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Editorial Note

KWASU Journal of Research in Tourism and Hospitality Management (KJRTHM) calls for research paper in all areas of tourism and hospitality management and its related studies for publication in its biannual series in June and December. Original research papers, survey papers, case studies, reviews and academic or scholarly articles of high quality that focuses on research, development and application in the aforesaid areas are welcome. KJRTHM aims to encourage scholars to write research reports of academic understanding on themes related to regional, national and international development. It publishes conceptual, theoretical and empirical academic research studies and works in Arts, Science, Social Sciences, Education, Management Sciences, Agriculture and multidisciplinary studies related to past, current and future issues in tourism and hospitality management.

The main objective of the journal is to publish seminal articles on tourism and hospitality management and open up new areas of thinking in policy formulation, program theories and practices particularly in relation to people, culture, travel, environment, events, heritage, social and economic development in local, national and global perspectives.

Editorial Guidelines

Original articles, which have not been published elsewhere, are acceptable for publication. The article must confirm to the following format:

- It shall have an Introduction, Literature/Theoretical Survey, Methodology, Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and References. Articles should be limited to a maximum of fifteen (15) pages, A4 paper size in *Times New Roman* 12pt font, sub-headings in 12pt font (uppercase) with 1.15-line spaces.
- Titles of the paper shall not be more than 15 words, centred and in 20pt font, Author(s) name(s) in 18pt font.
- The cover page should bear the title of the articles, the names of the Author(s), and short address identifying designation and institution (affiliation) of the Author(s). An abstract of not more than 250 words shall be attached.
- Figures tables and charts are included within the body of the article; and shall not spread across two pages. Reference should be done on a separate page of the article, arranged in alphabetically, order, in line with the current American Psychological Association (APA) form. Use 12pt font for references.
- Articles submitted are to be subjected to blind peer review and plagiarism check for relevance and originality.
- An assessment fee of **N5,000.00** shall accompany submission. If publishable, it will be referred to the author(s) for final corrections (if any) and will be published in the next volume. ii

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From the Editor's Desk!

It is with immense pride and great pleasure that I welcome you to the new edition of the KWASU Journal of Research in Tourism and Hospitality Management (KWASU-JRTHM). Following the successful launch of the journal, this edition represents another significant milestone in the continuing efforts of the Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Faculty of Management and Social Sciences, and the entire Kwara State University (KWASU), Malete, Kwara State, to provide a credible platform for advancing scholarly inquiry, knowledge production, and professional dialogue in tourism, events, and hospitality management.

This edition features 10 strong and carefully reviewed research papers that reflect the breadth, depth, and growing dynamism of scholarship in tourism and hospitality management. The contributions comprise rigorous empirical studies, conceptual analyses, case-based investigations, and critical scholarly perspectives addressing contemporary issues of local, national, and international relevance. The research papers in this edition examine a range of important themes and emerging issues. Collectively, these studies demonstrate the relevance of tourism, events, and hospitality to economic development, cultural sustainability, environmental management, technological innovation, community empowerment, and social transformation.

KWASU-JRTHM remains committed to publishing high-quality scholarship that contributes meaningfully to academic discourse while generating insights capable of informing policy, programme development, industry practice, and sustainable development. We particularly encourage contributions that engage critically with issues relating to people, products, culture, travel, hospitality, events, heritage, the environment, and socio-economic development at local, national, regional, and global levels.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Editorial Board, Associate Editors, Editorial Advisory Members, the Vice-Chancellor, and the Management of Kwara State University for their invaluable support, commitment, and dedication to the growth and development of this journal. I also commend our contributors and reviewers whose scholarly contributions and rigorous engagement have helped to maintain the quality and integrity of this edition.

As KWASU-JRTHM continues its journey as a platform for knowledge exchange and scholarly excellence, we invite researchers, academics, practitioners, policymakers, and other stakeholders to engage with the journal and contribute to its continued growth. The journal remains committed to publishing biannually, in March and September, and to providing a vibrant avenue for research that responds to the evolving realities and opportunities within tourism, events, and hospitality management.

Thank you for joining us on this exciting scholarly journey. We hope that the 10 research papers presented in this edition will stimulate further inquiry, encourage meaningful debate, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge and practice in tourism, events, and hospitality management.

Sincerely,

Professor Wasiu A. Babalola

Editor-in-Chief

KWASU Journal of Research in Tourism and Hospitality Management (KWASU-JRTHM)

AN ASSESSMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM ACTIVITIES ON THE HOST COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY OF BADAGRY, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the economic effects of tourism on Badagry, a host community in Lagos State, Nigeria, utilizing a mixed-methods research approach. The primary focus was to understand how the Sangbheto Festival influences the local economy. Data collection involved distributing questionnaires to 235 participants, including tourists, local businesses, and residents, as well as conducting interviews with key stakeholders like festival organizers and local leaders, and observing tourism activities. The findings reveal that tourism significantly benefits Badagry's economy. Nine major tourism-related occupations were identified among respondents, who reported an average estimated monthly income of N118,128 from these activities. Economic advantages were primarily derived from sales of local goods, handicrafts, cultural events, and tourist accommodation. Tourism has notably generated employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, improved livelihoods, and boosted sales of local products, contributing to overall economic stimulation. Beyond economic gains, social benefits include enhanced capacity building, community development and pride, cultural exchange, and an improved quality of life for residents. The overall impact of tourism on the host community's livelihood was reported as positive by 35.32% of respondents. However, the study also highlighted negative consequences such as increased costs for shared tourist facilities, environmental degradation, cultural exploitation, and overcrowding. Factors positively influencing tourism development, in order of importance, include adequate local participation, complementary effects of other tourist facilities, high tourist arrivals, and government support. Conversely, over 60% of respondents perceived government efforts in managing tourism development as ineffective. The study concludes with recommendations emphasizing community engagement, infrastructure development, capacity building, collaborations, sustainable practices, and effective marketing to optimize tourism benefits and mitigate adverse effects.

Keywords: Badagry, Host community, Sangbheto Festival, Socio-economic, Tourism Development.

Background of the Study

Tourism has become a significant contributor to the global economy, with many countries relying on it as a major source of revenue and employment (World Travel and Tourism Council, WTTC, 2020). The economic impact of tourism on host communities has been a topic of interest for researchers and policymakers alike, as it can bring both benefits and challenges (Andriotis, 2005). According to Liu (2003), tourism can generate significant economic benefits for host communities, including increased employment opportunities, income, and foreign exchange earnings. Tourism can also stimulate local economic development by creating demand for local products and services (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008). However, tourism development can also lead to economic leakages, where revenue generated from tourism is spent outside the local economy (Britton, 1982).

The economic impact of tourism can also vary depending on the type of tourism development. For example, ecotourism and community-based tourism can provide more benefits to local communities compared to mass tourism (Manyara & Jones, 2007). Additionally, the economic impact of tourism can be influenced by the level of community involvement and participation in tourism development (Okazaki, 2008).

Despite the potential economic benefits of tourism, there are also concerns about the negative impacts of tourism on host communities. These can include inflation, increased cost of living, and displacement of local residents (Duffy, 2000). Therefore, it is essential to understand the economic impact of tourism on host communities to ensure that tourism development is sustainable and benefits the local population (Fagbohun, 2023).

This study aims to explore the economic impact of tourism on host communities, with a focus on the benefits and drawbacks of tourism development. Hence, the study will contribute to the existing literature on the economic impact of tourism by exploring the benefits and drawbacks of tourism development in a specific host community. The study will provide insights into the economic impacts of tourism and inform policymakers and stakeholders on how to maximize the benefits of tourism while minimizing its negative impacts.

Statement of Problem

The economic impact of tourism on host communities is a complex and multifaceted issue. While tourism can generate significant economic benefits, it can also lead to economic leakages, inflation, and displacement of local residents. Despite the potential economic benefits of tourism, many host communities in Nigeria continue to experience poverty and underdevelopment. There is a need to investigate the economic impact of tourism on host communities in Nigeria to inform policy and decision-making.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the socio-economic benefits and costs of tourism development in host communities, Badagry city in Nigeria?
- 2) How does tourism development affect the livelihoods of local residents?
- 3) What are the factors that influence the economic impact of tourism on host communities?

Research Aim

The aim of this research is to investigate the economic impact of tourism on host communities, Badagry city, with a view to identifying strategies for maximizing the benefits and minimizing the costs of tourism development. This research aims to contribute to the existing literature on the economic impact of tourism and inform policy and decision-making in Nigeria.

Research Objectives

- 1) To examine the socio-economic benefits and costs of tourism development in host communities.
- 2) To assess the impact of tourism development on the livelihoods of local residents.
- 3) To identify the factors that influences the economic impact of tourism on the host.
- 4) To develop recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders on how to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs of tourism development.

Literature Review

The economic impact of tourism on host communities has been extensively studied in various contexts. Research has shown that tourism can generate significant economic benefits for host communities, including increased employment opportunities, income, and foreign exchange earnings (WTTC, 2020). However, tourism development can also lead to economic costs, such as inflation, increased cost of living, and displacement of local residents (Duffy, 2000). Studies have also highlighted the importance of community-based tourism initiatives in ensuring that tourism benefits are equitably distributed among local communities (Manyara & Jones, 2007). Additionally, research has shown that local participation and engagement in tourism development are crucial for promoting sustainable tourism practices and minimizing negative impacts (Okazaki, 2008).

The relationship between tourism development and socioeconomic impact has been extensively studied in the literature. According to UN World Tourism Organisation (2019), tourism can contribute significantly to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction. However, the impact of tourism on local communities can be both positive and negative. Studies have shown that tourism can lead to increased income and employment opportunities for local communities, but it can also result in environmental degradation, cultural exploitation, and economic leakage.

In the Nigerian context, research has focused on the potential benefits of tourism development, including job creation and economic growth (Adeleke, 2015; Fagbohun, 2023). However, few studies have examined the impact of tourism facilities on socioeconomic development in specific destinations, such as Badagry.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is guided by the Sustainable Tourism Development Framework, which emphasizes the need for tourism development to be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. The framework highlights the importance of stakeholder participation, community engagement, and responsible tourism practices (Hall, 2008).

The conceptual framework for this study includes tourism facilities, socioeconomic development, and Sangbheto Festival. Tourism facilities are independent variable, could be referred to as the infrastructure and services that support tourism development, including accommodation, transportation, and tourist information (Cooper et al., 2008; Fagbohun, 2023). On the other hand, socioeconomic development is dependent variable, and may be referred to the economic and social benefits that accrue to local communities as a result of tourism development, including job creation, income generation, and improved living standards. However, Sangbheto Festival could be regarded as moderating variable, and can be referred to as the cultural event that showcases the town's cultural heritage and attracts tourists.

Historical Background of Badagry

Badagry, a coastal town in Lagos State, Nigeria, has a rich and complex history that spans centuries. The town's strategic location on the coast of West Africa made it an important hub for trade, commerce, and cultural exchange. According to historical records, the original inhabitants of Badagry were the Agbara people, who migrated from the Republic of Benin (Law, 1997). Later, the Egun people, also from the Republic of Benin, settled in Badagry and became the dominant ethnic group (Asiwaju, 1979).

The history of Badagry is also marked by its significant role in the trans-atlantics slave trade. The town's coastal location and proximity to the Atlantic Ocean made it an ideal location for slave traders. Many people from the region were forcibly taken and sold into slavery, with some estimates suggesting that millions of people were forcibly taken from the region (Eltis, 2000). The legacy of the slave trade still has an impact on the historical town of Badagry and its people up till today. Despite the dark history of the slave trade, Badagry has a rich cultural heritage. The people of Badagry have a strong tradition of Vodun (Voodoo) practices, which were influenced by the town's cultural exchange with other West African communities (Matory, 2005). The town celebrates various festivals, including the Badagry Festival, which showcases the town's rich cultural heritage.

Badagry is home to several historical landmarks, including the Badagry Heritage Museum, which showcases the town's history and cultural heritage (Fagbohun, 2023). The First Storey Building in Nigeria, built in 1845, is another significant landmark that attracts tourists and history enthusiasts. The Point of No Return, a monument that marks the point where enslaved Africans were forced onto ships bound for the Americas, is a poignant reminder of the town's role in the slave trade. It is important to note that Badagry is a popular tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the world. The town's beautiful beaches, rich cultural heritage, and historical landmarks make it an attractive destination for tourists and history enthusiasts. Visitors can experience the town's rich cultural heritage by attending festivals, trying local cuisine, and interacting with the friendly locals.

Badagry and its Tourist's Places of Attraction

Badagry as a historic town has a rich cultural heritage, offering a unique blend of traditional and modern attractions. The Sangbheto Festival, a significant cultural event, attracts tourists and locals alike. This note explores the types of tourist attraction places in Badagry, how tourists can enrich their experience during the Sangbheto Festival, and the impact of tourism facilities on socio-economic development (Fagbohun, 2023). However, the types of tourist places of attraction in Badagry can be grouped into historical sites, beaches, cultural attractions, and places of architectural interest. Historical Sites include Slave Museum, the First storey building in Nigeria, Mobee Museum, Point of No Return, Agia, Tree Monument, and Vlekete Slave Market. Badagry has two important beaches, include Coconut Beach, and Badagry Beach. Cultural Attractions include Sangbheto Festival, and Zangbeto Masquerade. Badagry has some Traditional shrines and worship centers. There are some places of modern architectural Attractions. These are National Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, French Village, and Whispering Palms Resort. Badagry's tourist attractions, offer a unique experience for visitors. By assessing tourism facilities and their impact on socioeconomic development, stakeholders can work towards creating a sustainable and beneficial tourism industry for both visitors and the host community.

Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods. The study population consisted of tourists, locals, and tourism stakeholders in Badagry. Data was collected through surveys, interviews, and observations. In order to collect a reliable data, three instruments of data collection were employed, which include questionnaire survey, interview, and observation. A questionnaire was administered to respondents, which included tourists, tourists' goods and service providers, and local community in Badagry, using convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire, which was administered on 235

respondents, included such questions like tourism facilities, tourists' products, challenges in exploring the facilities and products, and social and economic impacts on of tourism activities on the development of the study area. In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 key stakeholders, including relevant government officials, local leaders, and business owners. The interviews explored the impact of tourism development on socioeconomic development in Badagry. However, observations were made of tourism facilities and activities in Badagry, including the Sangbheto Festival.

