

Assessment of Tourism Development Impacts - The Case of Local Communities in Obudu Ranch Resort, Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Problems: In most developing countries, tourism data is insufficient, contributing to low tourism knowledge amongst residents. This does not only widen the knowledge gap between local communities and decision-makers but also accelerates their isolation from the tourism development process. This study aimed at assessing the impacts of tourism development on the host communities in Obudu Ranch Resort. **Approach:** Primary data were collected through interviews and Focus Group Discussion. Secondary data involved a reconnaissance survey of the resort for three months (March to May, 2015) to evaluate the situation on ground in the study area. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics as well as chi-square. 308 questionnaires were administered to residents in five communities around the resort. **Findings:** The data generated were analyzed showing that the economic impact of tourism in the destination were perceived to be on the positive side particularly in the areas of increase household income (88.76%), increase in income generating projects (93.50%) as well as increase in household income (83.76%). Other positive developments from respondents included gender empowerment (80.84%), enhancement of people's knowledge and standard of living (93.83%). However 44.16% of the respondents expressed negative opinions on the influence of tourists on indigenes. **Conclusion:** Results gathered from the study revealed that tourism development in the area had positive impacts on the economic and social life of the indigenes including tremendous commitment in sound environmental management. The management of the Resort should ensure that the present standard of economic, social and environmental status are maintained. Also, the need for dissemination of information and knowledge about tourism to communities therefore, of serious concern world-wide.

Keywords: Tourism, Development, Host communities, Obudu Ranch Resort, Focus Group Discussion, Impact, Environmental management, Economic, Social, Environmental, Gender empowerment.

Introduction

The role of tourism as an avenue for improving the livelihoods of host communities with significant socio-economic and environmental opportunities for most countries cannot be overemphasized (Ajake & Amalu, 2012a)^[1]. The level of local communities' involvement in tourism development processes in an area can determine its successes and land sustainability. Tourism has a very significant role in promoting the capacity to create opportunities for employment, infrastructural development, revenue and income generation in local communities (Ajake et al., 2016)^[2]. In a study by Aniah, Eja, Otu & Ushie (2009)^[3] regarding patronage of tourism potentials as a strategy for sustainable tourism development, it was considered that tourism is a major source of integrating people with diverse cultures and languages. Some studies have also revealed new ways of engaging in tourism based businesses with strategies that are focused on 'poverty alleviation'. This can be done by improving the social,

economic, or environmental benefits while maintaining commercial returns through the inclusion of frame work for promoting and developing incentives for good practice among stakeholders (Spenceley, 2008; Ashley&Haysom, 2005; Meyer, 2007 &Nicolau, 2008)^[4-7]. These can be done in a way that contributes more towards poverty alleviation by improving the social, economic, or environmental benefits while maintaining commercial returns. It has therefore become imperative for the private sector to get into partnerships with the local communities so that such business opportunities can be a way through which there can lift out of poverty. Partnerships can be created by engaging indigenous people in the normal business operations such as through procurement or sourcing of inputs, contract out services, providing information to guests, creating packages of local excursions, or developing new leisure facilities (Ashley&Haysom, 2005)^[5].

In Nigeria, tourism has played a major role in community and human development with its numerous accompanying socio-economic and environmental benefits. Cross River State (CRS) has indeed enjoyed significant benefits, from the tourism sector, with a steady increase in tourists' visits of about 10% annually from 2000 to 2016. ObuduRanch Resort (ORR) in Cross River State is one of the leading tourists' sites in the country with its natural and unique features. These include the climate and topography of the area, the longest cable cars in Africa, winding path-ways, natural swimming pool, exceptional accommodation and canopy walk-way. Consequently, the resort also experienced increased tourists' visits and patronages for some time, making the host people (Becheeve community who were predominantly farmers and hunters) very interested in tourism-related activities such as; acquiring jobs in the hotels, engaging in transportation, tour-guiding services, sales of food, drinks, honey, yoghurt, handcraft and other local products (Amalu et al., 2012)^[8]. The increasing tourism activities also attracts the provision of basic amenities such as: schools, electricity, security, accessible roads, financial and communication infrastructures.

