

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CRISIS AND MILITANCY ON TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN NIGER-DELTA

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ABSTRACT

The Niger-delta region in Nigeria is arguably one of the most naturally endowed location on the African continent, apart from having one of the largest crude oil and gas deposits; it is also blessed with scenic canopy of untainted mangrove forest, innumerable supply of aquatic life stock and rich and diverse cultural heritage of its teeming populace. Development of world class tourist destinations in the region has however remained a mirage due to the incessant crisis and militarization of the region between various ethnic militia who are agitating for environmental friendly oil exploration techniques (including share of oil wealth) and Nigeria armed forces. The study used primary and secondary data, the primary data were collected through a questionnaire survey of 100 respondents in Akassa region, secondary data were records of tourists visitation to various sites between 2003 and 2009 obtained from the data base of Akassa Development Association(ADA), one-sample t-test was used to analyzed the perception of the respondents on the effect of the crisis on the socio-economic development of the region and its tourism potentials, The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) also revealed that there was a significant variation in tourists in-flow to the region in the period considered. The paper emphasized the need for concerted efforts that will discourage tension and outbreak of crisis in the region by all stakeholders.

Keywords: Crisis, militancy, tourism potential, socio-economic development, niger-delta

INTRODUCTION

Tourism in recent times has developed significantly to become one of most rapidly growing industries in the world. According W.T.O (2002), 'global economy is presently driven by three major industries and these are technology, telecommunication and tourism'. This assertion clearly corroborated the view of Poirier (2000) who opined that 'tourism today is second only to oil as the world's leading export commodity, accounting for global earning of more than \$300 billion dollars or nearly 25% of total world gross national product (GNP) in the last decade' Obviously tourism growth and its resultant effect on economic fortunes of nations globally are not uniform. It is a truism that irrespective of how naturally endowed a location can be, or well developed the physical infrastructure are, without peaceable environment such resources may never yield their full tourism potentials .It has been established that the global tourism industry is quite sensitive. Thus, the driving force for tourism demand and supply can be susceptible to extreme events such as terrorism, political violence and natural disaster (Arana and Leon 2007; Ryan 1993; Page and Connell 2003;Glenn 2001) .

Tourism is an example of a straight-forward concept and is defined by Essner (2003) as 'a service based industry which is made up of several elements including transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, tours and merchandising' Terrorism, however, is a more challenging concept to define. For decades, scholars have debated the "terrorist vs. freedom fighter" dilemma. Enders and Saddler(2002) may offer the best definition, regarding it as'..... the premeditated use or threat of use of extra normal violence or brutality by sub national groups to obtain a political, religious, or ideological objective through intimidation of a huge audience, usually not directly involved with the policy making that the terrorist seek to influence' Furthermore, as terrorism against tourists often involves international citizens, international terrorism is defined as "terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country." (Essner, 2003).

There exists a noticeable symbiotic relationship between peaceful atmosphere and tourism development in a destination. Evidences have proven that the absence of terror or violence along with related factors is usually a pre-condition generally accepted for the development of destinations by would-be investors (Wahab 1995; Reichel 2004; So'nmez 1998). Researches have equally shown that political instability and relations influence the images of destinations in tourists-generating regions (Hall and Sullivan, 1996; Goodrich, 2002). The negative images that are projected due to crisis and political instabilities are often difficult to dislodge even after the end of such crisis. Governments and authorities from nearly all tourist generating countries rightly holds the lives of their citizens dear. To this end, threat to lives, personal safety and properties of tourists and their possession overrides any other considerations. A good example is the United State Information Service (run by the USA government) which gives periodic information on its data base to American tourists and citizens on crisis ridden regions and nations. Goodrich (2002) asserts that the US government outlined regular travel advice warning to its citizens to avoid a wide range of countries as a direct off-shot of the 9/11 al-Qaeda (Table1). Empirical findings evinced that often the responses of tourism industry to crisis of any nature is predictable; usually resulting in a sudden reduction in the numbers of in-bound tourists and deepening economic fortunes of the host region or tourist destination. For example Mwathe (2011) reported that the political crisis in Egypt which engulfed the nation in 2011, occurred at the peak of in-bound tourist flow. Already the impact is seriously felt in massive reduction in tourist visits to historical sites in Luxor, Aswan and Cairo coupled with cancellation of hotel reservations and bookings.

