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ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

Case study: Murtala Muhammed International Airport-Lagos
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ABSTRACT

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<p>Air transportation has been a major player in the global tourism industry and also an outstanding innovation of the 21st century. The airline industry is very dynamic and highly technology driven. It has evolved from being a monopolistic sector to a very competitive type. The deregulation era saw the emergence of several airlines carriers adopting vibrant business models and strategies which helped to shape the entire travel and tourism industry. Air transport has an impact on the economy in diverse ways.</p> <p>This research work focused on the economic impact of air transport in Lagos Nigeria with a special attention to the Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos Nigeria. In general, the air transport sector was examined in the light of the benefits and the relationship between the air transport and tourism industry and to gain a better understanding of how air transport impacted Lagos economic from the theoretic viewpoint. The report also looked into how the air travel helped drive the globalization process and the use of ICT changing the face of air travel.</p> <p>In this report, the qualitative method was adopted using the semi structured interview to collect data information from the chosen target group in the travel and tourism industry. The information from the interviewees was analyzed to arrive at findings regarding the economic impact of air transport in the region of Lagos. Finally, recommendations and conclusions were made based on the viewpoints of the writer.</p>		

<p>Key words Airlines, airport, deregulation, globalisation, impact, passenger, tourism</p>
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ABBREVIATIONS

CNC	Comprehensive Network Carriers
FSA	Fixed Scheduled Airlines
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
LCC	Low Cost Carriers
MMA	Murtala Muhammed International Airport
NCAA	Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ACI	Airports Council International
FAAN	Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria
ATAG	Air transport Action Group
NGN	Nigerian Naira (currency)

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1 INTRODUCTION

Travelling by air has remained one of the most vital transportation innovations of the twentieth century and it has continued to evolve over the years. It enabled the movement of passengers and cargoes in the shortest time and also promoted the demand for both short and long-haul trips. In fact, every part of the world could be accessed by means of airplanes within a 24-hour time frame and thereby promoting globalization. Air transportation has over the decades managed to gain a remarkable market share of the transportation sector in the tourism industry. With the increased number of people travelling every day by airplanes for different purposes, air transportation would continue to take a central stage in the tourism industry. It has become a very significant sector of tourism today. It is believed that air transportation has contributed in no small measure in making the world a global village, in other words, it has been a major player in the globalization process.

Air transportation is principally the use of airplanes to convey passengers and cargoes from one point to another and it is a fast evolving sector. Passengers more often than not are predominantly tourists. The tourism industry is interactive and dynamic in nature and air transport has remained a major player within the industry. Travelling by air has been made easier and more affordable owing to the emergence of budget airlines (Low Cost Carriers) competing with the legacy airlines (Full Service Airlines) and this practically altered the air travel market. Air transportation is susceptible to technological advancements and this over the years has continually changed the face of air travel in different dimensions. These changes cut across both technical (hardware, engineering and safety) and service delivery (software – customer service) fronts. Besides, information technology is believed to be the future of air transportation and tourism in general.

However, air transportation is a highly technology driven sector with its challenges and these are factors that affect its operations within the tourism industry. The tourism market is a very vast market and the demand for tourism services has increased tremendously, especially with air transportation in focus. There are factors that affect air

transport and they include, but are not limited to; air safety standards, terrorism, cost of operation, competition, natural disaster, economic recession, epidemics and pandemics, and all this is evident in today`s air transportation management.

The main aim of this thesis is to analyze the economic impact of air transportation in a region. It involved studying how the air transport business has affected the lives of the people in the region of Lagos economically. The objective of this report is to examine the importance of air transport in a region and identify main visible impacts of air transport in general and the Lagos region in particular. The economy of Lagos and the Murtala Muhammed Airport business activities will be discussed in the research work. The positive and the negative aspects of air transport in the region will also be considered to gain a better understanding of the subject. Also, the globalisation process and tourism in the region of Lagos will be considered in the report. In accomplishing this task, the writer will use the qualitative method of interview as the primary data source but may face the challenge of securing all the required information from the interviewees. The theoretical part will consider secondary data sources like eBooks, textbooks and web pages.

This report consists of four parts; the introduction, which gives the background information including the scope of the study, the theoretical frame work, discussing the subject in detail with the help of literature related to content, while the empirical part considers the subject in practical terms from the viewpoint of the case study applying the qualitative research method of interview for the analysis. And the conclusion and recommendation which consist of the writer`s final points of view based on the subject analysis.

2 LAGOS REGION AND MURTALA MUHAMMED AIRPORT

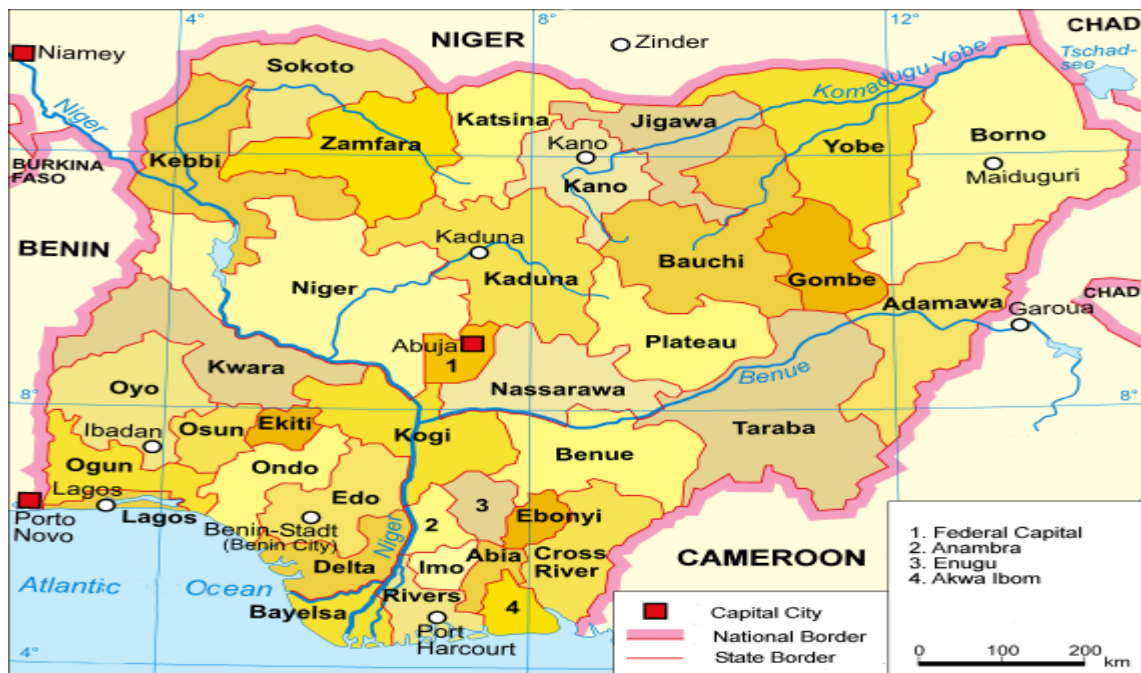
Lagos State is an African megacity which is located in south western Nigeria on the West Coast of Africa, within latitudes $6^{\circ} 23'N$ and $6^{\circ} 41'N$ and longitudes $2^{\circ} 42'E$ and $3^{\circ} 42'E$. The State is flanked from the north and east by Ogun State, in the west by the Republic of Benin and the south by the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Guinea. The total landmass of the State is about 3,345 square kilometres, which is just about 0.4% of the total land area of Nigeria. Physically it is the smallest, but the most highly populated state in the country. Lagos metropolis is occupied by about 80% of the population of the State making it the most urbanized State in the country Nigeria. According to projected population growth studies, it has been forecast that Lagos State population will reach 25 million inhabitants in the next ten years (2012), making the city the third largest in the world. As in 2006, the population of Lagos State was 17.5 million, (based on the parallel count conducted by the state during the National Census) with a growth rate of 3.2%, the state today has a population of over 21 Million making it 10 per cent of Nigeria's population. (Iwugo, D' Arcy & Andoh 2003)

By the late 15th century Lagos Island had been settled by Yoruba fishermen and hunters, who called it Oko. The area was dominated by the kingdom of Benin, which called it Eko, from the late 16th century to the mid-19th century. The Portuguese first landed on Lagos Island in 1472 and trade developed slowly. The local obas (kings) enjoyed good relations with the Portuguese, who called the island Onim (and later Lagos) and who established a flourishing trade. It was so until the British came to the region and forced out the Portuguese to establish their colonial administration in Lagos and also took over the trade which was predominantly agricultural produce. (Encyclopaedia britannica. com 2014)

Also known as "Èkó" in popular contexts, Lagos has been Nigeria's premier city since at least 1861. Its role as distribution centre to the West African coast assured by geography, Lagos attracted Portuguese traders and had become a major centre for the slave trade by the early seventeenth century. In 1851, the British bombarded the city, seeking to expel Portuguese slave dealers, abolish the slave trade altogether, and establish legitimate trade in its place. In the process, the British set up their own colonial

administration and finally annexed the city in 1861. The former city-state would soon become a bridgehead to the conquest of the territories that became Nigeria. In 1914, Lagos was named Nigeria's political capital, retaining that status until 1991 when Abuja formally became Nigeria's new federal capital territory. It has since remained Nigeria's capital, except in name. (Encyclopaedia 2014)

From early settlers through slave raiders to colonial officials, the city and its mainland towns had always been a place to move to in search of improved life chances, political power, better living standards, and exposure to the economic opportunities offered by the larger world. Lagos is a migrant city and can be reached by air, water and land transport. It has been growing on every side making it the fastest growing city in the country. (un.org 2014)



GRAPH 1. Map of Nigeria (Adapted from google.com 2014)

Graph 1 above is the geographical map of Nigeria showing all the regions and states that make up the country it has 36 States including Abuja which is the administrative capital. (un.org 2014) The Lagos region is situated in the Western part of the country. It can be found at the down west of the map and it is indeed the coastal region around the Atlantic Ocean as shown in the map.



