

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Tourism Potentials of Kagoro Community and Its Socioeconomic Potentials in Kaura Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Received: 23 March 2024 Accepted: 02 April 2024 Published: 26 April 2024

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Abstract

This study assessed tourism attractions of Kagoro community and its socioeconomic potentials in Kaura Local Government Area (LGA) of Kaduna State. The study sampled 400 respondents drawn from stakeholders; staff of Kaduna State Tourism Board; Kagoro hills managers; Traditional rulers in Kaura LGA and community members. A survey method research design was adopted and data were obtained through interview schedules, questionnaire and field survey. The data analyzed using descriptive statistics, results revealed that Kagoro community is endowed with very rich cultural and natural tourism potentials including the popular Afan festival, the giant “Katagwan” footsteps and his grave stones as well as the over bearing topography and inviting humid climatic condition among others. The study also revealed that the tourism attractions in Kagoro community have very high socioeconomic potentials including job and employment creation, revenue generation, infrastructural development among others. It was found that many of these attractions were still yet to be fully developed thereby denying the people its full socioeconomic benefits. The study therefore recommended the provision of infrastructural facilities; adequate marketing and promotion of the tourism potentials as well as adequate security and funding for the proper development of these attractions.

Keywords: Kagoro, Tourism, Attractions, Potentials, Kaura LGA.

1. Introduction

Tourism has become one of the most important factors in the development of local economies around the world. This is because of its tendency to bring about multi-income generating opportunities to community and local people (Ali, 2015; Wurz and Merwe, 2005). Africa at large and Nigeria in particular is known to have rich natural attractions which could be used for tourism purposes. However, studies such as Wurz and Merwe (2005) and Ashley and Roe (2002) indicated that many of these natural attractions have not been adequately branded, marketed and developed.

Socioeconomic growth, especially at local levels is perceived as a key solution to addressing the problem of poverty that most developing countries are faced with. The world view, therefore, an undisputed link

between socioeconomic development and poverty alleviation through nature based tourism (Azmat, 2013; Tsai, 2006; Dollar and Kraay, 2002).

There have been serious attempts both by developed and developing countries to reduce poverty by means of enhancing socioeconomic development (Kennedy and Dornan, 2009). Most strategies formulated to address poverty in these countries have not been successful, especially in developing countries such as those in the sub-Saharan African region.

Past researches have revealed the impacts of nature and cultural based tourism on socioeconomic development. However, many of these works do not state vividly how this special area of tourism can be used to stimulate socioeconomic development especially those of rural communities. It has also been proven

Citation: Orga, D.Y.(Ph.D), Emmanuel-Anthony, R. K. The Tourism Potentials of Kagoro Community and Its Socioeconomic Potentials in Kaura Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria. *Journal of Travel, Tourism and Recreation*. 2024;4(1): 10-19.

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that nature-based tourism has been able to enhance local revenue, create sustainable job opportunities, and sustain economic growth, contributing in cutting costs for both social and economic infrastructures and making significant contribution toward preservation of valued resources.

Despite the aforementioned attributes, Nigeria is still characterized by high rates of poverty, inequality and unemployment. Ironically, Nigeria has abundant natural attraction assets at her disposal that can be exploited for tourism purposes in order to resuscitate her trembling economy. It is believed that Nigeria has not been able to explore the full socioeconomic potentials of her nature-based tourism.

Just like the country with numerous natural attractions and endowments where one can still experience the connection with pristine, un-spoilt natural beauties, the study area boast of great natural attractions which are yet to be fully developed to attract the necessary socioeconomic potential for its local people.

There is total lack or inadequate data on the physical characteristics and features of the natural attractions in the study area. Also, little study has been conducted to explore the socioeconomic potentials and the challenge militating against the full development of the socioeconomic potentials of the study area which is what this study is designed to achieve.

This study has been inspired by numerous opportunities that nature attractions present to tourism and subsequent socioeconomic development mostly for the local communities. The study area is known for its abundant natural attractions in the form of hills and beautiful scenery- one of which is the Kagoro hills, which can be tapped by both public and private investors for the purpose of instigating local economic development.

