

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF TOURISM ON THE PEOPLE OF IDANRE

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ABSTRACT

The tourism sector has grown to become a vital sector of the economy. The tourism sector is of great potential to national development becoming neglected in present-day Nigerian society. This, among other things, has led to the relegation of its great potentials in the development of the country's economy. This study attempted to examine the effect of tourism on the socio-economic activities of the people of Idanre. The qualitative approach was used, and both purposive and simple random sampling technique was also used in selecting the respondents. Four (4) Focus group discussion were held, the group interacted with ten (10) key-informants and over twenty (20) in-depth interviews were gotten in the course of data collection. Results indicate that tourism has an enormous effects on the socio-economic activities of the people. Apart from the economic aspect, tourism also affects their socio-cultural life, as the touristic period sees to the changes in daily routine of the people and leaves indelible mark on the social life of the people. Recommendations are made to boost the sector and suggestions for further studies were also made.

INTRODUCTION

Humans throughout history have involved in travels (Porcia, Butler & Airey, 2003) and most of which have been for tourism. Tourism essentially has to do with trips outside of one's place of residence. The definition of tourism varies across source and Persons, and there is no consensus concerning the meaning of tourism (Bukola & Olaitan, 2018). Tourism has to do with the temporary movement of people away from their usual place of abode, to another location for relaxation and leisure purpose (Omole, Amodu, Olanibi, & Emmanuel, 2003).

According to the World Trade Organization (W.T.O) all over the world, people travelling for touristic purposes have been at an increased rate in recent years (Okonkwo, 2015). Tourism has become one of the world's fastest-growing industries and is a significant source of income for many countries (Adigun, et al, 2016 Omole, et al, 2003). According to the publication of World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2014), it was reported that in 2013, travel & tourism's total input to the world's economy rose to US\$7 trillion, an increase of about 9.5 per cent of global GDP, not only exceeding the broader economy but also growing at a more faster rate than other significant sectors such as Financial and Business Services, Transport and Manufacturing employment (Adeniyi, et al, 2018). This profound contribution of tourism is no doubt the reason tourism over the years has demonstrated to be an astonishingly intense and durable economic activity and essential contributor to the economic growth of countries by generating billions of dollars in exportation and creating millions of jobs (Adeniyi, et al, 2018).

In Africa, the tourism sector is becoming increasingly central in the development and growth of the continent (Ramukumba, Mmbengwa, Mwamayi, & Groenewald, 2012). Bukola, & Olaitan, 2018) agreed to this when he noted that tourism is a key contributor to sustainable economic development across Africa. The several examples of tourist sites in Africa, such as The Zanzibar in Tanzania, The Virunga Mountains in Democratic Republic of Congo, The Marrakech in Morocco, The Djenné in Mali, and many others attest to this.

Nigeria is a country that is blessed with an abundance of tourism potentials (Adeniyi, et al, 2018). From the rain forest in the south, through the grassland of the middle belt to the savannah of the north, these vast diversities constitute enough tourist potentials. Natural features such as rivers, waterfalls, forest, biodiversity, mountains plains, etc, are substantial tourist potentials of the country. Tourist sites can be found

in different parts of Nigeria. For example the Yankari National Park in Bauchi, the Ogbunike Caves in Enugu State, the Ibeno Beach in Akwa Ibom, The Ancient Nok Settlement in Kaduna. Within the southwestern part, where over three hundred thousand people come from across the globe to visit, we have Osun-Osogbo festival and Erin-Ijesa waterfalls in Osun State, Old Oyo National Park in Oyo State; the Olumo Rock in Ogun State; the Bar Beach at Victoria Island in Lagos; the Ikogosi Warm Springs located in Ikogosi, Ekiti State; and the Idanre Hill in Idanre town of Ondo State (Bukola, & Olaitan, 2018).

Despite the enormous tourism potentials of the country, the tourism sector is still at its infancy due to the nation's level of development (Omole, et al., 2013). Equally, the tourism potentials of Idanre is of no exemption. The unique and beautiful landscape of Idanre with the famous Orosun festival makes the town suitable for tourism. The touristic potentials of this town make it an interesting place to visit. Tourism at Idanre is coupled with geographical characteristic, the religious underpinning as well as the socio-cultural dimension of the town. However, the abundant tourism potentials which the area possesses are yet to be fully tapped (Adigun, et al., 2016).