GRAPH 2. Map of Lagos (Adapted from Google 2014)

Graph 2 above is the geographical map of Lagos region or state as it is referred to in Nigeria, showing municipalities that make up the region. It is a highly urbanised region with every municipality growing rapidly in business and population which have earned it a megacity status. And Ikeja is the administrative capital of Lagos and it is a heavy business district and that is where the MMA is located. Ikeja can be spotted at the top of the map in graph 2. Lagos is a metropolitan region and the commercial capital of Nigeria. It is branded the “Centre of Excellence” as a marketing slogan. (lagos.gov.ng 2014)

2.1 Lagos Economy

Lagos is indisputably the commercial nerve-centre of Nigeria (and possibly Africa), with the heaviest concentration of industries, even though the administrative and political headquarters of the country have been relocated to Abuja over twenty years ago. The state still holds more than 70% of the nation’s industrial and commercial establishments. All these industries and commercial enterprises are centred round the metropolis, i.e. Lagos Island and Mainland. The two major seaports in Nigeria, namely Apapa port and Tin-can Island port are in Lagos metropolis. At the same time, the busiest international airport in the country Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMA)

is also located in Lagos metropolis. The domestic wing of the MMA is also the busiest domestic airport in Nigeria and the whole of Africa. (Iwugo, D' Arcy & Andoh 2003)

Furthermore, on the African continent, Lagos State GDP figures rank fourth below Cairo (\$145 billion), Johannesburg (\$110 billion), and Cape Town (\$103 billion). The figures reveal that the Lagos State GDP is higher than 14 of the 51 states in the United States of America. It is also estimated to be higher than the GDPs of 22 of the 27 states in Brazil, and larger than 42 component states in Africa, including Kenya with a GDP of \$66 billion, Ghana with a GDP of \$61.97 billion, and Tanzania with a GDP of \$58.44 billion. There are seven prominent sectors dominating economic activities in Lagos State, headed by manufacturing which contributes 29.60 percent of the state's GDP figures. Transportation follows closely providing an average of 26.47 percent of economic activities in the state. Other sectors in order of prominence include building and construction (19.60 percent), wholesale and retail (8.39 percent); telecommunications (3.71 percent); financial institutions (3.51 percent); and real estate (2.01 percent). The seven sectors account for 93.39 percent of the economic activities in the state. (BusinessDay 2013)

Lagos is indeed a commercial hub with heavy influx of people, businessmen and tourists. Lagos has been experiencing a huge increase in business volume in the oil and gas, transportation, IT, telecommunication and allied services sectors. The hospitality sector has been in for big business in providing air transportation service for the teeming business travellers in Lagos city and as a result several investments have been made by domestic and multinational companies in Lagos. (privatefly.com.ng 2014). The administrative capital of Lagos is Ikeja and that is where the Murtala Muhammed Airport is located. Lagos is adjudged the Africa's fastest growing city and having one of the world's mega city statuses. The region derives huge taxes from several indigenous and multinational businesses operating in Lagos. It is perhaps also the only state capable of generating enough internal revenue to sustain its operations. The city forms the nucleus of this affluence, home to most banks and other financial institutions, including the Stock Exchange. (lagos.state.gov.ng 2014)

2.2 Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos, Nigeria

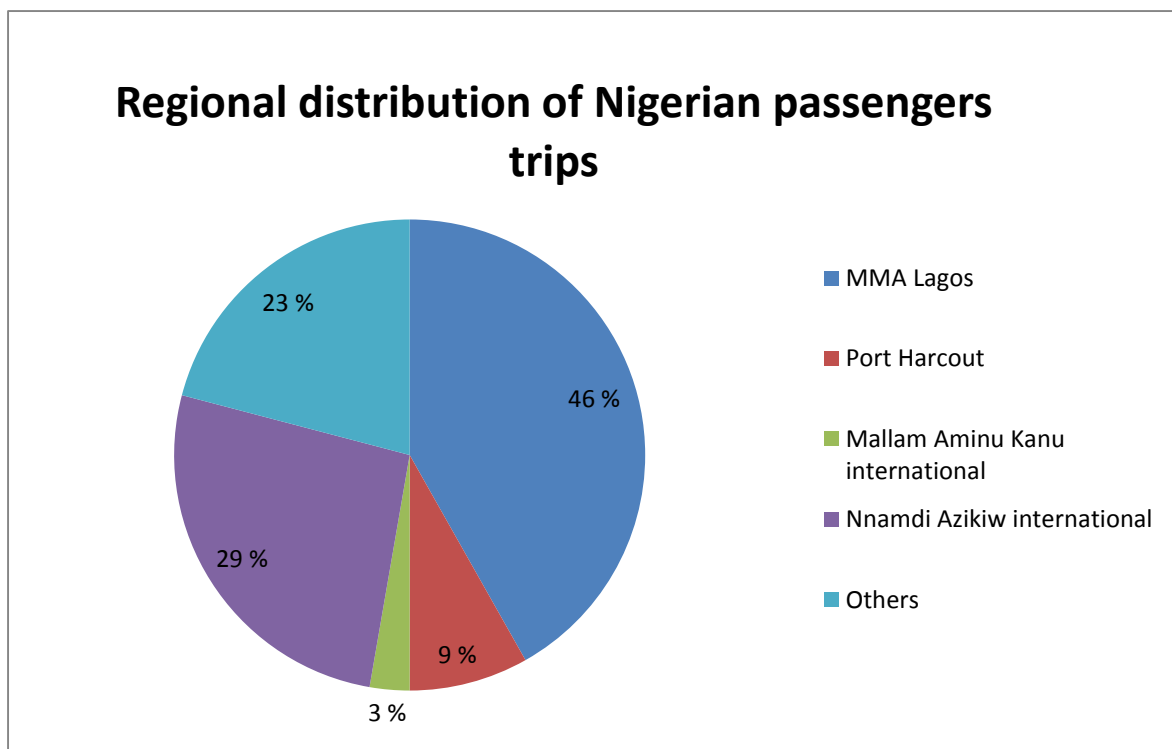
The Murtala Muhammed Airport is situated in Ikeja, Lagos state, Nigeria. It is the largest International airport and the major airport that is serving Lagos and the nation Nigeria. The airport is the busiest and mostly used and of course the commercial hub for regional airlines. It has two terminals known as the domestic and International wings, MMA1 and MMA2. These two terminals are located about one kilometre from each other, and have two runways which they share and it is suitable for small and medium jets, long range jets, regional airliners and large airliners. The cargo terminal is fully equipped to handle cargo flights and various cargoes are being received and dispatched from the MMA Lagos. The airport was originally known as Lagos International Airport before it was renamed after the Nigerian former military head of state Murtala Muhammed. The airport was constructed during the World War 2. The international airport terminal was designed based on the structure of Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam and it was officially opened on 15th of March 1979 for operations. Thereafter, MMA Lagos has been going through a series of development to meet the world standard. (faan.org 2014)

In the 80's and 90's, the airport faced some security challenges which made the staff and the travellers think it's not safe for them, but as at early 1999 after the presidential election of Olusegun Obasanjo, substantial improvement has been made at the Murtala Muhammed Airport on security, malfunctioning and non-operational infrastructure. The Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) ended its suspicious act of direct flights to Nigeria in 2001 in recognition of these security improvements. (FAAN 2014)

The Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA Lagos) is Nigeria's primary airport. As a hub airport for intercontinental passenger traffic, Murtala Muhammed International can provide its Nigerian residents and businesses better access to several destinations, at a higher frequency and at reduced fares. There are several passengers' flight that operate at the airport serving various routes internationally, they include: KLM, British Airways, Turkish Airline, United Airlines, Lufthansa, Qatar Airways, Virgin Atlantic and so on. The routes they fly are to and from Atlanta, Houston, Paris, London, Dubai, Istanbul, Madrid, Addis Ababa and Frankfurt. Apart from the 4 international airports in Nigeria, of which Murtala Muhammed is the busiest and largest, there are about 20 domes-

tic airports serving domestic passenger flights. Domestic airports are situated in some strategic states which are Warri, Benin and Ibadan. (Joslin 2008)

