

# Investigating the Socio-economic Effect on Tourism in Ghana

**Augustine Antwi Boasiako<sup>1</sup>, Francis Kofi Sobre Frimpong<sup>2, \*</sup>, Isaac Yeboah<sup>3</sup>, Linda Anane-Donkor<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Economics, Marketing and Services, Pentecost University, Accra, Ghana

<sup>2</sup>Department of Accounting, Kaaf University College, Accra, Ghana

<sup>3</sup>College of Foundation of Professional Studies, Pentecost University, Accra, Ghana

## Abstract

The tourism industry has increasingly become an important contributor to the development of the Ghanaian economy. This study examined the impact of tourism on socio-economic performance in Ghana. A sample of two (2) local tourist attractions were used, namely, Kwame Nkrumah mausoleum in Accra and Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast. The sample population of the study was 549. The research adopted mixed method approach by using both qualitative and quantitative method to get a good and balanced view of the research. Mean, frequency and standard deviation were used for the analysis. With the assistance of Microsoft Excel applications and statistic SPSS software the data collected from the field were analyzed well. The model of structural equations was used to measure tourism's effect on community indicators (i.e. variables relating to conditions of the community). The association between tourism, aid and covariates were used by Pearson. In addition, tables and measurements of key medium, mode and medium tendencies were used. The qualitatively interviewees were tape recorded and later transcribed. It was realized that both qualitative and quantitative method gave the results positively and negatively but the positive side outweighed the negative about local economy at the micro level. The result of the study indicated that tourism had a positive effect on community indicators, namely economic and infrastructural development, change in language, peace, child labour, crime, and prostitution. Of items measuring positive socio-cultural effects, "Tourism has stimulated cultural exchange" (Mean = 4.22; SD = 1.03) accounted for the largest mean score, followed by "Tourism helps in sustaining the quality of our social and cultural assets" (Mean = 4.17; SD = 0.99). Positive socio-cultural effects produced a mean score of 37 (Mean = 36.63; SD = 5.95), which represents about 81% of the maximum scale score of 45.

## Keywords

Tourism, Socio Economic, Infrastructure Development, Economic Performance, Community indicators, Child Labour, Crime, Prostitution

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## 1. Introduction

The socio-economic effects of tourism have attracted tones of academic and interests in recent times [29]. Tourism industry was one of the important economic activity in most countries around the world until the advent of COVID-19 pandemic. Recognized as one of the significant drivers of the service sector, the industry offers the prospect to diversify the

economy which over the years has been dependent on primary commodities from the extractive industry. In recent years, governments worldwide are being encouraged to revamp their various tourist destinations as part of their development agenda [38, 13]. The council indicated that domestic tourism as the key catalyst for action, accounting

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail address: [sobrefrimpong@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sobrefrimpong@yahoo.co.uk) (F. K. S. Frimpong)

for about 73 percent of total global Travel and Tourism spending in 2017 [38].

The tourism sector has increasingly become an important contributor to the development of the Ghanaian economy. According to WTTC [39], the total contribution of the travel and tourism industry to Ghana's GDP in 2017 grew by 4.9% representing 0.9% above the world growth rate of 4%. The data from the Ghana Tourism Authority, the number of foreign tourists visited the country increased from 456,275 in 2000 to 980,100 as at the end of 2017. Tourism receipts also increased from US\$289,500 million in 2000 to a total of US\$1854.8 million in 2017. The country's best selling point such as the beaches, the castles of the coast and a range of cultural and traditional events. However, there still remains much to be seen with regards to tourism development on the African continent due the advent of COVID-19 pandemic.

According to, tourism industry's main comparative advantage over other sectors has to do with the fact that visitors' expenditures have a flow-through or catalytic effect across the economy of a country in terms of production and employment creation WTTC [39].

In Ghana, the government's 15-Year National Tourism Development Plan (2013-2027) assesses how tourism can contribute to the national development discourse and how the sector can be enhanced as one of the leading sectors for environmental conservation, employment creation, revenue generation, and fostering national cohesion [39]. The plan aims at positioning tourism as one of the dynamic economic sectors that can play a more significant role in sustainable economic development and poverty reduction [9, 13]. Ghana leads its West African neighbours as the number one tourist destination [9, 28, 34]. Such a tendency often leads to the increased cost of living among the host communities, given that both the locals and tourists have to share the same infrastructures [27].

