

MAPPING TOURISTS FACILITIES IN UYO CAPITAL TERRITORY AND ITS POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT IN AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

Tourism is increasingly viewed as an attractive development option for many parts of the developing world. In some developing nations, it may in fact be the only visible means of stimulating development. Developing nations are seeking the potential benefits of tourism, such as increased income, foreign exchange, employment and economic diversification, nevertheless, these developmental benefits may in fact fail to materialize if not well planned and executed. More to this, that is, the number of people or tourists participation in tourism has grown, so too has the number of countries that play host to tourists. Based on the above facts, Akwa Ibom State Government decided to put in place some Tourist recreation facilities not only for the benefit of her indigenes but also for Local and International Tourists at large. This paper seeks to apply Cartography and GIS Technology in mapping out Tourist facilities in Uyo Capital Territory in order to foster positive and negative contributions of tourism to development in Akwa Ibom State. In so doing, it will critically appraise contemporary perspectives on tourism and development and, in particular, sustainable tourism development as the dominant tourism development paradigm. The study ran across a period of one year from June, 2008 to June 2009 where data was collected to test the contributions of Tourists facilities in the study area. Findings recorded an accepted high level of positive contributions to development (alternate hypothesis H_1) from the Tourists facilities on ground. A proof of this statement comes from the empirical analysis of data using Chique Square where critical value of X^2 stood at 12.59 less than the X^2 table value of 159.00 for negative points on null hypothesis (H_0) in Uyo Capital Territory. In conclusion, Cartography and GIS end product, that is the map, which serves as a planning tool for this research, had successfully shown that, the sky remains a limit for its usage for any proposed study.

Key Words: Mapping, Tourists, Facilities, Contributions, Development.

INTRODUCTION

Over the part half century, tourism has evolved into one of the world's most powerful, yet controversial, socio-economic forces. As ever greater numbers of people have achieved the ability, means of freedom to travel, not only has tourism become increasingly democratized (Urvy 2001) but also both the scale and scope of tourism have grown inexorable.

In 1950, for example, just over 25 million international tourist arrivals were recorded worldwide, by 2004, the UK alone was attracting that number of overseas visitors annually because of tourist facilities they have, while according

to the World Tourism Organization (WTO 2005) total international arrivals reached a record of 760 million. Little wonder then, that tourism has been described as the largest peaceful movement of people across cultural boundaries in the history of the world (Lett 1989).

Indeed to cite a few examples, the East Asia Pacific and Middle East Regions have witnessed the highest and most sustained growth in arrivals globally while, in particular, a number of least developed countries (LDC's) including Cambodia, Myanmar, Tanzania and Samoa, have experienced higher than world average growth in tourism (UNCTAD 2001). Reflecting on the growth in scale and scope, tourism's global economic contribution has also become increasingly significant. International tourism alone generated over US\$523 billion in 2003 and if current forecasts prove to be correct, this figure could rise to US\$2 trillion by 2020 (WTO 1998).

Given this remarkable growth and economic significance it is not surprising that tourism has long been considered an effective means of achieving economic and social development in destination areas, (Telfer and Sharpley 2008). Succinctly, the most common justification for the promotion of tourism is its potential contribution to development, particularly in the context of developing countries. That is, although it is an important economic sector and often a vehicle of both rural and urban economic regeneration in many industrialized nations, it is within the developing world that attention is most frequently focused on tourism as a developmental catalyst. Back home in Akwa Ibom State domestic tourism has witnessed a boom in recent times especially during the study period due to tourist facilities put in place by the Government. These tourist facilities will further project Akwa Ibom State into the frame of finding herself among the Global Tourism destinations.

The Research Area

The study covered Uyo Capital Territory with an approximate land mass of 15sq km, Uyo Master Plan (1991). It extends between latitude 4°52'N and 5° 07'N and lies between longitude 7°47'E and 8°03'E. These geographical coordinate values have been interpreted into ground measurements (geo-referencing) as shown on the map. It is the seat of Akwa Ibom State Government whose expanse showed all the tourist facilities, see figure 1 below:-

Map Production Techniques

The map, a tool for planning this study passed through Cartography and GIS Technology. Initially the base map had a Scale: - 1: 20,000. This map was produced cartographically employing all the stages of arts, science and technology of making maps as displayed on the map face (Robinson and Sale 1969). While the new map on Scale: - 1:60,000, was produced with an Arc View Version GIS 9.2. It was scanned, digitized, Geo-referenced and generalized to a format that fitted into the volume of this research (Obot 2005, Mohd Din and Ahmad 2008).



