



Sustainable Tourism Development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria: the Role of Indigenous Carnivals

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of indigenous carnivals in sustainable tourism development in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide and direct the study. Literature was reviewed based on the sub-variables of the study. The survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised of all adult male and female from 18 years and above in the study area. A sample size of four hundred and thirty eight (438) respondents was drawn from the population of eight thousand three hundred and eighty (8,380) using the stratified and purposive sampling techniques respectively. A four point modified Likert scale questionnaire title: Sustainable tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria: the role of indigenous carnivals" (STDSSDCRSNRIC) was the main instrument used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts in the department of test and measurement and evaluation in the University of Calabar. The instrument was personally administered by the researcher with the help of three trained research assistants in the areas of the study. The data obtained were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics. The result of the analysis revealed that indigenous/traditional street dances as well Calabar carnival significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in the study area. Based on the findings, the study recommended among other that, the government should do everything humanly possible to encourage the development of indigenous carnivals in the study area

so as to promote and sustained tourism in development in the state. More so, the youth should be sensitized on the relevance of indigenous carnivals in sustainable tourism development in the state.

Key words: Tourism, indigenous carnivals, sustainable tourism development.

Introduction

Tourism has been part and parcel of people's way of life. In the ancient period, people unconsciously engaged in tourism activities when they went in search of light, shelter and food. In the indigenous Nigerian society tourism and recreation were reflected in religious rituals/ceremonies, cultural festivals, visits to friends and relatives, pleasure and official trips by the ruling class similar to modern day formalization tours by government officials. In the past-prior to the period of independence, the people of southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria held tenaciously to certain cultural practices that were tourism related. These practices have been transformed from one generation to the other. Such practices include wrestling festivals organized at regular interval at the popular village square, the coronation of new kings, Ekpe festivals, New Yam Festival, Fishing Festival etc. Tourism at this point was not seen as a means of generating revenue for the country, state or community but rather a mere means of relaxation.

Modern tourism development in Nigeria dates back to 1962 when the Nigerian Tourism Association (NTA) was created. During this period, tourism was not seen as government responsibility and as such lacked the guidelines for the development of the country's tourism industry. The federal government in 1971 commissioned the African Development Bank to conduct a survey to determine whether Nigeria has adequate and attractive tourist markets or potentials for development. The report of the bank was positive and called for an effective tourism administration in the country (Tumba, 1993).

At its earliest stage, tourism in Cross River State in general and the southern senatorial district in particular was shallow in both its conception and development. The reason for this ugly development is

that tourism was been misconstrued or perceived as the “legally of few rich people”. Today, the story of tourism development in Cross River State is different as people and the government is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of tourism in the socio-economic development of the state (Anthony, Essien & Akpama, 2011). The tourism sector of the state from 1999 to date has drastically changed because of the government interest in boosting the sector. The government concern and effort have resulted in the development of some areas of attraction such as: the Obudu Cattle Ranch, Afi maintain, Drill Ranch, Agbokim Water Falls, Cross River National Park, Oban Hills, Kwa Falls, Tinapa Business Resort, Leboku Festival the Calabar Carnival, Mary Slessor Residence at Creek Town and the Old Residency. Other areas of attraction include the major indigenous masquerades and dances such as the Ekpe, Ekpo, Oban, Nnabo, Akata, Afambembe, Abang, Ekomi, Onene and Monikim.

Indigenous carnivals are also seen in the form of art and craft which express the creative human imagination and skills inherent to a particular set people. It could be expressed through visual forms such as painting, carryings, sculpture – making and craftown (Usua, 2018). Most indigenous communities are not aware of the relevance of indigenous carnivals in sustainable development of tourism in the area of the study thus they have refused to be part of the process. Some people even attribute the rise in crime rate to tourism development. It is in the light of the above that this study seeks to investigate the extent to which indigenous carnivals contribute to sustainable tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria.

The concept of tourism

The term tourism has no one generally accepted definition. Most scholars see it as “the business activity connected with providing accommodation services and entertainment for the people who are visiting a place for pleasure”. Tourism is a voluntary temporary movement of people from their usual place of residence to other places for the purpose of leisure and recreational activities without

any intention of securing a permanent resident or job at the destination (Egbaji, 2007).

