



Analysis of the Socio-economic impacts of Tourism in Rural Areas of South-South Nigeria

by

Aniedi U. Essien
Department of Geography
University of Uyo, Uyo
aniediudoessien@gmail.com,
07035319074

and Eno E. James
Department of Urban and
Regional Planning
University of Uyo, Uyo
Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigated the socio-economic impacts of tourism as well as the underlying dimension of tourism impact in rural South-South Nigeria. A sample of 30 rural tourism points was randomly selected. Data generated from the National Bureau of Statistic on tourism impacts in the South-South zone of Nigeria was used for the analysis. Descriptive Statistics as well as Factor Analysis were employed to analyze the impacts of tourism and to generate the underlying dimension of the impacts. Findings showed an abysmally low mean values on variables measuring socio-economic impacts. Also, Factor Analysis reveals five key dimensions of tourism impact to include employment, population stability, social connection, rural industrialization and improvement in income /living standard. On the whole, 70% of the sampled tourism points suffered setbacks on the five dimensions of tourism impact highlighted in the study. These findings, by far, have strong policy implications for stimulating the tourism sector through institutional, structural and technical re-alignment of the tourism industry to yield the desired socioeconomic impacts in rural areas. It was recommended among others that the structure of tourism planning should be decentralized to recognize rural peoples' idea on tourism development in their domain.

Keyword: Analysis; Tourism; Socio-economic; impact; tourism points; rural areas.

1. Introduction

In contemporary times, tourism has become a global economic force, generating significant revenue and contributing directly and indirectly to socio-economic development in different parts of the world (World Economic Forum, 2017). According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2016), tourism accounts for nearly ten percent of the World Gross Domestic Product (GDP) comprising \$5.89 trillion in economic activity and is expected to nearly double by 2020 (WTTC, 2016). For this reason, tourism is arguably the world's largest and fastest growing economic sector. Furthermore, International Agencies

such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), United States Agency for Internal development (USAID), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have unanimously affirmed the development of tourism as a panacea for economic decline especially in rural areas (Binns and Nel, 2018).

Most rural areas in both developed and developing countries are experiencing widespread socio-economic difficulties in spite of existing government intervention program (Sharply, 2019). This phenomenon has continued to negatively affect the fabrics and structure of rural areas around the world. In most countries, rural areas have traditionally relied heavily on agriculture, fishing and mining as the main economic activity. For a host of reasons, many of these activities have been in decline or have ceased altogether in recent years. In the developed nations, rural economic decline can be attributed to consolation, mechanization and globalization (Sharply, 2019). However, in most developing nations, it may be due to the depletion of the resources, environmental change and market fluctuation. These challenges have increased the pressure to find an alternative or supplementary rural economic base that is sustainable (Arlinda, 2015). At community levels, tourism is increasingly seen as a catalyst for rural development and a suitable replacement for dwindling agricultural fortunes in most rural communities (Aref, 2017). Rural development planners have recognized the economic contribution in bolstering stagnating economies and its ability to unify local community residents (Ivanovic, 2009). Tourism offers opportunities for direct, indirect, and induced employment and income, spurring regional and local economic development (Aref, 2017). Bushell and Eagles (2017) asserted that tourism plays a role in facilitating community development through business mentoring and educational opportunities that contribute to increasing skill and knowledge in local communities and local residents as well as improving the community's economic level.

In most developing countries, rural tourism has been used as a tool for reversing the malaise of uneven spatial distribution of income and socio-economic development between urban and rural areas through deliberate effort at increasing rural income via tourism employment and the provision of infrastructure in rural areas (James and Essien, 2019). In most cases, the concept of community– based tourism (CBT) has been applied to solve the problem of regional inequality in socio-economic well-being. The majority of rural policy makers have subscribed to the idea that the solution for regional inequality lies in the creation of regionally specific development plans. These plans are based upon, and are complimentary with local natural and human resources. For this reason, community based tourism (CBT) has been conceptualized in its widest sense to mean, “Tourism that occurs at a local level and seeks to benefit local communities in its impact” (Simkova, 2017).

