

Afamefuna Eyisi / Diane Lee / Kathryn Trees

The Use of Social Exchange Theory in Exploring Residents' Perceptions of Tourism: A Case Study of the Igbo Tribe of Southeastern Nigeria

Abstract

Following increased awareness that the economic impacts alone do not justify support for tourism, studies on residents' perceptions have gained importance. Most early studies of tourism that used social exchange theory (SET) to study residents' perceptions were in advanced countries rather than African countries. This paper provides an empirical discussion of how SET can be used to explore residents' perceptions of tourism in Southeastern Nigeria to contribute to research on the topic. In-depth interviews were conducted with 208 residents. Results of this study indicated that residents' perceptions of tourism could be influenced by creating opportunities for gender equity, community development and cultural preservation, fear of copying new behaviour from tourists, and local perceptions of foreign white tourists. The study concluded that a theoretical understanding of residents' perceptions of tourism requires identifying and addressing issues that influence such perceptions, which is essential for developing the industry in the area.

Keywords: SET, residents' perception, tourism impacts, Southeastern Nigeria

1. Introduction

With increased awareness of tourism impacts, scholars have borrowed and applied theoretical models to interpret residents' perceptions. One such model was Doxey's irritation index (index), developed to explain unilateral stages that residents followed in their responses to the effects of tourism (euphoria to antagonism) (Doxey, 1975). Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle Model (1980) was adapted from the Product Life Cycle Model to examine the stages a place of residence follows as it becomes a tourist destination. Applying the two models suggests that residents have a more positive disposition toward tourism and tourists at the early stage and less favourable as it develops, which may be correct in some cases. However, the models have been criticised for being unidirectional and viewing a community as a homogenous entity (Latkova & Vogt, 2012; Ritchie & Inkari, 2006).

As a result of these criticisms, scholars have applied other models to measure 'residents' perceptions of tourism. Dogan (1989) developed a model of adjustment - resistance, retreatism, boundary maintenance, revitalisation and adoption of Western culture - to measure how residents cope with the effects of tourism. Ap and Crompton (1993) proposed the embrace-withdrawal continuum model (embrace, tolerance, adjustment and withdrawal) to identify the stages residents follow when responding to tourism. As people and places are

Afamefuna Eyisi, PhD, Corresponding Author, Lecturer, School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, College of Law, Arts and Social Sciences, Murdoch University, Australia; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6318-9558>; e-mail: afamefuna.eyisi@unm.edu.ng

Diane Lee, PhD, Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, College of Law, Arts and Social Sciences, Murdoch University, Australia; ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8164-913X>; e-mail: D.Lee@murdoch.edu.au

Kathryn Trees, PhD, Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, College of Law, Arts and Social Sciences, Murdoch University, Australia; e-mail: K.Trees@murdoch.edu.au

heterogeneous, responses to tourism vary across destinations, coupled with the use of different methodologies, theoretical differences and complex interactions between tourists and residents (Kim & Park, 2022; Segota et al., 2022; Styliadis & Quintero, 2022). Tourism scholars have further adapted theories and models from anthropology, sociology and psychology to understand how residents view tourism.

Such theories and models include Growth Machine Theory (GMT) (Gill, 2000; Harrill et al., 2011); Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Lepp, 2007; Ribeiro et al., 2017); Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010); Social Representation Theory (SRT) (Moscardo, 2011; Javier, 2016); Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Gursoy et al., 2019; Muler González et al., 2023); and, Community Attachment Theory (CAT) (Brida et al., 2014; Hassan et al., 2023). These frameworks are Eurocentric, and their usefulness in Africa is often limited, with a few exceptions. SET was applied in South Africa (Acha-Anyi, 2015; Nsizwazikhona, 2015), Mauritius (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012), and Ghana (Sirakaya et al., 2002). Lepp (2007) applied TRA in Uganda, and Ribeiro et al. (2017) used SET and TRA in Cape Verde. Their findings suggested that irrespective of destination differences, theories can be applied to understand residents' perceptions of tourism impacts in Africa.

