



EVALUATION OF THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM ON THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT OF OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to identify the impacts of tourism on the physical and socio-economic environment of Oredo Local Government Area in Edo State. To achieve this, the local government area was divided into four (4) zones – A, B, C and D. Both structured questionnaires, interview and observation were adopted for data collection. 390 respondents were purposively chosen from the 4 zones in accordance with their population sizes. Out of 390 copies of questionnaire distributed to them, 341 were duly completed and returned. In each zone, respondents consist of town union executives, traditional rulers, school principals and headmasters, retired civil servants, local government councilors, staff of tourism board and Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Respondents were requested to scale each of the 24 variable impacts contained in the questionnaire as very serious, slightly serious, not serious or not known depending on one's perception, and to give specific examples if the choice is very serious or slightly serious. Simple proportional percentages were used to analyse the data. Results indicate that tourism has serious physical impacts, such as loss of farmland, deforestation, loss of bio diversity, economic impacts such as job creation, improved household income, inflation, sale of local crafts and social impacts such as cultural adulteration, inter tribal marriages, formation of friendship ties and increased crime rate. It is recommended that the local government should adopt the concepts of sustainable and honey spots tourism as well as mass environmental education to sensitize and mobilize local citizenry for enhanced ecotourism.

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Introduction

The success experience of some countries such as France, Egypt, Greece, Lebanon, United States, Kenya, Italy and many Island countries like Mauritius and Bahamas that boast their Gross National Product (GNP) from the large amount of income earned from tourism, appear to be influencing the thinking of governments in Nigeria to take tourism seriously. This reasoning is based on the fact that within the 20th century and particularly the past 20 years, there is a continued growth of interest in Nigeria on how people spend their leisure time to visit different places, destinations and localities (Copper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Fyail and Wall, 2008). At a global scale, this interest is becoming an international phenomenon where there is keen interest in people visiting foreign countries to spend their leisure and non-work time to experience and see what they were not used to. Localities or regions that possess unique tourist attractions usually witness an upsurge of tourists annually.

Nigeria offers a wide variety of tourism attractions that attract tourists all over the world, this include short and long rivers, extended ocean beaches, unique tropical wild life, submerged coasts, vast tracts of undisturbed nature ranging from tropical rain forest, well developed waterfalls, tropical grassland, desert features, mountains and lakes formed from diverse origins, highland modified climate, traditional and modern fast growing cities, indigenous countryside settlements, several unique event festivals with exiting masquerades and diverse socio-cultural heritage across the country.

Different sub-areas and regions within Nigeria offer peculiar tourism potentials which also attract tourists from within and outside Nigeria. Such regions include Oredo Local Government Area in Edo State and other surrounding Local government Areas in Edo State. In particular, Oredo Local government with Benin City as its headquarters offers a wide variety of tourism attractions to the extent that the Local government generates enormous revenue from tourism annually. This is because the local government is endowed with a variety of tourism potentials such as clement climate, traditional works of art and life style, the unique Oba Palace, exotic hotels, museums, cinema hall, event festivals which is over twenty between the month of March to December each year, the pre-colonial moat, ancient architecture, agricultural plantations, statues of pre-colonial heros and its peculiar spider-radial layout pattern. Infact Oredo is endowed with tourism assets ranging from cultural tourism, eco-tourism, historical tourism, sports tourism and economic tourism (Ofuani, 2012).

As a region with several tourist potentials, Oredo Local Government Area is showered encomiums for its splendors, excellence and creative arts in addition to its fame of being the tourist delight and investor's destination. The area is known for its traditional hospitality, the natives are warm enlightened people who are friendly and ever willing to offer helping hand to others particularly visitors and strangers.

Following from this, Oredo receives tourists from within and outside the country and hence quite popular in domestic and international tourism. The Local government has on its own expended tremendous resources to provide extensive tourism infrastructures and facilities to boast tourism and this enhanced the attraction of tourists from far places such as North America, Western Europe, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Turkey, and South Africa and from other parts of Nigeria. Right from the period of 1980, the influx of tourists into the area has been on the increase annually to the extent that currently one of the intractable challenges facing the Local government is how to address the problems emanating from increased tempo of tourism.

