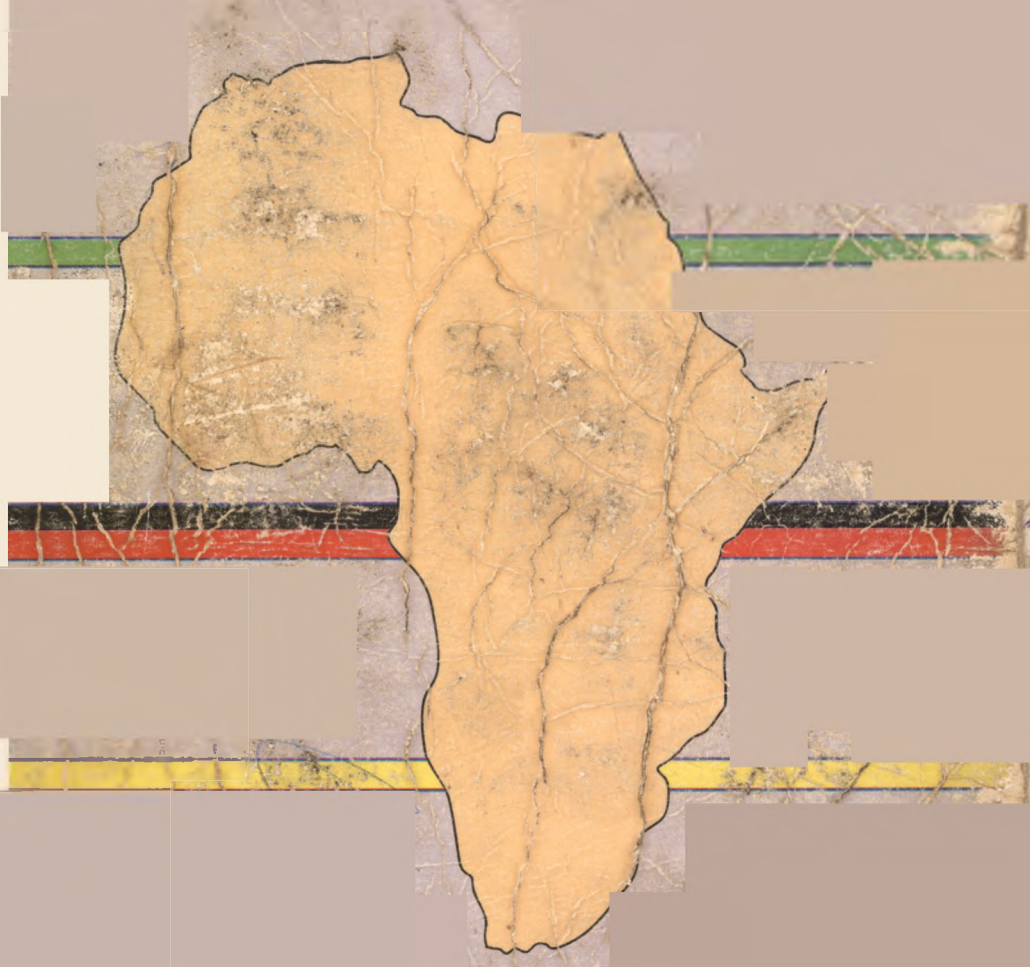


# **The Human Factor Approach to Development in Africa**



**Edited by**  
**G. Chivaura and Claude G. Mararike**

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# The Human Factor Approach to Development in Africa

Edited by

Vimbai G. Chivaura and Claude G. Mararike



UNIVERSITY OF  
ZIMBABWE  
Publications

# The Human Factor: Tourism and Development

Francis Adu-Febiri

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## Introduction

Given the substantial tourism resources of the continent and the rapid growth of tourism globally, African countries can be optimistic about the socio-economic transformative power of tourism as an industry. Africa has enormous resources for tourism, ranging from natural objects and heritage attractions, to cultural practices. Post-colonial African countries are trying to use these to create viable industries for tourism and jump-start their underdeveloped economies.