This paper is a contribution to the empirical discussion on the impact of political unrest and crisis on tourism and socio-economic development in Nigeria, a typical case in a developing sub Saharan African economy. Studies on impact of political unrest and crisis on tourism and socio-economic development have either been neglected or insufficiently studied in emerging tourist destinations on the African continent. This paper focuses on the assessment of the impact of civil unrest, resource agitation and militrilization of most communities in the oil-rich Niger-delta region of Nigeria, and its effect on tourism and socio-economic development of the region between 2003 and 2009. It also provides empirical basis for the explanation of the possible variation in the records of the in-bound tourist visitations to the Akassa region before, during and after the period of the crisis. The study is divided into five sections beginning with this introduction, Section two reviews some relevant literature on the subject of discourse, while

sections and three and four discuss the results and the methodology applied in conducting the study. Section five discusses the conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There seems to be a consensus among scholars on the negative impacts that terrorism and crisis are having on the global tourism industry. (Wahab, 1995a; Abraham and Yoel, 1996 ; Adam and Sinclair 2002), Wahab (1995b) opined that random acts of terrorism curtails travel activities and may remain so until the public memories of the publicized incidents fade. The effect of crisis and terrorism acts can be enormous even in developed economy. Adam and Sinclair (2002) who studied the negative effects of the September 2001 al Qaeda air strikes on the US were of the opinion that the repercussions of the strikes extended beyond the activities that were directly associated with tourism. The following sectors and stakeholders suffered considerable losses; aviation, hospitality, suppliers of intermediate goods and services, as well as employees and investors in the tourism industry. Similarly crisis engineered by public health disaster such as the foot and mouth epidemic in the UK (Sharpley and Craven 2001), the SARS outbreak in 2002-2003 (Page and Connell 2006) stretched the tourism industry abilities to formulate rapid responses to its limit. Despite the availability of equipments and human resources to combat such emergencies in most developed economies, morbid fear combined with media hype and misinformation created a devastating impact on the airline and hospitality industries in countries affected. The impact of terrorism and crisis however, can be more severe on developing economies and emerging tourist destinations. This is because competition for global tourism business is keen, and developing a world class tourist destination requires huge investment in infrastructural facilities and security outfits, This huge financial commitment nevertheless, a sudden eruption of crisis or terrorist act is capable of driving away tourists and slowing down economic growth. Essner (2003) reported that Kenyan economy lost a whopping 12% of annual gross domestic product (GDP) which is tourism driven due to the bombing of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi in 1998, and a beach hotel in Mombasa in 2002.

There is a growing global concern by analysts that if not systematically dealt with crisis, political unrest and insecurity is capable of wiping off the giant strides witnessed in the tourism industry in the last three decades (Adora, 2010; Mwathe, 2011; Bishwanath, 2001, Bhata, 2002; Holloway, 2002). The Cambridge training and development CTAD (1999) opined that it is quite germane that host destinations (countries) design a proactive and a watertight security plan to safeguard and guarantee tourist's wellbeing. It equally suggested that sometimes, curative approach may not be enough, as there may be need to include anticipatory plan of action to tackle any unexpected threat to the health, properties and lives of tourists who are most likely to be vulnerable in case of any security breach in a destination.

