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Mapping and locational analysis of tourism destinations in Ondo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Tourism is an activity that is not limited only to tourism industry but involves, directly or indirectly, other economic activities too. It is also a spatial activity and has an impact in urban development and the use of land. Tourist services are not limited to visitors but are also offered to local residents that live and work in the destination. It is therefore important to establish the cooperation of various

stakeholders that are involved in tourism. Public authorities, private sector and residents and their associations have different interests in tourism. Often it is very difficult to come to an agreement on how to develop tourism. However, it is necessary to include all stakeholders in tourism development and planning to ensure its sustainability.

Keywords: Tourism, Stakeholders, Local Residents, Tourism Destinations

1. Introduction

The World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2004) ^[14], describes tourism as the act of traveling for the purpose of recreation and the provision of services for this act. It further explained that a tourist is someone who travels at least eighty kilometers (fifty miles) from home for the purpose of recreation. Tourism to a layman, is the act of visiting other places for the purpose of sightseeing and enjoyment but the activities of tourism are more than that.

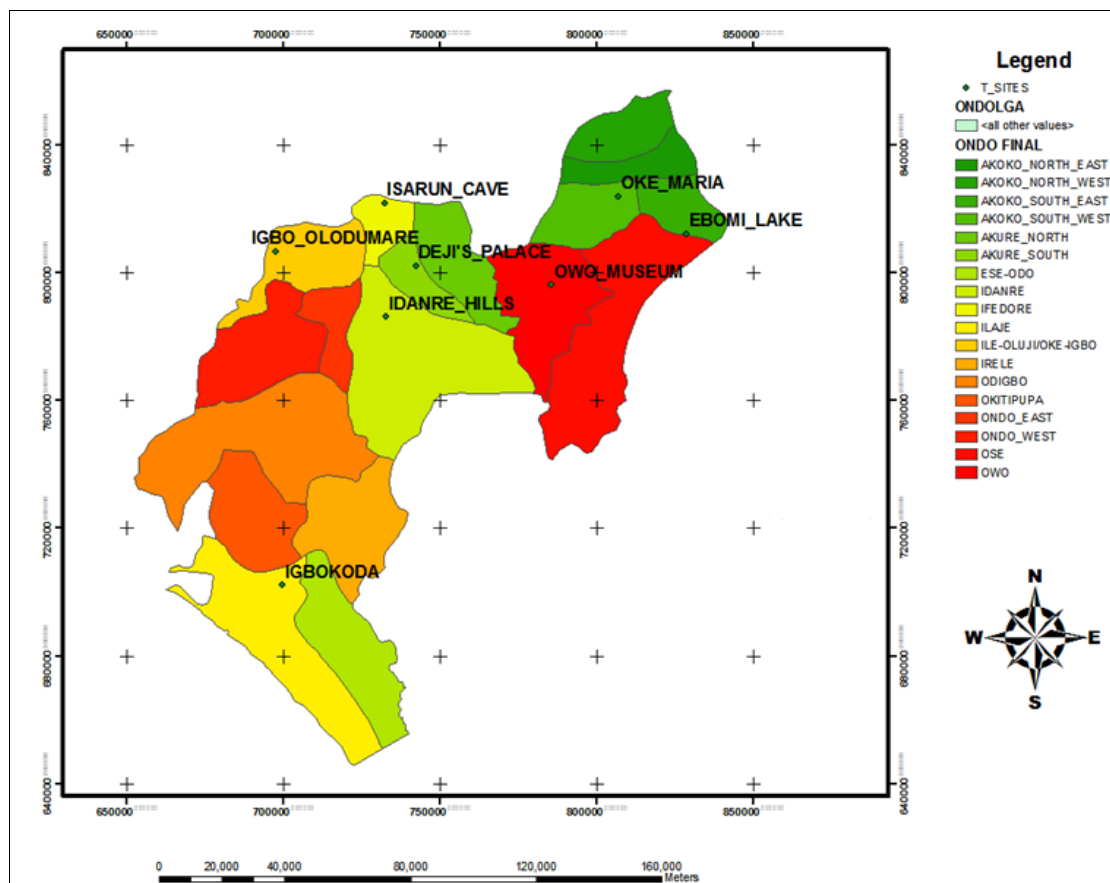
There is no nation in the world that does not possess one thing or the other to attract tourists. What makes the difference is the way tourism facilities are packaged for both local and international consumption (Ajala, 2008) ^[11]. There is hardly any tourist activity that does not rely on environment resources (Hunter and Green 1995) ^[7]. Nature-based tourism has been defined in many ways; initially it was defined as traveling in relatively undisturbed areas (Boo 1990) ^[3], including also the respect of nature.

