



## **COMMUNAL CONFLICTS AND THE FUTURE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN CROSS RIVER STATE**

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### **Abstract**

Communal conflict reduces tourists traffic because of the fear of attack. Communal conflict renders the environment unsafe for visitors. Incessant communal conflicts in Cross river state have led to cancellation of many events including the popular Christmas street party. Conflicts generally have a psychological effect on the tourists, especially those with experiences of previous attack. The reactions of communal conflicts may include fear, depression and to some extents, may result to lack of interests to travel to affect destinations. This study sought to investigate effect of communal conflicts and the future of tourism development in Cross River State. A descriptive survey design where three research questions and corresponding hypotheses were used to guide the study was used. The sample for the study consisted of 220 respondents made up of 40 Staff of Cross River Tourism Bureau and 180 indigenes of the conflict communities. The instrument for data collection was researcher's developed questionnaire which was structured on a 4-point Linkert scale rated as follows: Strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). Data obtained were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation. T-test statistics was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study showed that the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State were majorly ignorance, ethnocentrism, land and boundary disputes, politics, poverty, hostility, unemployment and over population. The findings of the study revealed that the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state include: looting of game reserve facilities, poaching of wildlife species, psychological effects on the tourists, fear of traveling to affected communities, collapse of tourism related business, declining employment opportunities. The study suggest the following to mitigate tourism development in the state: indigenes should be enlightened on the implications of ethnocentrism, establishment of land and communal conflict resolution agencies by government, politics of thuggery and bitterness should be discouraged, Government should set up poverty alleviation programs, religious groups should teach tolerance and coexistence and the need to love one another, and Government and private sectors should provide jobs for the indigenes among others. Besides, enlightenment programs should be organized to sensitize the people on the need for peaceful coexistence and the consequences of conflicts. All stakeholders involved in tourism administration should find safer environment that supports continued patronage by providing modern security apparatus.

**Keywords:** community, conflicts, tourism, development, wildlife, recreation.

### **1. Introduction**

Tourism is an institution of social force that impacts the life of people and where people are directly or indirectly connected with the industry. It is an ever-expanding service industry with vast growth potentials and has therefore become one

of the crucial concerns of nations and the international community as a whole. Tourism is extremely labour intensive and a significant source of employment. It is among the world's top creators of jobs requiring varying degrees of skills for youth, women and migrant workers. It

contributes significantly to socio-economic growth and development of nations across the globe. Tourism offers people the opportunity to move to destinations away from their usual place or normal habitat to enjoy their lives, have a quiet time or achieve a particular personal or collective goals and adequate facilities provided to cater for their needs.

Tourism involves a temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, as well as their activities during their stay at these destinations. Several definitions have been advanced to the tourism concept. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2015) defines tourism as 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. It has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure. Walton (2022) defines tourism as the act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure, while making use of the commercial provision of services. Oxford English Dictionary (2022) defines tourism as travel for pleasure or business; also the theory and practice of touring, the business of attracting, accommodating, and entertaining tourists, and the business of operating tours. Tourism is the act of travelling or sightseeing, particularly away from the person's home. However, tourism development also creates a positive experience for local people, local businesses, and tourists themselves.

Development in the other hand is defined as a state in which things are improving - the improvement of people's lifestyles through improved education, incomes, skills development and employment. It is the process of economic and social transformation based on cultural and environmental factors (Environment Data, 2022). It is also the process of social and economic advancement in a society. *Tourism development* has to do with planning and implementation of strategies, infrastructure or other projects deemed appropriate by an organized society with the sole objective to develop the sector to increase the attractiveness of a destination and thereby attract more tourists

(Law Insider, 2022). Tourism development is a set of techniques, theories and studies oriented to develop tourism industries in poor economies or countries. It is a cultural, economic, social, and environmental development strategies to meet the needs of tourists and residents. It is a planning and implementation of strategies with the objective to develop the tourism sector (iglobal.com, 2022). Tourism development is a set of strategies and plans that aim to increase, develop and/or promote tourism in a destination. Regrettably, tourism development in Cross River state has been impeded by the incessant communal conflicts in the state.