Nigerian tourism experts are in agreement on the potential of the budding industry and its anticipated contribution to the overall economy of the Nigerian nation once the available potentials are proactively harnessed (Oluwakoya and Ajayi 2010; Adora 2010; Okpoko et al 2008; Falade 2000). Already there is a growing consciousness both within the bureaucratic circle and the academia that the non-renewable extractive industry that fueled the engine of the national development in the last four decades is depleting fast. But it noted that one of the complimentary and alternative sectors being eyed as a potential avenue for boosting the nation's earnings is the tourism industry (Falade 2000; Okpoko 2008). Adora (2010) for example,

discouraged that Cross-River state (despite the fact that it is an oil rich state in the southern part of Nigeria) has latched on to this new thinking by investing heavily in infrastructural development in the evolution of world class tourist destinations in the state (like Obudu cattle ranch and Tinapa business resorts among many others). Massive funds are deployed to the provision of facilities like motor able roads, airports, electricity, security infrastructures and apparatus, world class hotels and skilled personnel to manage these facilities. Apparently, some events and sites are already generating the much needed foreign exchange to the national coffers. Events like the Osun Osogbo festival, Olokun festival in Badagry, Obudu cattle ranch annual mountain race, the Annual Africa Movie Award (AMAA) in Yenogoa, Yankari game reserve in Bauchi and various sporting and game events etc. have become regular attractions in Nigeria.

It is obvious however that these resources are not being fully exploited (Okey 2006; Falade 2000). It is equally perceptible that tourism development in the country is not at par with major tourist destinations in the continent. Countries like Kenya, South Africa, Egypt, and Zimbabwe earn more from the proceeds of tourism than Nigeria. The increasing fear of insecurity of lives and properties is presenting a new challenge to the investors, scholars and other stakeholders in the industry (Adora 2010; Okey, 2003). The fear may not be exaggerated if for examples the records of tourists visitation to sites in Akassa between 2003-2009 (table 5) are considered, there is discernible drop in the rate of visitation during the period the crisis lasted.

The suggestion that militants in Niger-delta sometimes deliberately choose to target tourists, tourist destinations and economic facilities with the intent of gaining publicity and furthering their ideological objectives seems particularly true. (Adora 2010; Okey 2003). Bunuzigha (2010) reported that tourism and socio-economic development of the entire region have suffered greatly because of deliberate economic sabotages experienced frequently on facilities (oil installations, road networks, tourist destinations etc), There is the more worrisome act of kidnapping tourists, foreign and local oil workers in exchange for culinary gains.

It may be farfetched and a bit misleading to holistically declare all the perpetrators of the crisis in the Niger-delta region as criminals. There are evidences that some of the militants sincerely agitate for environmentally friendly explorative activities by the oil corporation operating in the region. This is buttressed by genuine quest for infrastructural development of its numerous riverine and estuarine communities through non-violence means. The methodologies employed by most of these groups do appear to be synonymous with terrorism world over. It is imperative to state that irrespective of the nature of crisis (either natural like tsunamis, public health crisis, or terrorist strikes), it produces the same catastrophic effect on tourism industry. Soumez and Allen (1994) in a study of interrelationship between tourism development and crisis asserted that 'the tourism industry is highly vulnerable to natural (hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, torrential rains) and human-caused disasters—whether social or political (riots, insurgency, terrorism, crime, political upheaval, war, regional tensions).

Over time media coverage of disasters in tourist destinations have assumed a worldwide dimension as coverage of crisis that conveys vivid images of damages of properties, loss of lives, human suffering. Sadly, these economic and social disruptions are brought unfettered in most cases to the homes of would-be tourists around the world through print and electronic media. Essner (2003) discovered that most countries or regions battling the negative effects of crisis

expend considerable amount of finance on advertisement and image laundering. Page and Connell (2006) also reported the crisis that engulfed China as an aftermath of the government crackdown on Tiananmen square protests in 1989 led to a temporary downturn in tourism development. Prime-time news coverage of army tanks and the chaos that unfortunately resulted from the crisis had disastrous effect. Hotel occupancy rates in Beijing dipped below 30% as close to twelve thousands tourists cancelled their travel plans while nearly \$500 million expected revenue was lost.