Despite Africa's great endowments, tourism has not so far produced any socioeconomic development miracles. The argument that the global tourism windfall is passing Africa by, tends to focus on capital, entrepreneurship, knowledge, skills and policies at the expense of Human Factor (HF) qualities that give rise to deficiencies in tourism capital, entrepreneurship, labour force, and policies in African countries. It takes people who have acquired the necessary HF characteristics to create a sustainable tourism industry.

To put this argument in perspective, it is important to survey Africa's tourism resources, look at the global tourism growth, analyze tourism development efforts of selected African countries, relate them to the performance of their tourist industries, and highlight their neglect of HF qualities. The need to incorporate, cultivate and foster HF qualities into Africa's tourism development processes will be emphasised throughout.

## Natural and heritage tourism resources

Tourism cannot be developed through importation of raw materials as is the case with industrialization. The availability of specific and/or unique attractions in a territory is crucial and fundamental to the development of tourism as an industry. Fortunately, Africa possesses vast such tourism resources. Major ones include natural objects, heritage attractions and indigenous cultural practices. Two of the seven wonders of the world, Victoria Falls and Egyptian Pyramids, are in Africa. The single, longest river in the world, The Nile, is in Africa. So are the world's largest desert and tropical rain forests, coconut-lagoon-fringed sandy and sunny beaches, stretches of grasslands, lofty mountains, large inland lakes, waterfalls and a rich diversity of flora and fauna. In game and wildlife sanctuaries, no continent surpasses Africa. Africa's coasts boast of long and large sandy beaches and many forts and castles, historical monuments such as slave markets, churches, mosques, historic towns, walls, palaces, and ancient remains. Large harvests, religious festivals and significant cultural practices such as weddings, puberty rights and funerals, are some of Africa's attractive celebrations.

### Cultural tourism resources

Ethnic groups in Africa have impressive cultural celebrations and festivals. The most popular of these include Homowo, Hobetsotso, Odwira, Aboakyer and Akwasidae of Ghana, Irumbi of Kenya, Cucolola of Mozambique and Zambia and the First Fruits and Reed Dance of Swaziland (Adu-Febiri, 1995b: 83-90; Wyllie, 1968: 21-33; Opoku, 1970: 1-80; Harrison, 1995: 143). Durbars are prominent feature in many of these festivals. 'Modern' festivals celebrated are Christmas, the Edina Buronya of Elmina in Ghana, and Easter, among the Kwawu of Ghana (Adu-Febiri, 1994a: 142). These festivals attract large numbers of people, Africans and foreigners. Hotels are usually fully booked in advance for these occasions (Wyllie, 1968: 21-33; Adu-Febiri, 1994a: 142).

African funerals have the potential of becoming important cultural tourist attractions. African funeral 'celebrations' are usually elaborate and vibrant, with large gatherings of mourners, and sympathizers, and people with other interests (Fiawo et al, 1978). Drumming, singing and dancing accompany these 'celebrations'. Traditional funeral clothes worn by both men and women, come in all colours and hues. Red, black, brown, blue and green are common ones. Some of these funeral clothes have the adinkra (traditional motifs) touch. Ethnic groups such the as Gas of Ghana and the Christian Luhyas of Kenya, wear white clothes. Among the Akans of Ghana, twins wear white clothes at the funerals of a twin. These different colors and hues of funeral costumes make African funerals picturesque. There are a variety of funerals also. Some are for the aristocratic, rich, poor, drivers, musicians, lawyers/judges, hunters, priests/priestesses, witches/wizards, or twins. Each has its own unique formalities.

Public markets (open bazaars) of various sizes feature prominently in African cities, towns and villages. Traders and clients troupe to market centers during market days for various businesses and activities. Mankesim and Techiman markets in Ghana are typical examples.

Arts and crafts are also prolific in African culture. These include paintings, cane products, pottery, carvings, gold-weights and traditional clothes such as the batik, adinkra, batakari and the kente cloth which presently decorates the foyer of the United Nations General Assembly.

Before Christianity came to sub-Saharan Africa, African cultures and Islam were the dominant forms of religion. Even after five centuries of Christianity, African religions were and are still prominent. Numerous surviving shrines are concrete evidence of the continuity of African cultures and religions. The shrines are places of worship and rituals. On sacred days, traditional priests and/or priestesses cure diseases, do divinations and pour libations. The Akonedi Shrine of Lartey in Ghana shows that African religious practices can draw large numbers of international tourists (Adu-Febiri, 1994a: 150).

