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PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY ON SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACT OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT TO SUKUR WORLD HERITAGE SITE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The development of tourist destinations and thereafter, the patronage and flow of tourists to such areas generate impacts. These effects are much felt and seen in the destination region, where tourists interact with the local environment, economy, culture and society of the visited area. The interaction trigger off local perceptions and subsequent attitudes of the locals toward tourism development and visitors at large. This research identified the perceived sociocultural impact of tourism on Sukur World Heritage Site by evaluating the local perceptions towards the development tourism. A quantitative methodology, which measure residents' perceptions was adopted with quantitative data being collected through 373 questionnaires distributed to a stratified sample of local residents who are randomly selected within each stratum. 309 questionnaires were returned and 297 were analysed. The study found out that tourism development in Sukur has provided more benefits than cost; with the strongest and most favourable perceptions, according to the mean score, found to be the increase recognition of the local cultural heritage and increased residents' pride in local culture.

Keywords: Residents; Perception; Sociocultural; Impact; Tourism

Introduction

The significance and development of tourism has been optimally aimed at by a lot of governments in the contemporary time, and states that has natural resources and tourist locations have make stronger their efforts to advancing them for not only for the purposes of income generation but also to stimulate their sociocultural heritage to the outside world and attract international investment and joint venture ship (Isidiho & Sabran, 2015).

In many countries, today, most especially the developing nations, tourism segment has been recognised as one of the preferred economic sectors, which will serve as an additional or substitute to already existing economic sectors of that nation (Alhaji, Abubakar & Philip,2023). The contribution of tourism activity to economic monetary growth and expansion has long been

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. A.I. Mteiye [MALAWI]

recognised and acknowledged. Globally, the tourism industry is one of the key sectors of the world economy that contributes massively to employment, generates huge income, and promotes economic wealth. Tourism industry is also one of the fastest-growing sectors(Ismail, Zainordin & Aziz, 2023).

These new or realised statuses of tourism business and changes have affected the host communities in not small magnitude. As stated by Zaei and Zaei (2013) tourism either on a substantial measure or on a stumpy scale, in no small degree affects the host community. This is predominantly evident during the period of the events and sometimes afterwards. Mason (2003) underscores that tourism, as a significant form of human activity, can have major effects. These impacts are very much seen in the destination territory, where tourists interrelate with the native environment, economy, culture and the social order. Due to tourism activities, various types of opportunities are created such as job opportunities, infrastructure development and so on (Yusoh, et al., 2023). And so, it is normal to consider the impacts from tourism under the headings of economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. It is understood that the impact of tourism interactions can stretched from development of economic activities, change in social life to environmental appearance.

Whenever tourist's destination area is advanced, and witnessing great tourists' proceeds, the influence of the development and vacationers' visitation will both have progressive and undesirable features (U.N.E.P., 2016). The visiting of individuals to a specific destination in a country impinge on the living pattern of the local populace(Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003). How visitors behave themselves and their individual interactions with people of the visited destinations mostly has a profound effect on the way of life and behaviour of the indigenous people. The visit is usually understood to be the contact between cultures, traditions, values and behaviours. This is considered a structure where locals and tourists can learn better from themselves, through direct contact. Again, tourism requires local communities to be more responsive and educated to provide quality services to tourists.

The development and contact between tourists and the host community, generate new feelings, changes in behaviour and values, these also create awareness among the residents and improve social wellbeing of the community. As viewed by Paul (2016)interactions between locals and tourists generates the emergence of new ideas, values and motivations for social and economic progress. These new feelings and changes of the social heritage of the host populace, give rise to change of attitudes and breeds perception of the development and interaction between all the players in tourism business at the destination. Several surveys of late years have studied residents' perceptions of the influence of tourism advancement on the destination area. Perceptions residents have been realised to be motivated by a number of circumstances, including individual economic dependence on the tourism business; the advantages of the industry to the host community; the type and degree of resident-visitor association; and the general level of the advancement of tourism industry in the host community (Murphy, 1985). As opined by Alhaji, et. Al (2023) tourism is intended not only for its ability to create wealth, but to improve the conservation and preservation of our rich and pristine culture and heritage resources.