Following from this observed mass tourism, it is noted that tourism is an environment dependant activity and as such possess a two-way interactive relationship; tourism and the environment affect each in various ways. The impact which tourism makes on the environment is increasingly becoming an interesting questions to the environmentalists (Fletcher, 2008). This is because in an attempt to make adequate provisions for tourisms, the environment is in one way or the other affected negatively or positively.

One major assumption of this study is that the increasing trend of tourism in Oredo Local government is not doing so without some environmental implications. It is suspected that as tourism is expanding in the area, the environment must be experiencing some modifications, most of which need to be guarded against. Following from this, the aim of this study is to identify the impacts of tourism on the physical and socio-economic environment of Oredo Local Government Area in Edo State, Nigeria. In pursuance of this aim the following research questions will guide the study;

- (i) What impacts has tourism on the physical environment of Oredo Local Government Area?
- (ii) How do tourism activities affect the socio-economic environment of Oredo Local Government Area?

Review of Literature and Conceptual Issues

What constitutes tourism is not easy to be definitive about. This is a reflection of its complexity and also indicative of its immaturity as a field of study (Uwadiogwu, 2006) particularly in Nigeria. It can be described as a network of activities of persons who travel to and stay at destination outside their normal places of residence for pleasure, business, visiting friends and relations, sightseeing, health reasons, sports, holidays, study, meetings, religion, etc provided that the purpose is not connected with taking permanent residence or paid employment at the destination and the travel is undertaken as a leisure pursuit (Holloway, 1994). Tourism activities are inclusive of those who provide visitors with the enabling environments for the sojourn to take place for mutual benefits. The sojourner and the host benefit symbiotically. The tourists benefit from destination tourism products and service delivery to satisfy their tourism needs. The host on the other hand benefit from the tourists through enhanced household income, employment, investment opportunities as well as the stimulation of local cultures, arts and crafts.

The volume of tourism traffic to a destination is a function of the availability of tourism amenities and attractions. The more varied and differentiated the destination attractions the more the volume of tourism traffic towards that destination. Tourism leans heavily on the environment (Wood, 1997, Ezema, 1993, Lameed, 1999). Tourism activities are promoted, conditioned, influenced and sustained by environmental quality, hence tourism of any kind, and in any setting is built on attractions that motivate the tourists to commit interest, time and money into embarking on a tour of the attractive destination or event (Tumba, 1993, Ngoka, 2007). This suggests that certain elements of the environment constitute attractions which inform tourism. Such elements could be natural, cultural or man-made. It is therefore difficult to discuss tourism in the absence of the flora and fauna which constitute a major part of natural ecosystem (Ngoka, Ochor and Dike, 2010).

The environment, consisting of the lithosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere, is the most fundamental ingredient of tourism and its product. Thus, tourism is one of the major consumers of the environmental elements worldwide. The relationship between tourism and the environment is complex, sensitive and close. Tourism contributes to greater demand for natural resources and stimulates the development of an environment but Isaac (2000) observes that although tourism has been presented as a viable industry that is critical to the economies of many nations through its potential for creating small and medium scale tourism related businesses, generating employment, alleviating poverty and engendering environmental and cultural awareness, its potentials are limited by its tendency to contribute directly to environmental degradation. Thus, tourism produces both negative and positive impacts on the environment. Tourism environment includes natural, cultural, social, economic, political and demographic realms that interact positively or negatively with tourism. The boom in the tourism industry since the middle of the 20th century has led to several problems (Ngoka et al, 2010). Increased number of tourists requires a corresponding compromise of natural landscape to make way for tourist infrastructure and facilities. Sheer numbers can very quickly overload both natural and man-made systems and over stretch the carrying capacity of the systems.