The questionnaire survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including frequency distributions, means, and regression analysis. The interview data was analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying patterns and themes in the responses. The observation data was analyzed using content analysis, examining the characteristics of tourism facilities and activities in Badagry.

Results and Discussion

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Age and Gender

From the study conducted, out of the 235 respondents, 54.04% are males, while 45.96% females. The overall age analysis showed that 34.47% of the respondents for the study are in the age bracket 20-29, 22.987% were in the age bracket of 30-39, while 17.45% were in the age bracket of 40-49. However, 17.02% were in the age bracket 50-59%, while it was only 8.09% of them were in the age of 60 years and above. This is an indication that more males actively involved in tourism business activities than males, while respondents in the age bracket 20-29 and 30-39 were more active in tourism allied business activities than those in other age groups.

Educational Qualifications

The study found that the respondents in the tourism are of different qualification. Out of the 235 respondents, 6.28% have postgraduate or higher qualification, 11.49% were graduates or HND holders, while 25.11% were school certificate holders. However, 17.45% and 9.36% have primary school and informal education respectively, while 4.68% have none.

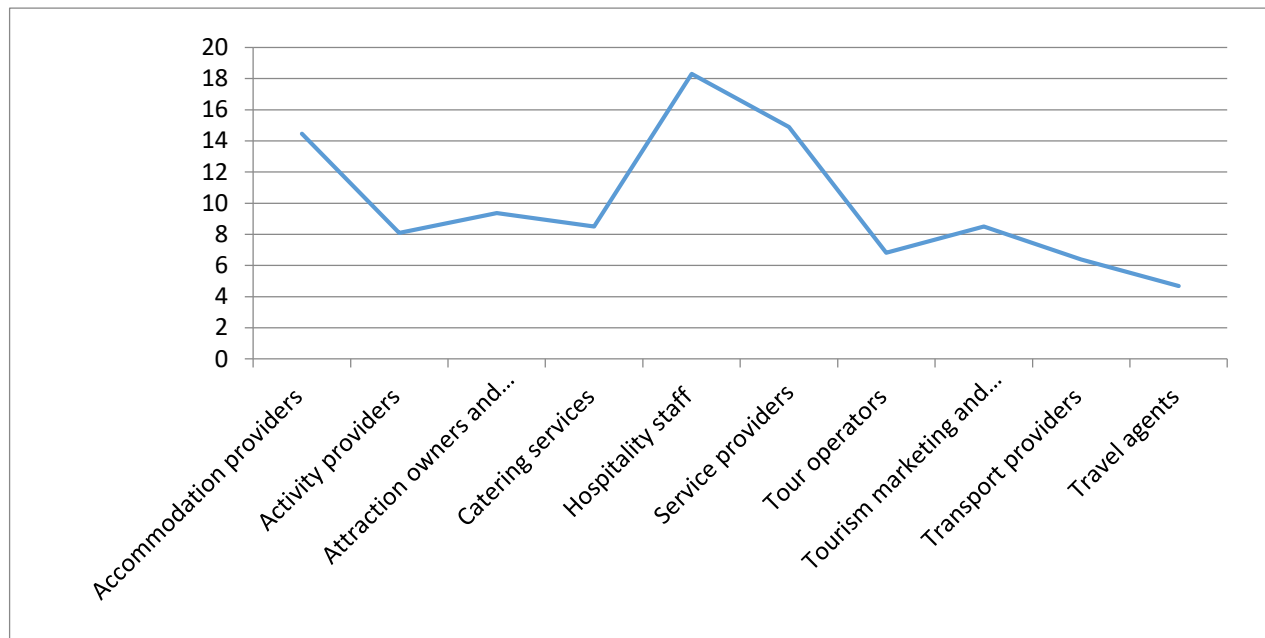
Estimate Monthly Income

The study investigated into the monthly income of respondents in Naira, and found that it was only 1.28% of the respondents that earned less than 70,000 per month, while 3.4% and 4.68% earned an estimated monthly income of 70,000–79,000 and 80,000–89,000 respectively. On the other hand, 9.36% earned 90,000–99,000, while 15.75% and 12.34% earned 100,000–109,000 and 110,000–119,000 respectively. The study found further that 16.17% earned 120,000–129,000, 19.58% earned 130,000–139,000, while it was only 17.45% that earned 140,000 and above. In average, monthly income of the respondents investigated was estimated at ₦118, 127.

Socio-Economic Benefits of Tourism Activities

Occupation and Tourism Business Activities

The study found 9 major occupation and tourism business activities among the respondents. As indicated in Figure 1, these include accommodation providers, activity providers, attraction owner managers, catering managers, hospitality staff, service providers, tour operators, tourism marketing and promotion, transport providers and travel agents. Hospitality providers (18.30%) formed the largest number, followed by service providers (14.89%), while travel agents (4.68%) were the least.



Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Types of Products That Mostly Provided Economic Benefits

From the study, 11 major types of products and services observed by the respondents provide economic benefits mostly to the respondents. These are as shown in Table 1 above where 15.75% derived most of their economic benefits from local goods, 13.62% and 10.64% derived most of their economic fortune from handicrafts and guided tour service respectively, while cultural events provided economic benefit to 14.04% of the respondents. Similarly, tourist accommodation provided economic fortunes to 14.89% of the respondents. It was discovered that souvenirs (8.94%), seminars, workshops etc. (5.96%), local drinks 4.26%, Travel guides 3.40% and Virtual tours 1.28%.

Table 1: Type of Products That Mostly Provide Economic Benefits during Tourism-Related Activities

Type of tourism-related products	Frequency	Percentage
Souvenirs	21	8.94
Local goods	37	15.75
Handicrafts	32	13.62
Guided tour	25	10.64
Seminars, Workshops, activities, etc.	14	5.96
Cultural events	33	14.04
Tourist Accommodation	35	14.89
Transport services	17	7.23
Local Drinks	10	4.26
Travel guides	8	3.40
Virtual tours	3	1.28
Total	235	100.00

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Extent the Tourism Related Business Activities Benefited the Host Community

The study assessed the extent the tourism related business activities benefited the host community in 8 major areas, which include employment opportunities, entrepreneurial opportunities, improved livelihood, increased sales of local products, hotel rental income, skills development, stimulate economic activities, and tour guiding. From Table 2, it can be discovered that higher proportion, 58.30% and 41.70% of the respondents observed that the tourism related business activities benefited the host community by providing fair employment opportunity and entrepreneurial opportunities respectively. Similarly, in the area of skill development, 42.13% observed the benefit was fair, as a result of tourism related economic activities. Looking at improved livelihood, stimulate economic activities, and tour guiding, higher proportion, 43.98%, 36.17%, and 41.28% respectively observed that the benefit was good. For increased sales of local products, and hotel rental income, higher proportion of respondents, 36.17% and 41.28% respectively believed that the benefit was excellent.

Table 2: Extent the Tourism Related Business Activities Benefited the Host Community Members

	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Economic Benefits								
Employment Opportunities	11	4.68	137	58.30	101	42.98	25	10.64
Entrepreneurial Opportunities	24	10.21	98	41.70	68	28.94	45	19.15
Improved Livelihood	10	4.26	46	19.58	101	42.98	78	33.19
Increased Sales of Local Products	9	3.83	66	28.09	75	31.92	85	36.17
Hotel Rental Income	6	2.55	44	18.72	88	37.45	97	41.28
Skills Development	16	6.81	99	42.13	65	27.66	55	23.40
Stimulate Economic Activities	7	2.98	67	28.51	85	36.17	76	32.34
Tour Guiding	18	7.66	75	31.92	97	41.28	45	19.15

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Average Income Generated from the Tourism Activities in the Study Area

From the data collected, as shown by Table 3, the study investigated into the income generated from tourism activities during tourism events, which may last between 4 - 7 days in order to determine the economic benefits derived by the host community members. It was discovered that it was only 11.06% of the respondents actually earned less than ₦70, 000, during the period of tourism activities. Note that ₦70, 000 is the current minimum wage in the country. The study discovered further that 12.77% of the respondents earned income in the range of ₦(70, 000–79, 000), during the tourism activities, while 15.75% and 18.72% earned income, which fell in the range of ₦(80,000–89,000) and ₦(90,000–99,000) respectively. However, 12.34% and 10.21% earned an income that fell in the range of ₦(100,000–109,000), and ₦(110,000–119,000) respectively, 8.51% earned an income that fell within the range of ₦(120,000–129,000). It was only 5.96% and 4.68% of the respondents that earned an income in the range of ₦(130,000–139,000), and ₦(140,000–149,000) respectively. It can be concluded that higher proportion of 18.72% of the respondents for the study has an income in the range of ₦(90,000–99,000), followed by 15.75% of the respondents, with an average income of ₦(80,000–89,000). Overall, the average income generated by the host community during the tourism activities in the study area is estimated at ₦94,340.

Table 3: Average Income from Tourism Activities during the Tourism Events

Average income (₦)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 70,000	26	11.06
70,000–79,000	30	12.77
80,000–89,000	37	15.75
90,000–99,000	44	18.72
100,000–109,000	29	12.34
110,000–119,000	24	10.21
120,000–129,000	20	8.51
130,000–139,000	14	5.96
140,000–149,000	11	4.68
Total	235	100.00

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Social Benefits of Tourism to the Host Community Members

The study identified 8 social benefits derived from tourism activities in the study area, which include capacity building, community development, community pride, cultural exchange, empowerment of local communities, and improved quality of life. Others include increased access to health facilities and services, and increased access to recreational activities. As shown in Table 4, respondents were given the opportunities to select the number of benefits as applicable to them. For instance, 4.68% believed that the contribution of tourism activities to capacity building in the study area was low, 54.04% believed that it was in average, 47.23% believed that it was high, while it was only 10.64% of them that believed that the level of contribution of tourism activities to capacity building was very high. For community development, the study found that 5.96% of the respondents observed that the level of contribution of tourism activities to its development was low, 46.81% believed that the level of contribution was in average, while 29.76% believed that it was high. It was only 18.30% that believed that tourism activities contribution to community development of the study area was very high.

As shown in Table 4, the mid-average indicates the perceived level of social benefits from tourism business activities, ranging from 2.55 for capacity building to 3.28 for cultural exchange. The social benefits of capacity building, community development, improved quality of life, and increased access to recreational activities, with a mid-average of 2.55, 2.60, 2.70, and 2.71 respectively are higher than the average social benefit of 2-point mid-average. It can be concluded that the 4 social benefits in the study area are favourable, as they moving towards high. Similarly, community pride, empowerment of local communities, and empowerment of local communities' social benefits, with a mid-average of 3.06, 3.26, and 3.28 respectively are higher than high. Hence, the 3 social benefits are favourable social benefits, moving towards Very High of 4-point mid-average. Overall, the social benefit of tourism business activities in the study area could be estimated at 2.85. This is higher than the Average of 2-point mid-average, but a little bit less than High.

Table 4: Social Benefits of Tourism to the Host Community Members

Social Benefits	Low (1)		Average (2)		High(3)		Very High(4)		Mid -Average
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Capacity Building	11	4.68	127	54.04	111	47.23	25	10.64	2.55
Community Development	14	5.96	108	46.81	70	29.79	43	18.30	2.60
Community Pride	11	4.68	39	16.60	110	46.81	75	31.92	3.06
Cultural Exchange	9	3.83	36	15.32	69	29.36	121	51.49	3.28
Empowerment of Local Communities	6	2.55	24	10.35	108	46.81	97	41.28	3.26
Improved Quality of Life	10	4.26	105	44.68	65	27.66	55	23.40	2.70
Increased Access to Health Services	7	2.98	127	54.04	55	23.40	46	19.66	2.60
Increased Access to Recreational Activities	18	7.66	75	31.92	97	41.28	44	18.72	2.71
Overall Social Benefit									2.85

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Overall Impact of Tourism on the Quality of Life

The overall impact of tourism is as shown in Table 5; 7.66% of the respondents believed that the impact was very negative, 14.47% believed that it was negative, while 27.66% of them believed that the impact was moderate. However, 35.53% and 14.89% believed that the impact was positive and very positive respectively. In average the impact of tourism on quality of life is 3.35, indicating a slightly positive perception overall. This suggests that while tourism has some negative impacts, its benefits are more pronounced, contributing to a favourable view among respondents.

Table 5: Overall Impact of Tourism on Your Quality of Life

Overall Impact Of Tourism	Frequency	Percentage
Very Negative	18	7.66
Negative	34	14.47
Moderate	65	27.66
Positive	83	35.32
Very positive	35	14.89
Total	235	100.00

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Effects of Tourism Development on Livelihood

Since tourism is a business that can generate income, it is expected to have a positive impact on the affected people. For this reason, the study assessed the tourism business impact on the livelihood of the host community as indicated in Table 6, and it was established that 1.7% of the respondents had the belief that the impact on livelihood of the host community was very negative, 2.98% believed that the impact on livelihood was negative, while 26.81% of them were of the opinion that the impact of tourism development on the livelihood was moderate. The study established further that 44.68% of the respondents believed that the impact was positive, while 23.83% had the belief that the impact was very positive. In average 47 of the respondents in the study area accepted that tourism developed their livelihood.

Table 6: Effects of Tourism Development on Livelihood

Overall Impact of Tourism	Frequency	Percentage
Very negative	4	1.70
Negative	7	2.98
Moderate	63	26.81
Positive	105	44.68
Very positive	56	23.83
Total	235	100.00

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Associated Consequences of Tourism Activities on the Study Area

The study investigated into the negative consequences of tourism activities on the host community, and discovered 5 of such consequences, which include increased the cost of shared tourists' facilities, environmental degradation, and cultural exploitation. Others include overcrowding and hostilities against the tourists. These are as highlighted in Table 7, and discovered that 4.68% of the respondents observed that increased cost of shared tourists' facilities was very negative on the host community, 54.04% have the notion that the effect was positive, 47.23% believed that the effect on the people of the area was fair. However, 5.96% believed that increased cost of shared tourists' facilities was negative on the host community, while 4.68% believed that effect was very negative.

