EXPLORING TOURISM POTENTIALS OF GURARA WATER FALLS

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project is an original work of LADAN DOGARA and it has not been presented in any form for award of Diploma or Degree elsewhere by anybody.

All the published information materials used are fully acknowledged in the text.

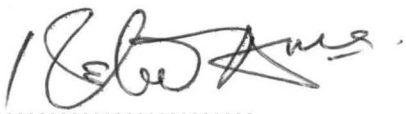


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LADAN DOGARA

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this project "EXPLORING TOURISM POTENTIALS OF GURARA WATER FALLS" was carried out by LADAN DOGARA of the Department of Geography, Federal University of Technology, Minna.



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family and all my well wishers.

ABSTRACT

Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries world wide unfortunately, however, this sector has not been receiving desired concern by Governments and Private concerns in Nigeria.

The Gurara Water Falls is one of such important tourist attractions in the country which, if well developed will serve the tourist needs of both foreign and local seekers of fun and excitement outside the home as well as providing the needed income.

The Gurara falls is an embodiment of rich natural attraction; the falls itself, the beautiful flora and faunna species, the fine sunny weather, the hospitable and vibrant cultured natives as well as easy accessibility are some of the attributes of the Gurara water falls.

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CHAPTER ONE

EXPLORING THE TOURISM POTENTIALS OF GURARA WATER FALLS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Webster et al (1986) defines Tourism as "The practice of traveling for pleasure or the business of encouraging and serving such traveling".

Tourism indeed is an organised movement of people out and home again principally for fun and excitement. Such journeys can be from one country to another or from one part of a country to another, all for the purpose of deriving pleasure. During such tours, attractive places are visited.

On the global scene, Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries and a source of foreign earning.

Nigeria as a tourist destination is blessed with many tourist attractions. These include: The over 800km coastline and beaches (for example Bar beach, Badagry beach, Eleko beach and Isaka beach); The Hills (for example mambilla Plateau, Abudu cattle ranch and zoma rock); The water falls (for example Assop falls in Plateau State, the Gurara and Mayanka falls both in Niger State); and cultural attractions (for example Argungu fishing festival, Osu Osogbo fishing festival, Kano and Katsina dubar as well as Nmanwu festival of Enugu).

Many hands are involved in the development of tourism in Nigeria. They include many arms of government and the private sector. However, the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation established in 1992 coordinates the activities in this sector of Nigeria economy.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

Gurara Water Falls is on the river Gurara at Bonu in Gurara Local Government Area of Niger State. The River Gurara is a tributary of the great river Niger with its source from the central upland of Nigeria around Zangon Katab in Kaduna State. It flows down through Gantam near Kafanchan to Jere all in Kaduna State. It enters into Niger State and passes through Izom and runs down through the western part of the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, and finally empties into the great river Niger around Gerinya near Kotokarfi. The entire river is about 580km long.

The Gurara Water Falls is about 68km away from Minna off Minna - Suleja road and about 35km from Suleja. It is less than 3km north east of Gawu Babangida the headquarters of Gurara Local Government area. It is also about 67km away from Garki-Abuja.

The Gurara Water falls area is a hilly terrain with very steep valleys. The entire river lies between latitudes 3.20° and 7.40° east and longitudes 8.0° and 11.30° north.

Source of date: Niger State; the new world.

1.1.1. ETHNICITY

The Gwari people are the predominnant setlers around the Gurara water falls. They are known for their hospitality and vibrant culture. Other tribes found in this area are Kadara, Koro and Fulani. These people by good standards are hospitable and well cultured. The fulanis are known for their "Sharo" an occasion where the Fulani Youth strike one another with wooden cane in a demonstration of bravery and Manhood.

1.1.2 NEIGHBOURING TOWNS

The major towns close to the Gurara falls are Minna, Suleja, Bida, Kontagora, Kaduna and Garki Abuja. These towns have facilities that any would be tourist deserves. These facilities include hotels. For instance the highly rated Shiroro hotel, Niger Motel, Doko international Hotel and Mo town hotel all in Minna. In Abuja, there are the five star Hilton Noga hotel, Sheraton Hotel and towers and Agura Hotel. In

Kaduna, the common hotels are Sheraton, Hamdalla and presidential Hotel.

These towns also have both post and telecommunication facilities.