Negative impacts of tourism occur when the level of visitor use is greater than the environment's ability to cope with its use and the acceptable limits of change (Hearly, 2000). These impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure such as roads, airports, tourism facilities such as resorts, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses and health care systems. Besides, most tourists inadvertently destroy what they have come to see. The negative effects of tourism development can gradually destroy the environmental resources on which tourism depends. Some of the negative effects are as follows;

- (1) **Contamination of water bodies:** Tourism impact negatively on water resources. Tourism industry use water bodies and in the process result to water shortage and degradation of water supplies (Dekadt, 1992). Use of water for recreation, transportation, washing, cooling of plants and manufacturing of goods and drinks result in water contamination, eutrophication and odour.

(2).**Air Pollution and Noise Pollution:** The use of air, road, water and rail for tourism transportation results to air and noise pollution. Doxey (1975) says that studies have shown that a single trans Atlantic return flight emits almost half the carbon (iv) oxide emissions produced by all other sources such as lighting, heating, automobile use etc consumed by an average person annually. West (2006) stated that noise pollution from air planes, vehicles, snowmobiles, jet streams, social parties and public functions causes annoyance, stress and even hearing loss.

(3).**Local Resources:** Tourism can lead to great pressure on local resources like energy and other raw materials that may already be in short supply. Page and Hall (2002) stated that greater extraction and movement of these resources exacerbate the physical impacts associated with their exploitation. During peak periods of tourism many localities experience ten times more visitors thereby placing a high demand upon local resources.

(4).**Land Degradation:** Important land resources affected negatively include fertile soil, forests, wetlands and wildlife. Increased construction of tourism facilities has increased the pressure on these resources and on scenic landscape (Jaakson, 1997). According to Wood (1997), the Alps receives over 50 million international visitors and some 7 million passenger vehicles each year. Construction and development of infrastructure and facilities to satisfy the needs of those visitors lead to local resource devastation and degradation. Forests suffer negative impacts in the form of deforestation caused by forest clearing for construction purposes.

(5).**Solid Waste and Littering:** Popular tourist centres experience serious waste disposal problems. Improper disposal can be a major despoiler of the natural environment (rivers, scenic areas and roads). For example, cruise ships in the Caribbean are estimated to produce more than 70,000 tons of waste each year (Kamugro, 2007). Solid waste and littering can degrade the physical appearance of water bodies which constitute threats to aquatic life. Tourists leave behind their garbage, oxygen cylinders, kerosene stoves and other camping equipments which cause nuisance after departure.

(6).**Aesthetic Pollution:** Hasty construction of houses, accommodation and recreation facilities lead to establishment of structures whose designs are not in complete harmony with the general environment in which they are situated. Construction of tourist camps at the outskirts can lead to sprawling and leap frog developments. These constitute serious assault on the environmental appeal and aesthetics. Some hotels and other attractions which are patronized because of their unique architectural and special facilities, may, with time, experience over demand, and in an attempt to expand and meet the increased demand, the original architectural design may be destroyed, thus reducing the aesthetic appeal of the destination.

(7).**Impacts on Fauna:** Wildlife can be affected directly through hunting and harvesting to provide souvenirs for tourists. Live animals are also sometimes sold as pets or used for photograph posing only to be killed when the animal becomes too big or weak to be handled (Holloway, 2006). Tourism also help in spreading of diseases through increased mobility of man and animals. It is believed that high incidence of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in East and South Africa is associated with tourism which brings the Wester adventure seekers to the region (Ngoka *et al*, 2010). Shanthlkumer and Atilola (1990), reported an outbreak of rinderpest among valued wildlife in Yankari Game Reserve, Bauchi State, Nigeria in 1983 in which 207 buffalo, 20 Warthog, 8 Waterbuck and 2 bushbuck carcasses were recovered from the reserve area. The rinderpest was believed to have spread from infested livestock which came in contact with wildlife.

