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Development Challenges and Tourism in the 21st Century in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Tourism holds significant potential for driving economic growth, cultural preservation, and social development, particularly in regions with diverse attractions like Cross River State, Nigeria. However, despite its vast natural and cultural resources, the state faces numerous challenges that hinder the effective development of its tourism sector in the 21st century. This study investigates the key obstacles to sustainable tourism growth in Cross River State, including, evolving security threats, poor policy implementation, and inadequate infrastructure. Three objectives of the study, three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study. Sustainable Tourism Development Theory was used to guide the study. Purposive sampling method was used to select 330 respondents to generate data to test the hypotheses. A twelve (12) item four points Likert scale questionnaire instrument was used for data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed that security threat significantly affect tourism development in Cross River State, poor policy implementation significant affect tourism development in Cross River State and inadequate infrastructure significantly affect tourism development in Cross River State. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that the Cross River State Government should invest in enhancing the capacity of security agencies to manage and mitigate security threats that deter tourists like introducing modern surveillance systems, better training, and community policing strategies also that government should invest in the development of accessible roads, airports, and public transport systems that connect key tourist sites in Cross River State that will enhances mobility and attracts more visitors.

Keywords: Tourism, Development, Security threat, Policy implementation, Infrastructure.

Introduction

Tourism has become an increasingly important element of the world's economic development with its substantial contributions to the creation of jobs, revenue, and cross-cultural interchange. Like many other states in Nigeria, Cross River State is endowed by nature with tourist destinations that have the power to reshape society socioeconomically, draw in outside capital, and lessen poverty. Indeed, it has been acknowledged that tourism represents one of the most feasible and long-term avenues for foreign exchange earnings and investment for the State (Ojugbo & Ojugbo, 2021). In addition to the aforementioned, Eja et al. (2018) have noted that Cross River State is a prime tourism destination due to its abundance of natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and temperate

climate. Despite these benefits, Cross River State's tourist industry confronts challenges to its sustainable growth. The worldwide tourism business is facing new challenges and demands in the twenty-first century, such as the requirement for better service delivery, upgraded infrastructure, and environmentally friendly travel habits (Ajake & Amalu, 2013). On the other hand, Cross River State faces challenges like low money, limited government support, poor policy execution, instability, and inadequate infrastructure. These difficulties have made it more difficult for the state to draw in and keep tourists, which has had an impact on its overall socioeconomic development (Ekpenyong & Esu, 2020). In addition, inadequate marketing tactics, environmental deterioration, and sociopolitical instability all have an impact on the state's tourism industry. These elements present major obstacles to attaining sustainable tourism development in the twenty-first century and contribute to the underutilization of the state's tourism resources (Akpan & Obang, 2015).

In Cross River, security is still a major worry for tourists. Significant hazards are posed to both tourists and the local community by the prevalence of crime, political instability, and communal disputes. Idem and Ogar (2019) talk about how these security problems have hurt Cross River's standing as an attractive and safe travel destination, which has resulted in a drop in visitor numbers. Even in isolated cases, perceptions of insecurity can have a long-lasting detrimental effect on tourism, impacting both present and future visitor numbers. Additionally, a major obstacle to Calabar's tourism industry's successful development is governance concerns. According to Bassey et al. (2018), the expansion of tourism is stifled by the absence of a cogent policy framework and the inadequate application of current policies. The situation is made worse by bureaucratic inefficiencies, poor stakeholder collaboration, and corruption, leading to mismanagement of tourism resources and missed opportunities for development.

The primary center of tourism activity, Calabar, has inadequate infrastructure, which prevents the tourism industry from expanding. Significant challenges include inadequate water and sanitation facilities, shoddy road networks, and unstable electrical supplies. Ojong-Ejoh and Umo-Etuk (2017) assert that Calabar's inadequate infrastructure deters potential visitors and lowers their overall experience. The municipality's ability to hold significant tourism events is restricted by inadequate infrastructure, which also jeopardizes the industry's potential to spur economic growth. It is against this background that this study was conducted to examine the development challenges that affect tourism in in the 21st Century in Cross River State. Addressing these challenges is crucial for transforming Cross River State into a leading tourism destination in Nigeria and beyond.

Statement of the problem

Cross River State's tourism sector has a great potential to propel socioeconomic growth because of its rich cultural history and spectacular natural environments. Nonetheless, a number of obstacles have impeded the state's tourism industry's ability to flourish, especially in the twenty-first century. The most notable issues are security issues, poorly implemented policies, and inadequate infrastructure. Security issues are becoming more worrisome for both travelers and investors. Potential visitors and investors are deterred from traveling to or making investments in the state due to the rising frequency of kidnappings, armed robberies, and intercommunal clashes in different sections of the state. The state's inability to guarantee safety has led to a decline in tourist arrivals and a subsequent decrease in revenue generated from the sector. A poor implementation of the policy makes matters worse. While Cross River State has created a number of tourism-related policies to boost the industry, these policies have not always been implemented consistently and have frequently been unproductive. As a result, there is currently no clear strategy for developing the tourist industry, and chances to fully utilize the state's tourism potential have

been lost. The mismatch between the creation and execution of policies has resulted in numerous unfinished or badly run tourism projects, which has lowered the industry's performance.

