

LOCAL RESIDENTS ATTITUDE AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

It is well established that tourism has been playing a major role in the development of any nation and particularly the local community that hosts tourism destination. Tourism has become one of the main stream of national economic development of the world in the recent decades. This study examined the local residents' attitudes toward tourism development in Nigeria and it's impacts on tourists' interest to visit with reference to The Port Harcourt Zoo in Rivers State. A cross-sectional, quasi-experimental design was adopted for the study. A total of 50 copies of questionnaire was administered to the local residents and 45 copies were retrieved. The findings revealed that that there is a strong positive relationship between resident's tolerance of tourists and their revenue generation within their locality. The findings further revealed that there is a there is a strong positive relationship between tolerance and tourist visit to the Port Harcourt zoo. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that Factors should be put in place to properly maintain the zoo and the tourist activities. The Local residents should be encouraged to participate in the planning, control and the entire management process of the zoo.

Keywords: Attitude, Tourism development, Residents, Socio-cultural, Residents' Tolerance

Introduction

In developing countries, tourism can be a viable opportunity to improve local residents' quality of life through providing jobs, generating income, diversifying the economy, protecting the environment, and promoting cross-cultural awareness (Honey & Raymond 2009). However, tourism not only creates benefits, but also harms aspects of the economy, society, culture, and environment. Previous research regarding sustainable tourism indicated that one of the important reasons that tourism develops sustainable benefits to local communities includes local support for tourism activities. That is why the inhabitants' approach to tourism development is one of the most comprehensively researched areas of tourism and has been the subject of research for over 30 years (McGehee & Andereck 2004). Many studies on this topic usually seek the level of support for residents for the development of tourism in one or more regions and factors affecting local attitudes (Perdue, Long, & Allen L.1990).

The research was carried out at the Port Harcourt zoo in Port Harcourt, whose main goal was to examine the factors affecting the attitude

of residents to tourism development. This study will serve as a useful reference to the Port Harcourt zoo and similar areas.

Literature Review

Attitude is a psychological, mental, and emotional construct that enters or characterizes a person (Richard, 2016). They are complex and are acquired through experience. It is a predisposed state of mind of an individual in relation to values and it is precipitated by reacting to a person, place, thing or event, which in turn affects his thought and action.

Perceptions and attitudes of local residents can affect the success or failure of the local tourism industry (Ap 1992). The theory of social exchange considers why support for tourism depends on tourists' perception of the impact of tourism (Jurowski et al. 1997b). However, when tourism develops, some benefit and others are negatively affected (McGehee & Andereck 2004). Once a community becomes a tourist destination, the daily lives of its residents are transformed by the presence of increasing numbers of visitors and tourist-oriented activities (Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997) depending on the stage of tourism development in their community (Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013). Over the past decade, the effects of tourism development on QOL have received considerable attention (Woo, Kim, & Uysal, 2015; Xian Liang & Kee Hui, 2016). The new trend of empirical and theoretical research in tourism is focused on the effect of tourism behaviors on life and experiences of others such as residence (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). New research places a greater emphasis on the impacts of tourism development on residents' perception; the impacts are not only economic, but also cultural, social and environmental outcomes (Derry, Hago, & Fredline, , 2012; Kim, et al, 2013; Ozturk & Ozer, 2015).

Local residents who perceive themselves as enjoying tourism probably perceive it positively, while residents who perceive themselves as incurring costs probably perceive tourism negatively (Perdue, et al 1990; Jurowski, Uysal , & Williams . 1997a; McGehee & Andereck 2004; Wang & Pfister 2008). In addition, residents who perceive tourism as personally valuable and believe that tourism-related costs do not exceed the benefits will likely support the development of tourism (Ap 1992; Látková & Vogt 2012).

However, complete independence and dependence are not impossible. A person who reacts with a strong perspective on exchange theory can more accept tourism than others (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005). McGehee and Andereck (2004) stated that residents addicted to tourism development will probably see a higher level of positive impact of tourism and express greater support for tourism activities. In addition, some authors suggest that the level of tourism development is a component that influences attitudes (Long et al. 1990). This means that the inhabitants of communities

with different levels of tourism development have a different approach to tourism development. Látková and Vogt (2012) suggested that a positive attitude to tourism development would have a high level of tourism development. In addition, Long et al. (1990) stated that the attitude towards tourism may become more negative when there is a higher level of tourism. Allen, Hafer, Long, and Perdue (1993) suggested that the level of tourism development in the community is not related to respondents' attitudes towards recreation and tourism development (Allen et al. 1993). The attitudes of residents also depend on the level of development of the community's economy. The attitude of inhabitants to the development of tourism in communities with higher economic and tourist development is more positive than that of inhabitants living in communities with higher economic development and underdeveloped tourism industry or lower economic development with developed tourism industry (Allen et al. 1993).

