VISITORS' ARRIVALS AND DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED RECREATIONAL RESORTS IN CROSS RIVER STATE. NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluates recreational resorts as a catalyst for visitors' arrivals and destination development in Cross River State. Two recreational resorts were used for the study which included the Obudu Ranch Resort and the Tinapa Business Resort. The checklist and questionnaire were the methods used for data collection in this research. Information such as the rate of patronage and origin of visitors were obtained and the socio-economic impact and the challenges of recreational resorts and visitors' arrival were equally evaluated. One hypothesis was stated and tested using the analysis of variance. However, the findings shows that recreational resorts under investigation have significantly contributed to visitors' arrivals in the state and also impacted on the socio-economic wellbeing of these communities were those recreational resorts are located. Nevertheless, the development of recreational resorts in those locations have also created socio-economic problems hence it is the responsibility of the government to ensure adequate measures to avert these challenges in the state.

Keywords: Community, Destination, development, Patronage, resorts, visitors.

1.0INTRODUCTION

The development of tourism over the years has become a major catalyst that has led to the socio-economic development of most tourism destinations such as Kenya, South Africa, Brazil and Thailand great tourism potentials (Lea, 2002). Tourism can be categorized into domestic and international tourism (Ojo, 1990). Domestic tourism describes travels within the country of residence, while international tourism deals with travels to other countries. Methieson (2005) in his analysis of the meaning of tourism, deduced that tourism is the temporary moment of people to destination outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in these destinations and the facilities created for cater for their needs. Tourism is therefore the movement of people from their usual habit of the establishment and impacts they have on the economic, physical and social well-being of their hosts. It is a multi-dimensional economic force which involves the business of transportation by land, sea, air and hospitality services that money can buy for the comfort and happiness of the fun-seeker. The activities created by visitors' arrivals in a given tourism destination generates a lot of money to the private sector and also a source of revenue generation to the government of the host country (Osso, 2003). In Nigeria, the numerous tourism potentials and the rich socio-cultural activities in most states such as Osun, Oyo and Anambra have seriously aided the rapid inflow of visitors to these destination. The inflow of visitors to those tourism destinations have not only increased the revenue base of the government but has also led to the development of these laudable destinations (Eja, 2012). In Cross River State, the development of recreational resort such as the Orange Resort, Marina Resort, the Obudu Ranch Resort and the Tinapa Business Resort which is one of the biggest tourism resorts have offered great opportunities for recreation and also influence visitors' arrivals in Cross River State (Eja, 2011). The involvement of private sector and public sector in Cross River State offered fun-seekers with enough recreational opportunities due to the presence of recreational resorts (Eja and Imoke 2014). However, inspite of the huge investment of private sector on the development of recreational resort in Cross River State, there is still seasonality in the inflow and patronage of these laudable recreational resorts. Besides, most of the existing recreational resorts suffered from the rise and fall and in past cases most of them no longer stay in business. It is on this note that this research which is to examine recreational resorts as catalyst for visitors' arrivals and destination development in Cross River State.

2.0LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Government and private sector involvement in tourism development

Tourism has the ability to promote better standard of living the host community through wealth creation, innovation, choice and competition. For tourism to achieve the aforementioned, both the private and public sector must form a partnership with each other (Eja, Out and Ewa, 2011). Wale (2002) believes that the private sector and the government share some responsibility in tourism development. The business of tourism has been neglected, according to him, because of non-participation of the private sector substantially. Governments of developing nations adopt several initiatives, such as ease in money transfers, tax incentives to investors, etc, in other to foster the development of the tourism industry (Eja, Otu and Ewa, 2011). The private sector provides funds that are used to build hotels and other tourism support services.

Okunbawa (2001), cited in Nwakanma (2002), stated that despite private sector involvement in developing tourism, the government needs to provide certain infrastructure as the permissive situations for tourism development. Okunbawa (2001) believes than the first prerequisite is the development of the social facilities such as good roads, good water system and the provision of electricity. Efficient communication facilities such as telephone and telex system should be available. All types of transportation system must be exploited and developed. The provision of accommodation is a necessary condition for tourism development. Various types of accommodation facilities needs to be improved for high classed tourist of different strata, medium size and small hotels with quality service but moderate prices need to be encouraged. The development composites near the various tourist attractions would also enhance the availability of accommodation facilities for the tourist. Elem (2004) opines that the government provides the necessary infrastructure that creates permissive conditions for the private sector to operate in. The private sector functions as a galvanizing medium to create employment, thereby expanding the economy through the production of goods and services, which improve general social well being of the citizen of a nation. This is the premise of the project Tinapa vision.

