

# The Perils of Social Insecurity on the Economic Growth of Tourism Industry in the Niger Delta: Revisiting the Years of Turmoil, 2009- 2011

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**ABSTRACT :** The study analyses the impacts of the perils of social insecurity on the economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region in order to halt what transpired during the years of turmoil, 2009-2011, from happening again. There was boom of an internal arms race, armed gangsterism, arson, assassinations, organized kidnapping, torture and other threats, which negatively affected the growth of the tourism industry. The study adopted a survey and ex-post facto research designs. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 345 respondents for the study (Cross River, Delta and Rivers States). Among the findings, it was revealed that the prevalence of poverty, unequal access to resources, large youth populations with limited access to education or jobs, and other social factors were not unconnected with this unceasing social instability in the region. Further, that the emergence of the perils of social insecurity altered the economic structures in the region as people no longer demanded for tourism services for fear of being molested, kidnapped or killed. Many residents lived in perpetual fear of the continued agitations and youth restiveness. In addition, reprisal attacks by government security forces restricted tourism investors and tourists both domestic and international, and this led to the slump in the economic growth of tourism industry in the region. Based on these findings the study concluded that the downward trend in the economic growth of tourism industry was due to the perils of social insecurity as investors relocated their investments to safe zones away from the Niger Delta Region. As a result, the study recommended among others, that since tourism industry has become one of the fastest growing economic sectors, with its total contribution to the global economy growing faster than other significant sectors such as financial and business services, transport and manufacturing, government must ensure that appropriate security is assured and guaranteed.

**Keywords:**Economic growth; Tourism; Peril of social insecurity; Agitations and Youth restiveness; Niger Delta Region

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

There is a widely-held view that tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries accounting for about 7 percent of global locked up investment, and also a fundamental contributor to economic growth of nations. It generates billions of dollars in exports and creating millions of jobs. Essentially, the industry heavily depends

on human contact, with the sheer volume of traffic and increasing spending power which has resulted to a rapid economic boom and also boosted the business travel market (Joffres et al., 2004). Earlier agreeing to this assertion, Smith et al., (2003) maintain that tourism appears to many developing countries a promising source of economic development. Basically, it is an agent of economic and social change, a service-based industry of creating employment and income (World Tourism Organization, 1997). Evidently, tourism is of a major economic significance; visitors spending generate income for both public and private sectors, besides effecting wages and employment opportunities. Corroborating this view, Amalu and Ajake (2012) observed that about 270 million tourists spent \$92 billion (US) annually in places outside their own countries. Furthermore, they opined that with the world economic growth in visitor arrivals rate of approximately 6 percent per annum, tourism has become the most important export industry and earner of foreign exchange in many countries. Basically, looking at the benefits and relevance of tourism in terms of its economic significance, receipts from international tourism are agreed to provide a valuable source of earnings for both developed as well as developing countries (Amalu and Ajake, 2012).

Contributing to the debate, Yusuff and Akinde (2015) uphold that tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors, and its total contribution to the global economy has risen to US\$7 trillion, about 9.5 per cent of global GDP, it is not only outpacing the wider economy but also growing faster than other significant sectors such as financial and business services, transport and manufacturing. Its total contribution to growing the economy was in creating nearly 266 million jobs about 8.9 percent of world employment (Yusuff and Akinde (2015). Sustaining their position, Yusuff and Akinde argue that the sustained demand for the tourism industry has continued to show the importance and value of the sector as a tool for economic growth.

It is in acknowledging these facts that tourism experts maintain that more than \$2.5 billion would be earned by the close of 2020 from the multitude of investments plunged into the industry. However, since the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic, which the World Health Organization (WHO) first declared in January 2020, there has been a global public health and economic crisis that has affected the \$90 trillion global economy beyond anything experienced in nearly a century (James K. Jackson, et al, 2020). As a result, the estimate of more than \$2.5 billion expected to be earned by the close of 2020 is far from being realizable as the on-going global public health catastrophe (COVID 19) has affected trillions of dollars of the global economy beyond imagination. Nevertheless, with social distancing guidelines and closedown businesses that had begun opening, emphasis is at the moment being placed on protecting and supporting the tourism industry to bounceback to its prominent position. Some of the protection have to be achieved by making assurances that social insecurity does not affect tourist destinations because safety and security are fundamental aspects, which are highly prioritized by the tourists when it comes to choosing destinations.

Since the tourism industry is made up of production units, which engage in providing different services such as entertainment, lodging, production and distribution of goods and services to meet individual satisfaction, it is generally accepted that tourism is not only concerned with the activities in the accommodation and hospitality sector, but also transportation and entertainment sectors with visitor attractions, such as, theme parks, amusement parks, sports facilities, museums etc. (Isang, 2001). In other words, tourism has been closely linked to all major functions, processes and procedures that are practiced in various areas related to going to places of interest as a system. Earlier than Isang, Yu (1994) declared that most of the tourism industry, particularly the hospitality sector such as hotels in Turkey have 5,005 rooms and with a hotel manpower strength of about 2,000 men and women employed to ensure guest comforts. Prior to Yu's position, Richter (1981) affirmed that hotel is an attractive way to generate scarce foreign exchange, create jobs for semi-skilled and unskilled labour. Further corroborating this position, Simoni and Mihai (2012) averred that tourism industry involves the functions of planning, organizing, coordinating, training and monitoring - evaluating at all levels (international, national, regional, and local). Based on these revelations, tourism industry contribution to GDP, according to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) rose by 1.9 per cent in 2014 and is expected to rise from 6.1 per cent per annum from 2014 to 2024. Essentially, tourism today has become one of the engines of growth for Nigeria's economy with a contribution of 3.20 per cent to National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and providing 2.70 per cent of total employment in 2013 (WTTC, 2014).

