safety and security for the development of Tourism and its sustainability, the security of tourists while on a tourist visit rests mostly on the standard of safety and security at tourist destination, and the larger society where the tourism site is located and tourists are motivated to travel to destinations with improved security standard (cooper et al, 2005).

Safety and security issues at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport

Safety and security are among the most basic needs in life and are essential in Tourism development, in Akanu Ibiam International airport was said to be shut down by federal government in 2019 for security reasons.

The safety and security issues at the Akanu Ibiam international Airport are:

1) thick bushes close to the runway areas- the runway area of the airport is situated very close to the bush from where terrorists can attack the aircraft at the airport, also air passengers can be attacked by wild or mentally deranged animals from those or mentally deranged animals from those bushes during boarding, herders move about with cows seeking green leaves for their flocks to feed on, at times these cows would run into the airport crossing runways and defeating on the lines of the runway, making it difficult for pilots to see the lines clearly from the air during landing and this is capable of causing plane crash as pilots may run into the wrong path there by leading to an unwanted situation.

2) Existence of market close to airport; the market has been in existence long before the extension of the runway and the proximity of the airport to the market has an abattoir which exposes the airport to regular bird strike, recalling that an air peace flight was hit

by birds and the air craft had to make an air return. At the end of the runway you have free trade zone which is also a security problem to the airport

3) Over speeding by pilots: there is a speed unit that has been assigned for flight safety purposes but unfortunately some pilots still cross the assigned speed limits and that is capable of causing and air side accident that can lead to the destination of lives and properties.

4) Falling roof and ceiling at the airport: those falling roofs and ceiling pose security treats to airport users as tools that were used to fine tune the roof & ceiling, if it falls on a person may cause serious injury.

5) Flooding: during the rainy seasons there are usually heavy down pour, when ever it rains heavily for a prolonged and consistent period of time the runway of the airport becomes heavily flooded thereby making the possibility of aircraft landing slim for a period of time.

6) Dirty toilet at the Airport: the State of toilets at Akanu Ibiam International Airport is deplorable, the toilets are not well maintained and that is capable of making all airport user fall sick hence a serious safety issue for the airport users.

7) Abandoned containers: there are a few abandoned containers close to the walk way leading to the airport terminal building. These containers have been there for a long time without carrying out any known function for the management of the airport unfortunately, those containers can be used by mischievous persons to store lethal equipments that may be used to attack the airport facilities or the passengers and staff of the airport.

8) Inadequate security equipment at the Airport: the aviation security do not have enough equipments to carry out their security duties efficiency, the few equipments that are available are not maintained thereby posing a serious risk to the security of the airport. In addition the security apparatus at the entrance of the gate onto the airport do gadgets that is able of forestalling advanced attacks from mischievous elements.

Safety Policies at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport

The Akanu Ibiam International Airport has an existing safety policy that addresses safety concern at the airport. The Policy says: AKanu Ibiam International Airport Enugu is committed to running an airport in a highly professional manner that seeks to achieve a high level of safety and customer satisfaction in the delivering of all its services, products through the applications of continuous improvement programmes, in so doing, the protection of the

shared environment is considered of fundamental importance to Akanu Ibiam International Airport Enugu, its employees and customers, the safety policy also captured the following:

- Develop, embed and practice a safety culture across our entire aviation activities that recognizes the importance and value of effective aviation safety management and acknowledge at all times, that safety is paramount.

- Support the management of safety by creating an organizational culture that encourage safe practices, effective safety reporting and communication, and activity manages safety with the same attention to results that is used in managing all systems that can cause bodily harm or destruction to property.

- Define clearly for all staff their accountabilities and responsibilities for the development and delivering of safe practices and procedures.

- Establish and operate hazard reporting system in order to decrease or eliminate hazards resulting from out operations or activities at a minimum drive hazard levels to a point which is as low as reasonably practicably (ALARP).

- Ensure externally supplied systems and services that affect the safety of our aviation operation meet appropriate regulatory and safety standards.

- Establish a "Just culture" in which no action will be taken against any employee who disclose a safety concern through the hazard reporting system except such disclosure indicates beyond any reasonable doubt, an illegal ace, gross negligence or a deliberate or willful disregard of regulations or procedures.

- Ensure sufficient skilled and trained staffs are available who are fully competent in aviation safety matters.

- Establish and measure our safety performance against realistic safety indicators and safety performance target.

- Comply with and wherever possible exceed, legislative and regulatory requirements and standards.