Other literature on tourism impacts suggest that rural tourism acts as a source of employment, resulting in a primary source of income for individuals or acts as additional income for individuals (UNWTO, 2016, Nzama, 2017 Milli, 2018). According to Lin (2016), the development of rural tourism service is pivotal for a whole chain of activities, thereby providing support for existing and new businesses and services. In turn, this diversifies and strengthens the local economic base for the local community (Tafler and Sharply 2018). The goal of developing tourism in rural areas is to attract tourist from outside the close vicinity of the destination. Attracting outsiders to a destination translates into bringing new money into the area, in turn stimulating the local economy (Aref, 2017). In

addition to the economic benefits of rural tourism, the literature also suggests that the development of rural tourism can contribute to a number of social benefits to rural communities (Odeleye and Oyekanmi, 2016; Imikan and Udofia, 2016). These benefits include; the provision of recreational opportunities, raising the quality of life, education, promoting community pride, building community management and organization, stabilizing rural population and ensuring rights in natural resources management (Ijeomah,2007). Garrod and Wilson (2014) asserted that rural tourism has the ability to foster social cohesion and provide opportunity for cultural exchange and create conditions for safeguarding and enhancing local cultural identities.

Despite the replete of theoretical knowledge on the socio-economic impact of tourism, the empirical verification of the theoretical postulation is scanty especially in Nigeria. In the South-South region of Nigeria where the present investigation was carried out, empirical evidence regarding the socio-economic impact of tourism in rural areas have not been adequately documented (Anake, 2008; Imikan and Udofia, 2016; Edet, Mbu, Etim and Etefia, 2017). The afore-mentioned studies are however, lacking in spatial scale which is critical to the validity of conclusions. The present study seeks to broaden the scope of investigation of the tourism impacts at a regional scale as well as examining the dimensionality of the tourism impacts – a perspective that is lacking in the previous studies. South-south Nigeria is endowed with abundance of tourism resources, some of which have been harnessed for accelerated rural development (Essien, 2016). However, analyzing the impacts of tourism development in the region will further provide vital tools and framework for tourism development in the region in particular and Nigeria in general.

2. Objectives of Study

The study objectives included:

- i. to assess the socio-economic impacts of tourism in the study area
- ii. to examine the dimensionality of the tourism impacts in relation to the tourism points in the study area

3. Materials and Method

i. Study Area

The study area is the South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. It comprises three coastal States: Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Rivers State. The three States were chosen for the study based on consideration of contiguity, the relative concentration of major tourism activities in the region and the evidence of robust tourism drive by the various State governments. The study area is located between latitudes 4°2'01" and 7° North and Longitudes 6°2'01" and 8°3'01" East (Fig. 1).

