

# An Evaluation of selected attractions in Osun state for tourism promotion

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## Abstract

Tourism industry has enriched the economies of many nations across the globe. Its linkages to all other sectors made it highly labour intensive. Thus, if properly harnessed and managed will serve as an alternative or perhaps a readily source of income for the country. If subsequently promoted becomes the bedrock for a mono-petrol economy like Nigeria. Despite the identification of tourism industry as an alternative to this diversification process yet not much is been done to attain the desired goal as a result of lack of information on Nigerian tourist sites. To remedy this situation necessitated the writing of this work which centres on identifying some of the cultural and natural attractions in Osun state for tourism promotion. The evaluation of these tourist sites in Osun State was carried out in some randomly selected tourist sites to forecast their feasibility as tourist destination.

**Keywords:** Osun, tourism, tourist, attractions

## Introduction

All over the world, tourism constitutes temporary movement for recreation, leisure, religious, family or business. Looking at the broad scope of this industry it goes beyond mere temporary travelling and gallivanting around the world to lucrative economic enterprise set to rejuvenate or boost the economy of any nation as the case maybe. Surveying tourism activities in a destination Cook et al (2006) asserted that tourism has become more than just another industry; it has developed into an important part of the economic foundation of many countries. The positive benefits of tourism activities in periods of economic stagnation or decline have not gone unnoticed. Consequently, many countries on discovering the benefit that could accrue their nation through tourism has today joined the band wagon in developing and promoting tourism to increase its foreign income earnings which cuts across other sectors of the economy inducing the necessary infrastructural facilities needed to sustain development. The services inherent in this industry range from mere unskilled jobs of a cleaner to that of a skilled professional. The grassroot nature of tourism sector makes it a viable economic alternative that would pursue qualitative development in Nigeria. However, the failure of the Government of Nigeria to package and sell tourism products effectively encouraged over-dependence on the huge income oil facing fluctuation. To ward-off such scenario calls for diversification and improvement on already existing relegated sectors. In effect, tourism industry has been enlisted amongst the sectors to be developed following the Nigeria's vision 2020 with a view on maximizing its benefit. Therefore the pursuit of such goal led to the identification and development of various tourist attractions within the country. This forms the premise of this work which focuses on the evaluation of selected cultural and natural attractions in Osun state for tourism promotion. Surveying Osun state tourist attractions shows the current state of the attractions and recommends what is to be done to qualitatively exploit the sites without destroying its natural ambience. Despite the undeveloped state of Osun state tourist attractions according to Anugwara (2013) has so far generated about one million, four hundred and seventeen thousand and fifty Naira (N1, 417, 050) for Osun State Government, as part of its internal revenue generation drive. The evidence of this huge profit generated from undeveloped tourist attractions proves the prowess of tourism in boosting the economy of destinations.

This paper strives to evaluate some selected tourist attraction in Osun state for tourism development. For a qualitative research it tends to achieve the above aim by carrying out a reconnaissance to the selected attraction, examine government activities at the sites and the problems facing their development then proffer solution to mitigate the said challenges.

## Background of the study

The modern Osun State was created in 1991 from old Oyo State. The state's name is derived from the River Osun, the venerated natural spring that is the manifestation of the Yourba goddess of the same name. The 2006 census puts the population of the state at 3,423,535 with over 200 towns, villages and other settlements. The State has a considerable number of highly urbanized settlements some of which are Osogbo, Ile – Ife, Ilesa, Ikirun, Iwo, Ede, Ila-Orangun and Ikire. Other includes Ipetumodu, Ejigbo, Ilobu, Gbongan, Okuku, Inisa, Ijebu – Ijesa, Ipetu – Ijesha, Iragbiji etc.

Osun State located in the south-west geopolitical zone of Nigeria is an inland state with its capital as Osogbo. It is bounded in the north by Kwara State, in the east partly by Ekiti State and partly by Ondo State, in the south Ogun State and in the west by Oyo State.