(8).**Impacts on Floras:** Development of tourism infrastructure and facilities alter the integrity of the biodiversity of localities. The proliferation of sports activities for various ends cause deforestation and erosion. Tourist activities have the tendency of destabilizing plant density and decrease biomas (Wood, 1997).

Since every coin has its reverse side, tourism has some positive impacts which are enjoyed by both the visitors and host communities. They include;

- (1) Conservation: Conservation of Wildlife and natural resources such as rainforests which are now regarded as tourism assets (Colvin, 1994). It reduces environmental problems such as over fishing and deforestation in developing societies. This is the essence of ecotourism.

- (2) Scientific Research: Tourism encourages scientific research on ecological systems, biodiversity and wildlife.
- (3) Creation of Local Awareness: Local people learn from tourism the value of their culture, immediate surroundings and regard for visitors. Some communities have hostile attitude towards visitors but tourism teaches co-operation and harmonious co-existence.
- (4) Enhancement of Aesthetic Value: According to Ibru, (2004) tourism promotes the beautification of attractions to make them more appealing and pleasing to visitors.
- (5) Generation of Employment: Tourism creates both seasonal and permanent employment in hospitality industries, health delivery systems, transportation, security, mass media, insurance, immigration etc.
- (6) Foreign Exchange: Tourism is a powerful foreign exchange earner which works in the same way as export to the government of the host country.
- (7) Gross Domestic Product (GDP): Tourism has emerged as a major component of national economies, it is also a socio-economic phenomenon with tremendous positive contributions to GDP of a nation. According to Ibru (2004), international tourism contributes 10% of the world's Gross Domestic Product.
- (8) Contribution to Government Revenue; Direct revenue contributions are generated by taxes on income from tourism employment and tourism business and levies on tourism business such as departure taxes, restaurant taxes, airport use taxes and park entrance fees (Carter, 1994). Indirect contributions come from taxes and duties on goods and services supplied.
- (9) Stimulation of Infrastructural Development: Tourism stimulates the provision of roads, electricity, water, drainages, hospitals, Bank branches, etc which lead to improvement of local living standard.
- (10) Promotion of Local Popularity: Tourism has the potentials of promoting and positioning a nation's image as well as sub-localities more than any sector of the national economy (Ibru, 2004). Other positive economic impacts of tourism include the limitation of rural – urban migration, economic opportunities for the local people, thus it helps in alleviation of rural poverty, stimulation of local goods and production of local crafts which enhances community pride and heritage.

Tourism is also known to have produced some negative impacts which affect the economy of nations. Such negative impacts include;

- (1) **Opportunity Costs:** The opportunity cost of tourism development in many cases is enormous. According to Sindiga (1994) public resources spent on the provision of tourism infrastructure reduces government investment in other critical areas such as education, health and security.
- (2) **Hike in Price of Goods and Services:** Tourists' demand increases costs of basic goods and services. West (2006) stated that as a consequence of tourism development and demand, the prices for local goods and services could increase up to 80% particularly in rents, land value, taxi fares and hospital bills.
- (3) **Neglect of Local economy:** Because of purposes of convenience, the local people may lose interest on their laborious economy and shift to tourism business. Over-reliance on tourism carries significant risks (Ziffer, 1989).

The social environment is also affected by tourism such as spreading of diseases due to tourism sex, conflict arising from tourist behavior which are not in line with the local way of life, increase in crime rate at the local communities (Mathieson and Wall, 1982), relocation of settlement to alien location, example, Maasai in East Africa (Kamuaro, 2007) and displacement or adulteration of local culture and tradition (Brohman, 1996).

Methods and Materials

Benin City is the headquarters of Oredo Local Government Area which shares boundaries with Egor Local Government Area in the east, Ikpoba-Okha Local Government Area in the west and Delta State in the south, all in the south western part of Nigeria.

Oredo L.G.A. occupies an area of 317.08 square kilometers and its population is currently projected to 374,672 people (Ofuani, 2012). The study is principally survey in design and was carried out between June 2011 to September 2013. Both primary and secondary approaches were adopted for data sourcing.