The host's perception is an issue that needs constant monitoring and study as it is a basis for a successful tourism development and friendliness between tourists and residents. People Perceptions and attitudes towards diverse influence of tourism have been widely explored since

the 1970s. A good number researches have centred on how different sections of local communities respond to tourism impacts differently(Tosun, 2002).

Thus, this paper is aimed at evaluating residents' perception towards socio-cultural impacts from tourism development in Sukur World Heritage Community. The development and achievement of Sukur World Heritage Site as a cultural and natural landscape, offers tourism attractions for both domestic and international tourists. This have exposed the Sukur kingdom to various impact that arise from tourism development. Development of infrastructure facilities. Such as road, chalets, a mini museum and celebration of annual Yewal cultural festival in grand style are some of the early benefits witnessed in the destination.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

Sukur World Heritage Site is the initial World Heritage Site (WHS) in Nigeria and it is the premier Cultural Landscape in Africa as declared by UNESCO in 1999. Sukur was enlisted as Nigeria's first Site on the world heritage list in December 1999. Sukur landscape lies on the Nigerian side of the Mandara Cameroun borderlands on an undulating plateau ranging from 1000 to 3045 feet above sea level with coordinates of 10°44'26N and 13°34'19E. It is located 25km west of Mokolo in the Cameroun and 17km south west of Madagali in Adamawa State of Nigeria (National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 2011). The area designated covers a total landmass of 764.40 hectares, thus comprised the physical landscape, the vegetation and its environments, the fauna and flora and all cultural components that is tangible and intangible, movable and immovable, on the high plateau and the adjoining lowlands (Aliyu, 2002). The cultural features of Sukur Kingdom as identified by the NCMM, (2011) are: the Hidi's palace, stone walls, stone paved walkways, vernacular architecture, traditional graveyards, shrines and ceramic alters, bull fattening pens, iron smelting furnace.

Population and Sample Size of the Study

The Sukur, as at when this research was conducted as 13,397 people; this includes all the residents of Sukur World Heritage Site community (host community) in the two Sukur settlements; hilltop and lowland settlements (core and buffer zones). 373 questionnaires were distributed by the aid of an research assistant to the two Sukur settlements(core and buffer zones) accordingly for their responses. The study, utilizes quantitative approach, a stratified sample is chosen to reach all the strata of settlement within the core and buffer zones. The selected sample gives information that represents the assessment of the populace in a pure survey. 373 sample size was obtained from the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table. Therefore, based on those results, the suitable sample size arrived at for this study is 373 respondents.

Method of Data Collection

Stratified random sampling was adopted to make possible or achieve the purpose of the investigation and making sure that the individual sub frames in the study area are represented accordingly. Sukur World Heritage community is segmented into two main groups: the core and the buffer zones of the plateau (hilltop) settlements and the lowland settlements. Therefore, the stratification of the research is based on these sub frames.

