

The Influence of Ikogosi Warm Spring Tourist Centre on Economic Development of Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Over the years it has cut through human developments to economic development of regions, nations and the world at large. Tourism generates wealth and employment. It's served as a major source of income and foreign exchange earners for countries. The Ikogosi-Ekiti warm spring tourist centre is a tourist destination; it offers numerous values ranging from historical, environmental monuments and rich cultural heritage of the people. It's a wonder to behold. The purpose of the study was to assess the impact of the Ikogosi cold/warm spring tourist resort on community development, with a view to enhancing the economic development of the host community. This study adopted a survey research method and used four different sets of questionnaire to collect research data from the household heads, tourists, staff of Ikogosi tourism centre and the Ekiti state tourism board. The findings among others revealed that the Ikogosi warm spring tourist centre lack adequate network coverage and transportation problem. However the study compels government to encourage private partnership in tourism industry; and therefore calls for public enlightenment to be given to the host community on the usefulness to be hospitable and polite to tourists.

Keywords: Ekiti-State, Ikogosi-Ekiti warm spring, Tourism, Tourist centre.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an instrument of economic regeneration and stability. It harnesses the capacity to create wealth, empower the people and generate employment opportunities. As stated by Ogunberu (2011) Tourism is the largest and fastest growing industry in the world today. It accounts for about 7 percent of world capital investment with revenue predicted to rise up to 1.550 billion dollars by the year 2015. The industry is described as having economic regeneration and stability potential given its roles in employment creation, income generation and infrastructure development. Tourism is the industry that provides travelers with tour, meal, entertainment and overnight accommodation. It promotes enlightenment, education and international good will (Denis, 1993). Tourism brings about improvement in the socio-economic liverhood of people in any urban/rural area of the world. Its development tends to appreciate local cultures, promote solidarity from cultural exchange give rooms for comprehensible feelings of both the host communities and the tourists (Kolb 2006).

Studies and researches have revealed that the purpose of tourism by majority of the practitioners has been that of leisure and recreation. There is usually a time one gets off the usual daily activities that are geared toward the pursuit of wealth (Agbaeze, 2003). This time out, has proven to be very important to the effective running of the human body and the development of a nation in the long run. It is a time of leisure in which one is engaged in recreational activities and tourism. Tourism as a concept can therefore be referred to as a virile tool for human development and health enhancement.

Tourism is concomitant to sustainable development and growth. It is great generator and a good driver of economic wealth creations for developed countries like United State of America, France and Germany. Many countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Israel, Greece, Lebanon, Italy, Thailand, Seychelles, Mauritius, Bahamas, Fiji, Philippines and Egypt are presently benefiting in their investment on tourism industry which is a fast growing sector in the world. Tourism centre/industry has also helps to generate integration, foreign exchange, rural enterprise, encourage development and employment facilitators for urban and rural dwellers. Developing countries in the world like Nigeria will generate funds from tourism industry/centres rather than depending solely on crude oil revenue that is not enough to bring about growth to the country at large (Adedeji, 2015).

Nigeria has several capacities on tourism that has not been fully utilized to the fullest without limit. For instance Ikogosi warm and cold water springs is a tourism resort that one has very little or no information on how much influence it has in exploiting its potentials and it has the keys to social and economic sectors. There is no doubt that Ikogosi has some natural resources that could be utilized in enhancing the quality of life of people

in generating employment creation in the community and state. According to WEF (2013), the total contribution of the tourism industry to the global employment, including jobs indirectly supported by the industry, was 8.7% of total employment put at 262 million jobs. This figure is expected to rise by 1.7% in 2013, estimated at about 266million jobs and 2.4% pa put at about 338 million jobs in 2023.

However the immediate past administration of Ekiti State carried out some physical developments on Ikogosi Warm and Cold springs site, more is still expected from the present administration. It's on this note that a study was carried out on the influence of Ikogosi Warm and Cold Springs Tourism Centre on Economic Development of the host community in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria". Ekiti State harbor important tourist resources, among them are Ikogosi Warm and Cold Spring Resort and Ipole-Iloro Waterfall, to mention a few. The purpose of this paper to assess the impact of the Ikogosi cold/warm spring tourist resort on community development in Ekiti – State, with a focus on Ikogosi-Ekiti.