Tourism is one of the largest global industries with huge potentials for job creation opportunities to rapidly depressed regions. Travel and tourism are labour-intensive activities; hence, the majority of enterprises operating in the tourism industry are small, medium and micro enterprises. Taiwo *et al.* (2018) ^[11]. Travel and tourism could be used as an activator for other related industries, due to the investments of capital and efforts in infrastructure, plants and capital equipment from suppliers (Kandari, 2004) ^[8].

1.1 Statement of the problem

An improvement of the tourism destinations may be desirable in order to boost the economic development of the government, as well as the standard of living of the locality where these tourist attractions are situated.

The recent awareness of the significance of tourism has now become a major discussion in every nation on the earth. (Fisusi 2011) ^[4] Tourism has been seen as a leading sector of the world economy. It is an alternative source of income to government and individuals when they are properly developed and harnessed. In addition, studies in Nigeria on tourism as a strategy in regional development planning has been limited and, in most cases, non- existing. The high returns from oils have made governments in Nigeria and many developing countries to tourism development, and their ignorance that the tourism industry could also generate the funds needed for economic development. (Taiwo *et al.*, 2018) ^[11] The effective utilization of tourism sites would be an immense source of income for the rehabilitation and renewal programmes for sustainable national development. Tourists' satisfaction with the destination will not only affect their willingness to revisit but also the reputation of the destinations. (Taiwo *et al.*, 2018) ^[11]



Source: Taiwo & Adeyemi 2018^[11]

Fig 1: Map showing the major tourism centres in Ondo State, Nigeria

Tourists might not be familiar with the tourist destinations in the study area, hence there is need for mapping out the tourist destinations and also need to develop tourism website in the study area which will show case all the tourist destinations in the study area and it should be able to cater for simple query and to give information about a particular tourist center, and with ease people coming to visit outside the state and even people coming from other countries will be well informed about the tourist destinations in the study area.

2. Literature review

According to Hall (2000) governments have realized that long-term potential of tourism is not only for generating revenue, but also as a promoter of international peace and goodwill. Consequently, many countries are busy capitalizing on the comparative advantage that they may have in the tourism arena. The comparative advantage for tourism can often aid developing nations in earning foreign exchange more rapidly and with less difficulty than would be true for other products (Debbage, 1998). To encourage travelers from abroad to visit their respective countries, governments allocate large proportion of federal funds to tourism policy, planning and promotion. Nevertheless, problems are still encountered primarily due to a lack of coordination between tourism policy and environmental policy. Governments of countries that put much effort into receiving visitors place much emphasis into the construction of essential tourist facilities, such as hotels, highways, and access roads, communications, and visitor attractions.

Significant efforts are also devoted to conserving areas of natural beauty and maintaining resort areas and cultural communities. Special events, entertainment, and cultural activities are often supported by local and regional governments (Stabler, 1991).

Admitting international visitors and facilitating their travel within a nation's borders is a political action, therefore a country's approach to international tourism is a part of its foreign policy, as well as a part of its economic and commercial policy. There are endless examples of the political and foreign policy implications of international tourism. Increased contacts between persons of different cultures can lead to increased knowledge and understanding which in turn can contribute to a relaxation of tensions between nations (Hall, 2000).

It was often thought that the negative effects of tourism development outweighed the positive ones in developing countries. The major reasons being that tourism involved a high number of foreign ownership and high profits, as well as the employment of a large number of foreigners, while government was bearing the real cost on infrastructure and incentives. Bryden (1979) was one of the first to recognize that tourism development takes different forms and its impacts are conditioned by the context in which that development occurs, however, tourism has evolved from traditional mindset and now governments work in collaboration with public and private sectors, as well as investors to ensure a mutual benefit for all, so as to ensure prosperity of their interests.

