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# Stakeholders' Perception of Socioeconomic Implications of Crises on Tourism in Oyo State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

Although it seems obvious that tourism activities at destinations would be adversely impacted by crises including terror attacks, crime, and political unrest, with consequential socioeconomic implications, not all generic empirical investigations support these views. This study examines the extent to which various crises affected tourism at two tourist sites, namely the Ilaji Hotels and Sports Resort and Bower's Tower in Oyo State, Nigeria. Like many of Nigeria's destinations, there have been crisis incidents at these sites that could have socioeconomic implications. The current study employs crisis management and the push and pull factor theories. It uses a mixed-method approach to unravel the crisis perceptions of 8 destination stakeholders and 230 tourists from the study sites. Interview/document coding and statistical tools (frequencies and percentages) were used to analyze and determine how various crises including kidnapping, political demonstrations, ethnic conflict, and snatch theft impacted tourist flow, tourist perceptions, and socioeconomic potentials of the selected destinations. Based on the findings, it was concluded that crises, other than the past COVID-19 pandemic, had no significant impact on tourist flow, tourist perceptions, host community, and employment owing to tourism development measures at the study sites. Nonetheless, the study recognizes the need for further development of tourism at these sites through the provision and maintenance of adequate infrastructure and promotion of the destination for the socioeconomic prosperity of the host communities.

**Keywords:** crises, destination management authorities, stakeholders, socioeconomic implications, tourism, tourist attractions

## Introduction

A crisis can be defined as "an unpredictable event that threatens the important expectancies (perceptions) of stakeholders related to health,

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safety, environmental, and economic issues, and can seriously impact an organization's (or destination's) performance and generate negative outcomes." Coombs (2014; as cited in Majebi, [2021](#)). Crises, including human-induced (terror attacks) and naturally occurring (earthquakes) events, can be a source of concern for stakeholders (a person(s) or group(s) of people) who have an interest in the operations of a particular organization/destination. A crisis incident, such as a terror attack or a similar threat, can have diverse ripple effects on important sectors of a destination, especially tourism, with socioeconomic implications (including loss of livelihood). Tourism can be defined as "the processes, activities, and outcomes arising from the relationships and interactions amongst tourists, tourism suppliers, host governments, host communities, and surrounding environments that are involved in the attracting and hosting of visitors" (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2003; as cited in Majebi, [2021](#)).

### **Sociological Significance of the Study**

Stakeholders' perceptions of the implications of crises, including human-induced crises such as terror attacks on tourism, hold significant sociological importance as they reflect broader societal attitudes and values. These perceptions can influence community cohesion, resilience, and social dynamics. Also, stakeholders' views may shape policy responses which can impact the distribution of resources and support efforts towards crisis management which comprise prevention, response, and recovery measures. An understanding of these perceptions allows for a nuanced analysis of societal fabric, highlighting the interconnectedness of economic and societal structures within the context of tourism. Crisis incidents can be detrimental to destinations in Africa with diverse but underdeveloped resources, since these incidents can impact their budding competitiveness in the global tourism industry. This deserves an empirical investigation in a destination context to inform appropriate measures for enhanced living standards through identifying and addressing crises that potentially affect tourism operations.

The African continent contributed to global tourism growth with a 9% increase in tourist arrivals in 2017 (Signé, [2018](#)), 5% share of global tourist arrivals, and 7.1% share of its GDP in 2018 (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], [2020](#)). In the same vein, in 2019, tourism accounted for about 7% of Africa's GDP and contributed \$169 billion to its economy (Wyman, [2020](#)). Several challenges undermine the growth of

African tourism including weak institutions and a depleted infrastructure base associated with unsafe roads, inadequate water supply, inconsistent electricity supply, and environmental, economic, and security/terrorism risks (Signé, [2018](#)). Even then, despite the recent COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in travel restrictions, the continent still seems to have the potential for further tourism growth. This is evident by the increase in international tourist visitations being witnessed in some African regions, including North Africa (+10% tourist arrivals) and Sub-Saharan Africa (+5% tourist arrivals), in recent times (Bentum-Ennin, [2020](#)). Africa also contributes to domestic tourism. For example, in 2019, domestic tourism accounted for 55% of all travel and tourism spending in Africa (Wyman, [2020](#)).

Nevertheless, to further improve the growth of tourism in Africa, research must focus on further identification of such crises that can have a socioeconomic impact on tourism at specific destinations in Africa. The perceptions of key stakeholders, especially tourists, host communities, tourism-related businesses, and destination management authorities are very important to understand the socioeconomic impact of crises as this study seeks to do, in a destination such as Nigeria, where there have been crisis incidents that potentially affect tourist flow with socioeconomic implications for the destination.

Nigeria is a major tourist destination in West Africa and it has unique cultural and natural tourist attractions. According to Mustapha ([2013](#)), these include ‘about 29 national parks and game reserves, 60 museums, 25 scheduled sites recognized for their archaeological or historical importance, and 13 tourist villages, centers, and complexes in the country, about 1500 annual festivals, rock paintings, geological formations, and bird sanctuaries’. According to the Federal Ministry of Information & National Orientation ([2023](#)), tourist attractions in Nigeria can be found in several states of the federation across the country’s six geopolitical zones. They include, but are limited to, zoos, plateaus, rocks, hills, springs, lakes, waterfalls, beaches, gardens, and shrines. These attractions potentially influence tourism activities which result in employment generation, wealth creation, and economic empowerment (Adesina-Uthman et al., [2023](#); Ajudua et al., [2022](#)).