House designs in Africa are very different from those in the major tourist destinations of Europe, North America and Japan. African houses are 'exotic.' They could be important attractions to tourists from industrialized nations. The compound system of houses for extended families is quite prevalent throughout Africa. The system consists of rooms surrounding an open central courtyard. Family members share the

kitchens and washrooms. Houses range from one to five stores. Remarkable differences in the house types occur in rural areas of Africa. The typical house in the forest region of Ghana is a compound house built of mud, bricks, wood, palm fronds or bamboo. The roof is either of aluminium corrugated sheets, grass or bamboo thatched. The houses in rural areas of Ghana's savanna zone, are a series of rectangular and/or circular rooms, connected together to form a large compound house of one or more patrilineal households.

The proverbial African hospitality makes many visitors feel welcome to the continent. According to the Tourism Market Study (Ghana Tourist Board, 1987: 10-11), the friendliness and personal security African traditional hospitality offers to the visitors, enable them 'to explore instead of merely make contact with local culture through windows of their tourist coaches or at stereotyped hotel displays, which lack the authenticity and enthusiasm of local festivals'. African friendliness, their warmth and readiness to offer accommodation and food are factors that can attract large numbers of tourists to Africa and boost Africa's tourism industry.

Africa's vast and diverse tourism resources constitute an important basis for Africa's optimism in developing Africa's tourist industry and socio-economic transformation. Another significant factor for optimism is the rapid global growth of tourism since the Second World War.

### **Tourism: A global perspective**

In the immediate post-World War II period, tourism was adopted as an important mechanism for the socio-economic reconstruction of many European countries (Jafari, 1989: 21). In the 1960s, newly independent countries adopted tourism as a significant tool of development (Jafari, 1989: 21). Since then, many countries of the world have made tourism a crucial development factor on their agendas. Today, tourism ranks third in World trade and accounts for about 7 per cent of all world exports (World Tourism Organization, 1991: 24; Hall, 1991: 24). Jafari observed that:

As to the global tourism volume, in 1987 some 358.7 million tourists travelled internationally (among countries) and spent over \$158 billion (excluding transportation). Worldwide domestic tourism generated \$1.5 trillion in the same year. This brings the 1987 global tourism (in/to all countries) which has been growing steadily during the past years, to an estimated \$1.7 trillion.... As another indication of its importance, in 1984 tourism generated 64.3 million jobs worldwide (1989: 19).

The 1990s have seen even greater growth in global tourist arrivals and tourism receipts. According to the World Tourism Trade Organization, tourism is projected to reach \$527 billion in receipts by the year 2000 (The Courier, 1990, cited in Poirier, 1995: 157). The World Tourism Organization's forecast predicts that in the year 2010, international arrivals of tourists will hit 1 billion and tourism receipts US\$1,5 trillion (World Tourism Organization, 1996: 1-3).

Tourism growth should entice African countries to seriously adopt it as a development factor for creating jobs and salvaging their citizens from poverty. Most

African countries have already accorded tourism top priority on their economic development agendas.

### **Tourism in Africa**

At present, Africa is relegated to the periphery of world tourism. She receives only about 3 per cent of world tourism revenue. (Poirier, 1995: 158; WTO, 1995: 2). 'Many African governments are, therefore, eagerly seeking a greater share of the world tourism dollar' (African Research Bulletin, 1990; Jenkins and Henry, 1982; Wright and Poirier, 1991, cited in Poirier, 1995: 158). The examples of Tunisia, Zambia, Ghana and Kenya show that disparity between Africa's efforts to develop tourism as a gateway to socio-economic transformation, and the actual performance of the industry are explainable in HF terms.

#### *Tunisia*

The 800-mile Mediterranean coast-line of Tunisia explains Tunisia's reliance on beach tourism development. In 1962, Tunisia adopted a coherent tourism development strategy. 'The growth of the industry has been rapid and the capital investment ... intense ... in the past 15 years' (Poirier, 1995: 159). In the 1970s the capacity of tourism accommodation more than doubled. It tripled in the 1980s. According to Poirier (1995: 159-160), 'in 1977, private investment in Tunisian hotels amounted to TD10,5 million; but the relatively modest amount was soon overshadowed by considerable growth showing a more than twentyfold increase to TD202,8 million by 1992.' Tunisia has the fastest growing tourism economy in Africa today and 'one of the fastest growing tourism economies in the world.' (Poirier, 1995: 158).