In Nigeria, the history of organized tourism, according to Ashikodi (2010), dates back to 1962 with the creation of Nigeria Tourist Association by a group of tourism practitioners in the country. But it was in 1976 that the Federal government of Nigeria formally recognized the sector as a potential economic activity with the establishment of Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB). It is imperative to admit that the failure to create any meaningful impact on the country's tourism industry led to the creation of the Nigerian Tourism Development

Corporation (NTDC) in 1992 to replace Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB). Similarly, the government in conjunction with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2006 produced a National Tourism Development Master Plan (NTDC, 2006) to strengthen and revitalize the tourism industry (Yusuff and Akinde, 2015). The master plan, according to Yusuff and Akinde (2015) was produced in three volumes. Ever then, tourism activities had gathered momentum in Nigeria.

From the foregoing, it is clear that tourism has undisputedly been regarded as a means of economic modernization. The concept of economic modernization emphasizes improvements in various indicators, including improvement in the living standards, the quality of life as well as the security of the population. Supporting this statement, Boo (1992) says tourism has assumed the position of the world largest employer of labour and also safest of all the industries with regards to atmospheric pollution. In this globalized era, Cross (1998) has described the tourism industry as where people from different nations interact socially and by extension, physically to boost the economy of the world. As this happens, new economic relations are established thereby making tourism assume a centre stage in the economic agenda of most nations of the world. Sequel to this, attention on tourism as a critical sector of the economy has greatly increased. This is in view of its capacity to quickly stimulate economic growth. In addition, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) said that among the world's top 40 tourism earners in 1995 about 18 were developing countries including India. Going through Bhatia's (2002) study, it was quite revealing to observe the number of visitors' arrivals and the population figures of the world. France with a population of 57 million received 70 million visitors in 1998. Similarly, Spain with a population of 37 million received 47 million visitors during the same year (Bhatia, 2002). Arguably, the influx of visitors has influenced expansion and modernization of infrastructure. Implicitly, the countries and the regions having adequate infrastructure are the greatest beneficiaries of tourism.

At this juncture, it is perhaps, necessary to define what tourism entails. However, it is difficult because tourism means different things to different people; it is an abstraction of a wide range of consumption activities which demands products and services from a wide range of industries in the economy. It is in this light that one of the earliest attempts to define tourism was undertaken by Hunziker and Krapf. They held that tourism should be defined as "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected to any earning activity" (Hunziker and Krapf, 1942). On its part, a working party for the proposed Institute of Tourism in Britain (which later became the Tourism Society) attempted to clarify the issue, and reported in 1976 as follows:

*Tourism is the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work . . . it includes movement for all purposes, as well as day visits or excursions.*

Yet in another attempt, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in its International Conference of Travel and Tourism in Ottawa in 1991 stated that tourism comprises:

*The activities of a person travelling outside his or her usual environment ... and whose main purpose of travel is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from the place visited (WTO, 1991).*

However, four years later, WTO (1995) expanded its definition of tourism as "the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for no more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes", while a year later, the same time WTO (1996) states that "tourism is thus a rather general term, which can refer to the consumption of tourists, to the production units supplying goods and services particularly to tourists, or even to a set of legal units or geographical areas related in a way or other to tourists.

From the following, it is obvious that tourism is by no means a new phenomenon. Its historical origins can be located in the ancient cultures of the Greek and Roman social life. In all, it is however difficult to find a precise point in time when tourism as we understand it today began (Onor, 2015). What we know, Onor asserts, is that it evolved through time, building on the needs, and desires of society and the opportunities that were presented. Wealthy people have always travelled to distant parts of the world, to see great buildings and works of arts, learn new languages, experience new cultures, and taste different cuisines. An inscription on an Egyptian pyramid dated 1244 BC reads:

*Hadnakhte, scribe of treasury, came to make an excursion and amuse himself on the West of Memphis, together with his brother, Panahkti, scribe of the vizier (Casson, 1974).*

From the foregoing, it is undeniably a fact that the tourism industry was given momentum by the Greeks who were known to travel far and near to the extent that they had numerous contributions to the development of tourism ascribed to them (Onor, 2015). According to Chakraborty and Chakravarti (2008) cited in Onor (2015), the Greeks established the system of currency exchange as the currency of some city states was accepted outside the Greek City States; their language became the common language in the Mediterranean; they hosted festivals to attract travellers from all over the world and one important festival was the Olympic Games held to display creative athletic skills in honour of the God Zeus. According to Onor (2015), the Greek theatre was also renowned and people came from far and near to see Greek tragedies and comedies as these were a reflection of the manners and philosophy of the time. In addition, scholars came to Greece to debate with its philosophers and to exchange medical skills with physicians and men of science. Since the city states became attractions for visitors, Athens became a renowned destination boasting of hospitality facilities that provided food, accommodation and entertainment like floor shows, dancing girls and gambling. The employment of a guide, Proxeuros (usually a native), to steer the tourist away from troubled spots throughout the tourist's vacation was initiated by the Greeks.

