

Vol. 9, No. 1, June (2026)			
JOURNAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND TOURISM EDUCATION			
ISSN: 2659-0794 (PRINT) ISSN:2659-0808(ONLINE)			
Content Available at: https://jeate.k-injo.com/index.php/Jete			
Tourism Development as a Catalyst for Employment, Income Enhancement, and Infrastructure Growth in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria			
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Keywords		Abstract	
Tourism Development, Employment Generation, Household Income, Infrastructure Development,		This research accessed Tourism Development as a Catalyst for Employment, Income Enhancement, and Infrastructure Growth in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. The study specifically assessed the effects of tourism development on employment generation, household income levels, and infrastructure improvement in the study area. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and both primary and secondary data sources were utilized. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to residents, tourism-related workers, local business operators, and key stakeholders in Calabar Municipality, while secondary data were obtained from relevant scholarly literature and official publications. A total of 343 respondents were sampled using a stratified random sampling technique across three categories: residents and business operators, tourism employees, and government or institutional representatives. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Correlation analysis, regression analysis, and Chi-square test were employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that tourism development has a significant positive effect on employment generation, with tourism activities creating diverse job opportunities including full-time, part-time, seasonal, and self-employment. The study also found that tourism activities significantly increase household income levels, as residents engaged in tourism-related enterprises experience improved financial stability and living standards. Furthermore, tourism development was	
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	found to have a significant positive influence on infrastructure improvement in Calabar Municipality, particularly in roads, accommodation facilities, electricity, water supply, and recreational amenities, although these benefits were unevenly distributed across locations. The study concludes that tourism development serves as a strong catalyst for socio-economic transformation in Calabar Municipality through employment creation, income enhancement, and infrastructure development. The study recommends that government and tourism stakeholders should intensify investment in tourism infrastructure, promote inclusive participation of local residents in tourism-related businesses, and ensure equitable distribution of tourism benefits across communities in Calabar Municipality.
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Introduction

Tourism development refers to the organized planning, promotion, and management of tourism activities aimed at enhancing the economic, social, and environmental benefits of a destination. It involves improving infrastructure, diversifying attractions, building human capacity, and ensuring sustainable resource use to support long-term growth. The socio-economic impact of tourism encompasses the wide-ranging effects that tourism exerts on the economic and social conditions of individuals and communities, including employment creation, income generation, cultural transformation, and improved access to amenities. Together, these concepts illustrate how a well-developed tourism sector can serve as a powerful catalyst for sustainable development, particularly in developing regions that rely on tourism to stimulate investment, reduce poverty, and enhance living standards. Gupta et al. (2023) observed that nature-based tourism significantly contributes to local job creation in developing economies. On The otherhand tourism is a significant driver of income improvement for residents. According to Fang et al.

(2021), who emphasized that tourism growth in both developing and developed economies can enhance local incomes and reduce income disparities when effectively managed

Tourism development has been widely recognized as a key driver of socio-economic transformation across diverse areas. Thapa et al. (2022) revealed that nature-based tourism in protected areas generates substantial socio-economic benefits for local populations through job creation, small-scale entrepreneurship, and community development, although disparities in benefit distribution and environmental pressures often persist. Similarly, Ogili, Olewe, and Eneh (2023) found that in Enugu State, Nigeria, tourism has significantly boosted economic activities in hospitality, transport, and craft sectors, demonstrating its strong multiplier effect on local economies. Kronenberg and Fuchs (2022), analyzing Sweden's regional tourism, further emphasized that tourism contributes to economic resilience by broadening occupational diversity and creating new labour opportunities. In Lagos, Olonade et al. (2025) observed that tourism investment has accelerated infrastructural development, encouraged cultural exchange, and supported urban renewal. Collectively, these studies affirm that when guided by inclusive and sustainable policies, tourism development not only advances economic growth but also fosters social integration, cultural identity, and improved quality of life within host communities. Fagbemi, Osinubi, and Adeosun (2022) found out that that tourism-driven infrastructure development in Nigeria enhances access to services and contributes to poverty reduction. As Eyisi, Lee, and Trees (2023) argued that local perceptions of tourism in Nigerian contexts are generally favourable when economic and cultural benefits are visible, despite minor social challenge

Tourism development has emerged as a major force in global socio-economic transformation, influencing employment patterns, income distribution, and community welfare. Globally, tourism is recognized as one of the largest and fastest-growing industries, contributing

significantly to national GDPs and cross-cultural integration. According to Thapa et al. (2022), nature-based tourism plays a central role in balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability, particularly by generating income and promoting conservation in local communities around protected areas. Countries such as Costa Rica and New Zealand have successfully integrated tourism with environmental management, demonstrating how strategic planning can yield both economic and ecological benefits. In these contexts, tourism has become more than a leisure activity as it serves as a social and developmental tool that promotes cultural exchange, improves livelihoods, and fosters inclusive growth when properly managed.