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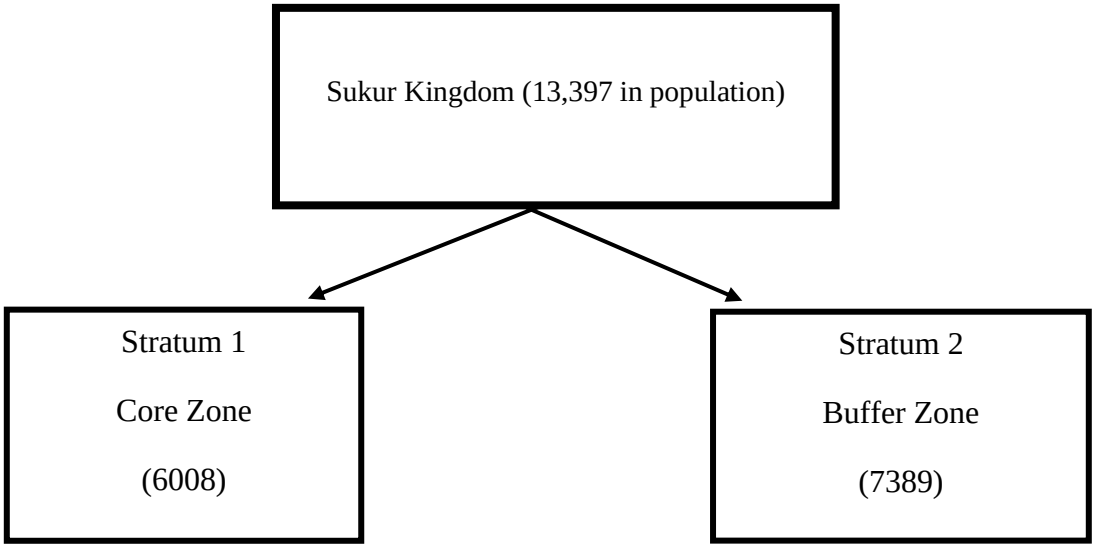


Table 1: *Stratum 1: Core Zone*

S/N	Settlements	Population
1	Dugum	613
2	Girndahwa	492
3	Duv Dagwa	698
4	Dazza	540
5	Guzka	562
6	Gwafak	662
7	Dalak	682
8	Dzivuk	320
9	Fah	472
10	Gwassa	400
11	Kiggi	330
12	Muva	237
	Total	6008

Table 2: *Stratum 2: Buffer Zone*

S/N	Settlements	Population
1	Rugudum 1	497
2	Rugudum 2	326
3	Dlanduv	626
4	Muvilim	725
5	Mbuth	420
6	Midling	200
7	Mataka A	740
8	Mataka B	629

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. A.I. Mteiye [MALAWI]

9	Mafer	531
10	Damai Kasa	642
11	Tokya	515
12	Tiksu	778
13	Damai	310
14	Kurang	450
	Total	7389

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents of the study were mostly males (61.3%) and mainly of the ages of between 31-50 (55.9%). The unmarried singles recorded the clear majority of respondents (60.3%). The larger percentage of respondents are relatively well educated with graduate and postgraduate certificates (61%). And lastly, the employed constitute the highest respondents of (59%).

Table 1 shows the means (*m*), standard deviation (*SD*) and the overall mean for the residents' responses. The highest means among the items were: *m* = 4.407 for item 3: 'Tourism has created recognition of the local cultural heritage" with *SD* = 0.636; follow by *m* = 4.303 for item 6: 'Encourage cultural identity' with *SD* = 0.680; then *m* = 4.300 for item 7: 'Increased residents' pride in local culture' with *SD* = 0.776; *m* = 4.290 for item 24: , Increase in drug abuse' with *SD* = 0.950 and; *m* = 4.279 for the item 4: 'Enhanced positive changes in values and customs' with *SD* = 0.784. The lowest means among the items are: *m* = 2.414 for item 29: 'Increase in prices of goods and services with *SD* = 1.241; followed by *m* = 2.598, for item 30: 'High cost of living' with *SD* = 1.369; then *m* = 2.789, for the item 15: 'There is competition between tourists and locals for the use of resources' with *SD* = 0.8404; *m* = 3.370, for the item 25: 'Increased congestion in traffic and public areas' with *SD* 1.446; and, *m* = 3.394, for the item 20 'Promotes host imitation of tourists' behaviour' with *SD* = 1.293. The overall means for respondents' perception of socio-cultural impact is 3.865 and the *SD* = 0.991 which indicates that local residents agreed with these variables as the socio-cultural impact of tourism development in Sukur. Because they are of the view that tourism has created recognition of the local cultural heritage, not only within the country, but, internationally. Apart from the cultural identity, the pride of the community on their local culture has increased and other benefits has perceived by the residents.

