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## **Assessing private sector as a panacea for destination development: A case study of the hospitality industry in Calabar, Nigeria**

### **Abstract**

This paper aims to assess private sector as a panacea for destination development in Calabar. Major private sectors that are involved in the development of hospitality industry were used for this study. The checklist and questionnaire were the methods used for data collection in this study. One hypothesis was tested using the multiple regression analysis. The result from the data collected indicates that the private sector have significantly contributed towards destination development in Calabar. The data collected on the socio-economic impact of the private sector on destination development shows that the private sector have significantly impacted socioeconomic development through employment generation, increase in government revenue, good security and it has encouraged the emergence of other tourism support services in the area. However, in spite of the tremendous impact of private sector efforts towards the development of hospitality industry in Calabar, their activities are challenged by various factors such as insecurity, political instability among others in Calabar. Nevertheless, adequate measures must be put in place to address the challenges faced by private sector in a bid to provide essential services to visitors in Calabar.

**Keywords:** *Destination development, Calabar State, Hospitality industry, Private sector.*

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### **ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER**

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## 1. Introduction

The growing demand for recreational activities in most destinations with tourism potentials have necessitated the private sector involvement in tourism development. The presence of tourism potentials and tourism activities in countries such as South Africa, Kenya, and Thailand have seriously encouraged the development of hospitality industry which provides essential services to visitors and other fun-seekers in these locations (Swarbroke, 2006). Hospitality industry in most tourism destinations has significantly encouraged the rate of visitors' inflow and at the same time increased other socio-economic activities especially location with high tourism attractions (Ifegbo, 2005). Tourism development is one of the key elements that have led to the economic growth of countries with great tourism potentials. These laudable tourism potentials have become major catalysts that have encouraged private sector involvement in tourism related activities and creation of opportunities for investment in the tourism sector (Cooper, 2006).

In Nigeria, the numerous landscape and physical attractions such as warm springs, lakes and mountains which cut across the region have encouraged the rapid growth of tourism in most areas in the country. States such as Bauchi, Jos, Lagos among others with great tourism and ecotourism potentials have benefited socio-economically due to private sector partnership in tourism development and the provision of basic services that would provide the needed comfort for visitors (Akama, 1997). The involvement of private sector in the provision of essential services in these destinations have increased the rate of visitors inflow in these regions hence enhancing destination development through the emergence of other auxiliary tourism support services such as restaurants, confectionaries which generate other multiplier effects in these regions with great tourism potentials and activities (Ardaherey, 2011).

In Cross River State, the laudable tourism potentials such as the Tinapa Business Resort, Obudu Ranch Resort, waterfalls and the Carnival Calabar have greatly influenced the involvement of private sector in the development of the hospitality in the state (Lary, 2005). According to Eja (2011), the role of the public and private sector involvement in hospitality industry development is to provide essential services that are needed to guarantee visitors' and other fun-seekers' comfort during their stay in Cross River State. In Calabar the state capital of Cross River State, private sector impact in the hospitality industry development are enormous such that almost all of the tourism support services which are part of the hospitality industry are private sector oriented (Elem, 2004). These tourism support services have influenced visitors' arrival in Calabar thereby encouraging the rapid development of Calabar as one of the famous tourism destinations in West Africa (Eja, and Judith 2015).

However, in spite of the high rate and huge amount of funds committed by both the public and private sectors in tourism development and the increase in the tourism related activities in Calabar, there is still seasonality and rise and fall in the existing hospitality industry in Calabar. Besides this, seasonality has drastically affected the revenue base of the State Government. It is on this note that one would ask if the private sectors are really affecting destination development. What role are they playing in ensuring destination development in Calabar which is the basis of this research to critically assess private sector as a panacea for destination development using their involvement in the hospitality industry development.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 *The Concept of Sustainable Development*

In recent times, tourism has become a major tool that has enhanced huge growth in destination areas all over the world. The rapid development of tourism also constituted environmental, economic and social challenges. Governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are increasingly concerned about the negative impacts of tourism and

its effects on livelihoods. The situation demands more environmental and host friendly tourism activities.