Communal conflict engenders pandemonium and comes as an obstacle in the path of peaceful life and tourism development. Like tourism it comes with different perspectives. Owens (2015) defines conflict as a disagreement arising from the fact that the parties involved perceive another's action as a threat to their needs, interests or concerns. Coser (2016) in his work noted that conflict is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure, or eliminate the rivals. Wall (2015) described conflict as a perceived divergence of interest, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously. Kilmann (2014) noted that conflict are communicative interactions amongst people who are interdependent and who perceive that their interests are incompatible, inconsistent or in tension. Wallenstein (2007:12) defined conflict as "a social situation in which a minimum of two actors (parties) strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resources". Conflict means an expression of hostility, negative attitudes, dispute, aggression, rivalry, misunderstanding, contradiction or clashing interest between two persons or groups.

Communal conflict is, generally, a conflict between non-state groups that are organised along a shared communal identity. The parties involved want to gain control over some disputed and perceived indivisible resource, such as a piece of land or local political power. The groups involved are non-state groups. This means that neither actor controls the state, although the state might be involved as an important supporting actor in a communal conflict. (Brosché, 2015).

Communal conflicts are threat or action of one party directed at territory – rights, interests or privileges – of another party, because of differences over economic issues, power or authority, cultural values and beliefs (Coleman, 2007). Communal conflicts are stimulated by the production and consumption of goods, socialization, social control, and social participation. Thus, communal conflicts are products of social relations. Dunmoye (2013) disclosed that communal conflicts in the Middle Belt zone of Nigeria are caused by land scarcity and boundary disputes, due to population pressure, alienation and concentration. Sklar (2014) stated that the fault lines along which communal conflicts can arise in Nigeria are manifold: ethnicity, religion, politics, distribution of riches, and modes of economic production.

Many contemporary Nigerian communities have experienced several cases of communal conflicts in the past right from the precolonial era. Some of the notable examples include the Zango-Kataf conflict in Kaduna State (1999-2001); Tiv-Jukun Wukari conflict in Taraba State (1999-2001); Itsekiri-Urhobo Warri crisis, (1999-2000); Yelwa-Shendam conflict (2003- 2005), Mangu-Bokoss crisis (1988-1999), the Ife-Modakeke crisis (1999-2000) (Ubi, 2001; Best 2007). Others are Aguleri-Umuleri conflict, boundary disputes between Enugu and Kogi states' communities, a communal clash between Urum and Achala communities in Anambra and clashes between communities in Cross River and Ebonyi states among others. Although these conflicts happen periodically, they are usually fatal in most cases, and also lead to grievous body harm, destruction of properties and displacement of people.

For years, Cross River was the stage to a territorial dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon over the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula. After a controversial UN-backed ICJ verdict in 2002 and a comprehensive resolution between the two nations in 2006, Abuja began to transfer authority of the peninsula to Yaoundé, and Cameroon eventually took full sovereignty of Bakassi in August 2013 (fundforpeace.org, 2018). Larry & Ohara (2018) briefly highlighted some of the communal conflicts witnessed in Cross River state in recent times; the Ebom

Versus Ebijiakara conflict left one of the communities (Ebijiakara) without a place called home, the Adadama and Ikwo conflict has left many dead and properties worth millions of naira destroyed, the Wanikade and Wanihem conflict in Yala Local Government Area was a humanitarian disaster. The Boje and Nsadop conflict in Boki Local Government Area is tittering on the brink of humanitarian emergency while the Onyadama versus Nko and Oderegha versus Inyima conflict in Obubra, conflict between the neighboring communities of Uyangha and Ojor in Akamkpa Local Government Area and Yakurr Local Government Areas have been on perennial crisis. Eight persons died in a communal clash between Alesi community in Ikom local government area and their neighbors, Ochon community in Obubra local government area. Crop Farmers and Fulani Herdsmen clash in Yakurr Region among others. Any destination with the history of communal conflicts reduces the number of tourists because of fear of attacks. Incessant communal conflicts in Cross river state led to cancellation of many events. Communal conflicts have a psychological effect on the tourists and especially those with experiences of previous attacks. The immediate response to communal conflicts may include fear, depression and to some extents, may result to lack of interests to travel. Communal conflicts in Cross River state have led to collapse of business activities and job loss in tourism industry in the state.