However in recent times, the repairs and maintenance of most of the infrastructures in the resort have been grounded. This present development is ascribed to inadequate allocation of funds, thus leading to a very deplorable condition of the amenities and facilities including the Cable Car, Swimming Pool and accommodation infrastructures. Furthermore the local communities are becoming restive due to their noninvolvement in the overall management of the resort. Other challenges include non-implementation of benefit sharing programmes, ineffective marketing of the resort due to nonfunctional tourism networking skills and tools. The study is therefore aimed at assessing the impacts of tourism development on the host communities in Obudu Ranch Resort.

Attitudes and Perceptions towards Tourism

An attitude towards and perception of tourism depend on each person's feelings about gains from tourism development. Attitude means those resident feelings which indicate that residents' opinions of tourism development within a community can vary greatly. Consequently, people who benefit from tourism perceive a greater economic but lesser social or environmental impact from tourism than those who do not (Jamal & Getz, 1995:194)^[9]. Perception means the way in which resident regards the social and economic benefits of tourism, which may largely be influenced by the amount of tourism education of the residents (Jamal & Getz, 1995)^[9]. Basically, attitude and perception are caused by the gains and losses made as a result of local communities' appreciation of tourism-related activities. Most tourism studies are conducted by measuring residents' attitudes towards tourism and the effects that are perceived by local communities (Zhanget al., 2006:184)^[10]. Wang & Pfister (2008:84)^[11] has identified residents' attitudes towards tourism as being an important factor in achieving successful sustainable tourism development.

The attitude of communities towards tourism is also determined by the age of residents. Age has been explored as a factor in residents' attitude towards tourism developments (Harrill, 2004:251)^[12]. The types of tourism development also contribute to attitude of residents towards tourism. Most recently, the reasons relating to an examination of residents' attitudes have included the degree, to which types of tourism initiatives are acceptable to residents, the nature of residents' positive and negative concerns regarding development options, economic investment and relational network factors among the community's take holders (Wang & Pfister, 2008:84)^[11].

The long term success of the tourism industry is predicated on a clear understanding and assessment of attitudes and perception of the impact of tourism development on host communities (Ap, 1992; Ritchie & Inkari, 2006)^[13, 14]. There is therefore the need to involve local communities and relevant stakeholders in the entire process from the decision making level through the planning stage to the stage of implementation (Byrd et al., 2009)^[15]. Several studies examined the attitude and perception of local residents towards tourism development have shown that perception differ from communities to communities. It was further reported that residents who enjoy tremendous benefits from the industry are likely to express more positive perception of the economic impact of tourism than those who do not benefit (Lankford and Howard, 1994; Jurowski et al 1997, Sirakaya, Teye and Sönmez, 2002)^[16-18]. Therefore economic benefits are perceived by local communities as the most important factors in influencing their support for tourism development (Ritchie, 1988; Husband, 1989; Akiset al., 1996)^[19-21]. These benefits include increase investment by local communities, improved livelihood and creation of employment to residents. However, a study by Amaluet al., (2012)^[8] on assessment of the employment structure in Obudu mountain resort, a higher level of non-indigenes were employed more than indigene and most of the indigenes employed were in the category of unskilled labor as supported by (Argumedo & Stenner, 2008)^[22] who asserted that local residents are more involved in low paid jobs due to their limited qualification.

Awareness and Participation of Local Communities in Tourism Development

Local communities can effectively participate in tourism activities such as planning, provided they are fully involved in awareness programmes. Communication is also important in capitalizing on the promises of community-based tourism. This is inevitable since the local people need to be sufficiently aware of and knowledgeable about tourism (Tosun, 2000:621)^[23]. However, the issue of local communities on tourism awareness has not been widely studied. In most developing countries, tourism data is insufficient, contributing to low tourism knowledge among residents (Butler & Hinch, 2007:132)^[24]. This does not only widen the knowledge gap between local communities and decision-makers but also accelerates their isolation from the tourism development process. The need for dissemination of information and knowledge about tourism to communities therefore, of serious concern world-wide.

Impacts of Tourism in Rural Areas

Tourism has long been considered as veritable tool in the socio-economic development of rural communities. Therefore, rural tourism developments need to be sustained for the benefit of present and future generations (Sharpley, 2002:233)^[25]. Over the past decade, many rural communities have been encouraged to incorporate tourism into their economic development plans, in-view of its potentials as a basic industry providing employment opportunities, income and economic diversity (Crotts & Holland, 1993:112)^[26].