Generally, researchers in the field of tourism seem to agree on the following when considering the interrelationship between political unrest, terrorism and tourism (Adora 2010; Essner 2003; Page and Connell 2006; Mwathe 2011):

- That tourism can be a harbinger of socio-economic development of host or tourist destination if properly managed.
- That tourists might be vulnerable and easy targets for terrorists and criminals partly because they are out of their familiar environment and so are likely to be more at risk. Moreover, they are believed to be affluent and may be able to afford ransom prices in case of kidnapping, Furthermore it seems terrorist groups are of the opinion that it is a lot easier to score cheap political point and gain publicity by attacking tourists.
- That all forms of crises (either natural or manmade) are capable of grounding the global tourism business if not proactively tackled.

STUDY AREA

The case study upon which this research is based however, are the effects of crisis, violence and political instability on tourism destinations development in three major towns in, Bayelsa state the heartland of the Niger-delta which was created in 1996. Majority of the residents of the state are rural dwellers engaged in fish and subsistence farming The peculiar terrain of the state (estuarine) made most economic and commercial activities taken for granted by residents in hinterland a forbidden venture. Also the failure of the government to provide basic infrastructures like transportation facilities, to link the various estuarine communities has remained the major debilitating factor militating against the development of the state. It is equally discernible that the oil exploration in the region has a disastrous effect on both the flora and fauna components of the natural environment. Consequently, this renders the otherwise rich, arable land largely uncultivable and the water unlivable for the aquatic stocks. The festering crisis in the region arose in the early 1990s occasioned by frosty relationship between oil corporations and a number of the various minority ethnic groups in the region. The youth population of the ethnic groups feels exploited by the obvious disregard for lack of sustainable explorative processes by most of the oil corporations operating in the region. The crisis became further exacerbated because of the competition for oil wealth by innumerable ethnic militia and criminals hiding under the guise of resource control agitation, With time, this led to a near complete militarization of the entire region.

Akassa and Twon Brass communities in Brass local government area and Ogbolomabiri town in Nembe local government area are located in lowland zone of Bayelsa state These are characterized by tidal waves, picturesque coastal beaches, tropical rain forest and some fresh

water swamp. Unfortunately, they also are homes to several threatened and endangered species of aquatic livestock. Another, popular site in the state is the Edumanom forest reserve, which is described as the last natural habitat for chimpanzees in the entire Niger-delta region. Apart from its natural endowment of natural forest and coastal environment, Akassa, Twon Brass and Nembe towns have popular and historic tourist sites that attract relatively high level of visitations all year round. Some of these are: the slave tunnel in Brass, the Olodi museum in Ogbolomabiri town in Nembe local government area, and the Akassa light house. The communities also celebrate various cultural festivals, which portray the rich cultural heritages of the people, these sites drew relatively high number of tourists especially before the advent of the imbroglio that engulfed the region. For example in Brass, there are four major annual cultural festivals, which attract a lot of tourists visitation, these are the Yanawari festival celebrated in April, Abadi festival celebrated in September, Sakapele and Sou-nouma erewo festivals observed in the months of November and December respectively. All these festivals are held annually and their celebrations act as rallying points for both natives and non-natives of the region, irrespective of where they live and work.

Tourist attraction in Akassa, Ogbolomabiri, Twon Brass and Nembe

The following are important tourist attractions in the study area are: a) Commonwealth graves of British soldiers who died in the Nembe-British war of 1895, b) Slave transit camp in Akassa, c) The picturesque Atlantic beach in Twon Brass, d) Olodi museum at Ogbolomabiri, e) The mangrove forest museum in Nembe, f) Ogidigan deity and shrine in Bassambiri in Nembe Local government area, g) King Ockiya mausoleum in at Ogbolomabiri in Nembe, and h) Late Chief Christopher Iwnewari's monument in Bassambiri in Nembe LGA.