During Prime Minister Bourguiba's era in the 1960s, less priority was given to tourism. The major tourism focus and investment incentives were initiated by Prime Minister Heidi Nouira in the 1970s. Tourism pushed Tunisia's balance of payments to a positively high level (Anderson, 1986: 238). The tourism sector receipts helped pay 48,7 per cent of Tunisia's trade deficit in the 1970s. By 1988, the figure increased to 97,2 per cent. (Office National du Tourisme Tunisien, 1992, cited in Poirier, 1995: 163). Apart from 1991, when tourism's share of total foreign trade fell to 13,2 per cent, its contribution has been consistently at a 20 per cent average. (Office National du Tourisme Tunisien, 1992, cited in Poirier, 1995: 163). Besides its substantial contribution as a source of foreign exchange, tourism in Tunisia has also proven to be a good job creator. Office National du Tourisme Tunisien (ONTT) estimates that the number of jobs that tourism directly creates, ranges from 0,88 to 1,2 per hotel bed (Poirier and Wright, 1993: 149-162; Poirier, 1995: 165). This is attributed to 1970 when tourism was promoted to the level of being the country's leading export commodity.

International sub-contracting, especially in the areas of resort construction and management, was accorded top priority. In the late 1980s, hotel and restaurant management schools and institutes have been established in Tunisia to counter the problem of employing of expatriate management. By 1992, these schools and institutions had awarded a total of 667 diplomas to Tunisian nationals, an increase of more than 100 per cent of the 1988 figure (ONNT, 1992).



In spite of the remarkable growth and contributions of tourism to the Tunisian economy, the country's economy still remains underdeveloped, mainly because of the problems of: 1. foreign ownership and control; 2. security, 3. public hygiene, 4. beach hustlers and, 5. political instability, both regional and internal (Poirier, 1995: 169; ONTT, 1986; cited in Poirier, 1995: 168). Tourism analysts, however, fail to realize that these problems result from HF decay more than from the above five factors.

### *Zambia*

Post-independence national leaders and developers of Zambia have realized the precariousness of relying mainly on copper for foreign exchange and national development. Given the spectacular tourism resources such as the Victoria Falls and the 18 wildlife sanctuaries, Zambia has recognized tourism as an important development tool. When Zambia became independent in 1964, she recognized 'the need to find new ways to double the country's capacity for tourism to earn foreign exchange and accelerate economic development' (United Independent Party, 1974: 35).

Tourism development was, therefore, accorded national priority in the First (1965-1971), Second (1972-1978), and Third National Development Plans (1979-1983). Zambia's tourism Master Plan, formulated by the Irish Tourist Board, was incorporated into the Third National Development Plan. Tourism in Zambia continues to be viewed as a very important 'vehicle for economic development' (Teye, 1989: 270).

The Zambian government's efforts to develop tourism have produced some good results. Tourist arrivals have expanded and tourism revenue increased. In 1965, there were 117 800 foreign tourists (Zambia Central Statistical Office, 1967: 146). The figure increased to 146 649 in 1981 'and remained well ahead of the Master Plan's estimations for 1982 and 1983' (Teye, 1989: 271). It is important to note that the number of foreign tourists to Zambia fell drastically during the 15-year guerrilla war in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. International tourism generated US\$10 million foreign exchange for Zambia in 1979 and increased to US\$43 million in 1983 (Zambia National Tourist Board, 1984: 5). Domestic tourism revenue increased from US\$13.4 million in 1978 to US\$30 million in 1983 (Zambia National Tourist Board, 1984: 5).

In spite of the progress in tourism development, Zambia's tourism industry is yet to reach the optimum and Zambia to experience the required socio-economic transformation. In 1978, the Irish Tourist Board (1978: 272-273) insightfully observed that 'Zambia had unique assets which could not fail to appeal to a growing proportion of international tourist markets. Unfortunately, while the basic game viewing product was first class, much of the supporting services and infrastructure left much to be desired.'

