

Socio-Economic Impacts of Tourism on the Development of Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State

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Abstract The main thrust of this study was to examine the impact of tourism on the socio-economic development of Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State. Three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant. A sample of two hundred respondents was used for the study. A four point Likert scale questionnaire instrument with twenty items was used for data collection. Pearson product moment correlation statistical technique was used for data analysis. The results obtained from the analysis of data and testing of hypotheses revealed that festivals, recreational sports facilities and museums have a significant effect on the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis of Cross River State. Based on these findings, it was recommended that cultural and Christmas festivals should be expanded to cover every Local Government Area in the state in order to expose the rich tourism potentials of the state and encourage infrastructural development in the local communities. Some recommendations and suggestions for further research were also made.

Keywords Socio-Economic Impact, Tourism and Development

1. Introduction

Tourism has emerged as one of the world major socio-economic sector and has an expanding rate of 45 percent annually during the later half of the 20th century and has since become the world fastest growing industry accounting to 7% of global captive investment[5]. It is in this regard that the Cross River State government is investing a lot of money into the development of tourism. Tourism development is part of government strategic plan to emerge as one of the foremost tourist destinations in Africa in the nearest future[3].

The rising profile of tourism in the state has led to its recognition as a potential fast growing industry by the present administration as it is seen as a virgin source of revenue and indeed a vibrant sector for repository income, foreign exchange and the private sector. Tourism has become a worldwide industry which is recognized as one of the top three constituents of world trade ranking third after petroleum and the vehicle industries,[8]. Tourists who are individuals regarded as holiday makers or travelers for pleasure or fun seekers and lovers of frolics are not the major reasons for their travels despite the fact that tourism is focused on recreation and relaxation. Some tourists are also religious pilgrims, business visitors, individuals in search of health and even students undergoing various researches in

wild life, and geography and culture of other countries.

There are also accidental adventure tourists, business people, journalists, development workers, etc.,[1].

In response to the government call, the state is beginning to witness an increase in private sector involvement in the tourism industry. Many people within and outside the state are today investing in the hospitality industry, transport sector, communication sector, provision of recreational facilities, banking sector among others. These investments have significant implications for the socio-economic development of the state and country,[9].

The Cross River State Government has mapped out some strategies to conceptualize and implement an integrated tourism master plan that will give a unique tourism favour. This master plan if implemented will lead to the state becoming a trade and distribution hub in West Africa, provide unique tourism opportunities in Nigeria and increase transportation infrastructural facilities. But despite the enormous natural resources and the efforts Cross River State Government has put into tourism sector, the state is yet to fully develop her tourism potentials to its maximum benefit.

Celebrations and dances are integral part of native customs and traditions which will help to boost the tourism potentials of the areas that practice them. These festivals have over the years evolve into more attractive occasions which attract imminent personalities who attend for the purpose of leisure or pleasure due to its unique features such as dances, cultural display, fashion etc. These dances are part of the communal life of the people and need no special occasion for display. Traditional festivals are celebrated in most parts of the state notably Ugep, Boki, Obubra, Ikom

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and Bekwarra Local Government Areas respectively,[4].

Over the past decade most of all these festivals have been upgraded to international standards and have attracted tourists across the globe to visit such areas during these festivals such as the new yam festival which is associated with yam farming communities notably within the northern and central senatorial districts. It is a celebration of bountiful harvest and also reinforces the traditional ties between man and nature. It is one occasion that has no ethnic or racial discrimination. It is a period the communities show appreciation to God who provided the yams freely and express their generosity and gratitude to whoever comes around. Its unique cultural features has given it a place in the Cross River State government tourism calendar, and has involved the sponsorship and interest from various national and international bodies like MTN Nigeria and has also engaged the citizens of such local government with various business opportunities and job opportunities,[7].

The Cross River State Government resolve to develop tourist attractions across the state in order to put the state in the world tourism map and make Cross River State a tourist destination has witnessed a rapid development in recreational facilities such as the Obudu Ranch Resort which has been upgraded to international standard and has a mini-golf course and a squash hall, a presidential villa and office, Bebi Airstrip and the longest Cable Car in the world. Also the cultural centre which is located in the heart of the state capital Calabar, and its facilities have been upgraded with the provisions of modern infrastructure and artifacts at the main bowl and a mini theatre. This has attracted several tourists into the state and has generated revenue and created job opportunities to deserving person. The cultural center provides accommodation for conferences, cultural fairs, trade fairs, cultural displays etc. It attracts both local and foreign tourists annually and best of the country. The recreational facilities and equipment in the cultural centre has contributed to the socio-economic development of the state as well as boosted tourism which is aimed at making Cross River State a tourism destination,[2].

In Africa south of the Sahara, Nigeria is perhaps the richest in sculptural traditions. There are numerous amounts of archaeological discoveries which are tourist attractions of immense interest which houses several museums in most states of Nigeria. These monuments have attracted visitors from within and outside the country in their search for knowledge, research purpose, pleasure and leisure. The influx of tourists has therefore motivated the federal government to upgrade facilities in the museums as well as provide basic infrastructure that would add to tourists delight during their visits. The increase number of tourist visits to museum has boosted economic development by creating means of livelihood for several members of the society,[6].

The literature reviewed reveals that tourism is a free movement of people to destinations outside their normal abode on a temporary or short term basis. It is a service industry created to satisfy the needs of tourists within and

across international boundaries as it is an avenue for adventure, sports, education and other remunerated purposes. It shows that here in Nigeria and Cross River State in particular, there are great opportunities due to the rich and vibrant cultures of its people and its various festivals. It also shows that the upgrading of recreational facilities and equipment have increased government revenue earnings in recent times resulting in the patronage of these facilities by local and foreign tourists visiting the state.