In view of what has been discussed above, this study explores the tourism and socioeconomic potentials of the study area and how it can be harnessed for the socioeconomic development of its people. The study objectives are to identify the tourism potentials of Kagoro community and assess the socioeconomic potentials that could be derived from the identified tourism potentials.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Nature-Based Tourism

Ceballos-Lascurain, in the early 1980s, was one of the first writers to use the term 'nature based or ecotourism'. It was subsequently popularized in

Boo's seminarr work, *Nature based tourism: The Potentials and Pitfalls* (Boo, 1990). He defined nature-based tourism as tourism that consists in traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas.

In these terms, nature-oriented tourism implies a scientific, aesthetic or philosophical approach to travel. The main point is that the person who practices nature based tourism has the opportunity of immersing himself/herself in nature in a manner generally not available in the urban environment (Ceballos-Lascurain, cited in Boo, 1990).

More recently, Eagles (1992) has similarly defined nature tourism as "travel for the discovery of and learning about wild natural environments." This emphasis on travel to natural places has perhaps been the only consistent element in the debate over nature based tourism/ecotourism. Though there is a small distinction between ecotourism and nature-based tourism in that the former should be small-scale tourism with limited negative impact, whereas the latter is not defined by scale but rather by its focus on nature but most times they almost means and refers to the same thing (Brandon, 1996).

Socio-Economic Potentials of Nature-based tourism attraction

In light of the above trends, it is not surprising that many have noted that opportunities exist for linking tourism and natural protected areas for mutual benefit, especially in a developing world context. Widespread support and hopes for mutual tourism-park socioeconomic benefits are aptly reflected in the recommendation of the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA) that "global, national and local agencies and organizations concerned with protection of natural areas adopt policies to make tourism a conservation tool."

This is recommended based on CNPPA's belief that "tourism associated with protected areas (can) serve as a tool to advance protected areas' objectives for maintaining ecosystem integrity, biodiversity, public awareness, and enhancement of local people's quality of life" (McNeely, 1992).

The theory behind mutual benefits is relatively straight forward. Natural attractions provide a setting and opportunity for people to recreate and enjoy nature. In a sense, natural ecosystems are the product base

for much tourism and it is therefore in the interest of those in the industry to protect that base in order to maintain its attractiveness to tourists (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). In return, tourism to protected areas induces environmental stewardship among visitors and helps to build a conservation constituency for a location; a constituency that provides both moral and financial support.

Tourism also generates revenue – through entrance fees, concessions, souvenirs, donations, etc. – that can be channeled back into the management and conservation activities of the protected area agency. In turn, tourism revenues can indirectly induce greater government and donor agency funding at a site (Lindberg et al, 1996).

Travel activity also improves the welfare of people living in communities surrounding the natural protected area by providing employment opportunities and, more generally, by diversifying the local economic base (i.e. direct benefits).

Further indirect socioeconomic community benefits are stimulated through infrastructure and service improvements and secondary spending of tourism-related income among local residents and businesses. Community benefits resulting from protection encourage local residents to act as environmental stewards and actively support conservation at the site.

At the same time, tourism can help to promote greater community empowerment and local pride (Whelan, 1991). Taken together; the potential direct and indirect benefits generated by protected area tourism can provide a powerful economic and social justification for the continued protection of natural resources in a region (Dharmaratne et al, 2000; Brandon, 1996). For these reasons, some have noted that tourism

has in many countries played a major role in the establishment of parks and protected areas (Lindberg, et al, 1996).

In summary, this review has revealed that tourism attraction development has been used in urban and rural settings of the world as a strategy for local economic development. Interestingly, it has been observed from the literature that most of the benefits that accrued from such tourism development are attributed to the developed countries while developing countries like Nigeria are yet to attract the needed development in the sector.

It has been clearly shown from the literature that even with abundant physical and cultural potentials, the study area in particular and Nigeria at large is yet to fully develop her tourism attractions for the benefit of the local people.

From the review above, it is clear that there is a clear inadequate past research works on tourism attraction development of Kagoro community in particular, hence the current research therefore seek to bridge this gap and provide the needed data on Kagoro attractions in Kaura local government area in Kaduna State, Nigeria to facilitate socioeconomic development of its local inhabitants.