The people of the state are warm, hospitable and highly enterprising and could be found engaged in trading all over the country. The state has 30 local government areas and an area office; it is also divided into three senatorial districts, each of which is composed of two administrative zones.

The major sub-ethnic groups in Osun State are Ife, Ijesha, Oyo and Igbomina of the Yoruba people, although there are also people from other parts of Nigeria. Yoruba and English are the official languages. People of the state practice Islam, Christianity and Traditional faith. The people of the state are mainly traders, artisans and farmers. Their other occupations include hand-woven textiles, tie and dye, leather work, calabash carving and mat-weaving.

Osogbo is the state capital; it is very rich in arts and crafts. It is about six hours drive from Abuja, the Federal Capital and 232 kilometres from Lagos, Nigeria's most pre eminent port city and commercial/industrial nerve centre Ibadan, the most populous city in West Africa in about 88 kilometres from Osogbo. Federal Government Agencies in the State Capital include the Nigeria Machine Tools, Osogbo Steel Rolling Company and the industrial Development Centre. Others are the Federal Department of Solid Minerals, the Liaison Office of the Raw Materials Research and Development Council, National Directorate of Employment, National Examinations Council and the West African Examination Council, among many others.

The state capital also houses a National grid of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria. It is linked by a good network of roads with other parts of the country and it also connected by a rail line for goods and passengers. The Ido – Osun aerodrome, near the state capital, is being upgraded to an International Airport.

The state Government operates from an ultra-modern Secretariat complex in the State Capital. The legislative and judicial arms of government are independent and work harmoniously with the executive arm to move the State forward.

Local Government administration in the State, as in other states of the Federation, is operated under a two-tier system made up of the executive and legislative Structures Activities of the Local Government areas complement of the efforts of the State Government in making the State truly investment-friendly.

### **Conceptual Literature**

Tourism is a multidimensional, multi-faceted activity which touches many lives and business activities. Tourism industry is a conglomeration of services offered by restaurants, hotels, motels, travel agencies, transport etc. This commercial outlook subjects tourism to diverse definitions. Thus, experts are confined to define the term from his/her own perspective. Simply put Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure.

Pearce (1989) defines tourism as “the relationship and phenomena arising out of the journey and temporary stay of people that travel primarily for leisure or recreational purpose.” The author further listed, conditions for a trip to qualify for the term tourism-travel, the person has to stay away for at least one night out of his normal residence. For Cook et al (2006) tourism could be described as “the temporary movement of people to destination outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken in those destinations and the facilities created to cater for their needs.” This definition shows that tourism includes wide array of people, activities and facilities. A broad definition of tourism propounded by WTO the umbrella of global tourism industry across destination setting the limit on who a tourist is and the extent of its activities within a destination in the following words: tourism is “the movement of a person travelling outside his /her usual environment for less than a specified period of time, whose main purpose of travel is other than for the exercise of an activity remunerated from the place visited”.

### **Tourist attraction**

Attractions are one of the components of tourism destination and perhaps the major reason behind tourist visit to any destination. Tourism been a purposeful well planned journey entails useful management of discretionary income and time. In this vein, tourist seeks destination with more interesting and exciting features worthy of their time and income which calls for visit to sites with variety of attractions along with its momentous experience. This implies that without tourist attractions there would be no tourism (Gunn 1972). Also without attractions drawing tourists to destinations, there would be little need for all other tourism services such as transportation, lodging, food, distribution and so on (Goeldner and Ritchie 2009). Thus attractions are central to visitors overall enjoyment and experience within any given destination. In many respects, they are the lifeblood of a destination because they are part of the appeal, ambience and overall experience that visitors seek to consume in areas they visit (Page, 2007). Therefore, tourist attractions consist of all those elements of a

“nonhome” place that draw discretionary travellers away from their homes. They usually include landscapes to observe, activities to participate in, and experiences to remember (Lew, 1987).