This study will therefore examine the impact of the tourism industry to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis in Cross River State by;

- i. Examining the influence of festivals to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.
- ii. Determining the contributions of recreational facilities to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.
- iii. Assessing the impact of museums to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

2. Methodology

The ex-post facto design was considered most appropriate for this study which is meant to examine the influence of tourism on the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

The population of the study consists of all adult residents in Calabar metropolis consisting both males and females. They are chosen from selected occupants in the study areas.

A total of 200 respondents were randomly selected from five residential areas in Calabar metropolis. The sampling technique employed in selecting the size is the sample random sampling technique.

The instrument for data collection is the questionnaire. It is divided into two parts. Part A has questions on respondents demographic data while part B is designed using four point Likertscale of Strongly Agree, (SA), Agree (A), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). It contained twenty questions covering the variables of the study. Items 1-5 measures festivals, item 6-10 measured recreational facilities, items 11-15 measured museums while item 16-20 measured the dependent variables of socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

The instrument used for data collection was validated using factor to content validation. Each item in the questionnaire was formulated to relate to the topic under investigation. To determine the reliability of the instrument test-retest reliability was conducted on a smaller sample size using Pearson product moment correlation statistical technique. The result obtained from the analysis was 0.432 which showed a high reliability of the questionnaire.

Hypothesis one:

There is no significant influence of festivals to the socio economic development of Calabar metropolis.

Table 1. Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the influence of festivals to socio-economic development of Calabar Metropolis

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
Influence of festivals	2642	6980169	5296	0.508
Socio-economic development	2654	7042716		

Significant at 0.05; df= 198 critical r= 0.196

The result of the statistical analysis in table 1 indicates that the calculated r-value of 0.508 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.196 at 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. This implies that there is a significant influence of festivals on the socio economic development of Calabar metropolis of Cross River State.

Hypothesis Two

Recreational facilities do not significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

Table 2. Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the contribution of recreational facilities to socio-economic development of Calabar Metropolis

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
Influence of festivals	2786	7761796	5440	0.520
Socio-economic development	2654	7042716		

Significant at 0.05; df= 198 critical r= 0.196

The result obtained from table 2 reveals that the critical r-value of 0.520 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.196 when tested at 0.05 level of significant with 198 degrees of freedom. This implies that there is a significant contribution of recreational facilities to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis of Cross River State.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant impact of museums to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

Table 3. Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the impact of museums to socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis

Variables	$\sum x$ $\sum y$	$\sum x^2$ $\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	Cal-r
Influence of festivals	2648	7011904	5302	0.486
Socio-economic development	2654	7042716		

Significant at 0.05; df= 198 critical r= 0.196

The result obtained from table 3 indicated that the calculated r-value of 0.486 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.196 at 0.05 level of significant with 198 degree of freedom. This implies that there is a significant impact of

museums to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis of Cross River State.

3. Discussion of Findings

The result of the first hypothesis indicates that there is a significant influence of festivals on socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis of Cross River State. This agrees with the findings of [4] which revealed that there are only a few culture in Nigeria where one can find such an entertaining rich cultural diversity as found in Yakurr Local Government Area of Cross River State. [7] also agrees that the unique cultural features associated with the new yam festivals have earned it a place in the Cross River State government tourism calendar. This informed the sponsorship and upgrading of the Ugep New Yam Festival (Leboku) and that of Bekwarra (Ipemlyeye) to international standards. The development of infrastructure to attract tourists to the festivals has improved economic activities in the areas to a remarkable level.

The findings of hypothesis two state that recreational facilities have significant contributions to the socio-economic development of Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State. This is in line with the findings of [8] who asserts that the Cross River State Government has resolved to develop tourist attractions across the state in order to put the state in the world tourism map and make Cross River State a tourism destination. This has witnessed a rapid development in recreational facilities in the area of study. As the state government has invested huge amounts in the development of the Obudu Ranch Resort to international standards, and the influx of visitors to the ranch has generated a lot for the government in terms of revenue. [2] also supports that the cultural center provides accommodations for countries, cultural fairs, trade fairs, cultural displays, theatre performance, religious activities etc. it attracts both local and foreign tourists annually and is one of the best in the country.

Findings from the analysis of hypothesis three state that there is a significant impact of museums to socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis in Cross River State. This agrees with the findings of [6] which states that in Africa, south of the Sahara, Nigeria is perhaps the richest tourist attraction of immense interest and houses in several museums in most states of Nigeria. These monuments have attracted visitors to such museums and the increases rate of visitors to these museums has led to a boost in the economic activities in such areas thereby providing means of livelihood for numerous members of society through provision of employment and business opportunities.

4. Conclusions

The researcher therefore concludes as follows:

1. There is a significant influence of festivals to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

2. Recreational facilities have significant contributions toward the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

3. There are significant impacts of museums to the socio-economic development of Calabar metropolis.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Cultural and Christmas festivals should be expanded to cover every local government area in the state in order to expose the rich tourism potentials of the state and encourage infrastructural development in other local communities.

2. More museums should be established across the state to help attract more tourists to such areas as well as improve infrastructural development.

3. Recreational facilities should be provided across the state as a means of attracting visitors both locally and internationally to such area where these facilities are located or sited.

4. Private sector investment on tourism should be encouraged as a means for improving tourism development in the state and the local communities as well.

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