

## **CORRELATE OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN IKOT ABASI AND IBENO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN AKWA IBOM STATE.**

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**Abstract:** This study explored the relationship between tourism management and community development correlation in Ikot Abasi and Ibena Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State. Recently tourism has become a lucrative business, and a source of revenue generation, and improved socio-economic activities in Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance. The study adopted correlation survey design. The population of the study was 480 Local Government Staff while the sample size was 380 Local Government Staff, representing eighty percent of the population selected, using cluster sampling technique. The instrument used in gathering data was a self-made Questionnaire, titled: tourism management as a correlate to community development questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts in the Department of Adult Education and Community development. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test re-test method, which resulted a reliability index of .83. Findings of the study revealed that as publicity platforms increase, community development also increases in the Local Government Areas in which the study was carried out; in addition, findings also indicated that there was a positive relationship between publicity platforms and Community development. The study concluded that tourism is an important source of revenue for local government councils in Nigeria. It was recommended that the government should develop and implement comprehensive policies that support sustainable tourism and prioritize community development.

**Keywords:** Tourism, Tourism Management, Community development.

### **Introduction**

Communities, especially those in developing nations, are frequently confronted with a variety of social issues. Community development is concerned with change in human conditions for the better in both urban and rural communities. This change may be in the form of improved healthcare, income capacity, etc. In most communities, there is dilapidation of existing infrastructure and resources (Umoh, 2023). Part of local government statutory role is to provide basic social and economic services for communities and their members such as education, healthcare, market, road, transportation, communication, investment in food production etc. This is to foster an

enabling environment for socio-economic development. The major challenge is dwindling revenue of local governments in Nigeria.

Local governments derive revenue from two main sources: Federal allocation (budget) and internally generated revenue, which come through taxes, issuing of license, rent, etc. However, the major source of revenue is federal allocation, which has been dwindling due to the shutdown of the operations of oil companies in Niger Delta area by militants and partly also due to the vagaries of global market for crude oil. Nigeria's economic growth has been decreasing as a result of this crisis (Ukaegbu, et al, 2020). The Federal Government has made several attempts to address these issues through measures such as diversification of production, promotion of small and medium enterprises, and development of solid minerals and so on. More measures are still required to achieve the desired goal (Wordu, 2019). One of such measures at the local government level is tourism.

The history of tourism is traced to 1472 during the visit of the first Portuguese merchants on mercantile mission trade. Tourism in Nigeria focuses on events, as a result of ethnic groups, Nigeria is home to over 250 ethnic groups, each with unique customs, celebrations, and rituals. This diversity provides a rich tapestry of events throughout the year, such as the Argungu Fishing Festival (Kebbi State), Osun-Osogbo Festival (Osun State), and New Yam Festival (Igbo communities). But also includes Rainforest, Savanah, Waterfalls and other natural attractions.(Yang et al, 2008).

The following are some of the notable Tourists attraction in Nigeria: Agbokim waterfalls, Ogochi Gardens, Aso Rock, Apapa Amusement Park, Lagos Bar Beach, Benue River, Blue Plateau, Ibene Beach, among others.

Recently, tourism has started to gain importance as a means to improving the socio economic condition of people in Nigeria. Though tourism is important to community development, its importance is more visible when it is managed effectively; it then becomes capable of job creation and as well as increased revenue for local government councils. Tourism management can contribute to investments or developments in agriculture, industry, or trade that create jobs and income for the communities. Projects such as building roads, schools, and hospitals can also improve living conditions. If tourism publicity platforms, marketing and promotion policies are focused on community development, poverty alleviation and activities that promote sustainable practices to the community. This can lead to increased standard of living of the people in the communities through improved food security, better housing, sanitation, provision of clean water, etc. This makes it a useful tool for community development (Kyando, 2013, Dolezal & Burns 2014). Tourism management can serve as a panacea to community socio-economic need and their courtship to poverty (Buckley, 2020). Communities are blessed with diverse cultures, traditions, festivals, talents, historical and beautiful tourism sites that can attract visitors from relationship parts of the world. These endowments, when properly harnessed, could lead to sustainability of the community's rich cultural heritage and uniqueness, as well as create wealth for it's people, thus reducing poverty amongst the community. To put the situation in perspective, there are four main areas through which tourism management correlate to community development. These areas are generation of revenue, increase in economic activities, employment generation and infrastructural development (Okonkwo & Lukpata, 2015). Tourism is one of the most effective ways of moving wealth from one part of the world to other local economies. Government in