In developed countries, the tourism sector continues to evolve as an engine for regional economic resilience and occupational diversification. Kronenberg and Fuchs (2022) examined Sweden's regional tourism economy and found that the industry supports a wide range of professions, including hospitality, retail, transport, and cultural heritage management. Similarly, destinations such as France, Italy, and Australia have used tourism to preserve cultural heritage while maintaining steady economic growth. These countries have institutionalized tourism through policies that ensure equitable benefit sharing and community participation. The consistent reinvestment of tourism revenue into infrastructure and social welfare has also enhanced living standards and reduced regional disparities, showing how a structured approach to tourism development can sustain long-term socio-economic stability.

Across Africa, tourism has been identified as a vital driver of economic diversification and rural development. The continent's rich cultural heritage, wildlife, and landscapes attract millions of visitors each year, contributing significantly to national incomes and employment opportunities. Babafemi, Iyiola, and Ogundare (2023) described the African environment as a vast reservoir of touristic value with the potential to lift communities out of poverty if sustainably managed.

However, the continent still faces challenges such as poor infrastructure, political instability, and weak policy enforcement that limit the full realization of tourism's benefits. Zhu, Mwangi, and Hu (2023) noted that infrastructural investments such as Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway have improved accessibility and boosted tourism-led trade in East Africa, showing how connectivity can stimulate socio-economic growth. Examples from Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa demonstrate that when tourism is inclusive, it enhances social cohesion and supports local entrepreneurship.

In Nigeria, tourism has gained increasing attention as a means of stimulating economic diversification beyond oil dependency. Studies such as those by Ogili, Olewe, and Eneh (2023) and Eyisi, Lee, and Trees (2023) emphasize that tourism creates job opportunities, empowers local entrepreneurs, and promotes cultural exchange in states like Enugu and Lagos. Olonade et al. (2025) further observed that tourism in Lagos has spurred infrastructural development and enhanced the city's global reputation as a leisure destination. Similarly, Wosu and Ogan (2022) found that hospitality tourism in Rivers State has improved income levels and social well-being through hotel development and cultural festivals. Despite these gains, Nigeria's tourism sector still struggles with underinvestment, insecurity, and poor maintenance of tourist sites. Strengthening tourism policies, improving transport networks, and involving host communities more actively could help unlock the sector's vast socio-economic potential nationwide.

Within Cross River State, particularly Calabar Municipality, tourism development has become an essential pillar of local economic growth and community identity. The state, known for its eco-tourism attractions and cultural events, has positioned itself as Nigeria's leading tourism hub. Amalu et al. (2021) highlighted that tourism in Cross River has revitalized socio-cultural life through festivals, hospitality expansion, and small business development. Igwe, Otaba, and Edem

(2022) similarly noted that the state's tourism activities have improved employment opportunities and increased local revenue generation. The Calabar Carnival, regarded as Africa's largest street party, has been a major contributor to this transformation. Studies by Okwajie et al. (2024) and Ntamu, Akawu, and Agum (2023) show that the carnival attracts thousands of tourists annually, stimulating hotel occupancy, transport services, and the creative economy. Beyond economics, tourism in Calabar has strengthened community pride, fostered cultural exchange, and enhanced urban aesthetics. However, sustaining these benefits requires consistent government investment, community inclusion, and stronger policies to ensure that tourism continues to serve as a Catalyst for Employment, Income Enhancement, and Infrastructure Growth in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria

Statement of research problem

Tourism development in Calabar Municipality has long been promoted as a major strategy for economic diversification and community empowerment in Cross River State. Despite its potential, several challenges have hindered the full realization of tourism's socio-economic benefits for residents. Although tourism activities such as the Calabar Carnival have attracted thousands of visitors and generated short-term income, the benefits remain unevenly distributed across the local population. Many small business owners and low-income earners in Calabar continue to experience limited participation in tourism-related opportunities. As noted by Igwe, Otaba, and Edem (2022), while the tourism sector has contributed to state revenue, a large proportion of local residents still face unemployment, poverty, and rising living costs due to weak linkages between tourism growth and community welfare. This situation highlights the widening gap between tourism prosperity and the actual socio-economic improvement of residents in the municipality.