For effective data collection Oredo L.G.A. was divided into 4 zones, namely zones A, B, C and D. Zone A comprises of communities within Evouogida, Uboko and Ezoma axis, zone B includes communities within Iguose, Ogunwenyi and Ugigbigi axis while Idumuwnun, Ivbiator, Oko, Arougha and Benin Airport axis constitute zone C and D consists of communities and settlements within Ugboiyokho, Obiazegbon, Oghede, Umurogbo and Urehin axis.

Data were collected by structured questionnaires, oral interviews and observation. The questionnaire instrument was structured into four sections. The first section deals with the biodata of the respondents, the second section solicits data on the physical impact of tourism while third section covers the social impacts. The fourth section requested data on the economic impact of tourism in the relevant zones. In each zone, respondents consist of immediate past and present Town Union executive members, traditional rulers and their council members, principals and headmasters of secondary and primary schools, as well as indigenous retired civil servants. Table 1 shows questionnaire distribution format.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

S/N	Area	No Distributed	No Returned	% Return
1	Zone A	85	75	88.2
2	B	90	72	80.0
3	C	90	82	91.1
4	D	100	91	91.0
5	Local Government Councilors	10	9	90.0
6	Tourism Board	5	4	80.0
7	Ministry of Culture & Tourism	10	8	80.0
	TOTAL	390	341	87.4

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

Respondents from Local and State headquarters include local government councilors, staff of Tourism Board and Ministry of Culture and Tourism. These respondents were purposively selected and were believed to be knowledgeable enough about the aim of the study. Out of 390 copies of questionnaire distributed, 341 which were well completed and returned were content analysed together with interview information. Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the questionnaire contain 24 variable impacts likely to emanate from tourism. Respondents were requested to indicate either very serious, slightly serious, not serious or not known against each of the variable impacts depending on perception and experience. Respondents were equally requested to indicate specific examples to expatiate their choices particularly in the choice of “very serious” and “slightly serious” options. Simple proportional percentages were adopted for data analysis and presentation.

Results and Discussions

Tourism stimulates a unique types of interaction between tourism activities and the environment some of which lead to degradation while others are quite promotional of some environmental attributes. The environment, whether natural or cultural, forms the basic foundation upon which tourism flourishes and as such likely to bring about some degrees of changes on the environment. Tables 2, 3 and 4 show the outcome of the analyses of the returned questionnaires while Table 5 shows summary of the deduced physical impacts from Table 2 which shows the three categories of impacts namely; very serious impacts, slightly serious and not serious impacts (See Table 5).

Table 2: Physical Impact of Tourism

Category	Aesthetic improvement		Noise pollution		Loss of farmland		Air pollution		Water pollution		Deforestation	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very Serious	4.5	13	107	31.4	154	45.2	62	18.2	88	25.8	148	49.3
Slightly serious	211	51.9	138	40.5	122	35.8	121	34.5	174	51.0	111	32.6
Not serious	85	35.1	73	21.4	50	14.7	132	38.7	101	29.6	67	18.1
Not known	-	-	23	6.7	15	4.3	26	8.6	22	6.4	-	-
TOTAL	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100

Table 2 Cont'd

Category	Destruction of Wildlife		Displacement of settlement		Population increase		Structural deformation		Conservation	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very Serious	152	44.6	-	-	244	71.6	211	61.9	223	65.4
Slightly serious	102	29.9	-	-	52	15.2	72	21.1	67	19.6
Not serious	81	23.8	248	72.7	40	11.7	50	14.7	34	10.0
Not known	6	1.7	93	27.3	5	1.5	8	2.3	17	5.0
TOTAL	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

Table 3: Impact on Social Environment

Category	Crime increase		Displacement of culture		Disagreement and conflicts		Marriage breakup		Inter-tribal marriages		Development of friendship ties	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very serious	116	34.0	244	71.6	168	49.3	78	22.9	149	43.7	184	54.0
Slightly serious	152	44.6	72	21.1	103	30.2	178	52.2	134	39.3	157	46.0