Considering different class of tourist Cook et al (2006) observed that attractions are natural locations, objects or constructed facilities that have a specific appeal to both tourist and local visitors. In other words, all the features within an environment/destination both natural and manmade which captivates or arouses tourist curiosity are attraction. These include ‘resorts (beach, ranches, mountain sides), cultural artifacts, historical relics and monuments and festival constitute tourist attractions which attracts tourist to a destination’ (Okoli, 2001). Most times these attractions are packed in such recreational activities like amusements (e.g. amusement parks, carnival, circuses) for entertainment (Okoli, 2001).

In general, any feature of a destination in the form of structures, facilities, activities or places capable of drawing tourists called an attraction without the captivating power to woo tourists fails to be an attraction. These attractions primarily consist of man-made features, natural features or events.

Natural attractions are the ‘mainspring’ that drive many people to travel (Goeldner and Ritchie 2009). These remain the captivating scenery and landscape, eternal sunshine and the wild fauna and flora with which a country is endowed (Okpoko and Okpoko, 2002). Natural attractions or features include the physical features of a place such as the beauty of mountains, the fresh air of a seaside resort, the qualities of a particular beach, the architecture and atmosphere of a great city (Okoli, 2001). Osun natural attractions include the Osogbo sacred grove,

However, cultural attractions are indispensable components in our tourism development schemes. In other words cultural/man-made relics can often be an important stimulus to tourist travel. For instance the pyramid of ancient Egypt attracts tourist to the country. Okpoko and Okpoko (2002) asserts that cultural attraction provide the foundation upon which our tourist trade should be built. Cultural attractions in Osun include:

### **Osun Oshogbo sacred grove**

Osun Osogbo sacred grove is one of its kinds perhaps the only active grove in Yoruba land. The grove covers an area of about 75 hectares of land situated in the tropical rainforest vegetation harbouring over four hundred species of flora of high medical value to Yoruba, a race well grounded in herbal medicine and others. The grove is an emblem of Yoruba tradition extending over four centuries, this makes an indispensable heritage which constitutes the identity of its owners. Rooted in traditional religion the grove consists of about 40 shrines, 2 palaces and many sculptures and other works of art. The grove is one of the highly priced vestiges of pre-colonial African traditions facing extinction at hands of western culture. Its resilient nature as one of the sources of both tangible and intangible identity of Yoruba ancestral origin was its tie to African traditional religion which hedged with divine sanction. The sacredness of the grove sustained it till date. The religiosity of grove is tied to the Osun River which is the abode of the Osun deity, the goddess of fertility. The presence of this river does not only replenish the grove physical thereby supporting the broad diversity of flora and fauna therein but spiritually fulfills the needs of man. The river is belief to possess powers capable of healing various ailments including barrenness. The efficacy of this grove can neither be undermined nor over emphasized as its fame has spread beyond the fringes of West Africa to the International community. The Osun grove was declared a world heritage site by United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 15th July, 2005 (Oseghale et al, 2014). Prior to that in 1965 it was declared a National Monument in Nigeria covering only a section of the grove amended in 1992 the entire 75 hectares of the grove was protected. The religious significance of the grove has not waned since the inception of its festival. The festival is an annual event which commemorates the day Osogbo town was founded by the first Ataoja, Oba Larooye, about 450 years ago (Olaniyan, 2014). Although a religious event to appease and venerate Oshun--the Yoruba female deity goddess of beauty, who is also believed to have the power to heal, give children, grant wealth and protect--the festival also provides the forum for the community to renew their allegiance to the king and affirm a sense of group solidarity (Omojola, 2010). This goddess is perhaps the only known African traditional religious deity to declare a foreigner priestess in the history of traditional shrines in Nigeria. This further strengthened the spiritual tie of the grove with its environs and beyond and this peculiarity added its fame.