However, as with many destinations in the Global South and especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria is confronted with varying crisis incidents across all its six regions that could affect the country's budding tourism



industry and subsectors, with socioeconomic implications for its dwindling oil-dependent economy. According to Duerksen (2021) and Majebi (2021), these include crises caused by militant Islamist groups such as Boko Haram and the Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP) in the northeast of the country, where several people have been kidnapped including the infamous kidnapping of over 200 schoolgirls in 2014. This is in addition to many other past and recent terror attacks by these groups and other criminal gangs and bandits in different regions of the country including incessant cases of terrorism, kidnapping, attacking travelers on highways, sabotaging the power grid, establishing permanent checkpoints, destruction of property and farmland, and armed robbery across some states of the federation (Ajayi et al., 2022; Duerksen, 2021; Majebi, 2021). The impact of these crisis incidents and other threats is evident by the decline in tourist arrivals, receipts/revenue generation, and job losses (Majebi, 2021; The World Bank, 2023) owing to perceived security risk concerns, which have harmful socioeconomic implications for the destinations' tourism industry and subsectors.

Many studies on different types of crises that impact tourism in terms of decline in tourist arrivals and revenue generation have focused on major tourist destinations in Asia, Europe, North America, Oceania, and Latin America (Duan et al., 2021; Wut et al., 2021). Only about 3% of the studies conducted during the period 1985-2020 focused on the African context (Duan et al., 2021; Majebi, 2021; Wut et al., 2021). Diers-Lawson (2020) envisaged a dearth of research from Africa about crisis contexts, amongst other issues associated with crises and destination perceptions. Earlier studies on crises in the African context focused more on crimes against tourists in the subcategory of security crises, with South Africa emerging as the destination with the highest number of studies in this category (Duan et al., 2021).

However, there have been a few recent studies on tourism-specific crises and management measures in the context of African destinations. These include studies focusing on destination rebranding in association with post-disaster events (Avraham & Ketter, 2017), the effect of crises associated with insecurity (Nwokorie, 2014; Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019; Ogunsusi & Adeleke, 2020), destination image repair during crises (Avraham & Ketter, 2017; Gozgor et al., 2022), the need for a collaborative stakeholder approach towards crisis management in the context of the

negative impact of 2014-2015 Ebola crisis on tourism (Maphanga & Henama, [2019](#); Novelli et al., [2018](#)), recovery strategies for political crises associated with post-coup de 'tat (Musavengane & Zhou, [2021](#)), coping and post-recovery strategies for COVID-19 pandemic (Dayour et al., [2021](#)), and tourism stakeholders' crisis preparedness (Majebi, [2021](#)) amongst others. These studies undoubtedly contribute to the small but growing literature on crisis and its management in the African tourism context, especially as regards suggestions on effective response and recovery measures following such events that could have negative impacts on African tourism.

The existing studies do not seem to take a holistic approach to crisis perception and manageability from both the demand side (tourists) and the supply side (destination management authorities and host community) of tourism. This research seeks to fill this gap, especially in the context of an African destination such as Oyo State, Southwest Nigeria where there have been various crisis incidents including kidnapping, ethnic conflicts, farmland attacks, stealing of farm produce, destruction by herders, and armed robberies (Ayodele, [2021](#); Ogunsusi & Ayodele, [2020](#); Oladele et al., [2023](#)) among others, like most Nigerian cities (Ajayi et al., [2022](#); Majebi, [2021](#)). These could evoke the perception of safety concerns among tourists, host communities, businesses, and destination authorities. Tourists' negative perceptions of destinations owing to safety concerns could have socioeconomic impacts often evident by a decline in tourist arrivals, revenue generation for tourism businesses and activities at host communities, business closures, and job losses (UNWTO, [2021](#)).

## Theoretical Framework

This study adopts two theories (crisis management and push and pull theories) to evaluate the perception of destination stakeholders (destination management, tourists, and residents) regarding the manageability of crises that have socioeconomic implications for the respective destinations' tourism industry. The first theory (crisis management theory) was employed to evaluate the perception of the destination's (Oyo State, Nigeria) management authorities and their manageability of crises associated with kidnapping and terrorism. The tourism crisis management theory (Ritchie, [2004](#)) has been employed mostly to study both proactive (preventive) and reactive (response and recovery) measures for major disasters and crises (Majebi, [2021](#)). Still, it can be adapted to study the perception of



destination's authorities and the management of threats associated with kidnappings and terror attacks in the context of a developing destination, as this study seeks to do. The second theory (push and pull theory) provides the theoretical foundation for the investigation of tourists' perception of the socioeconomic implications of similar crises for the tourism industry of the study destination. The motivation for visiting tourist attractions or destinations can be associated with push or pull factors (Antara & Prameswari, [2018](#)). A push factor, for example, could be described as when a person needs to get out of their daily routine. Then, the urge to travel pushes the particular person to find information about alternative places for visitation. A pull factor is when a destination attracts the attention of person(s). Depending on their findings, they are stimulated to find travel alternatives. Nonetheless, people's perceptions could be based on a combination of both push and pull factors (Antara & Prameswari, [2018](#)). At this stage, the importance of various attributes is assessed based upon one's intuition or past experiences. The alternatives are usually decided at this stage. Among push factors that could discourage potential or repeat tourists from visiting tourist destinations are poor safety conditions and related concerns, unemployment, poverty, and so on. Pull factors comprise low crime rates, political stability, less risk of natural hazards, and so on.

Salimon et al. ([2019](#)) examined the joint influence of push, pull, and perceived security issues in Nigeria on tourism intentions. Their empirical study administered research instruments to six hundred and fifty (650) participants, out of which only three hundred and ten (310) responses were finally available for analysis. The findings revealed that both push and pull factors have a significant and positive impact on tourist intention. Similar to other studies, the study also revealed that whenever tourists perceive their intended tourism destinations as insecure, they avoid such destinations. The push and pull theory is, therefore, appropriate for the investigation of the perception of tourists/residents about the socioeconomic implications of crises associated with kidnapping and terror attacks in a destination like Oyo state, Nigeria, where there have been reported cases of such crises.