3. Materials and Method

The study area is Kagoro community in Kaura Local Government Area of Kaduna State. It lies between Latitude 9°37'55" North and Longitude 8°30'12" East.

The study area is bounded on the North by Zangon Kataf Local Government Area, on the West by Jema'a Local Government Area, on the East by Bassa and Riyom Local Government Areas in Plateau State Nigeria as shown in Figure 1.

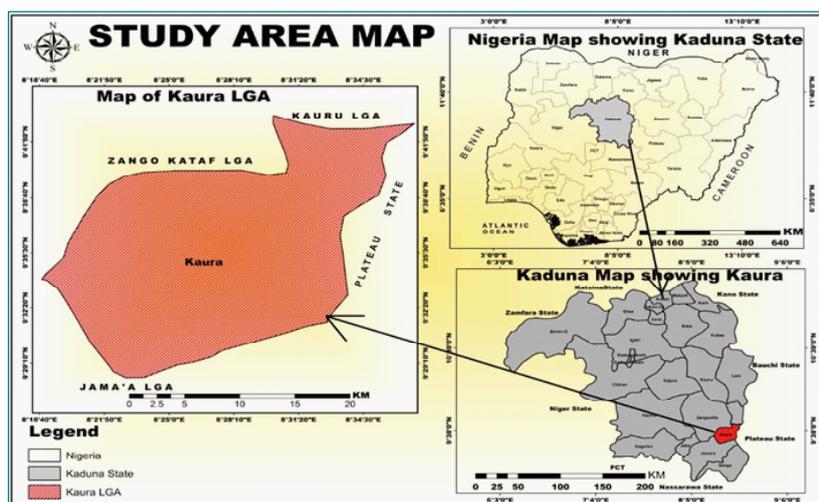


Figure 1. Map of Kaura Local Government Area. Source: Kaduna Geographic Information Service (KADGIS), 2023

3.1 Population of the Study

This study employed exploratory mixed methods design and the population for this study were drawn from the stakeholders including, 58 officials from the headquarters of Kaduna State Tourism Board, 67

Kagoro Hill attraction Sites Manager’s, 21 traditional rulers of Kaura Local Government Area and 5000 community members of Kagoro. This makes a total population of 5146 persons as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Population of the Study

S/N	Study Stakeholders	Total Population
1	Staff of Kaduna State Tourism Board (HQ)	58
2	Kagoro Hills Site Managers	67
3	Traditional Rulers (Chiefs) in Kaura Local Government Area	21
4	Community members of Kagoro	5000
	Total	5,146

Source: Kaduna State Tourism Board and Kaura LGA, (2023)

3.2 Sampled Populations

The study used Krejcie and Morgan sample size table

as cited in Orga (2016) to obtain the study sample size of 487 shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Sampled Population

S/N	Study Stakeholders	Total Population	Sample Size
1	Staff of Kaduna State Tourism Board (HQ)	58	52
2	Kagoro Hills Site Managers	67	59
3	Traditional Rulers (Chiefs) in Kaura Local Government Area	21	19
4	Community members of Kagoro	5000	357
	Total	5,146	487

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The study employed selective sampling and simple random method. The rationale behind using selective sampling strategy was because the participants have a distinct, significant perspective on the research study, and they are always present in the sample (Robinson, 2014).

In terms of the quantitative sampling, the study used simple random sampling method. The simple random sampling is appropriate for the study since it provides sampling frame with an equal and independent opportunity for being selected for the study.

The study used both qualitative and quantitative method of data collection. This involves gathering of data from both primary and secondary sources.

Data for this study include: The primary sources of data for this study were gotten from structured questionnaire, informal interview and field survey. The secondary sources of data for this study were achieved through the use of books, journals government documentaries, published and unpublished articles etc. The instruments of data collection for the study are questionnaire, interview schedule and field survey. The study used questionnaires as its main instrument for data collection. Structured questionnaires are used in order to obtain relevant information from the

respondents. The questionnaires were divided into two sections: section A; location of tourism potentials of Kagoro community, section B statements on socio economic potentials of Kagoro community tourism attractions. The study also used unstructured interview to obtain firsthand knowledge from some respondents. They were asked on the location of tourism potentials and socioeconomic potentials. The researcher also visited the hills to observe and verify information on location of tourism potentials and the socioeconomic potentials.