Not known	61	17.9	21	6.2	41	12.0	52	15.2	32	9.4	-	-
	12	3.5	4	1.1	29	8.5	33	9.7	26	7.6	-	-
TOTAL	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

Table 4: Impact on Economic Environment

Category	Job creation		Private Income opportunities		Inflation		Increase in Government Revenue		Investment attraction		Marketing local crafts		Community development	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Very serious	166	48.7	170	50.0	168	49.3	172	50.4	42	12.3	175	51.3	180	52.8
Slightly serious	92	27.0	99	29.0	102	29.9	104	30.5	106	31.1	100	29.3	114	33.4
Not serious	80	23.5	70	20.5	52	15.2	40	11.7	174	51.0	64	18.8	27	7.9
Not known	3	0.8	2	0.5	19	5.6	23	7.4	19	5.6	2	0.6	20	5.9
TOTAL	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100	341	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2013

Table 5: Summary of Physical Impacts extracted from Table 2

s/n	Category	Description
1	Very Serious Physical Impact	(i) Loss of farmland (ii) Deforestation (iii) Destruction of Wildlife and loss of biodiversity (iv) Population increase (v) Structural deformation (vi) Conservation measures
2	Slightly serious	(i) Aesthetic Improvement (ii) Noise pollution (iii) Water pollution
3	Not serious	(i) Air pollution (ii) Displacement of settlements

Source: Table 2

In agreement with Hervey and Hoare (2002) most physical impacts of tourism are linked with the construction of general tourism support infrastructure such as roads, transport terminals and other facilities which promote tourism such as hotels, resorts, restaurants, shops, golf courses, play fields etc. Clearance and grading of sites for tourism, infrastructure and facilities in Oredo led to deforestation, loss of valuable farmland, destruction of wildlife and sometimes soil erosion. For instance, the construction of Lizz Bon Hotel, Edo Hotel and Oba Akenzua II Cultural Centre led to the loss of over 6.4 hectares of land which originally contained several species of tropical trees including plants that produce sap for rubber synthesis. The Idabor Arts Gallery alone brought about the destruction of 2.8 hectares of virgin plants and farmland which used to yield sustenance to local Bini peasant farmers. The loss in biodiversity and farmland is enormous and irreversible. Little wonder why the respondents perceived such losses as very serious.

Inclusive in the category of very serious impacts in Oredo are the problems associated with increase in human population. Botkin and Keller (1998) are of the view that underlying nearly all environmental problems is increase in human population. Increase in human population has the tendency to mount more pressure on the environmental resources which results to appreciation of degradation and waste generation. Tourism, particularly during the peak period which occurs during dry season from October to March leads to increase in visitors to Oredo L.G.A. thus upsetting existing delicate balances in cost of goods and services particularly in food items, transport services, accommodation rents, locally designed clothings and foot wears etc.

In order to provide accommodation for increased number of visitors, many landlords embark on extension of their houses by adding new rooms as attachments to the main house thus structurally enlarging the houses to amorphous shapes. Over time, particularly when vacated by the temporally visitors, the houses remain as assaults to the neighbourhood scape. Similarly, building extensions decrease air and parking spaces thus triggering off a host of other living problems. This kind of problems are common in Urubi, Uzebu, Oliha, Ogbelaka, Ibiwe, Ewase, New Benin and Okhoro areas.

Tourism at Oredo has also helped in the conservation programmes particularly in conservation of historic artifacts such as the ancient moat, Emotan statue, Oba Palace and the National Museum where several works of local arts are kept and preserved. There are also several zoological and botanical gardens in Oredo where attempts are being made to conserve and preserve endangered flora and fauna species, example, the Ogba Zoological garden.