Almost all these towns can be accessible by road, rail and air transport means. There are infact railway stations at Minna and Kaduna. As for air transport, there exist international airports at Minna, Kaduna and Abuja.

Road networking include; the Abuja - Kaduna/Kano express carriage way; the Minna - Suleja trunk 'A' road and Bida - Suleja also a trunk A road. The Minna - Suleja and Bida Suleja roads meet at Gawu Babangida the headquarters of Gurara Local Government which is about 3km north east of the Gurara water falls.

With this road networking, access to the Gurara water falls in relatively easy.

1.1.3 CLIMATE

The climate of the Gurara falls and environs is typical of the Savanna and synonymous with the climate of Niger State. There is a distinct dry and wet seasons a hybrid of northern and southern Nigerian climate. The mean annual rainfall being about 1600mm. The duration of

the wet season ranges between 150 days and 210days. The highest rainfalls are within the months of June to August. These are the months that flooding of the river Gurara is expected. There is also seasonal variation of air temperature which is fairly constant. The maximum temperatures are about 35°C between March and June with the lowest Minimum temperature usually in December and January. The dry season starts in November with the north east trade winds from the Sahara that brings about the harmattan. The serious effects of the harmattan are felt mainly between December and February when the relative humidity can be as low as 14°.

Source of data: Niger State, the new world

1.1.4 VEGETATION

The nature of vegetation cover in Gurara Water Falls and environs is typical of the Savanna woodland. This is chracterised by very tall grasses and low trees; otherwise known as parkland. The typical floral species found in this area are Mahogany (Kaya senegallensis) locust bean tree (Parkia Biglobosa) sheabuter tree (Paradoxa Spp) and Sheabuter like plants (Loffira lancidanta spp) Mango tree (Magi fera indica). Shrubs are

of the following species combratum spp, Gardenia spp, Adenodelius spp and piliostigma spp.

The forest is continually been affected principally by agricultural activity, bush burning and harvest of wood by natives as fuel wood.

1.1.5 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

The primary occupation of the natives of Gurara falls and environs is farming. The types of crops that are cultivated in large amounts are Guinea corn, maize, rice, Groundnut, Soya beans, Cowpea, cassava and yams. Some of the natives however, engaged in such economic activities like hunting fishing and petty trading.

1.1.6 OTHER TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

The immediate tourist attractions to the Gurara falls are the Mayanka falls Suleja, Zuma rock, Shiroro dam and Dr. Ladi Kwali pottery works Suleja.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Tourism a virile industry is a source of revenue and employment to the people and Government of Niger State, the problem of developing

this vast hospitality industry is attributed to lack of information and capital by both government and the private sector which brings about limited number of explored and developed tourist centers and that pose the problems of their proper use.

1.3 AIMS OF THE PROJECT

The General aim of the project is to explore the tourism potentials of the Gurara water falls.

1.4 SPECIFIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The specific aims and objectives of this research are:

i. To explore the tourist attractions at the Gurara Water Falls;

ii. To identify facilities that enhance tourism at Gurara Water Falls

iii. To examine the socio-economic impact of Gurara Water Falls as a tourist attraction

iv. To asses the future potentials of the Gurara Water Falls.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION

This project work is intended to bring to light those attractive qualities of the Gurara water falls, that would be of delight to all categories of tourists; whether the tourist is a foreign or local one.

Over and above all, the study will also serve as an impute to the tourism development in Niger State and the country as a whole.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

The coverage of the research work embraces tourist attraction potentials of the Gurara water falls, socio- economic importance of the falls to the people as well as identification of facilities that enhance tourism at the Gurara water falls.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE PROJECT

The research intended to have a wider coverage of the project study as well as use sophisticated modern equipment for field work data collection (for example remote sensing method) and for data representation and analysis. However, this desire has been negated by limited financial stand of the researcher as well as the time available to the researcher to carryout the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism as a rapidly growing industry is a source of income and employment for the people.

The economist (1991) records that "tourism in 1987 alone had sales of $2 trillion world wide and employed 3.3 per cent of the global work force".

Williams et at (1989) observes that "TOURISM industry has not only grown rapidly but it has also increasingly become the domain of large and often multinational corporations, many of which have not only become horizontally but also vertically integrated, spilling from one part of the industry into others. This is especially the case in the package holiday market from retail outlets through transportation to hotels". However, it should not be forgotten that much will continue to be reliant on numerous small business.