Anani (2004), stating the relevance of tourism sector in the economy of Cross River State, outlined centres being developed and to be developed. To be developed included; Obudu Cattle Ranch, Kwa Falls, Agbokim Water Falls, Ebom Ox Bow lake, Cross River State National Park, Mary Slessor tomb and the Project Tinapa. Ejom (2004), on his assessment of the Tinapa business resort project, reiterated that the Tinapa project is the commitment of the Cross River State Government to great business and leisure environment for not only Cross Riverians and Nigerians but also the world at large. Ejom (2004) explains that the complex is

"meant to provide international standard wholesale emporiums, integrated shopping complex and product distribution element supported by business tourism and entertainment facilities".

Agbo (2004) also affirmed government's commitment to providing both super structures and infrastructures in the area. According to Anani (2004), the government is committed to provide facilities such as roads, electricity, water supply etc. that would make the environment comfortable for business to flourish. Okunbawa (2001), in Nwakanma (2002), opines "that the private sector needs to be encouraged to invest in the tourism industry not just in hotels and travel agency business, but also in the establishment of amusement parks, family vacation resort and outdoor games facilities" The provision of tourism infrastructure according to (Eja,2002) such as good road network electricity supply among others would encourage the rate of visitors arrivals in any given destination The encouragement could be the in forms of guarantee of long-term loans to enable tourism projects. Land in the vicinity of the major tourist attractions could also be leased out at a comparatively cheap rate to private investors, who would want to invest in auxiliary services of tourism importance.

These incentives, he averred, would encourage investment in tourism industry by private sector. He further pinpointed that the industry is too big for the government agency (Tourism Bureau) alone to shoulder. The private sector needs to invest in this vital sector of the economy. Ejom (2004) opined that private sector participation in the development and growth of any economy is one very transparent and necessary ingredient required to turn around a non-performing economy to a path of growth. Uhuegbu (2002) stressed on the need for private sector participation in tourism development. The private sector's role in tourism development should be encouraged, so as to enhance the growth of tourism facilities such as game reserves, resorts, etc. Tourism, according to Anijah-Obi (2001), has become a worldwide industry which is at different levels of development from one nation to another. This, therefore, implies that the development of the sector is not uniform. Elem (2004), affirming the works of Anijah-Obi (2001), in his analysis of the private sector participation at the different developmental levels of tourism in any nation, believes that the private sector is a dominant key player in the operation of tourism globally. It is recognized that the sector has created trust within the industry in various service market, which is beneficial to their countries. Elem (2004) believes the relationship between the industries and the sector should be kept and expanded. Also, the private sector is encouraged to involve stakeholders in the community and other organizations in tourism planning and implementation. The private sector's contributions may include capital investment management expertise, transfer skill etc.

Aremu (2001), in evaluating government's contribution to promoting tourism, believes "a great deal of people is yet to be aware of what tourism is and the gain derivable from it". He therefore recommends that campaign awareness should be undertaken and tourism should be introduced at all levels of school curriculum. On the effectiveness of tourism industry, Aremu (2001) recommends and concludes that for effective domestic and international tourism, there is need for security of life and property, for example Airports and hotels could be made more secure. Agbo (2004) in a paper titled "Community Based Tourism", highlighted that for effective management of tourism resources, which he termed "success factors" the local people must be made aware of actual participation in tourism programmes within their locality.

2.2 Economic impacts of tourism

Tourism has contributed enormously to the economies of most of the host areas. Tourism development has internationally and domestically promoted interaction of people from diverse ethnicity. It has significantly encouraged large monetary resources that benefit the destination area. Several scholars in tourism studies such as Torres & Momsen (2005), Mcintosh & Goeldner (1984), and Dincer & Ertugral (2003) have focused on the socioeconomic impacts of tourism. Caneday & Zeiger (1991), Milman & Pizam (1988) and Liu & Var (1986) in their analyses assert that tourism enhances income and standard of living. Ross (1992) further stress that tourism not only generates income but contribute to employment generation while Milman and Pizam (1988) are of the opinion that it increases tax revenues. Ross (1992) differentiates the economic contribution of tourism to the real estate industry in terms of influence in prices of properties.

