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## IMPACT OF ART AND CRAFT TOWARDS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT A CASE STUDY OF OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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### ABSTRACT

*Art and craft industry is a major economic sector of tourism development in Oredo. The aim of this study is to establish art and craft as a veritable source of tourism economic development; the objectives of the study are to: undertake the itinerary of art and craft in the study area, identify the art and craft stakeholder in the study area, examine the socio-economic benefits of art and craft to the stakeholders and identify the problems associated with art and craft production in the study area; Data were collected by structured questionnaire; oral interviews, on site visits and participant observations so as to gain perception and understanding of the art and craft sector. The primary data was gathered from the crafters through interviews, while the Secondary data were gathered from questionnaires. The results and findings show that art and craft sector has socioeconomic and economic benefits to the stakeholders though there are infrastructural deficiencies, lack of capital, no conducive environment and regular power supply to work; that the government should put in place, to enhance the sector. Conclusion and recommendation are drawn that since the sector has socio economic and economic benefits that art and craft bring for the stakeholders and even the government both state and local, the government should try to ameliorate the problems.*

**KEY WORDS:** Arts and craft, tourism development, stakeholders, socio-economic benefits

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### Introduction

The central motivation for development of tourism in a given society is the economic benefits derived from its foreign exchange earnings, creation of jobs and opportunity for people to increase their income and improve on their standards of living. Experiences are demonstrated and employments are generated directly in the sector, which yields earnings generated that are competitive in the sector better than other sector (Hall and Lew, 1100M). Arts and crafts industries are the foremost occupation of the people of Oredo local government and it dates back many centuries even before the coming of the Europeans. Agbontaen (IMMC) buttresses this fact by adding that the artistic tradition of pre-historic Benin (Oredo inclusive) were firmly established in the people's way of life and maintained by traditional art guilds. Layiwola (110011) and Agbontaen (IMMC) observe further that the establishment of the guild system became a solid foundation for handicraft industries to emerge as an integral part of economic social and administrative organization of Benin kingdom. The economic empowerments derived from arts and crafts and their impact in breaking poverty circle cannot be overemphasized. The trade is transforming the quality of life by providing the bridge to self-sufficiency through workshop experiment that can build self-awareness; that can assess social and economic values and through which participant can acquire and enhanced integrity thereby increasing products for tourists and tourism boom (Elebute and Odukuma, 1101L).

**Marshall (1911)** states that there was at least sixty-eight guilds among the Edos; that twelve out of the sixty-eight guilds dealt with arts and crafts, known as the craft guild. To this end, vocations under arts and crafts as listed by **Dark, 1933** and **Obichere, 1991** included: architects, blacksmiths, brass casters, carvers, carpenters, costume designers, beaders, tanners, sculptors, potters, weavers and cosmetologist. Tourism according to **Uwadiogwu (1994)**, are inclusive of those who provide visitors with the enabling environments for the sojourning to take place for mutual benefits. The tourist and the hosts as well benefit symbiotically. The tourists benefit from the destination tourism products and service delivery to satisfy their tourism needs and the hosts on the other hand benefit from the tourists through investment opportunities as well as the culture stimulation and arts and crafts. Art and craft industry is the bane of Oredo attraction of visitors/ tourists to the state. The tourism products include arts and crafts heritage, considerable from wealth of carvings, hand-woven clothes, bowls, ash trays, flower pots, bronze objects, brass carving objects, pottery, farm implements, household utensils, iron works, ebony rings, and weapons: the production of enormous merchandise, local arts and crafts provide the basis of tradition, economy and source of employment and income to substantial number of individuals and government. In Oredo, workshops of various crafts can be found and visitors/tourists are normally welcome to observe the craftsmen and women at work and various tourist products on display.

As observed earlier, tourism exhibit culture; meaning that it is worth mentioning that Nigeria and precisely Oredo are endowed with numerous and diverse tourist attractions which are categorized into natural (eco-tourism) and man-made resources. **Ononeme (1990)** has it that Oredo traditional art objects the production centres at Igun Street, the new carving centre's emerged since the reign of **Oba Eweka II**, when the carvers relocated from their traditional base at Igbesanmwan Street, the Oredo artistic museum where some of these art work are kept for the viewing as well as the other numerous galleries are all geared towards tourism economic development. The conquest of **Benin Kingdom** in 1897 led to the seizure of treasures by the **British** soldiers that soon became the most highly prized all African art, their value until this day has not diminished. **Ononeme (1990)** has it that many people travel to obtain service from the **Benin** arts works. (Oredo (inclusive) and also that scholars visit arts museums and galleries worldwide where **Benin** arts are displayed either for consultation or purchase of products. Same way locally, tourists continue to visit the production centers and showrooms for observation and purchase.