It will take more than large capital, many knowledgeable entrepreneurs, many skilled tourism personnel, and right policies which tourism analysts such as Peter Ankomah (1991), Victor Teye (1989), Adu-Febiri (1994b) and Echtner (1995) propose, to resolve the debilitating problems of tourism development in Zambia. The application of appropriate HF qualities in Zambia's tourism is very critical if Zambia is to adequately meet the challenges of optimum tourist development and economic transformation.

The tourist 'trade, restaurants and hotels' subsectors' contribution to the Gross Domestic Product from 1984 to 1988 averaged 11 per cent per year (Government of Kenya, 1989: 19). Total visible exports grew nominally at an average yearly rate of about 50 per cent during the 1980s, while tourism grew by over 120 per cent (International Labor Organization, 1987). Tourism's contribution to revenue generation increased 275 per cent vis-a-vis 90 per cent of total visible exports (International Labor Organization, 1987).

The country however, has not made significant economic gains despite the rapid growth of Kenya's tourist industry. Its contribution has been negligible towards:

tax revenues, earnings by local operators, employment generation and other indirect effects such as stimulation of agricultural and light industrial production to meet the demands of the tourist sector [and other sectors] for food and other consumer goods (Migot-Adholla, 1989: 254).

Kenyan tourism has failed to facilitate 'the so-called trickle down effect. It has, instead, tended to aggravate existing patterns of inequality' (Migot-Adholla, 1989: 254).

Critics of Kenyan tourism (Mitchell, 1970; Tourist Consult, 1979; Dunning and McQueen, 1981; Migot-Adholla et al, 1982; Migot Adholla, 1989; Jommo, 1987; Rajotte, 1987; Backmann, 1988; Dicke, 1991; Sinclair, 1990; Sinclair et al, 1992) attribute this paradox to foreign domination of the industry in the areas of ownership, management and control. According to Dicke (1991: 285), 'foreign equity participation accounts for about 60 per cent of hotel beds in Kenya, while well over 50 per cent of Kenyan tourist hotel capacity is under foreign ownership, control and management.' Foreign domination of Kenyan tourism leads to leakage of foreign exchange which could be reinvested in the economy. Migot-Adholla correctly observes that:

apart from the 'import component', additional foreign exchange losses take the form of financial transfers in respect of profits to transnational corporations (TNC's) which directly participate in equity in hotels or tour operation in the host countries, management services, franchise payments, and salaries to expatriate staff who always hold the highest paid positions (1989:253).

Other channels of leakages are, over-invoicing of purchases from foreign parent or related companies, and deposition of stolen tourism revenue in foreign accounts by some Kenyan officials. According to the World Bank (1972: 13), about 55 per cent of gross earnings from Kenyan tourism is ultimately repatriated from the country. In some cases, the leakage is even higher. A large international hotel in Nairobi in 1975:

declared a profit of only KS8,048, yet a remittance of KS434,800 in respect of services was made to the parent firm. And although no profit was declared in 1976 and 1977, service payments amounting to KS474,800 were made in both years (Migot-Adholla, 1989: 258).

Sinclair et al (1992: 63) and Migot-Adholla (1989: 264-265) suggest the following solutions:

1. Kenyan Tourist industry should rely less on large luxury hotels and more on small and medium hotels which can be publicly owned and run by local managers;
2. The government should apply careful pressure on all elements of the tourist industry to indigenize;
3. Government ministries responsible for tourism should recruit and train competent locals; and
4. The government should rely on indigenous people who are knowledgeable and experienced enough to negotiate fruitfully with TNCs and other international agencies with vested interests in tourism.

Mere indigenization of Kenyan tourist industry cannot improve the socioeconomic transformation capacity of tourism in the context of such widespread lack of accountability, responsibility, commitment, hard work and rampant corruption. People who lack appropriate human qualities of loyalty to the state, integrity, honesty, commitment, accountability and responsibility cannot 'fruitfully negotiate' with foreign agencies to prevent high foreign exchange leakages from the tourist industry and:

increase tourism's contribution to the growth of Gross Domestic Product;...increase Kenyan ownership and management of the industry; reduce ... undesirable social and environmental consequences; and conserve, protect and improve environment and wildlife (Kenya Development Plan 1984-1988, cited in Dieke, 1991: 281).