1.1 The Study Area

Ikogosi-Ekiti is in Ekiti State, Nigeria. It is located in the western part of Nigeria, it's situated between lofty, steep-sided and heavily wooded, north-south trending hills about 27.4 km east of Ilesha (Osun State), and about 10.5 km southeast of Efon Alaaye-Ekiti. It is located just north of the 7o 35'N latitude and slightly west of the 5o 00' E longitude. The elevation of the general area is between 457.0-487.5m1. There are rainy season (April-October) and the dry season (November-March). Temperature ranges between 21° and 28°C with high humidity. Ikogosi is a small community in terms of size and population. The 1991 national population census puts the population of Ikogosi-Ekiti at 6,984 persons with 3,314 male and 3,670 female. The estimated population in 1996 was put at 7,863 persons (NPC, 1996). The projected population in 2014 was put at 13,386 persons. Ikogosi-Ekiti people are predominantly farmers. They engage in planting food crops like coco-yam, plantain, maize, yam, cassava and banana among others. They also plant cash crops like cotton, cocoa, and coffee to mention a few while some also engage in craft like carpentry, bricklaying, weaving, masons, gold smiting and blacksmithing.

1.2 THE UNTOLD STORIES OF THE IKOGOSI-EKITI WARM AND COLD SPRINGS

According to history, the warm and cold springs of Ikogosi were two women rivals of the same husband. A rift occurred between the two and in annoyance transformed to the cold and warm springs at Ikogosi. The ill-tempered wife became the hot spring while the cool-tempered wife became the cold spring. The husband also who was embarrassed by the actions of his two wives transformed into undulating hills that encompass the springs. However it is well established that some of the villages still worship the springs as deities. History has it that the area where the spring is located was occupied by powerful spirits, who made some strange murmuring in the night. Hunters and strong herbalists within and outside the town visit the place for religious purposes. It is believed that the warm spring in Ikogosi has the ability to cure kidney stone, body rashes, hypertension, guinea worm and pimples, this is done either by bathing with it or drinking it. However the water is also used for domestic activities (Hairul *et al*,2013). Below is the pictorial evidence of one of the notable views of Ikogosi-Ekiti warm and cold springs.

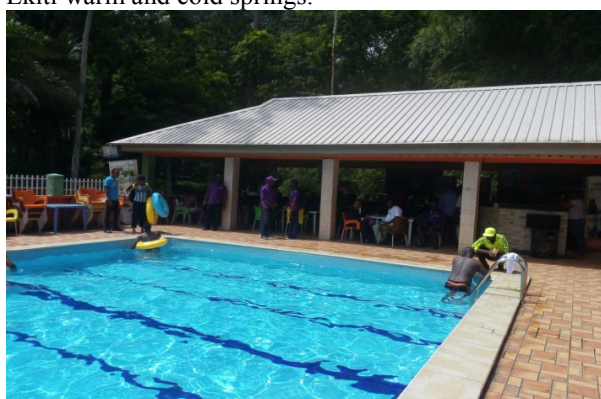


Plate 1: Showing Ikogosi, Ekiti-State resorts Aerial View



Plate 2: Showing Tourists at the meeting point of the Warm and Cold Springs Water of Ikogosi, Ekiti-State

1.2.1 Now That the Untold stories of the Warm and Cold Springs in Ikogosi-Ekiti is known

Tribute to the Ex Governor of Ekiti-State, Nigeria (Kayode Fayemi). Who shifted attention to the neglected Ikogosi tourism centre and resort, through the new Tourism development drive. Experts have worked and developed the centre to international standards. Facilities are put in place, such as heliport, golf course swimming pool, multipurpose and well furnish conference hall, hotel, sport centre and cabins for students on