Noise and water pollution were perceived as slightly serious impacts. It is not surprising that Oredo people did not record noise and water pollutions as very serious. This is because one of the surprises is the level of ignorance exhibited by people in third world countries about environmental pollutions. Lack of environmental education and sensitization about the health implications of various types of pollutions make people to take pollutions for granted. Thus even if tourism produces such pollution effects, low perception of the people will make them to disregard it as serious fallouts from tourism. Otherwise, with increased land and air traffic volume, night parties etc during the tourism peak period, one would expect a corresponding increase in noise pollution as well as water pollution due to increased waste generation.

During field observations, there were evidences of structural face lifts, colourful decorations and planting of ornamental trees and flowers around public and private buildings. Most parks and gardens look well kept which result to aesthetic improvement in the area. Though classified as slightly serious, there is evidence that in an attempt to provide comfortable environment for the visitors, the aesthetic quality of the area is enhanced. Therefore, one of the impacts of tourism at Oredo L.G.A. is the enhancement of environmental quality.

Air pollution and settlement displacement are not serious impacts of tourism at Oredo. Air pollution may have been under-reported due to lack of studies. Settlement displacement has not occurred but, however, only land use displacement was reported such as displacement of agricultural landuse by institutional and recreational land uses.

Social Impacts of Tourism

Table 6 presents the summary of the social impacts of tourism at Oredo Local government area.

Table 6: Categories of Social Impacts

s/n	Category	Description
1	Very Serious Impacts	(i) Cultural displacement/adultration (ii) Disagreement and conflicts (iii) Inter tribal marriages (iv) Formation of friendship ties
2	Slightly serious Impacts	(i) Increase in crime rate (ii) Marriage break up
3	Not known	Not applicable

Source: Extracted from Table 3

One of the reported serious impacts relates to cultural displacement and adulteration. Respondents reported that tourism brings alien cultures into their locality and since the local people have the inclination to copy the alien culture in attempt to look modern, some elements of the indigenous cultures are either totally displaced or adulterated. Since women and youths are the vulnerable groups, cultural compromises are expressed in them more than in others. According to Brohman (1996) one unpleasant outcome of tourism is that perceived superior culture often displaces the inferior one as they interact over time. Adulteration of local culture if not properly handled may lead to opposition to the tourism industry by the Local elites.

Other reported serious social impacts emanating from tourism include disagreement and conflicts of interest. This happens when visitors were found to infringe on the local practices or are being forced to observe local practices. Fortunately the Oba institution always settles amicably such conflict of interests. On the contrary Oredo tourism has helped many indigens to secure foreign friends that paved way for higher achievements. Some locales have been assisted by tourists to travel out to other countries of the world with several other attendant benefits.

Other social impacts of less importance are increase in crime rate and marriage break-up. Common crimes listed include breaking and entry, swindling, trickery, prostitution and abduction in which the major victims are the visitors. There were four reported cases where married women abandoned their homes in favour of a foreign visitor, thus confirming cases of marriage break-up.

Economic Impact of Tourism

Table 7 presents the summary of economic impact of tourism in Oredo as extracted from Table 4. Job creation is an outstanding impact of tourism at Oredo Local government area. Jobs are created as more hands are required for travel agencies and tour operators. Jobs are also created by transport services at airports, taxes and transport booking clerks, cleaners in hospitality industries as well as at camps and resort centres. Many people get employment through these avenues. Between 2009 and 2013, not less than 1,622 persons got either temporary or permanent employment via tourism related activities in the local government (State Tourism Board, Benin City, 2013).

Table 7: Categories of Economic Impacts extracted from Table 4.

s/n	Category	Description
1	Very Serious Impacts	(i) Job creation (ii) Enhancement of private/personal income (iii) Inflation (iv) Increases in government revenue (v) Marketing local crafts (vi) Community development
2	Slightly serious	Nil
3	Not serious	Attraction of Investment
4	Not Known	Nil

Source: Extracted from Table 4

There is also the enhancement of personal income since some individuals get involved in the sale and production of local crafts, conversion of residential houses to guest houses and private cars to airport and shuttle taxis. Many people get involved in petty trading and services provision. All these enhance personal income and hence contribute to poverty reduction.