Inadequate infrastructure presents a significant obstacle to the growth of tourism in Cross River State. Poor road systems, erratic electrical supplies, and inadequate healthcare facilities plague the state; these are necessities for a healthy tourism sector. These infrastructure shortcomings not only discourage tourists but also make it more difficult for the state to organize major events or draw well-known tourists. As a result, the state's tourism sector is still in its infancy and cannot successfully compete with other well-liked travel sites in Nigeria and abroad.It is therefore expedient to address these challenges in order to unlock the full potential of Cross River State's tourism sector. Without significant improvements in security, policy implementation, and infrastructure, the state may continue to struggle in its efforts to position itself as a leading tourism destination in the 21st century. It is against this backdrop that this study was conducted to examine the challenges of effective development of tourism in Cross River State in the 21st Century.

Research Questions

From the forgone problem statement, the study seeks to answer specifically the following questions:

1. To what extent does security threat impede effective development of tourism in Cross River State?
2. To what level does poor policy implementation affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State?
3. To what degree does inadequate infrastructure affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State?

Research Hypotheses

1. Security threat does not significantly impede effective development of tourism in Cross River State
2. Poor policy implementation does not significantly affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State
3. Inadequate infrastructure does not significantly affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to examine Development Challenges and Tourism in the 21st Century in Cross River State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine how security threat impede effective development of tourism in Cross River State
2. Assess how poor policy implementation affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State
3. Investigate how inadequate infrastructure affects effective development of tourism in Cross River State.

Literature Review

It is imperative we discuss the basic concept (tourism) that forms the basis of our analysis, since it is a common tradition in the field of social sciences, we will not deviate from it. What then is

tourism? The term has no catholically or universally acceptable definition among scholars but in review of literature, several definitions have been given. According to Fennell (2003), there is a growing acknowledgement of the importance of tourism as a unifying force among local populations and an economic means of supporting economies that are in stagnation. Traveling to and remaining in locations other than one's usual place of abode is a part of the diverse phenomenon known as tourism (Oruonye and Ahmed, 2020). Collins-Kreiner & Wall (2015) define tourism as the short-term travel of individuals to locations other than their usual areas of employment and habitation, the activities they engage in while there, and the infrastructure and services established to meet their demands."Migration of people, families, and groups to places outside their normal residential areas for a limited period of time and their personal choice" is how Dada (1986) characterized tourism. However, Ikwu (1992) described it as "a brief, transient movement of individuals to a destination other than their usual place of residence and employment."

The International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (IASET) has developed a specific definition, which states that "tourism is the sum total of the phenomenon and relationship arising from non-residents' travel and stay, insofar as they do not lead to permanent residence" (Ladan, 2003). The tourist business is a broad industry that is interconnected with numerous other economic sectors, such as hotel operations, community-based activities, education, finance, agricultural, medical, travel and transportation, real estate, construction, and retail, and vice versa. Solomon (2020). The tourism sector is quickly becoming into a significant employer and a significant contributor to the GDPs of many nations worldwide. The World Tourism Organization (2020) reports that international tourism is expected to continue growing, with 1.5 billion foreign visitors arriving in 2019 and a projected 1.8 billion by 2030. This rise has been observed for the ninth year in a row. Empirically, tourism has been proven to have great influence on infrastructural development; this is because every development with respect to a place is depended on the need of the visitors. Visitors use a variety of facilities depending upon the priority (Ojugbo & Ojugbo, 2021).

Many writers have mentioned a nation's infrastructure as a possible factor in determining how appealing a tourist location is, such as Sam et al. (2014) and Sonia and Ivana (2016). An essential component of the tourism package is the infrastructure. For instance, good airport infrastructure guarantees that travelers have a smooth transition from the plane into the borders of the destination country and vice versa, while road infrastructure improves tourists' accessibility to various regions of the destination country. Because of this, communication infrastructure reduces uncertainty, anxiety, and asymmetric information by enabling rapid and inexpensive contact between the country of origin and the country of destination and by providing a wealth of information about the latter. Other infrastructure such as waste water and energy among others are also believed to result in more reliable services and thus enhance the attractiveness of the destination (Seetanah, 2011).