The concept of sustainability has its roots in environmentalism. Economic activities have negatively affected the environment and causing biodiversity depletion, depletion of the ozone layer and also increasing environmental pollution. According to Godfrey (1996), in the late 1980s, the concept of sustainable tourism development achieved virtual global endorsement as the new tourism industry paradigm. Saarinen (2006) affirmed that sustainability is transferred to tourism from the concept of sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development is difficult to define because there are no globally accepted definitions of sustainable development and there are over 70 different definitions of sustainable development. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature Natural came up with the term sustainable development and defined it as the integration of conservation and development to ensure that modifications to the plant do indeed secure the survival and wellbeing of all people. This definition of sustainable development has been criticized by many scholars because it puts more emphasis on environmental morality and ethics. Sharpley (2000) in his analysis, opined that this definition does not consider social and political barriers to development. He further claims that these barriers also pose great challenge to tourism development and stressed that “sustainable development may be conceptualized as a juxtaposition of town schools of thought: development theory and environmental sustainability.” The Brundtland Commission Report of the World Commission on Environment combines both concept and defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. This report emphasizes two major concepts (1987): “(i) the concept of needs and subjective well-being, particularly to the poor to whom priority should be given; and (ii) the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet the present and future needs”.

The Brundtland Commission Report was criticized based on its central, western technocentric development through an economic growth concept (Adams, 1990). This report further created expansion of global economic growth. Moreover, in reality the degree of growth from one country to another and also reject social and cultural livelihood patterns. Jacob (1994) and Barrow (1995) in their analysis of the concept of sustainable development, argue that sustainable development promotes contradictory ideas. At the same time it argues that economic growth is essential but on the other hand blames economic growth for causing environmental degradation. Butler (1992) in a similar manner cited the following assumptions such that in areas that currently experience low standards of living, extremely low incomes, overpopulation and resource scarcity, such mundane concerns as survival perhaps deserves more consideration than they have had to date in the rush to impose the sustainable doctrine by an overly moralistic developed world.

According to Escobar (1995), the fundamental inequality between North and South is not considered in the sustainable development concept. He further stresses that the natural assets in the South are ruined to meet the lavish demands of the North. Butler (1999) and Twining-Ward (1999) criticize the concept of sustainable development for its limited concentration on ecology and economic issues. Over 10 years of the Earth Summit, many policies that were recommended have not or realized little achievement. The UN (2002) comments that, “ten years later, despite initiatives by governments, international organizations, business, civil society groups and individuals to achieve sustainable development, progress towards the goals established at Rio has been slower than anticipated and in some respects conditions are worse than they were ten years ago. However, the following assumptions of the concept of sustainable development are put forward: The sustainable development concept emphasizes

that economic development activities should be harmonized with the natural environment. This concept assumes that only economic activities create negative environmental impacts ignoring the fact that poverty also contributes to negative environmental impacts. Pollution due to poverty emerges in many poor countries from degradation of marginal farmlands leading to erosion of soil and desertification in developing countries, a lack of resources and unequal distribution of income increase the poverty gap. But the sustainable development concept does not provide any answers to these problems. Most of the hospitality industry located tourism in destination attract visitors and other auxiliary tourism support services which in most cases causes environmental degradation ( Eja and Violet,2014).

## ***2.2 Private Sector in Tourism Development***

Tourism has the capacity to improve living standards of host communities through wealth creation, innovation and competition Wale (2002) believes that the private sector and the government have contributory responsibility to tourism development. He further accentuated that, although tourism has been neglected because of non-participation or unsubstantial participation of the private sector. According to Eja and Otu (2011), developing nations have introduced several initiatives and funding to private sector such as easy money transfer, providing of tax incentives to investors, etc in order to encourage private sector towards the development of hospitality industry. This incentives and initiatives would help private sector to build several hospitality industry and other tourism support services. The development of hospitality industry by private sector has significantly encouraged tourism and other fun-seekers into a given destination. The inflow of these visitors is attributed to the facilities that are provided by private sector to ensure visitors comfort (Aniah and Eja, 2010).