The application of theory in tourism research within Africa remains limited. This assertion is also true for Nigeria, where tourism is gradually developing. The current research contributes to existing knowledge on applying theory to understanding residents' perceptions of tourism in Africa, using Nigeria as a case study. Nigeria has cultural and natural attractions that could support tourism if adequately planned. Still, the country has various socio-political issues that must be addressed if tourism is to flourish, benefit residents and fulfil tourists' expectations. As a Nigerian, the primary author acknowledges that the Nigerian tourism industry faces religious and ethnic violence, insecurity, inadequate funding, poor policy implementation, limited expert personnel and limited tourism awareness (Eyisi & Okpoko, 2023; Eyisi et al., 2023). The discussion in this paper is not an attempt to undermine the government's efforts to develop tourism; instead, it reflects on residents' perceptions about growing the industry and what they expect. The findings may guide future researchers and regional policymakers and facilitate their understanding of the local peoples' expectations of developing the sector.

This paper uses SET to understand residents' perceptions of tourism in under-researched Southeastern Nigeria. The paper discusses how SET can be used productively and considers the issues that may influence its use in understanding how residents perceive tourism in the area. This study adopts an interpretive approach utilising ethnography to acquire in-depth insights into residents' perceptions of tourism.

2. Literature review

Since the 1970s, studies of residents' perceptions of tourism have grown exponentially (Gursoy et al., 2019; Segota et al., 2022). Findings show that successful tourism planning and assurances of repeat tourist visits require residents' support (Abbasi et al., 2021; Javier, 2016; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004). Residents' favourable disposition encourages sustainable tourism and assists in managing impacts (Castillo-Canalejo et al., 2016; Nejati et al., 2014). Yet, however, residents' views (especially those of women) are often neglected during decision-making (Jucan & Jucan, 2013), particularly in emerging economies (Nzama, 2008), leading to power imbalance (Eyisi et al., 2023; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012). In some cases, even when residents are consulted, the approach is often top-down because developers perceive that residents lack the required skills to contribute to the planning process (Moscardo, 2011).

A review of past studies on residents' perceptions of the consequences of tourism highlights how they perceive the industry. Several issues that influence residents' perceptions of tourism are presented in Table 1, which also reflects the year of study.

Table 1
Issues influencing how residents perceive tourism impacts

Issues for consideration	Year order and author
Effects of (neo)colonialism	Palmer, 1994; Butler & Hinch, 2007; Bandyopadhyay, 2011; Aponte-Parés, 2019.
Level of tourism	Ap & Crompton, 1998; Sirakaya et al., 2002; Hammad et al., 2017a.
Distance of tourism centre to residents	Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004; Ritchie & Inkari 2006.
Age, gender and education	Kibicho, 2005; Jucan & Jucan, 2013.
Demonstration effects	Mbaiwa, 2005; Tichaawa & Mhlanga, 2015.
Residents' expectations of tourism benefits	Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Abbasi et al., 2021; Laiginhas Pina et al., 2023.
Level of contact between residents and tourists	Nzama, 2008; Gursoy et al., 2019.
Type of tourism and tourists	Nzama, 2008; Gursoy et al., 2019.
Level of dependence on tourism	Kwon & Vogt, 2010; Almeida-Garcia et al., 2015.
Residents' level of involvement	Lawson, 2013; Wondirad et al., 2020.
Community attachment	Brida et al., 2014.
Eco-centric attitudes	Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015; Javier, 2016.

From Table 1, two concepts – neo-colonialism and demonstration effect – require in-depth discussion in tourism research in some African countries. Neo-colonialism is a form of corporate economic control and political or cultural pressures from advanced countries upon the emergence to put resources in place for the former's benefits, which might be antithetical to the latter's lifestyle. For example, in research conducted in the 1990s on tourism and colonialism in the Bahamas, Palmer (1994) explained how presenting the country as a former British colony in travel brochures and advertisements influenced the local peoples' view of tourism as encouraging Western domination. While tourism can have positive effects, residents may misconstrue the industry as a new form of colonialism. Another reason for this view could be that the industry is dominated by Western researchers, consultants and tourists (Yankholmes, 2014).