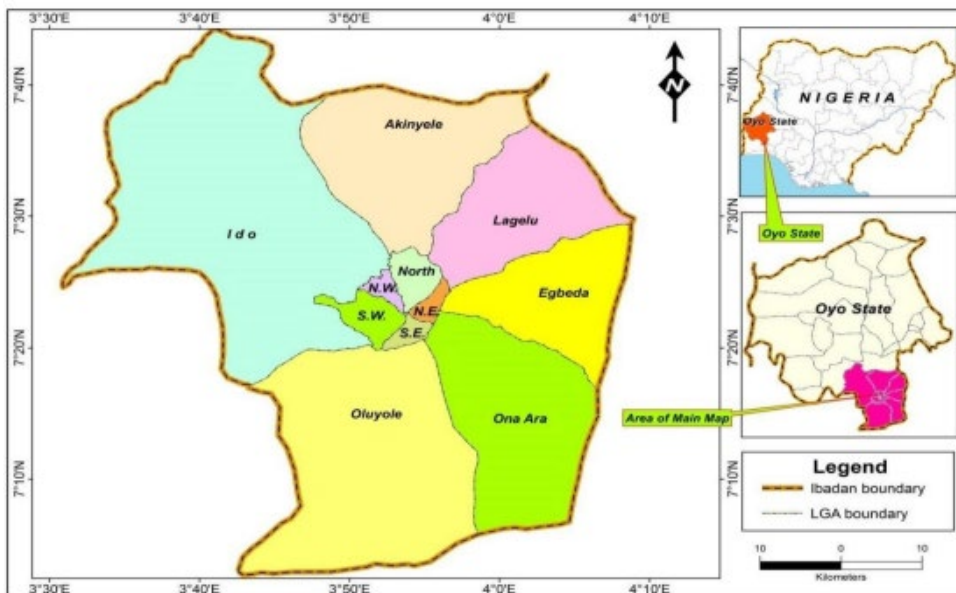
## Materials and Methods

This research is based on the examination of stakeholders' perceptions regarding whether various crises (snatch theft ethnic conflict, kidnapping, thuggery, terrorism) have economic implications for the tourism sector in Southwest Nigeria. The case sites for the study were the Ilaji Hotels and

Sports Resort and Bower's Tower in Oyo State situated in the southwest region of the country. The study region is one of the most populous in Nigeria and the third largest in the country, after Lagos and Kano states, with a population of 3,874,908 (World Population Review, [2023](#)). It shares boundaries with Kwara State to the north, and Osun and Ogun states to the east and south, respectively within the country. It also shares a boundary with Benin Republic to the West, outside Nigeria. It is located between longitude 70201E and 70401E of the Greenwich Meridian and latitudes 30351N and 40101N of the Equator (see Figure 1).

### Figure 1

*Map of Ibadan Indicating the Gocal Government Areas*



**Note.** Adapted from: Ministry of Lands, Physical Planning and Urban Development, 2021 in Oladele et al. ([2023](#))

In addition to the selected tourist sites for the study, Oyo state has many other popular sites including the Idere Hills, Aoyo Awaye Suspended Lake, Agodi Gardens, and the National Museum of Unity, among several others. Although no reliable data is available in terms of tourist arrivals and receipts at specific attractions at the destination, the available information from the Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism (Oyo State



Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism, 2023)<sup>1</sup> suggests that there had been a significant increase in tourist flow and investment in the tourism and hospitality sector since 2011 and continued to be until 2019 when the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted the sector (Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism, 2023). As shown in Table 1, there seems to have been a daily, weekly, and yearly increase in tourist visitations to all attractions in Oyo state, resulting in an additional 4,000, 000 visits since after COVID-19.

**Table 1**

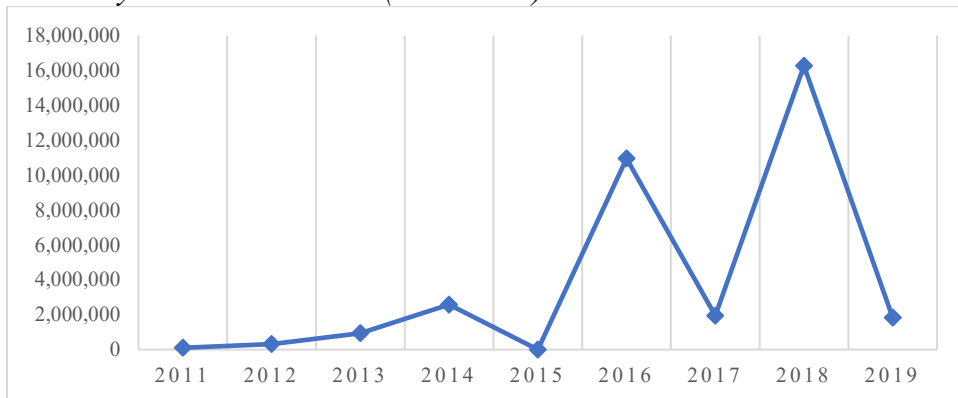
*Number of Tourists Patronizing Sites in Oyo State Before and in May 2019 (Prior to and after COVID-19)*

	Tourists per day	Tourists per week	Tourists per year	Percentage change
Before May 2019	1,604	11, 228	583, 856	
After May 2019	13, 927	97, 489	5,069,428	768

**Note.** Adapted from the Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism (2023)

**Figure 2**

*Internally Generate Revenue (2011-2019)*



**Note.** This figure includes the amount for the Y axis and the date for the X axis. Source: Adapted from the Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism (2023)

<sup>1</sup> Data was received in hard copy, by the office of permanent secretary of Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism, 2023.