Airlines require ground-based infrastructural facilities to operate. This infrastructure includes the facilities at Nigerian airports that directly serve passengers, like luggage handling, ticketing, retail and catering outlets. Less visible are the essential services which are sometimes offered off-site, such as air navigation and air regulation, as well as the local activities of freight integrators. The four largest primary airports in Nigeria are Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMA Lagos), Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport (NAA Abuja), Port Harcourt International Airport (PHIA Port Harcourt) and Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport (MAKIA Kano), which handle over three-quarters of passengers every year (Chart 3). In total over 13.5 million passengers arrive or depart from Nigerian airports each year. More than 181,000 tonnes of freight is handled every year. (Oxford Economics 2012)



GRAPH 3 Regional distributions of Nigerian passengers' trips (Adapted Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics)

The graph above clearly shows the percentage of passengers' traffic at the Nigerian primary largest airports. The MMA Lagos has 46% of the air passenger traffic in Nige-

ria, which is almost half of the total country's passengers. This percentage record places MMA Lagos as the busiest airport. The second busiest in terms of passenger traffic is NAA Abuja with 29%, PHIA Port Harcourt appearing third with 9%, and MAKIA Kano having the lowest of 3% air passenger traffic in its category. The remaining percentage covers other airports in Nigeria including secondary airports. This data record captured both the international and domestic air passenger traffic. (Oxford Economics 2012)

3. AIR TRANSPORT, TRENDS AND GLOBALISATION

Air transportation is the transportation of passengers and cargo by aircraft and helicopters. It is a transport system that involves the movement or carriage by air of persons or goods using airplanes and helicopters. It has become the most preferred means of common carrier travelling. The Greatest efficiency and value are obtained when long distances are involved and high value payloads are moved, although the time and cost efficiencies obtained reduces as distances travelled are decreased, air transport is often worthwhile even for relatively short distances. (oecd.org 2014).

Air transport is of great interest for tourism development and tourists flow because it offers less travel time and a significant routine platform in the tourism global interaction. It has remained the fastest means of transportation on a global scale that is shaping the tourism industry. People by means of air travel embark on long distant trips globally and reach destinations in a short travel time when compared to other travel means. Various flight services are offered today within the sector, there is short-haul and long-haul transport services globally. The chief advantage of this method is the considerable amount of time saved because of the high speed of the flight. (Wensveen 2012, 20).

3.1 Flight operations in Lagos, Nigeria

Air transportation management is a challenging and high risk business. However, it is profitable when properly managed in a deregulated environment. The management of the aviation business in Nigeria is being undertaken by the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) and Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA). These two bodies work together to ensure a better business environment in the air transport industry by promoting competition and safety. FAAN is a service organization statutorily mandated to manage all commercial airports in Nigeria and offer serviced to both passengers and airlines. It also develops, provides and maintains airports, necessary services and facilities for safe, orderly, fast and economic operation of air travel. The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority is the regulatory body for aviation in Nigeria. It became autonomous with the passing into law of the Civil Aviation Act 2006 by the National Assembly and

assent of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Act not only mandates the Authority to regulate Aviation Safety without political interference, but also to carry out supervisory functions of Airports, Airspace, Meteorological Services, etc as well as economic regulations of the industry. (ncaa.gov.ng 2014)

The air transport sector is one of the most regulated industries in the world. Every single technical personnel, equipment and airport must be certified and supervised by qualified regulatory bodies known as the Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs). Even the CAAs themselves are in turn examined by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and other international agencies. The MMA Lagos is the administrative headquarters of these regulatory bodies overseeing flight operations in Lagos and the country in general. (ncaa.gov.ng 2014)

The Civil aviation is a critical element in Nigeria's transportation system and indeed its economy. Nigeria has twenty (20) airports and many regulated airstrips and heliports, 23 active domestic airlines; 554 licensed pilots; 913 licensed engineers and 1700 cabin personnel. Nigeria being Africa's most populous country is an important destination for over 22 foreign carriers. Nigeria currently has Bilateral Air Services Agreements with over 78 countries. From Nigeria, air travellers can fly directly to several of the world's business destinations such as London, Paris, Frankfurt, New York, Johannesburg, Atlanta, Amsterdam, Beijing, Dubai, Jeddah and many more. With the attainment of America's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA), Category One Certification, Nigerian registered carriers can now fly directly into the United States of America. (NCAA 2014)

There is a rapid growth in the flight operations in Nigeria both on the domestic and international arena and Lagos happens to witness most of these operations by virtue of the fact that it's the commercial hub of the country and the West Africa region. It also serves as a hub to many airlines operating international routes in West Africa. Nigeria has about 20 domestic airlines headquartered in Lagos rendering short and long hauls flight services within and outside country. The size of Nigeria's air market is second only to South Africa in sub-Saharan Africa. Nigeria has 22 airports, four of which are international airports. From 2005 to 2007, the aviation industry experienced some growth which the result was that by 2008 passenger movement increased by 21 per-

cent, cargo movement increased by 74.6 per cent and aircraft movement improved by 2.3 percent (Olalerin, 2009). In the first quarter of 2009, the global economic recession impacted on the aircraft movement, but later in 2009/2010, traffic figures reveal a 17.2 percent growth and aircraft traffic figures showed a 12.3 percent growth (Nnodim, 2010).

3.2 Deregulation

Deregulation is the act or process of eliminating regulations and restrictions from a given industry, or in simple terms: “the reduction or removal of centralised power in a particular industry usually enacted to create more competition within the industry “(investopedia.com 2013). The above definitions make it clear that the major purpose of airline deregulation was to promote competition among airline carriers, leading to price reduction. In order to introduce competition on the airline market, the USA began airline deregulation in the year 1978. It was, and still is, a part of a sweeping experiment to significantly decrease ticket prices and eliminate entry control for new airline hopefuls. That singular action ushered in a new dawn in the industry and a new business climate emerged. This business model thrived which spread to other industries in the USA and was later replicated in Europe and the rest of the world (Wensveen 2012, 20).

In the dawn of deregulation, airlines have employed new strategies and consumers are in for a new market experience. The air travel market now to a very great extent is competitive as multi airlines exist within the industry serving different routes, offering long-haul and short-haul trips at affordable and making less travel time possible. There is a boom in domestic and international arenas. However, globally, state supported airlines still exist exercising control over ticket fares and route entry nevertheless several countries have long deregulated their local airline markets. Obviously deregulation has given some financial benefits to the average air traveller. Fares have been reduced consistently since deregulation. It is worthy to mention that deregulation did not compromise safety of any sort within the industry; rather it intensified safety on the airplanes and at the airport terminals (Wensveen 2012, 24).

Nigeria took control of the management of its national air transport industry with the promulgation of the civil aviation Act of 1964. The Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) was created in 1969, linked to the Federal Ministry of Aviation through the Nigerian civil aviation Act of 1964, most of the powers for regulation were vested in the Minister of Aviation because the civil aviation regulatory arms were part of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Since 1964 many changes have taken place in terms of the structuring of air transport regulation involving privatisation and liberalisation of the sector. (tiaca.org 2014)

The privatisation and liberalization exercise in Nigeria which led to the emergence of private airlines and competition was the resultant effect of affordable fares. There are over 20 domestic privately owned airlines operating across the country with their head offices in Lagos. Some of these private airline operators trade shares on the Nigerian Stock Exchange to increase their capital base. Two of these are flying international routes in African countries and in the UK and the US- Arik Air and Aero contractors. These private airlines compete with the national carriers for businesses. The Nigerian airline market is a huge one both on the domestic and international arenas. Deregulation in the industry has unleashed a lot of potential and Lagos is benefitting from the enormous business activities it generates. The resultant effect of the air transport boom is turning Lagos into a megacity in economic terms with attendant foreign direct investment (FDI). The air transport is growing rapidly even on the domestic front as the middle class are beginning to appreciate the economic importance of air transport. (pwc.com 2014)

3.3 The airline market- Legacy and budget airlines

Privatisation and liberalisation of the air transport brought about the proliferation of airlines competition within the industry. With national carriers and full service airlines, also called legacy or major airlines, the sector witnessed the emergence of privately owned small or medium airlines called budget airlines or low cost or low fare airlines. To remain competitive in the huge tourism market, airlines have tried to carry out their operation or serve their market in a manner that will be profitable. To that effect, different business models and strategies have emerged to help drive the sector where airlines tried to carve out a niche to serve using the business strategy deemed suitable.