Nigeria has a long colonial history, which may influence how locals consider tourism, with some possibly linking it to a continuation of European domination. Further, the Nigerian government partners with multinational companies to build the infrastructure required to service foreign tourists, primarily Westerners, in major cities. This discussion of multinational partnerships is consistent with Higgins-Desbiolles's (2022) exploration of neo-capitalist tourism approaches and the relationship between imperialism and economic dependence, where tourism was viewed as being developed for Western tourists rather than local people. Developing international tourism through multinational partnered government projects to cater to international tourists in Nigeria might be considered ongoing economic dependence and linked to colonialism. For countries without a colonial past, concern about economic dependence as neo-colonialism might not be the case. Ethiopia is one of the two countries in Africa without a colonial history. Wondirad et al. (2020) found no evidence that residents are concerned that Western NGOs working on sustainable ecotourism projects have a neo-colonial agenda. Research is needed to capture how residents in countries with a colonial history perceive tourism, as the topic has been neglected or misrepresented (Aponte-Parés, 2019; Bandyopadhyay, 2011).

The demonstration effect – residents copying tourists' lifestyles, a consequence of their interactions (Monterrubio & Mondoza-Ontiveros, 2014) – is also significant when discussing residents' perceptions of tourism in many African countries. Mbaiwa (2005) and Tichaawa and Mhlanga (2015), writing a decade apart, reported that residents in Botswana and Zimbabwe, respectively, tend to copy tourists' behaviours regarding religion and language. Such copying might occur more often among young residents who frequently associate with foreign tourists. The demonstration effect is not entirely negative as there are some positive aspects, such as more access to technology and residents learning about Western education, which have been embraced in developing countries. Tourism, as with other industries associated with an influx of foreigners, produces opportunities for prostitution, theft, burglary and other social vices to earn or extort money from tourists who are considered wealthy (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2007). Some residents link these antisocial practices

to the demonstration effect as evidence of tourism-induced changes (Zhuang et al., 2019). From personal observations of the primary author, linking these practices to the demonstration effect is ongoing in Nigeria.

This research adopts a qualitative method to explore residents' perceptions of tourism in Southeastern Nigeria using SET as a framework. The research will discuss the challenges that could affect using SET to assess residents' perceptions. The research questions are:

- 1) What are the residents' perceptions of tourism in Southeastern Nigeria?
- 2) How can SET help to understand these perceptions and the associated issues?

3. Applying SET to understand residents' perceptions of tourism

SET has gained popularity in tourism for interpreting interaction-based research (Ap, 1992; Segota et al., 2022; Styliadis & Quintero, 2022). The theory was first introduced in 1987 by Perdue, Long and Allen (Nunkoo et al., 2013) and was used by Ap (1992) to illustrate the two-way exchange of resources between the host and the guest. SET works on the premise that two parties agree on mutual benefits for both, and at any point when such agreement stops being beneficial, one or both parties may decide to withdraw. If the benefits outweigh the costs, the parties will likely continue the agreement (Ap, 1992). SET comprises four stages:

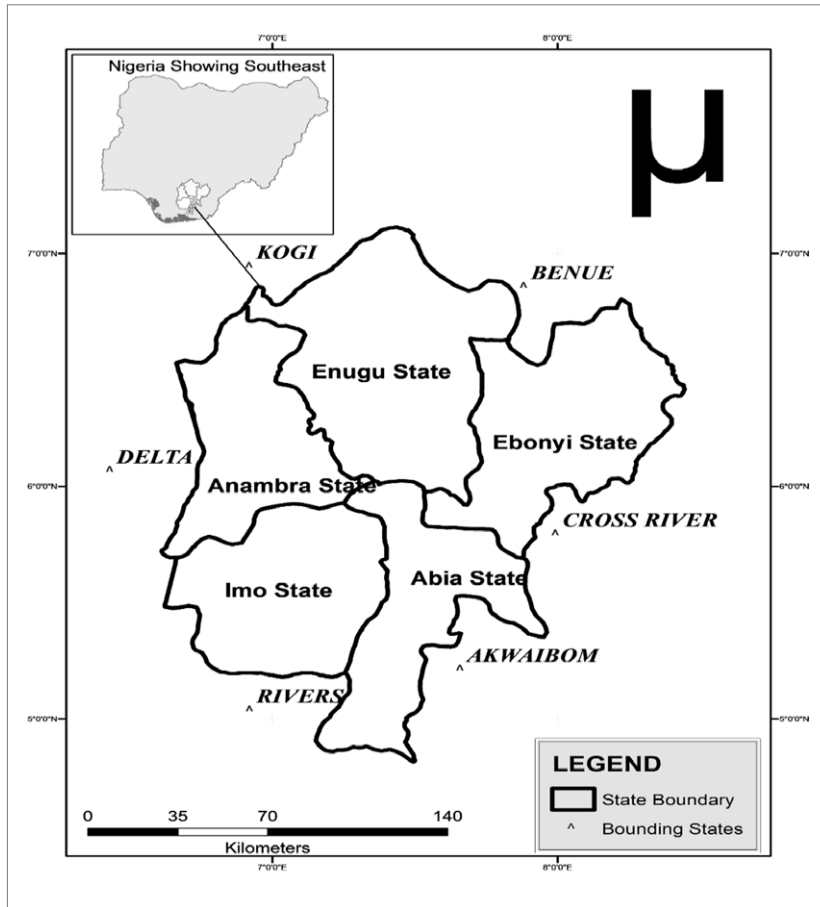
1. The initiation of exchange (identifying the needs to be satisfied);
2. The exchange formation (assessing the possible gains and costs before the exchange);
3. The exchange transaction evaluation (assessing the actual cost-benefit assessment after the exchange) and
4. The review of exchange consequences (the decision to continue with the exchange or not based on the evaluated results).

In tourism, the two parties in the exchange are residents and the tourism industry. When residents secure benefits from tourism, they support its development and are positive towards tourists (Muler González et al., 2023; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015). On the other hand, when residents are dissatisfied with the benefits or the cost outweighs the benefits, they tend to develop negative attitudes towards tourism and tourists (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003; Lawson, 2013). When residents develop hostile attitudes, tourism sustainability will likely be hindered because they will be unwilling to offer their knowledge and resources. The implication is that dissatisfaction towards tourism and unfriendliness to tourists might increase in such a situation. However, residents are not homogenous in their perceptions, which means they will respond to tourism and its impacts differently (Lawson, 2013; Moscardo, 2011; Ritchie & Inkari, 2006).

4. The research context

The research for this paper involved six months (July 2018-January 2019) of ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Southeastern Nigeria, the homeland of the Igbo tribe and the primary author. The Igbo people occupy Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States (see Figure 1). They are known for their hospitality, business inclination, creativity and rich resources that could be harnessed for tourism. Whilst the fieldwork ended four years ago, a recent survey by the primary author indicated that much has not changed in the area's tourism industry as there are still limited supporting facilities and tourists visiting the region. Although the area's government has promoted tourism (enacting policies, establishing ministries and recruiting experts), there are still significant challenges, such as socio-political and economic changes and impacts of COVID-19, which might influence residents' perceptions of tourism.

Figure 1
Map of Southeastern Nigeria showing the central states of the Igbo tribe



Two communities in Anambra and Enugu States were chosen as sites for conducting case studies because of their tourism resources, such as festivals, monuments, sacred sites, lakes, and streams. The two communities are also in the early stages of tourism development as limited tourists are currently visiting the sites, and there are limited facilities to cater to their needs (Eyisi et al., 2023). This research aims to highlight how residents interpreted and perceived tourism early in the planning stage to aid in the government and developers' understanding of their expectations.

5. Methodology

Fieldwork was undertaken, and data were collected from participants to understand their perceptions of tourism and issues that may need to be addressed if the industry is developed. Purposive sampling, which supports selecting members knowledgeable about a subject, was used to identify participants. The research methods included selecting 208 participants (see Table 2) who hold key positions and could influence decision-making to represent tourism stakeholders in the area, such as traditional rulers, men, women and youth leaders, chief priests and security agents. The participants represented the parties that would enter an exchange with the government and tourism planners during decision-making since they were elected to represent the people. The participants' perceptions may determine whether future tourism in the area is locally supported or rejected. Interviews were conducted in the Igbo language; each lasted about one hour, was audio-recorded and later transcribed into English. Participants were assigned pseudonyms to de-identify them for analysis.