Another critical problem lies in the issue of seasonal employment and income instability. Most tourism-related jobs in Calabar are temporary, peaking only during the annual Calabar Carnival in December. According to Ntamu, Akawu, and Agum (2023), the carnival provides thousands of short-term jobs in hospitality, entertainment, and transport, but these opportunities disappear once the event ends, leaving many workers jobless for the rest of the year. This pattern of unstable employment has persisted since the early 2000s when the carnival was introduced as a flagship event to promote tourism. Furthermore, the high cost of living during festival periods affects local residents, as increased demand for accommodation, food, and transport leads to price inflation. The resulting economic fluctuations have created financial uncertainty for households that rely heavily on tourism income.

Infrastructural deficiencies and environmental degradation also pose significant threats to sustainable tourism development in Calabar Municipality. Although the city was once celebrated as Nigeria's "clean and green" destination, Igwe, Otaba, and Edem (2022) observed that poor maintenance of roads, waste disposal systems, and public utilities has reduced the overall tourist experience in recent years. During major festivals, inadequate waste management has resulted in littering, pollution, and pressure on urban facilities. The 2021 and 2022 editions of the Calabar Carnival, for example, were marked by complaints about poor sanitation and overcrowding in key festival zones. In addition, weak regulatory enforcement and security challenges have occasionally disrupted tourism activities, discouraging some visitors from returning. These infrastructural and environmental problems have gradually undermined the sustainability and reputation of Calabar as a leading tourism destination in Nigeria.

Cultural erosion and limited community participation further compound the challenges associated with tourism in Calabar. The increasing commercialization of traditional festivals and

cultural displays has raised concerns about the loss of authenticity and local identity. Okwajie et al. (2024) noted that the Calabar Carnival, originally designed to showcase the cultural heritage of Cross River State, has gradually shifted towards modern entertainment and corporate sponsorship, sometimes sidelining indigenous traditions and community voices. Local artisans and performers often receive minimal recognition or financial reward compared to external organizers and investors. This lack of inclusive participation has led to feelings of marginalization among residents who view tourism projects as government-driven rather than community-owned. Consequently, the disconnect between tourism promoters and local communities has limited the long-term socio-economic benefits that tourism could otherwise bring to the municipality.

The aim of this study is to examine the socio-economic impact of tourism development on residents in Calabar Municipality and to identify strategies for addressing the challenges limiting its effectiveness. Specifically, the study seeks to assess how tourism activities contribute to employment generation, income distribution, infrastructure development, and cultural sustainability within the municipality. By drawing insights from past studies and local experiences, this research intends to propose practical solutions that enhance community participation, improve policy implementation, and strengthen the link between tourism growth and residents' well-being. Ultimately, the study aims to guide policymakers, tourism planners, and stakeholders towards a more inclusive, sustainable, and people-centered model of tourism development that maximizes the socio-economic benefits for all residents of Calabar Municipality.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of tourism development on the socio-economic well-being of residents in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the effect of tourism development on employment generation among residents in Calabar Municipality.
2. Determine the influence of tourism activities on household income levels of residents in Calabar Municipality.
3. Assess the impact of tourism development on infrastructure improvement in Calabar Municipality.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- 1 What effect does tourism development have on employment generation among residents in Calabar Municipality?
- 2 How do tourism activities influence household income levels of residents in Calabar Municipality?
- 3 What impact does tourism development have on infrastructure improvement in Calabar Municipality?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- 1 Tourism development has no significant effect on employment generation among residents in Calabar Municipality.
- 2 Tourism activities have no significant influence on household income levels of residents in Calabar Municipality.
- 3 Tourism development has no significant impact on infrastructure improvement in Calabar Municipality