Moreover, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), Economic Impact Report 2017 on Ghana, estimates the country's visitor exports at US\$929.5 million in 2017 up from US\$580 million in 2013. This indicates that, tourism seems to be the next higher earner of foreign exchange after the traditional commodity exports [21]. Therefore, the sector can provide an opportunity to diversify the Ghanaian economy looking at its contribution to export revenue. This paper therefore seeks to examine and expose the socio-cultural and economic impacts of tourism from the residents of two host communities in Ghana – Accra and Cape Coast.

This paper seeks to examine the impact of socio-economic performance in the tourism industry with respect to Kwame Nkrumah mausoleum in Accra and Cape Coast Castle in

Cape Coast. The study contributes to the limited body of researches available on the subject in the Ghanaian context.

## 2. Literature Review

A number of studies have been undertaken into the development of tourism impact on the economy of Ghana. Nonetheless, the interface between tourism and economic growth of the community is complex and challenging to be defined inclusively [13]. This emphasizes the observation that tourism is a complex, globalised phenomenon with demonstrated socio-economic importance [8, 13].

Thirumoorthi et al [35], defined tourism as 'the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations and the facilities created to cater for their needs'. The International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism (1981) also defined tourism as 'in terms of particular activities selected by choice and undertaken outside the home' [7]. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) identifying the challenging in arriving at precise definition for tourism, came up with a definition of tourism as 'a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for less than a year for personal, business or professional purposes. It defined these people who embark on such journeys as visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residence)' [37]. While tourism is a socially recognised phenomenon, its status and role in the development paradigm still seems to be in question [4].

### *Social Exchange Theory*

Social exchange theory has provided the theoretical foundation for studies exploring residents' perception of impacts of tourism [1]. According to the SET, people would go for a service or product which has a positive 'worth' or outcome, which is a term used to describe the benefit of the product or service being in excess of the cost [25]. Tourism impacts will be professed positively and supported by residents when the benefits, such as economic benefits, outweigh the cost of sharing environmental and social relations with the tourism industry [12].

Ritchie and Lyons [30] conducted research on the residents' attitudes based on the social exchange theory (SET). According this theory, residents often evaluate activities in terms of expected benefits or costs [41]. Residents will be willing to participate in the activities and enter into an exchange with the tourists if they can benefit from it without unacceptable costs [14, 16]. Logically, residents who

perceive the exchange as beneficial would support event development while residents who perceive the exchange as costly to them would be against the proposed event image [10, 31].

Recent studies have also revealed how tourism can lead to economic growth and development, leveraging on its potential for job creation [38]. Others also highlighted the linkage between tourism and the local economy, foreign exchange earnings, and its multiplier effect [39]. Some researchers contended that countries that are wholly dependent on agricultural export earnings experience high poverty rates, low per capita income, high unemployment, small domestic market, and uneven regional development.

In their view, such countries can leverage their tourism potentials for inclusive and sustained economic growth [40]. Wall and Mathieson [40] specifically opine that the transformation from a traditional agricultural economy to an industrial economy requires modernization and economic development in most global south economies requires huge capital earnings and investments that are beyond many governments' capacities.

Jenkins [15] suggested several justifications of why developing economies need to toe that path, arguing optimistically that: international tourism has been continuously growing since 1960 because of the introduction of long-haul travel. Further, in theory, he maintains that tourism helps redistribute wealth from rich countries to developing countries. In principle, there are no trade barriers in the tourism industry as there is for other international trade.

Nonetheless the many positives the industry can generate within the local economy, it has not entirely escaped criticism from its inception. Some researchers express their reservations about the role of tourism in socio-economic development. Torres and Momsen [33] emphasised that tourism growth tends to increase dependency on imports, which, in turn, compete with (or impact negatively on) local agriculture and small industry development. They further asserted that the industry also facilitates the leakage of foreign exchange from the national economy.

Gjerald [11], argued that the social impacts of tourism on the locals can be divided, within a broader perspective into socio-economic and socio-cultural. The socioeconomic impacts include labour force displacement, changes in the form of employment, increased land price and change of ownership, increased standard of living, and changes in the economic and political system. Apart from that, other socioeconomic impacts are also seen in tourist destinations, such as increasing female participation in tourism activities, the seasonal nature of employment, low

wages and social status of tourism jobs, and infrastructure development.