The Osun Osogbo sacred grove and its annual festival marks the hallmark of cultural events in Nigeria which has in no small measure promoted tourism and international relations as most Nigerians especially the Yorubas in Diaspora and inquisitive cultural tourists visit the country during the annual event. The aesthetics of the festival ranging from the ritual bearer of the festival (Arugba) to the colourful attires, hair styles, dance, drama etc are indeed filled with pomp and pageantry.

### **Olumirin waterfalls**

Nigeria is endowed with exceptional waterfalls namely Agbokim falls, Assop falls, Enemebia falls, Erin-Ijesa or Olumirin falls, Guara falls, Ipole-Iloro waterfalls, Kura falls, kwa falls, Mait Sirga falls, Owu waterfalls. Despite

the attractive features of these waterfalls the unique features of Olumirin otherwise known as Erin-Ijesa waterfall surpasses others. Its peculiarity lies exclusively in the geographical configuration via landscape to the seven different layering of the rocks from which the water surges on to the gushing form of the fall. In its entirety the waterfall is indeed nature at its very best. The waterfall geographically is situated in a densely forested area of Erin-Ijesa town in Osun state discovered in about 1140 AD. According to the mythology of the waterfall some said it was discovered by hunters while others attribute it to Akinla, granddaughter of Odudwa. The town Erin-Ijesa, according to oral history, was founded by a daughter of Oduduwa the progenitor of the Yoruba race in 1140 AD (Makinde, 2014) during the migration of the people. Upon discovery the waterfall had the appearance of a mysterious figure. It was believed to be a living spirit through whose several mouths water gushed out; a very tall and huge spirit whose height reached to the high heavens. The inhabitants therefore named the fall Olumirin. "They thought this was another god whose power over the whole area was only similar to Akinla, the founder of Erin Ijesha town." (Vanguard, 3 April 2015). The chance discovery of the waterfall was made by hunters. Seeing the mysterious gushing out of water from different levels of rock was not ordinary so they ran back and called their leader, Yeye Akinla. They told her they had discovered another god (Uguru, 2011). Not until an Ifa priest disclaimed the association of the fall to a spirit the people kept a considerable distance from the fall. Upon the revelation of the fall as an architectural piece of the divine to humanity opened the fall to human use one of which is tourism activities. The fall presents a panorama of scenic beauty luring tourists from across the globe

The access road leading to Oluminrin Waterfall has been improved and graded while recreational facilities are being provided for the interest of tourists. The development plan of Osun State Government is to build chalets that will accommodate tourists among other plans. Tourists are allowed to visit the waterfall throughout the year.

### **Nike Art Gallery**

Nike centre for Art and culture was established in the year 1983 by the great artist Nike Davies Okundaye. The popular artist named the centre after herself sustaining the creative status quo of her origin which accounted for great artist skill. Having been born into an artistic family Nike primarily learnt skills in artistry from her great grandmother. As Kashim et al (2012) rightly stated that Nike was educated by her great grandmother who was a weaver and dyer (textile artist) during her life time. In addition she derived a lot of inspiration from her teachers like Madam Susan Wenger. Nike came into contact with Madam Susan Wenger in Osogbo School of Artists the product of Georgina Beier art workshop held in Osogbo in the 1960s. Osogbo workshop was run by the Beier between 1962 and 1964 and it was taken over by Suzanne Wenger in 1967 with a focused style that is truly African devoid of academic influence (Kashim et al, 2012). Describing the students trained by the Art school Kashim et al (2012) citing Fulani (1998) noted that the school does not require academic qualification and most participants were primary school dropouts and artisans trained by Ulli and Georgina Beier which was later taken over by Suzanne Wenger, a famous instructor. Who groomed Nike artistic skill to compete equitably with international artists. In Kashim et al (2012) opinion Nike derived a lot of inspiration from her teachers like Madam Susan Wenger. This inspiration was reflected in the Nike centre for Arts and culture which specializes in the making of batik, wood carving, bead making, oil painting on canvas, imported crafts techniques like reversed appliqué, quilt making and cultural dances. The focus of the centre which is to promote the African cultural identity is basically been achieved through the various training programmes one of which is the training of artisans from all over the globe. Elaborating on this training programme Kashim et al (2012) observed that in the year 2007 there were 200 full time students from all part of Nigeria including countries like Kenya, Zimbabwe, United States of America, United Kingdom and other European countries learning how to make Yoruba adire, quilting, reversed appliqué, embroidery, painting, carving, bead making, dances and contemporary art forms. In 2008 the centre parades about 34 resource artists and more than 70 apprentices with the Industrial Training Students from different tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Hence, Nike Art centre is a medium through which Nigerian specifically Yoruba cultural heritage is displayed for the admiration of tourist who flood the centre to have a feel of the ambience of the living culture of the Africans.