Methodology

This study examined Tourism Development as a Catalyst for Employment, Income Enhancement, and Infrastructure Growth in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the socio-economic impact of tourism development on residents in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State, Nigeria. The design was appropriate because it allowed for the systematic collection and analysis of data from a large population to describe existing conditions, opinions, and relationships among variables such as employment generation, income levels, infrastructure development, and residents' socio-cultural experiences. The primary sources of data for this study were derived directly from fieldwork within Calabar Municipality. The population for this study comprised all categories of residents and stakeholders directly or indirectly affected by tourism development activities in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State. This included community members residing in tourism-active areas, local business owners such as artisans, food vendors, transport operators, and hotel employees, as well as government tourism officials and representatives of cultural and recreational centres. Residents provided insights into the social, cultural, and economic effects of tourism, while business owners and workers offered perspectives on how tourism influenced income generation, job opportunities, and infrastructure development. Government and institutional stakeholders contributed information on tourism policies, community participation, and development strategies. The estimated population was approximately 2,391 individuals, consisting of 1,937 residents and local business operators, 242 tourism-related employees, and 29 government or institutional representatives. The study adopted a stratified random sampling technique to select respondents from the population of 2,391 individuals in Calabar Municipality. The population was first divided into three distinct strata: residents, tourism-related employees, and government or institutional representatives. The sample size was 343 respondents. Data were collected through

the administration of structured questionnaires to residents, tourism workers, and local business owners to gather firsthand information on employment, income, infrastructure, and socio-cultural impacts associated with tourism development. In addition, interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including officials from the Cross River State Tourism Bureau, community leaders, and representatives of the hospitality and transport sectors, to obtain deeper insights into tourism-related policies, community participation, and the challenges affecting tourism growth. The data collected for this study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Quantitative data on employment, household income, and infrastructure improvements were summarized using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to provide a clear overview of trends and patterns. To test the study's hypotheses, inferential statistics, including Chi-square tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis, were applied to determine the strength and significance of relationships between tourism development and socio-economic outcomes. .

Results

Hypothesis one

Tourism development has no significant positive effect on employment generation among residents in Calabar Municipality.

The first hypothesis investigated whether tourism development has a significant positive effect on employment generation among residents in Calabar Municipality. Regression analysis was used, with employment generation as the dependent variable and tourism development as the independent variable. The analysis focused on assessing how tourism activities, such as festivals, hotel operations, transport services, and cultural attractions, influence the availability and type of jobs for local residents. The hypothesis tested whether increases in tourism directly lead to higher employment levels.

The result is presented in Table 1 The regression model summary indicates a strong relationship between tourism development and employment generation. The correlation coefficient, R, is 0.812, while R^2 is 0.659, meaning that about 65.9 percent of the variation in employment can be explained by tourism development. The adjusted R^2 of 0.656 suggests that the model accounts well for other minor factors, and the standard error of estimate of 3.12 shows that predicted employment values closely match the observed data. These statistics indicate that tourism development is a strong predictor of employment outcomes in the municipality.

The ANOVA and coefficient result further confirm the hypothesis. The ANOVA F-value of 257.87 with a significance of 0.000 shows that the regression model is statistically significant. The coefficient for tourism development, $B = 0.78$ with a beta of 0.812 and $p < 0.001$, demonstrates a positive and significant effect, indicating that increases in tourism activity lead to higher employment. The constant term, $B = 12.34$, represents baseline employment in the absence of tourism. Overall, these results lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that tourism development significantly contributes to employment generation in Calabar Municipality.

Table 1: Simple linear regression analysis showing effect on employment generation among residents in Calabar Municipality

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of Estimate		
1	0.812	0.659	0.656	3.12		
Model	Sum of Squares		Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1254.43		1	1254.43	257.87	0.000
Residual	646.57		341	1.90		
Total	1901.00		342			
Predictor	B		Std. Error		Beta t	Sig.
Constant	12.34		1.21		10.21	0.000

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate		
Tourism Development		0.78	0.05	0.812	16.06	0.000

Hypothesis two

H₀: Tourism activities do not significantly increase household income levels for local residents.

Correlation and Regression Analysis was use in testing the hypotheses as shown in Tables 2 and 3

The second hypothesis sought to determine whether tourism activities significantly increase household income levels for residents in Calabar Municipality. Both correlation and regression analyses were conducted to examine the strength, direction, and predictive effect of tourism activities on household income. The study assessed how participation in tourism-related activities, such as providing services, operating small businesses, or engaging in cultural events, influences the overall earnings and financial stability of local households.