Table 7: Associated Consequences of Tourism Activities on the Study Area

Associated Consequences	SA	A	NS	D	SD	$\bar{x}$
Increased the cost of shared tourists facilities	26	127	57	14	11	3.61
Environmental degradation	10	105	65	31	24	3.19
Cultural exploitation	11	39	110	42	33	2.80
Overcrowding	67	137	15	9	7	4.06
Hostilities From the Tourists	3	7	23	128	74	1.88

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Note: SA Strongly Agreed, A Agreed, NS Not Sure, D Disagreed, SD Strongly Disagreed, $\bar{x}$ Mean Average

Factors Influencing Tourism Development in Badagry

The study identified 5 factors, capable to positively influence development of tourism activities, which include infrastructure development, local participation in tourism, government support, tourist arrivals, and complementary effects of the tourists' facilities in the area. Respondents were given the opportunity to select more than one among these factors. As shown in Table 8, the study found that just 14.47% of the respondents believed that availability of infrastructure positively influences tourism development in the study area, while 98.30% and 28.51% of the respondents have the notion that local participation in tourism and government support have a contribution in tourism development in the study area. However, 83.81% believed the number of tourists' arrival aided tourism development, while 87.56% believed that Complementary effects of the tourists' facilities in the area, such as Sangbheto festival, viability of beaches, and other tourists' places of attraction collectively contributed to tourism development.

Based on the perceptions of the respondents, these factors can be ranked, based on their strength: adequate local participation in tourism (98.30%); complementary effects of other tourists' facilities

in the area (87.56%); high degree of tourist arrivals (83.81%), adequate government support (28.51%); and availability of infrastructure development (14.47%).

Table 8: Factors Influencing Tourism Development in Badagry

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Availability of Infrastructure Development	34	14.47
Adequate Local Participation in Tourism	231	98.30
Government Support	67	28.51
High Degree of Tourist Arrivals	197	83.81
Complementary Effects of Other Tourists Facilities in The Area	206	87.56

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Effectiveness of Government in Managing Tourism Development

As indicated in Table 9, the study investigated into the perception of the respondents on the effectiveness of government in managing tourism development. The study found that 14.89% of the respondents have the notion that government effort in managing tourism development to ensure accelerated tourism development is very ineffective, while 45.96% believed that government effort is ineffective. The study found further that 26.68% of the respondents have the belief that the efforts in place by the government in managing the development of tourism in the study area was fairly effective, 9.36% believed that it was effective, while 3.40% believed that it was very effective. Looking at the table, it can be concluded that government in managing tourism development has not been effective, since over 60% of the respondents investigated believed that the effort was not effective.

Table 9: Effectiveness of Government in Managing Tourism Development

Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage
Very Ineffective	35	14.89
Ineffective	108	45.96
Fairly Effective	62	26.38
Effective	22	9.36
Very Effective	8	3.40
Total	235	100.00

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

How Tourism Facilities Can Positively Complement Each Other for Socio-economic Development

Through respondents' perceptions, the study investigated into how tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community, the findings of the study area as indicated in Table 10, using Likert Scale to determine the mean score, denoted by $\bar{X}$. The study found that 8.94% and 45.96% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the notion that through community engagement and involvement, through local ownership, community-based tourism, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community, while 19.15% of the respondents were not sure. On the other hand, 15.32% and 10.21% of the respondents investigated disagreed and strongly disagreed with the notion. With the mean score $\bar{X}$ 3.26, falling

between not sure and agreed, this suggests that the respondents leaned towards moderately agreed with the notion.

When the notions of the respondents were sought for on whether through infrastructure development, through improved accessibility to basic amenities, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community; the mean score was calculated at $\bar{x}3.65$, which implies that respondents' perceptions leaned towards agreement. Hence, they moderately agreed with the notion that through infrastructure development, through improved accessibility to basic amenities, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socio-economic development of the local community.

On whether through capacity building and training, through training programmes, entrepreneurship support, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community, the mean score was calculated at $\bar{x}4.22$. With the calculated mean score, it can be inferred that the respondents' opinion leaned towards strongly agreed, because it is greater than 4.00. Hence, it can be concluded that the respondents were more favourable with the notion that through capacity building and training through training programmes, entrepreneurship support, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community.

On whether through collaboration and partnerships, through stakeholder engagement and public participation, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community, the mean score was calculated at $\bar{x}3.50$. With the calculated mean score, it can be inferred that the respondents' opinion leaned towards agreed, because it is greater than 3, which is not sure. Hence, it can be concluded that the respondents were more favourable with the notion that through collaboration and partnerships, through stakeholder engagement and public participation, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community.

On whether through sustainable tourism practices, through environmental conservation, and cultural heritage preservation, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community, the mean score was calculated at $\bar{x}4.51$. With the calculated mean score, it can be inferred that the respondents' opinion leaned towards strongly agreed, because it is greater than 4, which is not sure. Hence, it can be concluded that the respondents were more favourable with the notion that through sustainable tourism practices, through environmental conservation, and cultural heritage preservation, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community.

On whether through marketing and promotion, through joint marketing efforts and digital presence, tourism facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community, the mean score was calculated at $\bar{x}4.02$. With the calculated mean score, it can be inferred that the respondents agreed with the notion. Hence, it can be concluded that the respondents were more favourable with the notion that through sustainable tourism practices, through environmental conservation, and cultural heritage preservation, tourism

facilities in the study area can positively complement each other for socioeconomic development of the local community

Table 10: Respondents' Notion on How Tourism Facilities Can Positively Complement Each Other for Socioeconomic Development

Notions	SA	A	NS	D	SD	$\bar{x}$
Community engagement and involvement, through local ownership, community-based tourism	8.94	45.96	19.15	15.32	10.21	3.26
Infrastructure development, through improved accessibility to basic amenities	14.04	48.51	28.94	5.11	3.40	3.65
Capacity building and training, through training programmes, entrepreneurship support	25.96	51.92	17.02	2.98	2.13	4.22
Collaboration and partnerships, through stakeholder engagement and public participation	16.17	54.04	25.53	2.98	1.77	3.50
Sustainable tourism practices, through environmental conservation, and cultural heritage preservation	2.55	50.21	42.98	4.26	0	4.51
Marketing and promotion, through joint marketing efforts and digital presence	21.28	55.75	21.28	0.43	0	4.02

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Summary of Findings

This study reveals that Badagry, a historic coastal city, possesses a rich cultural tourism landscape, serving as a significant hub for trade and cultural exchange. Tourism activities have demonstrably contributed to the local economy, identifying nine major occupations with an average monthly income of N118,128 from tourism-related ventures. Key products driving these economic benefits include local goods, handicrafts, cultural events, and tourist accommodation. Beyond financial gains, tourism has fostered substantial benefits for the host community, including increased employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, improved livelihoods, and stimulated sales of local products. Socially, the community has experienced enhanced capacity building, development, pride, cultural exchange, and an improved quality of life. The overall impact on livelihoods was perceived as positive by a significant portion of respondents. However, the study also identified challenges such as increased costs for shared facilities, environmental degradation, cultural exploitation, and overcrowding. Factors strongly influencing tourism development were adequate local participation, complementary effects of existing tourist facilities, high tourist arrivals, and government support. Notably, over 60% of respondents viewed the government's management of tourism development as ineffective. Recommendations emphasize integrated strategies focusing on community engagement, infrastructure, capacity building, collaboration, and sustainable practices to maximize benefits and minimize drawbacks.

Recommendations

To optimize the positive socio-economic externalities of tourism in Badagry and mitigate adverse impacts, a multi-faceted strategic framework is proposed. Primarily, the implementation of robust community-centric engagement models and the promotion of localized ownership structures within tourism initiatives are paramount. This approach fosters equitable benefit distribution and necessitates concurrent capacity-building and vocational training programs, alongside entrepreneurship support, to enhance local stakeholder participation in the tourism value chain.

Strategic infrastructural enhancements are critical to improving accessibility and elevating the standard of essential amenities for both visitors and residents, thereby bolstering tourism facility efficacy. Concurrently, a rigorous adherence to sustainable tourism methodologies is imperative, integrating environmental conservation and cultural heritage preservation into all developmental blueprints to safeguard Badagry's unique assets.

Furthermore, strengthening inter-stakeholder collaboration and forging strategic partnerships among governmental bodies, local communities, and private sector entities are crucial for coherent planning and effective operational management. This encompasses integrated marketing campaigns and a robust digital presence to augment tourist arrivals. Finally, proactive policy formulation and enhanced governmental oversight are required to address identified negative externalities such as escalating living costs, environmental degradation, and overcrowding, ensuring long-term sustainable development and an improved quality of life for the host community.

Conclusion

This study comprehensively analyzes the economic and social impacts of tourism in Badagry, Nigeria, confirming its vital role in local livelihoods. It highlights significant benefits, including job creation, entrepreneurial growth, and enhanced community pride, underscoring tourism's positive contribution to socioeconomic development. However, the research also reveals challenges such as increased living costs, environmental degradation, and overcrowding, compounded by perceived governmental inefficiencies in tourism management. While strong local participation and existing facilities are key assets, these negative aspects demand strategic intervention. For sustainable growth, Badagry requires a balanced approach: empowering communities, improving infrastructure, and rigorously preserving its environment and culture, all underpinned by effective governance.

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IMPACT OF GREEN HOTEL PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE WELLNESS AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY IN THE NIGERIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Abstract

The hospitality sector in sub-Saharan Africa faces mounting pressure to adopt environmentally responsible operations, yet empirical evidence on the outcomes of such practices remains limited. This study examines the influence of green hotel practices on employee wellness and economic sustainability in Jos, Nigeria, using the Triple Bottom Line framework. A descriptive survey design was employed, drawing data from 47 respondents, including staff, management and guest across purposively selected 4-star hotels. Structured questionnaires assessed the implementation of energy conservation, water efficiency, waste management, and eco-friendly procurement, alongside perceived effects on workforce wellbeing and financial performance. Findings reveal that green practices significantly enhance employee wellness: nearly two-thirds of respondents reported great improvements in workplace comfort and morale, while over three-quarters expressed satisfaction with job and environmental conditions. Economically, 63.9% acknowledged substantial operational cost savings, and 63.8% linked green initiatives to revenue growth. Regression analysis identified cost savings ($\beta = 0.42$, $p = .003$) and customer demand ($\beta = 0.35$, $p = .012$) as primary adoption drivers. Moreover, a strong correlation between green practices and sustainable hospitality management ($r = 0.80$, $p < .001$) underscores their strategic value. The study concludes that even incremental sustainability measures yield dual benefits: healthier, more engaged workforces and improved financial performance. It recommends that hotel managers prioritise high-return eco-investments and that policymakers introduce targeted incentives to accelerate green adoption among small- and medium-scale enterprises.

Keywords: Green practices; employee wellness; economic sustainability; hospitality; Jos, Nigeria.

Introduction

The hospitality sector occupies a central position in Nigeria's service economy, contributing to employment, foreign exchange earnings, and urban development. Hotels, as core hospitality establishments, operate continuously and consume substantial quantities of energy, water, and consumables. This operational intensity generates significant environmental burdens, including high carbon emissions, freshwater depletion, solid waste accumulation, and effluent discharge (Shabaz *et al.*, 2021; Leyva & Parra, 2021). These pressures are particularly acute in rapidly urbanising cities of the Global South, where infrastructure deficits and weak regulatory enforcement compound ecological degradation. International sustainability discourse, shaped by the Brundtland Commission's call to balance present needs and future capacity and later consolidated in the United Nations 2030 Agenda, has increasingly framed tourism and hospitality as a sector with both environmental responsibilities and opportunities to contribute to global goals, including clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), and responsible consumption and

production (SDG 12) (Brundtland Commission, 1987; United Nations, 2015). In response, the concept of green hotel practices has gained international traction as a strategic approach to mitigating the environmental footprint of accommodation services while maintaining service quality and guest satisfaction (Santos *et al.*, 2020; Abdou, Hassan, & Dief, 2020; Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2018).

Green hotel practices encompass an array of operational behaviours intended to reduce ecological footprints and improve resource availability. Core domains include energy management through efficient lighting and HVAC systems, water conservation via low-flow fixtures and linen reuse programmes, waste minimisation and recycling, environmentally preferable purchasing, and guest and employee engagement strategies that encourage pro-environmental behaviour (Santos *et al.*, 2020; Abdou *et al.*, 2020; Han *et al.*, 2018). Adoption trajectories, however, differ sharply across markets. Multinational chains often lead implementation due to scale economies, access to capital, and brand-aligned certification schemes (Arun, Kaur, Bresciani, & Dhir, 2021), while independent and mid-scale properties in developing economies frequently lag due to capital constraints, technology gaps, and competing short-term business pressures (Kasimu, Zaiton, & Hassan, 2012; Mensah, 2021). In Nigeria, studies in Lagos and other centres have documented environmental management gaps, uneven staff awareness, and underinvestment in sustainable technologies (Adesina & Ngozi, 2013; Babalola & Oluwatoyin, 2014). Concurrently, the Nigerian hospitality sector faces mounting operational cost pressures, driven by volatile energy prices, dependence on diesel generators, and escalating water procurement expenses. These conditions create a compelling, yet underexplored, rationale for green investment.