The study employed descriptive statistics such as percentages, tables, bar charts, pie charts and pictorial presentation for data analysis. Specifically, data on tourism potentials of Kagoro community were represented in pictorial forms. Data on socioeconomic potentials of tourism potentials in Kaura Local Government Area were represented in percentages and bar charts.

4. Results

4.1 Tourism Potentials of Kagoro Community

Kagoro community is endowed with numerous tourism potentials according to officials from the Kaduna State Tourism Board (KSTB). These potentials

can be seen and felt all around Kagoro community and its environs which are in the form of cultural, historical, archaeological and physical/natural. For easier categorization, these potentials are divided and categorized into two major forms. These are the cultural/historical and the physical/natural potentials as presented and discussed below.

4.2 The Afan Cultural Festival

The Afan Cultural festival is one of the most popular cultural potentials of the Kagoro community. As gathered from officials of the Kaduna State Tourism

Board, This festival is an annual event celebrated every 1st January of every year by the Oegworok (Kagoro) people of southern Kaduna State. This prestigious festival has been observed for over 400 years and holds in the palace of the Chief of Kagoro. It marks the end of crop harvest for the year and the beginning of hunting expeditions. (Interview, 2023).

Some of the features of the festival include hunter's parade and display of hunting prowess as shown in Plate 1, cultural dance by Kagoro people as shown in Plate 2 and 3, Masquerade display as shown in Plate 4.



Plate 1. Hunters Parade at Afan Festival



Plate 2. Cultural Dance at Afan Festival



Plate 3. Cultural Dance at Afan Festival



Plate 4. Masquerade Display at Afan Festival

4.3 The Giant Katagwan Foot Print

Another cultural/historical potential of Kagoro community is the historical relics of the great Katagwan. According to an official response from those interviewed, Katagwan was a giant, a hunter, a warrior, and a civil right defender.

He taught his people how to practice equal rights and justice in this manner; if hunters shoot an animal with

their poisonous arrows, and there was an argument on who first shot the animal, Katagwan will stretch his long arm, pick the animal and drop it at the house of the right person that first shot the animal for them to share when they return from hunting. Also, when the stream that passes through Dusai land over flows its banks in the rainy seasons, he will stretch his long arm to serve as a bridge for his people to cross to the other side for farming (Interview, 2023). See plate 5.



Plate 5. The Great Katagwan Footprints

4.4 The Giant Katagwan Grave Stone

Katagwan was so tall that his actual height could not be known during the time. The only connection as proof is his grave (as shown in Plate 6).

As gathered from the official response, due to his size as he was a very tall man, he could not sleep in their types of houses at that time; instead, he used a cave on top of the hill as his bedroom. Finally, when he was

about to die, he dug his grave by himself measuring about 30 meters as evidence of his height. The prints which he used to bring out the earth are marked on his grave.

At his terminal illness, he went into his grave and laid in it and then gave up the ghost. His people then covered the grave and gave him all the death rituals he deserve (Interview, 2023)



Plate 6. The great Katagwan Grave

4.5 Kagoro hills, mountain top, and the ‘Akatan’ mountain highest peak

The Kagoro Hills, known as Afan Ae’gworok among the natives, is the towering elevation above the Kagoro municipality near Kafanchan in the Southern Kaduna sub-region of Northern Nigeria. The Kagoro

Afan National Festival derives its name from the hill (Afan). The Kagoro Hills is situated at an altitude of about 1,246 meters above sea level and its scene is one of the most picturesque natural attractions in Kaduna State Nigeria. See plate 7. It forms a range with big trees and rocky places at the base.



Plate 7. Kagoro Hill and Mountain Top

4.6 Elevated Topography, Climate and Vegetation

The topography and steep ranges functioned as a natural harbour of safety for the community during

the periods of inter-communal strives because the Kagoro hill is enclosed by conventional stories about heroes and supernatural beings. See plate 8.