For Ukwayi, Ojong, Eze and Emeka (2012), the employment of a guide is an expected requirement for any visitor in a tourist destination in order to be safe on holiday. This, according to them, rests on the background that tourism is a development-based industry, therefore protecting and supporting the tourist visiting any particular destination is paramount to ensure that the tourist does not feel unsafe or threatened at a holiday destination (Mthembu, 2008). Obviously, places that develop unsafe reputation have been substituted with alternative destinations that are safer for tourists. In the event of insecurity, the tourists might decide not to visit again or inform various other prospective visitors about these negative experiences, and this could be very damaging to the destination's tourism industry and could in the long run result in the decline of tourism to the area (Pizam and Mansfeld 2006). Unfortunately, one of the most distinctive features of the tourism industry is that tourists cannot 'test-drive' a holiday beforehand (Ukwayi, et al., 2015) as one would test-drive a car before purchasing.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The influence of the tourism industry has been seen as a means of enhancing economic growth of nations. Evidently, the industry has contributed positively to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) thereby improving the economies of many nations. However, it has been observed that places that develop unsafe reputation could be substituted by alternative destinations that are perceived as safer for tourists. Niger Delta region is a vast area richly endowed with ecological and cultural resources. The region offers a variety of tourist attractions such as many rivers and ocean beaches. There are also other water sports, unique and diverse wildlife, vast tracts of unspoiled nature from tropical forest magnificent waterfalls and climatic conditions in some parts particularly conducive for holidaying. Other attractions include traditional ways of life, local customs, rich and varied handicrafts and other colourful products depicting native arts and lifestyle and the authentic unsophisticated but friendly disposition of many of the Nigerian populace. But it is rather unfortunate that the involvement of tourism in the economic growth of the region coincided precisely with youth restiveness, oil bunkering, kidnapping and military confrontations. With the perils of insecurity observable in all nooks and crannies of the region, the tourists on ground, through the social media shared their horrifying and off-putting experiences to prospective tourists. These reports which were circulated through all the emerging social media platforms were very damaging to all the destination's tourism points in the Niger Delta. Having the image of the region presented by the international media as that of an insecure region prompted foreign embassies to raise the "red flag" before any of its citizens could develop interest in visiting the region. But this was the reality that the region had to face during those years of anarchy. In the long run, the growth of the economy from the tourism sector declined considerably due to the ugly experiences during this epoch.

### **1.2 Objective of the study**

The main objective of this study was to examine the impacts of the perils of social insecurity on economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011.

### **1.3 Research question**

The study was guided by one research question:

What are the impacts of the perils of social insecurity on economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011?

#### 1.4 Research hypothesis

A hypothesis is an educated guess of the answer that the study will find to the research problem. It assists in the investigation about the research problem and also in establishing relationship. Sequel to this, the study formulated one hypothesis to guide the study. It is postulated thus:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the peril of social insecurity and the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011 ( $P < 0.05$ )

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant difference between the peril of social insecurity and the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011 ( $P < 0.05$ )

## 2. Review of Related Literatures

### The Concept of Tourism Industry and Economic Growth

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and although Nigeria is reaping some of the benefits of this trend, the sector still remains threatened by social insecurity. However, its contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), according to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) rose by 1.9 per cent in 2014 and expected to rise by 6.1 per cent per annum from 2014 to 2024. In Nigeria, tourism has become one of the engines of growth for Nigerian economy with a contribution of 3.20 per cent to National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and providing 2.70 per cent of total employment in 2013(WTTC, 2014). Six years after this statistics, there has been an exponential growth in its contribution to National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and this seems to explain the *raison d'être* why various states' governments are investing much in the establishment of tourism sites as well as in the hospitality industry. In the same vein, government and other corporate organizations are upgrading abandoned tourism sites in different locations in the country in the bid to boost the economy. Thus, the substantial growth of the tourism activity clearly marks tourism as one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the past century (Ajake, and Amalu (2012). According to Ajake, and Amalu (2012), the number of international arrivals shows an evolution from a mere 25 million international arrivals in 1950 to an estimated 806 million in 2005, corresponding to an average annual growth rate of 6.5%. During this period, development was particularly strong in Asia and the Pacific (13% on average a year) and in the Middle East (10%) while the Americas (5%) and Europe (6%), grew at a slower pace and slightly below the world's average growth.

Basically, the development of the tourism industry has been rapid and all-embracing in the last sixty years. As an essential service industry in most countries of the world, more than ever it is attracting a large tourist trade, and boosting global economy by making heavy investment in modernizing facilities, including building more new structures with larger guest rooms, as well as parking areas and swimming pools. It is this vein that the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1998) estimated that the industry grew by about 2.5 percent per annum, and in the subsequent year, there were about 12.2 million rooms worldwide and occupancy rates varied, but they averaged about 65 percent overall. From this, it is generally accepted that big cities like London, Beijing, New York, San Francisco, Hawaii, the Caribbean area, and the city of Las Vegas are known for higher occupancy rates (Eja, Oto, Yaro, and Inyang (2011). Supporting this assertion, Griffin (2004) said hotel accommodations are heavily concentrated in Europe and North America, with Europe accounting for 44.7 percent of the world's room supply and the United States 27 percent, while East Asia and the Pacific region accounted for 12.7 percent, Africa 3.1 percent, Middle East 1.5 percent, and South Asia 1.2 percent. According to the America Hotel and Motel Association (AH & MA) analysis, the lodging industry in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union which included hotels, motels, suites and resort properties enjoyed its most successful and profitable year in 1997. Writing, Nixon (2003) pointed out that the economy growth of the tourism industry increased from an estimated \$71 billion in 1995 to over \$85 billion in 1997. In his contribution, Werner (2003) affirmed that many hotels engaged more in international activities, with the motivation of increasing sales on the one hand and decreasing cost and risks on the other. By this, he submitted that the same motivation also led hotel firms to operate in an international context and expanded their international activities through various internalization forms that included strategic alliances, acquisitions, hotel consortia, mergers, direct ownerships, joint ventures, management contracts and franchising. Corroborating, Lawson (2004) opined that in 1997 the tourism industry in U.S pretax profits were \$17billion, nearly 40 percent more than the industry's \$12.5 billion in 1996 and double the amount earned in 1995. Similarly, Kim (2006) supported

Werner's ideas and pointed out that the tourism industry today has grown beyond the countries of domestic markets and is playing a key role in the development and continuity of the international tourism industry.