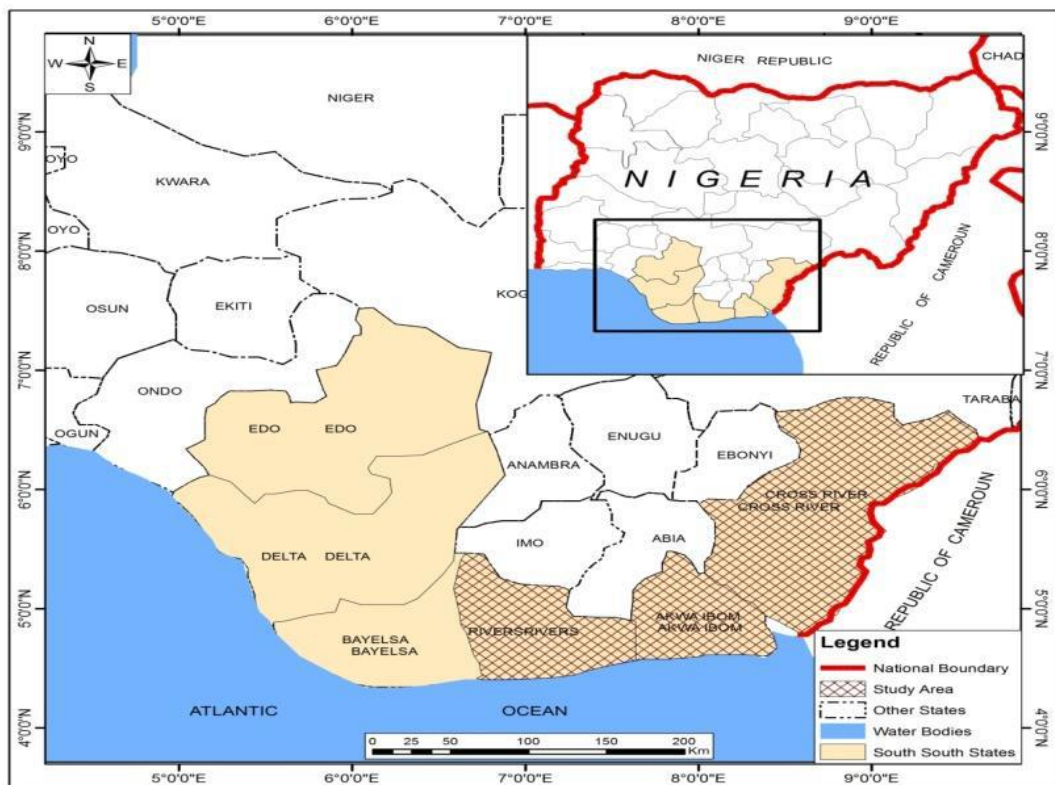


Figure 1: Location of the Study Area on the Map of the South-South Zone of Nigeria

It occupies a total landmass of 37.663km² with a population of 11,994,574 (NPC, 2006). The region’s tourism development is traceable to the 18th century when trade in palm oil and other local products attracted people from different areas of the world to the region. Apart from trade in local produce which attracted foreign merchants to the coastal area of Rivers, Cross River and Akwa Ibom State, the other activities which attracted foreigners to the region were the New Yam Festivals, Chieftaincy Installation Ceremonies, initiation into womanhood and blood oath ceremonies (Karibo, 1991; Ikurekong, 2010; Anake, 2008). These ceremonies marked the era of cultural tourism in Nigeria.

ii. Sample, Data collection and Analysis

The study used a sample of 30 tourism points out of a population of 81 listed tourism points in the area. The simple random sampling was applied to select the sample. Figure 2 displays the study sample.