A vital prerequisite for the growth of any tourism location is security. Threats to security have grown to be a major obstacle to the efficient growth of tourism in Cross River State. Security issues like kidnapping, armed robberies, and intercommunal strife have made it difficult for the state to draw and keep tourists, which has slowed the expansion of the travel and tourism industry. Numerous research' empirical data demonstrate how negatively security issues affect travel. For example, research indicates that areas with high rates of crime and violence also typically have a sharp drop in the number of visitors (Teye, 1988).Travelers have a natural inclination to stay away from places they think are unsafe, which hurts the local economy by taking away money. Due to

the ongoing allegations of armed robberies and kidnappings in Cross River State, there is a sense of unease among visitors, deterring both foreign and domestic travelers from taking advantage of the state's many attractions. Security risks not only discourage travelers but also prospective investors from investing in the travel and tourism industry. Anyanwu and Njoku (2020) assert that the tourist sector is extremely susceptible to risk perceptions and that investors are less inclined to make investments in places where their assets and customers are not sufficiently safeguarded.

This has led to underinvestment in Cross River State's tourism infrastructure, which is essential for drawing and housing visitors and includes lodging facilities like hotels and resorts. Moreover, the underutilization of current tourism resources is a result of security issues. For instance, due to security concerns, attendance at some of the state's most well-known attractions, like the Obudu Mountain Resort and the Calabar Carnival, has decreased (Akpan & Obang, 2015). The state's capacity to promote itself as a secure and appealing travel destination is further hampered by the decline in tourist numbers, which also has an impact on the revenue of these attractions. Security risks have long-term consequences on the state's brand and image in addition to immediate financial losses. Once a destination is perceived as unsafe, it becomes challenging to reverse that perception, even after the security situation has improved. This long-lasting impact can be detrimental to efforts aimed at reviving and sustaining the tourism industry in Cross River State.

The sustained growth of tourism depends on the efficient use of policies, which guarantee the achievement of the industry's strategic aims and objectives. One of the main obstacles to the successful development of tourism in Cross River State has been found to be the inadequate enforcement of policies. Although the state has well-defined policies regarding tourism, its incapacity to carry them out has resulted in less-than-ideal results for the industry. According to empirical research, institutional deficiencies and a lack of political will frequently impede progress in developing nations, where the gap between policy design and execution is a prevalent difficulty (Aref, 2011). Several tourism-related initiatives have been suggested in Cross River State government policysuch as the development of infrastructure, promotion of local attractions, and enhancement of tourism services. The tourism industry has underdeveloped as a result of these projects' repeated failure to materialize because of poor execution tactics. A significant outcome of weak policy implementation is the insufficient establishment and upkeep of tourism infrastructure. While Cross River State has plans to upgrade infrastructure, including roads, lodging, and recreational facilities, many of these projects have either been abandoned or executed subparly as a result of poor management and corruption, claim Eja, Ojong, and Ubi (2018). The state's ability to draw tourists is greatly hampered by this unreliable infrastructure since poor facilities degrade visitor experiences and raise the possibility of unfavorable comments and reviews. Furthermore, ineffective policy execution results in resource misallocation, whereby money meant for the growth of the tourism industry is either misappropriated or mismanaged. Many important tourism initiatives in Cross River State have failed as a result of resource misallocation, as noted by Akpan and Obang (2015). One of such projects is the Tinapa Business Resort, which was formerly intended to be a major tourism hub but has struggled to reach its full potential because of poor management and inconsistent policy support.

The sustained growth of tourism depends on the efficient use of policies, which guarantee the achievement of the industry's strategic aims and objectives. One of the main obstacles to the successful development of tourism in Cross River State has been found to be the inadequate enforcement of policies. Although the state has clearly defined policies regarding tourism, its

incapacity to carry them out has resulted in less-than-ideal results for the industry. According to empirical research, institutional deficiencies and a lack of political will frequently impede progress in developing nations, where the gap between policy design and execution is a prevalent difficulty (Aref, 2011). Government policies in Cross River State have suggested a number of tourism-related measures, including the improvement of tourism services, infrastructure development, and promotion of nearby sites. The tourism industry has underdeveloped as a result of these projects' repeated failure to materialize because of poor execution tactics. A significant outcome of weak policy implementation is the insufficient establishment and upkeep of tourism infrastructure. While Cross River State has plans to upgrade infrastructure, including roads, lodging, and recreational facilities, many of these projects have either been abandoned or executed subparly as a result of poor management and corruption, claim Eja, Ojong, and Ubi (2018). The state's ability to draw tourists is significantly hampered by its unreliable infrastructure since poor amenities degrade visitor experiences and raise the risk of unfavorable comments and evaluations.