In a rural setting, although income is received from rural tourism, both negative and positive results are experienced. Tourism development in rural communities is always accompanied by impacts which most times can be both positive and negative for destination areas and local communities (Saarinen, 2010:714)^[27].

Fortunately, on the supply side the impacts of rural tourism, both positive and negative, are well documented, widely debated and the subjects of an increasing literature (Sharpley & Roberts, 2004:119)^[28]. In the rural communities, negative socio-cultural impacts including the loss of cultural identity cause a negative impact on the local culture. Most times this occurs when tourists are from developed world and the hosts are located in a developing country (Mason, 2008:36)^[29]. Although many of the impacts have positive effect on the host population, negative impacts can also be experienced if stakeholders become insensitive to the potential of such development.

The impacts of tourism need to be measured, even though it is difficult to assess social and environmental impacts. Researchers are challenged when it comes to analysis of physical and environmental impacts. Although some of the social impacts are known and can be observed, it is always difficult to assess them (Tosun, 2002:231)^[30]. A number of factors have contributed to the economic emphasis of a majority of tourist impact studies, and compared with physical and social impacts, economic impacts are relatively easy to measure (Mathieson & Wall, 1982:36)^[31]. Tourism has become a global industry with

increasing impacts on the environment and regional and local development (Saarinen *et al.*, 2009:3)^[32].

Over the past decades, the impacts of tourism have received increasing attention in studies on the impacts of tourism developments on rural communities. Several studies on tourism impacts have revealed a range of evidence and potential problems, raising environmental, social, cultural, economic and political issue sat variousde stinations(Saarinen,2006:1121)^[33].

Benefits of Tourism

Local communities should receive benefits from any tourism development project taking place in their area. It is commonly realized that the more community resident's benefit from tourism, the more likely they are to support tourism and protect the area's natural and cultural heritage(Tosun&Timothy,2003:5)^[34].Economic benefits of tourism have been documented in many studies including the contribution of tourism to foreign exchange earnings and the balance of payments, the generation of income, the generation of employment, the improvement of economic structures and the encouragement of entrepreneurial activity(Mathieson&Wall, 1982:52)^[31].

Studies have indicated that tourism-related activities can provide local communities with sources of income (Butler & Hinch, 2007:154)^[24].Emphasis have also been highlighted on the economic benefits which accrue at the destination areas with development of recreational areas been viewed as a positive contribution to incomes and employment. Positive economic benefits usually include contributions to the local economy and job creation (Mason, 2008:37)^[29]. Support for rural tourism is based upon a number of perceived benefits, and the development of rural tourism offers potential economic growth. Tourism is therefore, often seen as a good strategy for income generation, though tourism-based growth does not automatically lead to socio-economic development in local communities(Saarinen, 2012:149)^[35]. In order for locals to gain benefits from tourism, educating the locals about the benefits of tourism is very necessary. Increasing incomes, employment, and education of locals are the most apparent ways of involving community members in the benefits of tourism development (Timothy, 1999:372)^[36]. Employment generated in the rural areas has affected local communities both positively and negatively. The most strongly perceived positive rural tourism development impact is the improvement of employment opportunities; the most strongly perceived negative impacts being a general increase in the price of goods and services (Richards &Hall, 2002:45)^[37].

Hypothesis

Hypothesis One: Impacts of Tourism Development on the Local Economy in ORR.

Ho: There is no impacts of tourism development on the Local Economy in ORR.

Hi: The local communities are benefiting from tourism development in ORR

Hypothesis Two: Social Impacts of Tourism Development in ORR.

Ho: Tourism development in ORR has no social impacts on the local communities

Hi: Tourism development has impacted greatly on the social life of the local people in ORR.

Hypothesis Three: Environmental Impacts of Tourism Development in ORR

Ho: Tourism development in ORR has no environmental impacts in the Study Area.

Hi: Tourism development in ORR has impacted greatly on the environment of the Study Area.