Airlines segment their markets, in terms of route to service, airport terminals to patronise and profiling customers to serve. (Duval 2007, 19)

Legacy is used to qualify those airlines that have existed prior to liberalisation, they are the pre-deregulation carriers and they are the oldest and largest airliners. They are sometimes called major, traditional, full service and scheduled carriers. All this predominately originated from the United States and later to other parts of the globe - America Airways and British Airways. They operate on a large network using hub-and-spoke model system and that earned the America airways and the British airways comprehensive network carriers (CNC). Some are interstate and regional carriers, and they have enjoyed the monopolistic market before the dawn of privatisation. (Duval 2007, 21)

Major airlines have evolved to meet the challenges of post deregulation market systems; therefore, business intelligence units are developing and adopting new business models and strategies. Competition has placed pressure on legacy airlines to reconsider their business strategies and start serving customers in a cost effective way. There is a bandwagon effect in the airline market today, cheap flights based on “no frills” business strategies (offering basically transportation and no extra services or treats), getting into strategic alliances (Star Alliance, Sky Team and One World Alliances) - customer self services, distribution system and routes mix. Generally, information technology has dominated the airline industry in recent times and there lies the future trend. Above all, traditional or legacy airlines leverage on wide route networks based on the hub-and-spoke concept. (Sita insight 2013)

The budget airline is a term used to describe those airlines that emerged following deregulation and they are post-deregulation airliners that specialised in short haul trips. They service niche markets on a point-to-point business concept. They are products of competition in the air transport sector, they have revolutionised the industry through aggressive business models and strategies that actually made legacy airlines to reconsider strategies to withstand competition. Budget airlines are also known as low cost, low fare and “no frills” carriers’. They primarily target price sensitive consumers both business and leisure travellers, operate point-to-point and use majorly regional airports and what is called secondary airports. This low cost carrier’s concept or busi-

ness model came at the wake of privatisation and the aim was to provide low ticket fares for the teeming travellers. It was a feat achieved firstly by Southwest Airline operating in the USA. (Wensveen 2012, 27)

Low fare carriers adopted a new business model in the airline industry, pushing down air ticket prices and promoted self-service in the area of securing air tickets online. This trend continued in the industry boosting tourism globally. Legacy airlines followed the bandwagon by changing the face of their service distribution system and also tried to adopt the “no frills” business model of low cost carriers (LCC) and pursue ancillary paid services to consumers. Budget airlines often offer a classless flight and are also involved in merging and acquisition deals. Examples of LCC are Ryan Air and Easy Jet. Today, travellers and tourists enjoy cheap flights with “no frills”. (Duval 2007, 19)

Nigeria’s aviation sector has seen enormous growth over the past few years. Today, Nigeria is well served by air transport, with sufficient competition to offer competitive fares in the domestic market. Some of the domestic airlines are, Dana air, Aero contractors, Arik air, Air Nigeria and Overland air. Cargo services are also offered by some of these domestic airlines across the country. Lagos has not yet assumed its place as an air transport hub for the region. Foreign airlines account for 92 per cent of the international passenger traffic into and out of the country, while Nigerian airlines account for the remaining eight per cent. (faannigeria.org 2014)

The latest report prepared by the United States-based Sabre Travel Network whose West African office is in Lagos, Nigeria, shows that 26 foreign airlines offer 2,316,288 aircraft seats to the Nigerian international travel market every year, while their Nigerian counterparts offer only 202,228 seats. Lack of adequate number of dominant national carriers on the part of Nigeria is responsible for the international airlines’ passenger traffic trend. (punchng.com 2014) Ranging from visiting family and friends to shipping high value products, 8.3 million passengers and 181,000 tonnes of freight travelled to, from and within Nigeria. More than 15,200 scheduled international flights depart Nigeria annually, destined for 32 airports in 30 countries. Domestically, more than 66,800 flights make over 7.5 million seats available to passengers, destined to 18 airports (Oxford Economics 2012)

3.4 Globalisation and future trends

Several changes have occurred in the air travel business and have had a significant impact on a global scale. Air transport is an important element of globalization. There is a very rapid growth in the travel and tourism industry and armed with the present development, the future could be predicted with minimal error. It is said that air transport is the most dynamic and exciting of all sectors. Global networks of relationships and dependencies acquire a growing potential to become international and global. Information technology has become an indispensable ingredient in the industry and that has made it a very high-tech sector. (Bari 2001)

Globalization could be seen from different perspectives depending on the context. In simple terms, it can be defined as the process of the entire world knit together and functioning as a single entity. This process is a combination of economic, socio-cultural, technological and political forces. The idea of globalization is, however, also often used to refer in a simpler sense to economic globalization involving integration of national economies into the international economy through trade, foreign direct investment, capital flows, migration, and the spread of technology. (oecd.org 2014) Due to the business activities in Lagos Nigeria and ever growing international presence occasioned by air transport, it is evident that Lagos Nigeria is indeed an integral part of the global village and a beneficiary of the process.

Air transport is an essential element of globalisation because it facilitates the movement of people around the globe as people can now travel long distances in the shortest possible time and in the process promoting capital investments and social interaction across the globe. "Globalisation is one of the major trends in the international tourism industry and involves a convergence in taste, preferences and products" (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall & Wanhill 2008, 427) The world is fast becoming a global village, all parts of the world can be accessed by air transport in a short travel time and for that reason there is a high travellers influx across the globe. The Sita insight (2013) puts it this way:

Increasing numbers of people will be travelling by air in the future. Despite the ongoing and immediate global economic pressures, the outlook for air travel is positive, with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) predicting that airlines will carry some 3.6 billion passengers in 2016 – an

increase of around 800 million on 2011 passenger numbers. The industry consensus is that passenger numbers will expand by an average of 5.3% per annum between 2012 and 2016. This period will also see nearly 500 million new passengers travelling on domestic routes and 331 million new passengers on international routes

The above quoted information pointed to the fact that there would be an increased number of air travellers in the future and air transportation will continue to occupy a very significant position in the tourism industry. Several technological advancements will continue to be the hallmark of the air transportation industry and improved service delivery process will be the resultant effect. It is obvious that air transportation is indeed a very dynamic sector and it continues to shape the future of the tourism industry. The demand for air travel is increasing every passing day and the industry is experiencing enormous volume of business. The airlines are offering personalised services and the delivery process is becoming more and more simplified, serving diverse customer needs. In fact, more routes are being served by airlines nowadays efficiently and effectively. (Cooper et al 2008, 424)

3.5 Passengers` self-Service based on ICT

With the introduction of information and communication technology in the air travel industry and it being popularised by the post-deregulation airline carriers, the customers have resorted to “self-service” in the aspect of booking tours. Airline carriers have user friendly electronic interfaces where travellers, with the aid of the internet, access flight schedules, book and buy flight tickets online. The use of mobile smart phones with social media is also trendy. This seems cheaper, easier and saves time as customers can do bookings in the comfort of their homes. Some airlines make it possible for customers to purchase tickets using their mobile gadgets, and calls could also be put across to airlines sales unit to buy travel tickets. Social media, like Facebook, is another avenue to handle travelling needs. It has been said that a greater number of travellers will rely solely on ICT to handle their travelling needs by 2016 and beyond. (Sita and Air Travel World 2013)

While it is trendy for customers in Lagos Nigeria to avail themselves of the “self-service” internet facilities, such as booking flight tickets with price discounts of booking

ahead, it is still not permissive as of today to carry out self-online checking in of passengers and luggage at the Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA Lagos). The use of mobile phones is indeed very trendy in Nigeria and internet services made available to mobile phone users by mobile phone operators and airports' flight services and information can be accessed via phones. The use of social media is another platform through which MMA passengers communicate with airline operators. It is believed that such services would be available in the near future to allow passengers in this category to have full benefits of ICT tools in this ever dynamic and high technology driven sector. (faannigeria.org 2014)

With the boom in the airline market, airports across the globe have faced pressure on facilities usage. Long haul and short haul trips are being undertaken by various travellers. Budget airlines are known to rely more on regional airports, also referred to as secondary airports. Low cost carriers adopt this strategy to enable a quick turnaround and managing operating cost. This cannot be possible in major airports which are always too congested and expensive. There is a rapid growth in the low fare carriers and regional airports are beginning to experience high air traffic almost similar to major city airports. Forecast had it that with the present state, the airports will face a serious challenge of facilities being stretched out and may not be able to handle the influx in years to come (Sita insight 2013)

3.6 Sustainable air transport

The demand for air travel is growing everyday in a global context and its operations have some measurable negative effect on the environment through the emission of greenhouse gases and local noise pollution. The aviation sector globally uses non-renewable energy resources, a contributor to environmental pollution which results in climate change but however, it provides a very important, valuable and unique contribution to the sustainable development of our global economy. Owing to the high air traffic in Lagos, environmental pollution such as emission of greenhouse gases, (CO₂, Carbon Monoxide) and aircraft noise have been identified as a challenge that needs to be addressed. Though, this is a global environmental issue that is receiving attention and concerted efforts are being taken at the world level to save our environment from further degradation. (ncaa.gov.ng 2014)

Responsively, aviation has dramatically improved its environmental performance. Since the 1960s, fuel efficiency has improved by some 70% per passenger km, today's aircraft are 75% quieter than those manufactured 50 years ago, and levels of carbon monoxide have come down by 50% and unburned hydrocarbons and smoke by around 90%. IATA encourages the use of voluntary initiatives to address environmental impacts from aviation and promotes the use of industry best practices where possible. (IATA 2014)

4 THE ROLE OF AIR TRANSPORT IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Air transport is of great interest to tourism development and tourists flow because it offers less travel time and a significant routine platform in the tourism global interaction. The tourism industry is the collection of all the services related to the act of visiting other places for pleasure. These may include services such as air transportation, accommodation, food provision in restaurants and hotels. The role the air transportation plays in transportation of people, cargo and the generation of employment opportunities in the world economy, is unquestionable. The existence of air transportation has created airports which have become the key nodes in the production and commercial system of local economic advancement. (travelandtourismindustry.weebly.com 2014)

Owing to the several job openings existing in these airports, a new urban form is emerging. Generally, air transportation has contributed enormously to countries' economic growth, as well as generating opportunities for employment, business commerce and tourism industries. Besides, the connections created between cities and markets represent a significant infrastructure asset that creates benefits through enabling foreign direct investment, business clusters, specialization and other spill-over which impacts countries' economic development tremendously. In fact, the role air transportation plays in the tourism development of any country can never be overemphasized. The aviation sector is determined to boost service delivery at all levels and a new aircraft like Boeing 747-400 series has been introduced into global fleet operations and air travel range has also been extended to 15,000km for non-stop flights. (Cooper et al 2008, 419).