Furthermore, poor policy implementation leads to the misallocation of resources, where funds intended for tourism development are either diverted or poorly managed. As noted by Akpan and Obang (2015), misallocation of resources has resulted in the failure of several key tourism projects in Cross River State, such as the Tinapa Business Resort, which was initially conceived as a major tourism hub but has struggled to achieve its full potential due to poor management and lack of consistent policy support. Poor policy implementation exacerbates infrastructure problems by undermining marketing and promotion initiatives. For example, the state's tourism regulations frequently stress the importance of promoting Cross River as a top travel destination both domestically and abroad. Unfortunately, inconsistent execution of these initiatives undermines them; insufficient funding and a lack of coordination between players in the public and commercial sectors result in marketing campaigns that are unproductive (Eja et al., 2018). Ineffective promotion of the state's attractions lowers awareness and restricts the number of visitors. Furthermore, inconsistent application of policies breeds doubt in the travel and tourism industry, deterring both domestic and foreign investors. When laws are not consistently upheld, potential investors are less inclined to allocate funds to an area, which discourages investment in the infrastructure and services necessary for tourism.

This uncertainty stifles innovation and growth within the sector, preventing Cross River State from fully capitalizing on infrastructure is the backbone of tourism development, providing the necessary facilities and services that enable tourists to access, enjoy, and experience a destination. Inadequate infrastructure in Cross River State has been a significant impediment to the effective development of its tourism sector. The state's failure to develop and maintain essential infrastructure, such as transportation, accommodation, and utilities, has hindered its ability to attract and retain tourists, thereby limiting the growth of the tourism industry its tourism potential. Empirical studies emphasize that infrastructure quality is a key determinant of tourist satisfaction and overall tourism development (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2019). In Cross River State, inadequate road networks are one of the most critical challenges. The poor condition of roads leading to major tourist attractions, such as the Obudu Mountain Resort and the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, makes these destinations difficult to access, especially during the rainy season. According to Akpan and Obang (2015), the state's road infrastructure is in dire need of upgrading and expansion to facilitate easier movement of tourists and reduce travel times. Moreover, the lack of reliable and adequate transportation options, such as airports, public transit, and car rentals, further exacerbates the problem. For instance, the Calabar International Airport, which serves as a gateway for international and domestic tourists, suffers from limited connectivity and inadequate

facilities. This hampers the flow of tourists into the state and reduces the competitiveness of Cross River State as a tourist destination (Eja, Ojong, & Ubi, 2018).

Accommodation infrastructure is another area where deficiencies are evident. The availability of quality hotels, resorts, and other lodging facilities is crucial for accommodating tourists and enhancing their overall experience. In Cross River State, there is a shortage of high-quality accommodation, particularly in rural areas where many of the state's natural attractions are located. The existing hotels and resorts often lack modern amenities and are poorly maintained, leading to negative reviews and reduced tourist satisfaction (Esu & Arrey, 2009). This inadequacy in accommodation options limits the state's ability to cater to different market segments, particularly high-end tourists who demand luxury facilities. Additionally, inadequate utilities such as water supply, electricity, and telecommunications infrastructure pose significant challenges to tourism development. Many tourist areas in Cross River State experience frequent power outages and unreliable water supply, which detracts from the comfort and safety of visitors. The lack of consistent electricity also affects the operation of hotels, restaurants, and other tourism-related businesses, leading to increased operational costs and reduced service quality (Akpan & Obang, 2015).

Telecommunications infrastructure is equally important in the modern tourism industry, where access to internet services is essential for both tourists and service providers. However, many parts of Cross River State, particularly remote areas with significant tourist attractions, suffer from poor internet connectivity and limited mobile network coverage. This limits tourists' ability to share their experiences in real-time, access travel information, and communicate with service providers, thereby diminishing their overall experience (Eja et al., 2018). In conclusion, inadequate infrastructure significantly impedes the effective development of tourism in Cross River State. The challenges related to poor transportation networks, insufficient accommodation facilities, and unreliable utilities not only reduce the attractiveness of the state as a tourist destination but also limit its capacity to compete in the global tourism market. Addressing these infrastructural deficiencies as well as security challenges is crucial for enhancing the state's tourism potential and achieving sustainable growth in the sector.

Table 1: Existing Cross River State Tourism Outfits that need improvement

S/N	Local Government Area	Location	Tourism outfits	Description
1	Akamkpa	Oban	Kwa Falls	Waterfall
2	Akamkpa	Okwangwo	Cross River National Park	Wildlife conservation
3	Boki	Afi	Afi Forest Reserve	Wildlife conservation
4	Calabar Municipality	Calabar	Tinapa	Business and Leisure Resorts
5	Etung	Agbokim	Agbokim water falls	Waterfall
6	Ikom	Alock/Nkarasi	Monoliths	Monoliths
7	Obanliku	Becheve	Obudu Mountain Resort	Ranch and Leisure Resort

Source: Ojugbo & Ojugbo, (2021)

Table 2: New Cross River State Tourism Outfits that require development

S/N	Local Government Area	Location	Tourism outfits	Description
1	Yala	Okpoma/Ijegu	Ancient Salt ponds	Natural salt wells
2	Yala	Ekprinyi	Otiakpa Lake	Natural lake
3	Calabar South	Anantiga	Aqua vista	Leisure resort
4	Ogoja	Ogoja GRA	Aya beach	Leisure resort
5	Yala	Aliforkpa	Lord Luggard Wall	Forest boundary walls