### **Museum of natural history OAU**

Museums are buildings where objects of great significance are preserved and displayed. Through the objects of the museum knowledge of the environment especially of the past societies and activities are elicited. The category of objects housed in a museum determines its type. In Nigeria there exist different kinds of museums ranging from war museum, cultural museums to natural history museum. A natural history museum therefore serves as repository objects of zoological and botanical origin (Fayenuwo and Amusa, 2010). The Natural History Museum Ile-ife been the first of its kind in Nigeria was established with the sole aim of been a repository of Nigeria scientific achievements. Basically its collection constitutes flora and fauna of all kinds. Interestingly the initial collections of the museum were zoological specimens of the Department of Biological Sciences. Since

then the museum has been primarily concerned with building up of its collection of plants and insects and other invertebrates, reptiles, birds, reptiles, rocks, fossils and minerals based on staff activities. These collections were adjudged spectacular by the numerous visitors of the museum as the character of any museum is determined by the quality and quantity of the collections in its possession. Ile-Ife natural museum has through its collection been able to document the different phases of life in Nigeria given the extinction of much of its flora and fauna. The preservation and display of these unique living things serves as a platform for increase in touristic activities in the community. Attesting to this Fayenuwo and Amusa (2010) noted that in 2005 the museum recorded over 250,000 visitors and subsequent this has increased by about 5% annually. Yet its educational activities are not restricted to the exhibition gallery. Specimens are loaned or supplied to schools on special requests. The museum organises scientific excursions and lectures especially for different classes of students from various schools around the country; and is open to tourists who are thrilled with the display of near-to-living fiction of past life and the natural world at large.

### Research methodology

This is a descriptive research which involved a careful observation of the tourist sites in Osun State. The population of the study comprises of the four randomly selected tourist sites in Osun State which include Obafemi Awolowo Natural History Museum, Obafemi Awolowo Botanical/Zoological Garden, Olumirin Waterfall, Nike Art Gallery. The study involves both the management staffs and tourists. The instrument used to elicit information was questionnaire administered to both staffs of tourist sites and the tourist. The instrument used by the researcher was very reliable. It was consistent as the research made text-retest of the questionnaire after the first two-week interval of its administration. The administration of the instrument was carried out by the researcher in personal contact with the respondent. A total number of two hundred questionnaire were proposed to be distributed which include one hundred for tourists and one hundred for management staffs but there was restrictions at some tourist sites which prevented the use of questionnaires, hence only thirty three questionnaire were administered which comprises of seventeen management staffs and sixteen tourists. The returned questionnaire was collated and analyzed by the researcher.

### Data Analysis

In analysing the data collected, the researcher made use of frequencies and percentages. The responses of the respondents were analyzed and calculated in percentage and frequencies.