Urry (1990) observes that "The growth of modern tourism would not have been possible without several technological innovations, in particular. The means to transport people in bulk to far-off places has increased rapidly", He also affirms that "Tourism has both favourable and detrimental economy, social and cultural impacts". Thus the tourist

industry may create much needed employment and income in a locality but, equally it can threaten the intergirty of a locality's society and culture. The most serious impact of tourism is undoubtedly environmental, whether in the form of pollution, loss of habitat and erosion.

In a n exclusive interview Adeyimi (1996) stresses the need.

i. To promote Nigeria as a viable tourist destination;

ii. To market Nigeria through tourism, that is to tell people what we have and encourage foreigners to visit Nigeria and spend their holidays

iii. To encourage Nigerians themselves to take and spend their holidays here;

iv. Lastly, he attributed poor financing by government and lack of unity among private sector practitioners on Tourism as the major problems facing tourism development in Nigeira.

Mohammed (2000) in his work on socio - economic impact of tourism activities at Kainji Lake national park asserts that "Tourism involves interaction between people usually socio-cultural background, particularly at the level it has assumed today' and that: "There is hardly

any location in the world that is now too remote to be a tourist destination".

A paper delivered by the Niger State Tourism Corporation (1992) on the Tourism day, identifies the following as reasons for tourism:-

i. For fun and excitement as well as for the interest in foreign countries

ii. For relaxation and refreshment of the body and mind,

iii. For sporting activities e.g fishing Olympic, games etc.

iv. For health purpose, that is to secure fresh air, sun shine and so on

v. Lastly for special interest in places having important historical and cultural association

Kayode (2001) in his work on planning proposal for ecotorism development and conservation of Bosso hill, stresses the relationship between tourist attractions, recreation and conservation. Conservation as defined by the encyclopedia Britannic vol.5 "is the protection of wild nature to enrich the life of man and the control or elimination of environmental pollution in its manifestations".

One important subsidiary concept of conservation is "rational use" of the environment which includes the preservation of certain areas or resources in an essentially undisturbed condition because they are either

of scientific interest, have aesthetic appeal or have recreational value. Preservation also serves as an ecological purpose by maintaining the function of the total environment. The following are some of the importance of conservation.

One importance of conservation is its values to mankind. Conservation is essential to the survival of man. This is because life depends upon the proper functioning of the biosphere - the relative narrow zone of air, water, soil and rock in which all life on earth exists. The ultimate purpose of conservation is to maintain the biosphere in a healthy operating condition.

Another importance of conservation is aesthetic and recreational value. Appreciation of wild nature as a source of aesthetic pleasure and the use of wild lands and wilde animal resources for recreational enjoyment have long been necognised as among the more important values of conversation Out-door recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, boating, swimming picnicking, sun bathing, hiking, skiing are related to the continued existence of natural or near-natural environment as the sites for these activities.

Conservation also has scientific value. This is because relatively, little is known about the past, present and possible future of the

biosphere, natural outdoor laboratories including areas of undisturbed nature, must be maintained in order to conduct the studies needed to acquire knowledge. Moreover, there are many natural resources with undiscovered scientific and technological values.

By and large conservation will help to preserve plants and animals of medicinal values.

In order to foster conservation of natural resources especially to prevent species extinction, the following should be adhered to:

i. There should be research into the ecological requirements and breeding potentials of the species involved;

ii. There should be protective laws and regulations necessary to control the allowable commercial or sport take in order to guarantee that it remains within the sustainable yield

iii. Further more, there should be means of enforcing such laws which should include the employment and deployment of adequate protective forces, preferably especially trained wildlife and fisheries wardens who are capable of identifying species likely to be killed or captured and who are familiar with the ways of hunters and fisherman.

In conclusion, it is desirable to conserve all tourist attractions.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The basis of a proper research method is on the data and equipment available. In this research work, both the primary and secondary sources of data acquisition were employed.

The primary source of data involved site survey, questionnaires and oral interview.

In pursuance of the site survey the researcher went to the site with a portable camera to take photography's of some of the physical attractive features of the water falls as well as photographs on any irregularities for example bush burning, deforestation and so on.

A measuring tape and range pole were used at the site to measure distances, depth and width of the site. A sack was used to house the collected samples of plant from the site for identification.

As regards oral interview, a note book and pencil was used to note down proceeding during the oral interview.