In most tourism destination the development of hospitality industry by the private sector was to provide opportunities for the people and also alleviate in such a destination. The first prerequisite for tourism development is the development of social facilities such as good roads, good water system and the provision of electricity which is usually the responsibility of private sector whom it motive is to maximize profit (Okunbawa, 2001). Efficient communication facilities such as telephones and telex system should be available, the development and exploitation of all types of transportation system are provided by private sector to boost destination image and encourage visitors arrivals. In furtherance of these, the provision of quality accommodation is a necessary condition for tourism development. In order for this to succeed, consideration must be made for various types of accommodation facilities with regards to the different cadre of tourists. Therefore, different types of hotels should be available to meet the demands of the tourists – small, medium and high-level hotels with adequate facilities and quality services with considerate prices should be available to tourists. Development (overshoot) composite near the various tourism locations is also capable of enhancing the availability of accommodation facilities for tourists.

Elem (2004) opines that government should provide the necessary infrastructure that creates conducive conditions for private sector involvement in tourism development. The private sector functions as a medium of job creation and wealth generation thereby expanding the local economy of a tourism location through the provision of various goods and services. This premise aptly captures the project Tinapa Vision. Ejom (2004), on his assessment of the Tinapa Buisness Resort project, reiterated that the Tinapa project is the commitment of the Cross River State government to create opportunities for private sector, business and leisure environment for not only her local population but for the world at large. Anani (2004), stating the relevance of tourism sector to the economy of Cross River State, outlined tourism sites such as the Obudu Cattle Ranch, Kwa Falls, Agbokim Waterfalls, Ebom Ox-Bowlake, the Cross River State National Park, Mary Slessor Tomb, and the Project Tinapa which if

operated at full capacity will transform the fortunes of Cross River State. Also, Ejom (2004) further explained that the Tinapa Complex “meant to provide international standard wholesale emporiums, integrated shopping complex and prudent distribution elements supported by business tourism and entertainment facilities” This complex is to be harnessed by private sector whose responsibility is to provide the needed facilities and services to ensure visitors comfort in Calabar. Anani (2004) stated that the commitment of government to provide facilities such as roads, electricity, water supply etc are factors that would make the environment conducive for business to flourish. This is further affirmed by Agbo (2004), who stated that the duty of government to commit to providing both super-structures and infrastructures will create further development in tourism and other sectors of the state’s economy.

Okunbawa (2001), in Nwakama (2002) opined that “the private sector needs to be encouraged to invest in the tourism industry not just in operating hotels and travel agencies but also in the establishment of amusement parks, family vacation resort and outdoor games facilities.” It was further noted by Okunbawa (2001) in Nwakanma (2002) that the tourism industry is too big for only government agencies such as the State Tourism Bureau to be sole managers of the tourism value chain. Ejom (2004) also supported this assertion, when he opined that private sector participation in the development and growth of any economy is a necessary ingredient needed to transform a slow-paced non-performing economy to the path of geometric economic growth. Uhuegbu (2002) also stressed the need for private sector participation in the development of tourism; that will enhance the growth of tourism facilities such as game reserves, resorts, etc. Anijah-Obi (2001) reiterated the importance of tourism as a worldwide industry which may differ in its level of development from one nation to another to explain that tourism development is not uniform.

Elem (2004), affirming the works of Anijah-Obi (2001) in his analysis of the private sector participation at the different developmental levels of tourism in any nation, believes that private sector is a dominant partner in global tourism operations. The private sector has been recognized to build a reliable tourism service market and trust between various tourism destination countries and the tourists. For example in Cross River State and Calabar in particular most of the existing hospitality industry are solely run and control by private sector. Elem (2004) believes that relationship between the industries and the sector should be kept and expanded especially as tourist demand and visitor’s inflow in a destination keep increasing. The involvement of private sector in hospitality industry and other tourism management organisations should be used to encourage local service providers and tourism enthusiasts. In evaluating government’s contribution to promoting tourism. Aremu (2001) also recommends that for effective domestic and international tourism and to protect private sector investment there is need for security of life and property. For instance the development of airports and hotels by private sector require adequate security for effective operation. Agbo (2004) in a paper titled “Community Based Tourism” highlighted that for effective management of tourism resources both the locals must be in partnership with private sector in order to yield maximum output from tourism. In recent times, most economy is run by private sector for instance the involvement of private sector would help poverty reduction (World Bank, 2006)