From the works of various researchers, tourism is strongly related to development. (Bukola, & Olaitan, 2018; Omole, Amodu, Olanibi, & Emmanuel, 2013; Adeniyi, et al, 2018). In line with this, it becomes paramount to examine the touristic activities of Idanre as it relates to the socio-economic activities of the people. Therefore, this study seeks to provide a close description of Idanre from first-hand interaction with the indigenes of the community and dwellers as relating to their culture, religion, socio-economic practices, heritage, artifacts, topography and tourist attractions. Furthermore, the study provides an analysis of the impact of tourism on the socio-economic activities on the people of Idanre community.

This study seeks to fulfill the general objective of examining the relationship between tourism and socio-economic activities of Idanre people. The specific objectives are as follows;

To understand the touristic potentials of Idanre.

To identify cultural exchange on socio-economic activities

Tourism, according to Pedrana (2013), is an activity in which people goes to visit a particular destination. Okonkwo (2015) also noted that this visit is not usually less than 24 hours. According to Erik (2011) tourism has to do with activities of persons travelling to and residing in places outside their usual location for not more than one consecutive year for either leisure, business or other purposes. It is the summation of the phenomena and relationships resulting from the travel and stay of non-residents, as far as such visit does not lead to taking up permanent residence and are not concerned with earning activity (Adigun, Abolade&Ibukunoluwa, 2016).

Touristic activities have been sorted based on different criteria. Zaei and Zaei (2013) recognise a grouping of three; these are domestic, inbound and outbound tourism. Domestic tourism includes those touristic activities in which one engages within the country. The inbound tourism involves non-residents travelling within the given state or people entering the country from their home country, while outbound tourism involves residents travelling to another country (visiting other countries for touristic reasons). This system is solely based on geographical boundaries, ignoring other aspects of tourism.

Others have considered different touristic activities in grouping tourism, such as, Agro-tourism (Hamzah, Yassin, Samah, D'Silva, NedaTiraiyaei, Shaffril, & Uli, 2012), Eco-tourism, (Tugba, 2013), Religious tourism (Okonkwo, 2015), Leisure (Harcombe, 1999), Hunting tourism (Samuelsson & Stage, 2006) and Sport tourism were identified.

Ajala (2017) looked at tourism from a different perspective and grouped them into three classes. The first class consists of those tourisms that are as a result of natural treasures (rivers, mountain, wildlife, etc). While the second class consists of artificial treasures like monoliths, historic building, artifacts, etc, and the third class are allusive treasures, including those places that possess historical, biographical, artistic and literary, culture, tradition and lifestyles of the people.

The effect of tourism stretches from the global to the local community (Milne, &Ateljevic, 2011). This effects broadly fall into three groupings; Environmental, Economic and Social. On the environment, the establishment of touristic sites results to other activities that manipulate the environment, which includes buildings, road construction and installation of certain devices. These do destroy the natural environment and at the same time, the beautification of the environment. Tourism in some cases does produce situations that cause the conservation of natural resources, such as biological diversity, which brings ecological experience to visitors, conserve the physical environment and expand economic benefit (Tugba, 2013).

Tourism has a significant impact on the economy. It aids in the provision of jobs, improvement of household income, boosts the local industries, sales of local crafts, eradication of poverty, promote gender equality, encourages inter-tribal marriages and formation of friendship ties as well as an increase in government revenue (Bukola et al, 2018). Furthermore, tourism serves as a booster for enhancing the country's employment opportunities and infrastructural facilities (Adigun, et al, 2016). Tourism expenditures and the export and import of associated goods and services engender income to the host country and stimulate the investment necessary to finance growth in other sectors of the economic (Omole, et al, 2003). It augments foreign exchange and increases international cooperation. It also provides occasions for relaxation which aid the physical and mental health of the human body (Adigun, et al, 2016). The tourism sector contributes significantly to sustainable development through, environmental sustainability, trade and economic growth and fostering partnership for development (Bukola&Olaitan, 2018).

The Economic impact in-turn has a significant influence on the social life of the people. Tourist activities open up the host community to the outside world; at first, most places were not known until the establishment of a tourist site in that area. This increases the dynamics of interaction and communication at all levels. Also, the local people are absorbed into the tourism industry and the various areas of the industry, which include working as a tourist guide, helpers, waiters, gardeners and other works, while others may be entrepreneurs who own their tourism enterprise (Ramukumba, et al, 2012). Tourism can also help in building the community pride and confidence, intensify and diversify their socio-economic activities, increases the purchasing power of the local community and this will improve the local communities' quality of life and standard of living (Hamzah, et al, 2012).