One bad effect of tourism in Oredo is that it leads to high rise in market prices. Local traders are in the habit of hiking prices of goods particularly during peak periods thus creating impressions of inflation conditions.

On the other hand both state government and local government generate a lot of revenue from tourism. Though statistics are unavailable, respondents indicate that governments generate revenue through taxes and licences on tourism activities. Since Oredo has been witnessing up surge of tourists since the last decade, it is expected that both the local and state governments are witnessing increased revenue from tourism. Tourism creates opportunities for the sale of the cherished local crafts to tourists and visitors. This is a very strong avenue for marketing and advertising Oredo art work and crafts to the outside world.

Similarly, tourism has contributed immensely to community development. In order to boost tourism, electricity and all season roads were extended from Benin to Aduwawa, Ekinosodi, Ugbekun-Oka and Eboriaria which are notable centres for event tourism such as Igue, Eghute, Ugivie and Ikhure festivals. Many communities such as Ugbor and Ogida-Use now possess ultra modern hospitals and five star hotels for the benefits of tourists. The airport at Benin has also received some face lifts which is attributable to the development of tourism.

However, respondents did not relate any foreign investment into tourism. In other words, tourism in Oredo has not led to any noticeable foreign investment within the communities.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it must be pointed out that a damaging impact is made on the environment by tourism when the revenue oriented interest outweighs ecological and environmental concern. Attempt must be made to strike a balance between contesting interests. Quite often the short term financial gains interest outweighs consideration for protection of biodiversity and other environmental realms. Environmental impact assessment should thus precede all tourism development programmes because of the delicate balance which exists between tourism and the environment. Proper evaluation of the ecological value and fragility of tourism sites in Oredo L.G.A. especially in natural settings should be undertaken before the pressures of tourism start to weigh drastically on them (Ngoka *et al* 2010).

There is also the need to pursue tourism development in line with the principles of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism has three key components namely (i) environmentally sustainable tourism, (ii) social and cultural sustainable tourism, and (iii) economically sustainable tourism. This kind of tourism has minimal negative impact on flora, fauna, habitats, water, marine resources, energy use and contamination. This type of tourism has regard for the social structure and culture of the community they are located and as such respect local cultures and tradition. They also contribute to the economic well being of the communities and other stakeholders. This simply means running tourism business in such a way that it does not destroy natural, cultural or economic resources but rather encourages an appreciation of the very resources that tourism is dependent on (Ofuani, 2012).

Oredo Local government should adopt the “honey pots” concept of tourism. This tourism concept is a situation where tourism is organised into intergrated resort development so that mass tourism is spatially dispersed and with copious opportunity for local participation. Honey pots tourism admits tourists to various sites in batches rather than rat race style. This is to ensure maximum tourist control and management.

There is need for environmental education in Oredo. This is to create environmental and social awareness among the citizenry. Both the visitors and the communities should be dissuaded from environment unfriendly habits in their daily lives such as indiscriminate deforestation and littering, local people must be taught the dangers of discarding their local practices in favour of alien ones and the risk involved in marrying foreigners without parental involvement and blessings and the curse that follows a spouse that abducts with a foreigner illegally.

CONCLUSION

Tourism has started to produce some serious negative impact at Oredo local government area but has not gone too far. There is every need for the local government to be aware that as it pursues programmes aimed at boosting tourism, there is also the other side effect on the environment which if not properly guarded and

protected may lead to future environmental catastrophe. Every action taken to promote tourism must be carried out in such a way that it will impact minimally on the environment. The tempo of tourism in Oredo is quite encouraging and has brought many goodies to the local communities as well as some regrets. There is need for the local government and the communities to find a way of striking a balance between economic gains and ecological losses of tourism. This means that everybody such as the Oba and his cabinet members, teachers and school children, women organizations, town unions, age grades, social clubs, religious groups, retired and serving civil servants, tourism board, councilors, politicians, traders, businessmen and women, youth movements etc must be involved in tourism through sensitization and mobilization.

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