Table 2
Showing the participants for the research (N=208)

Stakeholder group	Agulu-Aguinyi Clan in Anambra State	Ntuegbe Nese Clan in Enugu State	Total
Men representatives	27	33	60
Women representatives	27	33	60
Youth representatives	27	33	60
Traditional rulers	5	11	16
Security agents	2	3	5
Chief priests	3	4	7
Total	91	117	208

The data were analysed qualitatively through content analysis to identify themes by highlighting participants' fundamental ideas. The dataset was imported into Nvivo 11 to help with the systematic study and to reduce human bias. The analysis followed these stages:

1. Stage 1 was to determine the unit of analysis, which constitutes participants' perceptions of tourism impacts and how SET could influence the interpretation.
2. Stage 2 was to develop nodes for coding critical comments regarding the questions.
3. In stage 3, the contents of the nodes were sorted based on similarities and differences through reflective thinking, and themes were identified.

6. Findings

This section reports the themes identified for understanding residents' perceptions of tourism and the factors responsible for such interpretation. Verbatim quotes from the participants' comments are presented. The themes are as follows:

6.1. Creating opportunities for women to participate in tourism

This theme was identified from many women participants' comments about gender issues. They noted that creating opportunities for women to participate in future tourism can influence how residents perceive tourism in the area because of the influence of local Igbo culture. Some women explained that the area is a male-dominated society, and the men possessed more power and opportunity in project decision-making than women. One of the women noted that while they have some level of freedom to make decisions, men make more important community decisions as culture demands, especially regarding choosing and participating in projects (which includes tourism). As a result, many women participants acknowledged that their cultural orientation may affect tourism assessment. Representatives of the women – participants 5 and 16 – noted, respectively:

A menstruating woman is not permitted to enter our local stream. A married woman cannot engage in an extra-marital affair, but there is no native custom prohibiting the men from such an act. Women are also not expected to break kolanut; if they do, a man should not eat it.

Even though we have made significant contributions to the development of our community, there are still some limitations to what we can do because of how our culture is structured. We do not expect that we all will have an equal opportunity to make decisions about tourism planning.

The women participants also added that there are sacred sites where women are not permitted to enter and cultural activities that they are not allowed to participate in. Women mourning the death of their husbands

cannot go to the market or fetch water from the streams. They were worried whether they would be allowed to provide input concerning tourism in a male-dominated society. Participant 75 further noted:

Most of our cultural practices favour men over women. Women are sometimes not allowed by custom to do the things that men could do or the decisions that they could make. This cultural domination could also affect the decisions made about tourism in the future.

These comments suggest that the women do not think that men and women will have equal opportunity to assess tourism and its impacts in the future because of the favouritism that their culture affords the men in society.

6.2. Creating opportunities for community development and cultural preservation

This theme captures the perceptions of most participants about tourism's impact. Participants noted that tourism is early, so they have some expectations. They indicated that they would support tourism if it provided their basic needs, such as generating economic benefits, creating jobs, helping fix bad roads, improving electricity and helping to preserve their culture. A representative of the men (participant 160) noted: *'We want tourism because we expect economic benefits, to sell our local wares, the creation of job opportunities, improved living standards and boosting local businesses'*.

Some participants added that while Westernization has influenced African culture, some adherents of traditional religion still participate in cultural practices in Igbo society. Some chief priests lamented that many shrines and sacred places have been demolished for projects. Only a few residents in the area practice African traditional religion, resulting in many abandoned and deteriorating cultural sites and grievances from cultural fundamentalists. Additionally, some Christian fundamentalists in the region have destroyed several cultural sites to pledge allegiance to their newfound faith. These fundamentalists perceive Igbo culture as acts of paganism that should not be promoted to the outside world.