The human and financial implications of green adoption are receiving greater scholarly attention. Environmentally responsible operations can improve indoor environmental quality, reduce staff exposure to harsh chemicals, and create healthier, more comfortable workspaces, all of which support employee wellness, morale, and retention (Kim, Lee, & Fairhurst, 2017; Ong, Ng, & Chan, 2019). Employee wellness, in this context, refers to the physical, psychological, and satisfaction-related outcomes experienced by staff as a result of their work environment and organisational practices (Kim *et al.*, 2017). Perceptions of corporate social and environmental responsibility are also associated with higher job satisfaction and organisational commitment in service industries (Ong *et al.*, 2019). At the same time, green initiatives, especially those targeting energy and water efficiency, can yield measurable cost savings, protect hotels from utility price volatility, and enhance market positioning among eco-conscious travellers, thereby reinforcing economic sustainability (Han *et al.*, 2018; Sloan, Legrand, & Chen, 2014; Mensah, 2021). Economic sustainability in hospitality is typically operationalised through cost reductions, revenue growth, and customer loyalty, outcomes that together determine long-term financial viability (Sloan *et al.*, 2014).

This study is anchored conceptually in the Triple Bottom Line framework, first articulated by Elkington (1997), which argues that environmental, social, and economic objectives are interdependent and must be balanced for organisations to achieve long-term sustainability. The framework has been widely applied in hospitality research to evaluate how green practices simultaneously affect ecological performance, workforce wellbeing, and financial returns (Sloan *et al.*, 2014; Mensah, 2021). Applying the framework to this study, green hotel practices are expected to produce environmental gains; when well implemented, they should also yield financial benefits

and support the social dimension, here operationalized as employee wellness. The Triple Bottom Line thus provides a theoretical lens through which the interconnected outcomes of sustainability initiatives can be systematically examined.

A growing body of empirical literature has examined the relationships between green practices, employee wellness, and economic performance in hospitality contexts. Internationally, Kim *et al.* (2017) found that employees in hotels with comprehensive environmental programmes reported significantly higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions, mediated by perceptions of organisational concern for wellbeing. Ong *et al.* (2019) similarly demonstrated that corporate social responsibility initiatives, including environmental stewardship, positively influenced employee morale and commitment. On the economic front, Chan and Wong (2014) documented that ISO 14001-certified hotels in Hong Kong achieved substantial operational savings and enhanced reputation, while Han *et al.* (2018) reported that green positioning positively influenced guest loyalty and willingness to pay premium rates. In sub-Saharan Africa, Mensah (2021) provided evidence from Ghana that resource-efficiency measures in hotels yielded payback periods of under two years, yet adoption remained constrained by capital and awareness deficits. Within Nigeria, however, empirical studies remain sparse and fragmented. Adesina and Ngozi (2013) examined guest attitudes toward green hotels in Lagos, finding moderate awareness but low willingness to pay premiums. Babalola and Oluwatoyin (2014) documented curriculum gaps in hospitality education regarding sustainability. No identified study has simultaneously investigated the dual outcomes of green practices on workforce wellbeing and financial performance from the perspective of multiple hotel stakeholders in Nigeria, nor has any such inquiry been located in the Plateau State region.

This study is therefore motivated by a clear research gap: the absence of integrated empirical inquiry into the relationship between green hotel practices, employee wellness, and economic sustainability within Nigeria's hospitality sector. Specifically, no prior research has: (i) systematically assessed the extent of green practice implementation across classified hotels in Jos; (ii) evaluated how such practices are perceived to affect employee wellness from the perspective of staff and management; (iii) quantified the economic outcomes, including cost savings, revenue growth, and customer loyalty, attributable to green initiatives; or (iv) identified the key drivers and barriers influencing hoteliers' adoption decisions in this context. Addressing these gaps is essential for building a locally relevant evidence base that can inform managerial strategy and policy design.

The primary objective of this research is to examine the impact of green hotel practices on employee wellness and economic sustainability in selected hotels in Jos, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to: assess the extent to which green practices are being adopted; evaluate the perceived effects of these practices on employee wellness indicators, including job satisfaction and work environment quality; determine the economic outcomes associated with green adoption, particularly cost savings, revenue growth, and customer loyalty; and identify the key drivers and barriers influencing management decisions to implement green initiatives. The study was conducted in Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas of Plateau State, Nigeria, which host a concentration of classified hotels serving business, leisure, and religious tourists. The research focused on hotels rated four stars, as these properties typically possess the operational infrastructure and management systems necessary to implement and monitor sustainability practices. Participants included hotel

staff, management personnel and guests, enabling triangulation of perceptions across stakeholder groups.

This research contributes to scholarship and practice in several ways. Empirically, it provides one of the first integrated assessments of green hotel outcomes from a Nigerian perspective, responding to repeated calls in the literature for context-specific evidence from sub-Saharan Africa. Theoretically, it operationalizes and tests the Triple Bottom Line framework within a hospitality setting, demonstrating the interrelationships among environmental initiatives, social outcomes, and economic performance. Methodologically, it offers a validated instrument for measuring green practice adoption and its perceived impacts in developing-country hotel contexts. Practically, the findings offer actionable insights for hotel managers seeking to align operational efficiency with workforce wellbeing, and for policymakers designing targeted interventions such as tax rebates, grants, or certification programmes to accelerate sustainability adoption among small- and medium-scale hospitality enterprises. By focusing on the dual returns of green investment, the study aims to reframe sustainability not as a cost burden but as a strategic resource for competitive resilience in Nigeria's evolving hospitality landscape.

Methodology

The methodology provides a systematic investigation of the appraisal of green hotel practices and sustainable hospitality management in Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas of Plateau State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive and inferential cross-sectional survey design, which included the administration of structured questionnaires to produce information on green hotel practices and sustainable hospitality management in the study area.

The study was conducted in Jos North and Jos South Local Government Areas of Plateau State, Nigeria, which contain the highest concentration of classified hotels in the state, serving business, leisure, and religious tourist markets. Respondents for this research were purposively chosen from selected hotels in the study area. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 4-star hotels that are perceived to have implemented green practices and are recognised for their sustainability initiatives. Hotels without a formal star rating, or those rated below 4-stars, were excluded, as preliminary visits indicated negligible adoption of green practices. A list of such hotels was obtained from relevant tourism and hospitality authorities in Plateau State. To be included, hotels must have implemented at least two documented green practices, such as energy-efficient lighting, linen reuse programmes, waste segregation, or water conservation measures, for a minimum of six months, ensuring that respondents could meaningfully assess outcomes. A census approach was adopted for hotels meeting the inclusion criteria; all five identified four-star hotels in the study area agreed to participate.

The target population comprised three stakeholder groups directly involved in or affected by green hotel practices: hotel employees, management personnel, and hotel guests. From the selected hotels, a sample of 50 respondents was initially targeted, and a questionnaire was administered to them. This sample size was proportionally allocated to the five selected hotels in the study area. However, following data cleaning and the removal of incomplete responses, a total of 47 valid questionnaires were obtained and retained for the analysis. The final sample comprised 23 hotel employees drawn from housekeeping, maintenance, food and beverage, and front office departments; 14 management personnel, including general managers, operations managers, and departmental supervisors; and 10

frequent hotel guests who had stayed for a minimum of two nights. This sample size, while modest, is consistent with similar exploratory studies in Nigerian hospitality settings where access to classified hotels and respondent availability are constrained (Adesina & Ngozi, 2013).

Within each participating hotel, respondents were selected using stratified purposive sampling to ensure representation across stakeholder categories. Hotel employees were drawn from departments most directly exposed to green operational changes, with department heads assisting in identifying staff with at least six months' tenure to ensure familiarity with hotel practices. Management personnel included those directly involved in or knowledgeable about sustainability decision-making. Guests were recruited through convenience sampling at hotel lobbies and reception areas during check-out, and only guests who had stayed for a minimum of two nights were approached. Critically, employee wellness items were administered exclusively to staff and management; guests were not asked to evaluate workforce wellbeing. Guests contributed only to perceptions of economic outcomes, such as whether green practices influenced their loyalty, and to assessments of customer demand.

The questionnaire focused on issues relating to green practices and consisted of eighteen green practice simple and short green practice questions. Most of the questions were closed-ended, generally meant to generate information on the appraisal of green hotel practices and sustainable hospitality management in Plateau State. The instrument was developed following an extensive review of the hospitality sustainability literature (Han *et al.*, 2018; Kim *et al.*, 2017; Mensah, 2021) and comprised five sections addressing demographic characteristics, awareness and implementation of green practices, employee wellness outcomes, economic outcomes, and drivers and barriers to adoption. Separate versions of the questionnaire were prepared for employees, management, and guests, with wording tailored to each group's perspective.

For this research, face validity and a pilot study were used to establish the validity of the research instrument. The research instrument was reviewed by a panel of three experts in the field of hospitality management and sustainable tourism. The experts assessed the items in the instrument and their capacity to adequately cover the key aspects of green hotel practices and sustainable hospitality management. The questionnaire was examined for clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items for the target population of hotel managers and staff. Based on the feedback from the experts, necessary modifications were made to the instrument to improve its face validity, including the rephrasing of two ambiguous items and the reordering of sections for improved flow.

The reliability of the research instrument was established through a pilot study. A pilot test was conducted with a small sample of 12 respondents who were similar to the target population but not included in the main study, drawn from one three-star hotel in Jos, not part of the main sample. By conducting a pilot study and calculating Cronbach's alpha, the reliability of the research instrument was assessed, ensuring that the instrument consistently measures the constructs of interest and reduces the potential for measurement errors.

Data for the research were sourced through primary and secondary sources. The primary data involved the administration of a structured questionnaire designed to collect quantitative data from hotel managers, staff, and guests. The questionnaire assessed the extent of green hotel practices,

including energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, and eco-friendly procurement. Data were collected for a period of over four weeks. Complementing the primary sources, secondary information was obtained from reliable internet sources, textbooks, journals, and articles to contextualise the findings and support the literature review.

To analyse the relevant information sourced from the conduct of questionnaire administration, both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed. Quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires were analysed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarise adoption patterns, perceived improvements in wellness, and economic benefits. To address the objective of identifying predictors of green practice adoption, ordinary least squares regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between various factors and the commitment of hotels to green practices. Regression analysis is a statistical method used to examine the relationship between two or more variables. It helps in understanding how the typical value of the dependent variable changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed.

The dependent variable was the hotel's commitment to green practices, operationalised as the mean score of four items measuring the hotel's stated and observable commitment to implementing and expanding sustainability initiatives, including whether management actively seeks new ways to reduce environmental impact and whether the hotel allocates budget for green investments. This composite score was derived from management responses and validated against employee perceptions where available. The independent variables comprised four hypothesised drivers: cost savings, measured as the perceived financial savings from reduced energy, water, and waste expenditures; customer demand, measured as perceived guest preference for eco-friendly services and willingness to return; environmental concerns, measured as management's expressed commitment to ecological responsibility; and employee wellness, measured as the perceived contribution of green practices to staff health, satisfaction, and retention. All independent variables were measured on 4-point scales and treated as continuous.

The regression model was specified as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y = the hotel's commitment to green practices (dependent variable)

X₁ = cost savings

X₂ = customer demand

X₃ = environmental concerns

X₄ = employee wellness

β₀ = intercept

β₁, β₂, β₃, β₄ = coefficients of the independent variables

ε = error term

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was used to examine the bivariate relationships among green hotel practices, employee wellness, and sustainable hospitality management. The correlation coefficient was denoted as:

$$r = \frac{n\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Specifically, correlation analysis was employed to test the relationships between green hotel practices and employee wellness, and between green hotel practices and sustainable hospitality management. The overall green practice implementation score was operationalised as the mean of 15 items, employee wellness as the mean of nine items, and sustainable hospitality management as the mean of six items, capturing perceived operational efficiency, brand reputation, and long-term viability. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$ for all analyses.

Results

A total of 47 valid responses were obtained, consisting of 23 hotel employees, 14 management personnel, and 10 frequent guests. Results are presented according to the four research objectives.

Extent of Green Practice Adoption

Respondents evaluated the level of implementation across five domains: energy conservation, water efficiency, waste management, eco-friendly procurement, and guest/staff engagement. Among the 15 items assessed, energy-efficient lighting (68.1% “fully implemented”), linen reuse programmes (61.7%), and low-flow water fixtures (55.3%) were the most widely adopted. Waste segregation and recycling were notably less implemented (34.0% “fully implemented”). The aggregate mean score for green practice implementation was $M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.62$ (on a 4-point scale), indicating moderate adoption.

Perceived Effects on Employee Wellness

Employee wellness outcomes were analysed using responses from staff and management only. A majority reported positive effects attributed to green practices. Across wellness indicators, 63.9% perceived overall wellness improvements as high or very high, while 78.7% reported high or very high job satisfaction and work environment satisfaction.