Methodology

This study assessed the impacts of tourism development on the host communities in Obudu Ranch Resort.. Five (5) communities within the twelve (12) communities in the study area where purposely selected for the study. This include Belegete, Kegol, Anape, Akpajile and Ikwette.Both primary and secondary data were collected. Primary data were collected through interviews. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held with 13 principal stakeholders including five (5) management staff of the Resort and 8 members in the communities.The sample size of the respondents was 10% of the number of households in each of the five (5) selected communities in the study area.Data was collected using questionnaire. The questions were consisted of two (2) parts. The first part covered the assessment of the demographic profile of the respondents. The questions in the second part are based on the variables to

measure the residents' perception on the development of tourism in the study area. The respondents indicating level of agreement is measured using a Likert Scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. 89, 71, 52, 51 and 45 questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the study areas totaling 308 questionnaires (Table 1). The questionnaire was developed based on previous studies (Digun-Aweto et al, 2015)^[38].

Secondary data involved a reconnaissance survey of the Ranch Resort for three months (March to May, 2015) to assess the situation on ground in the study area. During the period the Resort was contacted to gather all relevant documents pertaining to their operations. This included existing documents containing appropriate biological and management information, draft management plans, tourism development plans and annual reports covering the study period (2011 - 2015). Field trips were also embarked upon to assess the situation on ground. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequency distribution, percentages and chi-square test.

Table 1. *Population of the Purposely Selected Communities and their Sample Size*

S/N	Communities	No. of Households	Sample Size
1.	Belegete	890	89
2.	Kegol	710	71
3.	Anape	520	52
4.	Akpajile	510	51
5.	Ikwette	450	45
Total		3,080	308

Results and Discussions

Impact of Support for Tourism Development in ORR

The results in table 2 reflects the position of respondents on the conflicts between local communities and the management of the resort. The general opinion (34.09%) was that conflicts did not exist among stakeholders. This situation has impacted positively on the operations of ORR by creating a new atmosphere of peace and understanding in the communities due to harmonious interaction between the communities and the management of ORR.

Table 2. *Conflicts among stakeholders in ORR*

Responses	Communities					Total (%)
	Balegete	Ikwette	Akpajili	Anape	Kegol	
Strongly disagree	20	12	18	13	18	81(26.3)
Disagree	12	18	13	8	7	48(15.58)
Not sure	4	3	2	4	3	16(5.19)
Agree	15	10	7	9	17	58(18.85)
Strongly agree	38	12	11	18	26	105(34.09)
Total (%)	89(28.90)	45(14.61)	51(16.56)	52(16.88)	71(23.05)	308(100)

The chi-square result: $X^2_{cal} = 31.063$, $df = 16$, $X^2_{tab} = 26.3$, since chi-square calculated is greater than the tabulated, the result is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected implying that conflicts did not exist among stakeholders, a situation that has impacted positively on the operations of ORR by creating a new atmosphere of peace and understanding in the communities due to harmonious interaction between the communities and the management of ORR.

Economic Impacts of Tourism Development on the Local Communities in ORR

Figures 1, 2, 3 and Tables 3 and 4 below represents the Economic Impacts of Tourism Development on the local communities in ORR. Majority of the respondents (43.18%) submitted that tourism development in ORR has impacted positively on the prices of goods and services indicating that the local people now have value for the sale of their farm inputs as a result of tourism activities in ORR (Figure 1). Positive impacts were also the position of majority of the respondent (53.24%) (Figure 2). Furthermore, a higher number of respondents (35.74%) were of the position that tourism has impacted positively on the provision of subsistence income to indigenes, (Table 3). It was also the position of respondents (25.32%) that there were positive impacts on community businesses in the area (Table 4). However, the general opinion (50.97%) felt that increase in income generating projects were not put in place by ORR for the communities (Figure 3).

Tourism development has brought employment opportunities to the indigenes including investments in entertainment facilities, and wealth-creation generated in the local area. Consequently, investment and development spending in the area, variety of shopping facilities, and variety of restaurants all were perceived to have improved. The respondents also alluded to the fact that the residents were very satisfied with the improvement in the business environment. These findings support Ap and Crompton (1998)^[39] on their position that tourism development was beneficial to the economy of the residents.

