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The challenges and prospects of marina resort development in Calabar Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper evaluates the challenges and prospect of Maria resort development in Calabar. One hundred and fifty copies of questionnaire were randomly distributed to residents around the marina resort. The questionnaire was the only method used in data collection in the study. The findings shows that several tourism support services which cater for visitors and fun-seekers were provided in the marina resort. It was also discovered that the facilities provided were patronized on daily bases and profits made from them. However, in spite the significant impact of marina resort it activities are not devoid of challenges as observed in the research finding.

Keywords: Challenges, Development, Marina, Support, Tourism

Introduction

In recent times, tourism has become an important policy tool for community and regional development in many developed and developing countries. In Nigeria, the establishment of the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) has necessitated the rapid development of tourism especially in most states of the federation with great tourism potentials.

Cross River State, in a bid to diversify her economy, necessitated the rapid development and rehabilitation of the existing tourism potentials such as museum, botanical garden, Kwa Falls, Tinapa Business Resort among others. Furthermore, the development of these great potentials have given rise to the rehabilitation of Aqua Vista resort, and the development of Orange resort which today receive various visitors all over the world. Apart from the services that these laudable resorts offer to visitors, they also serve as a source of income and revenue generation to both the locals and the government.

Besides, they have also encouraged the emergence of other auxiliary tourism industries in the area such as restaurant, mobile phone operators enterprises which provide essential services to tourists. Today, the Marina resort offers great leisure opportunities to numerous fun-seekers in Calabar, it also generates income to residents in the area and revenue to government. However, despite the tremendous impact to the establishment of the Marina resort, it has significantly suffered from seasonality in terms of patronage and income generation. Besides, the development of the Marina Resort is not devoid of problems which affect the rate of visitors' inflow and income generation. It is on this note that this research was carried out to examine the challenges and prospects of marina resort development with specific reference to assessing the tourism support services in the Marina resort, daily profits, patronage of tourism support services in the resort, and the challenges and prospect associated with the marina resort development.

Literature Review

Economic impacts

As an economic activity, tourism has major effects on the economies of destination areas. Tourism, both international and domestic, brings about an intermingling of people from diverse backgrounds, and also a considerable amount of financial resources which has a significant impact on the destination area. Many tourism researchers (McIntosh and Goeldner, 2000; Dincer and Ertugral, 2003; Torres and Momsen, 2005; Wood and Hughes, 2006) focus on the economic impacts of the industry. Some researchers claim that tourism contributes to income and standard of living (Liu and Var, 1986; Milman and Pizam, 2004);

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some (Ross, 2003; Sebastian and Pajagopalan, 2009) assert that it increases employment opportunities; some (Brougham and Butler, 1981; Milman and Pizam, 2004) identify that it increases tax revenues; and others (Ross, 2003) say that it increases real estate prices.

Wall and Mathieson (2006) say that the development of tourist facilities and recreational opportunities has frequently been viewed as stimulating a major positive contribution to the national balance of payments, as a means of redressing regional disparities in incomes and employment, as responsible for revenues gained from direct tourism expenditures and through taxes and levies. Until now few studies assess the economic costs of tourism, the direct costs of entering the tourist market and the indirect costs to destination areas (Jafari, 2011).

Wall and Mathieson (2006) argue that several factors contribute to the economic emphasis of the majority of tourism impact studies. Firstly, compared to physical and social impacts, economic impacts are relatively easy to measure whereas physical and social impacts are difficult to quantify. Few researchers try to assess the qualitative aspects of tourism impacts. Secondly, there is a lack of availability of reliable data on physical and social aspects of tourism. For assessing the economic aspect of tourism, data on expenditure, employment, income and tax revenues should be readily available. So research on economic impact of tourism dominates the tourism research. Thirdly, government and private sector investors believe that tourism can yield rapid and considerable returns on investments and can be a positive force in remedying economic problems and they have often seen tourism as a means of counteracting the economic difficulties that they face. So, organizations usually promote and sponsor research focusing on the economic benefits only. However, Sharples (2000) points out that the result of the economic impacts of tourism should be considered cautiously because of overemphasis on economic success.