Congruently, there also seems to be an increase in Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) associated with tourist arrivals to the attractions in the destination. According to the Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism (2023), the state's IGR rose from less than 5,000,000 Naira in 2011 to over 15,000,000 Naira in 2019, an increase of 10,000,000 Naira before the COVID-19 pandemic struck (see Table 1). This resulted in over 837,38% increase in the IGR generated from the tourism sector to the destinations' economy (Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism, 2023).

In the same vein, it seems evident that there has been a corresponding increase in investment in the destinations' tourism and hospitality sectors. According to the Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism (2023), investment in tourism and hospitality businesses increased after the COVID-19 pandemic (see Table 2). For example, Table 2 suggests that there were 633 hotel facilities prior to COVID-19 and 945 in the post-COVID-19 period. Similar growth was recorded in other sectors (nightclubs, event centers, restaurants, tour agencies) within the same period, as reflected by Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Growth in Hospitality Industry in Oyo State (Before May 2011 to April 2023)*

	Before May 2011	May 2011 to May 2019	Total as of May 2019	Performance (%)	May 2019 to March 2023	Total as of March 2023	Performance (%)
Hotels	312	633	945	103	1,256	2,201	98
Night Clubs	8	70	78	775	643	721	819
Event centres	28	115	143	311	803	946	598
Restaurants	46	66	112	44	581	693	780
Tour operators	50	96	146	92	635	781	562

*Note.* Source: Adapted from the Oyo State Ministry of Information, Culture & Tourism (2023)

Nevertheless, the continued growth of the destination's tourism sector and the socioeconomic potential of the tourist sites in terms of employment

opportunities and revenue generation from tourism activities that are vital for the continued growth of the destination's economy may be at stake. This is because a myriad of crises associated with crimes and social vices including kidnapping, banditry, and armed robbery have been experienced at the destination (Ayodele, [2021](#); Ogunsusi & Ayodele, [2020](#); Oladele et al., [2023](#)).

### **Selection and Description of Study Sites**

The authors purposively selected the Bower's Tower and the Ilaji Hotels and Sports Resort for the study on the basis of a few factors including their familiarity with the region, logistics, location, and safety concerns. This was aimed at unraveling whether various crises have had significant socioeconomic impacts on the study sites, as other studies were not specific regarding the impact of crises on such sites. Thus, the authors chose a remarkable tourist site (Bowers Tower) within the Oyo old town and a farther one.

### **Figure 3**

*Bowers Towers*



*Note.* Nigeria Galleria ([2023](#))

Bower Tower (see Figure 3) is a historic monument erected to honor Captain Robert Lister Bower in 1936. He was the first British Resident in Ibadan, Oyo State, appointed by the British government to administer the ancient city between 1893 and 1897. The tower is 60 feet high and covers 11 square feet with two entrances and a spiral staircase that leads to the top of the tower. It has a 45 double spiral staircase which gave it the name

'Layipo', which means spinning around. From the summit of the tower, one can see the city of Ibadan and its environs and appreciate the pre-historicity of the town. It is located on the summit of Oke-Are, the highest hill in the city, from which one may enjoy a commanding view of the city. It is about 13.6 kilometers from Ibadan airport.

The second study site, Ilaji Hotel and Sports Resort (see Figure 4) is located at No. 1, Oloyo Village, off Ona-Ara Local Government Secretariat, Akanran, Oyo State, Nigeria. An amusement park within the resort is one of the area's local attractions. In addition, travelers who have shopping on their agenda can visit the Palms Shopping Mall and the Jericho Mall around the resort. The resort is an attraction that is located around a forest. It is 13 miles from the center of Ibadan, the Oyo state capital.

**Figure 4**

*Ilaji Resorts*



*Note.* Ilaji Resorts ([2023](#))

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

The authors used mixed methods research design (involving semi-structured interviews and a survey) (Saunders et al., [2015](#)) to retrieve information from the participants and respondents. This helped to corroborate information derived from both the supply side and the demand side of tourism regarding the stakeholders' perceptions of crises and the attendant socioeconomic implications, if any.

### ***Qualitative Study***

For qualitative analysis, the study employed semi-structured personalized interviews to retrieve information from the participants comprising representatives of destination authorities, managers of tourism business, academics, and site/security officials (see Table 3). All the participants were interviewed with their consent.

**Table 3**  
*Profiles of the Research Participants (Interviewees)*

Stakeholders	Ilaji Hotels and Sports Resort		Bowers Tower	
	code	Position	Codes	Position
Destination management authority	IOD1	Permanent Secretary	BOD1	Permanent Secretary
	IOD2	Director	BOD2	Director
	IOD3	Deputy Director	BOD3	Deputy Director
Academia/tourism consultants	IOA1	Professor	BOA1	Professor
	IOA2	Research Fellow	BOA2	Research Fellow
Hotel/Tourist site managers	IOT1	Human resource manager	IOT1	Site officer/security
	IOT2	Hotel/resort manager		
Security	IOT3	Tour Guide Ticketer/Security Official		

**Note.** I- Ibadan; O- Oyo; D- Destination authority; A -Academia; T-Tourist site. Source: Authors' (Field interview, 2023)

The recruitment of research participants was achieved after the lead researcher informed the participants about the importance of the study and assured them of confidentiality while reporting the outcome if they so desired. They were selected based on the snowball technique and the saturation point resulted in eight (8) research participants. Their responses were analyzed using a simple coding technique to reflect their perceptions of security crises at the selected destinations. To complement the information gathered from the participants, available documents on tourist arrivals and revenue were sought to examine the pattern of tourist inflow

and income generation to the destination. Also, the authors employed a direct observation technique to reflect on the physical state of tourist sites and patronage.