Tourism destinations in Ondo State



Location: Igbokoda

Plate 1: Igbokoda beach front

Short history: Igbokoda beach front is the longest territorial water in Nigeria. Equally, the longest Ocean stretch in Nigeria can be found in this part of the state. The place is good for boating, swimming, sport fishing, picnic, boat regatta ceremony, diving and many more. The water front is about 142km from Akure the state capital. Presently, the state government in partnership with Ogun State government, and some foreign firms is already working on the development of a deep seaport that would serve as a free Trade Zone at Olokola.



Location: Ipesi Akoko

Plate 2: Ebomi lake

Short history: The Ebomi Lake in Ipesi Akoko is about 115km from akure the State Capital. This Lake has fascinating historical antecedent. The name EBOMI means wonderful or something mysterious. This lake has religious significance to the people of Ipesi-Akoko. In actual fact, it has its own priest in the past, who is saddled with the

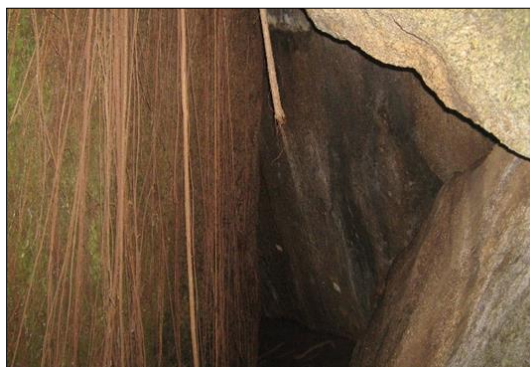
responsibilities of appeasing the lake in time of trouble and performing other rituals on behalf of the people. As a result of its spiritual significance, it is forbidden to fish in the lake.



Location: Oke-Igbo

Plate 3: Igbo Olodumare

Short History: This is a thick forest preserved for its beautiful and fascinating nature. It is an evergreen thick forest. It was believed in the past that demons and spirit existed in the forest. The surrounding is of thick beautiful vegetation with animals and reptiles. This forest was made popular by the famous novel titled “Ogboju Ode ninu Igbo Irunmole” by Chief D.O. Fagunwa in 1948.



Location: Isharun

Plate 4: Isharun Cave of Ashes

Short history: Historically, the cave was an ancient place of abode for the people of Isharun in the past. Human skeleton was excavated from the cave in 1964 by two renowned British Professor of Archeology, Prof. Thustan Shaw and Steve Daniels. Infact, the skull of the oldest man in Nigeria was discovered in this cave. This cave is significant for educational research.



Location: Idanre

Plate 5: Idanre Hills

Short history: Idanre town where these hills are located is about 15km Southwest of Akure, the State capital. The town is divided into ancient town, which is at the hill top and the new settlement at the foot of the hills. The hill is steep-sided, smooth and dome-shaped in nature. It also has 640 steps and 5 resting posts along the steps where tourists can take a rest before getting to the hill top. This tourist site is suitable for picnic, mountaineering, sport hunting, moreso, it is suitable for educational research work.



Location: Owo

Plate 6: Owo Museum of Antiquity

Short history: Owo museum is rich in antiquities and artifacts relics of historical and traditional value. These relics are readily available for the tourists to see for themselves. This center is significant for educational research. Owo is about 42km from Akure the state capital.



Location: Oka Akoko

Plate 7: Oke Maria

Short history: Oke Maria is located at oka-Akoko town. This tourist centre is about 113km from Akure the state capital. The Roman Catholic Mission had in recent time occupied this hill for religious rites. There is a Catholic shrine dedicated to the Vigin Mary whose statue is conspicuously erected on top of the hill. The hill is visited every February by Roman Catholics.



Location: Akure

Plate 8: Deji's palace

Short history: Palaces of traditional rulers are indeed a true symbolical relic of the people's tradition and culture. The Federal Government in recognition of this declared the Deji of Akure's palace a National Monument in 1990.

3. Methodology

Primary Data

The Primary data source consist the physical survey of the tourism destinations in Ondo State. Field work was done and the points at which all these sites exist were taken by the use of Global Positioning System (GPS). In this particular work Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to get all the existing tourism destination in the study area and also the level of accessibility of the sites and the condition of such places using data capture.

Secondary Data

These include data collected from sources such as journals, books, administrative records of relevant government agencies and the internet. Record of tourist sites were collected from Ondo State Tourism Board and Research and Statistics Department of Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget.