excursions. During this research, the following groups were met. On the 23rd of March, 2016 participant and organizers of the Joint International Conference on the 21st Century Human Habitat Issue, Sustainable and Development were met on site during their Fun Trip visit to the tourism centre (See Plate 2). While on the 21th March, 2016 the Housemaids of the Miss Culture Ekiti, 2016 were on site, according to the participants and organizers they are in Ikogosi Warm Spring tourism centre for a month camping. Other groups met were students from Crown Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti and (NYSC) Ekiti-State Corps members were met on the site in the company of friends whose purpose was just to mark/celebrate a friend birthday anniversary, these two groups were highly overwhelmed to see and feel the hotness/coldness of the spring. They claimed to have read and heard from people about the “Warm spring” in Ikogosi-Ekiti while in school, A corps member named Vanessa Okosun, stated that her family in London, told her about a place called Ikogosi in Ekiti state after they were informed of her posting to Ekiti-State, she reveals that Ikogosi tourism centre is a home away from home and called it an amazing additional beauty to Nigeria as a country.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is a tool used in the regeneration of economic development and stability; it enhances employment creation, income generation and infrastructure development of a state or country. In the convergence views of Chung and Cheng, (2011) and Akintunde (2011) they elucidated the records on international tourism, which shows that all foreign exchange earners, tourism comes next to crude oil in some countries such as Saudi Arabia, Israel, United state and Spain, etc. In 2011, the economic contribution of tourism globally was put at about \$6.3million in GDP with about 200 million jobs directly created, hence, showing that the industry is contributing significantly to the service economy of the world with enormous potentials for socio-economic development (Busayo *et al.*, 2011). However developing country like Nigeria will make a lot of money by developing tourism industry/sector rather than keeping hopes on crude oil revenue that is inadequate in making any meaningful development in urban and rural communities in the country, like Ekiti-State.

Ekiti State is greatly endowed with tourist resources relative to other countries of the world. Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Assessment was carried out on Nigeria by the World Economic Forum in (2013), the World Travel and Tourism Council revealed that Ekiti State has the required tourist resources to enhance her economic landscape and hence, witness steady growth economically. The report affirmed that tourist resources in Ekiti State fall into hotels or resorts, recreational parks, wildlife, natural sceneries, cultural festivals, historical relics and monuments; however the state is richly blessed with abundant tourist resources. (Busayo *et al.*, 2014). Apart from Ikogosi-Ekiti warm and cold springs tourism centre, Ekiti State is greatly endowed with tourist resources such as: (i) Fajuyi Memorial Park, Ado Ekiti; (ii) Lake View Resort, Ilawe-Ekiti; (iii) Efon-Alaaye Waterfall; (iv) Olosunta Hills; (v) Ero Dam and Lake; (vi) Ipole-Iloro Waterfall; and (vii) Oriole Hills etc. Despite this abundant tourist add to resource in Ekiti State. Statistics of poverty profile in Nigeria was conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics (2010); Ekiti-State was ranked as the 14th state in Nigeria in terms of poverty incidence in the country (Nigeria). However tourism is seen today as the longest prorogation of a few but it is an accepted accustomed and even expected part of the lifestyle of a large and growing number of people (Dekadt, 1979). The involvement of tourist in Ikogosi spring will greatly contribute positively to the state, and bring about socialization, enhance improved leadership skill and trait, create fun, friendship, feel needs and recognition of the wonders of the cold and warm water. Other benefits include accomplishment of satisfaction and general improvement (Reeve, 2001). Tourism is said to be the travel for recreational, leisure, family or business purposes, usually of a limited duration. Tourism is commonly associated with trans-national travel, but may also be refer to travel to another location for same country. The world tourism organization define tourists as people traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environmental for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.

2.1 Tourism in Ekiti-State: An Overview

Tourism development is seventh (7th) in the eight (8)-point agenda of the formal Governor (Kayode Fayemi) of Ekiti state administration, is agenda was to make Ekiti state, one of the leading tourism destinations in Nigeria. In spite of the fact that the state is blessed with many tourism potentials, no meaningful step was taken by the past administration to develop the tourism sector of the state. In the past, facilities in Ikogosi Warm and Cold Springs were deteriorated due to neglect on the part of the Government, which was responsible for the low level of its patronage. Presently Ikogosi warm spring has taken a new sharp; it is an attractive destination for relaxation and holiday for tourists, thanks to the present of heliport, world class hotel accommodation and sporting facilities. In view of the above mentioned literature on tourism, this study stands out to exploit the influence of Ikogosi tourism centre on economic development in Ekiti State, as it provides alternate source of revenue for the present administration of Governor (Ayodele Fayose's) in revamping the economy of Ekiti State, South West Nigeria.

Aim

The aim of this study is to assess the impact of the Ikogosi cold/warm spring tourist resort on community development, with a view to enhancing the economic development of the host community.