### 3. Methodology

A total of 459 respondents were used for the analysis for the quantitative method while 100 were used qualitatively. Mean and standard deviation were used for the analysis. The qualitatively interviewees were tape recorded and later transcribe. It was realized that both qualitative and quantitative method gave the results positively and negatively but the positive side outweigh the negative about local economy at the micro level.

#### 3.1. Methods and Materials

This study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approach and convenience sampling to select respondents. By the definition of Creswell J. W [5], the descriptive research technique is more suited to accomplishing these research objectives.

This was done to produce more complete knowledge necessary to inform theory and practice as reported by Onwuegbuzie et al [26]. He argues that multiple methods are useful as it provides better opportunities to answer research questions and to allow a better evaluation of the extent to which the research findings can be trusted and reliable. Accordingly, the primary data were collected mainly through interviews and survey questionnaire conducted with relevant stakeholders in the tourism sector. The secondary data were from available literature sources (mainly, journal articles) accessed through online databases, and other web sources.

#### 3.2. Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of this study comprised the cluster of tourism sector in Ghana namely; recreational tourism, adventure tourism and events tourism, cultural tourism and heritage tourism. A sample of two (2) local tourist attractions were used, namely, Kwame Nkrumah mausoleum in Accra and Cape Coast Castle in Cape Coast. The sample population of the study was 549.

#### 3.3. Analysis of Data

Data obtained from field were well analysed with the help of Microsoft Excel application and SPSS statistical software. Structural equation model was used to test the effect of tourism on community indicators (i.e. variables relating to conditions of the community). Pearson's correlation between tourism, support, and covariates were used. Furthermore, tables and measures of central tendencies of mean, mode and median were employed.

## 4. Results and Discussions

This section focuses on the statistics of data collection and analysis of data collected (in relation to the objectives of the research and variables used. Table 1 indicates the statistics on demographic variables.

**Table 1.** Statistics on Demographic Variables.

Variable	Level	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Location	Accra	84	13
	Cape Coast	188	29
	Outside Accra and Cape Coast	376	58
	Total	648	100
Gender	Male	380	58.6
	Female	268	41.4
	Total	648	100
Educational level	Basic/Secondary	16	2.5
	First degree	408	63
	Master's degree	216	33.3
	PhD or equivalent	8	1.2
	Total	648	100
Income (GHC)	1-500	52	8
	501-1,000	40	6.2
	1,001-1,500	96	14.8
	1,501-2,000	268	41.4
	2,001-2,500	192	29.6
Tourism	Total	648	100
	No	392	60.5
	Yes	256	39.5
Age	11-20 years	24	3.7
	21-30 years	64	9.9
	31-40 years	560	86.4
	Total	648	100
	Duration	Less than a year	8
4-6 years		32	4.9
7-9 years		336	51.9
Above 9 years		272	42
Total		648	100
Marital status	Married	48	7.4
	Engaged	16	2.5
	Widowed	32	4.9
	Divorced	376	58
Marital status	Single	176	27.2
	Total	648	100

In Table 1, 13% (n = 84) of the participants were from Accra; 29% (n = 188) were from Cape Coast, and 58% (n = 376) were from outside Accra and Cape Coast. That is, most of the participants were from other cities and towns. About 59% (n = 380) of the participants were men whereas 41% (n = 2268) were women. In terms of education, about 3% (n = 16) of the participants had basic/secondary education, 63% (n = 408) had a first degree, 33% (n = 216) had a Master's degree, and 1% (n = 8) had a PhD. Thus, most participants had a first degree. About 61% (n = 392) of the participants had no affiliation with the tourism sector whereas about 40% (n = 256) were affiliated to the tourism sector. About 4% (n = 24) of the participants were aged 11-20 years; 10% (n = 64) were aged 21-30 years, and 86% (n = 560) were aged 31-40 years. This was in support the work of a study by Ngugu [20] who

used count data regression to investigate the role that some identified socio-economic factors and destination characteristics play in stimulating foreign tourism demand in Kenya for the period 1991-2011.

The study concluded that socio-economic factors such as age and occupation of tourists from the eleven origin countries measured, have a positive significant impact on their demand for tourism in Kenya. However, the level of education, gender, marital status by the tourists were however not significant factors influencing tourists' choice for Kenya as an ultimate destination to visit.