Source: Ojugbo & Ojugbo, (2021)

Theoretical framework

This study adopts Sustainable Tourism Development (STD) theory as a guide. Theory is grounded in the principles of sustainability, which emphasize the need to balance the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of tourism. The theory advocates for tourism development that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future (Butler, 1999). This approach aims to minimize the negative impacts of tourism, such as environmental degradation and cultural erosion, while maximizing the positive benefits, including economic growth, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. Sustainable tourism development is often framed around three key pillars. The first is environmental sustainability, which involves ensuring that tourism activities do not lead to the degradation of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems. It emphasizes the importance of conserving natural landscapes, reducing pollution, and promoting eco-friendly tourism practices. The second is economic sustainability, which focuses on ensuring that tourism generates long-term economic benefits for local communities and contributes to the overall economic development of the region. It advocates for equitable distribution of tourism revenue and the creation of sustainable jobs. The third is sociocultural sustainability, which highlights the importance of preserving and promoting the cultural heritage, traditions, and social fabric of host communities. It aims to ensure that tourism activities do not disrupt local cultures or lead to social inequities.

The theory is relevant to the study in several ways: Firstly, Cross River State is endowed with rich natural resources, including rainforests, mountains, and wildlife. However, the state's tourism potential is threatened by environmental degradation, such as deforestation and pollution, driven by poorly managed tourism activities. The STD theory underscores the need for Cross River State to adopt eco-friendly tourism practices that protect these natural resources. For instance, promoting ecotourism initiatives that focus on conservation and responsible travel can help mitigate the environmental impact of tourism and ensure that these natural assets are preserved for future generations (Eja et al., 2018). Secondly, the tourism sector in Cross River State has the potential to generate significant economic benefits, including job creation and revenue generation. However, the economic potential of tourism is undermined by challenges such as poor infrastructure, security threats, and inadequate policy implementation. The STD theory calls for the development of tourism strategies that ensure economic benefits are not only maximized but also distributed equitably among local communities. For example, investing in community-based tourism projects can empower local populations, create jobs, and ensure that tourism revenue is reinvested in local development (Akpan & Obang, 2015). This approach aligns with the principles of economic sustainability by fostering long-term economic growth that benefits all stakeholders.

Thirdly, Cross River State is known for its vibrant cultural heritage, including festivals like the Calabar Carnival and traditional practices unique to the region. However, the influx of tourists and commercialization of cultural events can lead to the erosion of local cultures and traditions. The STD theory advocates for the protection and promotion of the sociocultural identity of host communities. In Cross River State, this could involve supporting cultural preservation initiatives, involving local communities in tourism planning, and ensuring that cultural tourism is developed in a way that respects and celebrates local traditions (Esu & Arrey, 2009). By doing so, the state can enhance the authenticity of the tourist experience while safeguarding its cultural heritage. Fourthly, the challenges of security threats, poor policy implementation, and inadequate infrastructure, as discussed in relation to Cross River State, can be addressed through the lens of sustainable tourism development. For example, adopting a holistic approach to security that involves community engagement, capacity building, and investment in sustainable infrastructure can enhance the safety and attractiveness of the state as a tourist destination. Additionally, effective policy implementation that aligns with the principles of STD can ensure that tourism development is not only well-planned but also executed in a manner that benefits both the environment and local communities.

Thus, the application of Sustainable Tourism Development theory to the challenges faced by the tourism sector in Cross River State provides a comprehensive framework for addressing these issues. By focusing on environmental protection, economic equity, and sociocultural preservation, the state can develop a more resilient and sustainable tourism industry. This approach not only helps to overcome current challenges but also ensures that tourism development in Cross River State contributes positively to the region's long-term growth and prosperity

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. Descriptive survey design is a research method used to gather information about a particular population or phenomenon. It aims to describe the characteristics, attitudes or behaviours of a sample population without manipulating any variables (Isangedigi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri, 2004). The study population covers the entire population of Cross River State. The projected population of Cross River State is about 4,406,200 million. A sample size of 330 was drawn from the population of the study using stratified sampling technique and purposive sampling technique. Stratified sampling technique was used to divide the population intro three strata, namely North, Central and Southern Senatorial Districts. A purposive sampling was used to select one Local Government each from the three senatorial districts. Hence, 110 sample were purposively drawn from Ogoja LGA; 110 from Ikom LGA and 110 from Calabar Municipal, making a total of 330 respondents. Data were gathered using self-structured close ended questionnaire and out of the 330 questionnaires distributed, 30 copies of the questionnaire were invalidated while only 300 copies were filled correctly and returned through the help of research assistants. A twelve (12) item four points Likert scale structured questionnaire instrument entitled Development Challenges and Tourism in the 21st Century in Cross River State Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire has two sections. Section A consist of respondents' personal variables while section B consists of 12 items on issues that relate to the variables under study. The data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis statistical technique at 0.5 level of significance.