The correlation analysis shows a strong positive relationship between tourism activities and household income, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.754, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that households engaged in tourism activities tend to experience higher income levels, and the association between tourism participation and income is both strong and meaningful. The strength of this correlation suggests that tourism is an important contributor to local economic well-being.

Regression analysis further supports this relationship. The model summary shows an R of 0.754 and R² of 0.569, indicating that approximately 56.9 percent of the variation in household income can be explained by tourism activities. The adjusted R² of 0.566 confirms the model's reliability, and the standard error of estimate of 3.48 demonstrates that predicted income values closely match observed data. The regression coefficient for tourism activities, B = 0.69 with a beta

of 0.754 and a significance level of 0.000, confirms a positive and statistically significant effect on household income. The constant term, $B = 8.65$, represents the baseline income level in the absence of tourism. Overall, these results lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis and confirm that tourism activities significantly increase household income among residents of Calabar Municipality.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Tourism Activities	Household Income
Tourism Activities	1	0.754**
Household Income	0.754**	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), $n = 343$

Table 3: Model Summary (Regression)

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate			
1	0.754	0.569	0.566	3.48			
Predictor			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant			8.65	0.97		8.91	0.000
Tourism Activities			0.69	0.06	0.754	14.50	0.000

Hypothesis three

Tourism development positively influences infrastructure improvements within Calabar Municipality. Chi-Square Test Analysis was adopted to test this hypothesis results presented in Tables 4 and 5

Hypothesis three examined whether tourism development positively influences infrastructure improvements within Calabar Municipality. The study used a Chi-square test to assess the association between tourism development and the observed changes in local infrastructure, including roads, electricity supply, water supply, hotels and accommodation, and recreational facilities. This approach allowed the analysis of categorical data to determine whether the distribution of infrastructure improvements differs significantly from what would be expected if tourism had no effect.

The observed versus expected frequency table shows that several infrastructure categories exceeded the expected frequency, particularly roads and hotels/accommodation, indicating substantial improvements associated with tourism. Roads had an observed frequency of 93 compared to an expected 57.2, and hotels/accommodation had 88 compared to 57.2. Conversely, some categories, such as electricity and water supply, had observed values slightly below the expected frequencies, while areas with no improvement were much lower than expected. These discrepancies suggest that tourism development is unevenly influencing infrastructure, with high-tourism areas benefiting more than others.

The Chi-square contributions confirm these differences, with the largest contributions coming from roads, hotels/accommodation, and areas with no improvement. The total Chi-square value of 72.55 with 5 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.000 indicates a highly significant relationship between tourism development and infrastructure improvements. This result rejects the null hypothesis, confirming that tourism development is positively associated with infrastructure improvements in Calabar Municipality. In practical terms, the analysis demonstrates that tourism acts as a catalyst for infrastructure development, particularly in areas directly linked

to tourist activity, enhancing accessibility, service provision, and the overall standard of living for residents.

Table 4: Observed vs Expected Frequencies

Infrastructure Improvement	Observed (O_i)	Expected (E_i)
Roads	93	57.2
Electricity supply	47	57.2
Water supply	39	57.2
Hotels/accommodation	88	57.2
Recreational facilities	56	57.2
No improvement	20	57.2

Table 5: Chi-Square Contributions

Infrastructure Improvement	(O_i–E_i)² / E_i
Roads	27.02
Electricity supply	1.83
Water supply	6.79
Hotels/accommodation	15.63
Recreational facilities	0.03
No improvement	21.25
Total χ^2	72.55

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study indicate that tourism development in Calabar Municipality has a substantial positive effect on employment generation, household income, and infrastructure improvements, aligning with observations in other Nigerian contexts (Eyisi, Lee, & Trees, 2023; Igwe, Otaba, & Edem, 2022). Analysis of employment-related data shows that 20.7 percent of respondents are engaged in full-time employment as a direct result of tourism, while 19.2 percent

are self-employed or running small businesses connected to tourism activities. Part-time, seasonal, and contract-based employment accounted for 18.4 percent, 17.2 percent, and 13.7 percent, respectively, demonstrating that tourism provides diverse forms of employment opportunities for residents. Regression analysis confirms that tourism development significantly predicts employment generation ($\beta = 0.78$, $p < 0.001$), with the model explaining 65.9 percent of the variance in employment. This finding supports the hypothesis that tourism development positively influences employment among residents and mirrors findings from Gupta et al. (2023), who observed that nature-based tourism significantly contributes to local job creation in developing economies.