From the foregoing, tourism, though a new phenomenon in the economic world, has been a major driver of economic growth, particularly in the Western society; it is an alternative strategy for sustainability and diversification of economy for important policy of a good government. Writing, WTO, (2003) viewed the tourism industry as one of the fastest growing sectors of the world economy. In essence, tourism has of recent made giant strides in the development of the country. The primary purpose of promoting tourism in developing countries is multidimensional; it ranges from earning foreign currency, ending unemployment, serving as a potent instrument for eliminating poverty, promoting dialogue among civilizations and providing channels in which streams of different culture could meet and mingle and create a new ethic-scope on which a fair, just, humane and enlightened order could be built for the entire human race. Basically, tourism plays an extremely important role in the economic growth of most countries in the world.

Over the past decades, tourism has become the largest industry worldwide in terms of employment and global gross domestic products. The tourism industry has been very dynamic and fast growing over the past three decades. This sector has so far created opportunities in areas characterized by natural attractions, wildlife and wilderness habitats. In other words, tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon and has become one of the largest industries in the world. The impact of tourism varies extremely. On one hand, it plays an important role in the socio economic and political development in destination countries, for instance by offering new employment opportunities. Also, in certain instances, it may contribute to a broader cultural understanding by creating awareness, respecting the diversity of cultures and ways of life. In recent times, tourism is one of the largest industries that have contributed to the economic growth of many countries especially countries where tourism is the mainstay of her economy, World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1998; cited in Eja et al, 2012 and Ojo, 2014). Basically, tourism is a catalyst for enhancing the employment opportunities, foreign exchange and infrastructural facilities of many countries (ESCAP, 2002; cited in Ejaetal, 2012).

Lending credence to this submission, Aliquah and Al-rfou (2010) corroborated the findings by applying descriptive statistical approach to determine the impact of the tourism sector on economic growth in Jordan. The results revealed that the tourism sector witnessed significant economic growth in services, infrastructure, legislations, institutional framework and the number of tourist arrivals between 1990 and 2008. In addition, their study revealed that the 1990-2008 tourism sector contributions to GDP varied from 12.3 per cent to 14.6 per cent. In a similar study, Mishra et.al (2011) found that the causality between tourism and economic growth in India was a long run unidirectional causality from tourism activities to economic growth of the country. In the same vein, Makochekanwa (n.d) viewed tourism contribution to economic growth of Southern African Development Community (SADC) and found that the contribution of tourism to GDP, employment, export receipts and investment was significant, though the sector's contribution to the economy varies among SADC countries. However, the study of Fayissa et.al (2007) using panel data of 42 African countries showed that receipts from tourism industry significantly contributed to economic growth of Sub-Saharan African countries. Furthermore, Seetanah et.al (2011) using panel auto regressive model investigated the dynamic and endogenous contribution of tourism to output based on 40 African countries for the period 1990-2006, and revealed that tourism contributed largely to African development, although private investment, openness and human capital remains the main drivers. In a nutshell, Samimi et.al (2011) as well as Havi and Enu (2013) also found positive relationships between economic growth and tourism.

Though the tourism industry is a relatively new phenomenon in international economic trades, but nowadays it plays a significant role in the economic growth of many countries. While agreeing wholeheartedly with Khalil et.al (2007) that investigated and revealed a strong relationship among tourism, receipts and economic expansion to explain that economic expansion was necessary for tourism development in Pakistan, it is important to hold that in the short run economic development for Pakistan economy grew. In a similar strand, Zortuk (2009) discovered a unidirectional causality from tourism development to economic development when he examined the relationship between expansion in tourism and economic growth in Turkey with Granger Causality Test based on vector error correction model (VECM). Finally, the study of Kreisan (2010) on the causality relations between tourism earnings and economic growth for Jordan also revealed that there was a positive relationship between tourism development and economic development in the long run. Nigeria tourism sector is therefore growing and it is capable of boosting the country's economic growth.

The Niger Delta region has the potential to become one of the main tourist attractions in the world. With a strong tourism industry, the region can play an effective economic role in the country. From the point of earnings, tourism is the largest service industry in the world. As a result of its importance, its growth has led to many economic changes. However, the main stimulus behind the growth of the tourism industry in many countries has been its economic benefits. According to Larry (2007) earnings of all countries from international tourism in 1950 was 2.1 billion US dollars. This figure reached \$856 billion in 2007 and expected to hit one trillion dollars in 2010 (Soleymani, 2008). However, the impacts of Nigeria's social insecurity level on the economy growth of tourism remain almost unquantifiable. The President of Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), Dr. Herbert Ajayi says no fewer than 800 companies in Nigeria closed between 2009 and 2011 due to harsh operating business environment and social insecurity. In line with the above, it followed that within the last few years, social insecurity in Niger Delta has arguably fuelled youth restiveness, leaving unpalatable consequences for the nation's economy and its growth. The peril of social insecurity implies the presence of fear and absence of economic or physical protection for persons, buildings, organizations or country against destruction or threats like crime or attacks. The massive loss of lives amounts to a huge loss of manpower and generally reduced labour productivity. For Shiklam (2012), the impacts of the peril of social insecurity forced investors in the tourism industry to look elsewhere, especially at places like Abuja since tourism does not thrive in an environment characterized by social insecurity and violence. Like the Niger Delta, the increasing level of social insecurity occasioned by the unwholesome activities of Boko Haram in Borno, Yobe, Kano, and even Kaduna states have also adversely affected tourism business activities.

