

Patronage Pattern of Idanre Hills as Eco-Tourism Centre

Adigun, Folasade Oyenike Abolade, Olajoke Adegboye, Ibukunoluwa Daniel

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examines the development and management of Idanre hills tourist centre in Ondo state. It also assesses the existing tourism potentials and infrastructural facilities in the tourist centre, trend of patronage and the tourist' level of satisfaction with tourism attractions, facilities and services in the centre; and impacts of the centre on the host community. Forty-six questionnaires were administered on the tourists who were randomly selected in the tourist centre. To examine the impact of the centre on the host community, systematic sampling technique was used to select one hundred and thirty (130) residents. Three indices were developed to measure the perception of respondents on various aspect of the investigation. These include; 'Infrastructural Facilities Index' (IFI), 'Potential Level Index' (PLI), and 'Tourism Effect Index' (TEI). Regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between year and number of patrons. Level of 'security' was perceived to be satisfactory in the area (IFI=4.22). The 'hills' is a major potential in the area (PLI=4.85). The centre has significant effect on 'employment' in the area (TEI=4.26). The study identifies a significant, positive linear relationship between year and number of patrons in Idanre hill tourist centre ($r = .864$, $P \text{ value} = 0.001$), which indicates an increase in the level of patronage over the period used (2014-2050). The study revealed that the centre has socio-economic impact on the area in terms of income generation, job creation, and infrastructural development. Though, there are challenges facing tourism in the area, the study suggests provision of basic social amenities to enhance development in the area, government-private partnership, and community involvement to give a sense of belonging in bringing development to the area.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Patronage, Impact of Tourism, Tourism Development, Satisfaction, Idanre Hills.

1. Introduction and Background to the Study

Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal, business or professional purpose (UNWTO, 2008). Hunziker and Krapf (1942), defined tourism "as the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in as much as the stay does not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with earning activity". This definition was subsequently adopted by the International Association of Scientific Experts on Tourism, AIAEST (Bell-Gam, 2011).

According to UNWTO (1994) there are three forms of tourism. These include domestic, inbound and outbound tourism. In domestic tourism people travel outside their normal place of abode to other areas within the country. For instance, a family visiting relations in another part of the country. The inbound tourism involves non-residents traveling within the given country or people entering the country in question from their home country. Example of inbound tourism is the best described like teams from different countries travelling to a different country for international event like Olympic games. Outbound tourism involves residents traveling within another country. This is when people travel to a country other than that in which they live to visit other international countries for leisure or business. For instance: a family from Belgium going on holiday to Austria (Zaei and Zaei, 2013). These were further combined to form various categories of tourism (UNWTO, 1994). The first is internal tourism comprising of domestic and inbound tourism. The second category encompasses the domestic and outbound tourism while the last category consists of inbound and outbound tourism. Considering features that forms attraction for tourist, Ajala (2007) listed various treasures of tourism. The first class consist of natural treasures. This include geological or topographic features of particular interest, rare plants, animals water bodies (ocean, seas, lakes and waterfalls) and ecological features. These are worthy of preservation and areas of special scenic appeals. The second class contains the man-made treasures such as prehistoric sites (camp, artworks etc), ancient monuments (precious stones, monoliths, historical buildings, and memorials), and features of industrial archaeological interest. The third are allusive treasures, including those places that possess historic, biographical, artistic and literary, culture, tradition and lifestyles of the people.

The treasures undergo cycles of development. These cycle developed was recognised by Butler (1980) and he developed a model to explain the recognizable cycle in the evolution of tourist areas. He used basic 'S' shaped curve to illustrate their waning and waning popularity. The model is named Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC). The model suggested that tourism areas (destinations) pass through six stages in terms of tourism development. These stages are exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and finally either decline or rejuvenation.

Tourism is one of the largest and dynamically developing sectors of the external economic activities, contributing positively to the social and economic development of the country as a whole (Mirbabayev and

Shagazatova, 2006). It is one of the world's fastest growing industries and is a major source of income for many countries (UNESCO, 2014). Most highly developed western countries, such as Switzerland, Austria, and France have accumulated a big deal of their social and economic welfare on profits from tourism (Mirbabayev and Shagazatova, 2006).