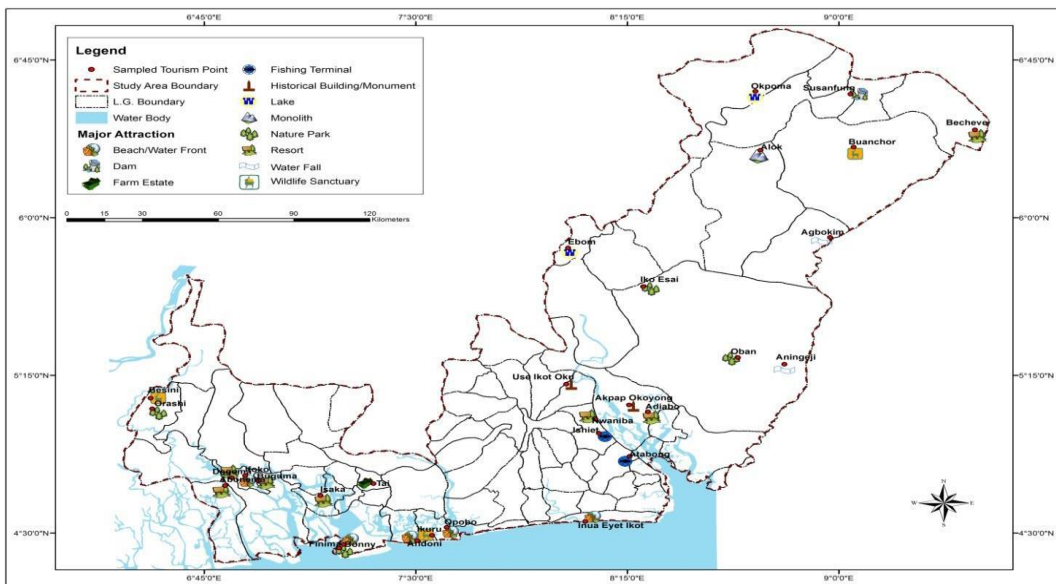


Figure 2: Sampled Tourism Points in the Study Area

Data required for the study were the measures of socio-economic impact of tourism. The data on these 14 variables were carefully selected from the literature and used as the measures of socioeconomic impact of tourism. Data were sourced from the Household Socio-Economic Survey conducted in 2018 and reported by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), South- South zonal office in Calabar, Cross River State.

Table 1: Socio-economic measures of tourism impact

S/N	Variable	Unit of measurement
1.	Hotel/Restaurant Employment	Percent of household
2.	Employment in transportation	Percent of household
3.	Employment at Tourism site	Percent of household
4.	Average monthly income above N18000 (National Minimum Wage)	Percent of household
5.	Type of living house (zinc-concrete)	Percent of household
6.	Access to recreation	Percent of household
7.	Ownership of private electricity (generator)	Percent of household
8.	Ownership of cell phone	Percent of household
9.	Access to internet	Percent of household
10.	Access to water supply (borehole)	Percent of household
11.	Level of out-migration	Percent of household
12.	Presence of Agro-processing industry	Total frequency
13.	Presence of craft industry	Total frequency
14.	Human capital building (Tour Guide Training)	Total frequency

Source: field survey, 2019

Regarding techniques of data analysis, descriptive statistics, mainly mean, minimum and maximum values of the variables were computed and used to assess the level of tourism impact on the socio-economic landscape of the area. A higher mean value

depicted a stronger impact of tourism on the specific socio-economic attribute of the area. Furthermore, using the SPSS, R-mode Factor Analysis was performed using the varimax rotation to reduce the 14 variables of tourism impact into fewer “Factors” that represented the underlying dimension of the tourism impact in the area. The “Factor Scores” generated from the analysis were used to assess the level of impact each socio-economic dimensions had in the sampled tourism points.

4. Findings and Discussion

i. Socio-economic impacts of tourism in the study area

A key component of this study was to examine the socio-economic impact of tourism in the study area. However, it is important to first describe the socio-economic variables that were used to assess the impact of tourism in the study area. Specifically, 14 variables bordering on tourism induced development and several aspects of household condition were selected. Data from the 2018 Household Socio-Economic Survey was obtained from the South-South zonal office of the National Bureau of statistics (Room 205, 2nd floor, Federal Secretariat building, Calabar) Cross River State and at States’ (that is, Akwa Ibom State, Cross River and Rivers) offices of Statistics. The above data were used to build the data matrix for the analysis. Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for the socio-economic variables used in the analysis.