### 3. Research Methods

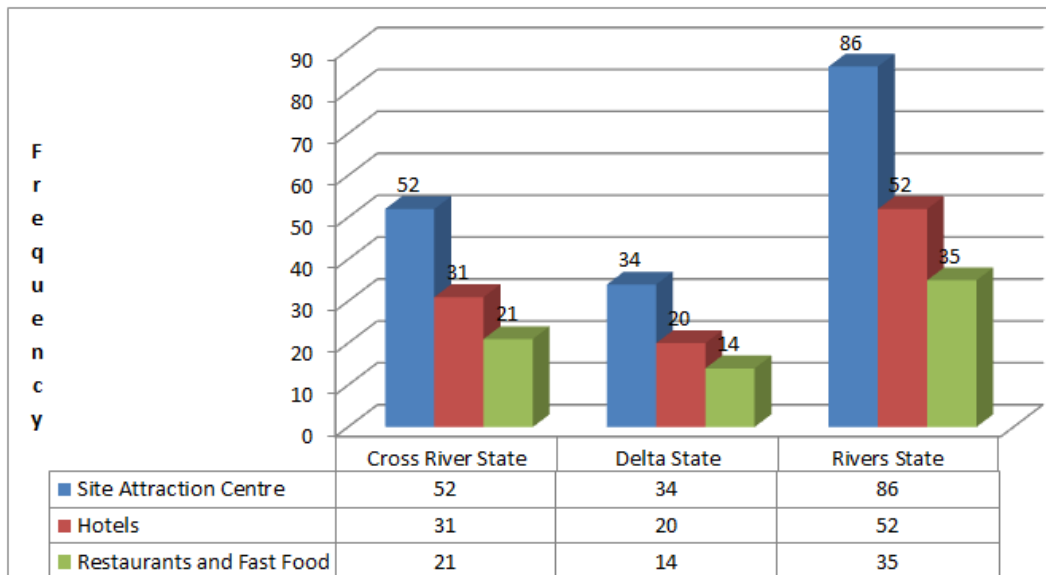
The study adopted ex post-facto and survey research designs. The three industries were purposively selected because they are the dominant businesses within the tourism and hospitality industry. According to Porter and Carter (2000), ex post facto research studies investigate events that have already happened in an attempt to describe and understand those events. It is also referred to as retrospective study. In this study, incidences of the perils of insecurity on economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta from 2009 to 2011 had already taken place in Niger-Delta region under study, hence the suitability of ex post facto design. The survey design on the other hand is a research design which studies samples from populations (Universe) to discover relative frequency or occurrence, distribution and interrelation of the variables. It is aimed at having a general opinion, attitude and feelings about a particular problem (Kerlinger, 1993). It is therefore very suitable for current study which seeks to ascertain from a sampled population of Niger Delta area impact of social insecurity on tourism and hospitality industry. The population of study was three hundred and forty-five (345) respondents selected through the purposive sampling technique. The respondents, mainly tourist industry operators, regulators and tourists constituted the sample respondents. The structured questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection. It consisted of questions, divided into 2 sections. Section A had three questions that focused mainly on the gender, age, and educational qualification of the respondents. The other questions examined respondents understanding of the one research question formulated to guide the study. By this, it is obvious that primary data collection was through questionnaire administration, interviews and observations, while secondary sources were from textbooks, journals and Internet.

#### 3.1 Data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on nature of business by states and industries

| S/N | State       | Tourism and Hospitality Industries |     |        |     |                          |     | Total |
|-----|-------------|------------------------------------|-----|--------|-----|--------------------------|-----|-------|
|     |             | Site Attraction                    |     | Hotels |     | Restaurant and Fast Food |     |       |
|     |             | Centre                             |     |        |     |                          |     |       |
|     |             | Freq                               | %   | Freq   | %   | Freq                     | %   |       |
| 1   | Cross River | 52                                 | 30  | 31     | 30  | 24                       | 30  | 104   |
| 2   | Delta       | 34                                 | 20  | 20     | 19  | 14                       | 20  | 68    |
| 3   | Rivers      | 86                                 | 50  | 52     | 30  | 35                       | 20  | 173   |
|     | Total       | 172                                | 100 | 103    | 100 | 70                       | 100 | 345   |

Source: Researcher's Survey Data, 2019. (N = 345)



**Fig. 1: A multiple bar chart showing the distribution of respondents based on nature of business by states and industries**

Table 1 of the study documents the distribution of respondents based on the nature of business by states. In each of the states, the blue bars represented site attraction centres, the yellow bars represented hotels; the green bars represented restaurants and fast food. Specifically, in Cross River State, operators in site attraction centre (private and public) were 53 (30%), those in hotels (private and public) were 31 (30%) while in restaurants and fast food, were 21 (30%) operators making a total number of 104 operators in the state. In Delta State, operators in site attraction centres were 34 (20%), those in hotel industry were 20 (19%) and the operators in restaurants and fast food were 14 (20%). This summed it up to a total number of 68 operators sampled in the state. In Rivers State, a total number of 173 operators were sampled with this distribution: site attraction centres had 86 (50%), hotel industry had 52 (30%) operators while there were 35 (20%) operators in restaurant and fast food industries. From these distributions in the three states, the site attraction centre had more operators followed by the operators in hotel business and those in restaurant and fast food business. This distribution was also in response to the proportional ratio of sample size distribution. For the purpose of clarity, a simple bar chart is used to illustrate the information above.

### 3.2 Analysis of Research Question

Research Question 1: What are the impacts of the perils of insecurity on economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on how the perils of insecurity affected the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region