Tourism serve as a catalyst for enhancing many country destination employment opportunities, income and revenue through sales and taxation, foreign exchange, quality of life, national and international cooperation. and infrastructural facilities (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, UNESCAP, 2002; cited in Eja et al., 2012; Odeleye and Oyekanmi, 2013). It also provide opportunity for relaxation and aid physical and mental health of human body. In addition, tourism has much educational value as it gives the tourists the opportunity to have a firsthand knowledge of places visited and facilitate the profitable use of land which may not be useful for cultivation.

Despite the numerous benefits accruable to tourism industry, it has negative implications on the economy, on the natural and built environment, on the local populace of the host community and on the tourists themselves. Tourism may tends to increase tension, hostility and suspicion. It can also affect cultural change leading to overdevelopment, conflict, and artificial reconstruction (Mirbabayev and Shagazatova, 2006). These may prompt congestion, conflict, increased crime, pollution among others.

In developing country like Nigeria, tourism is still in its infancy. This is consequent on the large accumulation of resources which are yet untapped as well as the institutional structure which is yet to be regulated to compete favorably with other fast growing tourism destinations (Munzali, 2011). Major constraints to tourism in Nigeria as highlighted by Odeleye and Oyekanmi (2013) include; poor transport and communication, poor tourist infrastructures, tropical diseases, inconsistent government policies, inadequate capital. Others include lack of an agreed masterplan for development that takes into account social, economical and environmental factors among others (Munzali, 2011; Ogunberu, 2011). This is coupled with insecurity, which has hindered international patronage of tourism and threatens the inflow of tourists. It is against this background that this paper intends to appraise the development and management of Idanre hills of Ondo state. The Idanre hills (Oke-Idanre) is one of the most awesome cultural and natural landscape in Nigeria, containing important bio-physical and landform features. The ecotourism centre has been part of the tentative list of the United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) since 2007, awaiting further accreditation of becoming enlisted in the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage List.

2. Study Area

Idanre hills or Oke-Idanre is situated in Idanre Local Government area of Ondo state about 20 kilometers Southwest of Akure (the state capital). It lies between latitudes 7°00' N to 7°15' N and longitudes 5°00' E to 5°15' E of the equator and Greenwich meridian respectively. Idanre is bounded to the North by Akure and Ifedore Local Government areas, Owo local Government area is the boundary at the East, and to the West by Ondo and Ore-Odigbo Local Government Areas. Edo state is the boundary at the South (Ige et.al., 2011; Akingbade and Okereke, 2009)

Idanre is a district comprising some major towns and several villages. Initially, Idanre Hills or Oke-Idanre and the surrounding areas provided shelter for the entire Idanre people for between 800 and 1000 years. Except for minor internal wars, Idanre people enjoyed a relative peace during their long years of sojourn on the hills. However, on account of the will to enjoy the benefits of modernization, they decided to move once to a new settlement down the hills in the year 1928 (Akinde, 2010).

3. Research Methodology

The data utilized for this research were from primary and secondary sources. Administration of questionnaire was the major means of primary data collection. Two sets of questionnaires were administered on the two major stakeholders in tourism development. These were the tourists and residents of the host community.

In administering the questionnaires, the sample frame for the research was limited to the main town (Odode-Idanre) of Idanre. The study employed both random systematic sampling techniques for this research. In order to obtain information from tourists, the simple random sampling technique was adopted. Forty-six (46) tourists participated in the survey. This was done so that each possible sample of a specific size in the population has equal chance of being chosen. The second set of questionnaire was administered to the residents of the host community. Houses surveyed were selected using systematic random sampling. The first house sampled was selected randomly. Subsequent units of investigation was every fourth building. A household was surveyed on each floor of the selected building. An adult of at least eighteen (18) years is qualified to be sampled. This is based on the assumption that the people in that age category and above have better understanding to the subject under study. Using the above method, one hundred and twenty-eight (128) questionnaires were recovered out of the one hundred and thirty (130) distributed. This is 98.46% recovery rate.