Table 1: Perceived Impact of Green Practices on Employee Wellness

Wellness Indicator	Very High (%)	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
Overall wellness improvement	21.3	42.6	25.5	10.6
Job satisfaction	25.5	53.2	17.0	4.3
Work environment satisfaction	31.9	46.8	17.0	4.3

Source: Author’s Field Survey, 2025

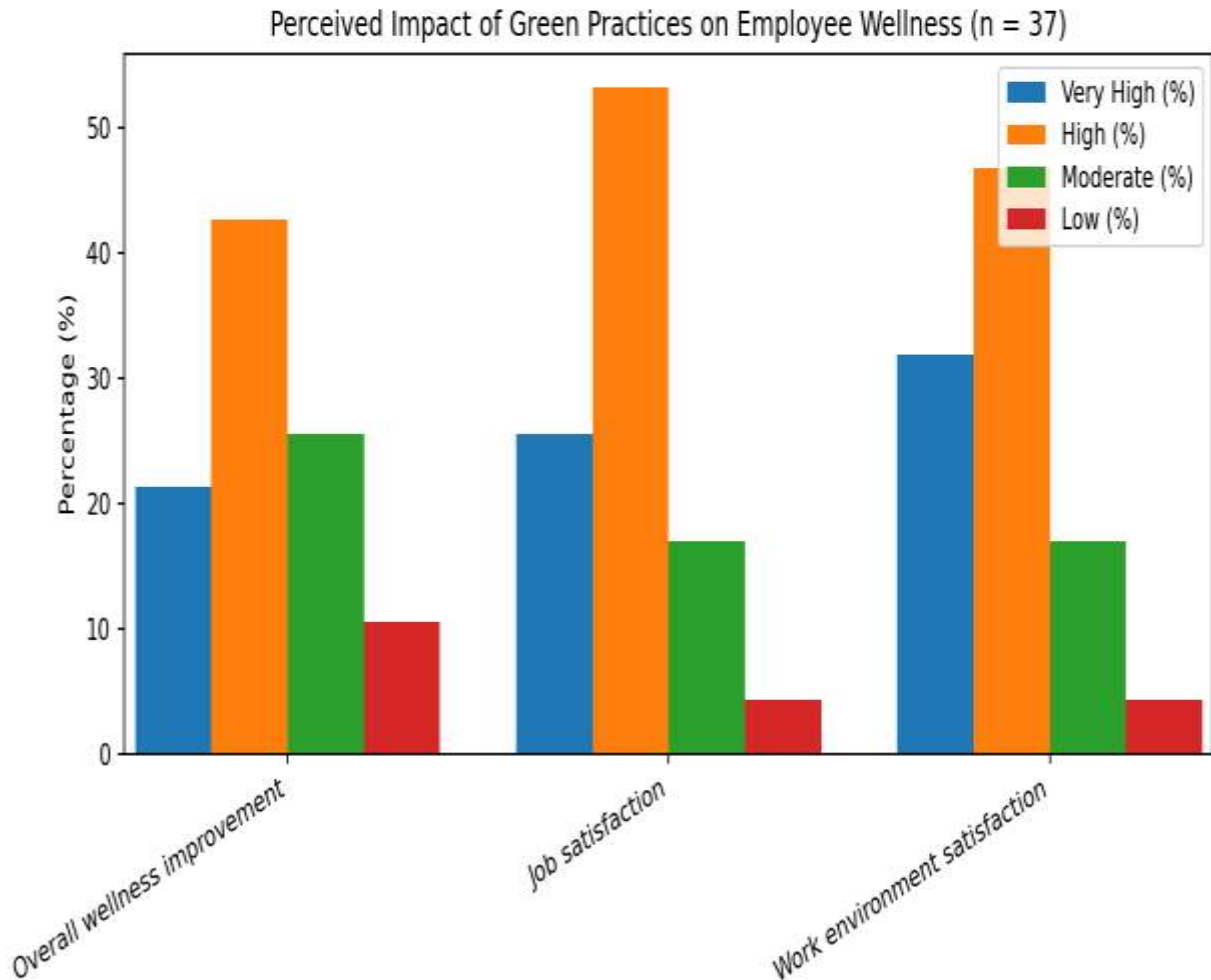


Figure 1: Perceived impact of green practices on employee wellness

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Perceived Economic Impact of Green Practices

Economic perceptions were drawn from all stakeholder groups (n = 47). A majority perceived those green practices contributed to reductions in operational costs (63.9%) and revenue growth (63.8%). Customer loyalty was the strongest economic benefit, endorsed by 74.5% of participants.

Table 2: Perceived Economic Impact of Green Practices (n = 47)

Economic Indicator	Very High (%)	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)
Reduction in operational costs	21.3	42.6	25.5	10.6
Contribution to revenue growth	17.0	46.8	25.5	10.6
Impact on customer loyalty	31.9	42.6	21.3	4.3

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

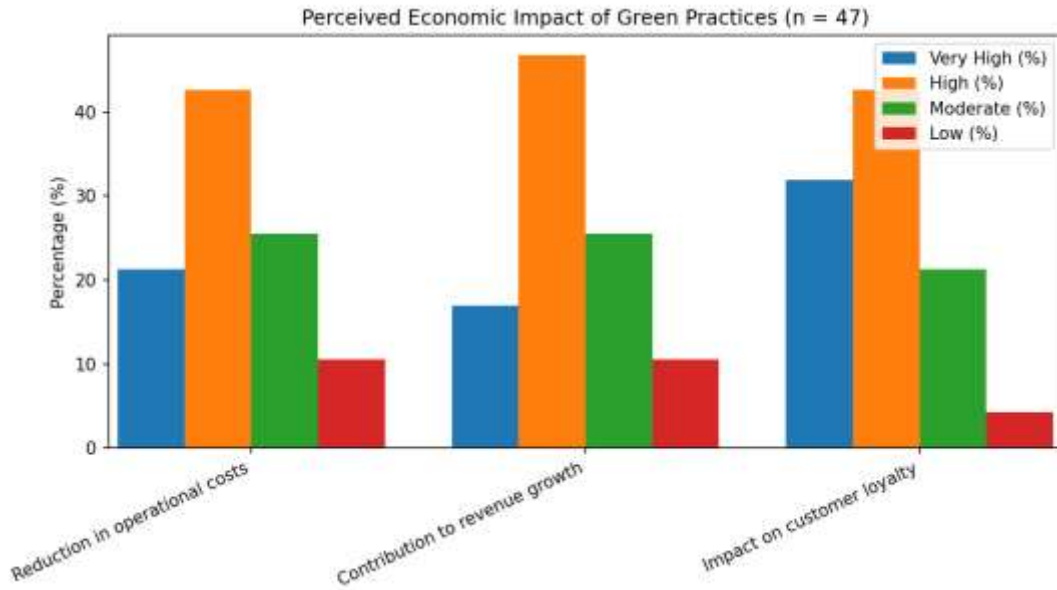


Figure 2: Perceived Economic impact of green practices

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Drivers of Green Practice Adoption

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using management responses. The dependent variable was commitment to green practice adoption ($\alpha = 0.77$). Independent variables included cost savings, customer demand, environmental concerns, and employee wellness.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Predicting Commitment to Green Practice Adoption (n = 47)

Predictor	β	p-value
Cost savings	0.42	0.003
Customer demand	0.35	0.012
Environmental concerns	0.28	0.032
Employee wellness	0.20	0.045

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

All predictors were statistically significant, with cost savings exerting the strongest influence.

Pearson correlations were used to examine relationships between overall green practice implementation and two outcome measures. Significant positive correlations were found: Green practice implementation and employee wellness, $r = 0.65$, $p = .002$. Green practice implementation and sustainable hospitality management, $r = 0.80$, $p < .001$.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Green Practices, Employee Wellness, and Sustainable Hospitality Management

Variables Correlated	r	p-value
Implementation vs. employee wellness	0.65	0.002

Variables Correlated	r	p-value
Implementation vs. sustainable hospitality management	0.80	0 .001

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

Discussion

This study investigated stakeholder perceptions of green practice adoption and its associations with employee wellness and economic outcomes in four-star hotels in Jos, Nigeria. The findings indicate moderate and uneven adoption of environmental measures, clear perceived benefits for employee wellbeing, and widespread belief that green practices contribute to economic performance.

Hotels in the sample tended to implement low-cost, high-visibility interventions, most notably energy-efficient lighting, linen reuse programmes, and low-flow fixtures, while more system-dependent measures such as waste segregation and recycling were less common. This adoption pattern aligns with prior evidence from developing-country hospitality settings, which shows that hotels prioritise measures with rapid payback and minimal capital outlay (Chan & Wong, 2014; Kasimu *et al.*, 2012; Mensah, 2021). The regression analysis corroborates this pragmatic orientation: cost savings were the strongest predictor of managerial commitment to green adoption, followed by customer demand, environmental concerns, and employee wellness.

Respondents, particularly staff and managers, generally perceived those green practices improved workplace wellbeing, job satisfaction, and the quality of the work environment. These perceptions accord with studies linking environmentally responsible operations (e.g., improved ventilation, non-toxic cleaning, access to natural light) to better indoor environmental quality and higher employee morale (Kim *et al.*, 2017; Ong *et al.*, 2019). The moderate-to-strong positive correlation between implementation and employee wellness ($r = 0.65$) suggests that even incremental environmental investments may produce noticeable social benefits recognised by staff.

Economic perceptions were also favourable: a majority believed green practices reduced operational costs and contributed to revenue growth, and customer loyalty was the most strongly perceived economic benefit. These findings mirror research from more mature markets showing resource-efficiency measures often yield utility savings and enhance market positioning among eco-conscious consumers (Sloan *et al.*, 2014; Han *et al.*, 2018; Mensah, 2021). It is important to emphasise, however, that the present results reflect stakeholder perceptions rather than objective financial audits.

Empirically, the results support the integrative logic of the TBL framework: environmental measures were associated with both social (employee wellness) and economic (perceived cost savings, customer loyalty) outcomes, indicating complementarities rather than trade-offs among the three pillars. The finding that extrinsic economic drivers (cost savings, customer demand) ranked above intrinsic environmental concern when predicting adoption suggests that in resource-constrained contexts, the business case remains the principal lever for sustainable transition. Nonetheless, the statistical significance of employee wellness indicates that social considerations are emerging as a meaningful, if secondary, influence on managerial decisions, an observation that encourages broader incorporation of human-resource variables in sustainability models for hospitality.

For managers, the pattern of results recommends a staged approach that begins with low-cost, high-return actions (e.g., LED retrofits, low-flow fixtures, linen reuse schemes) while planning for more systemic investments over time. Communicating visible sustainability efforts can capitalise on customer demand and strengthen brand loyalty. For policymakers, targeted incentives (tax rebates, micro-grants) and improvements in municipal waste infrastructure could lower adoption barriers, especially for interventions that require outside support, such as recycling and composting. Industry associations and training institutions can close knowledge gaps by disseminating practical case studies and integrating sustainability and wellness into vocational curricula.

The geographic focus on Jos and the sample's emphasis on 4-star hotels limit transferability to other hotel classes and regions. Future research should incorporate longitudinal designs and triangulate perceptual data with objective indicators such as utility bills, audited cost-savings, waste-diversion metrics, and health or absenteeism records to validate perceived effects. Comparative studies across Nigerian states or between independent and chain hotels would clarify contextual contingencies.

While acknowledging the study's limitations, the evidence presented suggests that modest, strategically chosen environmental investments can be perceived as simultaneously beneficial for people (employee wellness) and profit (operational efficiency and customer loyalty). This convergence reinforces the relevance of TBL thinking in resource-constrained hospitality contexts and provides a pragmatic roadmap for managers, policymakers, and educators seeking to scale sustainable practices in Nigerian hotels.

Conclusion

The perceived influence of green hotel practices on employee wellness and economic sustainability across selected four-star hotels in Jos, Nigeria was assessed by this study. The findings indicate that green practices, particularly energy-efficient lighting, linen reuse programmes, and low-flow fixtures, are moderately implemented. Stakeholders perceived these initiatives as contributing positively to employee wellness, operational efficiency, and customer loyalty. Furthermore, cost savings and customer demand emerged as the strongest predictors of managerial commitment to green adoption, while environmental concerns and employee wellness also played significant roles.

This study contributes a context-specific empirical perspective to hospitality sustainability scholarship in sub-Saharan Africa. It demonstrates that the dimensions of the Triple Bottom Line, environmental responsibility, employee well-being, and economic viability, are mutually reinforcing rather than competing outcomes. The strong positive correlation between green practices and sustainable hospitality management underscores this synergy. The study also fills an important gap in Nigerian hospitality literature by simultaneously examining workforce-related and economic outcomes of green practices and by incorporating multiple stakeholder groups in its analysis. Although limited by its geographic scope, cross-sectional design, and reliance on self-report measures, the study provides a foundation for future research involving objective financial, environmental, and wellness indicators and broader regional comparisons.

Recommendations

1. For Hotel Managers

Managers should implement measures with rapid payback, such as LED lighting, low-flow aerators, sensor-based lighting, linen reuse systems, and staff-led behavioural campaigns. With customer

loyalty perceptions high among respondents, hotels should communicate green efforts clearly through signage, websites, and guest engagement materials. Visible, credible environmental messaging can enhance repeat patronage. Managers should involve staff in environmental initiatives, use non-toxic products, improve ventilation where possible, and emphasise wellness outcomes in internal communication. Managers should also explore phased wellness improvements, ergonomic upgrades, indoor plants, and job satisfaction surveys as resources permit.

2. For Policymakers and Regulatory Bodies

Because financial constraints can impede adoption, targeted interventions such as tax rebates, reduced import duties on efficient technologies, and micro-grants for waste management could accelerate uptake. State agencies should expand collaborations with recycling firms, support composting initiatives, and develop regulatory expectations for waste audits among classified hotels. And also, a Plateau-specific certification, accessible and tiered to accommodate small and mid-scale hotels, could enhance competitive advantage and increase guest confidence in environmental practices.

3. For Industry Associations and Hospitality Educators

Workshops, benchmarking visits, and sustainability training can help build capacity in resource-constrained hotels and encourage adoption based on shared experience. Hospitality training institutions should also embed environmental management, green marketing, and occupational wellness into curricular and professional development programmes.

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TOURISM, URBANISATION, AND INFORMAL ECONOMIES IN ILORIN METROPOLIS: A CASE STUDY OF SEX WORK, 1940–2024

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Abstract

Sex work is an occupation tied to ancient practices, with the earliest recorded mentions dating back to around 2400 BCE in Sumer. This age-old profession is often considered immoral and unethical; however, it has also penetrated Ilorin. The evolution and growth of sex work in Ilorin Metropolis from the 1940s to 2024 demonstrate how tourism, urbanisation, and socio-economic factors have influenced its persistence and expansion. Using a qualitative research method, the study revealed the nexus between the development of hospitality and tourism sectors, particularly through the proliferation of bars, hotels, and recreational centres, and increased sex work. The paper argues that the intersection of poverty, migration, and weak law enforcement has contributed to the normalization of sex work within Ilorin's growing urban economy. The study concludes that the phenomenon reflects broader social and economic transformations and calls for inclusive social and legal reforms to address the vulnerabilities of sex workers.

Keywords: Sex work, socio-economic implications, development, tourism, Ilorin and urbanization.