other part of the world are increasingly realizing the huge potentials of tourism to galvanize their economies and communities. Nigeria with excessively rich natural resources, unique culture and outstanding historic events cannot afford to stand aloof.

In Nigeria, according to Udoh and Ekanem (2021), the history tourism is traced to 1472 during Portuguese first visit to Nigeria on mercantile mission trade. Tourism in Nigeria focuses on events, but also involves rain forest, Savanah, Waterfalls and other natural attractions. Some of the notable tourist attractions in Nigeria are as follows: The tourist industry is now one of the major economic drivers in many nations and has a role in global politics. In recent years, it has become much easier for tourists to afford to travel and they may customize their schedule and experiences to their preferences thanks to low-cost flights and the availability of alternative accommodations, controlled by internet businesses (Chikezie, 2023).

Tourism has an effect on the local economy as well as the social structures, cultural traditions, and way of life of the areas it visits. Therefore, the current task is to offer solutions by creating a tourism consciousness that respects the local way of life and the environment.

A wide range of activities, including farm tourism/agri-tourism, food and wine tourism, adventure tourism, cultural and heritage tourism, nature tourism, and ecotourism are all included in the broad definition of rural tourism. Numerous rural towns and families run small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) play a key role in promoting tourism in Nigeria.

Studies by scholars such as Rilly & Love (2010) and Aniah et al. (2019) have shown that tourism can be an important source of jobs creation and also offers business opportunities to local residents as well as but it can serve as firms to yield returns to start business locally. Tourism was also said to support local culture in rural areas by encouraging restoration of local and regional historic sites and a relatively clean industry that fostered local conservation efforts. In the context of Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, community development through tourism emerges as a promising avenue for fostering positive change and sustainable progress.

Tourism can empower individuals to take active role in shaping their own future and contributing to the overall well-being of the community (Adebayo et al 2014). This could deal with the challenges in these communities which may include high unemployment rates, limited entrepreneurial opportunities, and the need for sustainable economic growth (Gohori & van der Merwe, 2020). Thus, by leveraging the tourism sector, Local Governments can tap into new sources of revenue generation, create employment opportunities and stimulate socio-economic activities. The development of tourism infrastructure, such as hotels, restaurants, and transportation services, can directly contribute to job creation, while tourism-related businesses, such as souvenir shop, and tour operators can foster entrepreneurial activities and growth of small scale enterprises (Enejialat, 2022). Through these economic benefits, tourism can play pivotal role in enhancing socio-economic wellbeing of the local population. Ikot Abasi and Ibeno local government areas of Akwa Ibom State are witnessing rapid growth of the tourist industry. These are about five of such tourist centres in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Area: Lord Lugard's residence Ikot Abasi, The Amalgamation house Ikot Abas, Slave dungeon Ikot Abasi, Bridge of no