| S/N   | Questionnaire Statements  | Mean scores |                   | Standard Deviation |                   | Rating Based on Mean scores of 2009-2011 Items Rank Order |                  | Remark based on mean scores of 2009-2011 |
|---|---|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|------------------|--|
|   |   | Before 2009 | After (2009-2011) | Before 2009        | After (2009-2011) | Items   | Rank Order       |  |
|   |   |             |                   |                    |                   |   |                  |  |
| 1.  | People were more relaxed and lived longer   | 2.54        | 2.37              | 1.09               | 1.16              | 7   | 1 <sup>st</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 2.  | Many people were able to have access to education   | 2.86        | 2.20              | 1.08               | 1.02              | 8   | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 3.  | Between 2009 and 2011 poverty was low.  | 2.96        | 2.19              | 0.96               | 1.10              | 9   | 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 4.  | Fear and lack of freedom of movement was not experienced                                    | 3.56        | 2.18              | 1.06               | 1.04              | 10  | 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 5.  | Education was not badly affected as people changed locations or were forced to stay indoors | 3.21        | 2.17              | 1.58               | 1.06              | 11  | 5 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 6.  | Unemployment and retrenchment was not rampant   | 3.14        | 2.17              | 1.09               | 1.02              | 12  | 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 7.  | Life expectancy was high  | 3.05        | 2.17              | 0.85               | 0.98              | 2   | 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 8.  | More freedom of movement  | 3.14        | 2.16              | 0.98               | 1.03              | 13  | 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 9.  | Literacy level was high   | 2.93        | 2.15              | 1.05               | 1.02              | 14  | 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 10.   | Level of employment was high  | 2.92        | 2.14              | 1.07               | 1.02              | 5   | 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Reject                                   |
| 11.   | Personal dignity was high   | 2.77        | 2.14              | 1.01               | 1.09              | 15  | 11 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 12.   | More freedom of association   | 2.81        | 2.13              | 1.02               | 1.06              | 16  | 12 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 13.   | More personal safety  | 2.79        | 2.12              | 1.05               | 0.99              | 17  | 13 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 14.   | Low freedom from fear   | 2.86        | 2.11              | 1.60               | 1.03              | 18  | 14 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 15.   | Fear of physical harm was low   | 2.67        | 2.10              | 0.95               | 1.00              | 6   | 14 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 16.   | Participation in civil society activities was high  | 2.84        | 2.10              | 0.99               | 0.97              | 3   | 16 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 17.   | Employment generation was high  | 2.69        | 2.10              | 1.10               | 1.00              | 4   | 17 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 18.   | Growth in size of economy was high  | 2.78        | 2.09              | 1.01               | 1.13              | 1   | 18 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| 19.   | Level of home ownership was high  | 2.63        | 1.94              | 1.08               | 0.99              | 19  | 19 <sup>th</sup> | Reject                                   |
| <b>Average mean and standard deviation Scores</b> |   | <b>2.82</b> | <b>2.13</b>       | <b>0.92</b>        | <b>1.04</b>       |   |                  | <b>Reject</b>                            |

Source: Researcher's Survey Data, 2019.

(N = 345)

As documented in Table 2, nineteen questionnaire statements were raised to address research question five which centred on how social insecurity had affected economic growth of tourism and hospitality industries in Niger Delta region within the period of study. The table also reported the individual item mean scores of before and after 2011 (being the period of study). Based on the responses of the operators the economic growth indicators revealed that items such as people were more relaxed and lived longer ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.37; SD = 1.16), many people were able to have access to education ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.20 SD = 1.02), within 2009 to 2011 poverty was low and life expectancy was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.19; SD = 1.10), fear and lack of freedom of movement was not experienced ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.18; SD = 1.04) education was not badly affected as people were not forced to stay indoors ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.17; SD = 1.06) and unemployment and retrenchment was not rampant ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.17; SD = 1.02), life expectancy was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.17; SD = 0.98), more freedom of movement ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.16, SD = 1.03), literacy level was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.15, SD = 1.02), level of employment was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.14, SD = 1.02), personal dignity was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.14, SD = 1.09), more freedom of association ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.13, SD = 1.06), more personal safety ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.12, SD = 0.99), low freedom from fear ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.11, SD = 1.03), fear of physical harm was low ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.10, SD = 1.00), participation in civil society activities was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.10, SD = 0.97), employment generation was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.10, SD = 1.00), growth in size of economy was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 2.09, SD = 1.13) and level of home ownership was high ( $\bar{x}$  = 1.94, SD = 0.99).

From the above results, the mean scores of the opinions of the operators with respect to questionnaire statements were below the criterion mean score of 2.5, therefore all the items were rejected as responses to the research question. This indicated that the peril of social insecurity negatively affected the economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region within the period of study (2009– 2011). The average mean scores of 2.82 and 2.13 for before 2009 and after 2011 were confirmations to the above assertion. For the purpose of having a graphical view of the effect of the peril of social insecurity on the economic growth in tourism industry during the period of the study (2009– 2011), simple bar chart was used for illustration.