Three indices were developed to measure the perception of respondents on various aspect of the

investigation, using a five point Likert scale of rating. These include; 'Infrastructural Facilities Index' (IFI), 'Potential Level Index' (PLI), and 'Tourism Effect Index' (EI). Linear regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between year and number of patrons. In order to meet the minimum data entry for linear regression, annual patronage data for 2014 was extrapolated by calculating the average of records for 2011, 2012 and 2013, since the record for 2014 is not yet available for release by the Ondo State Tourism Board. The predicted value calculated are the linear functions of the distribution.

4. Results and Discussion

The major findings from study are summarized under the various headings below:

4.1 Trend of Tourist Patronage in the study area

The patronage data of Idanre hills tourist centre obtained from the records of Ondo State Tourism Board between 2005 and 2013 was used to examine the trend of patronage in the tourist centre.

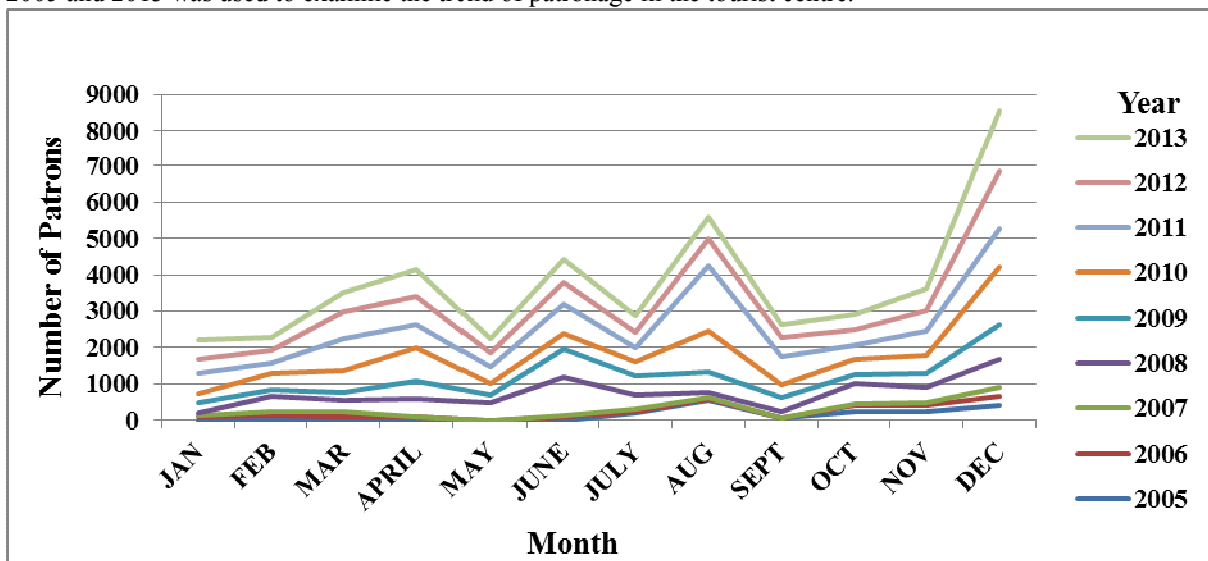


Figure 1: Rate of Tourists' Patronage

Source: Field survey, 2015

It is important to examine the level of patronage in the tourists centre. Information obtained from the records of Ondo State tourism board from 2005 to 2013 showed that the rate of tourism patronage has been increasing in the centre. The record of tourists between January to June for 2005 was not available. Also, the record of some other periods in 2006 and 2007 were not available due to political crises and fuel problem, which prevent the tourists from patronizing the centre. The increasing patronage in the tourist centre can be attributed to the awareness of tourists about the centre by friends and relatives, student trip, excursion and other means. Considering the most patronized months, high level of patronage was recorded in increasing trends; in April, June, August, and December. December is usually the peak of patronage when tourist on holiday have time for leisure. The increasing patronage implies the management of the tourist centre should prepare and provide adequate facilities to cater for the increasing patrons.