Figure 1: Uyo Capital Territory Showing Locations of Tourist Facilities

Scale: - 1: 60,000

Research Methodology

The data for this study was collected in Uyo Capital Territory using lineage coverage as sampling areas of tourist facilities for distribution and retrieval of questionnaires. The sampling areas were named as follows:- Uyo Urban, Aka Road, Oron Road, Abak Road, Ikot Ekpene Road, Nwaniba Road and others. A total number of 450 questionnaires were distributed to test for the Positive and Negative contributions of tourist facilities in Uyo Capital Territory. The field result came out with the retrieval of 399 questionnaires. Hypothesis for this study was postulated as recorded viz:- H_0 : Tourist facilities did not contribute to development in Akwa Ibom State, H_1 : Tourist facilities had contributed to development in Akwa Ibom State. The data was analyzed using Chi square statistical method, see details of data analysis from the table below:-

Table 1: Data Analysis for testing Positive and Negative contributions of Tourist facilities in Uyo Capital Territory.

$X^2 = \sum, \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$	Nwaniba Road	Uyo Urban	Aka Road	Oron Road	Abak Road	Ikot Ekpene Road	Others	Total
Observed Frequency (Positive Effects)	60	120	35	27	104	34	19	399
Expected Frequency (Negative Effects)	64	64	64	64	64	64	15	399
Significance Level 0.05; degree of freedom = 6; Critical Value of $X^2 = 12.59$, Table value $X^2 = 159.00$								

Author's Field Work June 2008 to June 2009

Location of Tourist Facilities in Uyo Capital Territory Sampling Areas:

Area One: Nwaniba Road tourist facilities embody Le Meridian Hotel Complex with its Golf course and Nwaniba Beach.

Area Two: Uyo Urban has her facilities at the Plaza, Science and Recreation Park at Udo Udoma Avenue, Afaha Oku, Udo Umana / Obio Imo by the Stadium.

Area Three: Aka Road has Relaxation Park by the Aka Round About and the Catholic Church.

Area Four: Oron Road facilities are the Scenery at the junction, four lanes of Nsikak Eduok Avenue, Oron Road and Edet Akpan Avenue where there is Television splash screen and Shelter Afrique Recreation Centre.

Area Five: Abak Road has her own tourist facilities at Abak Road Round-about by the State Secretariat.

Area Six: Ikot Ekpene locates hers at Itam Peace Column by Itam Market. In spite of the above facts, exotic Restaurants and Hotels abound also in the study area where foods can be sampled and Hotel Services as facilities uplift desires for tourists.

Area Seven: Others include facilities that are not located along the major roads in the study area, but provide services to the tourists.

Positive Contributions of Tourist Facilities to Development in the Study Area:

There is transport economic boom as many people troop out from destinations to see beautiful Scenery of water flowing in and out from rocks, intermittent splash of electrical ignition power in rays during the evenings and nights.

- Attraction of revenue to the coffers of the government as people pay for the plat form utilization during ceremonies, theatrical outings, and music displays are on the increase daily.
- Professional photographers for coverage of events are easily seen at the plazas and recreational centres who locates at these areas as their business base, all the above takes place at Area Two.
- The Television flash boards at Uyo City Plaza and at the four lanes junction of Oron Road, Nsikak Eduok and Edet Akpan Avenues heightens the economy base of the state from advertisement of business matters.
- The Television board at the Plaza also enables the public to watch local, international football matches, political rallies and radio programmes at ease and free especially those who could not afford to buy Television sets.
- The tourist facilities provide employment and vacation jobs to thousands of people as many rush out there for business routines.
- Educationally, these facilities serve to enlighten students and pupils during excursions.
- For tertiary school students, the facilities easily become areas of research and field work activities.
- The Structural Technicians increase their personal income from the construction of kiddies physical and health facilities in Science Park and recreational centres.

- The relaxation installations in the tourist centres soothe the minds of people and thereby promote good health and reduction in death tolls among the depressed.
- Physical landscape around Le Meridian Hotel, the interior decorations, exotic foods and accessories there-in increases tourist activities tremendously due to its international standard.
- Sporting of golf games at the Le Meridian Hotel Golf Ground, the exciting beach layout, and nonetheless other athletic facilities at other tourist locations are increasing their momentum daily on physical and health exercise alarmingly.
- Well built network of roads are also other interesting attractions to spin round Uyo Capital Territory by any intending tourists.