### ***Quantitative Study***

For the quantitative aspect of the research, a questionnaire was designed on Google Forms to retrieve information about the respondents' perception of security crises at the destination. To determine the sample size, a total of 540 samples from tourists, host community members, destination managers/heads of destination authorities, security staff/site members, and academics/professionals were targeted. Subsequently, to arrive at an adequate representation of the population for the study, Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination for a large population was employed. According to Yamane:

$N$  = sample size

$N$  = population size

$e$  = margin error

In  $n = N$

$1 + N(e)^2$

Therefore,

$n = 540$

$1 + 540(0.05)^2$

$n = 540$

$1 + 540(0.0025)$

$n = 540$

$1 + 1.35$

$n = 540$

2.35

= 229.78

$n = 230$  (approximately)



The selection of the participants is consistent with other studies on crises that potentially impact tourism, especially in Nigeria's context (Ezenagu, 2017; Majebi, 2021; Oladele et al., 2023). This was aimed at confirming or disputing the outcome(s) of this research with that of previous studies. Further, quantitative data collected from the questionnaires was analyzed using simple frequency, percentages, and graph.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Research that seeks to retrieve direct information from a group of respondents requires that adequate measures must be taken by the researcher to ensure that the study participants are (i) treated with respect, (ii) protected from any form of harm, and (iii) safeguarded from any form of embarrassment (Donnelly et al., 2013; Saunders et al., 2015; Veal, 2017). The researcher did not envisage any harm to the subjects of the research and the researcher alike, as well as the sites of the study destination where primary research was conducted. Therefore, before the interview sessions with each of the participant, consent forms were provided confirming that

- They have read and comprehended the information sheet.
- They are informed that their participation is voluntary and can withdraw from participating in the study at any time.
- That information could be used in future reports and article presentations.
- That their anonymity and confidentiality are respected.

In addition, the participants' consent was sought to use data on tourist arrivals and investment. Also, participant consent was sought to use the picture of the study site for research purposes only.

### **Results and Discussion**

The results of the data generated from the two study sites are presented in this section. This section has been organized based on the findings from (i) the interview sessions with the destination management, businesses, host community members, academics, and a security official regarding their perceptions of crises, as well as their socioeconomic impact and manageability (qualitative results) and (ii) the tourists/visitors' perception of crises and their influences on visitation to the attractions at the destination sites (quantitative results).

## Qualitative Results

### *Perception of Crises*

The opinions of the participants (destination representatives, academics/tourism consultants, hotel/tourist site managers, and an attraction security official) varied when asked about their perceptions of various crises (snatch theft, ethnic conflict, political instability, thuggery, terrorism) and their impacts at the selected attractions. Nonetheless, they all agreed that these crises can sometimes be a source of concern for tourism activities. For example, a destination representative said,

Although perceptions of crises are often not based on the realities at our destinations, there are few concerns regarding insecurities (e.g., terror attacks/kidnapping for ransom) which are not peculiar to our state, nonetheless, we collaborate with security agencies to prevent security issues when informed. (IOD1, personal communication, April 30, 2023).

IOD1's statement is congruent with those of other destination management stakeholders (IOD2, IOD3, BOD1, BOD2, and BOD3). They all affirmed that, even though there are some security concerns, the security agencies can promptly intervene.

However, a foreign research fellow/tourism consultant at a university in one of the destinations affirmed that

There are concerns on security crisis such as the kidnapping of persons, and this is not peculiar to a particular destination in Nigeria, but a general source of concern to especially potential international tourists, and this demand appropriate measures by the relevant authorities. (IOA2, personal communication, April 30, 2023).

IOA2's perceptions of security crises are consistent with the opinions of senior academics (IOA2 and BOA1) who affirmed that security concerns are not peculiar to a destination. They, however, suggested the need for destination authorities to collaborate with security agencies to enhance security.

In the same vein, the hotel/tourist site managers and security officials (IOT1, IOT2, IOT3, and BOT1) affirmed that there are some security concerns at the study sites including the activities of the "Yahoo boys", that



is, advance fee fraud perpetrators. However, they noted that this has been curtailed as most of the “Yahoo boys” had been apprehended and prevented from visiting the attractions. For example, a senior official of the Ilaji resort said,

To be honest, we experienced an upsurge in the activities of the “Yahoo boys” in the past, but our vigilant security team apprehended them, and we stopped them from accessing our venue. (IOT1, personal communication, April 30, 2023).

IOT1’s perception is consistent with those of others (IOT2, IOT3, and BOT1), who noted that the activities of thugs are a source of concern. They also affirmed that such cases had been curtailed by security agencies, especially when they were reported.

### **Implications of Crises on Tourism in Host Communities, Revenue Generation, and Employment**

The opinions of the members of the host communities were sought regarding the implications of various crises on tourism in terms of revenue generation and employment opportunities. All the respondents affirmed that such crises have implications for tourism activities when these crises overwhelm the communities. However, some of the participants (IOD1, IOD2, IOD3, BOD1, BOD2, and BOD3) noted that other than the COVID-19 pandemic, they had not experienced any crises that could adversely impact their communities. For example, a senior official of the tourism management board noted that

As you would expect, due to the social restrictions occasioned by the COVID-19 Pandemic, there were no regular tourism activities and this impacted socioeconomic activities in the tourism industry and subsectors, as businesses were limited in some cases, closed, revenue declined, and jobs were lost. But, that was not the case before the pandemic and now that we are in the post-COVID-19 era, we are seeing improvement in tourism activities in terms of improved tourist arrivals, revenue generation, and growing job opportunities. (IOD1, personal communication, April 30, 2023).

IODs’ statement can be corroborated by the data on tourist arrivals and the revenue generated during the period 2011-2019 and March 2023 onwards. This is indicated in Figure 2 and Table 2 in the methodology section of this article.