With respect to the questionnaires, one hundred and twenty were randomly distributed. Out of these questionaires, one hundred and ten were returned and well responded to. A sample of the questionnaire is on appendix II.

The second data source included data extracted from written documents recited to the topical concerned to the topical(s) concerned.

3.1 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The basis for data analysis in this study is on the use of ratio, tables, charts and plates

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 THE GURARA WATER FALLS

A recee survey shows that the point on the Gurara river that experiences water falls is a greatly elevated river bed because of erosion activities over the years; such that soft base soil an rock beneath have been washed away living hanging an impervious igneous rock with a very steep gradient for the water flow. The resultant consequence is the rapid falls of the river water flow at this point. See plate 1

The depth of this river valley at the falls points is estimated at 15m deep and about 26m wide. Because of the attendant steepness, viewing the water falls at this point is very difficult and could amount to very serious risk of life especially during the rainy season.

4.1.1 PROPOSAL FOR A "CABLE CAR"

In order to have access to the proper viewing of the water falls with its attendant steepness under minded, especially during the rainy season, a cable car is proposed to be hung accross this point.

4.2 ROCK

The photographs of rock whose surfaces have been eroded over the years and looking more or less very appealing to the sight were taken. See plate II

4.3 VEGETATION

In addition to what has been said about vegetation of this area in chapter 1.5, the vegetation cover at this point is relatively dense. No farming activities about 200m to 300m before and after the water falls.

Except for harvest of forestwood for fuelwood, bush burning is another factor that destroys the rich potentials of the river falls vegetation.

4.4 ORAL FACT

From an oral interview, it was gathered that the falls was once dreaded. According to the interviewee, evil forces on one hand and the types of wild life on the other, in the past made this place to be dreaded. Tales were also told of the mysterious disappearance of visitors to the Gurara Water Falls. According to the interviewee, only last year (2000), while he was fishing, one male visitor from Suleja removed his dress and

entered into the water about 40m lower of the water falls and was only seen dead three days later.

However, some villagers were seen washing, bathing and having nice time in the river about 50m from the water falls. See plate (III). My interviewee also revealled the presence of large and small fish in the river. This fact is not unconnected with the fact that the Gurara river is a tributary of the great river Niger.

4.5 FACILITIES

Apart from the about 250m feeder road that links the Gurara falls with the Minna-Suleja road, there are no facilities on ground that will encourage tourism activities.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

4.6.1. Respondents based on Educational Standard

RESPONDENTS	NO	%
Secondary Education and below	12	11%
Education Standard above secondary school	98	89%

Table 4.1, showing educational background of the respondents.

The table shows that 98 respondents out of the 110 returned questionnaires representing 89% have educational standard above secondary education. The remaining 12 represent 11% of the respondents have secondary education and below.

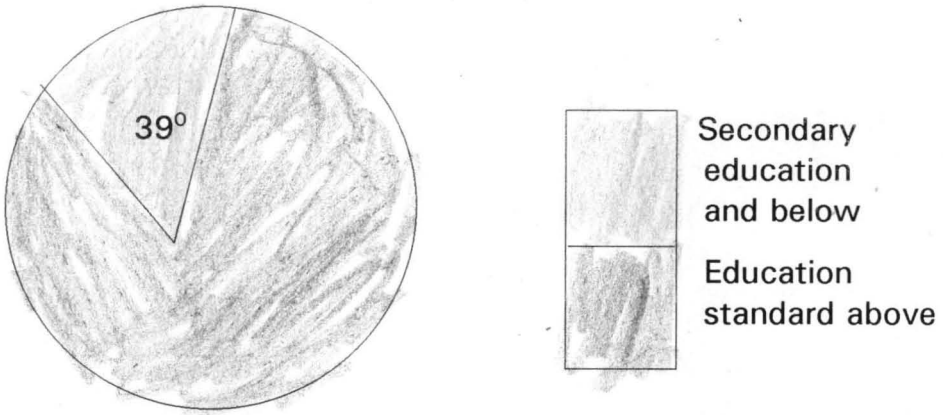


Fig. 4.1 Pie Chart showing secondary School educational background of respondents

4.6.2. Reasons for visit to the Gurara falls. A breakdown of the reasons of the 110 respondents for visiting the Gurara water falls is as follows:-

Reasons for the visit	NO	%
Foresight seeing	65	59%
To Fish	25	23%
To hunt	15	14%
Unspecified reasons	5	4%

Table 4.2. shows the break down of reasons for visit to the Gurara falls by the respondents.