Eja (2011) notes that the tourist industry consists of a heterogeneous group of establishments which provide a wide range of goods and services for tourist consumption. So economic impact of tourism depends on the distribution of tourist expenditure and linkages it has within the economy. Discussions on the economic impacts of tourism generally begin with the claim that tourist expenditure represents an injection of new money into a destination area (Frechtling, 1987; Fletcher & Cooper, 2006). The main economic impacts of tourism relate to foreign exchange earnings, contribution to government revenues, generation of employment and income, and stimulation of regional development. Cater (2012) says that "for developing countries tourism seems an attractive proposition in earning much needed foreign currency. Tourism has stimulated employment and investment, modified land use and economic structure, and made a

positive contribution to the balance of payment".

Some academics (Shivji, 1973; Torres and Momsen, 2005) claim that the economic impact of tourism also brings negative consequences to tourist destinations. The eminent Tanzanian academic Issa Shivji (1973, cited in Lea, 1988:37) argues that "the justification for tourism in terms of it being "economically good" completely fails to appreciate the integrated nature of the "system of underdevelopment". This argument states that while assessing the economic benefits of tourism it ignores perceived social and environmental costs created by the tourism industry. Torres and Morrisen (2005) state "tourism growth, more typically, results in increased dependency on foreign imports which, in turn, compete with or inhibit the development of local agriculture and small industry, while also draining precious foreign exchange reserves". In less developed countries tourism benefits tend to bypass local inhabitants, with the lion's share accruing to trans-national corporations, nonlocal entrepreneurial elites, and national governments (Britton, 2009; Mowforth and Munt, 2011). Some of the economic impacts of tourism which have been documented in the literature are discussed below,

Methodology

The study population was drawn from residents who operate small businesses in around the Marina resort such as hotel operators, restaurant bar operators, hair dressing/barbing saloons and also taxi drivers were considered for the study. This was deliberate so that only respondents whose activities could be impacted on by the Marina resort were included in the population of the study. Structured questionnaire were used as the major instrument for collecting data from the field. The questionnaire were tailored *or* designed to elicit *valuable and* relevant information needed for the study. A total of one hundred fifty (150) questionnaires were administered to the sampled population around the Marina resort using random sampling technique. However, the questionnaire capture information such as tourism support services in the resort, daily profits, facilities in the resort and the challenges associated with the resort development in the area

Results and Discussion

Tourism support services

The tourism support services presented in Figure 1 shows that all the mentioned tourism support services were found in the Marina resort with values of 24% followed by restaurant with 18.6% while Children Park was also on the high side with a value of 16.6%. However, boat side and event centres were also tourism support services in the Marina resort with values of 13.3% and 12% respectively while hotel was the least tourism support services in the resort with a value of 6%.

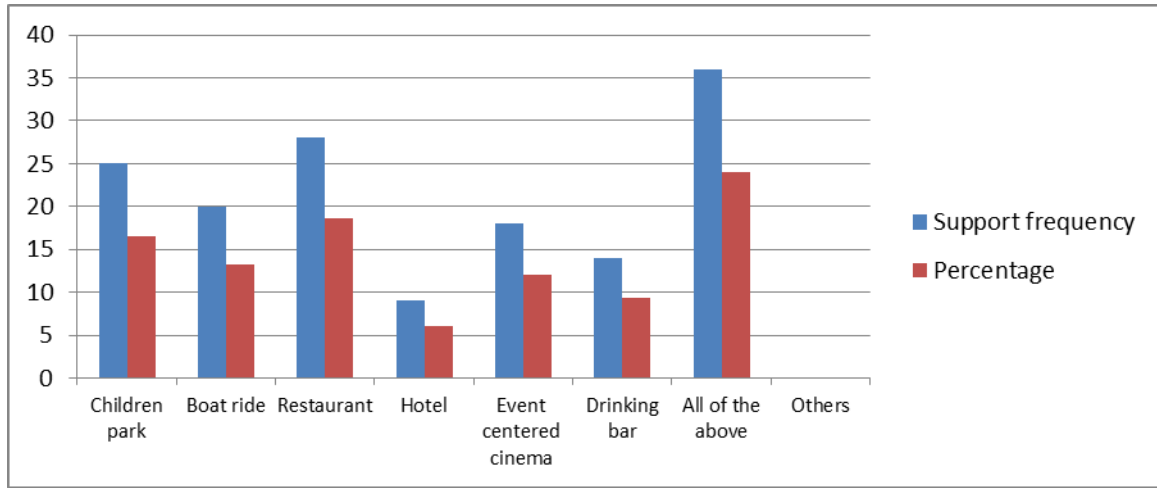


Fig 1: Tourism Support Services in the Marina Resort

The rate of patronage

The rate of daily patronage of the tourism support services presented in Figure 2 indicate that over 40 to 46 persons patronize the resort facilities in the Marina Resort with value of 32% while in most cases the resort records 20 to 40 percent with a values of 16.65 and 15.3% respectively. It was also observed that in some cases the resort also