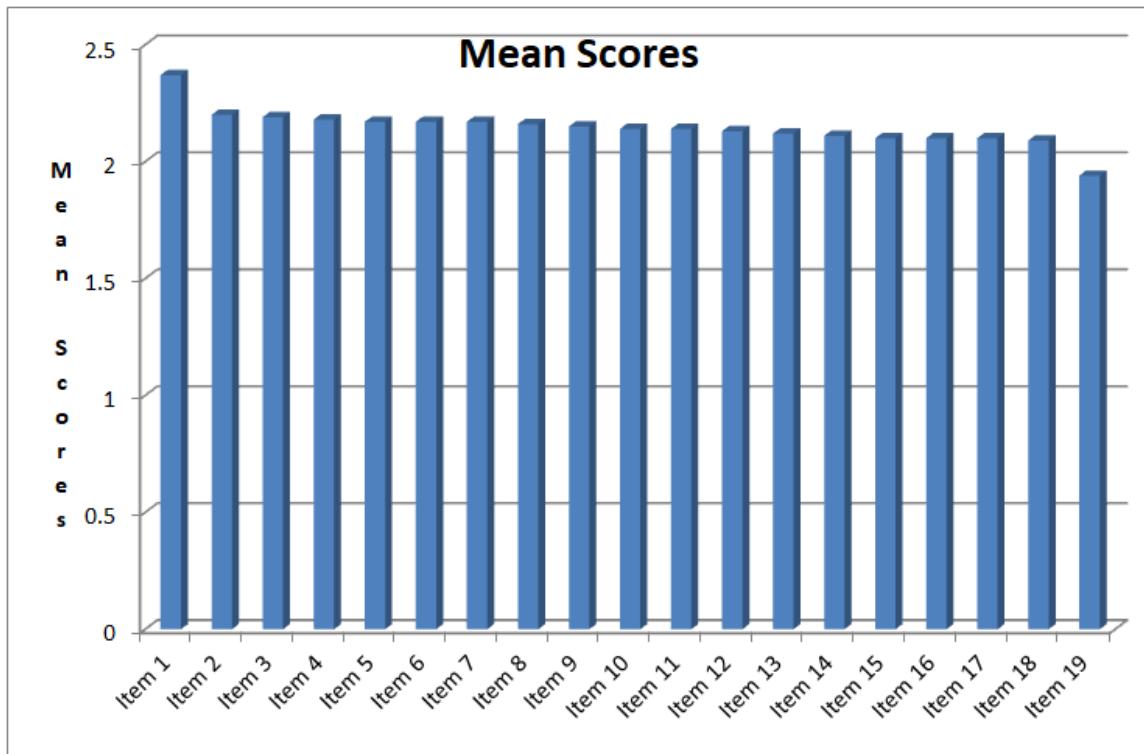


Fig. 2: Trend analysis of the perils of social insecurity on economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region

Figure 2 of the study revealed the trend analysis of the perils of social insecurity on economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region (NDR). The figure showed that items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 were adjudged in descending order of magnitude, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th showing decline or downward slope of economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region.

In essence, this implied that economic growth of tourism industry was retarded as revealed by the descending order of the respondents' responses: people were less relaxed and do not live longer and unable to have access to education, poverty was high and life expectancy was low, fear and lack of freedom of movement was experienced, education was badly affected as people were forced to stay indoors and unemployment and retrenchment was rampant, life expectancy was not high, literacy level was low, level of employment was low, personal dignity was not high, more freedom of movement, low freedom of association, low personal safety, low freedom from fear, fear of physical harm was high, participation in civil society activities was low, employment generation was high, growth in size of economy was high and level of home ownership was high within the period of study (2009 to 2011).

However, conditions of life in Niger Delta region prior to 2009 were in opposite direction with what the situations were between 2009 and 2011. The responses of the respondents supported the assertion that life conditions of the Niger Delta region were accepted in favour of the subject matter. This is as a result of high mean scores that characterized the questionnaire statements which outweighed the cut-off point of 2.50. From the analysis, all the items under the category before 2009 were accepted in favour of the conditions of life in Niger Delta region. In a nutshell, the perils of social insecurity affected economic growth of tourism industry.

The average mean scores of 2.82 and 2.13 before 2009 and after 2011 were confirmations to the above assertion. For the purpose of having a graphical view of the effect of the peril of social insecurity on the economic growth in tourism industry during the period of the study (2009 – 2011, simple bar chart was used for illustration.

### 3.3 Test of hypothesis

The hypothesis was postulated in statement form and translated into null form so as to subject the hypothesis into statistical test using z-test. In this study, there are two major variables, the independent and dependent. The independent variable was the perils of insecurity, while economic growth in tourism industry was the

dependent variable. The dependent variable was tested against the independent variables (the perils of social insecurity) in line with the objective of the study.

**Hypothesis 1**

H<sub>0</sub>: There was a significant difference between the peril of social insecurity and the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011 (P < 0.05)

H<sub>1</sub>: There was no significant difference between the peril of social insecurity and the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011 (P < 0.05)

Table 3: z--test of significant difference between the perils of social insecurity and economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region within 2009 to 2011

| S/ N | Variable                    | N   | Mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) | SD   | SE   | z-cal | z-tab | DF  | Alpha level | Decision   |
|------|-----------------------------|-----|--------------------|------|------|-------|-------|-----|-------------|--|
| 1.   | Perils of social insecurity | 345 | 2.92               | 1.02 | 0.06 | 1.42  | ±0.78 | 343 | 0.05        | Reject Ho<br>(z-cal > z-tab statistically significant) |
| 2.   | Economic growth             | 345 | 2.14               | 1.04 | 0.05 |       |       |     |             |  |

Source: Researchers' Survey Data, 2019.

As reported in Table 3 of the study, the hypothesis was tested with 2.92 and 2.14 mean scores and 1.02 and 1.04 for standard deviation values for peril of social insecurity and economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region. The result of the test revealed that the values of z-cal and z-tab were 1.42 and 0.78 respectively at 0.05 of degrees of freedom and level of significance respectively.

The result revealed that z-cal was greater than z-tab (1.42 > 0.78), therefore the statistical difference between perils of social insecurity and economic growth was significant. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. Therefore, there was significant difference between perils of social insecurity and economic growth in Niger Delta region within the period of study (2009– 2011). This also supported the initial claim that the higher the level of the peril of social insecurity, the lower the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger Delta region.

**4. Discussion**

From the research question posed and hypothesis formulated for the study, the perils of social insecurity affected economic growth of tourism industry in the Niger Delta region. From table 1, the economic growth of tourism industry in Niger-Delta Region within 2009-2011 was found to have been negatively affected by the perils of social insecurity. Essentially, respondents who witnessed the perils of social insecurity reported that the economic growth of tourism industry in the region was low. For example, the analysis of results showed that economic growth declined as perils of social insecurity increased. The perils of social insecurity frustrated economic growth.

In addition, the perils of social insecurity which prevailed in Niger Delta region within the period of study (2009-2011) was supported by the average mean and standard deviation scores of 2.93 and 1.01 respectively. This finding was indicated in respondents' answers concerning fear of movement and molestation, increase in the presence of police, and other security agents, fear of being kidnapped or taken hostage, non-arrival of tourists, and early close of business. Furthermore, as a result of the perils of social insecurity, allied businesses were not registered due to unimproved earnings; businesses were closed down due to low patronage. There were reductions in number of tourists and customers which impacted negatively on lodging (accommodation) resulting in the difficulty of payment of salaries. Besides, there were also retrenchment of workers, including the grounding of vehicles and other amenities. Above all, banks refused to give credit facilities to tourism operators in the region.