Analysis and Interpretation of Respondents Responses

Table 1: Respondent's responses to the questions on security threat and tourism development in Cross River State

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	Total
You feel safe visiting tourist destinations in Cross River State	87 (29%)	75 (25%)	64 (21.3%)	74 (24.7%)	300
Tourists have encountered security issues in your Cross River State	92 (30.7%)	70 (23.3%)	77 (25.7%)	61 (20.3%)	300
Law enforcement authorities respond effectively to security incidents in tourist areas in Cross River State	80 (26.7%)	72 (24%)	65 (21.7%)	83 (27.6%)	300
Cross River state Government is doing enough to protect tourists from security threats	81 (27%)	72 (24%)	64 (21.3%)	83 (27.7%)	300

Source: field survey 2024

Table 1 above shows respondents responses on the relationship between Security threat and tourism development in Cross River State. It reveals that 87 representing (29%) strongly agreed that they feel safe visiting tourist destinations in Cross River State, 75 (25%) agreed, 64 (21.3%) disagreed while 74 (24.7%) strongly disagreed. Also, 92 representing (30.7%) strongly agreed that Tourists have encountered security issues in your Cross River State, 70 (23.3%) agreed, 77 (25.7%) disagreed while 60 (20.3%) strongly disagreed. 80 representing (26.7%) strongly agreed that law enforcement authorities respond effectively to security incidents in tourist areas in Cross River State, 72 (24%) agreed, 65 (21.7%) disagreed while 83 (27.6%) strongly disagreed. Again, 81 representing (27%) strongly agreed that Cross River state Government is doing enough to protect tourists from security threats, 72 (24%) disagreed, 64 (21.3%) disagreed while 83 (27.7%) strongly disagreed.

Table 2: Respondent's responses to the questions on poor policy implementation and tourism development in Cross River State

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	Total
Government policies aimed at promoting tourism development in Cross River State are effective	78 (26%)	80 (26.6%)	42 (14%)	100 (33.4%)	300

You are very satisfied with the level of government support for tourism development (e.g., investment incentives, tax breaks)	82 (27%)	88 (29%)	32 (11%)	98 (33%)	300
Do you believe that the government actively involves local communities in the decision-making and implementation of tourism policies	69 (23%)	71 (23.6%)	70 (23.4%)	90 (30%)	300
Would you agree that corruption and mismanagement affect the proper execution of tourism projects and policies in Cross River State	74 (24.6%)	88 (29.4%)	38 (12.6%)	100 (33.4%)	300

Source: Field survey 2024

Table 2 above shows respondents responses on the relationship between Security threat and tourism development in Cross River State. It reveals that 78 representing (26%) strongly agreed that government policies aimed at promoting tourism development in Cross River State are effective, 80 (26.6%) agreed, 42 (14%) disagreed while 100 (33.4%) strongly disagreed. Also, 82 representing (27%) strongly agreed that they are very satisfied with the level of government support for tourism development (e.g., investment incentives, tax breaks),88 (29%) agreed, 32 (11%) disagreed while 98 (33%) strongly disagreed. 69 representing (23%) strongly agreed that the government actively involves local communities in the decision-making and implementation of tourism policies, 71 (23.6%) agreed, 70 (23.4%) disagreed while 90 (30%) strongly disagreed. Again, 74 representing (24.6%) strongly agreed that corruption and mismanagement affect the proper execution of tourism projects and policies in Cross River State, 88 (29.4%) disagreed, 38 (12.6%) disagreed while 100 (33.4.7%) strongly disagreed.

Table 3: Respondent's responses to the questions on inadequate infrastructure and tourism development in Cross River State

STATEMENT	SA	A	D	SD	Total
Do you agree that the state's transport infrastructure (roads, airports) is adequate for supporting tourism	81 (27%)	72 (24%)	64 (21.3%)	83 (27.7%)	300

You are satisfied with the availability of basic utilities (electricity, water supply) at tourist sites in Cross River State	81 (27%)	79 (26.4%)	70 (23.3%)	70 (23.3%)	300
Do you think the available accommodation infrastructure meets the needs of both local and international tourists	76 (25.3%)	70 (23.3%)	75 (25%)	79 (26.4%)	300
Accommodation options are very affordable and accessible in Cross River State for average tourists	94 (31.3%)	74 (24.7%)	56 (18.7%)	76 (25.3%)	300