witness a low patronage with values of 8.6% and 6% respectively. However, in order to affirm the stated hypothesis, from the data analyzed, it indicate that with a calculated of 0.86 was obtained while tabulated a positive value of 0.73 was obtained which shows that there was correlation between tourism support services and the rate of patronage of the resorts.

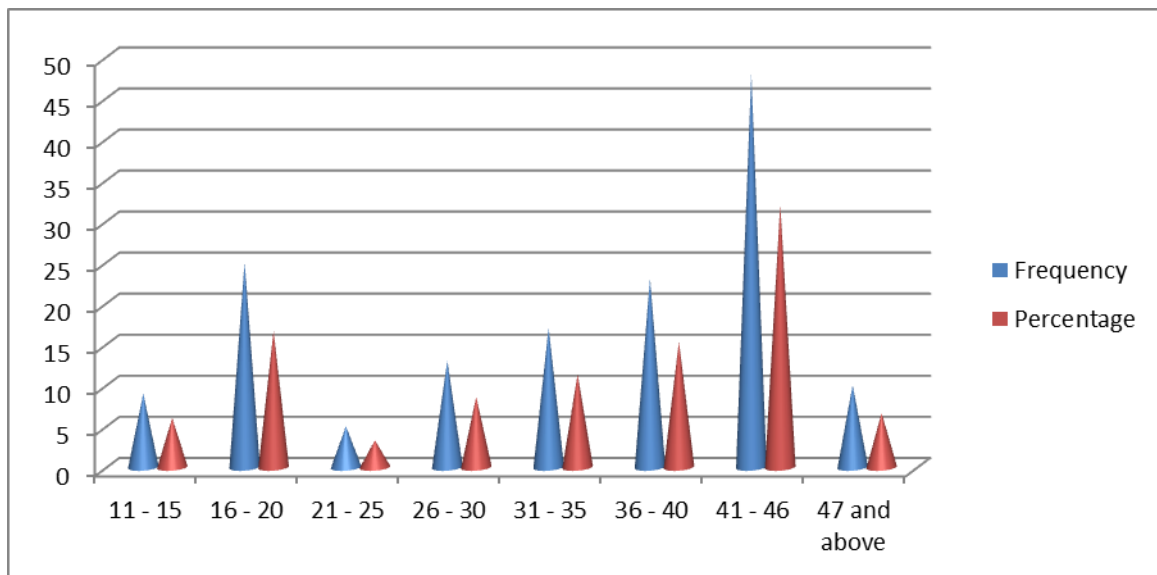


Fig 2: The patronage of the tourism support services

The daily profits in the resort

The daily profits from the various facilities presented in Figure 3 indicate that over N21,000 to N25,000 was the major profits made from sales in the result with a value 43.3% while in most days profits of N11,000 to N15,000 were obtained with a value of 24%. Table 3 also revealed

that some days the facilities in the resort makes profit of N1000 to N5000 with a value of 5.35% while only a few days that the operators of the facilities in the resort witness a least profit with a value of 3.3%. However, this report shows that the resort makes daily profit irrespective of week days.