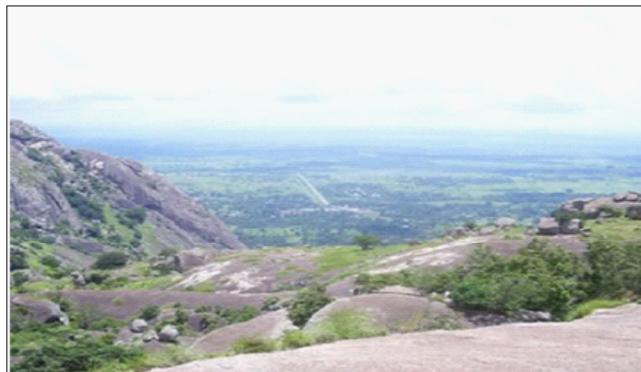


Plate 8. Elevated Topography of Kagoro Hill

4.7 The Kajim Bridge

At the foot of the elevation is a beautifully long bridge called the Kajim Bridge as shown on Plate 9, constructed by Kaduna State Government in 1975, as a means of easing the difficulty in movement of Kagoro people between the mainland and the hills.

It runs across the Kagoro River, a major source of water works in the Southern Kaduna sub-region, with modern purifying and treatment installations, reservoirs and giant pipes leading the onwards flow of water.



Plate 9. Kajim Bridge

4.8 The Matsirga Waterfalls

The Kagoro River, natural spring water, is the source of the spectacular Matsirga Waterfalls, (as shown in plate 10) but at this point, it is a lot bigger, forming

a pool of water beneath that flows onwards to neither town. Like most other water bodies, the river is a lot larger in the rainy season, overflowing its banks and the surrounding land area.



Plate 10. Matsirga Waterfalls

4.9 Socioeconomic potentials from tourism attractions in Kagoro Community

During the field work in the study area, a simple method of evaluation using questionnaire to gather responses was adopted. Respondents were asked to select from a three options (Very High Potential, Low Potential and No Potential) across all the items presented.

Job Creation/Employment Potential

The respondents were asked if the Kagoro tourism attractions has the potential to create jobs and

Infrastructural Development Potential

It was obtained from the respondents that the study area has a very high potential for infrastructural development because if the study area developed it

employment for the people and from the responses gathered, it can be gathered that the study area has a very high potential to create jobs/employment opportunities for the people of the area. Accordingly, as shown in figure 1, 75 percent of the respondents agreed that the study area has a very high potential for job/employment creation.

They elaborated that jobs could be created with the building of tourism and hospitality businesses like hotels, motels, guest houses, restaurants, transport terminals etc. as well as selling of vocational skills and crafts, artifacts etc. for the people of the area tourism attractions there must be the corresponding development of supporting infrastructures. This was evident as 80 percent of respondents agreed to the assertion as shown in figure 2.

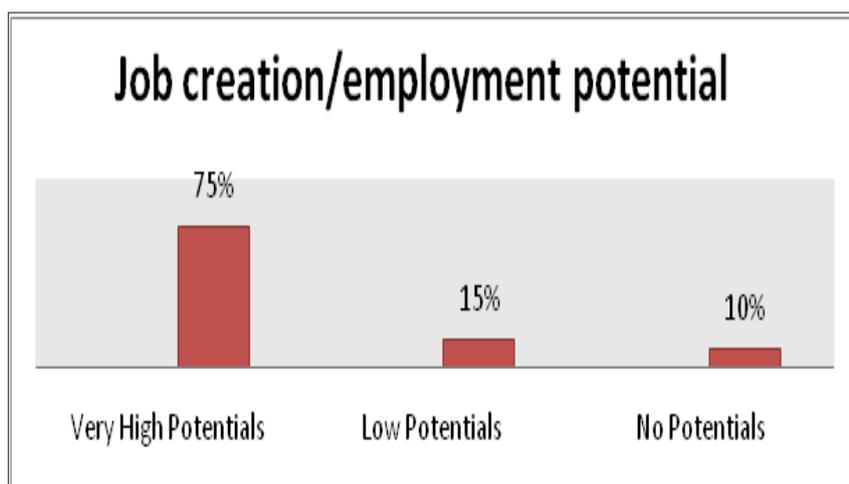


Figure 1. Job creation/Employment potential of Kagoro Community. Source: Field work, 2023