return Ikot Abasi, The women war memorial (Aba women riot 1929) Ikot Abasi, Ibeno beach. These are staffed with workers and supervised by local government officials. The question therefore is what influence does these tourist centres have on the people of Ikot Abasi and Ibeno local government areas and how could such influenced be sustained for the promotion of tourism and achievement of meaningful development in Ikot-Abasi And Ibeno Local Government Areas. The pertinent question is, does tourism management correlate community development in Ikot Abais and Ibeno Local government area of Akwa Ibom State? This calls for a study on tourism management and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Tourism management has emerged as a promising strategy for fostering socio-economic growth, cultural preservation, and community development in the local government areas (LGAs) of Ikot Abasi and Ibeno in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government there are many viable tourist centres such as the Lord Lugard residence, Slave dungeon Ikot Abasi etc. Most empirical studies on tourism concentrate on topics such as influence of tourism on community development. Taking into cognizance that the management aspect of tourism is a critical component for achievement of outcomes, this study sought to fill this gap in knowledge.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to examine the tourism management as a correlate to community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Identify relationship between publicity platforms used to create awareness of tourist centers for community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.
2. Examine relationship between tourism policy framework implemented and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between publicity platforms used in creating awareness and tourist centers for community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State?
2. What is the relationship between tourism policy framework implemented and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the publicity platforms used in creating awareness of tourism and Community Development outcomes in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between marketing and promotion of tourism and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Methodology:**

This study adopted correlation design to examine whether there is correlation between tourism management and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGAs. The target population for this study is 480 staff, including those directly working in tourism section of Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Councils. Ikot Abasi Local

Government council staff where 270 while Ibene Local Government council staff where 210. The sample size consisted of 384 staff of Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Councils. The cluster sampling technique was used to determine the sample size which represents eighty (80) percent. The instrument for data collection is self-designed questionnaire titled “**Tourism management as a correlate to community development Questionnaire** (TMCCDQ). The instrument was used to collect data from Ikot Abasi and Ibeno (respondents). The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A is being known as demographic data, it was used for the collection of personal information from the respondents like gender, educational background, age and occupation. Section B consisted of items on the key variables of tourism management and items related to community development outcomes which are based on a 4-point modified Scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly agree (SD) weighted 4,3,2,1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts. This corrections made regarding the items were incorporated in the final draft of the instrument. To determine the reliability a test-retest technique was used. The researcher visited and administered the same instrument to a sample of 20 respondents outside the study area within two weeks’ interval. A reliability coefficient  $r = 0.83$  was established using the Cronbach Alpha Statistic. The instrument was therefore, judged as reliable for the study. The distribution of the research instrument (questionnaire) and administration of the instrument entailed personal and direct hand-delivery process, 384 questionnaire were given on a face-to-face personal contact with the respondents. An on-the-spot method was adopted by the researcher and research assistants in distributing copies of the questionnaire to ensure maximum recovery of the questionnaire administered, due to the limited number. Three Hundred and eighty-four (384) Copies of the questionnaire were delivered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of 3 (three) research assistants. 380 copies were retrieved and used for the data analysis. The research questions were answered using Person Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) and also used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The data analysis was carried out using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 22.

## **Results**

### **Research Question One**

What is the relationship between publicity platforms used in creating awareness and tourist centers for community development outcomes in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State?

### **Hypothesis One**

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the publicity platforms used in creating awareness and tourism for Community Development outcomes in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

**Table1: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of Analysis on the Relationship between the Publicity Platforms Used in Creating Awareness and Tourism for Community Development and Tourism on Community Development Outcomes in Ikot Abasi And Ibena LGA Of Akwa Ibom State.**

		Publicity platforms	Community development
<b>Publicity platforms</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	384	384
<b>Community development Outcomes</b>	Pearson Correlation	.512**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	384	384

The table above showed the relationship between Publicity platforms and community development Ikot Abasi and Ibena LGA of Akwa Ibom State. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation results revealed an r-value of .512 with a corresponding p-value of .001, which is less than the chosen significance level of 0.05. This indicated a moderate positive relationship between Publicity platforms and community development outcomes. The results suggested that as Publicity platforms increases, there is a tendency for community development to increase as well. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between Publicity platforms and community development Ikot Abasi and Ibena LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

**Research Question Two**

What is the relationship between tourism policy framework and community development outcomes in Ikot Abasi and Ibena LGA of Akwa Ibom State.?

