

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