Furthermore, Table 2 revealed that a high negative impact was experienced on growth of tourism industry. The influence as revealed in table 2 points out that patronage to the industry was lowered as tourists arrivals drastically reduced. In line with the result, Olawale (2009) said 73.3% of businesses closed operations. In addition, the ripple effect of the perils of social insecurity extended to loss of jobs and reduced staff morale and productivity as the tourism sector was also hard hit since it was difficult to convince tourists to come to a destination in Niger Delta due to frequent disturbing agitations reports in the international media. Again, there was a significant difference between the perils of social insecurity and level of economic growth in the tourism industry in Niger Delta region within the period of study; hence, the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis

that the higher the level of the perils of social insecurity, the lower the level of economic growth in the tourism industry in Niger Delta regions within the period of study. In a related development, Nnajieta (2008) reported in his study that many residents lived in perpetual fear of the unknown as the peril of social insecurity continued to attack the city as they restricted their business activities to areas where they felt safe. A source at one of the leading hotels in Rivers State lamented that since, the reprisal attacks that trailed the state; there had been very low patronage. In relation to the effect of the perils of social insecurity on economic growth of tourism, one of the operators remarked thus:

*"As you can see, the whole place is looking empty; we don't have customers as we used to have because people are afraid of coming to the region."*

Yet another respondent said:

*"No any serious event, meeting or occasion that could bring people to the region is holding, so business is on the decline," said the source. "Sincerely business is not thriving at all in the region".*

Judging from the foregoing, it was clear that the downward trend in the economic growth of tourism industry could be attributed to the perils of social insecurity ensuing from the youth restiveness in the region. It forced investors to relocate their operational offices away from the Niger Delta Region. In addition, the number of tourists reduced drastically, and the industry including its allied businesses lost patronage. The respondents interviewed at the field of study pointed out that the impact of the perils of social insecurity evidently led to the downturn in the economic growth of tourism in the region.

From the foregoing findings, we could argue that the emergence of the perils of social insecurity in the region altered the economic structures as people could no longer demand for tourism services due to fear of being molested, kidnapped or killed. Mass retrenchment of skilled labour and even lack of fund crippled the system. Investors both domestic and international withdrew their investments. These findings which consequently lowered economic growth in the tourism industry were in line with Onuoha's (2012) observations that many investors and tourists were scared to death by the horrifying peril of social insecurity situation in the region. Jackson Philip, a respondent in a response to oral interview said:

*"Besides, at those moment of problem in our society, most private and government construction work in the state are at a standstill. Few companies were then found at their sites"*

Narrating further, he stated that:

*"The business environment was very dull and there was so much uncertainty. You were scared each day you woke up because you were afraid of what might happen during the day. You were very careful of places you would have ordinarily have gone; the fear of being caught in the wrong place if anything happened"*

Basically, it was clear that the fundamental, reason for the poor economic growth of tourism industry in the region was the fact that the image of the region presented by the international media was that of an insecure region which foreign embassies were in a hurry to raise the "red flag" before any of its citizens had interest in visiting. But this was the reality that the region had to face during those years of anarchy.

## 5. Conclusion

This study examined the perils of social insecurity on the economic growth of tourism in Niger Delta region within the period 2009 to 2011. Prior to this era, the immense impacts of the tourism industry on the economic growth of the Niger Delta region were recognized by several states and the federal government of Nigeria after having observed how one of the states in the region, precisely Cross River State, under the leadership of the erstwhile governor, Donald Duke, changed the narrative of tourism industry in the entire Niger Delta region, and the country as a whole. The effort towards diversifying the economy of the region was commendable, particularly as it concerned the economic growth of the Niger Delta region. Admittedly, tourism is a social activity that involves travel by individual or group to stay outside their usual environment within a period not too long, for the purpose of satisfying leisure, business or other needs thereby boosting the economic growth appreciably within a short span of time. But in the Niger Delta region, the results of the study showed that the economic growth of tourism industry was retarded as revealed by the descending order of the responses: people were not relaxed and of course, did not live longer in the region. There was no access to education, poverty was high and life expectancy low; there was equally no freedom of movement. Again, low freedom of association, low personal safety, fear of physical harm as well as the low participation in civil society activities within the period of study (2009 to 2011). By implication, perils of social insecurity frustrated economic growth and as the insecurity situation increased loop the economic growth of tourism declined considerably.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are not just prescriptive but made to serve as reference point for economic growth within the tourism industry.

- a) Government should improve the tourism industry for economic growth in order for tourists to benefits, in compliance with international law, from the liberty to move from any state of the Niger Delta to another, in accordance with Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition, tourists should have access to all available forms of communication, internal or external. Again, government should also ensure that tourists have prompt and easy access to appropriate security as well as being free to contact the consular representatives of their countries of origin in compliance with the diplomatic conventions.
- b) Furthermore, government should be proactive by improving social security situation in the region as a means to attracting more tourists. Since it is government's responsibility to inform tourists of the difficult security situations in their regions, every effort should be directed at discouraging other tourists or even delay their arrivals. Alternatively, government could advise both investors and tourists to change their destinations until security is assured. This approach will show that government is genuinely interested in both investors and tourists' security and safety.
- c) The press, particularly those reporting tourism should always report honest and balanced information on events and situations that could influence the flow of tourists. They should also provide accurate and reliable information to the consumers of tourism services.
- d) Finally, since tourists give high priority to safety and security in deciding destinations, adequate security should be given primary attention. In addition, tourists should be encouraged to walk in groups in order to mitigate the resultant effects of insecurity, namely, kidnapping, and robbery amongst others.

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