Impacts of tourism in destinations are often in the area of economic, socio-cultural and environment. Economic impacts are those that touched the life of the people positively. These include employment opportunities, economic growth, better standard of living and infrastructural development. Majority of the respondents confirmed that they benefited from tourism in the area. This situation is supported by a similar study, by Styliadis et al., (2014)^[40] that local people who were actively involved in tourism benefited from it in Bobiri Forest Reserve and Butterfly Sanctuary in Ashanti Region of Ghana. These developments are also in tandem with the findings of Bestard & Nadal (2007)^[41]. However, majority of the respondents expressed their dismay over the current level of development stating that there was no comprehensive policy by management on benefit sharing between ORR and the local communities which was supposed to be based on the total revenue generated each year.

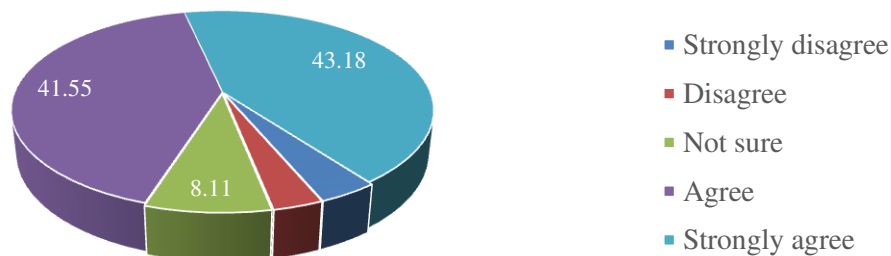


Fig.1: Increase in Prices of Goods and Services

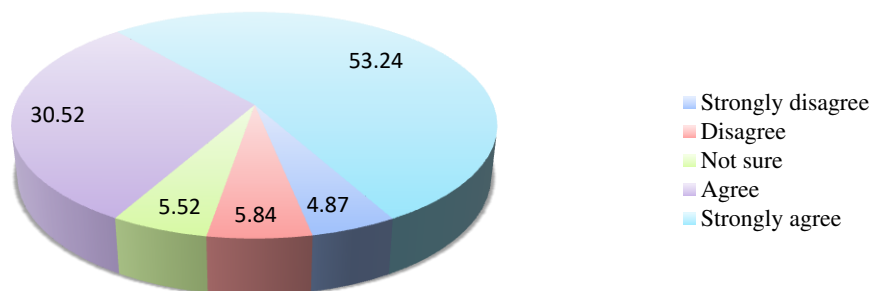


Fig. 2: Increase in Household Income of Local Communities

Table 3 *Provision of Subsistence Income to Indigenes*

Responses	Communities					Total (%)
	Balegete	Ikwette	Akpajili	Anape	Kegol	
Strongly disagree	4	4	1	5	6	20(6.49)
Disagree	9	6	8	8	3	34(11.03)
Not sure	1	1	2	1	1	6(1.94)
Agree	39	16	25	21	37	138(44.8)
Strongly agree	36	18	15	17	24	110(35.74)
Total (%)	89 (28.90)	45(14.61)	51(16.56)	52(16.88)	71(23.05)	308(100)

The Chi-square result: $X^2_{cal} = 27.086$, $df = 16$, $X^2_{tab} = 26.3$, since chi-square calculated is greater than the tabulated, the result is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected implying that the local communities are benefiting from tourism development in ORR

Table 4 *Enhancement of community business*

Responses	Communities					Total (%)
	Balegete	Ikwette	Akpajili	Anape	Kegol	
Strongly disagree	17	6	9	8	9	49(15.91)
Disagree	26	9	11	12	23	81(26.30)
Not sure	9	6	10	9	7	41(13.16)
Agree	20	8	8	11	12	59(19.16)
Strongly agree	17	16	13	12	20	78(25.32)
Total (%)	89 (28.90)	45(14.61)	51(16.56)	52(16.88)	71(23.05)	308(100)

The chi-square result: $X^2_{cal} = 29.7$, $df = 16$, $X^2_{tab} = 26.3$, since chi-square calculated is greater than the tabulated, the result is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected implying that the local communities are benefiting from tourism development in ORR