Transportation services, hotels services, restaurants, and some other services were shut down and this resulted to serious security and economic hardships for the people. Thus, this resulted to a decline in revenue generation and unemployment in Cross River state. The accommodation section of the Game Reserve/Wildlife Park suffers drastic declines in room occupancy rate in the time of communal conflicts in the state. Larry & Ohara (2018) stated that communal conflicts have induced a decline in the number of tourists using the recreational facilities of Game Reserve/Wildlife Park in Cross River state. consequently, there was uncertainties in the number of patronages in the state tourism business activities due to the

fear of communal conflicts. It has also triggered off looting of game reserve facilities and poaching of wildlife species. Nevertheless, Udom (2020) is of the view that the government can use its might to create an atmosphere of peace and tranquility, restore confidence, reconcile, integrate, reconstruct and rehabilitate the warring communities. build common schools, markets and health care centres that will bring he people together. These approach can go a long way in bringing peace and sustainable economic development among the warring communities. This will pave way for an even tourism development with a brighter future in Cross River state.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

The tourism industry involves the business of providing tours and services for persons travelling locally and abroad. The provision of these services by different industries sets tourism as one of the global industries with the highest employer of labour. In view of this, tourism acts as one of the most viable economic industries generating millions of dollars annually which contributes to the growth of numerous nations' economies around the globe. Unfortunately, communal conflicts have become a consistent experience across different local government areas of Cross River State. Cross River State has witnessed communal conflicts of diverse proportions and fatalities in recent years, these conflicts have grown in occurrence and assumed more dangerous and sophisticated dimensions. It usually results in massive loss of lives and destruction of properties.

Tourism industry in Cross River state have been adversely affected by incessant communal conflicts. The conflicts brought about decline in the number of tourist arrivals, increase in cancelled bookings, decrease in the average length of stay of tourists and the average room occupancy. The number of tourists using the recreational facilities of Game Reserve/Wildlife Park have also declined. Communal conflicts have a psychological effect on the tourists and especially those with experiences of previous attacks. This could make them to lack interest in traveling to Cross River state for leisure.

Communal conflicts in Cross River state have led to collapse of business activities and job loss in tourism industry. Consequently, there is a decline in revenue generation and unemployment in Cross River state. Peace is the best friend of tourism, while communal conflicts is its worst enemies. It is against this backdrop that the researcher is motivated to investigate communal conflicts and the future of tourism development in Cross River State.

## 3. Objective of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate communal conflicts and the future of tourism development in Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State.
2. Examine the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state.
3. Find out measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state.

## 4. Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State?
2. What are the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state?
3. What are the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state?

## 5. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses formulated guided the study, and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities

on the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state.

**Ho3:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state.

**6. Research Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population for this study were staff of Cross River Tourism Bureau and indigenes of the conflict communities. The reason for choosing staff of Cross River Tourism Bureau and indigenes of the conflict communities was because they were the categories of people that can give correct information with respect to the subject matter in this study. The sample of this study was drawn from staff of Cross River Tourism Bureau and indigenes of the conflict communities in Cross River state through a stratified random sampling technique. The state was stratified along the 18 local government areas and ten indigenes of the conflict communities were randomly selected from each local government area, thus, making a total of 180 indigenes of the conflict communities. Hence, 180 indigenes of the conflict communities were selected for the study. Also, 40 staff of Cross River Tourism Bureau were selected using a simple random sampling. In all, a total of 220 respondents were selected for this study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire structured on a 4 – point Linkert

rating scale where point were allocated as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (DA) 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. The instrument was face validated by two experts from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, one expert from Measurement and Evaluation, Cross River University of Technology. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha formula. The reliability coefficient value yielded 0.86 on average which was considered adequate for the study. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher and three research assistants. A total of 220 copies of the questionnaires were administered and collected on the spot from the respondents. Data obtained were analyzed using mean score and standard deviation. Any mean score lower than 2.50 implied disagree while equal to or higher than 2.50 implied agree to the items. T-test statistics was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. When the t-calculated values were less than critical t-value, null hypotheses was accepted, but when the t-calculated values were more than the critical t-value, null hypotheses were rejected.