List of countries US citizens were to avoid visiting in the wake of 9-11 2001 Al-Qaida strike in the US.

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Guinea –Bissau, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, The West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Macedonia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Solomon Island, Somalia, Sri-Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, and Yemen
(Source; Goodrich, J. (2002) September 11 2011 attack on America; A record of immediate impacts and reactions in the USA. *Tourism Management* 23(6); 573-80.)

METHODOLOGY

Data used for this study were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected using structured questionnaires. 100 of them were randomly distributed, 85 were eventually retrieved and used in the analysis. The respondents who are stakeholders in the communities and direct beneficiaries of tourism related activities were randomly selected. But particularly, efforts were made to target respondents that are direct beneficiaries of tourism and its related industry (craft makers, ferry boat operators, tour guides etc). It must be stated here that the physical terrain of most of the region where the study was carried out is quite daunting; most of the communities could only be linked by boats, places where roads exists; they are water logged, especially during the raining season that normally extend for as much as nine months in the year. This doubtlessly made the task of administering and collection of questionnaires strenuous. In case where the respondent was uneducated, the questions were interpreted and

explained. Secondary data of tourist’s visitation were collected from Akassa development association (ADA) records (Table 6). a community based non-governmental association kept records of tourists inflow to the sites between 2003-2009; a period of seven years. Descriptive data were used to illustrate demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents while one-way analysis of variance was adopted to depict the significance of variation in the level of tourists visitations experienced in the tourist sites before, during and after the crisis which engulfed the region.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The fundamental components included in the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are sex, age, marital status, educational status, income level, employment status, household size among others. 58.8% of the respondents were male while 41.2 % were females; these reflected the statistics from the three towns studied. A higher percentage of the male respondents is attributable to the fact that most males are actively and directly engaged in tourism related activities; canoeing, ferry boat operation, tour guide, commercial transit bus drivers etc

Table 1. Age level of the Respondent

Serial Number	Age Distribution	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
1	18 – 25	7	8.23
2	26 – 35	10	11.76
3	36 – 45	63	74.11
4	46 and above	5	5.8
	Total	85	100.0

Source; Authors’ Fieldwork 2010.

Table 1, which depicts the age structure of the respondents reveals that 8.23%% were between the 18-25 years age bracket, 11.76% were between 26-35 years age bracket, 74.11% were between 36-45 years age bracket, and 5.8% were between 46-55 years age bracket. The youth population, which are still actively engaged in economic activities accounted for over 90% of the respondents sampled. However, this was not deliberate as efforts were made for objective and factual random sampling.

50.1% of the respondents were married while 26.6% were single, 4.7% were separated and 14.4% were widows. The relatively high number of widows can possibly be attributable to low life expectancy of the country generally and the region in particular. The clashes witnessed in the region in recent times, along with prolonged battles between militants and the Nigerian army resulted in high casualty figures especially among the young and virile male population (Adora, 2010; Bunuzigha, 2010).

Table 2. Educational level of the Respondent

Serial Number	Educative Level	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
1	No formal education	38	44.7
2	Primary education	12	14.1
3	Secondary education	18	21.2
4	Tertiary education	17	20
	Total	85	100

Source; Authors' Fieldwork 2010.

Education status of the respondents [table 2] reveals that those with no formal education accounted for 44.7% of the sampled population, those who had primary education were 14.1%, while 21.2%. However, 20% of the respondents had secondary education and tertiary education respectively. The employment status of the respondents showed that 34.1 % are engaged in primary occupation (farming and fishing being the most predominant), 28,2% are engaged in commercial activities (trading, transportation, cane furniture, palm raft and canoe building), while 15% and 10.7% were civil and public servants respectively. More of the respondents (62.3%) were privately employed or self employed while a reasonable proportion of these numbers are engaged in tourism and tourism related activities. Any negative impact occasioned or generated by the crisis in the region will definitely affect the income and earning capacity of majority of the population.