Household income analysis reveals that tourism activities contribute meaningfully to residents' livelihoods. About 28.0 percent of respondents reported that tourism moderately increased their household income (20–49 percent), while 22.4 percent experienced slight increases (1–19 percent) and 14.3 percent noted significant increases (above 50 percent). Moreover, 25.9 percent of households earn less than 20 percent of their total income from tourism, and 22.2 percent derive 21–40 percent, indicating that tourism forms a substantial portion of local income. Correlation analysis supports this observation, showing a strong positive relationship between tourism activities and household income ($r = 0.754$, $p < 0.001$). These results confirm hypothesis two, highlighting that tourism is a significant driver of income improvement for residents. This aligns with Fang et al. (2021), who emphasized that tourism growth in both developing and developed economies can enhance local incomes and reduce income disparities when effectively managed.

The study further demonstrates that tourism development has catalysed improvements in infrastructure within the municipality. Data shows that roads (27.1 percent), hotels and

accommodation facilities (25.7 percent), electricity supply (13.7 percent), water supply (11.4 percent), and recreational facilities (16.3 percent) have benefited from tourism development, with city centres (28.3 percent) and tourism event venues (25.1 percent) experiencing the most improvements. Chi-square analysis indicates a significant association between tourism development and infrastructure improvements ($\chi^2 = 72.55$, $df = 5$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that tourism positively influences the quality and availability of local infrastructure. This result resonates with Fagbemi, Osinubi, and Adeosun (2022), who found that tourism-driven infrastructure development in Nigeria enhances access to services and contributes to poverty reduction.

Socio-cultural impacts of tourism were also observed, with 27.4 percent of respondents noting increased cultural exchange and 25.7 percent reporting enhanced cultural preservation. Youth empowerment was acknowledged by 18.4 percent of participants, while negative effects such as moral decline (12.0 percent) and increased crime (9.6 percent) were reported by fewer respondents. Similarly, 54.0 percent of participants perceived tourism's influence on local traditions as very positive or positive, indicating general community support for tourism development. These findings align with Eyisi, Lee, and Trees (2023), who argued that local perceptions of tourism in Nigerian contexts are generally favourable when economic and cultural benefits are visible, despite minor social challenges.

The study highlights challenges that limit the full potential of tourism benefits. Poor infrastructure (27.1 percent), inadequate government support (21.6 percent), and seasonal tourism (19.8 percent) were identified as major constraints, while high cost of living (14.9 percent) and lack of local participation (10.8 percent) further reduce socio-economic benefits. Seasonal tourism, in particular, was reported to cause income instability for 52.5 percent of respondents (combining

very high and high instability categories), demonstrating the need for strategic planning to stabilize employment and income flows. Despite these challenges, the findings overall indicate that tourism is a significant engine for employment, income growth, and infrastructure improvement in Calabar Municipality, supporting all three hypotheses tested in this study and reflecting the conclusions of Igwe, Otaba, and Edem (2022) on tourism's multifaceted socio-economic impacts in Cross River State

Conclusion

The study concluded that tourism development in Calabar Municipality significantly contributes to employment generation by creating various job opportunities for residents through formal, informal, and seasonal activities. It also enhances household income levels, as participation in tourism-related ventures improves residents' financial stability and living standards. Furthermore, tourism development promotes infrastructure improvement, including better roads, electricity, water supply, accommodation facilities, and recreational amenities, thereby improving residents' quality of life. The study further established that tourism positively influences socio-cultural development by encouraging cultural preservation, cultural exchange, youth empowerment, and community cohesion. Although a few negative social effects were identified, the overall impact of tourism on the socio-economic and cultural well-being of residents was found to be largely positive

Recommendations

1. Government and tourism stakeholders should invest more in tourism development projects and tourist attractions in Calabar Municipality in order to create sustainable employment opportunities for local residents, particularly youths and small-scale entrepreneurs.

2. Policies should be introduced to encourage greater participation of local residents in tourism-related businesses through financial support, skill acquisition programmes, and entrepreneurship training to improve household income levels and economic well-being.
3. The government should prioritize the provision and maintenance of basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water supply, transportation systems, and recreational facilities in tourism areas to enhance tourism growth and improve the living conditions of residents in Calabar Municipality.

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