Comments from the chief priests also revealed that tourism opportunities for cultural preservation could positively influence how residents perceive its impacts. They noted that if tourism can contribute to cultural preservation and restoration, there is a high likelihood that they will lend their support to the industry. They did not support the type of tourism that would harm their artistic practices. Participants 189 and 199 – representatives of the chief priests - noted, respectively:

Our culture is all that we know as part of our religion. We believe in our tradition and will do anything to preserve it. We are passionate about our culture because it shows who we are and what we do. If tourism and tourists can understand and respect this, we will likely offer our support.

I am hopeful that we can get more of our people to support tourism in the future if we are sure that it will not contribute to the challenges, we are currently facing in preserving our cultural values.

The chief priests argued that whilst tourism may generate benefits, tourists might alter their cultural practices, which could incur the wrath of the gods. As cultural custodians, they must appease them or face the consequences.

6.3. Fear of demonstration effects and Western influence

Many participants in this category did not support and accept tourism. Most participants whose comments are identified as demonstration effects understand tourism as a Western project. They argued that many residents tended to model their lifestyle after tourists. Participant 6 – a youth representative – noted: *'The problem of tourists' lifestyle influencing the young people... and introducing unacceptable behaviours that are against our culture are the issues we do not want'*. This participant's comment suggests the type of tourism that alters

residents' cultural way of life will not be accepted. Participants' comments also showed potential adverse tourism impacts, including the fear of attracting white foreign tourists, which could influence their perceptions. Participant 25 - a representative of the youth - said:

I understand tourism because I have travelled to other places where it has been developed in Nigeria. Although I am aware of some good things that we can benefit from tourism, I will not support it if it will affect my people's peaceful way of life.

Some participants further noted that they would not support tourism for fear of attracting white tourists, who might influence their lifestyle and relationships, as was done during colonialism. Some elderly participants recounted that Nigeria has a long history of colonialism, and tourism, being a Western phenomenon, can potentially alter their way of life. While the participants acknowledged potential tourism benefits, they insisted they needed to preserve their culture instead of supporting tourism. Participants 157 and 163 – representatives of the men - noted:

You people [the research team] were young and not born during colonialism. You cannot understand what we went through and what we lost. You have also acquired a Western education, and you might find it challenging to understand our concerns about developing tourism here.

We know we can benefit from tourism, but we are not open to it because it might bring in people who will try to change what we know about our culture. Our main fear is about the white people coming here because of what they did in the past.

These comments indicate that the participants do not support tourism because they believe it would influence their way of life in ways that are unacceptable to the people. The previous colonial experience also influenced such perception.

7. Discussion

Whilst SET has been widely utilised to explore and explain how and why residents perceive tourism impacts the way they do, it has been criticised because residents are not homogenous in their perceptions (Latkova & Vogt, 2012; Ritchie & Inkari, 2006), which is confirmed in this research. As supported by SET, our findings showed that meeting residents' expectations through addressing local needs increases their support, confirming findings from other studies (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2015). How residents' expectations are addressed in the study area would determine their perceptions, which is consistent with the exchange formation stage of SET. More so, contrary to the notion held by some tourism developers that the local people do not possess tourism skills (Moscardo, 2011), residents in our research are willing to be involved.

Another point from the findings is that local culture influences how residents perceive tourism. Kibicho (2005) reported that in Malindi, Kenya, men supported the economic impacts of tourism, while women were cautious about the social impacts, implying that gender influences tourism assessment. This insight is helpful to reflect on when considering the Igbo people's culture, which attributes more power to men during decision-making and can disenfranchise women, determining who participates in impact assessment. The women participants revealed that they do not possess equal rights with men to participate in tourism and assess its consequences, which needs to be considered while using SET to understand residents' perceptions in the area. Addressing gender imbalances early may encourage a broader range of residents' perceptions concerning tourism, a view that is consistent with earlier research on gender and power in tourism (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012).

The assumptions of SET about weighing the benefits and costs of tourism can also help to understand local people's perceptions of the industry and its sociocultural opportunities. Culture is essential to the

life of the residents and must be respected and understood while developing tourism. The psychological effect of colonialism and Westernization on the local people in the area is visible in some misgivings about tourism that could attract white foreigners. The possibility of accepting tourism is dependent on the opportunity for it to support cultural preservation or revitalisation instead of erosion or decay caused by colonialism. This assertion resonates with Brida et al. (2014), Dogan (1989) and Zhuang et al.'s (2019) point that the positive and negative sociocultural impacts of tourism influence residents' perceptions. Therefore, preserving and remediating culture could encourage further exchange between residents and the tourism industry.