Introduction

Ilorin Metropolis, the capital of Kwara State, occupies a unique place in Nigeria's socio-cultural and economic history. Traditionally regarded as a conservative Islamic city, Ilorin has, over the decades, transformed into a dynamic urban hub that connects northern and southern Nigeria. Since the 1940s, the city has witnessed significant demographic growth, infrastructural expansion, and the emergence of a vibrant hospitality and tourism industry. Hotels, bars, restaurants, and recreational centres have become integral to Ilorin's urban identity and its economy.

Alongside this urban and tourism expansion has been the evolution of sex work, an informal yet enduring component of Ilorin's social and economic life. The city's growing attraction for business, education, and travel has created a demand for hospitality and leisure services, within which sex work has become embedded. Although prostitution remains illegal in Nigeria, its presence in Ilorin, despite the city's religious identity, demonstrates the complex interplay between modernization, moral codes, and economic survival (Abdulrauf et al., 2022).

Ilorin Metropolis, the capital of Kwara State, has undergone profound socio-economic and spatial transformation since the mid-1970s. Originally renowned for its Islamic scholarship and conservative cultural values, the city has gradually evolved into a dynamic urban centre, attracting people from various parts of Nigeria and beyond. Processes of urbanization, modernization, and the expansion of the tourism and hospitality sectors have reshaped Ilorin's social landscape, influencing lifestyles, occupations, and moral perceptions.

The growth of tourism-related activities, including hotels, event centres, recreational spaces, restaurants, and transportation services, has contributed to the diversification of the city's economy. Alongside these developments, however, has been the emergence and expansion of sex work, an

informal but persistent aspect of urban economies worldwide. As Ilorin modernized and became more interconnected through improved infrastructure, migration, and education, the demand and supply conditions surrounding commercial sex work also evolved (Aderinto, 2006; Babatunde et al., 2014).

The interplay between tourism and sex work has long been acknowledged in urban and development studies. Tourist inflows, business travel, and hospitality services tend to create opportunities for informal sexual economies (Olofinbiyi et al., 2020). In Ilorin, this phenomenon appears particularly complex due to the city's religious conservatism and moral codes, which often clash with the realities of modern urban life. This tension raises critical questions about how sex work operates within the context of an expanding tourism economy and how it affects the city's social and economic fabric.

Between 1974 and 2024, Ilorin witnessed significant transformations in demography, spatial planning, and economic orientation. The establishment of educational institutions, government offices, and private businesses not only attracted migrants but also created avenues for new forms of livelihood, both formal and informal. Within this context, sex work has emerged as a survival and service-based enterprise, influenced by factors such as poverty, unemployment, female migration, and shifting moral boundaries.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the relationship between tourism, urbanization, and the growth of sex work in Ilorin Metropolis over fifty years. It aims to analyze the socio-economic drivers behind this growth, the transformations in its organization and perception, and its broader implications for Ilorin's development trajectory and cultural identity. This paper also examines how tourism, urbanization, and migration have influenced the growth and structure of sex work in Ilorin from the 1940s to 2024. It situates the practice within the broader dynamics of socio-economic change, using oral interviews and historical accounts to trace its evolution, organization, and impact on the metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

The city of Ilorin has long been regarded as a bastion of Islamic learning and moral rectitude. However, over the past five decades, rapid urbanization, migration, and the expansion of tourism-related businesses have subtly transformed its socio-cultural and economic landscape. The proliferation of hotels, bars, relaxation centres, event venues, and transport hubs, key drivers of local tourism, has also created spaces that facilitate informal sexual economies. Despite Ilorin's religious conservatism, sex work has grown both in visibility and organization, operating through networks that range from street-level workers to those attached to hotels and entertainment centres. Yet, there remains limited scholarly attention to how the combined forces of tourism and urbanization have shaped this growth and transformed the moral and economic dynamics of the metropolis.

This situation presents a paradox: a city publicly committed to Islamic values but privately accommodating a growing informal sexual economy linked to tourism and modern urban lifestyles. The implications of this contradiction are profound. They touch on issues of public morality, urban planning, gender relations, migration, and local development. Thus, the problem this study addresses is the need to understand how tourism and urbanization have influenced the growth, organization, and perception of sex work in Ilorin between 1974 and 2024, and what this reveals about the broader processes of socio-economic change in a culturally conservative urban setting.

Methodological Framework

This study adopted a qualitative historical case study design to examine the relationship between tourism, urbanisation, and informal economies, specifically sex work in Ilorin metropolis from 1940 to 2024. The approach combines historical analysis with contemporary fieldwork, enabling a long-term understanding of continuity and change. Insights were drawn from Historical Studies, Urban Studies, and Gender Studies to capture the multidimensional nature of the subject.

Study Area

The research focuses on Ilorin metropolis in Kwara State, Nigeria, an important urban center that has experienced significant growth due to colonial administration, post-independence development, and contemporary urban expansion. Areas within Ilorin known for commercial activities, hospitality services, and nightlife are of particular interest.

Sampling Techniques

Given the sensitive and often hidden nature of sex work, the study employs non-probability sampling methods, including:

Purposive Sampling: Participants are selected based on their relevance to the study. These include sex workers, hotel and bar operators, transport workers, law enforcement agents, and long-term residents with knowledge of urban changes.

Snowball Sampling: Initial participants help identify and recruit other participants within the sex work network, which is often difficult to access due to stigma and legal concerns.

Stratified Consideration: Efforts are made to include participants across different age groups, socio-economic backgrounds, and time periods (older participants providing historical perspectives and younger ones offering contemporary insights).

This combination ensures diversity and depth of information while addressing accessibility challenges.

Data Collection Methods

The study utilizes both primary and secondary sources:

Primary Data

Oral Interviews: Semi-structured and in-depth interviews are conducted with sex workers, community members, and key informants. These interviews explore experiences, motivations, and perceptions of urbanisation and tourism.

Archival materials: including colonial records, newspapers, and government reports.

Key Informant Interviews (KII): Conducted with officials such as urban planners, law enforcement officers, and health workers to provide institutional perspectives.

Participant Observation: Where possible, the researcher observes interactions in selected urban spaces such as hotels, bars, and transport hubs to understand the dynamics of informal economic activities.

Secondary Data

Academic books, journal articles, and theses related to urbanisation, tourism, and informal economies.

Reports from NGOs and international organizations addressing gender, labour, and urban development.

Data Validation and Reliability

To ensure the credibility and reliability of findings, the study employs several validation strategies:

Triangulation: Data is cross-checked using multiple sources (oral interviews, archival documents, and secondary literature) to confirm consistency.

Member Checking: Participants are given the opportunity to review and clarify their responses to ensure accuracy.

Cross-Referencing Historical Data: Oral accounts are compared with documented historical records to reduce bias and memory distortion.

Ethical Considerations

Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, strict ethical standards are maintained:

Informed Consent: Participants are fully informed about the purpose of the study and their voluntary participation.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: Identities of participants are protected using pseudonyms.

Non-Judgmental Approach: The researcher maintains neutrality and avoids stigmatization.

Safety of Participants: Interviews are conducted in safe and mutually agreed locations.

Theoretical Frameworks

The paper anchors on three theoretical frameworks, which are, an urban theory, an informal-economy theory, and a tourism-development theory, these theories together provide a robust conceptual scaffold for analysing tourism, urbanisation, and informal sex work in Ilorin Metropolis from 1940–2024.

Urban Theory

Production of space and urban political economy. Urban space is socially produced according to Castells, 1977, the spatial form and social uses of cities result from political-economic processes, struggles over use and access, and shifting regimes of capital and governance (Lefebvre; Harvey; Castells). Urbanisation is not merely a demographic growth but a reconfiguration of social relations expressed through land uses, zoning, and everyday practices. (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 1973; Castells, 1977.)

In Ilorin, the spatial concentration and visibility of sex work reflected changes in land values, transport corridors, housing markets, and the fiscal and regulatory choices of the government. For example, corners near markets, bus stations, rail lines or informal commercial areas often become nodes for sex work because they concentrate footfall and economic exchange (Lefebvre; Harvey). During the periods of rapid urbanisation in Nigeria by the 1970s (post-war expansion and oil-economy linkages), there was an increase in both formal planning pressure and informal land/space claims; these created intermediate urban spaces where informal livelihoods, including sex work, flourished.

From 1980–2000, and 2000–2024 the growth and developments in the Kwara State capital, Ilorin was marked with increased in transport, more marketplaces, and residential density enabled the growth of sex work. Urban political-economy lens therefore links macro processes (capital, infrastructure, governance) to micro practices (how sex workers negotiate, access, and claim space) and explains temporal shifts across 1940–2024.

Informal-Economy Theory

Survivalist and structural approaches to informality. The informal economy comprises a range of unregulated economic activities whose forms and meanings must be explained both as survival strategies of marginalized populations and as structural features produced by labour markets, regulation, and state institutions (Hart; Portes et al.; de Soto). Informality is not a residual pathology but an integral part of urban economies. (Hart, 1973; Portes, Castells & Benton, 1989; de Soto, 1989.)

Informal sex work in Ilorin should be seen simultaneously as (a) a household/individual survival strategy in contexts of limited formal employment, and (b) an economic sector shaped by exclusionary institutions (lack of formal labour options, gendered constraints and tenure insecurity). Although formal policy and regulation (criminalisation, policing and licensing regimes) alter the costs and spatial organisation of informal sex work, sometimes pushing it into more hidden or riskier locations, it should be noted that informal economies have internal heterogeneity distinguish between diverse modalities of sex work (street-based, brothel-based, bar/entertainment-based, online/phone-based), each with different links to tourism and urban change.

Tourism Development Theory

According to this theory, tourism develops unevenly through identifiable stages (exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline/rejuvenation, Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle), while tourist motivations for authenticity and leisure shape host–visitor encounters; resident tolerance or resistance to tourism evolves as impacts accumulate (Butler, 1980; MacCannell, 1976; Doxey, 1975). As, Ilorin experienced growth in visitor flows (religious pilgrimages, business travel, intercity transit and niche tourism), these flows created demand for sexual services either through direct tourist demand (sex tourism) or indirect demand from increased local spending and transient male populations (transport workers, traders).

Tourist demand interacts with modes of sex work which are often in entertainment venues, bars, and hotels serving both local and visiting clients; informal accommodation and transport nodes (bus stations, guesthouses) are also key sites for sex works.

Resident reactions to visible sex work often intersect with tourism policy, for example, where local leadership wants to promote a particular image (cultural and religious centre), there are intensifying regulation or displacement efforts that affect these political choices in shaping the spatial containment or invisibilisation of sex work (Doxey; Butler).

Historical Overview

The growth of sex work in Ilorin Metropolis between 1940 and 2024 cannot be separated from the city's transformation through urbanization, migration, and the gradual rise of local tourism. Before 1940, Ilorin was primarily a traditional Islamic emirate, renowned for its religious scholarship, agricultural trade, and moral integrity. Sexual relations outside marriage were heavily stigmatized, and prostitution was rare, often hidden or punished by local authorities and Islamic courts. However, the colonial expansion of administrative structures and the construction of the Ilorin–Jebba railway line in the mid-20th century marked the beginning of Ilorin's urban evolution (Babatunde et al., 2014).

As civil servants, railway workers, and traders began to settle in Ilorin, the influx of single men and migrants from other regions increased the demand for leisure and entertainment services (Abdulrauf et al., 2022). Informal social spaces such as beer parlours and “rest houses” began to appear around major transport corridors like Taiwo Road, Unity Road, and Challenge. These early establishments became precursors to organized sex work, as women seeking survival or independence began to engage in transactional sexual relationships (A. Soliu, personal communication, February 24, 2025). By the 1970s, with the establishment of the University of Ilorin (1975) and the expansion of government institutions, Ilorin witnessed another wave of urban growth. The rising population of students, civil servants, and businessmen stimulated demand for recreational activities and nightlife. Hotels, guest houses, and restaurants multiplied, especially along Sango, Tanke, and GRA, thereby creating new spaces for both tourism and commercial sex work. As a hotel manager noted, “We cannot deny that some of our guests come mainly for women; the more visitors we receive, the more the girls come around” (M. Abdulsalami, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Evolution of Sex Work in Ilorin

The origins of sex work in Ilorin date back to the 1940s, coinciding with the emergence of bars and motels that catered to travelers, traders, and colonial officials. One of the earliest establishments linked to commercial sex work was Queen’s Bar, founded around 1947 by Mr Tunde, a native of Abeokuta. It followed the earlier Paradise Bar on Taiwo Road, both of which offered entertainment, drinks, and lodging facilities that attracted sex workers seeking clients (Anon, 2016; Babatunde et al., 2014).

These bars were strategically located in central Ilorin: Coca-Cola Road, Taiwo Isale, Niger Road, and Agbo-Oba, making them accessible to local and visiting patrons. The connection between hospitality and sex work in these spaces illustrates an early form of tourism-linked sexual economy, where leisure and pleasure merged within the city’s entertainment scene. Over the years, many beer parlours evolved into brothels as demand grew. By the 1990s, areas such as Obo Road had become major red-light districts. A long-term resident and transport union official recounted that the first brothels emerged from former beer parlours that began offering lodging for sex workers and clients (Yusuf, personal communication, February 14, 2025).

Tourism-related mobility further reinforced this growth. As Ilorin became a destination for conferences, religious pilgrimages, and university education, demand for hospitality services expanded (Olofinbiyi et al., 2020). The clustering of hotels around areas such as Tanke, Gari Alimi, and Sango increased the presence of sex workers catering to both locals and visitors, illustrating how the city’s urban tourism infrastructure became intertwined with informal sexual labour.

Factors Contributing to the Growth of Sex Work in Ilorin

Economic Hardship and Unemployment: Economic difficulties are a major driver of sex work in Ilorin (Olofinbiyi et al., 2020). Many sex workers cite poverty and lack of employment as the main reasons for entering the trade. A 23-year-old woman from Ogbomoso, for instance, narrated that she turned to sex work after being unable to secure stable employment despite her attempts to work as a domestic servant (Aisha, personal communication, February 16, 2025).

The growing informal economy of tourism, especially in bars, hotels, and leisure centres, provides opportunities for survival through commercial sex. Thus, the hospitality industry indirectly sustains sex work by offering venues and clientele (Abdulrauf et al., 2022).