Apart from this the Construction of a new factories or the establishment of new stores, for example, would create jobs opportunities for the impoverish masses (Narayan and Robert (2013). The tourism support services provided by the private sector have greatly created job opportunities and at the same time as encourages the rapid inflow of visitors into most tourism destination(Barney and Griffin, 2014). In Cross River State private sector involvement in hospitality development has influence visitor arrivals and employment

creation (Osonwa et al., 2015). In many of these countries, the contribution of the private sector to overall economic growth has been enhanced by overall liberalization, including free entry into and forced exit from business as well as favourable monetary and fiscal policies. These in most cases made possible by Utilizing opportunities provided for rapid and sustainable growth of a diversified economy (Iwara, 2014)

### 3. Methodology

The study was anchored on private sector in destination development taking into consideration the development of hospitality industry. The existing companies in Calabar were used as private sector. This is because these companies render essential services to visitors and also their part of the hospitality industry in Calabar. However, the residents were used to score the under listed private sector (companies) over 10 according to their involvement in either hospitality industry development, tourism and socio-economic development was scored over 100%. Seven hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed to staff in the private sector using random sampling technique which allows every staff equal opportunity of being selected for the study. Two hundred copies of the questionnaire were also distributed randomly to residents living within where the activities of the private sector take place. The random sampling technique was adopted with the aid of field assistants Information such as challenges faced by the private sector with respect to the development of the hospitality industry and the impact of private sector in the development of the hospitality industry on socio-economic development of Calabar were captured in the questionnaire. The hypothesis was stated: "There is no significant effect of the activities of the private sector on destination development in Calabar". The multiple regression analysis was used on the data set which was used to establish the level of relationship between the response and the various predictor variables. This was done using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) which is stated as:

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + \dots b_nx_n + e$$

Where Y = Independent variable: Tourism and hospitality industry

a = Regression constant

$b_1, b_2, b_3 \dots b_n$  = Regression coefficients

$x_1, x_2, x_3 \dots x_n$  = Dependent variables: socio-economic development

e = the stochastic error term (indicating that these are not all the variables required for prediction of Y and that even the variables included have measurement errors).

## 4. Results

### 4.1 The Private Sector in Tourism Destination Development

The private sector in tourism destination development presented in table 1 which shows the economic development of Cross River State, the aggregated data of all respondents on companies in their contributive effort towards tourism and other socio-economic activities in Calabar. The various activities of private sector in destination development, tourism and socio-economic output was clearly presented in Table 1. It has to do with the way private sector has induced socio-economic growth in the state. The stated hypothesis which states that "there is no significant effect of private sector on the socio-economic development of Cross River State", was used to highlight the effects of the private sector in hospitality industry and tourism development as presented in table 1.