- Foster a learning environment by which we learn from incidents and accidents, our experience and the experience of others through participation in industry activities and initiatives.

The Role and Function of Aviation Agencies towards safety and security of Akanu Ibiam International Airport

Various agencies play various roles at the airport with the view to provide security and safety to the passengers of the airport, the staff, and the general facilities at the airport.

These agencies include: The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA); Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB); Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET); they carry out the following roles and functions.

a) The Nigerian Civil aviation Authority (NCAA): The Nigerian Civil Aviation Act to regulate aviation safety without political interference as well as to carry out over sight functions.

The functions of the Nigerian civil Aviation authority are:

- Regulation of aircraft operating environment for safety and security
- Regulates the method of entry and conduct of air transport business.
- Advises the ministry and government on policy formulation on aviation related matters.
- Licensing of aviation rules and regulations in line with ICAO SARPs

b) Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN): This agency is responsible for managing the Akanu Ibiam International Airports and to provide service to both passengers and airlines.

The functions they perform include:

- To develop, provide and maintain the airport and its facilities
- To provide adequate conditions under which passengers and goods may be carried by air and under which aircraft may be used for other gainful purpose.
- To provide adequate facilities and personnel for personnel for effective security at the airport.
- To develop and provide facilities for surface transportation within the airport.

c) Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA): The agency is responsible for providing air navigation service with the mandate to manage the airspace of the airport to a revel consistent with ICAO SARPS.

The functions they perform include:

- Provision of navigation service necessary for the operation of aircraft taking-off and landing and integrate them into the overall of air traffic within the airspace;
- Minimize or prevent interference with the use or effectiveness of all apparatus used in connection with air navigation and for prohibiting or regulating the use of all such apparatus and display of sings and lights liable to endanger aircraft and endanger the use of the airspace;

- Generally secure the safety, efficiency and regularity of air navigation;
- Provide adequate facilities and personnel for effective security of navigational aids outside the airport perimenters;
- Procure, install and maintain adequate communication, navigation and surveillance and air traffic management facilities at the Akanu Ibiam International Airports.

d) Accident Investigation Bureau (AIB): The roles of the accident investigation Bureau include investigation of Civil aircraft accidents and serious incidents within the airport with the intent of making safety recommendation to prevent recurrence of similar accident in Future.

The functions of this agency include:

- To conduct investigation into any accident or incident arising out of or I the course of air navigation within the Akanu Ibiam International Airport;
- To gather record and analyze relevant information on air safety data, in particular, for accident or incident prevention purposes, in so far as those functions do not affects independence and entail no responsibility in regulatory, administrative or standards matters;
- To issue safety recommendations;
- To determine the cause and/or contributory cause of an accident.
- To compile, complete publicize the final report of an accident or incident.

e) Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET): NIMET plays a very important role towards the provision of safety and security at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport as its mandate is to advise government on all aspects of meteorology (Weather and climate) as it concerns the airport the agency is responsible for carrying out the following functions:

- It provides information and forecast on the wealth conditions
- The agency advices the Government and also the general Public on issue relating to weather and climate.

The Implication of Airport Safety to Sustainable Tourism Development in Enugu State

The following are the implication of Airport safety to sustainable tourism development in Enugu State:

a) Economic Growth: when you have a safe airport that travelers are pleased with it has a way of positively affecting tourist activities in various locations in Enugu State. The travelers from time to time would love to cruise around town for the sake of fund and

when they become hungry they'll eat something, certainly not with the money they made from Enugu state but from where they are coming from all these activities are capable of boosting the economy of Enugu State.

b) Increased tourism business tourist activities: every business person wants to go into a profitable business venture, what happens is that when one person establishes a tourist site and that site starts to bear fruits for the owner it will attract all other investors. Imagines what will happen when a lot of people start of diversify their tourist ventures, the result will be great she said.

c) Increased employment opportunity: the youth are unemployed, a lot of students are graduating from institutions with knowledge of tourism practices in Enugu State yet after learning there is usually no Job to absorb them, however, the presence of more tourists in the state will lead to the creation of a lot of employment opportunities for the population. All these can be made possible with the airport managers being able to adopt and practice the standards Aviation Recommended practices (SARP).

Christiana & Ana (2007), in the Romanian Economic Journal argued that the air transport sector is evolving rapidly to meet the changing needs of society as a whole. This is very true. The implication of airport safety to sustainable tourism development in Enugu State is that it will contribute to the general growth and development of the state. This is because the major needs of the people is money, therefore, if the level of safety and security of the airport becomes such that everybody talks about a lot of people will be attracted to the airport thereby leading to increased economic activities in the state. Such activities include; investments in tourism activities and an increase in employment opportunities and circulation of money in the state.