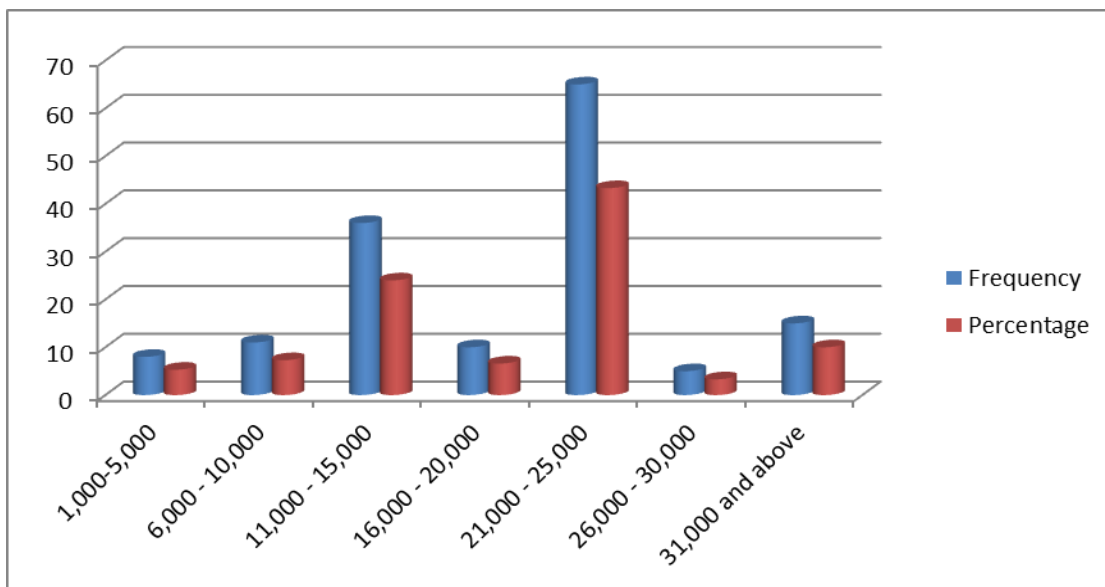


Fig. 3: Daily profits in the resort

The challenges

The socio-economic problems associated in the resort presented in Table 1 shows that all the aforementioned socio-economic problems were associated with the resort. However, it was observed that owners of businesses around the resort paid high taxation and traffic congestion were the major challenges associated the smooth functioning of the resort with values of 30% and 24.6% followed by youth restiveness with a value of 16% while prostitution was one of the least problem associated with the effective functioning of the resort as presented in the table below. However, the challenges associated with the Marina resort was further presented in the Table 1 below.

Table 1: The challenges associated with the resort

s/n	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Insecurity	17	17.3
2.	Youth restiveness	24	16
3.	High tax	45	30
4.	Traffic congestion	10	6.6
5.	encourage Prostitution	37	24.6
6.	All of the above	12	8
7.	Others	5	3.3
	Total	150	100%

Source: Field survey, 2016

The tourism support services provided in the resort

The services provided within in the resort presented in Table 2 shows that all the mentioned variables in table 6 were the tourism services provided in the resort with a high value of 43.3%. It was noticed in Table 2 that hair dressing and barbing salon was the highest tourism support services that was found with the Marina resort environment followed by mobile phone operators with a value of 13.3% while computer centre and mobile photo studio were on the least side with a value of 4% and 7.3% respectively.

Table 2: Services provided in the resort

s/n	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Computer centres	6	4
2.	Mobile phone operators	20	13.3
3.	Hair dressing/barbing salon	32	21.3
4.	Provision shops	16	6.6
5.	Mobile photo studios	11	7.3

6.	All of the above	65	43.3
7.	Others	6	4
	Total	150	100%

Source: Field survey, 2016

Conclusion

In recent times, resorts have become one of engine that attract visitors to any given tourism destination. This scenario has been witnessed over time in Cross River State in general and Calabar in particular. Besides, the development of the marina resorts in Calabar has encouraged the emergence of most tourism support services which provided not only income to residents both also revenue to the government through taxation. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the agencies involved in tourism management and development to ensure that the resort potentials are effectively develop and utilized in the state.

Recommendations

Therefore, this research put toward the following recommendations in other to avert the challenges associated with the marina resort development in the study area.

1. The government should frequently update the facilities that are provided in the resorts. This would help encourage visitors to the area
2. The government should reduce tax, this would help the operators and management of the resort to provide the needed services that would ensure tourists' comfort in the resort
3. Adequate security should be provided so as to ensure the safety of visitors in the area
4. The government should establish a taskforce that would monitor the operators of the resort with respect to maintain standard
5. The various stakeholders should provide a framework that would ensure tourism activities all year round. This would help increase the rate of visit to the area
6. The government should organize a tourism programme that would enlighten the youth on the importance of resorts in a tourism destination. However, this would help to reduce youth restiveness in the resort in the area.

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