In recent times, studies on tourism economics all explained the economics of tourism and investigated in a broader perspective the economic impacts of tourism, which most modern tourism researches have acknowledged. Wall and Mathieson (2006) observed that "the provision and development of tourism support services and recreational opportunities have stimulated major positive contribution to the national balance of payments, as a means of remedying regional disparity in income and employment, as responsible for revenues gained from direct tourism expenditures and through taxes and levies". Over the years, a few studies have evaluated the indirect costs to destination areas, the bulk expenditure of joining the tourist market and the economic expenditure of tourism (Jafari, 1974; Turner, 1976).

Wall and Mathieson (2006) in their empirical studies, affirm the following reasons why most economic studies of the impact of tourism are carried out. Firstly, economic impacts are relatively easy to measure as against others. Secondly, as a result of the availability of field data on the economic impact of tourism, such as data on employment generation, expenditure, tax revenues and income generation, studies on economic impact of tourism is usually studied in the tourism discipline. Thirdly, private and public sector investors are the major catalysts that can remedy several economic setbacks faced by most host countries where tourism is the main source of community livelihood. This necessitated why most researches are encouraged and funded by both the private and public sector due to the economic benefits. Accordingly, Archer (1973) in his empirical analysis of the tourism sector explains that, "the tourist industry is made up of a heterogeneous group of establishments which provide different categories of goods and services for several fun-seekers and, in his assertion, believes that economic impact of tourism relies on the visitors' arrivals and the power of visitors' spending which is usually injected into the local economy for economic growth and development. Fletcher, (1994) and Frechtling (1987) point out that tourism has contributed significantly in the increase in government revenue base, increased income, employment opportunities and at the same time increased the foreign exchange earnings and stimulated regional growth of many nations. Cater (1987) opines that "for developing countries, tourism seems an attractive proposition in earning much needed foreign currency".

Shivji (1973), Torres and Momsen (2005) opines the negative consequence of the economic impact of tourism. Shivji (1973) asserts that "the justification for tourism in terms of it being economically good completely fails to appreciate the integrated nature of the system of underdevelopment". His submission follows thus; "while assessing the economic impact of tourism, little or no attention was paid to the perceived social and environmental costs created by the tourism industry". Torres and Momsen (2005) further observed that the "growth of tourism typically results in increased dependency on foreign imports which at the same time

compete with the development of local agriculture and small scale industry". The positive impact of tourism in most cases, do not trickle down to the local community or people in most less developed countries. Rather, this positive impact goes to the national or regional governments, foreign entrepreneurs' and international corporations. (Britton, 1991; Mowforth & Munt, 1998).

The participation of private sector and public sector in Cross River State offered fun-seekers with enough recreational opportunities due to the presence of recreational resorts (Eja and Imoke, 2014). However, in spite of the huge investment of the private sector in the development of recreational resorts in Cross River State and Calabar in particular, there is still seasonality in the inflow and patronage of these laudable recreational resorts. Besides, most of the existing recreational resorts suffered from the rise and fall and in most cases some of them no longer stay in business despite the introduction of famous festival events (carnival) in the state. It is on this note that this research wishes to evaluate if recreational resorts are catalysts for visitors' arrivals and destination development in Cross River State.

3.0METHODOLOGY

This research is anchored on visitors' arrivals and destination development using selected recreational resorts. Two resorts were selected for this study and the rational for selecting the two resorts which include the Obudu Ranch Resort and the Tinapa Business Resort is due to the fact that the two resorts are the most viable, well recognized and most attractive in Cross River State. However, information such as the level of visitors' arrivals in both the resorts were obtained from the management of the resorts with the aid of a checklist. The origin of visitors in the two resorts were assessed and within the time frame of 2012 to 2015. However, socio-economic impact of visitors' arrivals and the associated problems with visitors' arrivals were equally evaluated with the aid of a questionnaire. Four hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed to residents living around each of the resorts each using random sampling technique which allowed every member of the population equal opportunities of being selected for the study.