Table 1 Descriptive Analysis for local residents' perception of socio-cultural impact of tourism development

Respondents' Perception (n=297)

Item No	Item	Mean (M)	SD
1	Leads to rise in standard of living and better quality of life	4.118	0.8072
2	Better education of the community	4.236	0.6614
3	Tourism has created recognition of the local cultural heritage	4.407	0.6359
4	Enhanced positive changes in values and customs	4.279	0.7837
5	Preservation of cultural resources and identity	4.152	0.8100
6	Encourage cultural identity	4.303	0.6796
7	Increased residents' pride in local culture	4.300	0.7762

8	Offered opportunity to meet and understand more about other people culture	4.202	0.7441
9	Improve the cultural of tolerance of social differences	4.111	0.8608
10	Enhanced cultural changes between tourists and local residents	4.152	0.7039
11	Promote goodwill and image of the community	4.219	0.7551
12	Rise in the status of the community	4.212	0.7833
13	Promote peace in the area	4.222	0.7197
14	Improved security condition is ensured because of tourism	4.158	0.8494
15	There is competition between tourists and locals for the use of resources	2.789	0.8404
16	Tourism development has turn local cultures into commodities	3.939	1.2205
17	Sacred cultural heritage of the Sukurs has been commercialised	3.909	1.0851
18	Staging of cultural shows just to suit the taste of tourists	3.886	1.1121
19	Changes in design of local products	3.660	1.1663
20	Promotes host imitation of tourists' behaviour	3.394	1.2931
21	Adoption of unwanted lifestyle	3.611	1.2078
22	Distortion of local behaviour pattern	3.889	1.0801
23	Increase in crime	4.017	1.0605
24	Increase in drug abuse	4.290	0.9499
25	Increased congestion in traffic and public areas	3.370	1.4464
26	Increased noise in the community	3.422	1.3607
27	Caused cultural land changes	3.717	1.1184
28	Abandoning farming for tourism jobs	3.532	1.3048
29	Increase in prices of goods and services	2.414	1.2413
30	High cost of living	2.598	1.3693
	Overall	3.865	0.991

The study used descriptive analysis to establish the mean scores based on 5 point Likert scale (1-Strongly Disagreed to 5-Strongly Agreed) as presented in table 4.4. The result indicates that tourism is perceived positively from scores of views which shows that tourism has created recognition of the local cultural heritage of the Sukurs has a mean score of 4.41. Encourage cultural identity has a mean score of 4.30. Increased residents' pride in local culture has a mean of 4.30. And enhanced positive changes in the values and customs has a mean score 4.28. This findings is in line with the findings of Mbaiwa (2005) on the Socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in the Okavango Delta, Botswana; that tourism turns local culture to sources of pride. However, the findings were in contrast with the findings in the similar study by Dar (2015) 'an empirical analysis of sociocultural impacts of tourism on Kashmir'. Where the respondents did not concur, that tourism has bring about positive changes in values and traditions and protection of sociocultural identity. Among the positively perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism in Sukur, are better education of the community, promotion of peace in the area as explained earlier by (Biederman, 2008). Promotion of goodwill and image of the community, rise in the status of the community, offering opportunity to meet and understand more about other people culture, improved security condition is ensured because of tourism, preservation of cultural resources and identity, enhanced cultural changes between tourists and local residents. Leads to rise in standard of living and better quality of life and improving the culture of tolerance of social differences; which all have a mean

score of more than 4.10, all this findings corroborate the opinion of Biederman (2008) where he asserted that social standard of living and increase in the quality of life of the host communities, it has also influence attitudinal changes of the residents. Communities that have conservative ideas have metamorphosed from rejections of aliens to culture of tolerance because of the development of tourism. Some have even take up jobs that will allow direct contact with tourists.