**7. Results**

The results of the data analyses were presented based on research questions in Tables 1 to 3

**7.1 Research Question One**

What are the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State?

Table 1: Summary of t-test on the difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State. N – 220.

S/N	Items	Cross River Tourism Bureau Staff		Indigenes of Conflict Communities		PL	t-cal	df	t-crit	re m
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>					
	<b>Causes of communal conflicts:</b>									
1	ethnocentrism	3.1 1	0.4 7	3.3 8	0.2 8	0.0 5	0.0 8	21 8	1.9 6	A
2	land and boundary disputes	3.2 8	0.3 9	3.1 4	0.2 2	0.0 5	0.0 6	21 8	1.9 6	A

3	politics	3.2 1	0.2 2	3.2 5	0.0 6	0.0 5	0.3 2	21 8	1.9 6	A
4	illiteracy	1.8 7	1.4 0	2.0 1	1.7 1	0.0 5	0.0 4	21 8	1.9 6	D
5	poverty	3.0 9	0.1 6	2.8 1	0.1 5	0.0 5	0.1 5	21 8	1.9 6	A
6	hostility	3.1 5	0.4 5	3.4 2	0.2 7	0.0 5	0.0 7	21 8	1.9 6	A
7	unemployment	3.3 2	0.3 8	3.1 9	0.2 1	0.0 5	0.0 6	21 8	1.9 6	A
8	over population	3.2 6	0.2 1	3.3 0	0.0 5	0.0 5	0.3 2	21 8	1.9 6	A

$\bar{X}$  = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, PL = Probability Level, t-cal = t-calculate, df = degree of freedom, t-crit = t-critical, rem = remark, A = Agree, D = Disagree

The result in Table 1 shows that the mean ratings of the Cross River Tourism Bureau staff for item numbers 1-8 are 3.11, 3.28, 3.21, 1.87, 3.09, 3.15, 3.32 and 3.26 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.47, 0.39, 0.22, 1.40, 0.16, 0.45, 0.38 and 0.21 respectively. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the indigenes of the conflict communities on the above items are 3.38, 3.14, 3.25, 2.01, 2.81, 3.42, 3.19 and 3.30 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.28, 0.22, 0.06, 1.71, 0.15, 0.27, 0.21 and 0.05 respectively.

In table 1 above, the t-calculated value of each item was obtained; the degree of freedom of all

items was 218, while the critical t-table of 1.96 was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. From the table, it can be seen that the t-calculated values for all items were less than critical t-value. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River state was accepted.

### 7.2 Research Question Two

What are the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River State?

Table 2: Summary of t-test on difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state N = 220

S/N	Items	Cross River Tourism Bureau Staff		Indigenes of Conflict Communities		PL	t-cal	df	t-crit	rem
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>					
9	looting of game reserve facilities	3.0 6	0.6 6	3.4 0	0.1 3	0.0 5	0.0 2	29 8	1.9 6	A
10	poaching of wildlife species	3.2 0	0.6 0	3.1 9	0.0 7	0.0 5	0.0 7	29 8	1.9 6	A
11	psychological effects on the tourists	3.1 8	0.0 8	2.9 1	0.1 0	0.0 5	0.1 4	29 8	1.9 6	A
12	lack of interests to travel	3.4 0	0.1 0	3.3 0	0.0 6	0.0 5	0.1 8	29 8	1.9 6	A

13	cancellation of many events	2.2 7	0.1 7	2.1 6	0.4 1	0.0 5	0.0 7	29 8	1.9 6	D
14	collapse of business activities in tourism industry	3.2 6	0.5 8	3.2 4	0.0 6	0.0 5	0.0 4	29 8	1.9 6	A
15	job loss in tourism industry	3.2 2	0.0 7	2.9 7	0.0 8	0.0 5	0.1 3	29 8	1.9 6	A
16	decline in the number of tourists using the recreational facilities in game reserves	3.4 5	0.0 9	3.3 6	0.0 4	0.0 5	0.1 7	29 8	1.9 6	A

$\bar{X}$  = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, PL = Probability Level, t-cal = t-calculate, df = degree of freedom, t-crit = t-critical, rem = remark, A = Agree, D = Disagree