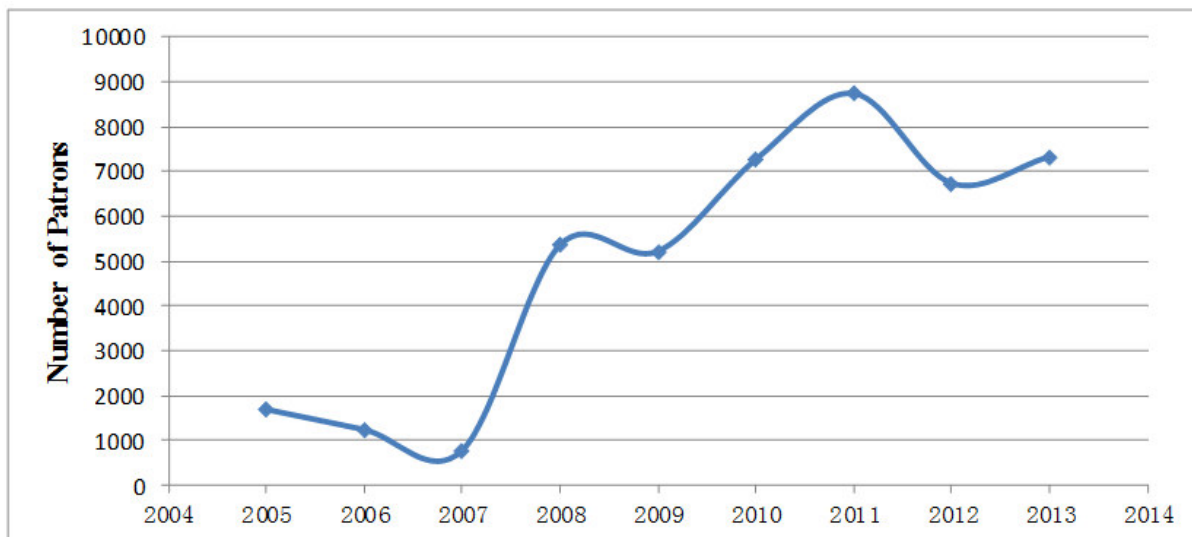


Figure 2: Temporal Variation in Annual Patronage of Tourists in the Centre (2005-2013)

Source: Author's, 2015

The graph in Figure 2 show an upward slope indicating a gradual increase in the patronage of the tourist centre between 2005 and 2013. The analysis of data collected from the Ondo State Tourism Board revealed that there was an increase in the rate of tourists' patronage to Idanre hills tourist centre between 2005 and 2006. It is observed that annual patronage in Idanre hills tourist centre has two peaks; 2008 and 2011 (see figure 2). Patronage increased in 2008 after which it retarded then peaked again in 2011. There was a decline again in 2012, then it gradually rose again in 2013.

The increasing patronage can be attributed to the growing awareness about the tourist centre. It can also be attributed to the effort of the government in organizing an international mountain climbing competition at the tourist centre in 2009. This has become an annual events sponsored by the government.