There is a continued growth of interest in the past 100 years in Nigeria on how people spend their time to visit different places, destinations and localities (**Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Yail and Wall, 1990**). At a global scale, this interest is becoming an international phenomenon where there is keen interest in people visiting foreign countries to experience and see what they were not used in doing or seeing. Localities or regions that possess unique tourist attractions usually witness an upsurge of tourists annually; Oredo for example always experience a boom during Igwe and Ewere festivals, which attracts a lot of tourists and visitors. **Novandomsky (1998)** observes that in Oredo, tourism is an important element towards economic development. Tourism is a multifaceted sector comprising both formal and informal enterprises with numerous subsectors. The arts and crafts sector is an integral travel and tourism-linked economic sector of Oredo. **Ofuani (1991)** adds that Oredo tourism has assets ranging from cultural tourism, ecotourism, sports tourism and economic tourism.

Tourism development in Oredo has been receiving considerable attention by both the public and private sector operating in the state. The state existing tourist facilities and services are acclaimed to be the nation's most popular destination among other states of the federation due to the uniqueness of the art and craft products in Oredo. The services usually offered includes: transportation or travel information services, hotels, restaurant and entertainment services, security services, banking services, medical services and shopping services. All these, geared towards economic development.

Economically, arts and crafts sector is a strategy that gives individual and the government process of obtaining basic financial opportunities. It involves actively thwarting attempts to deny the marginalized people their basic rights by encouraging, fossilizing and developing their skills for self-sufficiency with focus on eliminating the future need of seeking charity for individuals in the marginalized group.

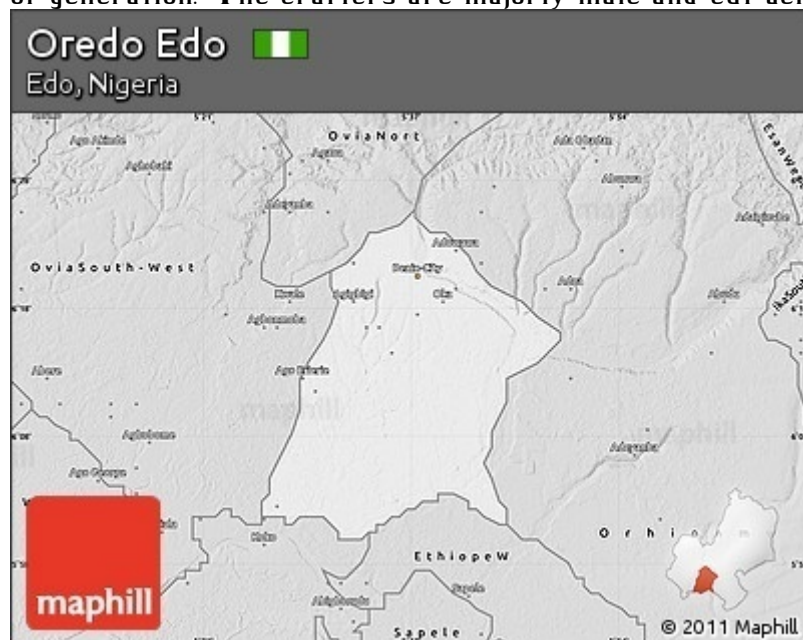
### The Objective of the Study

The aim of this research work is to establish art and craft as a veritable source of tourism economic development in Oredo. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Undertake itinerary of arts and crafts in the study area
- ii. Identify the art and stakeholders in the study area
- iii. Examine the socio economic benefits of arts and craft to stakeholders and
- iv. Identify the problems associated with arts and crafts production in the study area

### Study Area

Benin City is the headquarters of Oredo Local Government Area. It shares boundaries with Egor Local Government in the East, Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area in the west and Delta state in the south western part of Nigeria. Oredo is the spiritual home of Edo speaking people. Its headquarter is in Benin City, it remains the capital of Benin Empire. Oredo occupies an area of 1111.00 square kilometers and its population is currently projected to 1111.111 people (Ofuani, 1111). Oredo is showered with encomiums for its splendors, excellence and creative arts in addition to its fame of being the tourist delight and investors' destinations. The area is known for its traditional hospitality, the natives are warm, enlightened, friendly and ever willing to offer helping hands to others particularly visitors and strangers. The study areas for this research work include Igun Bronze Casters along Igun Street. It is to be noted here that Igun is the home of guild of casters in Oredo known as *Iguneronmwon* (Layiwola, 1100v) and Igbesanmwan crafters in Igbesanmwan Street, Benin City. Majority of the art and craft work produced in Oredo are majorly from Igun and Igbesanmwan streets, which are all located in Benin City, the headquarter of Oredo Local Government Area. Among the work of art produced, here are scriptural piece, carving, painting, drawing, which have the rich cultural endowment of the Benin nation and represents history, culture, value and the tradition of Benin people. (Egbon, 1101x), he states further that these sites form focal points to interact with history of Benin. Igun Street, according to history, continues to serve as guardian of ageless tradition, a place where art is the genealogy of generation. The crafters are majorly male and cut across all ages, young and old.