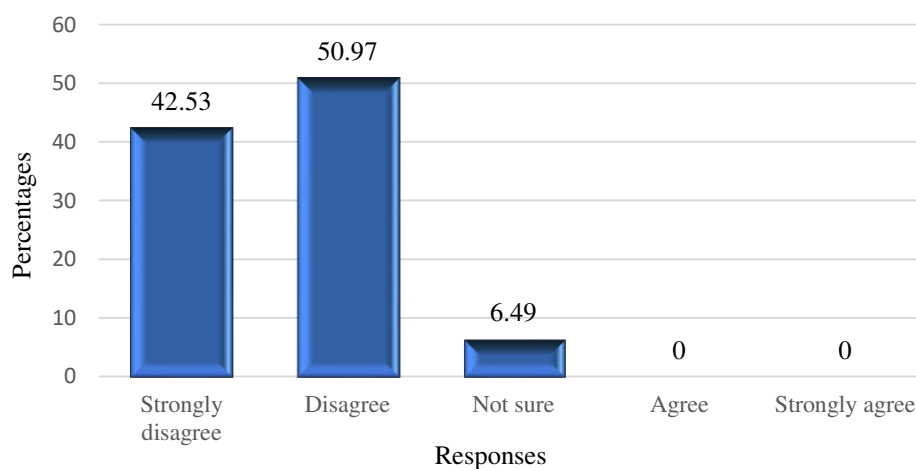


Fig. 3: *Income Generating Projects for Communities*

Social Impacts of Tourism Development in ORR

Social Impact of tourism development on the local communities in the study area are reflected in tables 5 and 6 as well as Figure 4. A higher percentage of respondents (41.88%) were of the views that tourism has impacted positively on gender empowerment within the local communities in the study area (Table 5). Regarding negative influence of tourists on indigenes, a greater number of the respondents (25.00%) admitted that tourism had no negative influence on the indigenes due to the presence of tourists in the area (Table 6). Further discussion on these issues revealed that Balegete and Anape communities justified the position because their locations are far away from the entrance of the resort and thus there were little or no regular interactions between the indigenes and tourists. Finally, results on the impacts of tourism on the level of education in the area, there was a negative response from majority of the respondents (30.84%). (Figure 4). This was due to non-implementation of educational programmes in the area of school buildings and provision of scholarships to young indigenes in the area.

The results on the influence of tourists on the indigenes of ORR is supported in a similar study by Jovicic (2011)^[42] that socio-cultural influences are the result of the relationship created during a certain period between residents and tourists. This is also affected by the habits, customs, social life, beliefs and values of non-nationals of a given society (Almeida et al., 2015)^[43]. Dall'Agnol (2012)^[44] has also noted the fundamental needs to know the perceptions and attitudes of residents in tourist locations particularly on the impacts generated by tourism in their places of residence. A guide by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 1999)^[45] emphasized on respect for both tourists and host communities and the need to appreciate the socio-cultural and economic contributions of tourism while minimizing all possible negative impacts. Barretto (2003)^[46] has also underscored the need to create a better relationship between tourist and host in a situation as both share in the mutual benefits that accrued to them.

Table 5: Gender Empowerment

Responses	Communities					Total (%)
	Balegete	Ikwette	Akpajili	Anape	Kegol	
Strongly disagree	2	4	4	7	6	23(7.47)
Disagree	4	4	7	5	3	23(7.47)
Not sure	3	2	2	2	4	13(4.22)
Agree	38	12	21	23	35	129(41.88)
Strongly agree	42	23	17	15	25	129(38.96)
Total (%)	89 (28.90)	45(14.61)	51(16.56)	52(16.88)	71(23.05)	308(100)

The chi-square result: $X^2_{cal} = 28.67$ df = 16, $X^2_{tab} = 26.3$, since chi-square calculated is greater than the tabulated, the result is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected implying tourism development in ORR has impacted greatly on the empowerment of women in the study area.

Responses	Communities					Total (%)
	Balegete	Ikwette	Akpajili	Anape	Kegol	
Strongly disagree	18	8	12	7	8	53(17.2)
Disagree	34	5	20	19	8	77(25.00)
Not sure	20	8	6	3	5	42(13.64)
Agree	7	12	9	15	31	74(24.03)
Strongly agree	10	12	4	17	19	62(20.13)
Total (%)	89 (28.90)	45(14.61)	51(16.56)	52(16.88)	71(23.05)	308(100)

Table 6: Negative Influence on Indigenes by Tourist

The chi-square result: $X^2_{cal} = 70.278^{ns}$ $df = 16$, $X^2_{tab} = 26.3$, since chi-square calculated is greater than the tabulated, the result is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected implying that tourism development in ORR has no negative influence on the locals in ORR.