Anijah-Obi (2001) defined tourism as a free movement of people to destinations outside their normal abode on a temporary short-term visit as well as the services created to satisfy the need arising from these movements within and across international boundaries. The concept tourism according to Kehinde (1993) has been broadened to include various forms of business and vocational travel which may not attract remunerated employment within the destination visited. Five characteristics of tourism have been identified based on the concept of tourism. These include:

1. Tourism evolves from the movement of people and their stay in various destinations.
2. It embraces the journey to the destination and the stay at the destination.
3. The condition in (B) takes place outside the tourist's normal abode.
4. The period of movement to another destination is usually short.
5. The destination visited are not meant for purpose of taking up permanent residence or paid jobs.

The concept sustainable tourism development

The concept sustainable tourism development refers to management of all tourism activities and resources in such a manner that economic social and aesthetic need can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support system. It is development that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impact addressing the needs of the visitors, the industry, the environment and the host communities. Sustainable tourism development also refers to a situation whereby the industry is committed to making low impact on the environment and local culture, while helping to generate future employment for local people. It ensures that there is positive development between the local people, tourism companies and tourists themselves. Tourism activities cannot take place in a vacuum

but within the environment. Thus, the environment whether man made or natural environment is very useful in tourism development and must be preserved for an area to be environmentally sustainable (Hornby, 2000).

The concept indigenous carnivals

A carnival involves public celebrations including events such as parades, public street parties and entertainment. Hornby (2000) defined carnivals as a public festival usually one that happens at a regular time each year that involve music and dancing in the street for which people wear colourful clothes. Indigenous carnivals are traditional festival which may include events like parade, public street parties, dances and other forms of entertainments. Indigenous carnivals include traditional dances and annual Ekpe Masquerades, New Yam Festivals, Festival of Art and Craft etc. Esu (2014) see indigenous carnivals as street fiesta related to customs, ideas and social behaviour of a particular people involving processions, music, dancing and the use of masquerade. It is a fiesta which usually brings communities together in celebration and its participation is voluntary.

Indigenous carnivals and sustainable tourism development

The role of indigenous carnivals in sustainable tourism development, development of tourism in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State cannot be over emphasized. Indigenous carnivals are those street fiesta related to customs, ideas and social behaviour of a particular people involving processions, music, dancing and masquerading. It is a fiesta which usually bring people together in celebration and participation is voluntary (Usua, 2018).

They are traditional festivals that involve public celebrations including events such as parades, public street parties, dances and other forms of entertainments. A typical carnival is usually a gathering of musicians, dancers, street theatre, performers, costume designers and sound engineers. The most prominent street parties (carnivals) in Nigeria today are Calabar, Lagos and Abuja carnivals. The essence of carnivals is to develop tourism potentials within a given area.

Anthony, Essien and Akpama (2011) stressed that indigenous tourism is beyond the pleasure, the adventure and the photograph but it plays significant role in the socio-economic development of many countries. Indeed tourism has become the number one industry in many countries of the world and the fastest growing economic sector in terms of foreign exchange earnings. It has been recognized as one of the top three constituents of world trade that could favourably compete with other sectors like petroleum industry.

Oruwari (1993) attributes the weakness of tourism development in Nigeria to the tourism culture, which is still very foreign to the people. Tourism is perceived as an exclusive preserve of the rich and affluent who can afford both the cost and time needed for trips. Moreover, indigenous or cultural carnivals have been neglected while emphasis is laid on international tourism, characterized by the development of game reserves, construction of hotels and city-based recreational facilities. He stressed that for tourism to be successful, indigenous carnivals as well as internal, home-based tourism should be developed.

Esu and Arrey (2009) investigated tourist satisfaction of Calabar carnival. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The spectators of all the events served as the population of the study. A sample of 500 spectators was drawn for the study using convenient sampling technique and regression statistics was the statistical tool used in data analysis. The result of the finding revealed that cultural carnival significantly predicts tourist's satisfaction. The finding depicts that carnivals help to ensure tourist's satisfaction and encourage tourists to turn up for the annual events thereby facilitating the development of the state's tourism sector.

In a study conducted by Amalu and Ajake (2012) on the influence of Calabar carnival on the economy of Calabar residents all the people living within the carnivals route in the metropolis comprised the population of the study. A sample of 2,500 was drawn for the study using random sampling technique. Data obtained was analyzed using aggregate of amount, mean score, percentages and standard

deviation. The result of the findings revealed that those involved in tourism-related activities during the festive period generated up to three (3) times the amount generated by those involved in non-tourism related activities. The result of the finding implies that carnivals have significant impact on the economy of the area. Thus it could be used as a potent tool in sustainable tourism development in the area of the study.