Source: [www.maplandia.com](http://www.maplandia.com)

## Methodology

The study draws on desk research, interviews, on site visits, structured questionnaire and personal observations. The majority of the crafters interviewed are not formally educated, they are majorly male and the sector cuts across all ages: old and young. They formed the primary source of data collected for the study. Here, group discussions and interviews were the instruments used to get the data for the information used for the discussion. The secondary data drew on questionnaires instrument, which was employed in National Museum, Benin City, art galleries such as Idubor Art gallery, Victor Uwaifo Gallery, Wangboje Creative Arts Centre and Ebohon Cultural Centre; Oredo Local Government Area. Questionnaires were administered here because the respondents were too busy to give the researcher audience for interview.

Structured questionnaire instrument of Likert scale (agree, strongly agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree), was used for the data collection. The first section deals with biodata of the respondents.

**Table1: Questionnaire Distribution**

S/N	Organisations	No Distributed	No Returned	%
I	Galleries	MO	DII	ML I
II	Open craft shops	VO	IIII	DO
	<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>87.6</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2010

**Table 3:Problems Associated with Art and Craft Production**

Category	There is conducive environment		There is Regular Electricity supply		There is enough capital		There is good transportation system		Crafters use new technology			
Agree	IO	C.C	D	L II	X	III. D	M	L M	ID	III. D		
Strongly agreed	X	III. D	C	X.V	IO	C.C	L	V.L	C	X.V		
undecided	III	II. III	II	I.X	V	III. I	III	II. III	V	III. I		
disagree	XD	VV.L	LX	XO.O	XI	IIIM. II	XL	VIII. I	VO	IIIO. D		
Strongly disagree	LV	VM. II	XC	VIII. D	LO	VL. II	LL	XO. D	LI	VL. M		
Total	IIIO	IOO	IIIO	IOO	IIIO	IOO	IIIO	IOO	IIIO	IOO		

Source: Fieldwork, 2017

These respondents were purposively selected across the stakeholders and were believed to be knowledgeable enough about the aim of the study. Out of the 1100 questionnaires distributed, 114 which were completed and retrieved were analyzed together with the data got from the interview. Section II, III and V of the questionnaire contained issue of arts and crafts in tourism economic development. Respondents were requested to indicate either strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree or strongly disagree against each of the questions asked depending on perception and experience. Simple proportional percentages were adopted for data analysis.

## Results and Discussions

### The Itinerary of Arts and Craft in Oredo Local Government Area

S/N	Names of arts and Craft Centres	Location	No. interviewed
I	Igun bronze carvers	Igun street, Benin City	xmale (11adults, 11youths )
II	Igbesanmwan Crafters	Igbesanwman Street Benin-City	vmale (11old men, 11youths)

Source: Fieldwork, 2017

### The Socio-economic Benefits of Arts and Crafts to Stakeholders

Beyond beauty and cultural dimension, arts and crafts present several interesting and important socio-economic benefits as observed by some of the participants. Among the benefits are job creations. Arts and crafts are home based sector, which requires a low capital and infrastructure to establish which therefore creates jobs at minimal costs. Hay, (1100) points out that crafts industries have low level of organization and since it does not require formal education to establish, it requires a low skill level.

The participants pointed out that people of different category patronize their products. To this end, Rogerson and Sithhole (1101) are of the view that for many researchers, the activities of crafters represents a special category of tourism-linked small, medium and micro enterprise or, more importantly, a form of informal tourism enterprise. The crafters recognize also that due to the durability of products and uniqueness of their products in international market, there is influx of viewers and buyers. Crafters make significant contribution in the wider cultural sector due to the attraction of their products to visitors both locally and internationally (Schwartz and Yair, 1100). This sector brings the crafters to international recognition.

Arts and crafts sector brings about infrastructural development to the Oredo as attested by the participants. The government makes efforts to create good roads, bring portable water and hospitals to the state because of the tourism and the importance to buy their products.