Urbanization and Rural–Urban Migration: Ilorin’s rapid urbanization has attracted migrants from nearby states and countries (Olofinbiyi et al., 2020). Young women migrate from rural areas in search of jobs in restaurants, hotels, or as domestic helpers but are often deceived or coerced into sex work (Babatunde et al., 2014). In line with the urbanisation theory, a 19-year-old girl from Benue State revealed that her aunt brought her to Ilorin under the guise of finding her employment, only for her to end up in a brothel (Loveth, personal communication, February 14, 2025). The migration trend aligns with Ilorin’s transformation into a regional economic centre, where urban tourism and mobility create demand for temporary companionship and entertainment according to tourism development theory.

Expansion of Tourism and Hospitality Infrastructure: The proliferation of hotels, bars, and event centres since the 1970s has intensified the connection between tourism and sex work. Many establishments originally built for relaxation or lodging now double as spaces for transactional sex. Brothels such as Honeymoon, Star Hotel, and Classy Brothel along Obo Road operate near major transport routes and hospitality zones, serving both local and visiting clients (White, personal communication, February 14, 2025). These locations also attract business travelers and conference participants, revealing the subtle but significant relationship between the tourism economy and commercial sex in Ilorin.

Social Influence and Peer Networks: Peer influence plays a key role in recruitment. Young women are often introduced to the trade by friends already in the business. One sex worker explained that she joined after observing the wealth and lifestyle of her peers working in brothels (Olofinbiyi et al., 2020), (Funmi, personal communication, February 14, 2025). This informal network contributes to the steady flow of new entrants, many of whom are linked to the social spaces of tourism and leisure nightclubs, beer parlours, and hotel bars. This aligns with the informal economy theory.

Weak Law Enforcement and Corruption: Although prostitution is criminalized under Nigerian law, enforcement in Ilorin remains inconsistent. Several brothel owners disclosed that law enforcement officers frequently collect bribes or patronize sex workers instead of enforcing the law. This tolerance allows sex work to thrive, particularly around tourism zones where economic interests overshadow moral considerations (Abdulrauf et al., 2022).

Migration and the Role of the immigrants in the Sex Industry

Migration has played a crucial role in shaping the demographic and economic structure of Ilorin Metropolis since the mid-20th century (Aderinto, 2006). The transformation of Ilorin from a modest emirate town into a modern urban center drew migrants from surrounding rural areas and neighbouring states such as Kogi, Benue, Niger, Osun, and Oyo, as well as a few from other West African countries. These migrations were initially driven by employment, education, and trade opportunities, but over time, they also contributed to the growth of informal and survival economies, including sex work. A large proportion of sex workers in Ilorin originated from immigrants who migrated to Ilorin, mainly from Benue State (Aderinto, 2006). Migration,

economic hardship, and displacement caused by conflicts have made many Tiv women vulnerable to exploitation in urban centres like Ilorin.

The colonial and post-colonial periods witnessed increased mobility due to road and railway development. Young men and women migrated to Ilorin in search of economic opportunities, escaping rural poverty and limited access to education. However, many female migrants faced gendered barriers in employment, particularly in the formal sector (Olofinbiyi et al., 2020). This lack of access to stable income sources compelled some to enter informal labour markets such as domestic service, hawking, and eventually commercial sex work (A. Soliu, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Benue's declining agricultural productivity and farmer–herder conflicts have pushed many young women to migrate in search of livelihoods. Upon arrival in Ilorin, many find themselves in brothels, often through deception or coercion (Precious, personal communication, February 14, 2025). For many, sex work emerged as an adaptive economic strategy, a means of navigating poverty, gender inequality, and the cost of urban living. A young woman from Benue State explained that she came to Ilorin “to work in a restaurant, but when the owner started delaying salary, I joined my friends who were seeing men to make ends meet” (L. James, personal communication, February 14, 2025).

The presence of Tiv women in Ilorin's sex industry has also been reinforced by client preference. Some patrons claim they prefer Tiv sex workers for their friendliness and perceived hospitality (Muhammed, personal communication, February 21, 2025). These dynamics reveal how ethnic stereotypes intersect with tourism consumption patterns, shaping the demand side of sex work in Ilorin. Though the majority of sex workers in Ilorin are Nigerians, evidence from oral interviews suggests limited cross-border migration, especially from neighbouring West African countries such as the Benin Republic, Togo, and Ghana. These women are often drawn to Ilorin because of its central location, relative safety, and steady stream of visitors linked to its educational institutions and religious tourism.

A brothel owner in Sango confirmed that during festive periods, “we receive girls from Cotonou and Accra who come for just one or two months when business is good” (M. Abdulsalami, personal communication, February 24, 2025). Such short-term transnational movements illustrate how Ilorin is gradually integrating into the regional sex-work circuit that connects Lagos, Ibadan, Abuja, and northern Nigerian cities. This regional mobility contributes to the circulation of languages, fashion, and sexual practices, further diversifying the city's nightlife economy and indirectly enhancing its tourism appeal, though often in informal and morally contested ways (Abdulrauf et al., 2022).

Expansion of Brothels and Urban Tourism Spaces

The expansion of brothels mirrors the city's spatial and economic growth. Areas such as Obo Road, Taiwo Isale, Niger Road, Tanke, and Sango now host dozens of brothels. Many of these establishments began as small relaxation spots catering to travelers before converting into full-scale sex businesses as demand grew (Adeniyi, personal communication, February 21, 2025). Urban tourism according to the tourism development theory, contributes to this expansion by increasing short-term visitors, students, and businessmen who require temporary accommodation and leisure. Brothels often position themselves near hotels, garages, and event centres to attract clients. The

architecture of these spaces and rooms with flexible rental systems and open courtyards facilitates social interaction and quick transactions.

Despite religious restrictions, landlords often rent properties to brothel operators due to the steady income they provide. Security agencies seldom intervene, and in some cases, sex workers receive warnings of police raids (Mana, personal communication, February 14, 2025). The diffusion of sex work into various neighborhoods such as Coca-Cola Road, Ita-Amodu, and Tanke area illustrates how urban tourism and informal economies coexist within Ilorin's modern cityscape.

Impact of Tourism and the Growth of Sex Work in Ilorin Metropolis

The rise of sex work in Ilorin Metropolis has had a significant economic influence on surrounding businesses. As the population of sex workers grew in key areas such as Taiwo Isale, Coca-Cola Road, Obo Road, and Niger Road, many small-scale traders began to adapt their goods and services to meet the new demand. For example, several shop owners have included the sale of condoms and cigarettes alongside their regular provisions. A trader near a brothel in Taiwo Isale explained that she now stocks different brands of condoms because sex workers and their clients purchase them daily: "If I don't sell condoms, I will be losing money because this is what they buy the most every night" (O. Adeola, personal communication, February 24, 2025). Similarly, a shop owner on Coca-Cola Road noted that even though he had never sold cigarettes before, the growing demand from sex workers and their customers prompted him to include them in his stock: "Even girls that don't smoke still buy it for their customers" (M. Abdulsalami, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Patent medicine stores and chemists have also benefited economically. Many sex workers purchase drugs to treat urinary tract infections and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). A pharmacist at Temidayo Pharmacy, Sango, reported that medicines such as Flagyl, Septrin, and other infection-related tablets are among his best sellers, alongside pregnancy test kits and emergency contraceptives (G. Michael, personal communication, February 25, 2025). Food vendors, bar owners, and restaurateurs have equally experienced a boost in income. A food seller along Niger Road revealed that her sales increased after brothels began operating near her restaurant: "I sell more in the night than I do in the daytime. Now I cook more because there are people around at night" (R. Ibrahim, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Tailors, hairdressers, and makeup artists also benefit, as sex workers frequently require new clothing and beauty services to attract clients. A tailor in Obo Road explained that he no longer needs to advertise, as his customers refer him to others and often return for new outfits every few weeks (A. Soliu, personal communication, February 24, 2025). However, not all businesses profit from the presence of brothels. Shop owners who deal in religious or family-oriented goods often experience losses, as customers avoid areas associated with sex work. A bookseller near Coca-Cola Road lamented that parents no longer allow their children to visit his shop due to the stigma attached to the neighbourhood (A. Soliu, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Furthermore, landlords in these areas have increased rent, taking advantage of the higher demand from brothel operators and sex workers. This has displaced ordinary families who can no longer afford housing in those communities (A. Soliu, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Overall, the expansion of the sex work industry has created a local market that supports many informal businesses from the sale of condoms and cigarettes to food, drugs, and clothing. While this has contributed to local economic growth, it has also altered the social atmosphere and increased inequalities in affected areas (Abdulrauf et al., 2022). Socio-Cultural Effects on Ilorin Metropolis: The proliferation of sex work in Ilorin from 1975 to 2024 has had profound sociocultural consequences. Ilorin, traditionally known for its Islamic discipline and moral values, has witnessed gradual shifts in behaviour, dress, and community standards. Many elders lament the erosion of traditional decency and modesty. An elderly resident of Taiwo Isale observed that practices once regarded as shameful are now openly displayed: “Our children no longer fear God or tradition. They now copy these girls and think it is a normal life” (B. Adugbo, personal communication, February 24, 2025). Young girls dressing provocatively and standing by roadsides at night have become a visible feature even in family-oriented neighborhoods.

Teachers and religious leaders also express concern over the exposure of children and youths to sexual content. Many adolescents living near brothel areas have become familiar with adult behaviour at an early age, leading to moral anxiety among parents and educators (A. Mariam, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

The increase in sex work has also contributed to family instability. Several cases of infidelity and domestic conflict have been reported, particularly where married men frequent brothels or engage in affairs with sex workers (M. Abdulsalami, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Furthermore, public perception of women has been negatively affected. Many young women, particularly those who dress fashionably or move around at night, are sometimes harassed or wrongly labelled as sex workers by transport operators or law enforcement agents (O. Adeola, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

Religious leaders in Ilorin face growing challenges in addressing this issue. Some brothels are located close to mosques and churches, making it difficult for worshippers to attend evening prayers or religious events (A. Mariam, personal communication, February 24, 2025).

There has also been a shift in how the youth perceive success and wealth. A secondary school student interviewed stated, “One of the girls on our street became rich very fast, and she’s always buying new clothes. Some of us started thinking maybe it’s not a bad thing” (A. Mariam, personal communication, February 24, 2025). This reflects an emerging materialistic culture where quick wealth, often through sex work, overshadows the traditional values of honesty and hard work.

Thus, the socio-cultural impact of sex work in Ilorin is wide-ranging. It affects family structures, youth behaviour, public morality, and gender relations. While some view sex work as a form of economic survival, many residents see it as a threat to the city’s cultural and religious identity (Abdulrauf et al., 2022).

Health Implications on the people of Ilorin metropolis: the health consequences of sex work in Ilorin are considerable, affecting both sex workers and the wider community. The most prominent concern is the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as gonorrhea, syphilis, and HIV/AIDS. Although condoms are widely available, many sex workers report that some clients

offer extra money for unprotected sex or even remove condoms secretly during intercourse (W. Adamu, personal communication, February 14, 2025).

Due to financial constraints and fear of stigma, most sex workers depend on local chemists rather than hospitals for treatment. A pharmacist in Sango confirmed that sex workers frequently buy antibiotics and painkillers for infections and urinary problems, but these self-medications only provide temporary relief (G. Michael, personal communication, February 25, 2025).

Unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions are also common. Many sex workers resort to unlicensed clinics or self-administered abortions, leading to severe complications or death (G. Michael, personal communication, February 25, 2025). In addition to physical health risks, mental health issues are prevalent. Some sex workers suffer from depression, anxiety, and trauma due to social stigma, abuse, or economic distress. A 19-year-old newcomer at Honeymoon Brothel confessed that she often cries at night and feels trapped in her situation (F. Michael, personal communication, February 7, 2025).

These health challenges not only affect individual sex workers but also pose broader public health risks to the community, underscoring the need for accessible healthcare, education, and rehabilitation programs.

Conclusion

The study of sex work in Ilorin Metropolis from 1940 to 2024 reveals a complex interplay between urbanization, tourism, migration, and socio-economic transformations. Over the decades, sex work has evolved from isolated entertainment venues in the colonial era to a pervasive urban industry embedded within the city's hospitality and leisure economy. This growth reflects broader patterns of urban expansion, increased mobility, and the rise of Ilorin as a regional hub for trade, education, and tourism.

The persistence of sex work in Ilorin is closely linked to economic hardship, rural-urban migration, unemployment, broken family structures, and limited educational opportunities. Migrants, particularly young women from Benue State and other parts of Nigeria, constitute a significant proportion of the workforce in the industry. Their presence highlights how urbanization and internal migration create both opportunities and vulnerabilities, especially in a city experiencing rapid population growth and the expansion of hotels, bars, and recreational facilities.

The research also underscores the role of tourism and the leisure economy in sustaining the industry. Festive events, student influxes, and tourism-related activities generate a transient clientele that fuels demand for commercial sex. In this context, sex work has become intertwined with the informal hospitality sector, benefiting certain local businesses such as bars, restaurants, hair salons, and pharmacies, even as it exacerbates social, moral, and health challenges.

The socio-cultural impact of the industry is significant. There has been a noticeable shift in traditional norms and moral standards, particularly in neighborhoods with high concentrations of brothels. The normalization of transactional sex has affected family structures, youth behavior, religious practices, and community perceptions of women. Health risks, including the spread of

sexually transmitted infections and complications from unsafe abortions, remain persistent challenges, compounded by limited access to healthcare and weak regulatory enforcement.

In light of these findings, it is evident that addressing the growth of sex work in Ilorin requires multi-dimensional interventions. These should include social reintegration programs, economic empowerment initiatives, educational campaigns, and accessible healthcare services for sex workers. At the urban planning level, ethical management of tourism and leisure facilities, coupled with stronger regulatory frameworks, can help mitigate exploitation and reduce the negative social consequences associated with the trade.