Ajake and Amalu (2012) carried out another study on the relevance of tourism on the economic development of Cross River State, Nigeria. One of the study objectives was to ascertain whether there is decrease or an increase in both tourists attendance at the annual carnival and the amount of revenue generated during the carnival. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 200 respondents comprised of both youths and adults was drawn for the study using purposive sampling technique. Simple percentage was the statistical tool used for data analysis. The result of the analysis revealed that tourists attendance at the carnival increased by 30% between 2007/2008 and 2009/2010 seasons respectively. The finding further revealed that revenue generated from tourism related activities for the state increased significantly. The result of the analysis implies that carnival play a significant role in the economic development of the state. The findings also revealed that carnivals do not only facilitate economic development but also have the capacity of attracting more tourists for onward tourism development.

Ukwayi, Ojong and Bassey (2012) investigated the socio-economic impact of cultural carnivals and festivals on community development in Cross River State, Nigeria. One of the objectives of the study was to ascertain the social and economic impact of carnival on community development. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. All adults and youths in Calabar municipality and Ugeb in Yakurr local government area constituted the population of the study. A sample of 300 youths and adults in the study area was drawn using purposive sampling technique. The questionnaire was the main instrument used for data collection. Factor analysis was used to analyse data obtain.

The result of the findings reveals that carnival has significant impact on community development.

Abutu and Managwu (2015) carried out a study on the impact of Abuja carnival on the enhancement of tourism in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive design. The population of the study comprised of all the spectators, tourists, staff of the federal ministry of culture and tourism and Abuja carnival secretariat, simple random sample technique was employed to draw a sample of 120 respondents. Data was analyzed using the simple percentage and frequencies. The findings of the study revealed that the level of awareness of carnival in sustainable tourism development is very low. This therefore entails that since people are not aware of the impact of carnivals on sustainable tourism development it could not be used for tourism development.

Okonkwo and Odey (2017) maintain that tourism events such as the Calabar carnival have serious correlation with tourism development in the study area. They stressed that indigenous carnival should be encouraged and sustained so as to enable tourism development in the area of the study to be sustainable. The primary aim of indigenous carnival is to promote the rich culture of the people and develop tourism in the state as a whole, carnivals specifically aim at:

1. To stimulate the desire for leisure and relaxation among Nigeria.
2. To promote awareness of our rich art and culture.
3. To create an environment that will improve economic activities and encourage the development and growth of tourism related industries in the state.

Indigenous carnivals in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State., Nigeria is remarkable particularly in cultural dances, art, local craft and music. The Calabar carnival which is tagged as Africa's biggest street party has been sustained over time due to the displayed of indigenous carnival activities such as traditional dances, local art and crafts, music and indigenous songs. According to Ekonomi (2016) indigenous or traditional dances are products of cultural behaviours and traditions created by inhabitants living in a particular region.

Dancing is a method of non verbal communication use to interact with other people. A dance is created and performed to send messages with certain objectives such as share happiness, affection, sadness or gratitude. Traditional dances have unique features such as: qualification to perform, the number of performance, the costumes worn and at what time or kind of event a dance is performed. This makes traditional dances to be seen and known as an important element of local identify. Traditional dances therefore can be applied as a method to promote tourism and to lure visitors/tourists to come and experience such dances directly. In addition to promoting tourism it can be used as an effective tool for encouraging the development of local economy. Traditional street dances are very vital in promoting and sustaining tourism development in Cross River State and particularly the southern senatorial district. Some traditional dances in Cross River State responsible for the promotion of tourism development include: the child queen dance of Ogoja, the Akata cultural dance, Asukwu cultural dance, and Wuben Mbe cultural dance, the Ekombi dance, Moninkim dance, Abang dance troupe, Nnabo dance and Iwali (Ndoma & Takon, 2016).