Despite the numerous benefits accruable to the tourism industry, it has negative implications on the economy, the natural and built environment, the local people of the host community and on the tourists themselves. Tourism may tend to increase tension, hostility and suspicion. It can also affect cultural change leading to conflict, and artificial reconstruction, congestion, increased crime, pollution, among others (Adigun, et al, 2016).

In Nigeria, despite the abundant touristic potential that could make her achieve its apex of being a leading tourism provider in Africa, the sector has been frustrated by the collapsed infrastructural amenities and security crisis. Facilities such as high-quality road, stable electricity and basic social amenities to enhance visitor's comfort are not there. Also, the alarming rate of the activities of the herdsmen, kidnappers, religious extremists, and hoodlums has given a deterring signal to the visitors globally to stay away from the country (Bukola, & Olaitan, 2018). Other challenges facing the sector, as highlighted by Rudrappan (2010) includes; provision and maintenance of water pipes and sewage, solid waste management at the tourist sites, inadequate finance and banking services, absence of effective monitoring and enforcement and lack of adequate awareness.

About the enormous benefits of tourism, there is a need for an urgent improvement in the tourism sector in Nigeria. The government need to have a comprehensive overview of what an excellent good tourism is all about; such as development of the attraction spots, infrastructural facilities that would help to assist efficiency of operations of tourism; such as, publicity machineries, appraisal of hotel accommodation, good roads and communication network, financial commitment, etc. leading to enhanced tourism patronage both at the micro and macro levels (Omole, et al, 2003). The dynamics of tourism, in its activities and the industry,

requires continuous efforts in seeking new approaches, tools, and perspectives to acquire new knowledge and have a greater understanding of tourism (Song, Dwyer, Li, & Chao, 2012). Also, creating awareness should be a priority as most tourist sites are still unknown, even within the country. This will revitalise Nigeria's touristic potentials and elevate its socio-ecological values among world's tourism destinations. Tourism can also help to diversify the economy and reduce overdependency on oil as the main source of revenue. (Adeniyi, et al, 2018)

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory posits that all human relationships are formed by the use of subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives. Social exchange theory treats social life as involving a series of a sequential transaction between two or more parties (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels & Hall, 2017).

Exchange of resources is through a process of mutuality whereby one party tends to repay the good deeds of another and the quality of this exchange sometimes influenced by the relationship between the actor and the target. Social exchange theory is one of the most enduring and widely used conceptual frameworks. Social exchange can also be seen as the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible and more or less rewarding or costly between at least two persons.

Using this theory concerning the concept of tourism and its effects on the socio-economic activities of Idanre people, it seeks to explain the exchange process that exists between the people of Idanre and the outside world. This is more pronounced during the festive period. This festive period becomes potential tourism for the people. There is a major exchange between the people of Idanre town and the visitors. For instance, Idanre as an African Society, before this time, practice African Traditional Religion, but with the influence of tourists from other parts of the world into Idanre, there has been a change.

This change has resulted in acculturation; in which the people of Idanre adopt the visitor's culture. Religion is one aspect of people's culture that has change over time. Presently, the society that was mainly practising African Traditional Religion is now religiously divided, with some of its members either becoming a Christian or Muslim or adherent of the Traditional Religion.

Tourism has helped to open up Idanre town to the global village. For example, it was recognised as one of UNESCO's world heritage sites in 2007. This results in modernization of Idanre. Due to this, the goods produced at Idanre are exported to other parts of the world. In the same vein, tourism has enhanced the socio-economic-activities of Idanre people. During the festive period, the town experiences an influx of visitors. These visitors contribute massively to the economy of Idanre. Visitors are always in need of accommodation all through their stay. Hotels and Guest-houses are usually filled up. By paying for this accommodation, a lot of money is brought into the economy.

Also, these tourists have to travel from place to place. The transportation sector experiences a boom and the money they pay for it goes into the economy. Again, even the petty traders who sell at shops along the streets also experience an explosion in sales. All these and many more are ways in which tourism affects the socio-economic activities of the people of Idanre. In as much as tourists are attracted to Idanre hills, they are bound to exchange ideas, food, religion, mode of dressing, hairstyle and other cultural dimensions.

