
The Impact of Calabar Marina Resort and Implication to Tourism and Hospitality Development

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To cite this article:

Ajoma Simon Okwoche. The Impact of Calabar Marina Resort and Implication to Tourism and Hospitality Development. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Management*. Vol. 6, No. 1, 2022, pp. 19-23. doi: 10.11648/j.ijhtm.20220601.13

Received: December 14, 2021; **Accepted:** January 20, 2022; **Published:** June 14, 2022

Abstract: Resort development has been a major economy driver of many nations. The paper x-rays the impact of the Calabar marina resort to hospitality and tourism development. Cross River in an attempt to diversify the economy of the state developed several resorts to mention, but a few include Obudu mountain resort, Tinapa resort as well as Marina resort located in Old Calabar. The resort is situated together with the slave history museum, which gives a clear picture and detailed history of how slaves were traded in ancient times and take their route through the marina. The specific objectives to achieve is the positive and negative impact of marina resort (economic, social, and financial). The various services offered in Marina Resort and their implication to tourism development include merry-go, game nation, water-view lounge, ship-anchor, barbeque, photo studio, cinema as well as slave history museum etc. The findings revealed that marina resorts have a lot of implications to the nation and state economy. The study adopted the qualitative research method, where knowledgeable people were interviewed as key informants. Henceforth, the development of Marina Resort has been widely seen as an opportunity to provide the antidote for development, job creation and diversifying the economic growth of the state.

Keywords: Marina Resort, Tourism, Hospitality Resort Development

1. Introduction

Resort development is one of the most widely researched subject matters within tourism studies. It has been subject to numerous empirical studies since geography started covering the topic in the 1930s. Several theoretical models have also been presented [5]. This development raises questions with regard to the process of a geographical place's touristification, i.e. transforming a place into a destination, as well as with regard to other processes that affect a constituted tourist resort. Tourist resorts have been described as a specific territorial form of geographical place whose mono-activity and smaller size and shape distinguish them, for example, from cities [6]. Empirical observation shows that tourist resorts undergo much differentiated trajectories, during which decline and restructuring are the rule; some resorts are, however, able to maintain a tourism activity over a long period of time [3].

Marina Resort was established in May, 2007 to promote tourism in Calabar Obong, Linus B. [9]. It is notable as a recreational and learning destination. In recent times, tourism

has become an important policy tool for community and regional development in many developed and developing countries. In Nigeria, the establishment of the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) has necessitated the rapid development of tourism especially in most states of the federation with great tourism potentials. Cross River State, in a bid to diversify her economy necessitated the rapid development and rehabilitation of the existing tourism potentials such as museum, botanical garden, Kwa Falls, Tinapa Business Resort among others. Furthermore, the development of these great potentials have given rise to the rehabilitation of Aqua Vista resort, and the development of Orange resort which today receive various visitors all over the world. Apart from the services that these laudable resorts offer to visitors, they also serve as resources of income and revenue generation to both the locals and the government [6]. Besides, the development of the Marina Resort is not devoid of problems which affect the rate of visitors' inflow and income generation. It is on this note that this research was carried out to examine the impact of marina resort hospitality and tourism development with specific reference to assessing

the tourism support services in the Marina resort, daily profits, patronage of tourism support services in the resort, and the challenges and current state, ascertain the management structure that guarantee continuous survival as well suggest alternatives measures for alleviating the identified challenges, associated with the marina resort development. Calabar marina Resort is the fresh breath of air needed to relax from stress, with its wide range of facilities ranging from the slave history museum to restaurants to lounges; you are assured of a fun filled with educative experience. Europe has a 68,000-km long coastline, which is much longer than that of the United States and Russia [13]. The long coastline offers great opportunities for the development of sailing tourism. Europe has 4500 marinas with 1.75 million berths and a total boat park of 6.3 million vessels [12]. The nautical tourism sector in Europe creates 234,000 jobs and generates €28 billion in revenue each year. Thirty-six million citizens of the European Union regularly participate in boating activities, keeping about six million vessels in European waters [11]. As one of the fastest-growing sectors in European tourism, sailing has experienced continuous growth over the past 30 years [8].