Table2: Socio-economic impacts of tourism in the study area

S/N	Socio-economic Variable	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
1.	% of household employed in Hotel/restaurant	6.3	0.5	20.7
2.	% of household employed in transportation	12.08	10.5	15.0
3.	% of household earning an average of N18000 and above monthly income	31.7	10.0	66.1
4.	% of household living in concrete-zinc houses	36.7	16.0	70.0
5.	% of household with access to recreation facility	11.5	5.0	23.0
6.	% of household with out-migrant	0.2	1.0	5.1
7.	% of household owning private electricity (generator)	15.7	5.0	40.0
8.	% of household with access to borehole water supply	15.0	5.0	40.0
9.	% of household owning cell phone	19.5	10.4	30.1
10.	% of household having access to internet/social media	3.7	1.0	6.1
11.	Members of household working in tourism site	8	1	30
12.	Members of household trained as tour guides	3	1	7
13.	Number of craft industry	1	1	1
14.	Number of Agro-processing industry	1	1	1

Source: Data Analysis, 2019

Data in Table 2 shows the minimum, maximum and mean values for different socio-economic measures of tourism impact. Just like rural areas in other parts of Nigeria, the majority of households in the study area reported very low values on household socio-economic conditions and generally low levels of rural transformation. For instance, average of 31.7% of households earned monthly income above the national minimum wage of N18,000. This implied that more than 60% of households in the study area earned below the minimum wage. In terms of house type, an average of 36.7% lived in concrete-zinc houses. Water and energy supply remained a pervasive problem among rural communities in

Nigeria. For the sampled tourism points, an average household of 15% have access to borehole water while only 15.7% average owned generator. Regarding cell phone and internet access, an average of 3.7% of households in the tourism points had access to the internet/social media while 19.5% owned cell phone. In terms of employment in the non-farming sector, average of 6.3% of households was employed in hotel/restaurants while 12.0% was employed in transportation.

Furthermore, in most tourism points, an average of 8 household members worked directly in the tourist site while average of 3 household members worked as tour guide. The average number of craft and agro-processing industry in the study area was 1. On the whole, the status of socio-economic development remained relatively low and unimpressive. In the proceeding section, attempt has been made to profile the socio-economic development status of individual tourism points.

ii. Dimensionality of Tourism impact in relation to the sampled tourism points

In order to meaningfully capture the underlying dimensions of tourism impact in the sampled points, Factor Analysis was performed on the initial 14 variables in order to generate fewer factors as well as factor scores that can be used as indices for assessing tourism induced socio-economic development in each sampled points. From Table 3, five new factors were generated from the initial 14 variables and used to assess the structure of tourism socio-economic impact in the area.

Table 3: Selected factors, Factor loadings and Eigenvalue for the measured tourism impacts

Variables No.	Variable Names	Factors					Communalities
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	Hotel employment		.78				.92
2	Transportation employment		.52				.83
3	Income	.87					.89
4	House type	.81					.84
5	Recreation opportunity		.68				.91
6	Agro-processing industry					.70	.78
7	Tour guide training					-.78	.84
8	Craft industry					.87	.83
9	Out migrant			-.65			.60
10	Private electricity	.91					.89
11	Borehole supply	.80					.89
12	Cell phone ownership				-.83		.79
13	Internet access				.93		.92
14	Tourist site employment		.77				.83
	Eigenvalue	5.821	2.409	1.29	1.218	1.085	
	% variance	41.5	17.2	9.2	8.2	7.2	
	Cumulative %	41.5	58.7	67.9	76.7	84.4	

Source: Data Analysis, 2019

As data in Table 3 indicates, five factors accounted for 84.4% of the variance in the original data set and, therefore could be said to be significant. Furthermore, the communality values were highly loaded, indicating the suitability of the variables included in the analysis. The size of the eigenvalue (1.00 and above) determined the inclusion of the

factors in the model and variables loadings + or -0.50 and above were used for identifying the factors. The highlight of the five Factors was as follows.