The result in Table 2 shows that the mean ratings of the Cross River Tourism Bureau staff for item numbers 9-16 are 3.06, 3.20, 3.18, 3.40, 2.27, 3.26, 3.22 and 3.45 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.66, 0.60, 0.08, 0.10, 0.17, 0.58, 0.07 and 0.09 respectively. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the indigenes of the conflict communities on the above items are 3.40, 3.19, 2.91, 3.30, 2.16, 3.24, 2.97 and 3.36 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.13, 0.07, 0.10, 0.06, 0.41, 0.06, 0.08 and 0.04 respectively.

In the table above, the t-calculated value of each item was obtained; the degree of freedom of all

items was 218, while the critical t-table of 1.96 was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. From the table, it can be seen that the t-calculated values for all items were less than critical t-value. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state was accepted.

### 7.3 Research Question Three

What are the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River State?

Table 3: Summary of t-test on the significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state N = 220

S/N	Items	Cross River Tourism Bureau Staff		Indigenes of Conflict Communities		PL	t-cal	df	t-crit	rem
		$\bar{X}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{X}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>					
	<b>Measure to Mitigate the impact of communal conflicts:</b>									
17	indigenes should be enlightened no the implications of ethnocentrism	3.2 0	0.1 1	2.8 9	1.0 0	0.0 5	0.0 5	21 8	1.9 6	A
18	indigenes should be encouraged to avoid land and boundary disputes	3.1 4	0.8 4	2.8 5	0.9 8	0.0 5	0.0 5	21 8	1.9 6	A
19	Government should set up formal and non-formal education for the indigenes	2.1 1	1.0 1	1.9 5	1.0 7	0.0 5	0.1 3	21 8	1.9 6	D

20	Government and the elites should stop playing politics with people's lives	2.9 5	0.1 2	3.1 9	0.0 3	0.0 5	0.0 6	21 8	1.9 6	A
21	Government should set up poverty alleviation programmes for the indigenes	3.5 1	0.1 5	3.0 8	0.3 1	0.0 5	0.0 8	21 8	1.9 6	A
22	Religious groups should teach indigenes the need to love one another and avoid hatred	3.1 9	0.8 2	2.9 0	0.9 6	0.0 5	0.0 4	21 8	1.9 6	A
23	Government and private sectors should provide jobs for the indigenes	3.0 0	0.1 1	3.3 4	0.0 2	0.0 5	0.0 5	21 8	1.9 6	A
24	Indigenes should be advised to bear the number children they can care for and go for family planning at the appropriate time	3.5 4	0.1 4	3.1 2	0.3 0	0.0 5	0.0 7	21 8	1.9 6	A

X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, PL = Probability Level, t-cal = t-calculate, df = degree of freedom, t-crit = t-critical, rem = remark, A = Agree, D = Disagree

The result in Table 3 shows that the mean ratings of the Cross River Tourism Bureau staff for item numbers 17-25 are 3.20, 3.14, 2.11, 2.95, 3.51, 3.19, 3.00 and 3.54 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.11, 0.84, 1.01, 0.12, 0.15, 0.82, 0.11 and 0.14 respectively. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the indigenes of the conflict communities on the above items are 2.89, 2.85, 1.95, 3.19, 3.08, 2.90, 3.34 and 3.12 with the corresponding standard deviation of 1.00, 0.98, 1.07, 0.03, 0.31, 0.96, 0.02 and 0.30 respectively.

In the table above, the t-calculated value of each item was obtained; the degree of freedom of all items was 298, while the critical t-table of 1.96 was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. From the table, it can be seen that the t-calculated values for all items were less than critical t-value. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean ratings of Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities on the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state. was accepted.

### 8. Discussion of Findings

The findings with respect to research question 1 shows that Cross River Tourism Bureau staff and indigenes of the conflict communities have same

view on the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State. They agreed that the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State are: ethnocentrism, land and boundary disputes, politics, poverty, hostility, unemployment and over population. These findings were in line with the findings made by Dunmoye (2013) for the middle belt region of Nigeria. He showed that communal conflicts in the Middle Belt zone of Nigeria are caused by land scarcity and boundary disputes, due to population pressure, alienation and concentration. The findings were also in consonance with the statement credited to Sklar (2014) that the fault lines along which communal conflicts can arise in Nigeria are manifold: ethnicity, religion, politics, distribution of riches, and modes of economic production. The findings of the study also uncovered that illiteracy was not one of the causes of communal conflicts in Cross River State.