With the importance of air transportation mentioned above, it is obvious that since tourism practically entails the movement and travelling from one country to another or from one region to another, tourism heavily relies on air transport for survival and is unarguably the fastest means for tourists to arrive at their final destinations. It is also obvious that air transport survival depends on tourism, as tourism remains the backbone of the air transportation industry. The tourism industry has been known to be one of the fastest developing industries over the years. The existence of air transport has

been identified as the major reason for the rapid growth in tourism. Presently, the existences of various types of airlines have increased the number of tourists and the prosperous tourism industries in the global economy. These are some of the factors that have contributed to the air transportation industry growth today. (Joslin 2008)

4.1 The relationship between air transport and tourism in Lagos, Nigeria

The air transportation and tourism complement each other, which means each of the sectors depends on the other for survival and no one exists or operates in isolation. Lagos witnesses a high influx of people and high airline traffic both domestic and international flights. The business travellers or tourists drive the tourism sector, giving rise to high demand for accommodation services. And higher percentage of these business tourists comes by air orchestrating beehive of activities in Lagos. Air travel and tourism are indeed inter-related, the demand for air transport is derived from each providing complementary economic benefits. (Abiodun 2002)

The travel and tourism environment in Nigeria has been experiencing expansion in recent years. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the industry's contribution to the national gross domestic product has improved persistently over the past few years owing to the joint efforts by the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation to widen its potential in the country. With the incessant fluctuation and uncertainty in the oil prices occasioned by the recent world economic meltdown, the travel and tourism is now seen by government as one of the priority areas in improving the economy. It has taken some measures to transform the industry into a money spinner and it is also considered a key instrument to launch Nigeria into the community of top economies of the world by the year 2020. (euromonitor.com 2014)

Increasing passenger traffic at Lagos Nigeria's airports means several airlines are competing for market share and also positioning themselves on a profitable business venture. A lot of carriers have been increasing flight frequencies to both long- and short-haul destinations, while others are adding to their fleet size to accommodate the high demand for air travel to Lagos and other parts of Nigeria. In addition, promotional programmes such as miles plus cash reward options are being given to help build loyalty among existing clients and also attract new ones. Local and regional airlines are

also offering seamless connectivity via code share agreements with major international carriers. All these developments should help to further boost future growth of air transport and tourism in the country. (euromonitor.com 2014)

4.2 Benefits to Nigerian tourism

Air transport lies at the heart of global business and tourism. Through its speed, convenience and affordability, air transport has widened the possibilities of world travel for both tourists and business travellers, allowing an ever greater number of people to experience diversity of geography, climate, culture and markets. Tourism, both for business and leisure purposes, makes a huge contribution to the Nigerian economy.

Oxford Economics estimates that in 2010 the travel and tourism industry directly employed 814,000 people and supported indirectly through its supply chain a further 529,000 jobs. The travel and tourism industry directly contributed NGN 505 billion to the Nigerian economy (GDP), NGN334 billion indirectly through the output it supports down its supply chain and a further NGN 203 billion through the induced effects of consumer spending. (oxfordeconomics.com 2012)

When only considering the contribution connected to the spending of foreign visitors arriving by air on Nigerian produced goods and services, the sector contributes NGN 40 billion directly to the Nigerian economy, NGN 24 billion indirectly and a further NGN 15 billion through induced effects. In fact, Lagos remains the first point of call for the majority of the arrivals, tourists and business travellers alike and the enormous economic activities that follow the influx of passengers in and out of the Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA Lagos) makes Lagos the largest commercial hub in Africa. The beehive of economic activities in the city of Lagos occasioned by the air transport is responsible for the high GDP growth and continuous tourism expansion. (Whospitalitygroup.com 2014)

Nigeria's accommodation sector is the most competitive area within the nation's travel and tourism sector. This area of tourism offers enormous investment opportunities for investors and has recently witnessed an increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) as a result of the development of hospitality infrastructure. In the quest for high-growth markets, a lot of international hotel chains such as Hilton, Sheraton, Best Western and

Marriot have moved swiftly to establish themselves in Lagos majorly and spread to other parts of the country. The nation's flourishing economy, as well as actions by the government to nurture a competitive travel and tourism sector, has been attracting Western accommodation giants to establish operations in the country. The growth in the hospitality industry is as a result of the growth in the air transportation sector and vice versa. Consistent expansion of the business environment in Lagos, Nigeria will help to generate economic prosperity and is expected to further increase hospitality sector growth as well as boost occupancy rates in the future (thenigerianhotelindustry.com 2014)

In recent years, the Lagos hotel market has grown rapidly, with the increase of international and regional branded hotel properties. Growth had been slow moving from the 1990s when Sheraton opened. However, the period beginning from the late 1990s into 2000s witnessed new properties entering into the market and today several hotel chains operate in Lagos. Indeed, it can be asserted that a growth in supply is spurred by hotel demand which, in turn, is directly linked to economic conditions – especially in the Lagos context where demand is primarily business-generated. As the economy is growing, hence there is a corresponding increase in business travellers requiring hotel accommodation, thus an increased supply of hotels serving this demand. (w-hospitalitygroup.com 2014)

Lagos is still in an emerging phase of development, of course, and it will take a little while before it matures and growth eventually begins to climax. As it is of a growing market, Lagos currently does not have enough segmentation amongst various classes of accommodation services. This is primarily because the pattern of supply growth in Lagos has followed the direction of demand, hence the majority of branded and other hotels in Lagos today are high-priced business hotels and there are very little mid-market properties. (TheNigerianHotelIndustry.com 2013)

4.3 Demand and supply of accommodation service in Lagos

There are several accommodation services in Lagos in form of hotels, apartments and few mid –market types like hostels. These include the Eko Hotel & Suites, Moorhouse M Gallery (formerly Sofitel), the Protea Victoria Island and the Sheraton Ikeja. The

market has continued to evolve, strengthened by increasing demand and Lagos has seen the introduction of more brands such as Southern Sun, Golden Tulip, Four Points by Sheraton, Radisson Blu, Best Western and the recently-opened InterContinental. There have also been numerous openings of smaller, indigenous independent hotels, some of which operate at acceptable standards but vary widely in the standard and quality offered. In fact, a more inclusive estimate of the relevant hotel rooms in Lagos is in the region of 9,000 rooms. In the last 10 years, the total number of branded and major unbranded hotel rooms has increased from 1,073 in 2003, to an estimated 3,299 by the end of 2013, representing an over 200 per cent growth. The accommodation sector continues to attract the attention of investors both locally and internationally. (howwemadeitinafrica.com 2014)

Remarkably, however, this recent growth in supply is still not adequate compared to the demand for international standard rooms in Lagos. This is clearly evident in the strength of average room rates achieved by the hotels operating here. A 2013 hotel survey published by Hogg Robinson Group cited average room rates achieved in Lagos as being “some of the highest in the world”, despite new additions to supply (hrgworldwide.com 2013). In its ranking of the top 55 cities by hotel rate, Lagos was second only to Moscow. These high rates are a direct result of an inadequate number of rooms serving a relatively price-insensitive, business-driven market. This demand largely comprises major national and international companies who prefer to use recognized branded hotels that will offer an expected quality of service, security and general insulation from the perceived harshness of Lagos. They are more capable of paying these rates than tourist groups, for instance, who tend to be more price-sensitive hotel guests. Of course, there are other factors that contribute to the high rates – the high cost of energy, a heavy reliance on imported supplies and so on – but none as significant as the inadequate supply and resulting lack of competition. (Whospitalitygroup.com 2014)

This will mean more international standard properties at different price points to cater to a more diversified hotel demand market. A strong advantage of some of the bigger hotel chains is the variety of brands in their portfolio to serve different demand categories. For instance, Hilton has identified Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn as the core brands in their Africa development strategy, while Carlson Rezidor is looking to grow

its Radisson Blu and Park Inn by Radisson brands in the region. International hotel chains are established in Lagos to cater for the teeming accommodation seekers the majority of whom are business travellers and tourists arriving in Lagos. With the numbers of domestic and international air carriers flying in and out MMA 1 and MMA 2, Lagos, and tourism will continue to generate great economic benefits in the region. These hotel chains are looking to establish and grow their brands at both the up- and mid-market tiers and the current lack of branded mid-market hotels certainly highlight an opportunity to be tapped into by interested investors. (W-hospitalitygroup.com 2014)

5 THE IMPACT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN A REGION

Air transportation is the world's most important industry ACI states. It lies at the heart of the global business and tourism. Through its speed, affordability and convenience, air transport has expanded the possibilities of world travel for tourists and business travellers, as well given a chance to a greater number of people to experience diversity of geography, climate, culture and markets. It's also a very valuable means of transport globally; it would be difficult for people without the access to air travel which is the most convenient and fastest way to move around the world. Air transport will always be an eye saw which everyone pays attention to because it is very important in a region that probably uses tourism as their source of income and living in a specific destination (aci.aero 2014).