2. Method of Data Collection

The instrument used in collecting data for this study includes ethnography, fieldwork, interview, observation, documentary materials. The purposes were to examine the people’s perspectives and to get varied information, their experiences using a different method in other to help analyze the data properly. Mixed method is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Amaratunga, Baldry et al. [2] opined that mixed method allow the weakness of each method (quantitative and qualitative) to be complemented by the strength of the other. Amaratunga, Baldry et al. [2] further added that the mixed method which is known as the broad approach is imperative for having an introspective overview of a research.

Ten (10) key informants were interviewed using questionnaire guides. These people comprise 2 management staff of the resort, 2 game rooms, 2 merry goers, 2 management staff of the hotel, 2 bar/restaurant operators from each company. This is because they are directly involve in running and managing.

3. Data Presentation and Analysis



Figure 1. Water view lounge.

It is made of a hall, office and a kitchen. It is Seafood restaurant and has all forms of seafood.



Figure 2. Ship anchor.

It is the first shipping area in eastern zone of Nigeria; it can also be called promenade riverside sit out.



Figure 3. Shawama point.



Figure 4. Coconut station.

Some tourist who are in love with coconut to eat.



Figure 5. Photo studio.

Here the tourist takes photo for memory.



Figure 6. Cinema.

Is a circle design which consist of a basement and upper floor, the front is made of free row and standing row. It is used for showcasing artist who wish to promote their talents during shows at night. It is interconnected with speaker all through the resort area.



Figure 7. Slave trade museum.



Figure 8. Slave trade museum.

The slave history museum presents the history and pictures of unforgettable experience. Tourists, excursionists and those who go for fun must visit. It is a reflection of how the white men came and captured Nigeria and other African countries as slaves and then taken to their plantation. The curator gives you the near first-hand information of how and where the slave trade started and how it came to an end. This very section arouses the interest of several people to visit.



Figure 9. Side view of car lot count.

It is mainly for parking of vehicles and other tourist who wish to catch fun outside.



Figure 10. Merry go round.

Merry - go- round (carousal) it spins round circular form, it also has annual form, feature form that children can climb or any one of animal made of robot which spin in circles form. The service is mostly offered to children. The facility is used for one hundred naira per ten minute (100) of go-round; children are motivated to ride as they walk into the resort and some adult who wish to catch fun with their children.

3.1. Discussion of Findings

Economic and Social Important of Resort Development

According to Edisua et al 2020, in their report on socio-economic impact of tourism in Cross River State reveals the total number of 40.5% of respondents said (indicated) that social impact is the most significant impact of tourism for them. The social impacts comprises of unity, enhancement of culture, entertainment, language etc.

Followed by economic impacts to be 25.4% which comprised more investments and environmental impacts to be 16.2% comprises of infrastructure, better roads, more trees, more cleanliness, beauty. Finance impact to be 10.62% ranked to be the lowest among the most significant impact of tourism for respondents.

According to Ejah et al [6], the rate of daily patronage of the tourism support services in marina resort indicate that over 40 to 46 persons patronize the resort facilities in the Marina Resort with value of 32% while in most cases the resort records 20 to 40 percent with a value of 16.65 and 15.3% respectively. It was also observed that in some cases the resort also witness a low patronage with values of 8.6% and 6% respectively.

Accordingly, Obong, L. B. et al [9] opines that the development of various rich attractions like Tinapa Business Resort, Obudu Cattle Ranch Resort, and the Marina Tourism Resort has not only boosted the image of Cross River State but play a catalytic role in establishing Cross River as a trade and distributive hub in West Africa. Hence, the development provides unique tourism experience that forms the growth of hospitality and tourism sector in Nigeria.

The studies also support the view and opinion of Obong, L. B. et al, Ejah et al and Edisua et al [6, 7, 9], in their socio-economic impact of tourism in Cross River State. Having

investigated all the sections in Marina Resort and their contributions to hospitality and tourism development, the findings reveal that the vendors have the potential to contribute to the growth and development of the hospitality and tourism industry, since it is economically beneficial, socially accepted and environmentally compatible. The various services offered in the Marina Resort and their implication to tourism development.

Henceforth, the development of Marina Resort has been widely seen as an opportunity to provide the antidote for under development, job creation and diversifying the economic growth of the state in a recession.