To realize the aim, the study objectives are to;

1. identify the socio-economic characteristics of the residents in Ikogosi-Ekiti;
2. evaluate the influence of the Ikogosi tourism centre on community social development; and
3. highlight the impacts of tourism on the host community of tourist destination in the study area.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study is survey researched. Data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources; this was carried out through questionnaires administration, interviews and personal observation. Four (4) sets of questionnaires questions were set and specifically designed to obtain information from the respondents, it consists of seventy six (76) questions. In line with the philosophy of critical rationalism, a random sampling technique was applied in this study. The population used for this study include: 15% of the total household heads of 2,087, which make up two hundred and eighty seven households head in Ikogosi-Ekiti and 10% of the tourists met during the questionnaire administration were pick which amount to 191 tourists, however, 100% census survey was conducted on the general manager of the tourist centre and the officers of Ekiti-state Tourism Board respectively.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from the study are presented as follows:

4.1 Sex of Respondents

From the field survey in Ikogosi town, there were more males' respondent than female. Table 1 show that male respondents constituted 64.4%, while the female respondents accounted for 35.6%. Findings revealed that males are majority the heads and owners of households in Ikogosi-Town.

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	185	64.4
Female	102	35.6
Total	287	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2016

4.1.1: Occupation of Respondents

Table 2 shows that farming is the predominant occupation of the people of Ikogosi Town with about 34.1% of the people engaged in farming. Artisans constituted 26.5% while trading activities generally represents 22.0% of the occupation. Trading activities in this regard is concerned with selling of agricultural products, provision and petty goods while 17.4% are Civil Servant.

Table 2: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Civil Servant	50	17.4
Farming	98	34.1
Trading Activities	63	22.0
Artisans	76	26.5
Total	287	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2016

4.2: Influence of the Ikogosi Tourism Centre on Community Social Development

Table 3 shows the influence of Ikogosi Tourism centre on community social development. More than half (52.5%) of respondents were of the view that the presence of Ikogosi tourism centre and its tourist has attracted the attention of the government in terms of provision of social amenities. Respondents who said the tourist resort has improved the standard of living of the people accounted for 22.9%. 18.1%, stated that Ikogosi tourist centre has brought both national and international recognition to the community. While 6.5% were of the opinion that the Ikogosi tourism centre has influenced rapid population growth of the community. In addition the tourist resort has drawn the attention of government in the provision of basic social amenities, like borehole water supply, tarred roads, and electricity supply among others.

Table 3: Influence of the Ikogosi Tourism Centre on Community Social Development

Influence of Ikogosi Tourism Centre	Frequency	Percent
Increase in Population size	20	6.5
Improvement in standard of living	66	22.9
Attraction of government attention in provision of social amenities	147	52.5
National and international recognition	54	18.1
Total	287	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2016

4.2.1 Influence of the Tourist Centre on Economic Development

Ikogosi tourism centre has influenced the economic development of the host community. Majority of the residents sampled (56.6 percent) revealed that the tourist centre has influence the economic development of the community through the provision of employment opportunity, while (30.0 percent) of the residents stated that it has make the community a centre of attraction for investors. However (14.2 percent) of the resident investigated revealed that the tourist centre has influence and enhance economic development. For example it has brought about increase in income through commercial activities. Further findings reveal that majority of the workers of Ikogosi warm and cold springs are indigenes of Ikogosi-Ekiti, most of them are youths who also engaged in transportation business as a mean of mobility in conveying tourist to the centre. Provision of employment opportunities is the most dominant influence of the tourist centre on economic development in Ikogosi-Town of Ekiti state.

Table 4: Influence on Economic Development

Influence on Economic Development	Frequency	Percent
Provision of employment opportunities	161	56.0
Increase in income as a result of commercial activities	41	14.2
It makes the community a centre of attraction for investors	85	30.0
Total	287	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2016

4.2.2 The Influence of Ikogosi Tourism Centre on Economy of Ekiti-State

Based on the information gathered from this study, the influence which Ikogosi warm and cold springs tourism centre has on the economy of Ekiti State is its contribution to the local economy of the host community and generation of revenue for the government. Other influence of Ikogosi tourism centre is employment generation. Residents of the host community adopted the practice of trading and engaging in other jobs (most notable transportation). Commercial motorcycle (Okada) is the major form of transportation in the area. Money gotten from this form of trade goes directly to the traders and in the long run the community, this type of money is not taxed and it contributes little or nothing to the government revenue. Investment in tourism industry represents if not the engine, then, the "wheels" of economic activity of any community or nation development.