Contributions of Tourism to socio-economic development of the region

Table 3. Contribution of Tourism to Socio-economic development of the region

Serial Number	Respondents Decision	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
1	Strongly agreed	45	52.94
2	Agreed	12	14.1
3	Partially agreed	15	17.64
4	Disagreed	13	15.29
	Total	85	100.0

Source; Author's Fieldwork 2010.

The evaluation of the respondents view on the contributions of tourism to the socio-economic development of the region is quite germane as this revealed the perception and the belief that the

respondents held on the contribution of tourism to the development of the region. 52.94% of the respondents strongly believed that tourism has helped in fostering better socio-economic development of the region, while 14.1% agreed that tourism has boosted the socio-economic development of the region, However 17.64% were of the opinion that tourism related activities partially contributed in one way or the other to the region's development, while 15.29% of the respondents disagreed with the view that tourism has contributed in any significant manner to the region's development. On how much contribution tourism business made to the income of the respondents in recent times, there was a seemingly unanimous agreement by all respondents on the benefits derived from tourism. 7.1% believed that they earned some ^20,000 yearly, 44.1% believed that they earned up to ^60,000 annually from tourism based enterprise, 38.9% of the respondents adjudged that they earned between ^81,000-^100,000 annually from tourism based enterprise, while 20% of the respondents were of the opinion that they earned over ^100,000 annually from tourism based enterprise.

Specific areas of development that have benefitted from tourism based enterprise

20% of the respondents believed that tourism based enterprise helped in boosting their income and earning capacity (table 3). This result easily validates findings by researchers that tourism is veritable alternative means of income even in pristine and rural community (Falade 2005; Okpoko et al 2008). 29% of the respondents were of the opinion that tourism activities have helped in generating jobs and sources of livelihood in the region. This is hardly surprising because one of the attendant benefits that is associated with the development of tourism potentials of a location is job creation; either as tour guide, ferry boat operators, local craft makers, food vendors or hoteliers etc. Tourism is universally acclaimed as a harbinger of employment. Many of the respondents equally declared that some structural developments in the region are triggered by tourism based activities. At least, 9.4% of the respondents were of this opinion. This claim may have futuristic developmental implication if properly harnessed by concerned authorities. A cursory observation of the whole terrain of the study area reveals a region that is bereft of sustainable infrastructural facilities like transportation, communication and other basic social amenities. The whole region is generally lacking in the availability of these facilities. To this end, it is incontrovertible that providing an enabling environment for tourism development will certainly hasten the structural development of the region.

16.5% of the respondents agreed that there have been some socio-cultural benefits attributable to tourism based activities in the region. Some of the benefit highlighted included exposure to both national and international tourists culture(languages, dressing sense and style, mannerism etc). Cultural infiltration has also been identified as one of the blights of cross-cultural tourism as there are bound to be varying degrees of cultural exchange between the tourist and the host in most cases. The relevant authorities in charge of tourism development in the region may need to put some measures in place to safe guard the cultural heritage of the people so as to prevent losses due to cultural infiltration (Falade 2000; Okpoko et al 2008).

Assessments and impacts of the crisis on the tourism industry and subsequent effects on socio-economic well being of the region

There is a consensus among the respondents on the negative impact that the prolonged crisis had on the standard of living and income of the populace while the crisis lasted. 63% of the

respondents claimed that fishing (the dominant occupation in the region) was adversely affected by the crisis. 76.5% of the respondents claimed that there is a surge in violent and petty crime rates during and after the period of the crisis. These results validate the claim of scholars that the proliferation of arms within the region, and breeding of new generation of youths who are adept in fire arms usages and are lured into criminal groups (Bunuzigha 2010; Adora 2010).