Austin (2015) stressed that a dance is a mixture of the various kinds of rhythmic movements of parts of the body to particular kind of music. Dance in most cases is a means of displaying joy or celebration of a particular occasion. People in Nigeria dance for a lot of purposes, praising God, supporting a football team, during carnivals, festivals such as new yam and marriages. According to her there are a plethora of dances that help in sustaining tourism development in Cross River State. These include: Nyok dance carried out by the fishermen and those staying around the Calabar river, Ndam found in the Yakurr region, Ndebe dance found in Ikom local government area. Ekpino Kpere dance found in Wenakom area, Abekpa in Obubra area, Mbim notable among the Yakurr people, Ewe and Abang notable among the Efiks and Moninkim dance of Ejagham people.

Despite the important of traditional dances in the sustenance of tourism development in the study area, 134 still face serious problems that need solution. Among these problems include: It is

extremely difficult to find young people who are committed to the maintenance of traditional culture. Traditional dances to them seem to be outdated or obsolete, more so lack government support since traditional dances are not prioritized poses a serious constraint to the sustenance of traditional dances.

Des (2018) posits that tourism could be promoted and sustained through indigenous art and craft. This is the area of tourism that is often over look but it is as old as tourism itself. Art tourism is a term that is used when people travel in order to explore and engage in activities of arts. It includes travelling to art festivals, concerts and exploring famous museums.

Statement of the problem

The people of Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State have been involved in one tourism activity or the other. Such activities include wrestling festivals organized at regular intervals at the popular village square, the coronation of the new king, fishing festivals, Ekpe festival and new yam festivals. In it earliest stage tourism in the area of the study was very shallow in its conception and development. From 1999 to date the story of tourism in Cross River State as a whole have drastically change because of the government interest in boosting the sector. The government effort have resulted in developing some areas of attraction such as the Obudu Cattle Ranch, Afi Mountain, Drill Ranch, Agbokim Water Falls, Cross River State National Park, Oban Hills, Kwa Falls, Tinapa Business Resort, Leboku Festival, the Old Residence etc.

Despite the concerted effort made by the government and other spirited individuals in the study area, tourism development in the area is still in a very slow pace. This could be attributed to the fact that indigenous carnivals which could be expressed through street dancing, art and craft, painting, carving, songs and music and sculpture are not fully encourage or developed by the government. More so, the young people see anything indigenous as being outdated or obsolete while others attribute the rise in crime rate to tourism. It is in the light of the above that this study 134 to empirically

investigate the extent to which indigenous carnivals helps in sustaining tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which indigenous carnivals influence sustainable tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria. The study specifically aims at investigating the extent to which:

1. Indigenous/traditional street dances relate with sustainable tourism development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State.
2. Calabar carnival relate with sustainable tourism development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guides and direct this study.

1. Indigenous/traditional street dances do not significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State.
2. Calabar carnival does not significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State.

Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for this study. This design was most preferred because the study drew a representative sample from a large population in order to describe the existing phenomena within the study area. The study was carried out in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. The area of the study is comprised of seven local government areas viz: Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South and Odukpani local government area. A sample of 438 respondents was drawn from the population of 8,380 using stratified and purposive sampling techniques. The populations of the study consisted of adult male and female from 18 years and above. The questionnaire titled "Sustainable Tourism Development in Southern Senatorial District of

Cross River State: The Role of Indigenous Carnivals” (STDSSDCRSRIC) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by two experts in the area of Test and Measurement, Faculty of Education University of Calabar, Nigeria. Split half reliability method was employed to ascertain the reliability estimate of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered by the researchers with the help of two trained research assistants. The data obtained was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics.

Results

Hypothesis one

The first hypothesis states that Indigenous/traditional street dances do not significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The independent variable in this hypothesis is indigenous/traditional street dances while the dependent variable is sustainable development. To test this hypothesis indigenous/traditional dances and sustainable tourism development were compared using Pearson product moment correlation statistics. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis of indigenous/traditional dances and sustainable tourism development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State (N=412)

Variables	X	SD	R	p-level
Indigenous/traditional dances	15.45	2.15		
			.252*	.000
Sustainable tourism development	31.42	4.28		

Significant at .05; df = 410, critical r-value = .098

The result of the analysis in Table 1 revealed that indigenous/traditional street dances produced a mean score of 15.45 with the standard deviation of 4.28. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .252* obtained with a p-value of .000 is

greater than the critical value of .098 at .05 level of significance. Based on the result obtained, the null hypothesis which states indigenous/traditional dances do not significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was upheld. The result indicates that with the obtained value of .252* indigenous/traditional street dances have a significant positive relationship with sustainable tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis two