METHODOLOGY

This study makes use of the qualitative approach in which a semi-structured interview guide was used as instrument of data collection. Also, observations were made on the description of targeted population, places and events. The samples of the study were selected through Purposive Sampling and Simple Random Sampling Technique. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) consisting of nine discussants, three key-informant Interviews (KII) and five In-depth interviews (IDI) were utilized as methods of data collection. The FGD included the "Isolo" (the priest of Orosun) and other adherents of the religion. The data collected were

contently analyzed to reflect the research objectives. Transcriptions were done for the recordings and were compared with the written note for corrections. Participation by respondents were solely on consensus.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Tourism potentials of Idanre.

Tourism, among other things, also involves economic activities, in which people move to an area to visit a particular destination. Tourism, on a global scale, has improved the economy of countries and the wellbeing of the people within the tourist centre. Idanre town is one of the oldest towns in Yoruba land with abundant tourism potentials. These tourism potentials include the beautiful landscape that surrounds the town; such as the amazing Idanre Hills – which is a compound of hills - with breath-taking appearance that mesmerizes an observer. These hills have become a globally recognized tourist centre. Equally, the presence of other physical characteristics in the area has enormously contributed to tourism potentials of the town. The ancient settlement of the people on the hill top is another major tourist attraction in Idanre. This ancient settlement on the hill top has vast varieties of tourist attraction. One of such tourist attraction on the hill top is the famous Ancient Palace, which serve as remain of the town's ancient civilization and architectural design. In the same manner, the Ancient Primary School on the hill top is another tourism potentials of Idanre. This school was built by the 'White' and has become an instrument of tourism and symbolizes the presence of education in Idanre since colonial times. Also on the hill top is the ancient court, the sacred stream among others.

The Orosun festival is another tourist potential of Idanre. The festival is an annual festival which is celebrated either in May or June. This festival, in conjunction with the Oke-Idanre forms a potential tourist attraction. During the festival, people usually come from different countries and cities in the world to witness the festival.

In the data analysed, majority of the respondents reported that the Orosun festival has brought about civilisation and changes in the town due to the influx of people during the festival and others that do come to see the hills.

This town is an old town. If you get to the top of the mountain, you will see evidence of ancient dwellings. The Orosun festival is an annual festival of the people, and this festival is of high esteem. The festival takes place either in May or June. The festival and the hills make the town a potential tourist site. During the festive period, this town is always filled with people from different parts of the world who come to witness the festival. Their presence in the town contributes essentially to the economic improvement of the town. The hills and the festival are the touristic potentials of the town."

(Discussants/Idanre/FGD/2019)

"Idanre town is blessed with diverse tourism potentials. The physical environment is filled with lots of wonders. The town is almost surrounded by hills. This hills serve as a major tourism potential of the town. The hill was the ancient settlement of the people. Till date, the hill top still houses remains of ancient materials and civilization which contributes to the tourism potentials of the town. There are things such as the ancient palace, ancient primary school, the court, the sacred river, and many others."

(Respondent/male/38years/Idanre/IDI/2019)

Cultural exchange on socio-economic activities

The natural environment and the festivals of Idanre serve as a major source of tourism in the town. These touristic potentials have pulled many people into Idanre. Their coming, among other things, has resulted in

the exchange of ideas, materials, etc between the indigenes and the visitors through the process of interaction. Some people of the town, especially the youths, acculturate some aspects of the visitor's culture, including the hairstyle, dressing, among others. The visitors on the other add imbibe some aspects of Idanre culture. Some visitors do attempt learning the language of the people to communicate and understand certain concepts.

Also, visitors take the festive culture of not keeping long hair during the festival, putting on white clothes to participate. Material culture is also exchanged; visitors do come with different materials that are alien to the indigenous people. In the other hands, the visitors also find materials in Idanre, which is unknown to them. Often at times, these materials are exchanged on an economic basis.

The economies of Idanre to a certain extent rely on tourism. Therefore, one cannot talk about the socio-economy of Idanre without talking about tourism. Although, the people engage in other economic activities like farming, trading, provision of various services and some being formally employed. The people also major in cocoa production, timbers, palm oil and more. These products are being sold to other parts of the state or the country or even exported. It is tourism, both the hills and the festival that, that attracts people into the town. Yet, tourism serves as the major activity that improves the economy of the city, also bringing the city into international recognition. Social Exchange Theory is used to explain this interaction. Cultural items, material and non-material, are being traded and inter-changed during the process of communications.