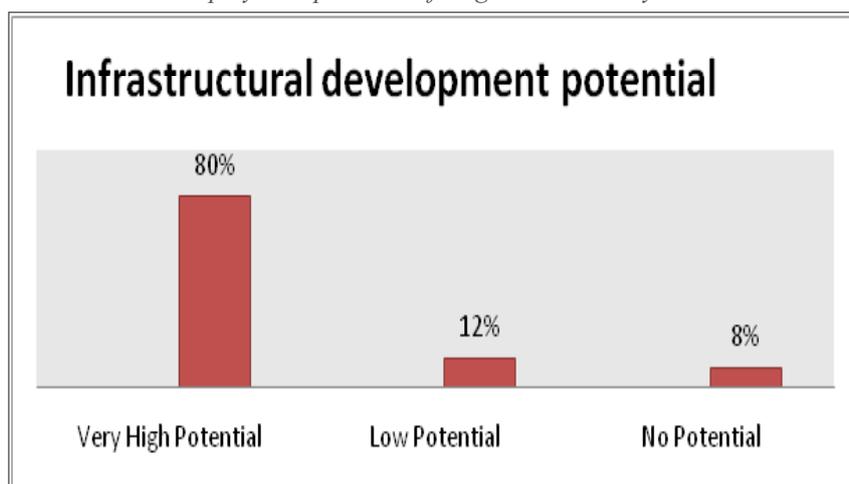


Figure 2. Infrastructural Development Potential of Kagoro Community. Source: Field work, 2023

Potential for Revenue and Income Generation

Another potential of the Kagoro tourism attractions was identified as ability to generate revenue for government through levy, foreign exchange and

informal income for the local people who participated during Afan festival. From the data analysed as presented in figure 3, majority (70 percent) of the respondents agreed to the above position.

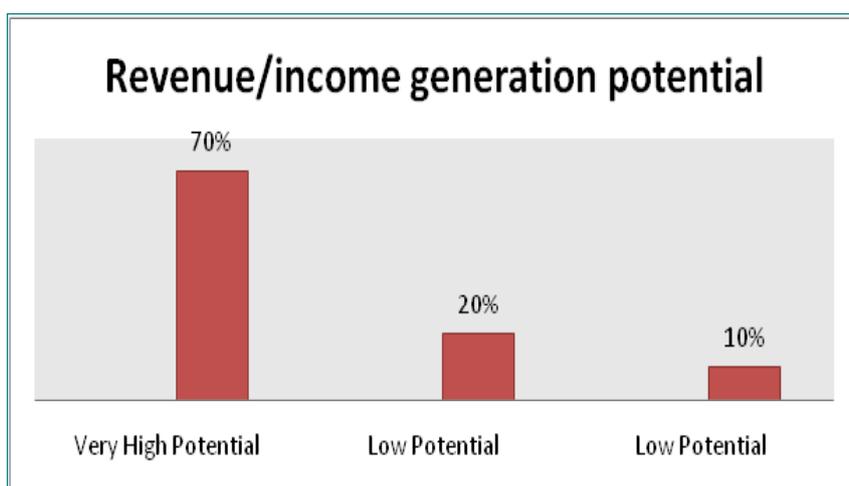


Figure 3. Potential for revenue and informal income generation. Source: Field work, 2023

Potential for the Preservation of Local Cultures

The preservation of local culture is very important for sustainable development of tourism industry. Accordingly, the study revealed that Kagoro tourism potentials have a very high potential for the

preservation of local culture which would thereby enhance flourishing cultural heritage tourism. As shown in figure 4, majority (90 percent) of the respondents agreed to this position.