**Table 2.** Statistics on economic and infrastructural development, crime, and language.

Variables	Mean	SD
Tourism encourages investment in the state's physical infrastructures such as highways, other roads, hotels, restaurants etc.	4.18	0.75
Tourism has brought investment and development in this area	4.09	0.85
Tourism has created jobs for local community people	4.20	0.82
Tourism is a major contributor to infrastructural development	4.22	1.02
Tourism has contributed significantly to investment in this area	4.00	0.89
The local government gives a lot of attention to promoting tourism in this area	4.00	0.90
The infrastructure to the site is good	4.16	0.75
Traffic congestion in this area is not affected by tourism	4.16	0.75
Tourism is a major contributing factor to the development of this area through job creation	4.02	0.86
The host community is actively involved in tourism planning and management	4.15	0.77
Economic and infrastructural development	41.19	5.32
Crime here is not attributable to tourism	3.98	1.10
The crime rate here is not a problem	4.14	0.96
Drug abuse in this community is not due to tourism	4.05	0.93
Security in this locality is not due to tourism	4.01	0.98
The security of place of stay is enough	4.07	0.95
There is safety at tourist site and places of stay	4.04	1.19
Security of tourist spots is enough	3.91	0.94
Tourism has not increased crime rate	3.67	1.07
Tourism has not contributed to vandalism in this area	4.05	1.15
Tourism has not increased drug trafficking in this area	3.99	1.08
Crime	39.86	7.34
My ability to speak my dialect or language has not been affected by tourism in this area	4.32	0.89
Changes in my language skills are normal to me	4.35	0.74
Relatives and members of the community accept changes in my language skills	4.27	0.59
I would like to meet tourists from as many countries as possible in order to learn about their languages	4.23	1.00
I can extend my cultural experiences when I talk to the tourists and people back home	4.11	0.86
Foreign tourists do not have any problem communicating with me because of language differences	4.12	0.96
Change in Language	25.41	3.90

In Table 2, all items of economic and infrastructural development produced large mean scores. The largest mean score came from "Tourism is a major contributor to infrastructural development" (Mean = 4.22; SD = 1.02), and the overall construct produced a mean score of about 41 (Mean = 41.19; SD = 5.32), which represents about 82% of

the maximum scale score of 50. Crime produced a mean score of about 40 (Mean = 39.86; SD = 7.34), which represents about 80% of the maximum scale score. Language change accounted for a mean score of about 25 (Mean = 25.41; SD = 3.90), representing about 85% of the maximum scale score of 30. These results suggest that both crime and change in language were perceived as outcomes of tourism.

This study is in support of work conducted by (Sebastian & Rajagopalan, [32], who argued that tourism improves the living conditions of residents in destination areas. Majority of (64%) residents in Kumily, India associated tourism to improvement in living standards in the community. Some of the positive economic impacts uncovered by the study are increase of income and standard of living [36]; employment opportunities for local people particularly the women [2], increased women empowerment [22], and increased market price of land in destination area [24].

**Table 3.** Summary statistics on socio-cultural effects.

Variable	Mean	SD
Tourism helps in sustaining the quality of our social and cultural assets	4.17	0.99
Tourism has saved the value of the local traditional culture	4.00	0.89
Tourism gives residents the opportunity to put their culture on display.	4.02	1.03
Tourism has awaken general awareness towards the preservation of cultural heritage and traditions	4.14	0.91
Tourism has stimulated cultural exchange	4.22	0.92
Tourism development maintains my traditional way of life	3.90	1.10
The majority of tourists are interested in the local culture	4.11	0.88
The majority of tourists respects the local culture	4.05	0.96
The tourists who visits this place respect the local rules and regulations	4.01	1.04
Positive Socio-Cultural Effects	36.63	5.95
Local residents have suffered from unpleasant cultural activities from tourists	4.06	1.15
Tourism has resulted in negative impact on local cultural identity	3.64	1.03
Tourism disrupts the lifestyle of local residents.	3.82	0.90
Tourism results in increased drug use in this community.	3.67	1.01
Tourism causes pornography to increase in this community.	2.32	1.38
Negative Socio-Cultural Effects	17.51	2.92

In Table 3, all the variables, except ‘Tourism causes pornography to increase in this community’, produced a large mean score that is close to 5, which suggests that participants agreed that all the variables represent socio-cultural effects of tourism. Of items measuring positive socio-cultural effects, “Tourism has stimulated cultural exchange” (Mean = 4.22; SD = 1.03) accounted for the largest mean score, followed by “Tourism helps in sustaining the quality of our social and cultural assets” (Mean = 4.17; SD = 0.99). Positive socio-cultural effects produced a mean score of 37 (Mean = 36.63; SD = 5.95), which represents about 81% of the maximum scale score of 45. “Local residents have suffered from unpleasant cultural activities from tourists” (Mean = 4.06; SD = 1.15) and “Tourism disrupts the lifestyle of local

residents” (Mean = 3.82; SD = 0.9) produced the largest mean scores among negative socio-cultural effects. The negative socio-cultural effects produced a mean score of about 17 (Mean = 17.51; SD = 2.92), which represents 70% of the maximum scale score. Comparatively, the negative socio-cultural effects had lower mean scores, which means that they were not as prevalent as the positive effects.