**Table 1:** Contributory efforts of private sector in hospitality industry, tourism and socio-economic development.

COMPANIES	Private Sector activities	Hospitality Industry 10 marks	Tourism 10 marks	Socio-economic development 100 marks
Dangote	Manufacturer	7.63	4.53	73.16
Niger Mills	MA	6.32	2.68	52.16
Nig. Breweries	MA	5.37	3.47	45.26
Unilevers PLC	MA	5.16	2.63	42.63
Cleans Nig. Plc		5.11	2.16	38.47
Tropical waters	Packaging	5.42	2.11	33.63
Real plantation	PA	5.42	2.89	33.89
Pineapple processing factory	PA	5.11	2.63	35.68
Intel Nigeria Limited	Shipping	4.58	2.00	31.84
Brawal Nig. Ltd	SH	3.74	1.42	24.95
Integrated Nig. Limited	SH	4.79	1.47	32.16
J. O. Odey Nig. Limited	Clearing	4.05	1.32	25.11
Commerce and freight	CL	4.47	1.89	26.84
Universal Basic	Marketing	5.26	2.53	37.26
UAC	MK	5.26	2.58	44.74
John Holt Dist. Nig. Plc.	MK	4.68	1.95	37.47
Mr. Biggs	Confectionaries	6.63	3.79	56.11
Mr. Fans	CF	5.63	3.26	49.68
Dukes	CF	5.53	3.05	45.74
High Quality	CF	4.89	1.89	37.68
New Maseco Bakery	CF	4.16	1.84	34.32
First Bank	Bank	6.16	2.58	59.32
Standard Trust	BK	5.95	2.32	59.58
Guaranty Bank	BK	5.11	2.37	49.32
Citizen Bank	BK	5.00	3.47	46.42
All State Bank	BK	4.42	4.37	42.58
Pyramid	Servicing	5.37	5.21	49.79
Mirage	SV	6.26	7.11	54.79
Channel View	SV	5.95	4.95	59.21
Aqua Vista	SV	6.37	5.95	55.11
Metro Hotel	SV	5.58	3.84	49.58
The Young	Transport	5.53	2.68	50.74
Dangote	TP	6.89	3.11	53.79
USA	TP	5.37	1.89	41.95
Cross Lines	TP	5.11	2.26	42.11
Rainbow	TP	3.74	1.58	28.53
IRS Airlines	TP	4.47	2.74	35.32
Aero Contractors	TP	4.84	2.47	36.21
Chang Changi Airline	TP	4.42	2.53	37.32
ADC Airline	TP	5.53	3.00	41.26
Calculux	TP	4.47	1.95	36.00
DHL	Communication	5.53	2.79	39.79

V-Mobile	CM	6.11	3.74	55.11
Globacom	CM	6.63	3.37	54.95
CRBC	CM	6.42	4.42	60.89

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

From this, it is established that there is a positive relationship between the response variable which is the socio-economic gains to Cross River State, and the predictor variables which are the two major activities of the private companies that have declared interest in destination development (hospitality and tourism). The result indicates that as the companies are carrying out activities which impact on business and tourism, Cross River State will gain socio-economically. Invariably, the more the activities of private sector the greater the increase in socio-economic gains. In order to verify whether the result could explain or predict the socio-economic gains to Cross River State by indicating level of activity applied by the private sector. Looking at the sum of squares which represents the total amount of variability in the data from Table 2, the regression sum of squares to be 4378.544 was found and its residual to be 967.552 and total 5346.096 which indicates that 82% of the variation in the socio-economic gain to Cross River State as a result of private sector could be accounted for by knowing the activities from the private companies as regarding their hospitality industry and tourism contribution while about 18% is accounted for by other factors based on their activities.

**Table 2:** Predictors (constant) of tourism and hospitality industry.

Model	Sum of squares	At	Mean square	F	Sig
1 Regression	4378.544	2	21.89.272	97.296	.000
Residual	967.552	43	22.501		
Total	5346.096	45			

However, table 3 revealed that the  $r^2$  called the coefficient of determination, the proportion of the variable in socio-economic gains to Cross River State accounted for by variation in the predictor variables is given by the value of 0.819 implying that the model explains the variability of the socio-economic gain to Cross River State very well, so there is very little random variation.

**Table 3:** Model summary.

Model	R	R square	Adjusted square	R	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.905	.819	.811		4.7435

The regression model on the Anova output on table 2 represents the evidence for linear relation between socio-economic gains to Cross River State and the predictor variables of hospitality industry and tourism activities. The evidence is very strong with ( $P < 0.001$ ; which is much less than 0.05), implying that a great confidence of about 99%. The researcher rejects the null hypothesis of no linear relationship between the socio-economic gains and the predictor variables. The value of the variance ratio of 97.296 is about the square of the t-ratio



given for the slope in Table 2. This result clearly indicates that private sector has significantly contributed to the destination development as the development of the hospitality industry has boosted tourism and the socio-economic development of Calabar, Cross River State.

**4.2 Socio-Economic Impact of Private Sector on Destination Development**

The socio-economic impact of public-private sector on destination development presented in Table 4 shows that increase in government revenue was a major socio-economic impact of private sector in destination development as observed with a value of 9.5%. Similarly, other social amenities such as good security system, employment opportunity were part of the gains derived from the establishment of the hospitality industry as noted in Table 5 with a value of 6% and 5.5%. Nevertheless, in spite of the individual observation made by the respondents in the hospitality industry, it was noticed that all the listed options in Table 5 accrue to the State as a result of the activities of private sector in the provision and tourism development in the hospitality industry.