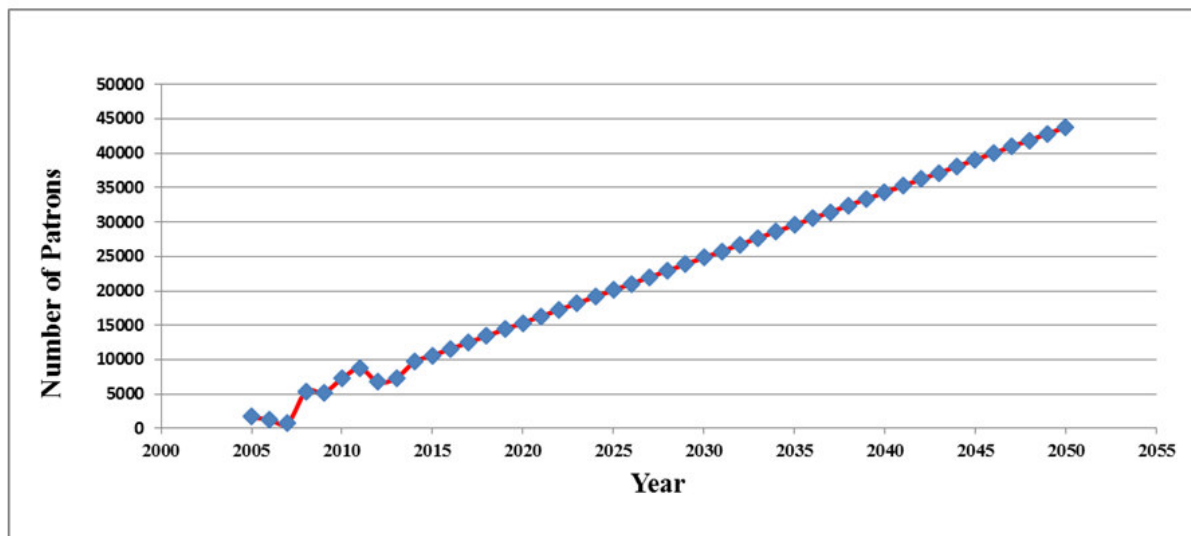


Figure 3: Predicted Future Annual Patronage in the centre (2014-2050)

Source: Author's, 2015

The correlation coefficient is ($r = 0.864$). This shows a positive linear relationship between year and number of patrons. It means as year advanced the number of patrons increases (P value = 0.001). The result showed that there is a significant linear relationship between year and number of patrons in Idanre hill tourist centre. This implies that a statistical model for predicting the future patronage can be formulated with the available data.

A prediction of future patronage was based on the observed trend for a period of ten years (2005-2014). A model was generated from the result of linear regression analysis.

Linear regression equation, $y = a+bx$
 where y =number of patrons

b=constant
 x=year
 $y = -673902.885 + 835.576x$the generated model

The results from the graph (see Figure 3) are predicted patronage values based on trend observed in the tourist centre between 2005 and 2014. Since the 10 years trend shows a consistent increase or decrease with time as indicated by positive r coefficient, the predicted values are the linear functions of the distribution. It is assumed that if the rate of patronage continues as observed between 2005 and 2014, then there is going to be a progressive increase in the patronage pattern of the tourist centre.

4.2 Tourists' Satisfaction with the available Tourism Attractions and Facilities in the centre

Table 1: Existing Potentials and Natural Attractions in the Tourist Centre

S/N	POTENTIALS	RANKING					POTENTIAL LEVEL INDEX					
		5	4	3	2	1	NR (f)	PWV	PLI	\bar{X}	D (X- \bar{X})	D ² (X- \bar{X}) ²
1	Hills	40	5	1	0	0	46	223	4.85	4.42	0.43	0.1849
2	Cultural & historical attraction	35	9	1	1	0	46	216	4.70		0.28	0.0784
3	Swimming	27	13	6	0	0	46	205	4.46		0.04	0.0016
4	Mountaineering	23	21	2	0	0	46	205	4.46		0.04	0.0016
5	Flora and Fauna	18	15	12	0	1	46	187	4.07		-0.35	0.1225
6	Water resources	15	17	12	2	0	46	183	3.98		-0.44	0.1936
Total									26.52			0.5826

Source: Field survey, 2015

PLI = Potential level Index

PWV = Potential rates Weight Value

NR = Number of respondent or summation of frequency

$\sum (PWV/NR) = PLI$

N = Total Number of variables

Mean = $\sum (PWV/N) = 26.52/6 = 4.42$

Variance (S²) = $\sum (X-mean)^2/N = 0.583/6 = 0.0972$

Standard Deviation (S.D) = $\sqrt{\text{variance}} = \sqrt{0.0972} = 0.31$

Coefficient of variation = $\frac{S.D \times 100\%}{\text{mean}} = \frac{0.31 \times 100}{4.42} = 7.01\%$

For a better understanding of the potentials level of the tourist centre, it is imperative to have a discussion of tourist's satisfaction level on different potentials and natural attractions in the study area as summarised in Table 1.