Allen and his colleagues also believed that business concerns a relationship with the adequacy and satisfaction of recreational programs. In particular, residents of rural communities with higher economic activity and tourism development have achieved tourism benefits and have a more favorable approach to tourism development. Communities with higher economic activity and lower tourism development do not appreciate the development of tourism. While communities with less developed economic activity and higher tourism development support tourism less because they were not aware of the economic benefits of tourism development, communities with lower economic activity and less developed tourism have greater hopes and / or expectations for the future development of tourism (Allen et al. 1993). McGehee and Andereck (2004) additionally emphasized the economic role (economic benefits and economic impact) influencing attitudes towards tourism development.

In Katutura, Namibia, the main problems that affect perceived tourism revenues include expected income and benefits from tourism activities (Saarinen 2010). However, although the economic effects are very important, they are not always the most important. Pham and Kayat (2011) suggested that residents of Cuc Phuong National Park in Vietnam appreciated the socio-cultural and environmental impact of tourism more than its economic effects, and that they support tourism development for reasons beyond economic benefits.

The dimensions of the attitude of the inhabitants used in this study are embracement and tolerance. According to Husbans cited in Obiora (2018), embracing describes how the community accepts tourism in its field, including costs and benefits. The attitude of the community towards tourism activities has a big impact on how business will prosper in such an environment. When the community does not accept tourist activities with a positive attitude, there is a tendency to leave the tourist infrastructure. The

acceptance of tourist activities by the community makes the tourist feel comfortable every time there are visits (husbands quoted in Obiora 2018). Tolerance refers to tolerance for tourist activities. This means that residents can prepare for the reception of tourists in such a way that they can bear the consequences of tourists visiting their community. One thing the community does when it comes to tourism development is to tolerate visitors coming to tourist destinations. Therefore, the community's ability to persevere is of great importance in tourism activities. You need to realize the need to anticipate tourist consequences from those who understand what tourism is all about. But it will be very difficult in a place where no one wants to listen to what tourism can bring to the community (Obiora, 2018). The reviewed studies on resident's attitude towards tourism development showed that majority of the studies concentrated on the socio-economic impact of tourism development on the residents. Our study looked at the embracement and tolerance of the residents towards tourism development. Moreover, most of the studies to our best of knowledge were done outside Nigeria, but ours is based in Nigeria with reference to Port Harcourt Zoo.

The Concept of Tourism Development

The purpose of this section is to provide a conceptual background of tourism's positive and negative impacts on a country's economic, social, cultural, and environmental characteristics. Tourism development can enhance a country's economy through numerous positive economic impacts. However, tourism development can also cause negative outcomes. With the rapid development of tourism in the late twentieth century, there was a noticeable change "in the structure of society... [and] the expansion of international tourism increased contact between different societies and cultures" (Brunt & Courtney, 1999). The change caused by the development of tourism questions the development of tourism based on its damage to the social, cultural and environmental characteristics of the destination. In addition, Ko and Stewart (2002) state that the economic benefits of tourism development should be compared with the potential social disruption of tourism.

Economic Impacts: Positive economic aspects of tourism development revolve around increased employment opportunities, improved standard of living, support for infrastructure, and economic growth. Easterling (2004) suggests the positive economic impacts to include contributions to standard of living, increased employment, improvement of development, and infrastructure spending. Tourism development further improves public utilities, transport infrastructure, and increases tax revenues (Ap & Crompton, 1998).

Socio-cultural Impacts: Tourism development also affects social, cultural and environmental aspects at the destination. Socio-cultural impact relates

to the ways in which tourism contributes to changes in value systems, individual behavior, family relationships, collective lifestyle, moral behavior, creative statements, traditional ceremonies and social organization (Pizam & Milman, 1984, as cited in Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996). Enhanced tourism can have a positive impact on the socio-cultural aspects of the destination. Research (Ap & Crompton, 1998; Easterling, 2004) suggests that tourism provides a better understanding of other cultures and strengthens the cultural identity of the destination and increases community pride. In addition, tourism development is increasing and cultural exchange between tourists and residents is promoted

Residents Attitude and Revenue Generation

Tourism is a potential source of income generation, especially through currency exchange, because it still exceeds the multiplier effect compared to the rest of the whole economy (Adora, 2010). The country of Ghana recognizes tourism as one of the key sectors in its economic recovery program and is currently the third foreign exchange earner after minerals and cocoa. Tanzania, a South African country, accounts for around 5% of foreign trade related to its tourism, even Kenya earns around \$ 128 million on tourism (Ezenagu, 2013). So, we can see that tourism can serve as a currency exchange. Obeta and Onah (2013) emphasized that tourism is the main source of currency exchange for at least 38% of countries in the world. And that it is in the top five major sources of currency exchange for up to 83% of countries.