Two hypotheses were stated which tries to examined if or not there exists a significant variation in the rate of visitors' arrivals in the two recreational resorts between 2012 to 2015. However, the state hypothesis was tested using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) which tries to evaluate the differences in mean between three or more variables.

4.0FINDINGS

4.1 Visitor's Arrivals

The rate of visitors' arrivals presented in table 1 indicates that residents were the major visitors arrivals in both the two resorts with a value of 78.7 percent and 73.89 percent followed by other states with a value of 15.5 percent and 18.88 percent, while foreigners were in the least side with a value of 5.6 percent and 7.27 percent. However, table 2 indicates that 2015 recorded the highest visitors' arrivals in Tinapa Business Resort with a value of 30 percent compared to Obudu Ranch Resort with a value of 19.97 percent. It was also discovered in table 2 that Obudu Ranch Resort recorded a high visitors' arrivals in 2012 and 2013 with values 33.35 percent and 24.22 percent compared to the Tinapa Business Resort with a value of 21.17 percent and 23.02 percent

Table 1: Visitors' arrivals in the resorts

	Tinapa Business Resort						Obudu Ranch Resort					
Origin of	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	%	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	%
tourist												
Residents	42,463	46,407	52,120	59,729	200,7	78.7	39,320	26,210	24,857	22,956	113,34	73.84
					19						3	
Other	8,388	9,167	10,295	11,798	39,64	15.5	7,865	7,865	6,945	5,201	28,986	18.88
states					8							
Foreigners	3,175	3,106	3,294	4,945	14,52	5.6	3,112	3,112	2,645	2,510	11,165	7.27
					0							
Total	54,026	58,680	65,709	76,472	254,8	100	37,187	37,187	34,447	30,667	153,49	100
					87						4	

Source: Field Survey, 2016

The result of analysis presented in table 2 indicates F-value of 3.21 and a table-value of 1.24 in the Tinapa Business Resort. However, this result indicates that there is a significant variation in the annual visitors' arrivals in the Tinapa Resorts. Although, this result was also obtained in the Obudu Ranch Resort as the f-value of 2.11 was greater than the table value at 0.05 significant level indicating that there is a significant variation in the annual visitors' arrivals in the Obudu Ranch Resort.

Table 2: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the differences in tourist arrivals in the Tinapa Ranch Resort

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	Table
						value
Between groups	1.303E3	3	2.112E2	3.21	0.05	1.2
				2		
Within groups	1.100E2	23	1101110.231			
Total	1.413E3	27				
Analysis of variance	ce (ANOVA) of the	ne dif	ferences in tourist	t arrival	s in the C	Obudu Ranch
Resort						
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	Table value
Between groups	1.213E2	3	1.102E2	2.11	0.05	1.1
				1		
Within groups	1.112E3	24	1101110.122			
Total	1.412E3	26				

4.2 International Visitors

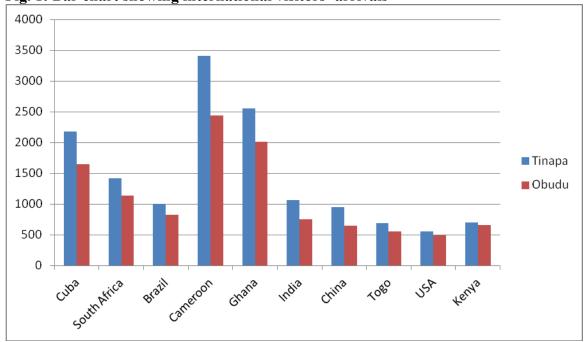
The origin of international visitors' arrivals presented in table 3 indicate that Cameroon and Ghana recorded the highest number of visitors' arrivals in the resorts as observed with values of 23.4 percent and 17.6 percent followed by visitors from Cuba and South Africa with values of 14.9 percent and 9.7 percent. However, table 3 revealed visitors from China and Brazil were also noticed in the recreational resorts with values of 7.2 percent and 6.9 percent followed by visitors from Togo with a value of 4.7 percent. Nevertheless, visitors from USA and Kenya were the least international visitors that visited the recreational resorts in Calabar as observed with values of 4.8 percent and 3.7 percent. Figure one below shows the total international visitors' arrivals in the resorts.