## **Participants' Concerns about Poor Infrastructure and Destination Image Portrayal**

The interactions with the participants provided them the opportunity to express pertinent concerns of their communities, as well as making some suggestions on how to manage such concerns. All participants at both study attractions expressed their concerns about the poor state of infrastructure within the communities where tourist attractions are located. For example, a security official at the Bowers Tower noted that

Because of the state of the infrastructure (e.g., unpaved roads) and the negligence of the facilities, only a few tourists visit the attraction, as the state of the site has attracted hoodlums who constitute risks to visitors. (BOT1, personal communication, April 30, 2023).

In the same vein, a senior official of the destination management agency said,

We are concerned about the state of infrastructure at our tourist sites, can you imagine the number of tourists that would be willing to visit an iconic site such as the Iyake Natural Suspended Lake? (BOD3, personal communication, April 30, 2023).

This is congruent with the opinions of other destination management members, the host community members, and a security official (IOD1, IOD2, IOD3, BOD1, BOD2, and BOD3), who expressed their concerns about the poor state of infrastructure including roads and the need for urgent attention from the requisite authorities. In addition, the participants were also concerned about the need for the destination to be promoted to encourage visitation. For example, a senior member of the destination management agency said,

Despite the problem associated with access to our attractions, owing to poor infrastructure, there is a need to promote these attractions through various mainstream and social media platforms. This can help to get to the appropriate authorities and prospective tourists. Also, the outcome of this research would help to publicize our destinations and bring the attention of the authorities to our needs. (BOT2, Personal communication, April 30, 2023).



## Quantitative Results

### *Demographic Information of the Respondents*

Table 6 shows the demographic information of the 230 respondents. The collation of responses is presented based on their demographic categories/items, corresponding frequency, and percentages.

**Table 6**  
*Demographic Information of the Respondents*

Label	Items	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Sex	Male	127	55.2
	Female	103	44.8
	Total	230	100
Age	Less than 20 years	21	9.1
	20-30	89	38.7
	31-40	43	18.7
	41-50	40	17.4
	51-60	24	10.4
	61 and above	13	5.7
	Total	230	100
	Occupation	Self Employed/Businessperson	84
Salaried/Regular waged		61	26.5
Casual Labor		27	11.7
Student		56	24.3
Professional Sportspersons		2	1
Total		230	100
Education Qualification		First School Leaving Certificate	51
	Secondary School Certificate	67	29.1
	OND/NCE	46	20
	BSc/HND	47	20.4
	Master's Degree	16	7
	Doctorate Degree	3	1.3
	Total	230	100
Marital Status	Married	86	37.4
	Single/Never Married	110	47.8
	Widow/Widower	13	5.7
	Divorced	11	4.8
	Separated	10	4.3
Total	230	100	
Monthly Income	Less than N35,000	117	50.9
	35,000-69,000	59	25.7

Label	Items	Frequency	Percentage(%)
	70,000-104,000	22	9.6
	105,000-139,000	7	3
	170,000-204,000	10	4.3
	205,000 and above	15	6.5
	Total	230	100
Travel Group	Family	72	31.3
	Together with Friend	53	23
	Together with Group	45	19.6
	Alone	60	26.1
	Total	230	100

It can be deduced from the table that the majority of the respondents were male (52%) and the remaining were female (48%). In terms of age, many of the respondents (38.7%) belonged to the age bracket 20-30 years. This implies that most of the respondents were young adults. This age group is closely followed by the 31-40 years adult age bracket (18.7%). The remaining age brackets for the respondents, as shown in the table, represent those within 41-50 years (17.4%) and those above 50 years (16.1%).

Regarding the occupation of the respondents, Table 1 shows that many of the respondents were either salaried/waged/labor (38.2%) or self-employed (36.5%). This implies that 74.7% of the respondents were in one form of employment or another, while 24.3% of the respondents were students, and the remaining 1% were professional sportspersons.

Regarding the educational qualification of the respondents, the table shows that all the respondents had at least one certificate. This ranged from First School Leaving Certificate to the Doctorate degree certificate. Nonetheless, most of the respondents had Secondary School Certificate and First School Leaving Certificate, representing 51.3% of the total respondents. This is closely followed by those with OND/NCE and BSc/HND, representing 40.4% of respondents. Thirdly, there were those with a master's degree, representing 7% of the sample. However, the table shows that only 1.3% of the respondents hold a Doctorate degree.

Regarding the marital status of the respondents, the table shows that many of the respondents (47.8%) were single/never married. This is followed by the respondents who indicated that they were married (37.4%). Then, there were those who indicated that they were either divorced or



separated (9.1%), and the remaining (5.7%) indicated that they were widows/widowers.