The table shows that majority of the respondent, corresponding with 65 and 59% of the total respondents, visit the Gurara falls for sight seeing. 25 respondents representing 23% of the respondents visit the fall to fish and 15 respondents visit the Gurara falls to hunt while 4% of the Gurara falls visit the Gurara falls for unspecified reasons.

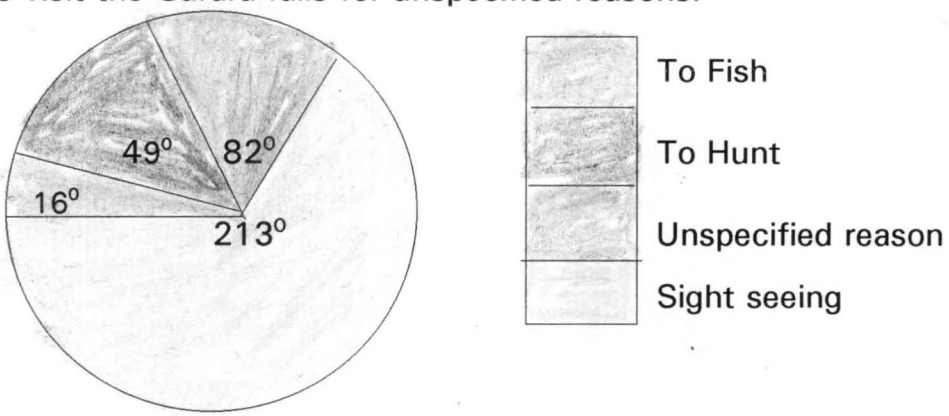


Fig. 4.2 - pie chart
Showing the breakdown of
the reasons for visit to
the Gurara falls

4.6.3. Wild life in the environs of Gurara water falls. The follow wild life resources were identify by the respondent to be or to have been in the Gurara water falls and environs.

(a) Large and small cartilaginous and bony fishes

(b) Reptiles like cobra and crocodile

(c) Large wild manmals like antelop, Gorrilla Monkeys and Baboons

(d) Birds of assorted species abound in this area.

4.6.4. On whether the Gurara falls is an intriguing tourist attraction, the following result was obtained.

Item	No	%
Yes Respondents	102	93%
No Respondents	2	2%
Undecided Respondents	6	5%

Table 4.3 Shows the breakdown of the respondents on whether the Gurara falls is an intriguing tourist attraction.

The table shows that 93% of the respondents agreed that the Gurara water falls is quite an intriguing tourist attraction, 2% said no while 5% of the respondents were undecided.

4.6.5 All the respondents recognise job opportunity and revenue generation as socio-economic advantages of the Gurara falls as a tourist attraction and centre.

4.6.6. On whether the Gurara water falls as a tourist attraction will have negative impact on the people, the following result was obtained.

Item	No	%
Yes Respondents	54	49%
No Respondents	53	48%
Undecided Respondents	03	3%

Table: 4.4. Show the break down of respondents on whether the Gurara water falls as a tourist attraction will have negative impact on the People.

The table shows that 49% of the respondents agreed that the Gurara falls as a tourist attraction is likely to have negative impact on the society and culture of the people. 48% of the respondents however, are on the opinion that the falls as tourist attraction is not likely to pose any negative impact on the people. About 3% of the respondents were undecided.

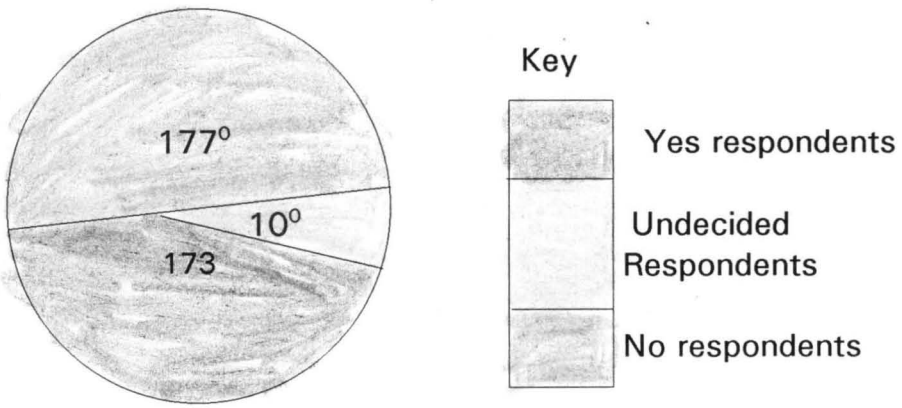


Fig. 4.3. Pie chart showing respondents on whether the falls has a negative impact on the people.