The second hypothesis states that Calabar carnival does not significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The independent variable in this hypothesis is Calabar carnival while the dependent variable is sustainable development. To test this hypothesis Calabar carnival and sustainable tourism development were compared using Pearson product moment correlation statistic. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis of Calabar carnival and sustainable tourism development in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State (N=412)

Variables	X	SD	R	p-level
Calabar carnival	14.84	2.56		
			.144*	.003
Sustainable tourism development	31.42	4.28		

Significant at .05; df = 410, critical r-value = .098

The result of the second hypothesis on Table 2 revealed that Calabar carnival produced a mean score of 14.84 with the standard deviation of 2.56, while sustainable tourism development produced a mean score of 31.42 with standard deviation of 4.28. The result further

revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .144* obtained with a p-value of .003 is greater than the critical value of .098 at .05 level of significance. Based on the result obtained, the null hypothesis which states that Calabar carnival does not significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State was rejected, while the alternate hypothesis was upheld. The result further indicates that with the obtained value of .144* Calabar carnival has a significant positive relationship with sustainable tourism development in the southern senatorial district of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Discussion of findings

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that indigenous traditional street dances significantly relates with sustainable tourism development in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State Nigeria. The findings is in line with the view of Ekonomi (2015) who maintained that traditional dances has unique features such as; qualification to perform, the number of performances, the costumes worn and at what time or kind of event a dance is performed. Based on the features listed above, traditional dances could be seen and known as an important element of local identity thus it could be applied as a method to promote tourism and to lure visitors or tourists to come and experience such dances directly. He however outlined some traditional dances that are instrumental in promoting tourism development to include; the queen dance, Ekombi dance, moninkim dance, Abang dance troupe, Asukwu cultural dance, wuban mbe dance, Nnabo dance and Iwali dance.

Austin (2015) stressed that dance in most cases is a means of displaying joy or celebration of a particular occasion such as; praising God, supporting a football team, during carnivals, New yam festivals, burial funerals and celebration of marriages. She maintained that a plethora of dances which help in promoting tourism development in Cross River State include: Nyok dance, Ndam dance, Ndebe dance, Ekpinkpere dance, Abekpa dance, Mbim dance, Ewe dance, Abang dance, and Moninkim dance.

The findings of the second hypothesis revealed that Calabar carnival significantly relate with sustainable tourism development in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State Nigeria. This finding is supported by Amalu and Ajake (2012) who carried out a study on the influence of Calabar carnival on the economy of the residents. The result of their findings revealed that Calabar carnival has significant positive influence on the promotion of tourism development as well as the economic development of the residents of Calabar. The findings of this study are further supported by Esu and Arrey (2009) who investigated tourists satisfaction of Calabar carnival. The result of their study revealed that carnival helps to ensure tourists satisfaction and encourage tourists to turn up for annual events thereby facilitating the development and sustainability of the states' tourism sector.

Conclusion

The role of indigenous carnivals in sustainable tourism development in cross river state and beyond cannot be over emphasized it is based on the above that the government of Cross River State since 1999-date have made frantic effort to encourage indigenous carnivals as a way of promoting tourism development in the state. The Calabar carnival and Leboku festival for instance has become international events where various indigenous or traditional street dances and craft, songs and music and sculpture are displayed annually. Despite the concerted effort made by the government non-governmental organizations and spirited individuals to promote indigenous carnivals in the study area, most people still visualize traditional/indigenous carnivals as an exclusive preserve of the rich and affluent who can afford both the time and the cost more so the youth see anything that is indigenous in nature as being outdated or obsolete and the government has not fully encouraged the development of indigenous carnival. It therefore behaves on all and sundry in the study area to put their hands on deck so as to encourage indigenous carnival in other to promote and sustain tourism development in Cross River State.

Recommendations

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

1. The government should do everything humanly possible to encourage the development of indigenous carnival in the study area so as to promote and sustain tourism development in the state.
2. Awareness creation campaign should be embarks upon to sensitize the youths in the area of the study, on the relevance of indigenous carnival on sustainable tourism development in the state.
3. Non-governmental organizations, philanthropies and highly spirited individuals should as a matter of urgency complements the government effort by providing funds to supports indigenous carnival in the state.

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