- i. Factor 1 was identified as “income/living standard” factor because it reported high loadings on income (.87), house type (.81), private electricity supply (.91) and bore-hole water supply (.80). Factor I had eigenvalue of 5.821 and contributed 41.5% of the variance in the data.
- ii. Factor 2 was identified as “employment” because it loaded highly on hotel employment (.78), transport employment (.52) and tourist site employment (.77) factor 2 had eigenvalue of 2.409 and contributed 17.2% of variance in the data set.
- iii. Factor 3 was identified as “recreation and population stability”. It loaded highly on recreation opportunity (.68) and out migration (-.65). It accounted for 9.2% of variance in the data set and had an eigenvalue of 1.298.
- iv. Factor 4 was identified as “social connection” as it loaded highly on cell phone ownership (-.83) and internet access (.93). It accounted for 8.2% of variance in the data set and had an eigenvalue of 1.218.
- v. Factor 5 was identified as “rural industrialization” as it loaded highly on craft industry (.87) tour guide training (-.78) and agro-processing industry (.70). Factor 5 accounted for 7.2% of variance in the data set with eigenvalue of 1.085.

The factor scores showed the performance of tourism point on the above five dimensions of socio-economic impact of tourism as displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of Factor Scores on Dimensions of Socio-economic impacts of Tourism amongst sampled points

S/N	Tourism point	Factor					Aggregate score	Level of impact
		1	2	3	4	5		
		Income/Living Standard	Employment	Recreation and pop. Stab.	Social connection	Rural Industry		
1	Inua Eyet Ikot (AKS)	-1.02	-1.25	1.24	0.89	1.16	1.02	Moderate
2	Nwaniba, AKS	1.13	-1.57	304	0.14	0.04	2.78	Moderate
3	Oban, CRS	0.37	1.25	1.21	0.02	-0.98	1.87	Moderate
4	Use Ikot Oku, AKS	-1.18	-0.26	-1.29	0.26	-0.67	-3.14	Low
5	Atabong, AKS	-1.46	0.31	0.19	-1.29	1.63	0.62	Low
6	Ishiet, AKS	-1.33	0.80	-0.08	-0.96	1.67	0.1	Low
7	Adiabo (CRS)	-0.28	1.93	1.60	1.47	-0.22	4.50	High
8	Agbokim, CRS	-0.88	0.38	-0.09	0.04	-0.89	-1.44	Low
9	Alok, CRS	-1.24	-0.11	-0.03	0.78	-0.67	-1.27	Low
10	Baunchor, CRS	-0.84	0.40	0.16	0.02	-1.22	-1.48	Low
11	Becheve, CRS	0.48	2.42	1.49	1.51	0.66	6.2	High
12	Ebom, CRS	-0.46	-0.07	0.58	-1.12	0.17	-0.9	Low
13	Iko Esai, CRS	1.06	0.58	0.01	-1.50	-1.99	-1.84	Low
14	Akpap Okoyong, CRS	-0.13	0.04	0.83	-2.95	-1.04	-3.25	Low

15	Okpoma, CRS	-0.52	-0.49	-0.49	-0.63	-0.90	-3.03	Low
16	Susanfang, CRS	-0.88	-0.61	-0.42	-0.13	-1.08	-3.12	Low
17	Aningaji, CRS	-0.68	0.35	-0.29	0.69	-1.10	-1.73	Low
18	Abonema, (Rivers)	0.10	-0.42	-0.67	0.50	0.58	0.09	Low
19	Andoni, Rivers	-0.66	-0.90	-0.13	-0.08	0.95	-0.82	Low
20	Bonny, Rivers	1.39	0.10	-0.45	-0.66	0.48	0.86	Low
21	Finima, Rivers	0.10	-0.70	-0.05	-0.75	0.63	-0.77	Low
22	Opobo, Rivers	0.82	-0.25	-0.57	0.81	0.63	1.44	Moderate
23	Tai, Rivers	0.73	2.53	-1.92	-0.71	1.55	2.81	Moderate
24	Ikuru, Rivers	-0.06	-0.62	-0.44	0.96	-0.55	-0.71	Low
25	Degema, Rivers	1.71	-0.15	0.36	0.91	-0.64	0.30	Low
26	Orashi, Rivers	0.70	-0.86	-0.41	-0.14	1.00	0.26	Low
27	Buguma, Rivers	1.73	-0.92	-0.39	-0.61	1.26	1.10	Moderate
28	Ifoko, Rivers	2.01	-0.32	-0.71	0.28	-0.86	1.01	Moderate
29	Isaka, Rivers	0.15	-0.57	-0.39	1.08	0.56	0.83	Low
30	Biseni , Rivers	-0.87	-0.99	-0.71	1.18	-0.16	-0.94	Low