**Table 4:** Socio-economic impact of public-private sector on destination development.

S/N	Options	Population sample	Percentage (%)
A	Employment	11	5.5
B	Housing	9	4.5
C	Electricity	7	3.5
D	Water supply	5	2.5
E	Hospital	4	2.0
F	Good road	2	1
G	Increased income generation	3	1.5
H	Good security	10	5
I	Increase in government revenue	19	9.5
J	Entertainment joints	3	1.5
K	Hotels and restaurant	12	6
L	Good security network	5	2.5
M	All of the above	110	50
N	Others	0	0.0
		200	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

**4.3 Challenges of the Hospitality Industry Development in Calabar**

Challenges of the hospitality industry in Calabar presented in Table 5 shows that the challenges in the hospitality industry ranged from increase on taxation, insecurity, obsolete facilities, political instability, congestion and lack of space, poor attitude of staff, and bad roads. Furthermore, it was discovered that increase in taxation and poor attitude of staff were the major challenges of the hospitality industry in Calabar with values 15.57% and 43.57%. The data collected also indicate that bad roads and political instability was a challenge towards hospitality development with values of 14.29% and 13.14%. However, insecurity, congestion and lack of space were the least challenges in the hospitality industry with values 7.86% and 5.86% in Calabar.

**Table 5:** Challenges of hospitality industry development in Calabar.

Challenges	Population sample	Percentage
Increase in tax	109	15.57
Insecurity	55	7.86
Obsolete facilities	98	14
Political instability	92	13.14
Congestion and lack of space	41	5.86
Poor attitude of staff	305	43.57
Bad roads	100	14.29
Total	700	100

Source: Field survey 2016.

## 6. Conclusion, Implications, and Limitations

The growing demand for recreation in Calabar has seriously given rise to the activities of both the public and private sector involvement in the provision of recreational facilities in Calabar. Today, private sector activities have become a major catalyst that has encouraged destination development in Cross River State in general and Calabar in particular. This assertion is evidenced in the level of private sector involvement in the hospitality industry development which has impacted significantly on tourism and other socio-economic development variables in Calabar. However, it is quite clear that most of the hospitality industries in Calabar are private sector oriented which at the same time has increased the revenue base of the government and also create employment and other services to most urban dwellers in Calabar. Apart from this, the stakeholders involved in the development of the hospitality industry have faced some challenges such as insecurity, political instability among others which has caused seasonality in their operations. However in spite of the significant impact of private sector activities with respect to the development of the hospitality industry in study area their activities are no devoid of challenges in the area. It is on this note that effective mechanism be put in place to cushion the challenges faced by private sector in Calabar.

In recent times, private sector activities in the hospitality industry development have impacted significantly on destination development in Calabar as this is evidenced in the data collected and the result obtained from the tested hypothesis which indicate that the development of the hospitality industry by the private sector has socio-economically enhanced Calabar as a tourism destination. However, in spite of this great impact of private sector on destination development, there are also challenges in the bid to provide the needed services that would boost the image of Calabar as a tourism destination. Therefore, this research put forward the following measures to cushion the challenges faced by private sector in Calabar.

1. The government must provide adequate security that would encourage private sector investment in the development of the hospitality industry.
2. The tax regime leveled by the government to the private sector should be reviewed in order to encourage the private sector to participate in the destination development.
3. The private sector must upgrade and update their facilities so as to meet the acceptable standard and also encourage effective utilization of the facilities.
4. The government must make laws that would encourage investors in tourism to invest in the industry; this would however act as incentive that would protect the activities and assets provided by the private sector in the area.

This study has some limitations which were very challenging during the field work. For instance, most of the visited hospitality industry find it very difficult to supply adequate information about their business operations. Besides, some of the staff were illiterate who were not able to give correct information. However, lack of funds to effectively mobilize the field assistants during questionnaire distribution was also a limitation to this research work.

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