4.6.7. The following are some of the suggestions offered by the respondents.

1. Niger State Government to develop the Gurara water falls to a befitting tourist attraction.
2. Essential facilities including electricity should be provided in the area
3. Government to check the culting down of the forest for fuel wood.



Plate I: showing the Gurara Water Falls



Plate II: showing beautiful exposed rocks and vegetation

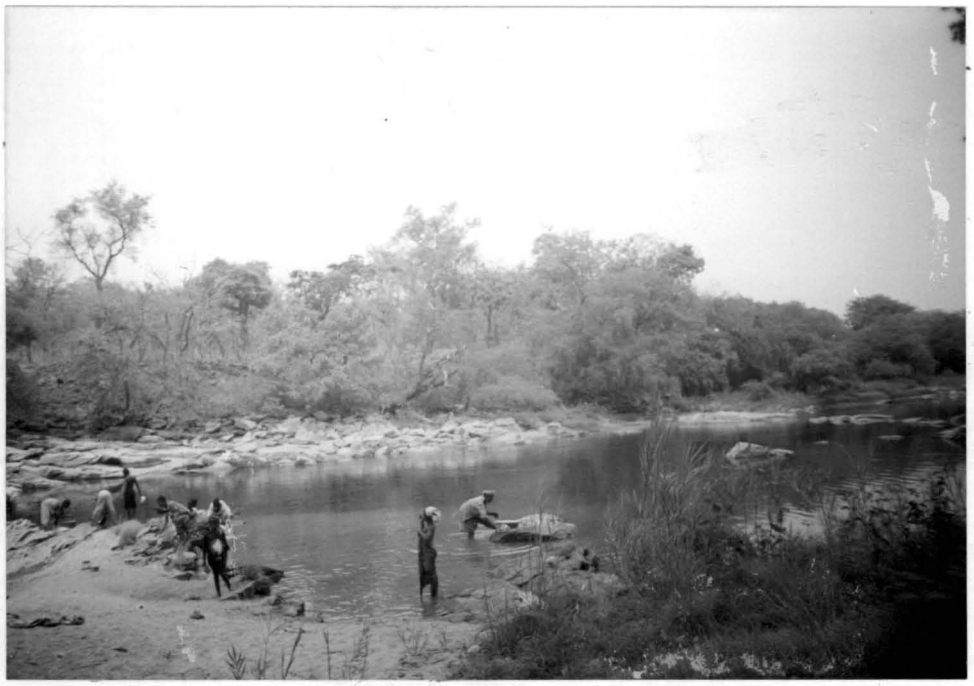


Plate III: showing the Villagers having a nice time in the Gurara Water Falls

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 SUMMARY

The fact still remains that tourism is a lucrative venture. And it is beneficial not only to the people but also to the Government as a whole. Infact Kenya depends greatly on earning from tourism for its source of national income.

The need to develop Nigerian Tourism potentials has been stressed by well meaning Nigerians. Gurara water falls is one tourist attraction, the Niger State and the Federal Government of Nigeria cannot and should not be allowed to waste.

5.2 RECOMMENDATION

(1) In the first place, there is the need for conceited efforts to conserve any tourist attraction. In the case of the Gurara water falls, both the Flora and Fauna species of the environs should be preserved or conserved to maintain a stable ecosystem. In doing so, efforts should be made by Government and people to discourage bush burning, harvest of forestwood for fuelwood, and discarding of bad agricultural practisces. When this is done, all the benefits of conservation will be reaped

8. What social benefit(s) do you think the Gurara water falls will be to the people and Nigeria as a whole?

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9. Do you think the Gurara water falls as a tourist attraction is likely to have negative impacts on the people? Yes, No, or undecided

10. If yes list some of these negative impact(s)

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11. What suggestion(s) will you offer to make the falls a better tourist attraction?

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Thanks for your response.