The study however, find out the highly negative perceived socio-cultural impacts of tourism to Sukur community to be Increase in drug abuse which has the mean score of 4.29. Increase in crime has 4.02. Generally, as confirm by Weaver and Oppermann (2000) the development of tourism is often affiliated with increases in the degree of certain types of crime. Turning local cultures into commodities, commercialisation of Sacred cultural heritage, distortion of local behaviour pattern, staging of cultural shows just to suit the taste of tourists, cultural land changes, changes in design of local products, adoption of unwanted lifestyle and abandoning farming for tourism jobs are the findings of the study that are earlier explained by (Gartner, 1996; Mason, 2003; Sharpley, 2002). Fortunately, the findings reveal that the following negative impacts of tourism are not yet witnessed in Sukur Community: Competition between tourists and locals for the use of resources, high cost of living and increase in prices of goods and services. Generally, the result suggests that socio-cultural impact of tourism to Sukur Community is favourably perceived by the residents. This is evident in the mean score of the overall responses on the research question 1(Residents' perception towards socio-cultural impacts from tourism development). This is line with exploration and involvement stage of the concept of a Tourism Area Life cycle of Evolution as developed by Butler (1980).

The main findings of this study, is the identification of the residents' perception of socio-cultural impacts of tourism within the community of Sukur World Heritage Site. Tourism in general, is perceived favourable in Sukur, even though, some negative impacts like increase in crime are witnessed, in the overall measurement, the positive impacts override the negative impacts. The current study makes many contributions to comprehending resident perceptions of socio-cultural impacts and attitudes toward support for tourism development. This study reinforces earlier research findings and provide an idea of residents' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism in the study area. The contributions were confirmation of Doxey's Irritation Index Model and Social Exchange Theory hypothesis. They see interaction from a cost/benefit perspective. In which hosts are very likely to support tourism development if they expect its benefits to outweigh the potential negative effects. The exchange process includes both material and immaterial social costs and benefits. Social exchange does not work as per any tenets or agreements. Individuals regularly depend all alone own perceptions, and their intentions vary. Therefore, social exchange inside the setting of group ought to be frequently analysed as a subjective marker if governments or private financial specialists need to know how inhabitants in a region respond to advancement. This current review's outcome affirmed that apparent positive and effects are basic impacts on support for future tourism. Residents are more likely to respond to the impacts of tourism when developing their attitudes toward supporting tourism development. It indicates that most respondents are favourable, at least in the beginning, toward tourism.

CONCLUSION

This study identified socio-cultural impact of tourism development. The results of the study reveal that the local residents perceived the socio-cultural impact of tourism favourably. As expected, local residents had very positive perceptions about the impact of tourism on their community. some of these are created recognition of the local cultural heritage of the Sukurs, encourage cultural identity, increased residents' pride in local culture, and enhanced positive changes in the values and customs of the community. Other favourable perceived socio-cultural impacts are rise in the standard of living, education, preservation of cultural heritage, security, etc. However, turning local cultures into commodities, commercialisation of Sacred cultural heritage, child

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. A.I. Mteiye [MALAWI]

labour, distortion of local behaviour pattern, staging of cultural shows just to suit the taste of tourists, cultural land changes, changes in design of local products, adoption of unwanted lifestyle and abandoning farming for tourism jobs to be the negative socio-cultural impacts witnessed within the area. In view of the findings of this study sustainability measures and component factors and community participation ought to be provided as strong foundation to continue to study the residents' perceived impacts; thereby protecting and maintaining tourism activities in Sukur World Heritage Site Community

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to maximize the benefits of tourism development in Sukur Kingdom, the following recommendations are hereby forwarded:

- Since Sukur World Heritage has designed plan, the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) should try to see that each phase of the development plan is fully implemented and in due time.
- There should be publicity and marketing efforts in order to showcase the rich culture of Sukur and attract people to the area most especially within the country.
- More measures should be put in place to help in the correction, protection and restoration of the Site.
- In order to make Sukur a tourist haven, enough funds should be earmarked by the government so as to fasten it developmental plans.
- Private enterprises should be involved through public/private partnership (PPP) in areas of organization of Sukur cultural festivals and provision of more tourists' facilities.

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