Source: field survey 2024

Table 3 above shows respondents responses on the relationship between Security threat and tourism development in Cross River State. It reveals that 81 representing (27%) strongly agreed that the state's transport infrastructure (roads, airports) is adequate for supporting tourism, 72 (24%) agreed, 64 (21.3%) disagreed while 83 (27.7%) strongly disagreed. Also, 81 representing (24%) strongly agreed that theyare satisfied with the availability of basic utilities (electricity, water supply) at tourist sites in Cross River State,79 (26.4%) agreed, 70 (23.3%) disagreed while 70 (23.3%) strongly disagreed. 76 representing (25.3%) strongly agreed they think the available accommodation infrastructure meets the needs of both local and international tourists70 (23.3%) agreed, 75 (25%) disagreed while 79 (26.4%) strongly disagreed. Again, 94 representing (31.3%) strongly agreed that accommodation options are very affordable and accessible in Cross River State for average tourists, 74 (24.7%) disagreed, 56 (18.7%) disagreed while 76 (25.3%) strongly disagreed.

Test of hypotheses/Results

Hypothesis 1: Security threat does not significantly impede effective development of tourism in Cross River State

Table 4: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between Security threat and effective development of tourism in Cross River State (N = 300)

Variables	**$\sum X$** **$\sum Y$**	**$\sum X^2$** **$\sum Y^2$**	**$\sum XY$**	**r-cal.**
Security threat	624	422	394	0.98*
Effective development of tourism in Cross River State	576	378		

*Significant at 0.05 level, df = 198, critical r = 0.138

The result of the analysis presented in table 3 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degrees of freedom, the calculated r of 0.98 is greater than the critical r of 0.138. Based on decision rule, if calculated value is greater than the critical value then the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that security threat does not significantly impede effective development of tourism in Cross River State was rejected by the analysis. This means that security threat significantly impedes effective development of tourism in Cross River State.

Hypothesis 2: Poor policy implementation does not significantly affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State

Table 5: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between Poor policy implementation and effective development of tourism in Cross River State(N = 300)

Variables	∑X ∑Y	∑X² ∑Y²	∑XY	r-cal.
Poor policy implementation	630	484	302	0.88*
Effective development of tourism in Cross River State	570	244		

*Significant at 0.05 level, df = 198, critical r = 0.138

The result of the analysis presented in table 4 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degrees of freedom, the calculated r of 0.88 is greater than the critical r of 0.138. Based on decision rule, if calculated value is greater than the critical value then the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis that, Poor policy implementation does not significantly affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State was rejected by the analysis. This implies that, poor policy implementation is one factor affecting effective development of tourism in Cross River State.

Hypothesis 3: Inadequate infrastructure does not significantly affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State

Table 6: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between Inadequate infrastructure and effective development of tourism in Cross River State(N = 300)

Variables	∑X ∑Y	∑X² ∑Y²	∑XY	r-cal.
Inadequate infrastructure	641	309	307	0.97*
Effective development of tourism in Cross River State	559	321		

*Significant at 0.05 level, df = 198, critical r = 0.138

The result of the analysis presented in table 5 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 198 degrees of freedom, the calculated r of 0.98 is greater than the critical r of 0.138. Based on decision rule, if calculated value is greater than the critical value then the hypothesis is rejected. The hypothesis which states inadequate infrastructure does not significantly affect effective development of tourism in Cross River State was rejected by the analysis. This means that inadequate infrastructure is one problem affecting effective development of tourism in Cross River State.

Discussion of findings

The results of the first hypothesis revealed that security threat significantly impedes effective development of tourism in Cross River State. Security is a fundamental requirement for the development of any tourism destination. Empirical evidence from various studies have highlighted the negative impact of security threats on tourism. According to Teye's (1988) research, for example, tourist visits tend to fall significantly in areas with high rates of crime and violence. Travelers have a natural inclination to stay away from places they think are unsafe, which hurts the local economy by taking away money. Due to the ongoing allegations of armed robberies and kidnappings in Cross River State, there is a sense of unease among visitors, deterring both foreign and domestic travelers from taking advantage of the state's many attractions. Security risks not only discourage travelers but also prospective investors from investing in the travel and tourism industry. Anyanwu and Njoku (2020) claim that because the tourist sector is so vulnerable to risk perceptions, investors are less inclined to make investments in places where their resources and clientele are not adequately protected. In Cross River State, this has resulted in underinvestment in tourism infrastructure, such as hotels, resorts, and recreational facilities, which are crucial for attracting and accommodating tourists. Furthermore, security threats contribute to the underutilization of existing tourism assets. For example, some of the state's most famous attractions, such as the Obudu Mountain Resort and the Calabar Carnival, have experienced a decline in patronage due to security concerns (Akpan & Obang, 2015).