### Overall Presentation of Data analysis

**Table 1: Sex Distribution of Tourist**

| Sex          | No. of Respondents | Percentage  |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Male         | 13                 | 81.25%      |
| Female       | 3                  | 18.75%      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>16</b>          | <b>100%</b> |

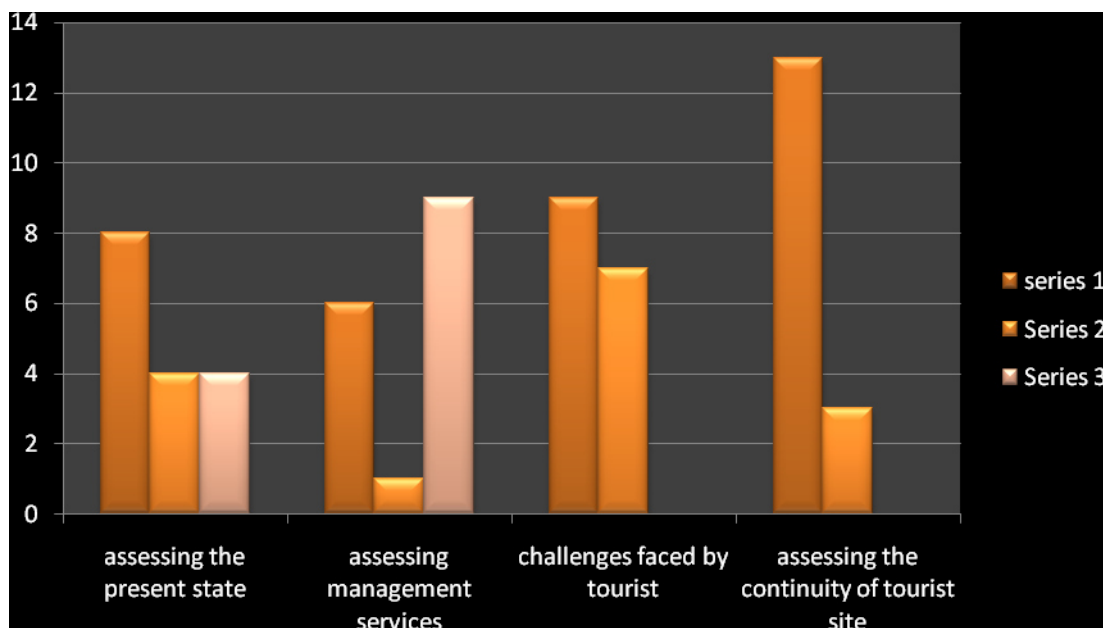
The result on the table 1 shows that a number of 3 respondents represent the female with 18.75% while 13 respondents represent the male with 81.25%.

**Table 2: Age Distribution of Tourist**

| Age          | No. of Respondents | Percentage  |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 15-35        | 15                 | 93.75%      |
| 36-45        | 0                  | 0%          |
| 46+          | 1                  | 6.25%       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>16</b>          | <b>100%</b> |

The result on table 2 shows the age of people between 15-35 had 15 respondents with 93.75%. Age 36-45 had 0 respondents with 0% while Age 46<sup>+</sup> had 1 respondents with 6.25%

**General Assessment of Tourists and Tourist sites**



**Figure 1.1**  
**Source: Field Survey**

**Assessing the Present State of Tourist Sites:** Eight respondents (series 1) noted that the tourist sites are in good condition, 4 respondents stated that the tourist sites are in bad condition (series 2) while 4 respondents stated that the tourist sites are in an average condition (series 3).

**Assessing the Management Services to Tourists:** Six respondents (series 1) observed that the management services to tourists is good, one respondent (series 2) noted that it is very bad while 9 respondents (series 3) stated that the management services to tourist is on an average scale.

**Assessing the Challenges faced by Tourists:** Nine respondents (series 1) stated that there is poor management of the tourist sites which affects their tour as tourists while seven respondents (series 2) stated that they are not faced with any challenge.

**Assessing the Continuity of the Tourist Sites:** 13 respondents (series 1) observed that the tourist sites will still continue to exist in years to come while 3 respondents (series 2) stated that the tourist sites will go into extinction in some years to come.