Summary

Safety and security is indispensable to the sustainability of tourism development as presented in the study. One will find out from this study that tourism sustainability is anchored majorly around the safety and security of lives and properties of tourists. This is because tourists love to have favourable travel and tour experience, and as a result travelers will not travel to destinations if they are sure that the means of transportation to be adopted is safe. Tourists will never go to a destination without the presence of a safe means of transportation, of which air transportation was focused on in this study.

The study further showed that for safety and security of lives and properties of travelers at the airport to be attained various rules and regulations guiding air travel operations have to be adhered to. In the event that there is a breakdown of law and other at the airport the security outfit at the airport will be brought into scene to restore order. This security outfit comes in two phases. The first phase is the aviation security: this security apparatus comprises trained personnel who are charged with the responsibility of maintaining law and order. The function of the Aviation Security at the airport is akin to the functions of Civilian police in the larger society. The second phase is the Air Police: the air police comprises men of the Nigerian army and air force. They mainly prevent terrorist related activities such as highjack of planes and destruction of lives and property. There are various sections/departments at the airport that carry out various functions with the safety department of Akanu Ibiam International Airport. The safety department plays key roles in getting the attention of other departments to what should be done and at what time. The safety department functions as the watch man of airport such that whenever something is about to go wrong they draw the attention of staff of the department responsible for prevention of such negative occurrence. The roles that each and every department of the airport plays necessitated the use of structural functionalism in this study. This is because there is an inter relationship of functions at the airport whereby each department is structured with functions, and each of them working to maintain a sustained whole for the good of all.

Conclusion

Air transportation as a fundamental medium of transportation of tourists from one city or country to another, contributes immensely to the growth, development and sustainability of the tourism industry as a result of the fact that air transportation add to the wider spread and

increase in tourist travels to various countries of choice. Its contributions are great because it provides a more convenient way to travel and at the shortest possible time frame. Tourists would rather make good use of the air transport because it reduces the stress of travel and brings them more positive travel experience.

Although there are tourists who 'even up till present', considering the level of advancement in technology, still fear that they would die in a plane crash if they travel by air. This is certainly not the fault of such tourists, as in the recent past; there had been situations whereby lives were lost in air crashes. Nonetheless, conscious efforts have been made to prevent such occurrence by airport regulatory authorities as we have Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria as the regulatory body for Nigerian Airports. The Aviation Security in close partnership with the safety department at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport works day in day out to ensure that air crashes does not occur at the Akanu Ibiam International Airport.

Finally, the relationships that exist in the tourism industry are another aspect that this work captured. This relationship is seen in the collaborations between primarily and secondary stakeholders in the industry and how each of them relies on one another to achieve success. Air transportation as one of the key tourism concepts play a great role towards the encouragement or discouragement of tourists who would travel from their areas of residence to destinations of choice. Therefore, news about plane crashes, lack of efficient security system at the airport and disrespect for air travel passengers will negatively affect the sustainability of tourism development since they must first travel from the airport before getting to the tourist destination of choice.

Sugestions

Having seen the results of the study, the following recommendations are made towards improving the standard of safety and security which will encourage more tourist visits and reflect in the sustainability of tourism development in Enugu state:

a) **Maintenance of Security Equipments**: Equipments that are used to monitor and provide safety and security to tourists degrades with time. Therefore, equipments should be checked from time to time and replaced in due time so as to ensure the protection of lives and properties.

b) **Continuous training and retraining of Security agents**: the staff of the Aviation security should be trained and retained from time to time to keep them up to date in their business of protecting lives and properties of travelers.

c) **Stiffer measures to sanction staffs who default on safety policies**: Airport staff like pilots should be sanctioned if found breaking speed limits. In this case it is either that

the pilot should be sanctioned if found breaking speed limits. In this case it is either that the pilot is sanctioned or that the airline he is working for is made to pay for the errors of their staff so that they will have a justifiable reason to call the pilots to order

d) **Imbibing safety consciousness in tourists**: the tourists should be encouraged to imbibe safety consciousness. They should follow rules and regulations governing their rights to boarding of a plane. They should avoid going onboard with edible materials that have been banned by the airport authorities.

e) **Annual Safety Assessment**: There should be an annual assessment of safety evaluation of safety and security departments of the Akanu Ibiam International Airport so as to measure their levels of success and failures in the provision of a secured and safe environment for both travelers and staff at the airport.

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