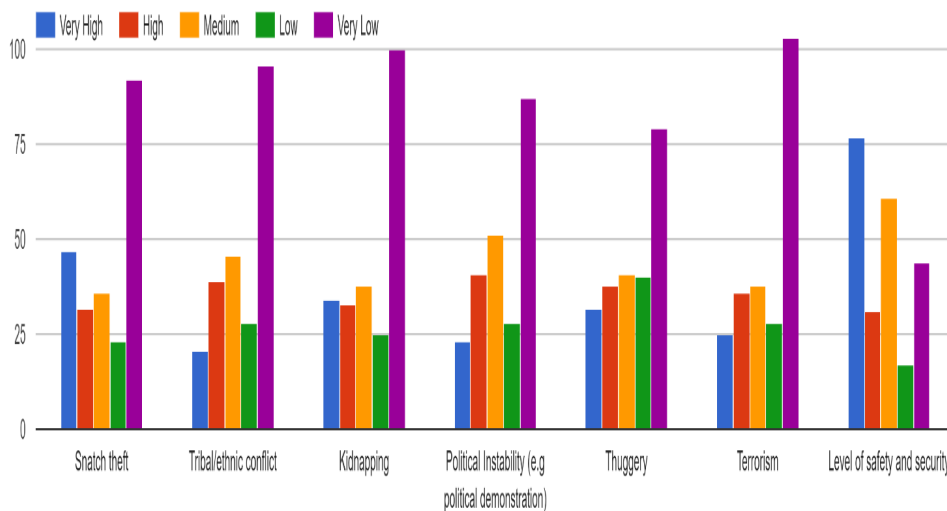
Regarding the monthly income of the respondents, the table shows that many of the respondents (50.9%) were in the low-income wage bracket, earning less than 35,000 Naira (\$40) per month. This is followed by respondents who earned between 35,000-69,000 Naira (25.7% of the study sample). Moreover, the table also shows that 9.6% of the respondents earned between 70,000 to 104,000 naira, while 7.3% of the respondents earned between 105,000 to 204,000 Naira. Only 6.5% of the respondents earned over 205,000 Naira. This implies that most of the respondents have little disposable income for leisure/tourism purposes.

Regarding the travel group, the table shows that many of the respondents (31.3%) traveled with family members. This is followed by those who traveled alone (26.1%). Others comprise respondents who traveled with a friend (23%) and those who traveled with a group (19.6%). This implies that most of the respondents (73.9%) were with more than one person while visiting the attractions. This may not be unconnected with ensuring safety while visiting attractions within a region where there may be some security concerns.

Figure 5 shows the collation of the responses regarding the perceptions of crises at the study destination. Responses are presented based on the type of crisis, with corresponding colors and numbers.

Figure 5 shows that the perceptions of the respondents regarding various crises are very low for all crisis categories, except the level of safety and security for the destinations, which is considered very high (75%). Nonetheless, the overall result in this category shows that most of the respondents do not perceive crises including snatch theft, tribal/ethnic conflict, kidnapping, political instability, thuggery, and terrorism as a problem. Yet, the opinions of about 60% of the respondents varied in terms of the general level of safety and security at the destination. This result suggests that although the respondents do not perceive the risk of crisis, they are concerned about the level of safety and security at the tourist destinations.

**Figure 5**  
*Perceptions of Security Crises*



### *Influence of Crises on Tourists*

Table 7 shows the collation of the responses to the influence of the security crisis on visiting the attractions. The responses are presented based on the type of crisis and the corresponding frequency, percentages, and ratings.

**Table 7**

### *Influence of Crises on Tourists*

Label	Frequency	Percentages	Ratings
Fear of harm from thugs causes tourists to avoid tourist location	76	33	Low
	14	6.1	medium
	140	60.9	High
Total	230	100	
Snatch theft is less likely to drive away tourists from centers	86	37.4	Low
	24	10.4	Medium
	120	52.2	High
Total	230	100	

Label	Frequency	Percentages	Ratings
Tribal/ethnic conflicts will affect tourist decisions to visit a location	65	28.3	Low
	22	9.6	Medium
	143	62.2	High
Total	230	100	
Kidnapping has high effects on tourists' behavior toward a particular location	62	27	Low
	15	6.5	Medium
	153	66.5	High
Total	230	100	
Political instability does not affect tourists' choice of tourist location	86	37.4	Low
	23	10	Medium
	121	52.6	High
Total	230	100	
Terrorism leads to low tourist arrivals in tourist locations	56	24.3	Low
	17	7.4	Medium
	157	68.3	High
Total	230	100	

Table 7 shows that many (67%) of the tourists affirmed that the fear of harm from thugs can cause them to avoid the attractions. Such respondents considered this type of security crisis as medium to high. However, 33% of the respondents considered such a crisis as having a low influence on their decision to visit the attractions. Nonetheless, the result shows that tourists are averse to crises that pose risks to their safety and security. However, regarding snatch theft, many (over 62%) of the respondents affirmed that this type of crisis is less likely to deter them from the attractions. Others (over 37%) affirmed that such a crisis is less likely to impact their visit to the attractions. This implies that the cases of snatch theft in the attractions are less likely, perhaps due to enhanced security and personal safety measures taken by the respondents. On the impact of tribal/ethnic conflict, the findings showed that many (about 72%) of the respondents indicated that this type of crisis can have a medium to high effect on their decision to visit the attractions. Others (less than 29%) indicated that this type of crisis has a low effect on their decision. Regarding the impact of kidnapping on tourist behavior towards the attractions, the findings showed that many (73%) of the respondents indicated that this type of crisis can have a medium to high effect on their decision to visit the attractions. Others (27%) indicated that this type of crisis has a low effect on their decision to visit the

attractions. Nonetheless, the findings showed that most (over 62%) of the respondents do not consider political instability to have an influence on the choice of tourist destinations. Others (less than 38%) indicated that this type of crisis has a low influence on tourist choices to visit the attractions. However, like other crises (other than snatch theft and political instability), many (over 75%) of the respondents (representing those in the medium to high categories) also indicated that terrorism could impact tourist arrivals to attractions. Although, others (less 25%) affirmed that terrorism has a limited influence on tourist arrivals.

### Discussion

A crisis is undoubtedly a concept that causes concerns for destination management authorities, host communities, tourism businesses, and tourists (Adesina-Uthman et al., [2023](#); Ajayi et al., [2022](#); Fareed et al., [2018](#); Gozgor et al., [2022](#); Majebi, [2021](#); Ogunsusi & Adeleke, [2020](#)). Destinations experiencing various crises including kidnappings, ethnic/tribal unrest, thuggery, and terrorism are likely to develop strategies in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders to reduce the impact of such crises on tourist arrivals, revenue generation, job creation, and community development spurred by the tourism industry and associated subsectors.