Income is obtained from tourists' expenses, which are then introduced into the destination's economy, providing services such as accommodation, food, drinks, local transport, entertainment, shopping, etc. (Ezenagu, 2013). In addition, it stimulates labor demand in the host community, which helps residents earn and increase income levels. Residents of the host community are able to generate personal income from tourists' purchases of local arts and crafts, groceries, specially manufactured local items, etc. Host communities that are well informed about the impact of tourism on the economy in their community will most likely accept and promote tourism because of their location.

Residents Attitude and Tourist Visits

Places of natural beauty, such as beaches, tropical island resorts, national parks, mountains, deserts and forests are examples of traditional tourist attractions that people can visit. Cultural tourist attractions may include historic sites, monuments, ancient temples, zoos, aquariums, museums and art galleries, botanical gardens, buildings and structures (such as forts, castles, libraries, former prison towers, bridges), theme parks and carnival parks, life historical museums, public art (sculptures, statues, wall

paintings), According to the literature on general impacts on tourism, some scholars have stated that perceived positive influences and perceived negative impacts of tourism significantly affect the attitudes of residents towards tourism development (Perdue et al. 1990 ; Látková & Vogt 2012). Residents will support tourism if they think it will bring positive effects. On the contrary, the inhabitants will not support the development of tourism when the negative effects of tourism are noticed (Ko & Stewart 2002, McGehee & Andereck 2004, 2009, Látková & Vogt 2012).

Background Information of the Study Area

Port Harcourt Zoo is a state-owned zoo in the city of Port Harcourt in the state of Rivers State in Nigeria. The Port Harcourt zoo is home to numerous exceptional creature species, for example, lions, cobra, monkeys, chimpanzees, turtles, crocodiles, ostriches, jackasses, gazelles, peacocks and numerous winged animal species. The zoo was founded in 1974 by military governor Alfred Diете-Spiff and was officially opened to the public on October 1, 1975. Located within Trans - Amadi, in Obio-Akpor, Rivers State, Port Harcourt Zoo has been ranked among the major tourist attractions in the city and is considered one of Nigeria's leading conservation centres (Abah, 2013). The Port Harcourt International Airport is approximately 14 miles (22.5 km) northwest of the park (Wikimapia, 2014). The Rivers State Government announced plans on June 18 2012 to introduce new animals to the zoo and completely renewed its state to meet world standards (The Tide, 2012).



Figure 1: Map of Nigeria Showing the 36 States and FCT

about which they gather data. The population of the study comprises all the Local residents within the Port Harcourt Zoo. Using a purposive sampling technique, a total of 50 Local residents were chosen for research.

Presentation of Findings

The generated data were presented through the use of simple table frequencies and percentages. The data were analyzed and the formulated hypotheses tested using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical tool in Statistic Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0.

Reliability and Validity of the Measuring Instrument

The reliability and validity were ensured through the adoption of the measures of constructs and scale used in some duly accepted research works (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). A pilot study was carried out 12 selected residents within the study area. From the pilot study, the result yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of $r = 0.971$, which confirmed the reliability of the measuring instrument. The general rule of thumb is that a **Cronbach's alpha** of .70 and above is **good**, .80 and above is better, and .90 and above is best (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016).

Hypothesis 1: There is no Significant Relationship Between Tolerance and Revenue Generation.

Correlations			TOLERA NCE	REVEN UE_GEN ERATIO N
Spearman's rho	TOLERANCE	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.808*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.028
		N	8	7
	REVENUE_GE NERATION	Correlation Coefficient	.808*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	.
		N	7	7
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

The null hypothesis tested showed the probability level to be 0.808 at 0.05 significant level. Following the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between tolerance and Tourism Development. The more tolerant people are with the tourists who frequent their environment, the more revenue is generated through the tourist activities.