5.1 Benefits of air transport for a region

There are lot of benefits that can be generated by air transport. Air transport development and its technical and service achievements make it one of the greatest contributors to the advancement of modern society (Icao.int 2014). Air transport drives the economic and social progress in a region; it also connects people, countries and cultures likewise providing access to global markets. It creates a connection between developed and developing nations, as well as generates trade and tourism in a region for greater development (aci.aero 2014).

Air transport provides the only worldwide transportation system which makes it important for global business and tourism in a specific country or region. In 2013, it globally transported about 3.1 billion passengers, over 51.6 million tonnes of freight annually and 35% of interregional exports of goods by value, also about 52% of the international tourists travel by air. According to a recent survey conducted with over 2,200 business people, 52% said that restrictions on the numbers of flights they take would hurt their trade or business (Nigerian Aviation.aero 2014). Among the several reasons why people and businesses prefer air transport, people depend on it for holidays and

visiting friends and family (VFR), while businesses use air transport for meeting clients and for the fast and dependable delivery of mail and goods usually over long distances. Lagos is well connected by air transport worldwide. (aci.aero 2014)

5.2 The economic impact of air transport in Lagos, Nigeria

Air transport generates a lot of economic impact to, from and within Lagos, Nigeria. It creates different types of economic benefit in which studies such as this focus on the economic footprint of the industry, measured by its contribution to GDP, jobs and tax revenues generated by the sector and its supply chain. In other words, the economic value created by the industry is more than that. The main benefits are created for the customer, the passenger or the shipper using the air transport service. Air transport also contributes to public finances whereby they pay over 8.5 billion Naira in tax including income tax receipts from employees, social security contributions and corporation tax levied on profits, with a further 17.0 billion Naira of revenue coming from VAT on domestic and international flights originating in Nigeria (Nigerian Aviation.aero 2014).

Apart from the employment scheme going round globally where air transport industry supports 56.6 million jobs, creates 8.4 million jobs worldwide, airlines, airports and air navigation service providers employ 7.6 million people, over 9.3 million indirect jobs are created through purchase of goods and services from companies in the air transport supply chain. Nigeria has heavily benefited from the employment programme based on its huge population, over 159,000 people have been employed in Nigeria through the aviation sector, 51,000 jobs were supported via the spending by the aviation sector and its supply chain, over 44,000 jobs were directly supported and 64,000 were indirectly supported via the aviation sector and its supply chain. The air transport is generating employment and its multiplier effect is spread across every sector in the region of Lagos. (Nigeria Aviation.aero 2014)

There is an enormous investment and productivity in Lagos Nigeria stimulating speedy economic growth. Beside these transformative effects on the wider economy, air transport services – the airlines, airports and ancillary services, such as air traffic control – constitute a capital intensive sector that invests heavily in airplane systems and

other advanced technology. The sector is composed of two different types of activity, firstly, airlines transporting people and freight and secondly the ground-based infrastructure that consists of the airport facilities, the services offered for passenger at the airports, which includes baggage handling, ticketing and retail and catering services, together with essential services provided off-site, such as air navigation and air regulation. (Joslin 2008)

The aviation sector promotes GDP and the employment in Lagos Nigeria through four different channels. These channels are firstly direct – the output and employment of the firms in the air travel sector, secondly indirect – the output and employment promoted through the air travel sector's Nigerian based supply chain, thirdly induced – employment and output supported by the spending of those directly or indirectly employed in the air transport sector and fourthly the catalytic channel which consists of the spill over gains associated with the air travel sector. Some of these include the activity provided by the spending of foreign visitors coming to Lagos Nigeria by air, and the level of commerce directly supported by the transportation of merchandise. Air transport facilitates the movement of labour and cargoes which increases productivity and grows the GDP of Lagos Nigeria. (atag.org 2014)

5.3 The negative impact of air transport

The negative impact of air transport can be looked into through the aspect of air pollution to a region, especially emissions of the airplane when taking off from the airport to a particular destination which actually make airports some of the biggest sources of these pollutants and major public health hazards. Based on the wonderful feature of hurling hundreds of thousands of people, baggage, and aluminium thousands of miles at high speed by consuming a large amount of fossils fuels, airplanes dump huge amounts of toxic pollution over different homes and into the atmosphere every day which is quite dangerous to human's health. A fully laden A380, according to its engine maker Rolls Royce, uses as much energy as 3,500 family cars for each passenger. Long haul flights generate on average twice as much emission per mile travelled per passenger than cars and short haul flight produce three times as much (fly-ingclean.com 2014).

The consumption of airplane fuel produces carbon emissions as by product, in addition to carbon-dioxide, sulphates, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter, all of which extend the impact of aviation on global warming. Air transport sends out all these pollutants directly into the atmosphere, compounding the warming impact of the pollutants. This pollution moves miles downwind, adding to lot of health diseases like asthma, heart and lung disease couple with huge number of cancers. The combined negative effect of all these pollutant multiplies the global warming impact of aviation, making aviation currently responsible for an estimated 5-10% of global climate pollution (flyingclean.com 2014).

Another example of negative impact of air transport can be seen as noise pollution. The airplanes generate a lot of noise which always cause distraction as well as it can cause heart attack to humans. These noises are caused by two specific parts from an aircraft which are the airframe and the engine. The airframe noise happens when air passes over the body and the wings of the airplanes, which definitely causes friction and turbulence and make a noise. Engine noise is said to be created by the sound from the moving parts of the engine, it also makes noise by the air being discharged at high speed once it has passed through the engine. The noise mostly comes from the exhaust or jet behind the engine as it dilutes with the air around it (gatwickairport.com 2014).

Introduction of crime is also one of the negative impacts of the region. Some organized crime groups use a lot of different methods to destroy the aviation industry. They use the mode of importing illegal goods in small but frequent amounts, also using air cargo to import or export large quantities of illegal drugs and other goods in and out of different region or countries. The group of criminals destroys entry points depending on level of airport security, vetting and screening. They usually conceal illegal goods in regular personal or commercial movement. The criminals in some ways control the activity from outside the sector, or by group member to penetrate the sector where they can destroy vulnerabilities, corrupt officials, bypass security and use their criminal innate at the aviation environment. The criminal groups may as well have security cleared groups working in air cargo and freight organizations. There are some groups also called "terrorists". They usually attack airlines with fighting weapons like ammunition

and bombs. These create tremendous anxiety and fear to people in the world using air transport as their means of transportation. (crimecommission.gov.au 2014).

5.4 The social impact of air transport in a region

The social impact of air transport could be seen as the social aid that the region benefits from through the existence of an air transport. Air transport has widened people's cultural and leisure experiences through large affordable and choice access to different destinations across the world. It has improved the living standards and poverty has been alleviated through tourism, it also usually functions as the only means of transportation to remote areas promoting inclusion. Several lives have been saved through air transport being the fastest means of transportation, even though it's not 100% reliable and secure, because it makes the delivery of emergency and humanitarian aid relief easy, as well as facilitates swift delivery of medical supplies and organs for transplantation on special and emergency cases (Nigerian Aviation.aero 2014).

The existence of air transport in regions, usually attract people to the region. When people visit the region, they bring new ideas and cultures to that region that might have a social contribution to people living in that region as they learn new things. Air transport permits people to have social interaction, promoting the act of visiting families and friends (VFR) and adventures in different countries in the world. It is evident in the city of Lagos that there is interplay of other foreign culture with the local culture resulting in a robust cultural experience. Air transportation facilitates movement and stimulates people's urge for travelling so as to build business relationships, relax on tropical beaches, as well as visit family and friends. Based on the global economic growth, aviation has been the medium that brings people together from every corner of the world (ATAG 2014). Air transport has contributed socially a lot in the lives of people living in Lagos, Nigeria and all over the world. (privatefly.com 2014)

6 RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter will discuss the research methods used in writing this thesis report, the planning process of the research and the target group. More so, the research method applied and the information gathering process will be discussed together with the presentation and the analysis of the interview, as well as considering the validity and reliability in course of executing this research project.

The research method describes the procedure for gathering data information for the research that is being undertaken. There are diverse ways to collect information when carrying out a research. This research work has been designed to source information from the related case study area. The writer has adopted both the primary and secondary data information to accomplish the entire research project. The primary data comprise of semi structured interviews and text analysis. The entire interviews were carried out over the mobile phone and Skype with the chosen target group in Lagos Nigeria at an agreed time and date. The interviewees were very cooperative and responded to questions with open minds. The secondary data are sourced from journals, articles, published material from related authorities, the internet and the airport websites. The writer of the thesis did all he could to review relevant literature related to the contents in executing this research project.

The information required for the research work was mainly gathered from the published material from the relevant authorities and semi-structured interviews. Some of the data information presented in those materials was also documented for different goals which had different aims. The primary information sources are interviewees' information, while the secondary sources included data from the Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN)- yearly passenger traffic record, Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Murtala Muhammed Airport webpage, (MMA Lagos), Airports Council International Releases 2013 world Traffic Report (ACI). Information in the national and international daily newspapers also serve as secondary data information for this research work.