Table 3: International visitors' arrivals in the recreation resorts

S/N	International												
	visitors		Tinapa Business Resort					Obudu Ranch Resort					
		2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	%	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	%
1	Cuba	536	526	485	630	2177	14.9	423	458	395	372	1648	14.7
2	South Africa	317	311	309	481	1418	9.7	293	321	284	234	1132	10.7
3	Brazil	209	199	245	352	1005	6.9	223	215	186	196	820	7.3
4	Cameroon	649	625	768	1369	3411	23.4	645	685	567	547	2444	21.8
5	Ghana	528	508	675	845	2556	17.6	546	539	474	456	2015	18.0
6	India	238	224	235	362	1059	7.2	186	206	194	164	750	6.7
7	China	205	199	210	336	950	6.5	136	196	186	134	652	5.8
8	Togo	183	176	142	189	690	4.7	176	167	108	102	553	4.9
9	USA	130	143	102	176	551	3.7	125	138	119	114	496	4.4
10	Kenya	180	195	123	205	703	4.8	145	187	132	191	655	5.8
	Total	3175	3106	3294	4945	14520	100	2898	3112	2645	2510	11165	100

Source: Resort Management

Fig. 1: Bar chart showing international visitors' arrivals



4.3 Domestic Visitors Arrival

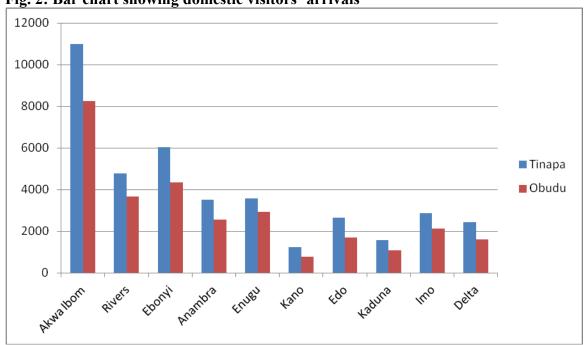
The rate of domestic visitors' arrivals in the recreational resort presented in Table 4 shows that domestic visitors from Akwa Ibom State dominated the recreational resorts as observed with values of 27.6 percent and 28.5 percent followed by domestic visitors from Ebonyi State with values of 15.2 percent and 14.9 percent. The data presented in Table 4 shows that domestic visitors from Kano were on the least side in the recreational resorts as observed with values of 3.1 percent and 2.5 percent followed by domestic visitors from Kaduna with values 3.9 percent and 3.4 percent. However, the data presented in Table 4 shows that the Tinapa resort recorded the highest level of visitors' arrivals in 2015 with a value of 29.75 percent compared to Obudu Ranch Resort with a value of 17.99 percent. The data presented in Table 4 shows that Obudu Ranch Resort recorded the highest domestic visitors' arrivals in 2012 and 2013 with values of 30.96 percent and 27.12 percent compared to Tinapa Business Resort with values of 21.15 percent and 23.12 percent. Figure to below shows domestic visitors' arrivals to the recreation resorts.

Table 4: Domestic visitors' arrivals in the recreation resorts

S/	International												
N	visitors		Ti	napa Bus	siness Re	esort			C	budu Ra	nch Reso	rt	
		2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	%	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	%
1	Akwa Ibom	2638	982	2464	3045	10980	27.6	2504	2152	1927	1667	8250	28.5
2	Rivers	943	1152	1265	1589	4779	12.0	1239	954	823	662	3678	12.7
3	Ebonyi	1026	866	1965	1899	6042	15.2	1508	1089	997	738	4332	14.9
4	Anambra	734	799	902	998	3500	8.8	785	725	626	408	2544	8.9
5	Enugu	825	228	896	1063	3583	9.0	890	801	728	523	2942	10.2
6	Kano	223	644	384	395	1230	3.1	245	201	192	126	764	2.5
7	Edo	642	387	658	715	2659	6.7	438	518	428	299	1683	5.8
8	Kaduna	379	689	368	429	1563	3.9	322	310	289	157	1078	3.4
9	Imo	512	587	795	876	2872	7.2	569	622	536	389	2116	7.3
10	Delta	466	9167	598	789	2440	6.1	475	493	399	232	1599	5.5
	Total	3175	3106	3294	4945	39648	100	8975	7865	6945	5201	28992	100
		21.15	23.12	25.96	29.75			30.96	25.12	23.95	17.99		