**Table 3: Sex Distribution of Management Staffs**

| Sex          | No. of Respondents | Percentage  |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Male         | 8                  | 47.06%      |
| Female       | 9                  | 52.94%      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>17</b>          | <b>100%</b> |

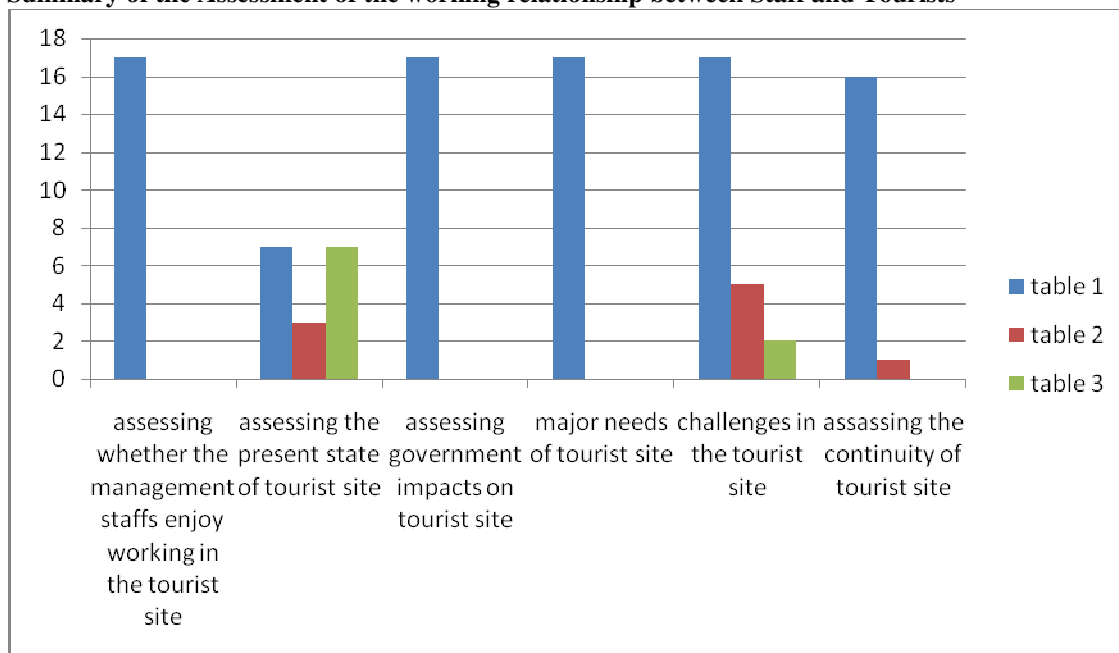
The result on the table 2 shows that a number of 9 respondents represent the female with 47.06% while 9 respondents represent the male with 52.94% percent each.

**Table 4: Age Distribution of Management Staffs**

| Age          | No. of Respondents | Percentage  |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------|
| 15-35        | 7                  | 41.18%      |
| 36-45        | 7                  | 41.18%      |
| 46+          | 3                  | 17.64%      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>17</b>          | <b>100%</b> |

The result on table 4 shows the age of people between 15-35 had 7 respondents with 41.18%. Age 36-45 had 7 respondents with 41.18% while Age 46+ had 3 respondents with 17.64%

**Summary of the Assessment of the working relationship between Staff and Tourists**



**Figure 1.2**  
**Source: Field Survey, 2014**

**Assessing whether the Management Staffs enjoy working in the Tourist Sites:** All the 17 respondents (table 1) stated that they enjoy working at the tourist sites.

**Assessing the Present State of the Tourist Sites:** According to 7 respondents (table 1), the tourist sites are in good conditions, 3 respondents (table 2) noted that the tourist sites are in bad conditions while 7 respondents (table 3) stated that the tourist sites are in an average condition.

**Assessing the Impacts of the Government on the Tourist Sites:** All the management staffs, 17 respondents (table 1) stated that they lack adequate support from the government.

**Assessing the Needs of the Tourist Sites:** 17 respondents (table 1) noted that the tourist sites needs funds for adequate improvement.