4.2.3 Economic Benefit of Tourist Patronage

Table 5 shows the extent to which tourist patronage affects the income of the business in the study area. Based on findings, the businesses that have tourist as customers, grade the income they receive from these tourist. Majority of the respondents 52.2% grade the economic benefit of tourist patronage as high, 17.7% view it as fair, while 14.6% also view it as low and 15.3% who fall under the category of not applicable are those who do not have upgraded facilities and do not necessarily meet the needs of tourist. There is high present of economic benefit of tourist patronage in Ikogosi.

Table 5: Economic Benefit of Tourist Patronage

Economic Benefit	Frequency	Percent
High	150	52.2
Fair	51	17.7
Low	42	14.6
Not Applicable	44	15.3
Total	287	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2016

4.2.4 Extent of Tourist Patronage

Table 6 shows the extent to which tourists are part of customers that patronized business in the study area. 28.5% of the investigated residents are highly patronized by tourist, while 43.5% of the respondents have tourist as part of their customers to a fair extent. 7.0% of the sample respondents have tourist as part of their customers but on a low scale. 21.0% of the respondents do not have tourist as part of their customers. The situation is a reflection of patronage of Ikogosi warm and cold spring tourism centre and also a reflection of the goods in which the business trade in. For example, businesses such as hair dressing saloon had very low patronage from tourist, this is because most saloons in Ikogosi are not sophisticated enough to meet the needs of tourist.

Table 6: Extent of Tourist Patronage

Extent	Frequency	Percent
High	82	28.5
Fair	125	43.5
Low	20	7.0
Not Applicable	60	21.0
Total	287	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2016

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tourism has a great potential to generate foreign exchange, revenue for the government of nations and its serve as income and employment for residents in the host community. Tourism has the power of attracting direct investors necessary to create jobs, and turning the economics of any it is hoped that Ikogosi warm spring tourism centre in Ekiti State will be elevated to international standard in the nearest future region, state or nation around. A community approach in tourism has improved the economic development of both the state and the host community; the following recommendations are proffered;

(a) Encouragement of Private Participation: Government should encourage partnership with private individuals in promoting tourism development in Ekiti State. Furthermore the Ekiti State Tourism Board should seek and encourage private investors and organizations towards proper management of the tourism centre. This paper recommends a partnership between private bodies and the government in order to develop the industry;

(b) Community Enlightenment: The community views the tourism business as the sole responsibility of the government and as such do not participate much in it. The community should be meant to understand the potentials of tourism industry and must be encouraged to contribute their quota to the industry. The Artisans must be educated and enlighten to upgrade their trade to meet the needs of the tourists. The host community must be enlightened on a regular based on the usefulness to be hospitable and polite to tourists;

(c) Provision of Adequate Transportation: Government should endeavor to assist Ikogosi by improving transportation facilities such as vehicles, that will lead tourists to the tourism centre from different state in Nigeria through construction of motorable roads and upgrading of existing roads.

(d) Advertisement and Public Enlightenment/Awareness: Advertisement and announcement through Television, Radio, Newspapers and Internet. The Ekiti state government must make Ikogosi warm spring a marketable tourism centre to other parts of the world, in this view, proper and efficient promotion strategy should be implemented and executed in order to create global awareness of the industry for it to be of economic benefit.

(e) Service Providers should improve their Network Coverage/Service in the Community. Network providers like MTN, GLO, AIRTEL and ETISALAT in the tourism centre lack adequate network coverage and internet access/connection. If available in the entire location of the Tourism centre, it will enable tourists to give instant information to family/friends about his/her where-about and to let the world have a feel of the experience had at the Tourism Centre, with photograph snaps and send in social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and Instagram etc.

(f) Reduction in the Price of the Accommodation in the Tourism Centre. Tourists, both within and outside the country after a fun tour in the area, depart the area for other areas with cheaper hotel accommodation. Reasons is ascribe to the price connected to the accommodations, where the lease price/amount for a single room in a day goes for N12,500, while the VIP lodge cost N65,000. Those prices have to be reviewed and reduced in order to attract and increase tourists in the tourism centre.

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