Preliminary survey revealed that there are eight (8) Local Government Areas in Ondo State that possessed tourist attraction sites (ODSG, 2007), hence this research work covered the eight (8) identified Local Government Areas which were purposively selected for the study. The Local Government Areas are as follows; Akure South (Deji's Palace), Owo (Owo Museum), Akoko South West (Oke Maria), Idanre (Idanre Hills), Akoko South East (Ebomi Lake), Igbokoda (Igbokoda Beach Font), Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo (Igbo-Eledumare) and Ifedore (isarun Cave of Ashes).

Data Analysis method

The administrative map of Ondo State was digitized using GIS packages the points of each site were taken and was over laid on the already digitized map. The reason why the

administrative map was used is that it shows all the local government boundaries and also the current road network of the state. The road network was digitized to know if all the tourism destinations were accessible or not. At the end of this study a tourism map of Ondo State which was not in existence was produced showing all the tourism destinations in the State, the map is attached to this work.

The map was digitized here and points of the tourism destinations that were taken on the field were inputted on the map. The road network, local governments and the drainage system (river) were imputed on the existing administrative map.

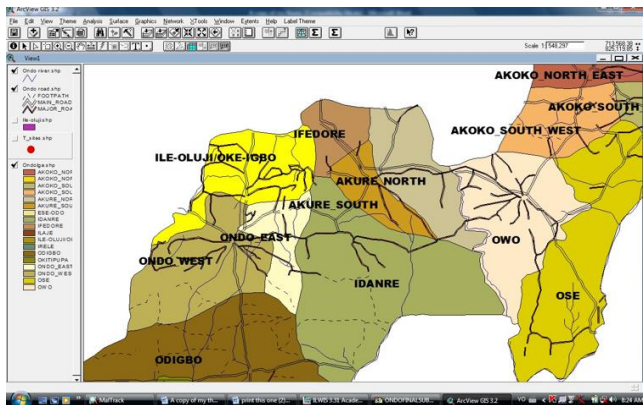


Fig 2

A view of the map shows the tourism destinations in Ondo State, the network of roads in the state, drainage system and the local governments. The points of the tourism destinations were gotten by using GPS to take the points, and much of the sites is represented differently. The different classess of the road network are also shown on the map by different features. It was geo-referenced and also digitized on ILWIS after digitizing it was polygonized before it was imported from ILWIS.

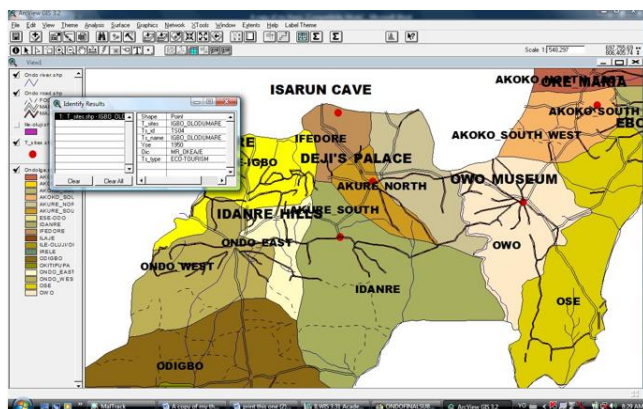


Fig 3

After the database has been done and added to the map a simple query can be done by simply clicking on any of the points, information of the point will be displayed as shown in fig 3 above this gives information about igbo-olodumare.