Tourism impact on a local community has been a major concern to researchers and scholars in the field of tourism study.

Unique relics found in the resort can support adventure tourism. The rusted rough and rugged nature of old Calabar where the study is based or limited to, can push or pull the adventurer that wishes to explore such an untamed site.

Interview with Mr. Otu Ekon an open bar manager unfolded that the section offered the following services; shawarma, drinks (alcoholic and non alcoholic) and continental dishes. He revealed that patronage is high during weekends, he list some of the chicken with sausage ₦1500 and without sausage ₦1300 and beef ₦1000, to mention but the few. Here the sections have 7 staff.

Another interview with Bright Effiok (Vendor) in game nation, gave a brief analysis of the services game nation (section) offer to the tourists who wish to un-wined and engage in any game during their stay in the resort, she said some games are played for a particular token and others are played as a result of drinks a customer or guest pay for.

Games like scrabble, chess, monopol and craft are being played as you pay/buy drinks while in the game nation, while snooker, table tennis, table soccer and soccer are played with ₦200 each, with the exception of snooker which is ₦500. Here the section has three (3) staff that run shifts.

According to Mr. King, Amaeze, the sales representative of the De-sport, offers food and beverage services as well as outdoor catering. According to him, sales and patronage is high during weekends. According to Rachael, Kite Cyber Studio manager who explained how tourists take photos while in the resort as well as their local residents who wish to come for sight-seeing. According to her, a copy of a soft photograph is at the rate of 500 while that of a hand copy is for ₦800. Patronage is always high by weekends.

3.2. Challenges Faced by Marina Resort

According to Mr. Amaeze (vendor) sales representative speak bitterly on some of the constraints faced by tourism support services during COVID-19 pandemic highlighted that there was low patronage followed by the order given by the Governor that every economic and social activities should be close on or before 10 pm had a lot of effect. He cites an instance of how he was harassed by the security officer in the restriction of movement following the imposed curfew.

He further mentioned that customers complained about

hiking the price of drinks, he accepted that drinks prices are high because the supplier of those drinks is from Enugu due to bad road network most time, whenever the truck fall down any damages will be incurred on the left over drinks which make them to buy at high rate as well. As a result of the increase in price the customers instead of paying for two-three bottles there rather go for one or even pair one bottle. Satisfaction represents overall subjective post-consumption evaluation based on consumer experiences [10].

3.3. Management Structure That Support Resort Development

Cross River State, in a bid to diversify her economy facilitated the rapid development and rehabilitation of the existing tourism potentials such as the museum, botanical garden, Kwa Falls, Tinapa Business Resort among others. Furthermore, the development of these great potentials have given rise to the rehabilitation of Aqua Vista resort, and the development of Orange resort which today receive various visitors all over the world. Apart from the services that these laudable resorts offer to visitors, they also serve as a source of income and revenue generation to both the locals and the government. Besides, they have also encouraged the emergence of other auxiliary tourism industries in the area such as restaurant, mobile phone operators' enterprises which provide essential services to tourists. Today, the Marina resort offers great leisure opportunities to numerous fun seekers in Calabar, it also generates income to residents in the area and revenue to the government. However, despite the tremendous impact to the country, the establishment of the Marina resort, has significantly suffered from seasonality in terms of patronage and income generation Ejah et al (2016).

4. Conclusion

In recent times, resorts have become one of engine that attract visitors to any given tourism destination. This scenario has been witnessed over time in Cross River State in general and Calabar in particular. Besides, the development of the marina resorts in Calabar. Cross River State has encouraged the emergence of most tourism support services which provided not only income to residents but also revenue to the government through taxation. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the agencies involved in tourism management and development to ensure that the resort potentials are effectively developed and utilized in the state.

Unplanned tourism is of dubious value to a nation in search of quick and substantial economic gains. The tourism industry as a whole is saturated with leakages of tourism revenue.' This may be the result of the pervasive tendency to forego long-term gains in search of short term profit.' Carefully planned, equity-oriented tourism development may aid governments in building needed infrastructure (roads, sanitation and communications), help with balance of payments, and generate foreign exchange which could be used to develop a nation's social infrastructure (i.e., improved/ health and education).

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