Source: Resort Management (2016)

Fig. 2: Bar chart showing domestic visitors' arrivals



4.4 Socio-economic Impact of Visitors' Arrivals

The socio-economic impact of visitors' arrivals in destination development in Table 5 revealed that the development of recreational resorts have given rise to employment generation and increase in businesses as observed with a high value of 17.7 percent and 16.2 percent followed by increase in income generation with a value of 15.7 percent. The data presented in Table 5 indicate that increase in government revenue and good road network were also the impact of recreational resort development on destination development in Calabar as noticed with values of 14.7 percent and 12.7 percent respectively. Therefore, the data presented in Table 5 indicates that increase in hotel, restaurants and housing development were also another impact of recreational resorts on destination development in the area as noticed in Table 5 with values of 5 percent and 6.2 percent while good communication system and increase in water supply were the least socio-economic impact of recreational resorts on destination development in the area with values of 2.2 percent and 4.7 percent.

Table 5: Socio-economic impact of recreational resorts

S/N	Socio-economic benefits	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Employment	71	17.7
2	Increase in housing development	20	5
3	Increase in government revenue	59	14.7
4	Increase in water supply	19	4.7
5	Increase in income generation	63	15.7
6	Improvement in power supply	18	4.5
7	Good communication system	9	2.2
8	Increase in businesses	65	16.2
9	Hotels and restaurants	25	6.2
10	Good road network	51	12.7
	Total	400	100

Source: Field survey (2016)

4.5 Socio-economic Challenges of Visitors' Arrivals

The socio-economic challenges associated with recreational resorts on destination development in the area presented in Table 6 indicates that the development of recreational resorts have given rise to high cost of land acquisition and loss of cultural heritage as observed with values of 25.5 percent and 21.5 percent. The data presented in Table 6 shows that increase in house rent and high cost of transportation were also a challenge associated with the development of recreational resorts as noticed with values of 18.7 percent and 11.7 percent. Although the data presented in Table 6 shows that the development of recreational resorts have caused violence, prostitution and inflation as observed with values of 6 percent, 5 percent and 4.7 percent respectively. However, increase in road accident, burglary and stealing were the least challenges associated with the development of recreational resorts as observed with values of 3.2 percent and 3.5 percent.

Table 6: Socio-economic challenges associated with visitors' arrivals on destination development

S/N	Socio-economic benefits	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Inflation	19	4.7
2	Violence	20	5
3	Prostitution	24	6
4	Increase in house rent	75	18.7
5	High cost of transportation	47	11.7
6	Loss of cultural heritage	86	21.5
7	Burglary/stealing	14	3.5
8	High cost of land acquisition	102	25.5
9	Increase in road accident	13	3.2
	Total	400	100

Source: Field survey (2016)

5.0 CONCLUSION

The growing demand and the rate of visitors' arrivals in Cross River State is necessitated to the development and rehabilitation of the existing tourism potentials in the state. This research revealed that the existing recreational resorts have greatly influenced the rate of visitors' arrivals as evidenced in the data collected which shows the rate and origin of visitors in the two recreational resorts selected for this study. However, the study also shows that the

presence of recreational resorts in Cross River State have impacted significantly on the socio-economic wellbeing of residents in the two communities where the resorts are located. Nevertheless, the presence of these recreational resorts have also posed some socio-economic challenges in the area. Therefore, adequate mechanism must be put in place to avert the challenges associated with visitors' arrivals and recreational resorts development in the area.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of the significant impact of recreational resorts development in Cross River State, the following recommendations are hereby put forward to avert the challenges that are associated with the recreational resorts and visitors' arrivals in Cross River State as a tourism destination.

- The government must provide adequate security that would guarantee the safety of visitors' in Calabar
- The stakeholders in the tourism industry must provide an effective framework that would encourage visitors' arrivals in Cross River State. This would help sustain the existing resorts.
- The state government must also provide a tourism framework that would ensure tourism related activities all-year round in the state
- The state government must reduce the tax regime and make it more affordable so as to attract investors especially in the tourism industry in the state.
- The state government and other stakeholders in the tourism industry must monitor the activities of operators of the various resorts so as to provide the best service delivery to visitors while they stay in the destination.

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