Negative Contributions of Tourist Facilities to Development in the Study Area:

- Intermittent Electrical Power failure retards business activities in the Recreational Parks, Science and Technology Centres and Hotels.
- In some, few people operate there because of fear of local thieves and vagabonds.
- Police security patrols are weak around the tourist centres and for fear of being attacked by undesirables.
- Some of the roads leading to areas with these facilities are not covered by Urban Taxis and Buses for local runs.
- Relaxation at the tourist facilities becomes dreaded during the early hours of the night as some indigenes complain of being arrested by the police for one reason or the other.
- Some of the facilities are underutilized due to people's lifestyle, nativity of African culture and lack of experience into some viable services that could have been rendered.

Recommendations

- Electrical power supply should be made constant at tourist destinations through the Government directives to Power Holding Company in the State.
- There should be police patrol from time to time around these places to maintain peace and order and destruction of accessories.
- People should be allowed a good taste of government facilities for free outings and relaxations as it is the happenings in the developed countries all round the world except when one is found to be dangerous.
- The State Ministry of Works and Transport should allocate Urban Taxis and Buses to cover such routes like Udo Udoma Avenue and Afaha Oku for accessibility to tourist movements.
- Democracy should be fully addressed by the police authorities against arresting the people's free relaxation without any criminal intention in the tourist centres.
- Some other business like Hot foods- Meat and fish, Round Table beverages and delicious high tasting snacks should be an investment into recreational parks by experienced business men as a valour of development, as it applies to such centres in the civilized nations.

Findings proved that, in spite of Negative contributions in the locations of the tourist facilities, the positive contributions gained upper hand to development as against the negative. Further, this emanates from empirically test of Chi square data analysis, the alternate hypothesis (H_1) was accepted for its contributions to development than the null hypothesis (H_0). Chi square critical value of X^2 was 12.59 for alternate hypothesis (H_1) which was accepted for positive effects less than the X^2 table value of 159.00 for null hypothesis (H_0) that was rejected for negative effects, an implication that the tourist facilities will move Akwa Ibom State into one of the Global tourist destinations soonest.

Conclusion pin points the erasure of doubts in people's mind on the capabilities of applying Cartography and GIS Technology end product, i.e. the map as a planning tool for research except for those without spatial orientation on the Earth, which are few.

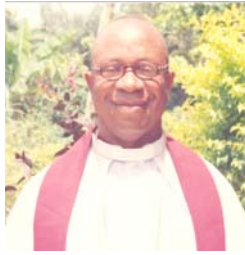
The changes in landscape with the high, sensational powered, recreational technological innovations such as plat forms for ceremonies, theatrical and musical displays, television flash boards at Uyo City Plaza, Four Lanes Junction of Oron Road, and intermittent splash of electrical ignition power in rays, during the evenings and nights, a scenario not really found in other cities of Southern Nigeria. While others with relaxation and recreational facilities serve as bench marks to developments.

With the envisaged Ibom Power Plant, Akwa Ibom State International Airport and the ongoing Tropicana project, undoubtedly all these, will add up to the number of tourist facilities and their contributions to developments in Akwa Ibom State shall go beyond expectations.

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Biography of Authors and Photos



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Biography Details

Rev. M. Markson Obot: OND, DIP., Carto., B.Sc., M.Sc. and (Ph. D. in view) MNCA, MNGA.

The Chief Cartographer/Geographer for the University of Uyo, Nigeria. Past Sabbatical Appointee of Cartography for Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria. Over 20 years of teaching professional Cartography. Past National Executive Council member of the Nigerian Cartographic Association. Past NCA Organizing Secretary for Akwa Ibom State Chapter of Nigerian Cartographic Association Conference. Presently, the Editor of Nigerian Cartographic Association, Akwa Ibom State Atlas Project. An Attendee of the XXII ICC July, 2005 Coruna, Spain with poster presentation, and also attended 1st and 2nd International Conference on Cartography and GIS in Borovets, Bulgaria in January, 2006 and January, 2008 respectively. The author has widely researched into the field of Cartography and GIS for Developments with International and Local Publications. A Professorial rank in Cartography becomes a vision after his Doctorate Degree.

Rev. Obot is an Anointed Ordained Minister of God.



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A Senior Lecturer teaching Geomatic Engineering in the Department of Civil Engineering, University of Malaya, Malaysia since 1986. he is now the Head of Surveying division and is actively doing research in GIS, GPS and Computerized Mapping, GPS Satellite Surveying, Photogrametry, and Remote Sensing. He is currently teaching all the mentioned subjects and his interest and writing are results in active participation in the local and international conferences.