"The town of Idanre is blessed with abundant culture; both material and non-material. When we have visitors from other parts of the world, there is always a surprise from their own culture; their kind of clothes and mode of dressing. The way they do speak English sometimes is different. Most times, it seems as though we need to learn how to speak English anew. Most time, some of us find these differences to be fascinating, and we tend to adopt them. The same is also applicable to visitors. Some of them even buy our food to take it away to their home country because they find the food to be so delicious".

(Respondent/male/50years/Idanre/IDI/2019)

"During the Orosun festival, there is usually an increase in sales, and the price of goods at the top of the mountain is high compared to the price at the bottom. I do sell edible goods such as bread, drinks, etc on the hill. Also, if I should buy goods worth, for instance, seventy thousand naira (N70,000), during this period, I will make more profit compared to the non-festive period. This is due to the high demand for goods as a result of a multitude of tourists. This tourism has changed our economic status, and we are always looking forward to that period."

(Respondent/female/60yrs/Idanre/KII/2019)

"Farming has been one of the socio-economic activities of the people of Idanre for decades. It's through farming that we were able to produce cocoa and other products for commercial purpose and exportation. The Orosun festival is highly revered in the town. Young and old, male and female are allowed to participate. When the government and outside world recognised the festival, it brought about the exposure of the town and its culture, which attracts people to Idanre every year."

(Respondent /female/40years/Idanre/IDI/2019)

The correlation between tourism and socio-economic activities of Idanre people.

From casual observation, the economies of Idanre to a certain extent rely on tourism. Although, the people engage in other economic activities like farming, trading, provision of various services and some being

formally employed. The people also major in cocoa production, timbers, palm oil and more. These products are being sold to other parts of the state or the country or even exported. It is tourism, both the hills and the festival that, that attracts people into the town. Yet, tourism serves as the major activity that improves the economy of the city, also bringing the city into international recognition. Social Exchange theory can be used to explain the economic exchange processes between the people of Idanre and the visitors.

"Farming has been one of the socio-economic activities of the people of Idanre for decades. It's through farming that we were able to produce cocoa and other products for commercial purpose and exportation. However, Orosun festival had also brought about commerce to the town. When the government and outside world recognised the festival, it brought about the exposure of the town and its culture, which attracts people to Idanre every year."

(Respondent /female/40years/Idanre/IDI/2019)

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(Respondent12/female/60yrs/Idanre/KII/2019)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Nigeria, as a country is blessed with an abundance of touristic potentials. But unlike many countries that properly utilise their touristic potentials to create massive wealth, Nigeria solely depends on oil. The tourism industry could be elevated to a standardised means of wealth generation for the country, thereby providing gainful employment to its teeming youths. Interesting investors in the sector should be able to find the industry attractive, and the government should collaborate with these investors and complement their effort by putting the necessary facilities in place.

This study has explored the Idanre hills resort and discovered the beauty of nature in the environment. If this tourist site is being developed, it will elevate the tourism potentials in Idanre, promote the socio-economic activities of the people of Idanre and as well improve the economy of Ondo State at large. Also, the festival will be more attractive than it is now. From the study it was also understood that the presence of a tourist site in the town had changed the city significantly. One such way is by opening up the city to the international world when it was recognised as one of the UNESCO tourist sites in the world.

Again, tourism has affected the cultural practices of the people as they engage in a series of interaction with the visitors. A lot of cultural exchange process has taken place between the people and its visitors; the people in one way or the other has imbibed some cultural practices of the visitors, and the same can also be said of the visitors.

In light of these, the following recommendations are made; more awareness should be made about tourism at Idanre. It will get more people informed, both locally and internationally. More social amenities should be made available in the town, especially road network, accommodation and market, where the visitors can get what they want, thereby increasing their comfortability. The environment should be beautified with more flowers and street lights. Economic activities such as cocoa plantation should be modernised in order to boost production both for local sales and exportation. Effort should be made to protect the cultural heritage of the people for it not to be eroded away due to constant aculturation with foreign cultures.

Further study should apply the quantitative approach to examine the extent of the effect of tourism on the socio-economic activity of the people.

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