Source: *Data Analysis, 2019*

As data in Table 4 indicates, socio-economic impacts of tourism varied across the five dimensions (factors) and also across the tourism points. In the proceeding paragraphs, attempts were made to examine the pattern of performance on the five dimensions of socio-economic impact of tourism in the study area.

i. Income/Living Standard

The range of factor scores on the income/living standard dimension (-1.46 to 2.01) revealed the relatively low performance of tourists point and the pervasive low standard of living and the largely monolithic income source of rural households in the study area. Rural households were largely dependent on farming income and tourism was expected to diversify and increase rural income. As data in Table 4 indicates, only 5 tourism points had factors score above 1.00 which was considered as pass mark. These included Ifoko in Rivers (2.01), Buguma, Rivers (1.71), Bonny, Rivers (1.39), Iko Esai, in Cross River (1.06) and Nwaniba in Akwa Ibom (1.13). However, 14 tourism points representing 46.6% of total reported positive score on income/living standard. The implication of this finding was that more than 50% of tourism points were yet to reap the benefit impact of tourism on income/standard of living could be attributed to existing differential in level of tourism activities in the sampled points.

ii. Employment

Employment structure is an important indicator of socio-economic impact of tourism, especially in rural areas where employment appears to be largely extractive industry based. Tourism provides the opportunity for introducing service based and light manufacturing-based employment in rural areas. Data in Table 4 show that only 4 tourism points had scores 1.00 and above on the employment dimension of socio-economic impact. These include Oban, CRS (1.25), Adiabo, CRS (1.93), Becheve, CRS (2.42), and Tai, Rivers (2.53). They reported a relatively robust tourism employment opportunity in the hotel/restaurants and transportation sub-sectors. However, a total of 12 tourism points representing 40% reported positive scores on the employment dimension.

iii. Recreation and population stability

Overtime, rural settlements have been characterized by persistent out-migration of her youth population. Essentially, stabilizing the rural population (by curbing the degree of out-migration) is an indicator of socio-economic development (Essien, 2016). Furthermore, providing opportunity for leisure and recreation are not only for visiting tourists but also for the host community as a component of socio-economic development in rural areas (Mili, 2018).

The performance of tourism points on the recreation/population stability factor is dismal. Only five tourists' points reported factors scores 1.00 and above. These include: Inua Eyet Ikot in Akwa Ibom (1.24), Nwaniba, Akwa Ibom (3.04), Oban, CRS (1.21), Adiabo, CRS (1.60) and Becheve, CRS (1.49). These tourist points possessed a range of recreational facilities that served both tourists and the host population. Authors have argued that the provision of recreational facilities in rural areas can be linked to urban-rural migration and rural population stability (Essien and James, 2019; Imikan and Udofia, 2016). However, ten tourism points reported positive scores on the recreation component of socio-economic impact.

iv. Social Connection

The level of social connection and interaction between one locality and the others has been identified as an important factor of socio-economic development (UNWTO, 2016). Improvement in social interaction and networking via the internet and cell phone communication remains a strong advantage for tourism points. Though the majority of tourism points (56.6%) reported positive scores on social connection, the fact remains that only four had factor score of 1.00 and above. These include: Adiabo, CRS (1.47), Becheve, CRS (1.51), Isaka, Rivers (1.08) and Biseni, Rivers (1.18).