### **Fostering human qualities for tourism development in Africa**

If African tourism is to develop as catalyst for socioeconomic transformation, it needs to cultivate and foster appropriate human qualities in its professionals, workers and entrepreneurs.

The tourism sectors of developing countries have tended to concentrate on professional education and vocational training at the expense of tourism entrepreneurial development (Echtner, 1995: 119-134). Virtually no effort has been made to cultivate and foster human qualities in tourism professionals, workers and entrepreneurs. Emphasis has been on human capital development (Echtner, 1995:120).

Present professional tourism education is largely academic. It aims at providing trainees with theoretical concepts and ability to interpret, evaluate and analyze issues for strategic planning (Cooper and Westlake, 1989: 72) The objective in present tourism education and training 'is to teach skills that can be applied to specific positions such as chef, travel counsellor or housekeeping supervisor' (Echtner, 1995: 121). According to Echtner (1995: 121), 'such training is critical in order to effectively deliver the products and services required by the tourism industry'. Echtner's contention is that 'the role of entrepreneurship development program is to provide business and management tools to persons that have been screened for the appropriate personality traits (1995:122).'

The underlying assumptions of these proposals are that:

1. When tourism professionals, workers and entrepreneurs acquire the needed tourism knowledge and skills, they automatically use them to develop the tourism

industry and that, 2. 'appropriate personality traits' that enhance the effective use of entrepreneurial knowledge and skills are innate. Both assumptions miss the point. Skills and knowledge need to be blended with conscious, not innate human qualities, if they are to be productive and functional for tourism development and socioeconomic transformation (Adu-Febiri, 1996a: 81-88; 1996b: 71-81). Human qualities, knowledge and skills are created and sustained by education, training and social rituals (Adu-Febiri, 1995b: 80-97). They are not inborn.

African countries such as Tunisia and Kenya, have tourism schools and institutions. Many other African countries educate and train their tourism personnel through local seminars, workshops, conferences and study abroad. The main objective of these tourism education and training activities has been the development of human capital. Graduates of these programs lack the necessary human qualities to make their acquired knowledge and skills work for tourism.

The following are some of the strategies which could be adopted:

1. Redesign tourism education and training programs to bring the cultivation and fostering of human qualities from the margin to the center. The curricula and agendas of tourism schools, institutes, training programs, seminars, workshops and conferences should be overhauled and reconstructed to incorporate human quality development as a significant component of tourism education and training.
2. Organize bi-annual human quality days to honor tourism entrepreneurs who apply human quality principles in their enterprises. The honor should be both concrete and symbolic, including cash prizes, plaques, traditional clothes and crafts and publicity in the national mass media.
3. Give special loans and tax breaks to tourism entrepreneurs who invest in the promotion of human qualities.
4. Sponsor tourism personnel who exhibit human qualities in their work on short-term scholarship trips to visit foreign tourism enterprises that demonstrate the positive effects of continuing human quality application.
5. Make continued employment salary increments, and promotion of tourism professionals and workers contingent upon their application of knowledge, skills and appropriate human qualities.
6. Ensure that demotions, suspensions and dismissals of tourism personnel, are based on failure to acquire and apply appropriate HF.

The above HF engineering techniques will help equip and motivate African tourism personnel to successfully (a) create and implement appropriate tourism policies, (b) generate adequate capital from local sources, (c) prevent unreasonable leakage of tourism profits, (d) plough back tourism profits into the industry, (e) link tourism with other sectors of the economy and (f) provide high quality services to tourists.

## Conclusion

In spite of the tremendous availability of resources, government efforts and growth of arrival figures and revenue, the tourism industry in Africa has not succeeded in transforming African economies. To rectify this anomaly, there is need to re-envision priorities and emphasize the direct relationship between human quality development

and tourism development. It takes more than adequate capital, appropriate tourism policies, skilled and knowledgeable tourism personnel or professional entrepreneurs, to develop a viable tourism industry capable of socioeconomic transformation. The cultivation and fostering of the HF in African tourism should constitute the first step necessary in overcoming the existing problems of the tourism industry as a catalyst for Africa's socioeconomic transformation.

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