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that poor policy implementation significantly affects effective development of tourism in Cross River State. The sustained growth of tourism depends on the efficient use of policies, which guarantee the achievement of the industry's strategic aims and objectives. According to empirical research, institutional deficiencies and a lack of political will frequently impede progress in developing nations, where the gap between policy design and execution is a prevalent difficulty (Aref, 2011). Government policies in Cross River State have suggested a number of tourism-related measures, including the improvement of tourism services, infrastructure development, and promotion of nearby sites. However, these initiatives have frequently failed to materialize due to ineffective implementation strategies, resulting in the underdevelopment of the tourism sector. One major consequence of poor policy implementation is the inadequate development and maintenance of tourism infrastructure. According to Eja, Ojong, and Ubi (2018), while Cross River State has plans to upgrade infrastructure, including roads, lodging, and recreational facilities, many of these projects have either been abandoned or executed beyond expectations as a result of poor management and corruption. The state's ability to draw tourists is significantly hampered by its unreliable infrastructure since poor amenities degrade visitor experiences and raise the risk of unfavorable comments and evaluations. Additionally, when policies are not implemented well, resources are misallocated, resulting in either poor management or diversion of funds meant for the growth of tourism.

The result of the third hypothesis showed that inadequate infrastructure significantly affects effective development of tourism in Cross River State. Infrastructure is the backbone of tourism development, providing the necessary facilities and services that enable tourists to access, enjoy, and experience a destination. Empirical studies emphasize that infrastructure quality is a key determinant of tourist satisfaction and overall tourism development (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2019). In Cross River State, inadequate road networks are one of the most critical challenges. The poor condition of roads leading to major tourist attractions, such as the Obudu Mountain Resort and the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, makes these destinations difficult to access, especially during the rainy season Akpan and Obang (2015) assert that in order to promote more convenient travel for visitors and shorten travel times, the state's road infrastructure urgently

needs to be upgraded and expanded. The issue is further made worse by the dearth of trustworthy and sufficient mobility choices, such as public transportation, airports, and rental cars. For example, poor facilities and poor connectivity plague the Calabar International Airport, which is a gateway for both internal and foreign travelers. This makes Cross River State less competitive as a travel destination and hinders the flow of tourists into the state (Eja, Ojong, & Ubi, 2018). Also, in Cross River State, there is a shortage of high-quality accommodation, particularly in rural areas where many of the state's natural attractions are located. The existing hotels and resorts often lack modern amenities and are poorly maintained, leading to negative reviews and reduced tourist satisfaction (Esu & Arrey, 2009).

Conclusion

The study has uncovered important elements that seriously obstruct Cross River State's tourism industry's expansion and sustainability. The study's analysis showed that security threat, poor policy implementation, and inadequate infrastructure all have a significant negative influence on how well tourism develops. Cross River State has been noted as a significant deterrent to both domestic and foreign tourists in terms of security issues. A sense of fear has been produced by the frequency of crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, and intercommunal disputes, deterring potential tourists and investors. Without addressing these security issues, the state's tourism industry cannot prosper since attracting and keeping tourists depends on safety. The development of tourism has also been significantly hampered by the poor application of policies. The tourism industry is underdeveloped even though there are well-crafted policies in place; the problem is that there is a lag between the formulation and implementation of policies. A lack of political will, misallocation of resources, and inadequate implementation of policies has led to squandered opportunities and the collapse of some important tourism projects. A favorable tourism climate and the accomplishment of strategic objectives depend on the efficient use of policies. Furthermore, the state's capacity to fully realize its potential for tourism has been greatly hampered by poor infrastructure. Roads in bad condition, few options for transportation, and inadequate lodging, and unreliable utilities have all contributed to a less-than-optimal tourist experience.

Without substantial improvements in infrastructure, the state will continue to struggle to attract tourists and compete with other destinations. Nonetheless, the problems mentioned above are closely related to Cross River State's inadequate tourism growth. Therefore, tackling these problems calls for an all-encompassing and well-coordinated strategy that puts security first, supports the efficient application of policies, and makes investments in the development of infrastructure. By addressing these issues, Cross River State will be able to realize the full potential of its tourism industry, which could result in increased living conditions for its citizens, cultural preservation, and sustainable economic growth.

Recommendations

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

1. Cross River State Government should invest in enhancing the capacity of security agencies to manage and mitigate security threats that deter tourists like introducing modern surveillance systems, better training, and community policing strategies and also establish a robust crisis management system that includes rapid response teams, clear communication channels, and emergency protocols to address security threats swiftly and efficiently.
2. There is a need to enhance the institutional capacity of the agencies responsible for tourism development (that is, the Cross River Tourism Bureau). This can be achieved through better training, clearer mandates, and improved coordination between government bodies and private

sector stakeholders. Also, the government should implement mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability in the execution of tourism policies.

3. The Cross River State Government should prioritize the development and maintenance of road networks, especially those leading to major tourist attractions; investment in alternative transportation options, such as air travel and waterways. They should also encourage investment in high-quality accommodation facilities across the state, particularly in rural areas where many natural attractions are located. This could be achieved through incentives for investors, such as tax breaks and simplified regulatory processes.

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