6.1 Qualitative research method

The qualitative research is concerned with the subjective assessment of opinions, attitudes and behaviours. Research in such situations is a function of researcher's insights and impressions. There are techniques and methods approved for data collections in qualitative research and it includes interviews, observation, focus groups, Delphi techniques, case studies, action research and documentary methods. The main purpose of adopting the qualitative technique for data collection and analysis is to comprehend the thoughts of the respondents which are based on their ideas and experiences. The data information needed for this report was gathered from various qualitative methods that include the semi-structured interview, observation and text analysis. (newagepublishers.com 2014)

The main research approach for executing this research project is the qualitative research method; in this technique the qualitative information collected is preauthorized in comparison to quantitative information. This method gathers a wide range of detailed information in comparison to the quantitative method. It gives room more for flexibility than other methods and provides more freedom. In this method, the process of data collection, analysis and writing occurred at the same time. For several years, qualitative techniques were considered problematic within social sciences, but in the recent decades the qualitative method has become widely appreciated and is no more seen as an exception and in need of special justification. In leisure studies, qualitative studies are now at least as common in the literature as quantitative studies, and in tourism studies they are common place. (Veal 2006,193, 195)

6. 2 Textual and data analysis

“Documents are available in everyday life which comprise of items of written, electronic or printed material that consist of data information of some sort” (Taylor, Sinha, & Goshen 2006, 114).Documents are a rich source of information that is practicable not only for personal and business matter but also for different kinds of research, and especially in social science research. They are simply written text that can be discovered in electronic or printed form. While applying the document as the source, it must be carefully analyzed and considered that it might have been produced for a different

purpose. Nevertheless, documents are vital sources and offer key information for the researcher to achieve aim of study (Taylor et al. 2006, 114-116.)

6.3 Interview

The semi-structured interview technique is of paramount importance in the field of tourism research. A semi-structured interview is the qualitative research approach that was adopted for the empirical research in this thesis. Some data information, like history, experiences and opinions, cannot be sourced using the structured interview method. The semi-structured interview is a qualitative technique of inquiry that combines a pre-determined set of open questions, i.e. questions that could stimulate discussion, with the opportunity of the interviewer to explore particular themes or responses further. This type of interview does not restrain interviewees to a set of pre-determined answers (unlike the structured questionnaire). It as well permits the interviewee to respond by discussing and raising matters that you may not have considered (newagepublishers.com 2014)

When it comes to a semi-structured interview, it is usually executed with few topics and followed with the list of the topics to be discussed rather than a number of questions. In the semi-structured interview technique, different themes are applied to conduct the interview. The research interviews were conducted by using an audio recorder owing to the accuracy of a recorder. The interviews were conducted as telephone conversations which were recorded and that is preferable because the bits of information you might miss out on the interview, could be traced back easily. (Veal 2006, 198) .

6. 4 Interview analyses

In course of drawing up the interview questions which were presented in themes, the researcher was motivated to seek items of information that would lead to achieving the aims and objective of the research project. Therefore, the data was collected from the active players within the research area and those interviewed were the regular flyer (MMA-Lagos), the staff of MMA Lagos and a tourism expert (hospitality entrepreneur). It was ensured that relevant quality data information was gathered from these inter-

viewees whose opinions and views constituted the findings of this research work of which recommendations and conclusions were based. Although it would appear unfair to make general conclusion from the views and opinions of a few individuals interviewed, it is crucial to note that for a research project of this nature, professional and expert opinions form the basis for reaching a valid conclusion.

6.4.1 Presenting the interview with the MMA-Lagos user

The interviewee is a regular flyer and user of Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos. He sincerely offered to share his experience as a flyer and user in an interview. Theme 1 of the interview was about air transportation in the Lagos region, benefits and alternative modes of transport. This was intended to ascertain the level of air travel demand growth and benefits in relation to other transport modes in Lagos region. In response, the MMA user explained thus:

“I can say air transport is the fastest and safest means of travel and it is growing rapidly both on the domestic and international fronts compared to previous years in Lagos region. It helps to facilitate movement especially on catching business appointments both home and abroad”

The statement shows how much value is placed on air travel as a major economic driver and it is growing rapidly which means demand for air travel is actually increasing in the region.

Theme 2 dwelt on the location of the Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos, other airports in Nigeria and preference. Here it was intended to find out the view of the users regarding MMA Lagos vis-à-vis other airports of equal status in the region and why it is preferred. The interviewee responded this way:

“(Laughed) I travel through MMA Lagos on the average of seven to ten times in a month both local and international trips. I prefer MMA to other airports in the region because my business and associates are easily accessible in Lagos and also easy flight connections local and international.

It can be said that the location of the MMA in Lagos has contributed to making Lagos a commercial hub as it is highly preferred to others of equal status within the region as

explained by the interviewee. The passenger and airplane movement are increasing every year with many benefits to the people.

Theme 3 was about the impact of the passenger traffic at the MMA Lagos and the future of air travel in Lagos. This was designed to ascertain the passenger throughput at the airport, the benefits that follow and what the future holds for the region. The user stated:

“The amount of passengers is quite huge and it is increasing every passing day at the airport. Lagos is one of the mega cities in the world and the economic power house of the country Nigeria and businessmen and tourists use the airport.”

The statement confirmed high passenger density at the airport, inbound and outbound and brings about enormous economic activities with its attendant benefits to the region.

6.4.2 Presenting the interview with the MMA Lagos staff

The interviewee is one of the members of staff of the MMA Lagos with years of experience in the air transport industry and he shared his views in an telephone interview with him. Theme 1 was about the situation of MMA Lagos, the economic impact and challenges in the region. The purpose of this theme was to establish how the location of MMA has benefitted the people in the region and challenges involved. The interviewee expressed it this way:

“The location of MMA here in Lagos has been of great economic benefit to me as a person and the generality of Lagosians. I have been working here in operations department for five years and I am not alone, several others are also beneficiaries. It contributes greatly to the region’s economy as a critical transport infrastructure asset”

The above confirmed air transport to be one of the major economic drivers in the region touching lives in diverse positive ways. “Pollution and congestion are our main challenges” the MMA staff added.

Theme 2 discussed the present situation of air travel in Lagos-Nigeria vis-à-vis airlines and connectivity. The motive was to understand the prevailing situation of flight operations in the region from the economic standpoint. The MMA staff said:

“Lagos is known to be the commercial hub of Nigeria and a mega city with huge economic activities. The MMA Lagos by virtue of its location experiences very high airlines and passengers’ activities on 24hours basis. It has excellent flight connections locally and internationally. Last year being 2013 MMA Lagos saw about 7 million passengers”

Theme 3 examined the future market of air travel in Lagos Nigeria, the benefits, MMA and other airports in Nigeria. It was intended to seek the interviewee’s opinion and views about the future of air travel business in Lagos and the benefits comparing MMA and its equals. The interviewee put it this way:

“In my own opinion the future of air travel in Lagos is very bright and prospect is very high. Looking at what it was a decade ago there has been constant increase in demand and it is my belief that it will be more in the future. MMA Lagos remains the busiest in the country and one of the busiest in Africa. I can say that enormous economic benefits will accrue to the people even in the future”

From the response it can be said that the future holds great economic prospect for air transport in the region and implies that the MMA Lagos will continue to play host to several major international carriers as well as domestic operators, thereby bringing benefits to the people.

6.4.3 Presenting the interview with a tourism expert

The third interviewee is a Lagos based business owner and he owns one of the 3 stars hotels in Ikeja Lagos, the immediate host community of the MMA. He has been in the accommodation business for eleven years. Theme 1 discussed doing business in Lagos, the impact of MMA and the interviewee’s view on motivations and prospects in the tourism sector. The theme was drawn to find out what business opportunities exist in Lagos and the role of air transport in the overall tourism business. The interviewee’s replied thus:

“What actually motivated me to start up a business in Lagos, which is the accommodation business, was because Lagos has had the potentials of a mega city and also a commercial hub which offers a huge business opportunity for the accommodation services so I thought it wise to tap into it. The activities at the MMA have impacted my business positively.”

Theme 2 considered the current and future state of tourism in Lagos, Nigeria, analyzing the economic contributions and drawbacks. It was intended to discuss the present and future economic benefits of tourism and challenges in Lagos. The tourism expert responded:

“Presently the tourism sector is not thriving as it should be looking at from the national standpoint. Research revealed that tourism contributes a very minimal percentage to the country’s GDP which is far too low considering the potentials available. To correct the imbalance, the federal government has come out with a tourism master plan and reforms are ongoing”

According to the tourism expert, the tourism industry in general has not fully taken advantage of the resources at its disposal to drive the sector towards contributing substantially to the GDP. The tourism expert preceded further to highlight the growth in the hospitality occasioned by air travel and its supply chains.

“At the moment I will say that the accommodation sector is growing when compared to others within the tourism industry. As long as the demand for air travel continues to grow in Lagos, the accommodation sector will also grow alongside.”