**Assessing the Challenges faced by Management Staffs:** 17 respondents (table 1) stated that they lack adequate fund to run the tourist sites, 5 respondents (table 2) added that they encounter shortage of electricity while 2 respondents (tables 3) noted that they experience shortage of staffs.

**Assessing the Continuity of the Tourist Sites:** 16 respondents (table 1) observed that the tourist sites will still be in existence in years to come while 1 respondent (table 2) stated that he/she is not sure whether the tourist site will be in existence in years to come.

#### 4.7 Summary

In a nutshell, this research work was carried out to evaluate the attractiveness of some of the tourist attractions in Osun with a view to understand the management status of the attractions in relation to tourist flow at the sites. The findings revealed among others that the state government is actually making visible efforts at enhancing most of the surveyed sites but these efforts should not deface the originality of the attractions rather geared towards maintaining the natural or cultural ambience as the case may be which attracts tourists. This will directly promote tourism in the state and indirectly stimulate economic growth as the host communities benefit from tourist expenditure invested in tourism businesses around the site.

#### Conclusion

Tourist attractions in Osun state are great economic stimulate which if well harnessed and packaged will turn the state into a world class destination. Considering the flow of tourist to yet undeveloped tourist attractions attests to this fact as Ige (2014) citing the Chairman of the state Tourism Board stated that no fewer than 40,000 tourists have visited Olumirin Waterfalls at Erin Ijesa, Oriade Local Government Area of Osun State in the last one year. In addition Olumirin water fall is the most visited tourist site in Nigeria today. As at November of 2014, from January to November the tourist site grossed 50,000 visitors. No other tourist site has had that level of patronage (Vanguard, 3 April, 2015). Equally, the Natural History Museum Ile-Ife which is one of its kind in Nigeria has

been a strong catch for tourist considering the quality of its collected collections and architectural outlay. Worthy of note the endorsement of Osun Osogbo sacred with the status of World heritage further enhanced its popularity globally conferring on its festival an international status.

From the foregoing it's a veritable fact that tourism is a crucial sector with greater potentials of generating revenues for state and nation at large if well explored. Today, Osun state had made great efforts towards converting its cultural and natural heritage for business growth and wealth creation.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were drawn from the findings of the research work.

1. Osun State is a country that is rich in natural resources and cultural diversity. More destinations that can attract tourists should be developed as an alternative source of revenue to boost the State's economy and to preserve the natural and cultural resources of the country.
2. Tourism stakeholders should create awareness programs on the impacts of tourism especially the social impacts of tourism. This will help host communities to protect their traditional values and prevent the erosion of their cultural heritage.
3. Policies and practices that ensure the sustainability of the destination and the social lives of the host communities should be developed at the early stage of tourism development to avert the negative social impacts at the maturation of the industry.
4. Host community participation which is a pre-requisite for sustainable tourism development should be encouraged and facilitated in tourism development processes to give the host community a sense of ownership and control over the resources of the community.

There are prospects for increased revenue generation through tourism in the Osun State. However, these assets need to be well developed to a level that would attract both national and international tourists. This should involve providing adequately for personal security and comfort. It also needs to be marketed to capture the attention of the upper class of the society that at present least patronize it. Also, early career officers should be further encouraged to embrace the culture of leisure by introducing a tax regime or policy which favours income redistribution and provides them with a reasonable budget for leisure. Furthermore, the tourism facilities show gross under-utilisation due to low gross margins and provide a justification for a radical overhauling that can make the sector perform at an optimal level. To this end it is also recommended that

- a. Government should encourage income redistribution through reduced tax burden on early career individuals to allow them engage more in leisure
- b. There is need to market the tourism assets and conduct public enlightenment on tourism facilities that are misconceived to contradict religious believe
- c. Increase budgetary provision be made by tourism operators and government at all levels for the physical development of the tourism assets to an internationally accepted level, and

Policies already in place to encourage new investors into the industry should be sustained while a tax regime that allows them to reduce their overhead should be introduced.

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