For most of the respondents, the crisis created a phobia for strangers and apathy towards tourists, and similarly towards people coming in contact with them for the first time. Unfortunately, a relatively high proportion of tourists fall within this category.

However respondents were asked to comment on the evidence of structural developmental activities on-going in the region at this post crisis period. 65.9% of the respondents were of the opinion that there were no noticeable structural developments in the region. Lack of tarred roads, schools, hospitals was cited as common indicators. It is the opinions of the generality of the respondents that there appeared to be no focused sustainable structural development in the region, even when a semblance of peace has returned to the region.

Analysis of in-bound and internal tourists flow and tourism based enterprise before, during and after the period of the crisis

Table 4. Analysis of respondents opinion on in-bound and internal tourists flow before, during and after the period of crisis

Serial Number	Analysis of Tourist Flow	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency
1	Partially agreed	16	18.9
2	Agreed	26	30.5
3	Strongly agreed	25	29.5
4	Disagreed	18	21.1
	Total	85	100

Sources; Author’s Fieldwork 2010

A greater proportion of the sampled population was of the opinion that there have been a drastic reduction in the flow of in-bound tourists and tourism related enterprises during and immediately after the crisis. 49.4% of the sampled population was of this opinion. 29.5% of the sampled population opined that the reduction in the flow of in-bound tourists to the region is mild, while 21.1% of the sampled population claimed that flow of in-bound and internal tourists actually increased during the period studied (Table 4).

The value obtained from the Anova statistical analysis indicates a significant variation in the records of inbound visitation by tourists to sites in Akassa, Twon Brass and Nembe for the period considered (2003-2009).

Table 5. Records of tourists visitation to sites in Akassa for 5 years period

Month	Year 2003	Year 2004	Year 2005	Year 2006	Year 2007	Year 2008	Year 2009
January	3	12	6	1	5	15	23
February	1	1	2	1	1	7	15
March	18	12	1	4	3	15	30
April	14	9	7	4	3	15	19
May	10	10	2	3	4	19	19
June	13	2	4	1	1	5	24
July	15	8	4	2	3	4	21
August	2	6	2	4	2	17	10
September	1	8	3	2	1	8	17
October	18	1	6	1	1	10	8
November	11	2	1	1	4	11	18
December	11	3	1	1	1	6	29

Source; Akassa Development Association records of tourist’s visitation to tourist’s sites between 2003-2009.

From the statistical analysis based on the records in table 5, the research data was analyzed to test for a significant variation in the records of tourists visitation to the sites between 2003 and 2004, an F – statistics value of 1.606 was obtained, at a non- significance level of 0.137. The significance value obtained from the ANOVA analysis indicates a variation in records of visitations to the tourist sites when the records for the two years are compared (2003-2004). A comparison of the significance value with the standard significance value for research in the social sciences (i.e. with values ≤ 0.05) signifies that the variation is however not significant. Since the significance value of the F statistic is greater.

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences						t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Pair 1 2003 - 2004	3.583	7.728	2.231	-1.327	8.493	1.606	11	.137	
Pair 2 2004 - 2005	2.917	4.420	1.276	.108	5.725	2.286	11	.043	
Pair 3 2005 - 2006	1.250	2.417	.698	-.286	2.786	1.792	11	.101	
Pair 4 2006 - 2007	-.333	1.723	.497	-1.428	.762	-.670	11	.517	
Pair 5 2007 - 2008	-8.250	4.245	1.226	-10.947	-5.553	-6.732	11	.000	
Pair 6 2008 - 2009	-11.000	11.631	3.357	-18.390	-3.610	-3.276	11	.007	

Similar results were gotten from the analyses for all the years examined except for the period between 2007-2009. For example, the research data was analyzed to test for a significant variation in tourist’s visitation between 2004 and 2005, an F – statistics value of 2.286 was obtained, at a non- significance level of 0.43. A comparison of the significance value with the standard significance value for research in the social sciences (i.e. with values ≤ 0.05) signifies that the variation is however not significant. Since the significance value of the F statistic is

greater (i.e. greater than 0.05). The results from the analyses for years 2005 and 2006; had a F-statistics value of 1.790 which was obtained, at a non-significance level of .101. While the ANOVA analysis for variation in the records between 2006 and 2007 had a F-statistics value of .670 obtained at non-significance level of .517. The evaluation of the significance value with the standard significance value for research in the social sciences (i.e. with values ≤ 0.05) signifies that these variations are however not significant. Since the significance values of the F statistic are greater (i.e. greater than 0.05).