The perceptions of relevant destination stakeholders and their manageability of these crises could be reflected by the increase or decline in tourist arrivals, revenue generation, and associated socioeconomic activities including improved social infrastructure at these destinations. Thus, it is important to determine the destination stakeholders' perceptions of crises and their socioeconomic implications for the tourism sector including measures towards reducing their impact on the destinations. It is also important to assess the crisis perceptions of tourists and the extent to which these can influence their decision towards visiting the destination. Employing the perception theory towards understanding the perceptions of the supply side (government agencies, host community members, tourism businesses members) and the demand side (tourists/visitors) of tourism can help to unravel crisis concerns and adopt crisis reduction measures from a wide range of perspectives. The outcome of the evaluation of crisis perceptions from the perspectives of both destination authorities, community members, tourism businesses, and tourists/visitors can spur relevant destination authorities to improve on and further develop measures





that help to better address the identified crisis concerns. It can also help to improve destination image perceptions for enhanced socioeconomic activities at tourism destinations.

Thus, this study aimed to determine the socioeconomic implications of crisis perceptions on tourism in Oyo, Southwest Nigeria, where there have been crises that could evoke concerns for destination authorities, host community members, tourism businesses, and tourists/visitors. Similar to other studies (Adesina-Uthman et al., [2023](#); Ajayi et al., [2022](#); Fareed et al., [2018](#); Ogunsusi & Adeleke, [2020](#)), this study adapted and identified some generic crisis dimensions including snatch theft, ethnic conflict, political instability, thuggery, and terrorism.

The current study found that other than the COVID-19 crisis which impacts destinations (Adesina-Uthman et al., [2023](#); Cetinkaya et al., [2020](#); Wen et al., [2021](#)), destination stakeholders did not perceive other crises (snatch theft, ethnic conflict, political instability, thuggery, terrorism) to have significant socioeconomic implications, such as reduction in tourist arrivals, revenue generation, employment opportunities, economic activities, and development in their communities and destinations. However, the stakeholders affirmed that the level of crisis threats at the tourist destination can have a significant impact on the destination's image and this could have adverse socioeconomic implications if not addressed. This finding is congruent with the findings of other studies (Ajayi et al., [2022](#); Gozgor et al., [2021](#); Ogunsusi & Adeleke, [2020](#)) which suggested that crises associated with terror have negative implications for tourist destinations. In addition, a significant finding of the study is the need for improved infrastructure including the construction of roads to enhance safety and attract more tourists and investment. This may also facilitate employment opportunities, enhance the livelihood of community members and visitors, and spur development.

In the same vein, the findings revealed that many of the tourists/visitors who responded to the questionnaire survey did not consider any of the identified crises as high, other than the level of safety and security at the destination. This further reaffirms the fact that tourists are averse to crises that can constitute a risk to their safety when visiting or considering visitation (Ajayi et al., [2022](#); Mawby et al., [2021](#)). This can affect tourist arrivals and the revenue generated from tourist expenditures at destinations. It can also impact employment opportunities when businesses close due to

a decline in arrivals. Congruently, Lin et al. (2023) found that risks associated with various crises at destinations can influence tourism participation, revenue/expenditure, and socioeconomic activities.

## Conclusion

This study examined the socioeconomic implications of crisis perceptions on tourism from the perspectives of destination stakeholders (destination authorities, attraction site managers, community members, academics/consultants, security officials, and tourists) in Oyo State, Southwest Nigeria based on the crisis management and push and pull theories. The findings revealed that although the destination authorities, attraction site business managers, academics, and host community members affirmed that crises can have socioeconomic implications for tourism at destinations, still they argued that other than the COVID-19 pandemic, other crises had no significant impact on tourist flow, revenue generation, employment opportunities, and general tourism activities at the Ilaji Hotels and Resort. This is attributable to the collaborative-proactive measures taken to dissuade risk potentials associated with advanced fee fraud peddlers ('Yahoo-yahoo persons' or fraudulent persons) and other concerns by the stakeholders at the above destination.

However, the study also found that there were limited tourism activities at the second study site (Bowers Towers), owing to the poor state of facilities and road infrastructure at the location. This significantly impacted the socioeconomic activities at the site and the host community due to a significant decline in tourist arrivals. Thus, the study recognizes the need for further development of the study sites' tourism sector economy and the livelihoods of community members through the provision and maintenance of adequate infrastructure and the promotion of the destination.

Similarly, the analysis of data retrieved from the tourists/visitors at the study sites revealed that many of the respondents did not perceive any crisis at the destination as high. This implies that crisis threats are unlikely to discourage most of the tourists from visiting the destinations. Nonetheless, the findings suggest that many of the respondents would be concerned when the level of insecurity associated with crises is high at the destination. These findings are consistent with extant literature on crises that have socioeconomic implications in tourism-generating regions.

Nonetheless, a significant finding of this study is the need for improved infrastructure such as paved road surfaces, electricity, and enhanced security at the study sites by relevant destination authorities. When the provisions of adequate security and requisite infrastructure to attract tourism activities to the destination are available, it would be important to publicize the improved attraction sites through mainstream and social media platforms to encourage visitation and sensitization to the destination.

## Recommendations

This study makes a significant theoretical and practical contribution to the literature associated with crises and tourism stakeholder perceptions in Oyo State, Southwest Nigeria . The findings of this study could be employed as theoretical guidelines for other scholars studying the socioeconomic implications of crises in other but similar contexts. It can also help destination authorities appraise crisis perceptions of their destinations. This can help them to understand the concerns of other stakeholders including tourists and prospective visitors toward their destinations and develop appropriate measures to address the identified concerns that may impact the tourism sector and livelihood of the host community members.

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