Considering tourism industry, there are several studies that examine the impacts of tourism have been mostly analysed from economic, social and environmental dimensions that may be either positive or negative. Ritchie [30] identified positive social impacts of tourism to include increased community pride, strengthening of traditions and values, and increased voluntarism. Brunt & Courtney [6] posit that, tourism lead to improvement in community service, additional park, recreation and cultural facilities, and encouragement of cultural activities.

However, not all social impacts are beneficial to rural communities. According to Sebastian & Rajagopalan [32], tourism is liable for the disregard of Islamic codes and traditional customs as well as bringing the scourge of prostitution to traditional villages. Residents of Kumily and Kumarakom in India perceived that tourism has led to increase alcoholism and immoral activities, brought undesired changes in the value orientation of children.

**Table 4.** Statistics on support for tourism indicators.

Variable	Mean	SD
Attracting more tourists is a good idea for this community.	4.00	0.90
I am encouraged by the roles local community is playing to improve current status of tourism development	4.16	0.75
Government puts more resources in Sites that mostly serve tourists	4.16	0.75
Investments in tourist sites in this locality are appreciable	4.15	0.77
Tourism has done enough in terms of employment generation	4.02	0.86
Tourism has expanded our infrastructure development	3.98	1.10
Tourism generates enough revenue to enhance our living	4.14	0.96
Government attention and participation is commendable	4.05	0.93
Tourism is an important livelihood in this community	4.01	0.98
Many tourists visit this community; so there is diversity in the social structure of the community	4.07	0.95
Jobs created by tourism improve quality of life in the area	4.04	1.19
Government provides support for the expansion of the tourism industry	3.91	0.94
Tourism support the existing community business and activities	3.67	1.07
Tourism support the existing community business and activities	4.05	1.15
Because of tourism, residents of this community have a say in planning and development	3.99	1.08
Tourism is controlled by the government but community members are involved	4.32	0.89
Money spent on tourism has improved the image of the community.	4.35	0.74
Support for Tourism	69.02	10.47

In Table 4, the largest average scores came from “Tourism is controlled by the government but community members are

involved” (Mean = 4.32; SD = 0.89) and “Money spent on tourism has improved the image of the community” (Mean = 4.35; SD = 0.74). The smallest mean scores were produced by “Government provides support for the expansion of the tourism industry” (Mean = 3.91; SD = 0.94) and ‘Tourism support the existing community business and activities’ (Mean = 3.67; SD = 1.07). Support for tourism produced a mean score of approximately 69 (Mean = 69.02; SD = 10.47), which represents about 81% of the total scale score. This confirms the assertion by Kuvan and Akan [17], that tourism is associated with economic, environmental, and sociocultural benefits with the potential to contribute to revitalization of communities and improvement in the quality of life of residents. McGehee & Andereck, [18], also posited that, expansion in tourism in rural communities can also lead to increase trading which offers the opportunity for the development of a variety of local businesses.

## Findings

The findings of the study have been summarized in relation to how they fulfilled each of the objective of the research and the implication of the results in the summary below.

The result of the tourism had a positive effect on community indicators, namely economic and infrastructural development, change in language, peace, child labour, crime, and prostitution. This result suggests that an increase in tourism was associated with the perception that change in language, child labour, come, and prostitution are not consequences of tourism in the area. More so, tourism was associated with perceived peace in the areas. The findings revealed that tourism development in both Accra and Cape Coast have created many opportunities which have significant effect on livelihoods, incomes and wellbeing of residents in host communities, although, the economic benefits accruing from the industry are unevenly distributed among and along the value chain. In Cape Coast, the study observed that tourism has become the major job provider in the city, and participants believe that the industry is a blessing for them as very few other economic activities provide them jobs. This conclusion is consistent with an argument put forward by Ap [3], that in most cases, local residents who get benefits from tourism development at the local level will support the industry.

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