**Hypothesis Two**

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between tourism policy framework and community development outcomes in Ikot Abasi and Ibena LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

**Table 2: Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on Analysis Tourism Policy Framework Implemented and Community Development**

		Tourism Policy	Community development
<b>Tourism Policy framework</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.450**
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.003
	N	384	384
<b>Community development outcomes</b>	Pearson Correlation	.450**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	384	384

The table above showed the relationship between tourism policy framework in Ikot Abasi and Ibena LGA of Akwa Ibom State. The results indicated a Pearson correlation r-value of .450 and a p-value of .003, which is less than 0.05. This result shows a moderate positive relationship between tourism policy framework and community

development outcomes. The implication is that higher tourism policy framework is moderately associated with community development. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that there is a significant relationship between m tourism policy framework in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State.

### **Major Findings**

1. There is a positive significant relationship between Publicity platforms and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State. This indicates that as Publicity platforms increase, community development also tends to increase.
2. There is a positive significant relationship between Marketing and promotion of tourism and community development Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State. Higher levels of Marketing and promotion of tourism are associated with increased community development.

### **Discussion of Findings:**

The findings of the study show that the listed items identified in research question 1 are the relationship publicity platforms used to create awareness of tourist centers in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State. The respondents agree that; Television programs and travel shows, radio broadcasts and interviews, outdoor advertising (billboards, posters, banners) and tourism fairs, exhibitions, and trade shows are publicity platforms used to create awareness of tourist centers. Publicity platforms play a crucial role in creating awareness of tourist centers. Publicity platforms such social media, travel websites and influencers are used to showcase picturesque landscapes, cultural experiences and unique attractions. Engaging with travels through captivating content, vibrant visuals and interactive campaigns to spark interest and encourage visitation.

These findings are supported by Dolezal and Burns (2014), which states that platforms like Instagram, Facebook and twitter are used to showcase pictures, images and information's about tourist attractions. Aniah et al., (2019), postulated that websites, print media and tourism fairs and exhibitions etc are also used to showcase tourist centers. Wordu (2019), connotes that social media influencers and content creators are also used to reach a wider audience and leverage their followers. Therefore, there are relationship publicity platforms used to create awareness of tourist centers.

The findings of the study reveal that the listed items identified in research question 2 are the tourism policy framework and community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno LGA of Akwa Ibom State. The respondents agreed that; there are clear policies in place for the development of tourism. Findings indicate that the policy framework implemented involves ensuring environmental sustainability, quality standards, safety measures and taxation and licensing.

These findings are supported by Umoh (2023), that developing a robust marketing strategy to promote tourism offerings, emphasizing the socioeconomic benefits for local communities and attracting responsible tourist are pertinent for tourism to realize the objectives of community development. Yang et al (2008), opines that developing policies that promote the preservation of local cultures, traditions and heritage emphasizing sustainable tourism practices that respect and celebrate the uniqueness of Akwa Ibom communities are essential

for tourism and community development. Therefore, there should be policy and planning in tourism on community development through socio-economic transformation.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to investigate relationship between Tourism Management and Community Development Correlation in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Areas in Akwa Ibom State. The main conclusion of this study is that tourism plays a pivotal role in fostering community development in Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State by generating revenue through tourist expenditures. This income contributes to community development through improved infrastructure, increased businesses, job creation and the overall economic well-being of the community. Tourism also contributes to the preservation and promotion of Ikot Abasi and Ibeno Local Government Area in Akwa Ibom State rich cultural heritage. Increased tourist interest often leads to initiatives aimed at conserving local traditions, arts and historical sites enhancing the community's sense of identity.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. The government should develop and implement comprehensive policies that support sustainable tourism and prioritize community development.
2. The government should allocate funds for the improvement of essential infrastructure, including roads, transportation and public facilities to enhance the overall tourism experience and benefit in local communities.

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