Seven (7) different potentials of the tourist centre were identified in the questionnaire. The deviation which is also used as Potential Level Index (PLI) is also calculated, to be able to establish the degree level of satisfaction. From this calculation, a positive deviation indicates a high level of tourist's satisfaction on tourism potentials and attractions and when the deviation is negative, it depicts a low level of tourist's satisfaction.

Hence, from Table 1, it is observed that the highest PLI was 4.85. The potential with highest PLI (4.85) is hills. This is followed in decreasing order by cultural & historical attraction (4.70), mountaineering (4.46), swimming (4.46), flora and fauna (4.07), and water resources (3.98).

It can however be deduced from the analysis that the tourists are very much satisfied with the hills, cultural & historical attraction, mountaineering and swimming. However, there is need for improvement on flora and fauna, and agriculture because the values are below the mean. The result of the analysis further reveals variance as 0.0972 and standard deviation was 0.31 while co-efficient of variation was 7.01%.

Table 2: Tourists' Level of Satisfaction with Existing Infrastructural Facilities in the centre

S/N	POTENTIALS	RANKING					INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES INDEX					
		5	4	3	2	1	NR (f)	IWV	IFI	\bar{X}	D (X- \bar{X})	D ² (X- \bar{X}) ²
1	Security	18	20	8	0	0	46	194	4.22	3.81	0.41	0.1681
2	Waste disposal	12	21	13	0	0	46	183	3.98		0.17	0.0289
3	Electricity	15	11	18	1	1	46	176	3.83		0.02	0.0004
4	Toilet facilities	18	8	12	8	0	46	174	3.78		-0.03	0.0009
5	Telephone services	11	15	19	1	0	46	174	3.78		-0.03	0.0009
6	Sitting arrangement	16	13	8	9	0	46	174	3.78		-0.03	0.0009
7	Accommodation	17	10	10	9	0	46	173	3.76		-0.05	0.0025
8	Water supply	15	11	14	6	0	46	173	3.76		-0.05	0.0025
9	Outdoor services	12	11	22	1	0	46	172	3.74		-0.07	0.0049
10	Parking space	4	24	9	9	0	46	161	3.50		-0.31	0.0961
	Total								38.13			0.3061

Source: Field survey, 2015

IFI = Infrastructural Facilities Index

IWV = Infrastructural Facilities Weight Value

NR = Number of respondent or summation of frequency

$\sum (IWV/NR) = IFI$

N = Total Number of variables

Mean = $\sum (IWV/N) = 38.13/10 = 3.81$

Variance (S^2) = $\sum (X-\text{mean})^2/N = 0.3061/10 = 0.0306$

Standard Deviation (S.D) = $\sqrt{\text{variance}} = \sqrt{0.0306} = 0.17$

Coefficient of variation = $\frac{S.D \times 100\%}{\text{mean}} = \frac{0.17 \times 100}{3.81} = 4.46\%$

The infrastructural facilities on "security" has the highest IFI 4.22. This implies that the presence of security in the study area is very high as observed by tourists, as there are available guards. It is followed in decreasing order by IFI on "waste disposal" with 3.98, "electricity" with 3.83 (see Table 2). The high IFI indicate those facilities (security, waste disposal, electricity) are sufficient and adequate in the tourist centre. There are waste bins along the stairs leading to the hills.

The IFI on "toilet facilities" with 3.78 were rated 4th with negative deviation of 0.03. The variables with the last six index values are: "telephone services" with 3.78, "sitting arrangement" with 3.78, "accommodation" with 3.76, "water supply" with 3.76, "outdoor services" with 3.74, and "parking space" with 3.50. This implies that toilet facilities, telephone services, sitting arrangement, accommodation, water supply, outdoor services, and parking space are not sufficient in the tourist centre. There is need for more provisions of infrastructure in the area. The problem of toilet facilities has been a major constraint and challenge hindering true appreciation and beauty of natural posture of the site.