The final point to make about the findings is the fear that residents had of potential negative impacts of tourism, which, as posited by SET, could elicit negative perceptions. Comments revealed fear of Western influence and changes in social behaviour, as articulated through the demonstration effect, was unacceptable to residents who consider their culture sacrosanct. It is essential to consider the negative impacts when assessing residents' perceptions of tourism, especially at the exchange formation stage of SET, as reflected in the literature (Kim & Park, 2022). Sirakaya et al. (2002) and Rasoolimanesh et al. (2015) noted that balancing the costs and benefits determines how residents perceive tourism. More so, in countries with a colonial history, residents' perceptions of white tourists can influence how they see tourism, consistent with Wondirad et al.'s (2020) views. This awareness calls for reflection and engagement between tourism stakeholders in the area to help support the industry.

8. Important lessons from the Nigerian case study

There are some lessons from this research. First, the primary author is indigenous, and his insider knowledge was invaluable in conducting fieldwork, interacting with participants, and analysing findings. An emic approach to research helps highlight people's opinions from regions less represented in the tourism literature. This approach will help balance the core-periphery dichotomy in tourism research. Encouraging Indigenous researchers to research their culture may help privilege their opinions.

Second, we join scholars who have conducted case studies in Africa to propose SET (and other theories) as a tool for assessing 'residents' perceptions of tourism impacts in Nigeria. Additionally, more African-based research is required to boost tourism scholarship. While academics in South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, Ghana, and Zimbabwe have contributed to African tourism research, more needs to be done. Specifically, although the works of African tourism scholars on residents' perceptions and the use of theories are increasing, more research is required to document destinations in the beginning stage of tourism, such as Nigeria.

Third, residents' perceptions of tourism are the most researched topic, but it is yet to be explored through Nigerian case studies. Residents of Southeastern Nigeria are yet to develop formal tourism and experience the actual consequences of tourism. It is vital in this early stage to analyse residents' perceptions of and expectations from tourism, the type they want, issues to address, and how to support sustainability. This discussion will help to inform tourism developers and stakeholders to find practical ways to address residents' concerns. It will also help establish a robust platform for further research.

Last, while previous research using SET has considered the costs and benefits of tourism, our research has added the psychological dimension by raising concerns about residents viewing tourism as a neo-colonial strategy because it tended to attract Western tourists. Our study confirmed that people in countries with a history of colonialism might view tourism as a new form of Western domination. How tourism developers and planners package a destination influences how residents perceive the industry and how, when SET can be used. Our research also found that unequal power between men and women can influence residents' perceptions. Further research is needed to explore additional issues affecting residents' perceptions of tourism in the area.

9. Conclusion

Most studies on residents' perceptions of tourism focused on advanced economies, with limited literature on Sub-Saharan African case studies highlighting a significant contribution of this paper. Our findings showed that SET can be used to interpret residents' perceptions of tourism in the area. We confirm that the application of SET is at the exchange formation stage, as the local people consider whether an actual exchange with the tourism industry will be favourable and what possible challenges may occur. Issues that can influence attitudes to tourism were identified, such as opportunities for women to participate in tourism, opportunities for community development and cultural preservation and fear of the demonstration effect and Western influence. The themes offer insights into the issues to consider while interpreting residents' perceptions of tourism within an emerging economy. Further research will highlight other considerations in analysing residents' perceptions of tourism in the country.

The implications of the research are manifold. First, the theory can be usefully applied in tourism research in Nigeria. Second, countries with a colonial history might exhibit scepticism towards tourism and Western tourists because of the psychological effects of colonialism. Third, sociocultural consideration has proven to be a strong determinant of how residents perceive tourism impacts and should be given as much attention as the economic and environmental aspects. These points require reflection by the tourism developers, planners and researchers in the area, which suggests a shift from 'business as usual' to 'business as better'.

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