However the research data analyzes to test for a significant variation in the records of tourists visitation to the sites between 2007 and 2008, an F – statistics value of 6.732 was obtained, at a significance level of .000. A comparison of the significance value with the standard significance value for research in the social sciences (i.e. with values ≤ 0.05) signifies that the variation is significant. Since the significance value of the F statistic is lesser (i.e. lesser than 0.05). Similar result is gotten when the records for 2008 and 2009 were compared; a F-statistics value of 3.276 was gotten, at a significance level of .007. Which is significant, when compared with the standard significance value for research in social sciences.

This analyses clearly shows, that the years when the crisis was at its peak (between 2003-2006), they were relatively low patronage of the various tourist's sites in the region, conversely from the onset of the Federal Government initiated amnesty/training programme for the militants, significant variations in tourist's visits are discernible. This lends credence to the incontrovertible fact that peace and socio-political stability is a non-negotiable driver of tourism growth. The exchange rate at the time this research was $\text{^155.0 to } \$1$.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is an empirical analysis on the effect of crisis on the budding tourism industry in a sub-Saharan African economy, using Akassa, Nembe and Oglomobari communities in Niger-delta region of Nigeria for the study. Incidentally, the region is the Nigeria nation economic live-wire, being the oil-rich area that accounts for a substantial part of the country's GDP. The vociferous outcry by concerned stakeholders on the danger of the country's continuous dependency on proceeds from the non-renewable and fast depleting oil-reserves, has given new impetus for the drive to open new frontier that will attract the much needed economic growth. Tourism is seen as veritable means of fueling Nigeria's economic growth, however, the budding industry is bedeviled by various challenges. These include social crisis and growing trend of terrorist acts. This study identified the growing popularity of tourism based industry among the rural poor who produce and provide tourist products and services for tourists visiting sites in their domains. It is equally discovered that crisis is an ill wind that blows no good. Its effects on the economy of the host communities is quite debilitating because tourists are scared of visiting crisis-prone areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need for governments at all levels to provide conducive environments that will engender business growth, economic prosperity and peace. The potential of Nigeria's becoming one of the major tourist destinations in sub-Saharan Africa is there but a lot of work need be done to empower the restive youth population of the country. This can be done by increasing access to education and providing environment that will make employment generation possible. The incidences of crisis and terrorist activities like (Niger-delta crisis, Boko-haram terrorists

strikes) though alien in the Nigerian social milieu, may be a pointer to increasing level of frustrations by most Nigerian youths. The supposedly economic growth being experienced by the country; is yet to be translated in realistic term to better the life of the average citizen, Poverty level and unemployment are still relatively high. Overall investment in the tourism industry in Nigeria is paltry and government financing of public infrastructural development is weak. This more than any other factor is a major deterrence to the development of world class tourist sites in the country. The immediate impact is that most investors are wary of committing scarce resources in a sector that may not deliver the much anticipated returns.

There is a frail regulatory framework guiding the operation and management of tourism based industry in Nigeria, In fact, It is debatable if the Nigeria Tourism Board is performing its statutory role of overseeing, regulating and promoting tourism development in the country. There is also a need to proactively synergize information gathering and sharing among the various security outfits in the country on one hand, and foreign partners on the other, This will go a long way in preventing attacks and boosting confidence in the minds of the tourists about the level of security of lives and properties in the country.

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