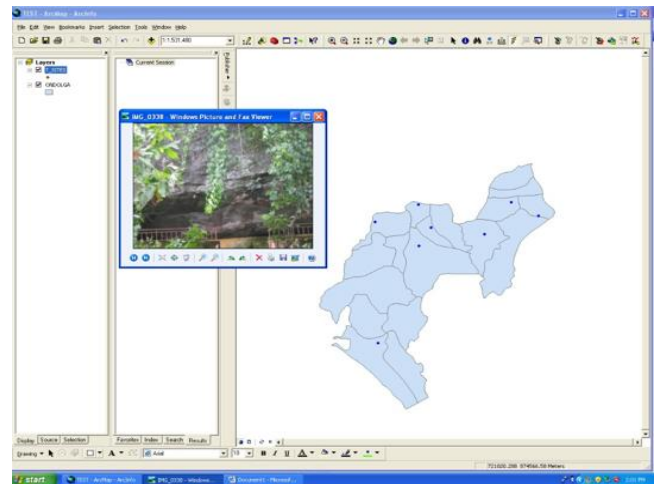


Fig 4

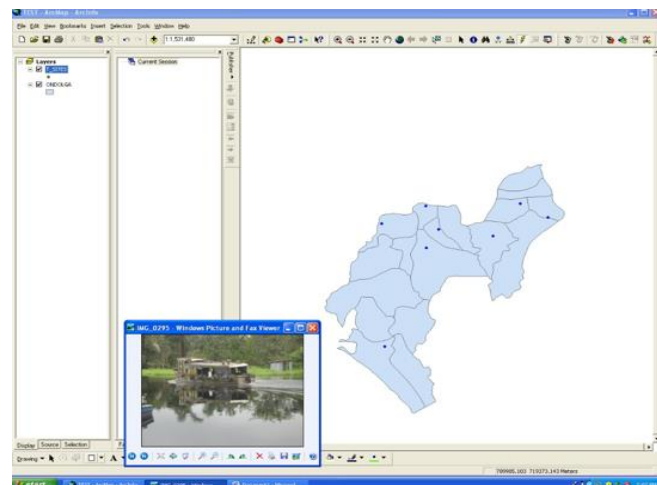


Fig 5

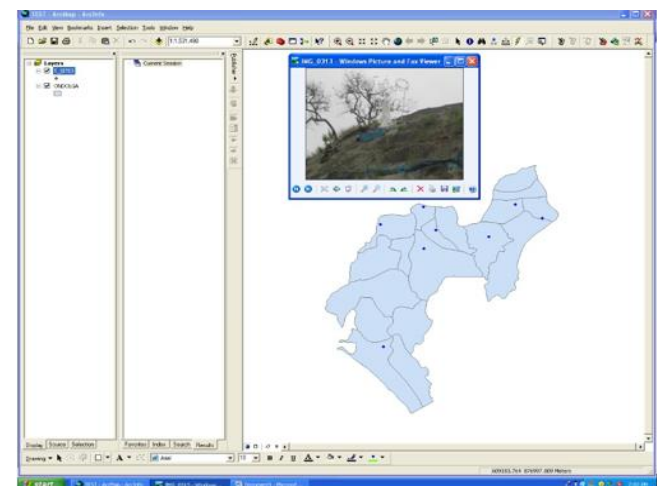


Fig 6

Fig 4, 5 and 6 show examples of the hyperlink. Fig 4 shows the hyperlink of Igbo Olodumare, fig 5 shows the hyperlink of Igbokoda beach font and fig 6 shows the hyperlink of Oke-Maria.