### Economic Benefits of Arts and Crafts to Stakeholders

Some of the economic benefits the participants stated they enjoy in arts and crafts sector, which include competitive edge. Because of the high patronage of their products, every artist puts in his best to come out with fascinating products. The

sector elevates the quality of life, improves the community's ability to attract economic activity and also create a climate in which innovation can flourish

Apart from competition, arts and crafts sector creates a foundation for defining a sense of place and contribute to the development of skilled workforce. According to Fillis (1000), several studies advocate that the art and craft be seen as a sector where creative talents are found and hunted. The existence of art and craft in Oredo has the potential to contribute immensely to the government's priorities.

Hall and Lew (1000) observe that concentration of culture sector firm and high-skilled workers along with businesses that are related will provide partnership and cooperative projects to develop. They speak further that concentration of businesses also would facilitates the marketing of skills and products. At Igun and Igbesanmwan, there are concentrations of crafters and the participants testified to be happy with themselves doing what they know best.

In the course of the study, the participants agreed that their sector is important to the development of the state. In agreement with the participants, Sharma, (1011), Hay (1000), Schwarz and Yair (1000) add that art and craft contributes immensely to tourism economic development of a place. The participants maintain that the benefits of craft production transcends the economic providing opportunities for social interaction, reinforcing cultural tradition and in some instances contributing to the improved natural resources management of the raw materials used in the production process. In addition, they observe clusters of culturally based businesses and workers can culture innovation and new specializations. It is obvious that places where innovation is prized are naturally attractive to investors and conducive to creativity of all types because the frequency of exchange promotes creative activity.

Arts and crafts industries led to the establishment of galleries by individual and museum by the Federal government in Benin City, where thousands of citizens are gainfully employed. Through these galleries and craft shops, incomes are generated to the governments through taxes and tourists' duties on purchase of art products and artifacts. Arts and crafts sector, an age long industry in Oredo led to the establishment of hotels to accommodate the teaming visitors to the state. Also, established of eateries and fun parks, which make Oredo a place of haven for tourists. Sherma, Dua and Hatwai (1011) opine that micro enterprises enhance productivity, generate employment and develop economic independence and personal ad social capabilities.

### **Problems associated with Art and Craft production and Marketing**

From the questionnaire, some respondents observe that the working environment of crafters are not conducive and they are surprised that with the huge income generated through art and craft to the state government taxation and duties, the government cannot afford to build an art village and relocate the crafters workshops there. They added that most often, the bronze casters work in the open because of the heat from the hearth used for casting bronze under the sun and in the rain. Oneneme (1010) attested to the observation made by the researcher by saying that though many of them still use local casting method, some of the casters have started using modern technology to produce their products, which come out more beautiful than the ones produced with local equipment.

Of the casters at Igun and Igbesanmwan, for this study, the participants all male indicates that the major materials especially the wax for bronze casting, is very expensive and therefore requests assistance from State Chambers of Commerce and Industry for development; no good roads and this affect patronage especially during the rainy season.

From the findings in the study, lack of Electricity is a major problem affecting production in art and craft sector. A gallery owner lamented bitterly that due to shortage of electricity power supply, crafters are not able to meet their demands especially during festivals when costumers come for patronage. That if the casters must produce products that can compete with other products across the globe there must be regular power supply for efficient products. There must be consistent electric power supply for crafter to be able to meet the demand.

Lack of capital is a major problem in any entrepreneurial sector. From the finding in the course of the study, the respondents complained bitterly of lack of capital. That due to short supply of fund, crafters cannot afford to stock raw materials for production and they (gallery owners and open art shop owners) are not able to stock their shops with products. Ononeme (11010) observe that there is inadequate availability of transportation due to bad roads especially during season. Allan and Lew (1100M), observes that an alternative approach to understanding the economics of tourism is not to think of it as service or even as an industry but according to Debbage and Ioannides (1100V) to think of about production chains and information flows within and between companies. Smith (11MMD) adds by saying there is need to start with primary inputs and factors such as land, labor and capital and then converting it them into them into immediate facilities galleries, hotels, restaurants and infrastructure which finally produce the final output

### **Conclusion**

Art and craft industry is a viable sector towards tourism development in Oredo. While there is a great potential for their contribution to tourism, the sector is faced with many challenges that hinder their ability to develop despite their huge socio and economic contributions to the crafters and local and even state government. In the study, problems are identified such as lack of infrastructure, lack of capital, lack of good working environment and lack of regular power supply impeding production.

### **Recommendation**

From the foregoing, art and craft is viable in tourism economic development thus the government should endeavor to create art village or improve on the casters' work site as incentive for better production of art products and improve on infrastructure so that tourists will enjoy all the haven of tourism.

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