4.3 Impacts of the Tourist Centre on the Development of the Host Community

Table 3: Residents' Perceived Impacts of the Tourist Centre on the Host Community.

S/N	EFFECTS	RANKING					EFFECTS INDEX			\bar{X}	D (X - \bar{X})	D ² (X - \bar{X}) ²
		5	4	3	2	1	NR (f)	TWV	TEI			
1	Employment	58	45	23	2	2	128	545	4.26	2.77	1.49	2.2201
2	Deforestation	35	70	20	3	0	128	521	4.07		1.30	1.69
3	Local crafts and arts	36	51	28	9	4	128	490	3.83		1.06	1.1236
4	Festivals	8	39	57	19	5	128	410	3.20		0.43	0.1849
5	Cost of goods & services	0	14	69	35	10	128	343	2.68		-0.09	0.0081
6	Traditional custom	4	16	52	31	25	128	327	2.55		-0.22	0.0484
7	Infrastructure	0	4	26	51	47	128	243	1.90		-0.87	0.7569
8	Crowding & congestion	2	4	16	55	51	128	235	1.84		-0.93	0.8649
9	Increased crime	1	1	18	48	60	128	219	1.71		-1.06	1.1236
10	Increased tax	1	0	17	52	58	128	218	1.70		-1.07	1.1449
	Total								27.74			9.1654

Source: Field survey, 2015

TEI = Tourists Effects Index

TWV = Tourism Effects Weight Value

NR = Number of respondent or summation of frequency

$\sum (TWV/N) = TEI$

N = Total Number of variables

Mean = $\sum (TWV/N) = 27.74/10 = 2.77$

Variance (S²) = $\sum (X - \text{mean})^2 / N = 9.1654/10 = 0.9165$

Standard Deviation (S.D) = $\sqrt{\text{variance}} = \sqrt{0.9165} = 0.9574$

Coefficient of variance = $\frac{S.D}{\text{mean}} \times 100\% = \frac{0.9574}{2.77} \times 100 = 34.56\%$

The effect of tourism was rated in the structured questionnaire and were examined. The effects of tourism was rated into ten (10) classes to calculate Tourism effects index (TEI). The deviation about the mean was calculated. A negative calculated deviation indicates low effect of tourism of the interested variables. When the deviation is positive, it denotes a high effect of tourism on the concerned variables.

The tourism effects on "employment" has the highest attribute index 4.26; this implies that the effect of tourism on the study area is significant as observed by residents. It is followed in decreasing order by tourism effects on "deforestation" with 4.07, "local crafts and arts" with 3.83, "festivals" with 3.20, (see Table 3). This implies that these variables are significant to the host community. Some of the residents of Idanre are working in the tourist centre. Also, the annual Mare festival has an impact on the host community by promoting its culture and tradition.

The tourism effects on "cost of goods & services" with 2.68 were rated 5th with negative of 0.09, "traditional custom" with 2.55, "infrastructure" with 1.90, "crowding & congestion" with 1.84, "increased crime" with 1.71, and "increased tax" with 1.70. These variables are of less significant on the community.

5. Conclusion

This paper has shown that the Idanre hills tourist centre is endowed with rich tourism potentials and that these tourism potentials are not fully developed. Tourism development in the area has many benefits that can aid development and positive outcomes in the community. Based on the findings of this research, it is concluded that tourism is a major tool for economic and infrastructural development if properly planned and therefore, the government should embark on government-private partnership and community involvement to encourage grassroots participation in the tourism industry. The encouragement of tourism promote cultural exchange and enhance international understanding and recognition among diverse peoples of the world. However, consciousness should be taken about the negative impact of tourism. In that case, the government should assist the tourism industry by giving all needed support and international authority should intervene in the development of tourism. Also revenue should be diversified in order to encourage socio-economic development of every locality.

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