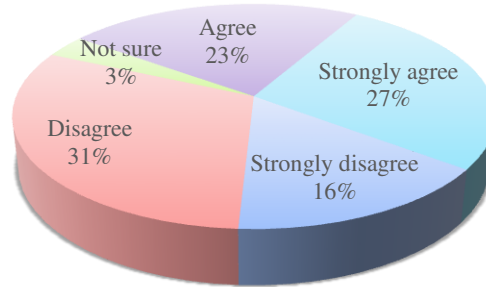


Fig. 4. *Provision of Education through Tourism Development*

Environmental Impacts of Tourism Development in ORR

Results on environmental impacts of tourism development in the communities are reflected in Table 7 and Figure 5. On the impact of crowd visiting the resort, 49.68% of the respondents submitted that management of crowd during peak periods of tourists inflow into the resort, which are Easter and Christmas celebrations as well as Obudu Mountain Race programmes was effective (Table 7). Therefore, the presence of tourists in the resort was effectively managed to avoid little or no impacts on the environment. It was also reported by majority of the respondents (34.09%) that traffic congestions and noise pollution was manageable with no adverse effect on the environment (Fig 5).

The positive impacts of tourism on the environment was also appreciated by most of the indigenes that were interviewed. They appreciated the healthy collaboration of World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as well as Cross River National Park (CRNP) Okwangwo Programme and Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) with the local communities to establish a 25ha Beecheve Nature Reserve protecting the forest surrounding ORR. In addition, an NGO - Development in Nigeria (DIN) has established abase at the Ranch, engaged in efforts both to prevent dry-season fire damage to plateau forests and encourage the ranch village communities to adopt new vegetable farming techniques (including potato farming) to take pressure off the plateau forests. These measures appear to have slowed the destruction of the forest including the preservation of historical sites, artifacts, ecotourism sites(Bestard, and Nadal, 2007)^[41]. This is fully reflected in ecotourism resources of Beecheve Nature Reserve.

Table 7 *Effective Management of Crowd*

Responses	Communities					Total (%)
	Balegete	Ikwette	Akpajili	Anape	Kegol	
Strongly disagree	1	1	0	2	0	4(1.30)
Disagree	2	2	1	2	1	8(2.59)
Not sure	5	3	3	5	2	18(5.84)
Agree	35	18	21	15	36	125(40.58)
Strongly agree	46	21	26	28	3	153(49.68)
Total (%)	89 (28.90)	45(14.61)	51(16.56)	52(16.88)	71(23.05)	308(100)

The Chi-square result: $X^2_{cal} = 30.091$, $df = 16$, $X^2_{tab} = 26.3$, since chi-square calculated is greater than the tabulated, the result is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected implying that tourism development in ORR has impacted positively on the environment in the study area.

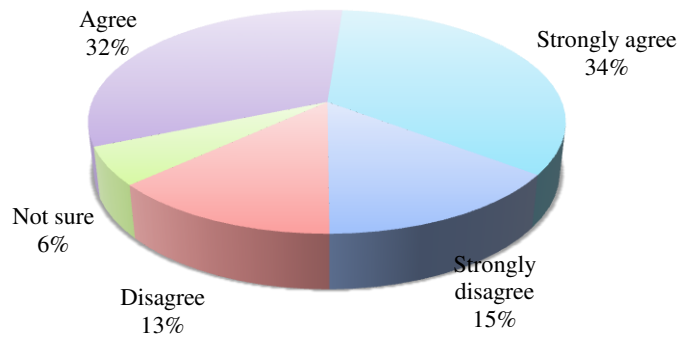


Figure 5. *Traffic Congestion and Noise Pollution*

Conclusion

This study was initiated to investigate the impacts of tourism development on local communities' residing around the ORR. The results of chi-square showed that the null hypothesis was rejected for the impact items (socio-cultural, economic and environmental variables). Generally, the local communities were positively disposed to positive attitudes toward socio-cultural and economic benefits, clearly expecting that the resort will provide an overall better quality of life. There is need for future studies to address a better understanding of the impacts of tourism operations in the areas. This is expected to help the management of the resort and policy makers assess the host community's perceptions of tourism development in the area.

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