Hypothesis 2: There is no Significant Relationship Between Embracement and Revenue Generation

Correlations				
			EMBRA CEMENT	REVENUE GENERATION
Spearman's rho	EMBRACEME NT	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.324
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.479
		N	10	7
	REVENUE GE NERATION	Correlation Coefficient	.324	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.479	.
		N	7	7

The null hypothesis tested above showed the probability level to be 0.324 at 0.05 significant level. This result shows that there is a weak but positive relationship between resident’s embracement of tourists and revenue generation. From the result it could be deduced that the more residents accept and receive tourists and their activities within their community, the more likely they are able to increase their income and revenue through tourist’s activities in their environment.

Hypothesis 3: There is no Significant Relationship Between Tolerance and Tourist Visits.

Correlations				
			TOLERAN ANCE	TOURIS T_VISIT S
Spearman' s rho	TOLERAN CE	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.446
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.268
		N	8	8
	TOURIST_ VISITS	Correlation Coefficient	.887	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.268	.
		N	8	9

The result of null hypotheses tested above is 0.887 at 0.05 significance level. This showed that there is a strong positive relationship

between Tolerance and Tourist visit to the Port Harcourt zoo. This result proves that resident's tolerance and forbearance of tourist's activities will facilitate or increase the inflow of tourists within the community.

Hypothesis 4: There is No Significant Relationship Between Tolerance and Tourist Visits.

Correlations				
			EMBRA CEMEN T	TOURIS T_VISIT S
Spearman' s rho	EMBRAC EMENT	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.149
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.701
		N	10	9
	TOURIST _VISITS	Correlation Coefficient	.795	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.701	.
		N	9	9

The null hypothesis tested showed the probability value to be 0.795 at 0.05 significance level. Following the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between embracement and Tourist Visits. This entails that the more residents accept and promotes tourist activities in their environment, the more tourists feel safe to visit hence an increase in the number of tourists who visit daily and annually.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the impact of Residents attitude on tourism development using the Port Harcourt Zoo as a case study. In the study, four hypotheses were formulated. The hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance using Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings are discussed below.

The result of the first null hypotheses which stated that there is no significant relationship between tolerance and revenue generation was rejected and the alternative hypotheses was accepted. The result showed that there is a significant relationship between tolerance and Tourism Development. This implies that when residents are tolerant with the tourists who frequent their environment, the more revenue is generated through the tourist activities. This result is in line with the findings of Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams, (1997) that states that once a community becomes a tourist

destination, the daily lives of its residents are transformed by the presence of increasing numbers of visitors and tourist-oriented activities.

The result of the second hypotheses showed there that there is a weak but positive relationship between resident's embracement of tourists and revenue generation. From the result it could be deduced that the more residents accept and receive tourists and their activities within their community, the more likely they are able to increase their income and revenue through tourist's activities in their environment. This result has a similarity with the work of Kudzayi and Candice (2015) which state that residents have positive attitudes towards tourism development as they perceive it to be necessary for economic growth.

The test of the third hypotheses showed that there is a strong positive relationship between Tolerance and Tourist visit to the Port Harcourt zoo. This result proves that resident's tolerance and forbearance of tourist's activities will facilitate or increase the inflow of tourists within the community. When there is an increase in the inflow of tourists within a community, such community is bound to increase in revenue generation and thereby improve the lives of the residents. This result supports Ezenagu, (2013) assertion that income obtained from tourists' expenses, are introduced into the destination's economy, providing services such as accommodation, food, drinks, local transport, entertainment, shopping, etc.

Hypotheses four tested showed that there is a significant relationship between embracement and Tourist Visits. From the result it can be deduced that the more residents embrace or accept tourist activities in their environment, the more tourists feel safe to visit hence an increase in the number of tourists who visit daily and annually. This in turn will improve or boost the revenue of the community. This result aligns with the finding of Obiora (2018) which state that that when the community embraces tourism activities, they will secure employment in the tourism activities thereby improving their living standards.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Generally, Tourism is known to be a catalyst to the socio – economic and cultural development of any community. The result of this work which is based on the Local Resident's Attitude toward the development of Tourism showed that the residents of the research area were tolerant and embraces the tourist who visits the Port Harcourt zoo. This in turn improves the revenue generation of the community and creates employment for many of the residents. Interactions with some of the resident showed lack of the impact of the destination to the area. Observation showed lack of maintenance of the Zoo.

Based on the observation and the result of the study, it is suggested that government and tourism authority members, make residents aware of

tourism development efforts, as well as potential benefits of tourism through awareness campaigns or local exhibitions. The management of the Port Harcourt Zoo should develop the maintenance culture in order to improve the deplorable condition of the Zoo.

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