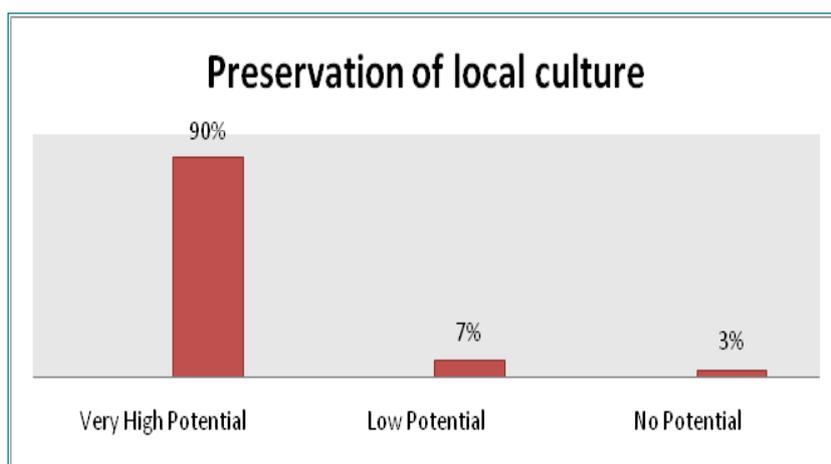


Figure 4. Potential to preservation Local Culture . **Source:** Field work, 2023

Potential to Enhance Environmental Protection

The study revealed that Kagoro community natural tourism attractions have a very high potential to enhance environmental protection. The data as

presented in figure 5 revealed that majority of the respondents, representing 57 percent agreed to this statement.

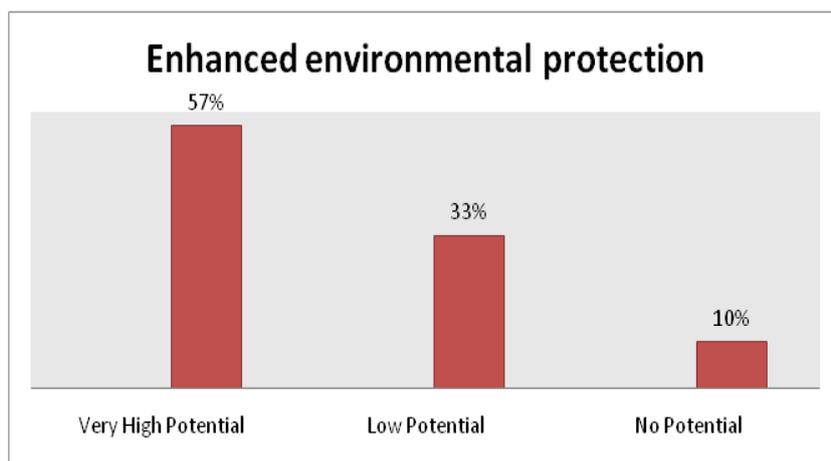


Figure 5. Potential to enhance Environmental Protection. **Source:** Field work, 2023

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that Kagoro community is endowed with cultural/historical and physical/natural tourism potentials as well as numerous socio-economic potentials that can be harnessed for the benefits of the local community members and Kaduna State Government. However, some of these tourism attractions are yet to be fully developed to harness its full socioeconomic potentials.

6. Recommendations

To harness the full socioeconomic potentials and benefits of the Kagoro tourism attractions, the following recommendations are proffered:

- i. Provision of infrastructural facilities: The Kaduna State Government and the private sector need to invest in the development of infrastructural facilities, such as provision of good roads, clean water, electricity, health care, telecommunication

etc. to enable the tourism potentials of the area to be fully harnessed.

- ii. Adequate marketing and promotion of the Kagoro tourism potentials: The Kaduna State Tourism Board should design and carry out consistent promotion of Kagoro tourism potentials in both local and international media through various forms of advertisements. The local Community members and Kaura local Government Council officials should also create awareness to the outside world of the Kagoro tourism potentials.
- iii. The need to step up security in the study area: The Kaduna State Government should design and implement effective security management system for the entire area, to provide safety and security to visitors, tourists and the local community. Also the local community members should organise local security groups to police the study area.

- iv. Mobilization of Fund for the development of Kagoro tourism potentials: The Kaduna State Government should show more interest and political will in developing the Kagoro tourism attractions by allocating more funds for its development as this will in turn generate income to the State. The local government council too needs to play a key role in mobilising funds for the development of Kagoro tourism attractions..
- v. Private sector investment in Kagoro hills: The private sector should be encouraged to invest in Kagoro Hills through favorable government policies like tax reduction, provision of services and making land available for private investors.
- vi. Adequate research: The Kaduna State Government should collaborate with Tourism research institutes such as National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism, Abuja, Nigeria, e.t.c to carry out tailored research into the Kagoro tourism potentials with the aim of identifying more areas of investment, collaboration and sustainability development.

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