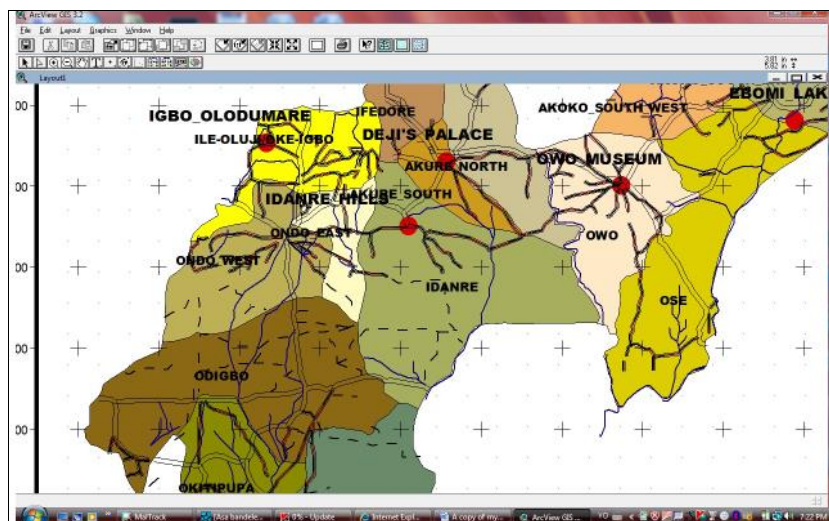


Fig 7: is a preview of the complete tourism map of Ondo State the Study area

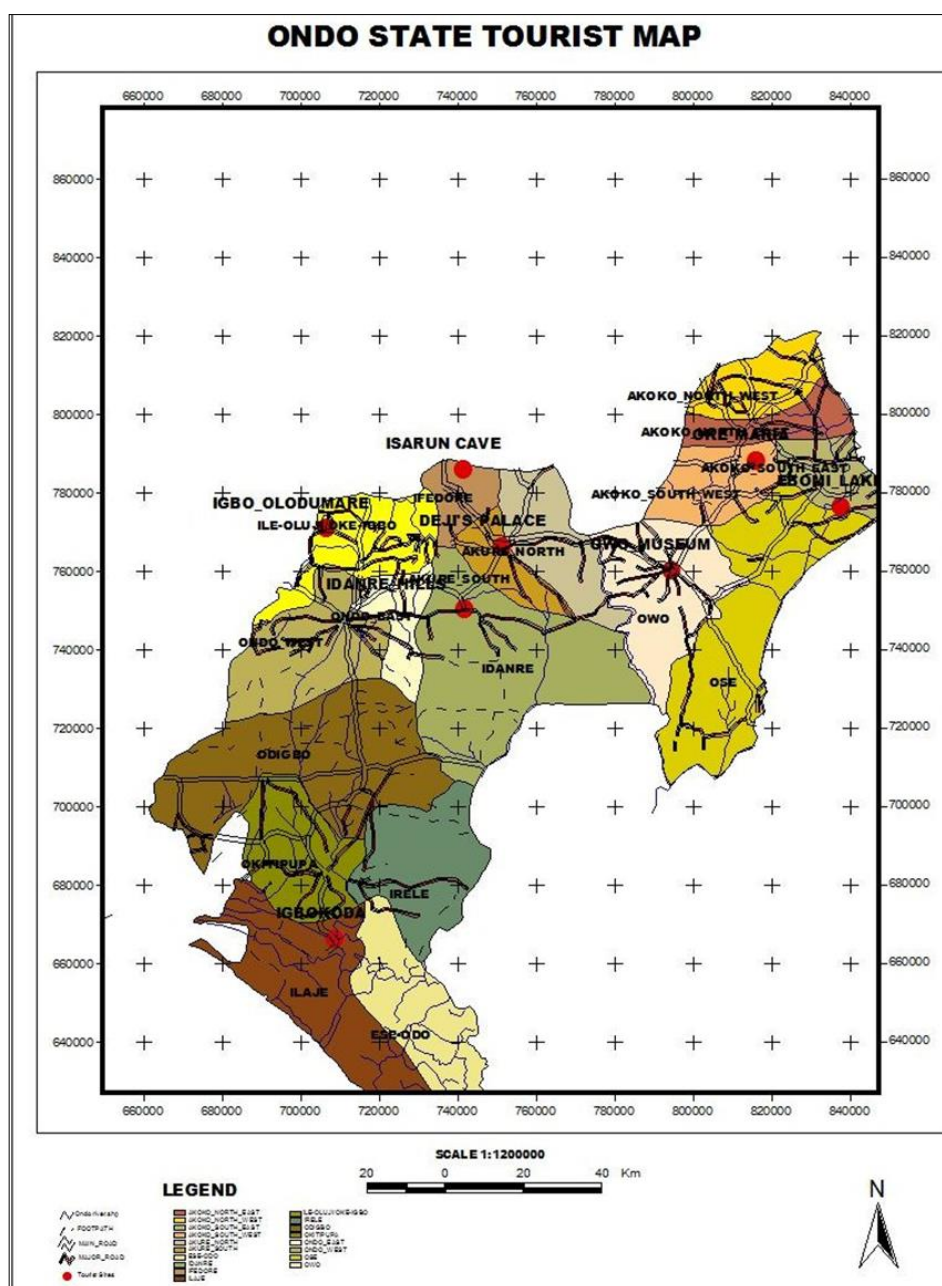


Fig 8

Fig 8 above shows all the local governments and also all Tourism destinations in the State.

4. Conclusion

It was observed during the course of the study, the popular tourism destinations in the study area are the Idanre hills, Owo museum, Deji's Palace and the Oke Maria, the rest are not well pronounced, studies shows that Idanre hills is the major one people visit the most, if there is a tourism Map and guide available in the study area, and most importantly if theirs is a tourism website where by all pictures and information about all these sites are displayed, it will create awareness about all these sites, take for example the Igbo Olodumare was believed to be a sacred place, hardly do people know that it's a tourism site with a lot of interesting features present there.

A tourism map and guide are needed for the tourism destination in the study area in order to attract tourists to the study area and this in turn will generate funds and also improve the economy of the state.

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