v. Rural industrialization and capacity building

Diversifying the rural economy through rural industrialization and capacity building is critical to rural development (Essien, 2016). Tourism creates avenue for local craft industry and agro-processing industry to emerge in rural areas. Data in Table 4 show that 6 tourism Points fared relatively better on rural industrialization. These include: Inua Eyet Ikot, AKS (1.16), Atabong, AKS (1.63), Ishiet, AKS (1.67), Tai, Rivers (1.55), Orashi, Rivers (1.00) and Buguma, Rivers (1.26). Most of the tourism points are fishing terminal where local fish processing and preservation is done. While rural tourism emphasizes the use of local resources to create industry, there is need for training to build capacity of rural people to take charge of rural industrialization.

5. Discussion of Findings

The impact of tourism on the socio-economic landscape in rural Nigeria is yet at its nascent stage. Unlike rural tourism points in other climes, such as Venkov in the (Czech Republic where tourism has generated significant socio-economic prosperity with over 8000 tourists visiting the area per annum (Janaeke, 2019), rural tourism in Nigeria and the South-South region in particular suffers notable setback in term of the development of unique tourism products as well as the supporting infrastructure (James and Essien, 2019). According to Imikan and Udofia, (2016), the development of tourism requires the provision of critical infrastructure capable of serving the residents population and the temporary population that arises at the location for business, leisure or other purposes. This indeed is

lacking in most tourism points in rural Nigeria. Furthermore, the low level of socio-economic impact in the sampled tourism points can be attributed to a monolithic tourism service where there is no diversity of tourism products. For instance as Essien (2016) rightly documented, the structure of water-based attraction, lake, beach, creeks and water front are ubiquitous in South-South Nigeria including ecotourism products (Mangrove and rainforest). However, these tourism resources are yet to be fully harnessed to generate significant tourism impact in the area. The creation of Nature park and wildlife conservation from the abundant ecotourism resources can be the “game changer” for tourism in the area. Though ecotourism attraction has been well developed in the Cross River State according to Anake (2008), much of the vast mangrove in Rivers and Akwa Ibom State are yet to be commoditized for tourists’ consumption. This observation is in line with Ashikodi (2016) position that the mangrove oil fields in the Niger-Delta should be converted to tourist’s attraction as global oil crises deepened.

On the five major dimension of tourism impact generated in the study area, the performance of the tourism points is abysmally low. For instance, the “income/living standard” factor has shown that most rural households at the tourism points are yet to generate income from the tourism industry as they still depend largely on a single income stream from farming. The impact of tourism on household income and living standard is below expectation. This situation is of course linked to the low employment generation and rural industrialization and capacity building in the study area. The stability of rural population from rural-urban drift has also been highlighted as a major dimension of tourism impact in the study area. However, findings indicate that only a few tourism point benefits from this dimension of tourism impact as majority of tourism points lack vital recreational and sports facilities as well as other social incentives capable of minimizing out migration from rural areas. Indeed, the findings of this study have strong implication for tourism policy formulation in the study area.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has analyzed the socio-economic impact of tourism in rural tourism points in south-south Nigeria. The major dimensions of these impacts have also been highlighted in the study. Findings have shown that the study area, though a major tourism hub in southern Nigeria, has recorded very low socio-economic transformation from the tourism sector. Though there is a strong theoretical propositions linking tourism with socio-economic change in rural areas, this has not been proven in the study as majority of tourism points display low performances on the five main dimension of tourism impact. These findings have strong policy implication for the study area. These issues cover three broad areas of intervention in the tourism sector: institutional, structural and technical. Institutionally, the multifarious government agencies running the tourism sub-sector should be harmonized and integrated to enable a formulation of a single, workable tourism master plan for the region. The structure of tourism planning should be decentralized to recognize rural people idea on tourism development in their domain. Technically, the ideas, skills and knowledge for managing tourism are dynamic. There is need to involve policy for high level man-power training for the tourism sector. These measures can help stimulate the tourism sector in the study area to be highly generative and impactful.

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