The findings with respect to research question 2 shows that staff of Cross River Tourism Bureau and indigenes of the conflict communities have same view on the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state. They agreed that the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state include: looting of game reserve facilities, poaching of wildlife species, psychological effects on the tourists, lack of



interests to travel, collapse of business activities in tourism industry, job loss in tourism industry and decline in the number of tourists using the recreational facilities in game reserves. These findings were in concord with the statement credited to Larry & Ohara (2018) that communal conflicts have induced a decline in the number of tourists using the recreational facilities of Game Reserve/Wildlife Park in Cross River state. Furthermore, there was uncertainties in the number of patronages in the state tourism business activities due to the fear of communal conflicts. It has also triggered looting of game reserve facilities and poaching of wildlife species. However, the respondents disagreed that cancellation of many events is one of the impacts of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state.

The findings with respect to research question 3 shows that the respondents have the same view on the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state. They agreed that the measures to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state are: indigenes should be enlightened on the implications of ethnocentrism, indigenes should be encouraged to avoid land and boundary disputes, Government and the elites should stop playing politics with people's lives, Government should set up poverty alleviation programmes for the indigenes, religious groups should teach indigenes the need to love one another and avoid hatred, Government and private sectors should provide jobs for the indigenes and indigenes should be advised to bear the number children they can care for and go for family planning at the appropriate time. These findings were in harmony with the view of Udom (2020) that the government can use its might to reconcile, integrate, reconstruct and rehabilitate the warring communities with schools, markets, health care centres etc. as these will go a long way in bringing peace and sustainable economic development among the warring communities. The respondents also disagree that setting up formal and non-formal education for the indigenes by the government is a measure to mitigate the impact of communal conflicts on tourism development in Cross River state.

## 9. Conclusion

The tourism industry is a unification of various sectors offering travel related services. The uniqueness of the industry in providing many services has made it a multifaceted activity which touches many areas of human life. In other words, the tourism industry involves the business of providing tours and services for persons travelling locally and abroad. The provision of these services by different industries sets tourism as one of the global industries with the highest employer of labour. It also generates huge amount of money annually; which contributes to the economic growth of countries globally. Despite the immense benefit of the industry to Cross River State's economy, communal conflicts have jeopardized tourism industry in the state. It has instigated a decline in the number of tourist arrivals, increase in cancelled bookings, decrease in the average length of stay of tourists and the average room occupancy. Communal conflicts have psychological effects on the tourists and especially those with experiences of previous attacks and this has dampened their interests to travel. Communal conflicts have led to collapse of business activities and job loss in tourism industry in the state. It has caused a decline in the number of tourists using the recreational facilities of Game Reserve/Wildlife Park. Thus, this had resulted to a decline in revenue generation and unemployment in Cross River state. Nevertheless, the governments can collaborate with relevant stakeholders to realize community cohesion and utilize conflict preventive and control measures to make Cross River state a save heaven where the future of tourism development is assured.

## 10. Recommendations

The following recommendations are being made in this paper:

- i. The government and non-governmental organizations should organize enlightenment programmes to sensitize the people on the need for peaceful coexistence and consequences of conflicts.
- ii. Developmental programmes on skill acquisition should be conducted in the warring

communities to avail the youths of skills that will enable them be gainfully employed.

iii. The root causes of conflicts in the communities should be investigated by the appropriate authorities and solution Sorted to address the issues concerned and bring lasting peace in the area.

iv. Those who lost lives and properties in the conflict should be compensated. Even as public properties such as primary and secondary schools, medical centers, markets should be rebuilt and scholarship and employment provided for the youths etc

v. All stakeholders involved in tourism administration should device safer environment that supports continued patronage by providing modern security apparatus. In the same spirit, government as the main stake holder in security provision should do more than paying lip service to guarantee security and safety of lives and properties.

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