6.5. Discussion of findings

The research project was intended to establish the economic impact of air transport in Lagos with Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos (MMA) as a case study. In the process of the research work, interviews were conducted with the target group, sampling views and opinions on the subject which were analysed and presented as findings below.

The research confirmed that air transport remains the fastest and safest means of commercial travel available to mankind. It also revealed that the demand for air travel is on the constant increase in the region and travellers and tourists show high preference for air transport in relation to other alternative modes. Some of the many reasons

that people and businesses prefer to use air transport are that, people depend on it for holidays and visiting friends and family (VFR), while businesses use air transport for meeting clients and for the fast and reliable delivery of mail and goods often over great distances. The study revealed Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos, had the largest passenger traffic in the region- 6.7 million in 2013 (Thisdaylive.com 2014). It is the fifth busiest airport in Africa and one of the busiest in the world as stated by ACI Releases 2013 world airport traffic report (ACI 2013) .The passenger traffic at the Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos is a testimony that the demand surge or congestion is experienced both at the domestic and international travel environments. Several international carriers, domestic airlines and their supply chains are springing up at the MMA Lagos to cater for the demand growth.

The air travel is bringing several tourists and business travellers to the region which has contributed to the industrialisation of Lagos and earned it a mega city status as revealed by the study. The growth in air transport demand and the services that MMA Lagos provides have a beneficial multiplier effect within local economies where the airport operates, as well as across industries and the regional economy. The passenger density at the MMA Lagos comprises of inbound and outbound, which generate a huge economic activity in Lagos. No doubt that air travel and its supply chains contribute immensely to the revenue base and act one of the main economic drivers in the region of Lagos.

It was also discovered that air travel and its supply chains are one of the major employers of labour in the region, in other words, it generates or creates jobs for the people of the region. It then implies that it impacts the economy of Lagos through employment creation, which has a multiplier effect across the regional economy. The international carriers have increased their operations in Lagos as well as domestic airlines which mean more economic benefits to the people The impact cuts across those that are engaged at the airport, the airlines, travel agencies, tour operators, airport car services, accommodation and down to the man running a kiosk in Lagos, this briefly describes the multiplier effects, the finding revealed.

Another finding was that Lagos is both a commercial hub and mega city with heavy presence of international and domestic enterprises. The tourism sector is generally still

at the developing stage which has suffered serious neglect over the years according to the tourist expert. Lagos has enormous tourism potentials to transform itself into a world tourism destination, the tourist expert added. However, the hospitality sector, which is the accommodation business, has received a boost in recent times resulting in several international hotel chains like Best Western, Radisson Blu, Hilton , InterContinental and ambitious domestic accommodation service providers serving Lagos market. The interview revealed that the air travel and in fact the location of MMA Lagos has contributed to growth in the hospitality sector.

It was also found that an increase in air travel demand has a slight corresponding increase in the demand of accommodation services. Those selling air travel services more often than not sell accommodation services alongside, for example travel agencies, airlines and tour operators. The findings showed that the majority of persons seeking accommodation services are business travellers, what we call business tourists, diplomats and religious tourists, hence, it can be said that air travel is benefitting the Lagos region in diverse ways.

Also revealed by the finding was that enormous employment and other economic opportunities exist in the Lagos region, occasioned by air travel and its supply chains. There is an exodus of people from far and wide towards the region which is resulting in population surge or congestion. There is also the issue of pollution resulting from air transportation activities in the region of Lagos as mentioned in the interview. However, the findings generally points to the fact that air transport and its supply chain have huge economic impact on the region.

6.5.1 Validity and reliability

“Validity is the extent to which the data collected truly reflect the phenomenon being studied” (Veal 2006, 135). It is the most challenging aspect of the research where the researcher experiences difficulties during the assessment of the behaviour and attitude of the respondent. The researcher is not often certain about the precise meaning of the response given in the interviews, surveys and personal reported accounts of behaviour. When measuring the accuracy level of the secondary data with the primary data the secondary sources have a pre-established level of validity, and the research-

er does not have to be sceptical while applying such information. However, as the research may have been done for some other purpose, the information used by the researcher may not be absolutely valid. (Veal 2006, 117,153).

“Reliability measures the extent to which the research findings would be consistent if the research were to be repeated at a future date or with a different sample of subjects” (Veal 2006, 41.).The research method adopted in this research work is the semi-structured interview and secondary data analysis. It is often said that an inexperienced interviewee reduces the quality of an interview result. (Smith 2010) Hence, to acquire high quality information, the interviews have been carried out with experienced persons only. To sum up, three interviews were conducted and the interviewees were all experienced. The secondary data sources were from published materials from the related authorities, the Internet and airport websites; hence, all the information is considered valid. Besides, the possibility of the internet sources not being fully trusted was carefully considered and the data used were not just entirely taken from the mere internet sources, but also from the highly reputable webpages such as ICAO, IATA, ACI and Oxford economics journal.

Despite the fact that all the materials collected were primarily documented for the research purpose they were somehow related to the main aim of the thesis. However, the reliability of the thesis may not be entirely high due to the interview method which only presents the personal opinions of the interviewees and their generalization is very difficult. More so, the information sources for putting together this thesis were not primarily documented to relate to this particular hypothesis, hence it is possible that the outcome may be slightly different from if a research for any other purpose was carried out.

6.6 Recommendations

In the course of analyzing the data information collected from the research work, it was discovered that besides the positive economic impact air transport has on the region of Lagos, there exist some challenges which if addressed would deepen the benefits accruable to the region. Therefore, the researcher is motivated to make informed suggestions based on the findings.

The rising congestion at the MMA Lagos needs to be addressed for more economic gains. It is a known fact that the demand for air transport and airport services is on the increase and this increase is putting the airport facilities under pressure. It is also envisaged that the trend will continue in the future, therefore proactive measure should be taken to invest in the future by deliberately expanding and improving on all airport facilities. The MMA has two terminals and two runways, but with the present level of demand and for the future demand it can be said they are inadequate to serve the teeming passengers and airlines, so expansion is necessary.

The commercial capital, Lagos is experiencing congestion owing to the population surge occasioned by economic opportunities made available by air transport, and its supply chain and other industries. Also, functional social amenities availability in the satellite towns will encourage people to move in and consequently decongesting Lagos metropolis. In the area of pollution arising from air transport, the authority should seek multi-agency approach like liaising with ACI, ICAO, and IATA in tackling the menace. Pollution has to be reduced to the barest minimum to make the environment sustainable which will produce the desired economic benefits in the region.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This research process has been very rewarding considering the area of the study, air transport, which is one of the most dynamic industries of today. The theoretical framework of the study considers the air transport sector in general and various developments that have taken place being a high technology industry. Air transport is known to facilitate the globalisation process by bringing people, societies and businesses together and it is a major economic driver playing a pivot role in the business world and the tourism industry especially. Therefore, it has a very great economic impact everywhere it operates.

This research work primarily seeks to examine the economic impact of air transport in the region of Lagos through the application of qualitative research techniques. It is in fact necessary to mention here that air transport and its supply chain is transforming the economy of Lagos and its benefits trickle down. Businesses and tourism are thriving due to the air transport multiplier effect which is contributing to the revenue base of the region. The study has also shown what a critical asset Lagos' air transport network is, to business and the wider economy. Connectivity between cities and markets promotes productivity and provides a key infrastructure on which modern globalized businesses depend. And Lagos is a commercial hub and one of the major players in global economy because of the air transport facilities.

The air transport and its supply chain is acting as an economic catalyst through job creation and shaping the tourism industry in general. The hospitality sector thriving in Lagos is attracting several foreign direct investments (FDI) because of the air transport availability. Today, several international hotel chains are operating in Lagos and a new tourism trend has emerged, religious tourism just at the growing stage, and all is made possible due to air transport. In the light of the above, it can be said that air transport-domestic and international-has great economic impact on the region of Lagos, touching lives in diverse ways. Besides, implementation of the recommendations made in this research project will bring more economic prosperity to the region now and in the future.

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APPENDIX 1

Research: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AIR TRANSPORT IN LAGOS, NIGERIA

Case study: Murtala Muhammed International Airport-Lagos (MMA)

Interview themes for MMA Lagos User

Interview Type: Semi-structured interview

- ❖ **Theme one:** Air transportation, benefits and alternative modes
- ❖ **Theme two:** Murtala Muhammed Airport Lagos, other airports in Nigeria and preference
- ❖ **Theme Three:** Passenger traffic at the MMA Lagos impact and the future of air travel in Lagos?

Interview themes for MMA Lagos staff

- ❖ **Theme one:** The location of MMA Lagos, economic impact and challenges in the Lagos region
- ❖ **Theme two:** The present situation of air travel in Lagos-Nigeria vis-à-vis airlines and connectivity
- ❖ **Theme three:** The future market of air travel in Lagos Nigeria, benefits, MMA and others

Interview themes for a tourism expert (Business owner hospitality sector)

- Theme one:** Doing business in Lagos, MMA impact, motivations and prospects in the tourism sector.
- ❖ **Theme two:** The current and future state of tourism in Lagos, Nigeria- economic contributions and drawbacks
- ❖ **Theme three:** The role of MMA Lagos in the industrial development, tourism and the economic gains to the people of Lagos region.