Ultimately, the evolution of sex work in Ilorin illustrates the tensions between modernization, urbanization, and socio-cultural values. It reflects how economic survival strategies, migration patterns, and the hospitality economy intersect to create a hidden but resilient sector. It also aligns with the three theories used in the work, which are urban theory, informal economy theory and tourism development theory. Effective policy responses must recognize these realities, balancing economic development, social protection, and moral considerations to ensure that urban growth and tourism contribute positively to the well-being of the city's residents.

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LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF DISEASES OUTBREAKS ON HOSPITALITY OPERATIONS IN SELECTED HOTELS IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

Disease outbreaks pose significant challenges to the hospitality industry, disrupting operations, reducing customer confidence, and threatening financial sustainability. This study investigates how hotels in Ilorin metropolis adopt technological innovations to mitigate the impacts of public health crises, with a focus on assessing both the extent of adoption and the effectiveness of such technologies in sustaining operations. Using a desk research approach, secondary data were drawn from scholarly articles, industry reports, and case studies in Nigeria and comparable contexts, including evidence from Ibadan and global best practices. Findings reveal that technology adoption in Ilorin hotels has been modest, largely limited to basic ICT solutions such as online reservations, e-payment systems, and social media engagement. While these measures provided partial continuity during crises such as COVID-19, they were insufficient to ensure long-term resilience. Comparisons with Ibadan indicate that these challenges are systemic within Nigeria's hospitality industry, constrained by financial costs, infrastructural gaps, and limited digital literacy. The study concludes that for Ilorin hotels to achieve sustainable resilience, technology must be institutionalized as part of long-term strategic planning, supported by government incentives, staff training, and partnerships with technology providers.

Keywords: hospitality industry, Ilorin metropolis, technology adoption, disease outbreaks, resilience

Introduction

The hospitality industry has historically been one of the most vulnerable sectors to crises, particularly public health emergencies and infectious disease outbreaks. Its reliance on direct human interaction, cross-border mobility, and shared physical spaces creates unique exposure to risks associated with pandemics and epidemics. For instance, the Ebola crisis in West Africa highlighted the devastating consequences of disease outbreaks on tourism and hospitality, disrupting travel flows and weakening hotel occupancy across the continent (Maphanga & Henama, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic further amplified these vulnerabilities at a global scale, shutting down hotels, restricting international mobility, and causing unprecedented financial and operational strain (Alotaibi & Khan, 2022).

Globally, hospitality businesses have increasingly recognized the importance of technological innovation as both a resilience-building mechanism and a strategy for sustaining operations during health-related disruptions. Studies such as Ivanov et al. (2022) conceptualize automation,

biosecurity systems, and digital solutions as key levers for ensuring continuity in service delivery, crisis management, and economic stability in tourism and hospitality companies. Similarly, Marques et al. (2022) emphasize that technology-driven innovations in safety and hygiene, such as contactless check-in, robotic cleaning systems, and AI-enabled surveillance, have become critical drivers of customer confidence in hotels.

In Africa, and particularly in developing economies, the integration of digital technology into hospitality crisis management is still emerging. Maharana et al. (2021) document the role of digital platforms in pandemic response across Africa, noting both the opportunities and infrastructural limitations in harnessing such technologies for public health and service continuity. Chokoe and Joao (2024) further argue that African hospitality operators have yet to maximize technology for effective crisis management, citing gaps in investment, skills, and infrastructure. In Nigeria, the impact of COVID-19 on hospitality operations was severe, leading to widespread business closures, revenue losses, and workforce disruptions (Obuene, 2021).

Within Ilorin metropolis, Folorunso et al. (2024) affirm that disease outbreaks directly destabilize hospitality operations, highlighting gaps in preparedness and resilience strategies among hotel operators. Yet, opportunities exist to leverage technology, such as online booking systems, digital communication platforms, contactless service innovations, and automated cleaning solutions, to reduce vulnerability and improve operational sustainability during and after outbreaks.

Therefore, while the global discourse strongly affirms the role of technological innovation in safeguarding hospitality operations, empirical insights specific to Ilorin metropolis remain underexplored. Understanding how selected hotels in Ilorin deploy technology to mitigate the effects of disease outbreaks is both timely and critical to enhancing resilience in the Nigerian hospitality sector. The recurrence of global and regional disease outbreaks has consistently exposed the fragility of the hospitality industry. Evidence from past epidemics such as Ebola in Africa (Maphanga & Henama, 2019) and the COVID-19 pandemic (Alotaibi & Khan, 2022; Obuene, 2021) reveals that hotels are disproportionately affected by declines in patronage, heightened health risks, and operational paralysis. While the global industry has begun adopting technological innovations such as contactless systems, automation, and biosecurity measures (Ivanov et al., 2022; Marques et al., 2022), the uptake of these strategies in developing economies like Nigeria remains limited. In Ilorin metropolis, the hospitality industry is critical to the local economy but has been shown to suffer disruptions during outbreaks (Folorunso et al., 2024). However, there is a paucity of research examining how hotels in this locality integrate technological solutions to mitigate risks, sustain service delivery, and build resilience. Without such knowledge, the industry remains ill-prepared for future outbreaks, exposing both businesses and consumers to significant health and economic vulnerabilities.

The study aims to examine how technology can be leveraged to mitigate the effects of disease outbreaks on hospitality operations in selected hotels within Ilorin metropolis. Specifically, the objectives are:

- I. To investigate the extent to which selected hotels in Ilorin metropolis adopt technological innovations in response to disease outbreaks.
- II. To evaluate the effectiveness of these technologies in sustaining hospitality operations and enhancing resilience during public health crises.

These objectives are addressed through the following research questions.

- I. To what extent have selected hotels in Ilorin metropolis adopted technological innovations in response to disease outbreaks?
- II. How effective are these technological solutions in sustaining operations and enhancing resilience during public health crises?

The study is geographically limited to selected hotels in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. Thematically, it focuses on the intersection of disease outbreaks, technology adoption, and hospitality operations. Temporally, the study emphasizes the COVID-19 pandemic era while drawing lessons relevant to future outbreaks.

This study contributes to both academic discourse and practical hospitality management. For academics, it fills a contextual gap by providing empirical evidence from Ilorin metropolis on how hotels integrate technology into crisis response. For industry practitioners, it highlights actionable strategies for resilience, drawing from global best practices while situating them within local realities. Policymakers and professional associations can also benefit by using the findings to design guidelines that encourage greater technological investment in hospitality. Finally, consumers indirectly benefit from safer, more reliable hospitality services during health crises.

The justification for this study is premised on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure). SDG 3 underscores the need to strengthen the capacity of all countries, particularly developing ones, for early warning, risk reduction, and management of health risks. Similarly, SDG 9 calls for the integration of innovation and resilient infrastructure in promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization. By examining how hotels in Ilorin adopt technology to mitigate the impact of disease outbreaks, this study aligns with both SDGs, promoting resilience in the hospitality industry while contributing to public health security.

Literature Review

The hospitality industry has consistently been one of the most vulnerable industries to health crises and pandemics, as its dependence on physical interaction, shared spaces, and global mobility makes it highly susceptible to disruptions. Past outbreaks such as Ebola in West Africa caused severe tourism and hospitality declines, leaving operators grappling with revenue losses and weakened demand (Maphanga & Henama, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic extended these vulnerabilities on a global scale, shutting down hotels, disrupting operations, and reducing customer confidence (Alotaibi & Khan, 2022). In Ibadan, Nigeria, Obuene (2021) documented how the coronavirus outbreak significantly destabilized hospitality operations, causing financial strain and exposing gaps in crisis preparedness. Similar outcomes were recorded in Ilorin, where disease outbreaks were found to directly disrupt hospitality businesses and expose operational weaknesses (Folorunso, Tiramisu, & Alabi, 2024).

Global scholarship increasingly points to technology as a critical resilience tool in times of health crises. Ivanov, Webster, Stoilova, and Slobodskoy (2022) developed a conceptual framework linking biosecurity, crisis management, and automation to economic performance in hospitality companies, showing that technology not only supports survival but also enhances long-term competitiveness. Marques, Borges, Pereira, and Magalhães (2022) similarly highlight the role of

hotel technology innovations such as contactless check-in, robotic cleaning, and AI-enabled monitoring in driving safety, hygiene, and customer trust. Li, Wang, Abbas, Hassan, and Mubeen (2022) extend this perspective by demonstrating how technology innovation and transformation helped reduce tourist health risks during the COVID-19 era, enabling sustainable recovery. Their work shifts the discourse from technology as an emergency tool to a strategic enabler of sustainable development.

Within the African context, technology adoption for crisis management remains emergent. Maharana, Amutorine, Sengeh, and Nsoesie (2021) illustrate how digital tools such as mobile apps, data dashboards, and online platforms supported Africa's pandemic response, though uneven access and infrastructural challenges limited their full impact. Chokoe and Joao (2024) add that African hotels have not fully optimized technology for crisis response, citing gaps in investment and digital readiness. Similarly, Alhassan, Adamu, Cowther, Rockson, and Maijamaa (2025) stress that digital transformation must be embedded in long-term resilience planning rather than temporary crisis fixes, yet much of their analysis remains conceptual and continental, without city-level empirical grounding.

In Nigeria, ICT-driven responses to COVID-19 have been discussed by Osho, Olorunfemi, Iyiade, and Metilelu (2023), who argue that efficient ICT adoption, including online reservations, virtual communication, and e-payment systems, can cushion hotels against pandemic shocks. While insightful, their focus is broad, without narrowing down to particular metropolitan realities such as Ilorin. Other Nigerian scholars have emphasized customer-centered technologies. Osadare, Akande, Soladoye, and Sobowale (2024) show how smart hospitality solutions enhance customer satisfaction through automation and personalization. Likewise, Chukwudi, Chidinma, Donald, and Egwu (2024) highlight how artificial intelligence and machine learning improve customer loyalty and service efficiency in Calabar hospitality enterprises. However, both studies are primarily concerned with customer management in stable periods, leaving unaddressed the question of how these technologies can be deployed for resilience during disruptive health crises.

Broader tourism-health intersections also reinforce the importance of preparedness. Enitan et al. (2024) emphasizes the role of travel medicine in pandemic management, underscoring that tourism and hospitality industries must integrate health considerations into their operations. Stephen et al. (2024), in their work on cholera's resurgence, similarly highlight that hospitality vulnerabilities are not limited to COVID-19 but extend to recurring infectious diseases, calling for forward-looking, multi-disease resilience strategies. Together, these studies illustrate that resilience cannot be a short-term response but must anticipate diverse public health risks.

In sum, the reviewed literature demonstrates a clear consensus thus: technology is indispensable in mitigating the disruptive effects of disease outbreaks on the hospitality industry. From ICT systems and smart hospitality innovations in Nigeria to AI-driven customer management in Calabar and global frameworks on automation, biosecurity, and hygiene technologies, scholars agree that digital solutions enhance operational resilience, customer confidence, and long-term recovery. Yet gaps remain evident. Much of the existing work is global, continental, or national in orientation, with little empirical focus on local hotel clusters such as Ilorin metropolis. Many studies emphasize customer experience and digital transformation broadly, but fewer address operational survival during disease outbreaks. Furthermore, the integration of hospitality technology with local public

health realities is underexplored, despite evidence that multiple diseases beyond COVID-19 continue to pose risks in Nigeria. This study positions itself within these gaps by examining how selected hotels in Ilorin metropolis actually adopt and deploy technological innovations to mitigate the effects of disease outbreaks. By narrowing the lens to a city-level context while engaging global, African, and Nigerian perspectives, the study provides both theoretical contributions to the discourse on hospitality resilience and practical insights for local operators seeking to strengthen preparedness for future health crises.

Methodology

This study adopts a desk research approach, relying entirely on secondary data sources to examine how technology can be leveraged to mitigate the effects of disease outbreaks on hospitality operations in Ilorin metropolis. Desk research is appropriate for this study because it allows for the integration of global, continental, and local perspectives from scholarly literature, industry reports, and policy documents, thereby avoiding the logistical and ethical challenges associated with primary data collection during or after disease outbreaks. The data sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, reports from international organizations, and Nigerian case studies, particularly those addressing COVID-19, Ebola, and cholera outbreaks in relation to the hospitality industry. Key databases consulted included Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and African Journals Online (AJOL). Specific works by Ivanov et al. (2022), Alotaibi and Khan (2022), Marques et al. (2022), Maphanga and Henama (2019), and Folorunso et al. (2024), among others, were critically analyzed to build a contextual understanding of how technology has been used for crisis resilience across different climes. Local insights were drawn from Nigerian studies focusing on Ilorin (Folorunso et al., 2024) and Ibadan (Obuene, 2021), supplemented with national hospitality reports from the Kwara State Tourism Board.

The study followed a systematic review logic, involving three stages: (1) identification and selection of relevant literature using keywords such as “hospitality technology,” “disease outbreak resilience,” and “Nigeria hotel industry,” (2) screening for relevance to crisis management and technological applications in hospitality, and (3) thematic synthesis to identify patterns, contradictions, and gaps. This process allowed the research to compare technological resilience practices in different contexts and apply them to the Ilorin case. Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, where insights were organized into themes such as ICT adoption, smart hospitality, artificial intelligence applications, health–hospitality linkages, and crisis management frameworks. By synthesizing evidence across sources, the study established theoretical linkages and identified practical gaps in how hotels in Ilorin have adopted technology in response to disease outbreaks. Ethical standards in desk research were maintained by ensuring proper attribution of all sources, avoiding plagiarism, and critically engaging the literature rather than reproducing it. This methodological approach provides a robust framework for drawing lessons from global best practices while contextualizing them within Ilorin’s hospitality industry. Although limited by its reliance on secondary data, desk research is valuable in generating timely and policy-relevant insights for both practitioners and scholars, especially where primary data collection may be impractical or constrained by ongoing health risks.

Findings and Discussion

The first research question asked: To what extent have selected hotels in Ilorin metropolis adopted technological innovations in response to disease outbreaks? Evidence from reviewed studies

suggests that technology adoption among hotels in Ilorin metropolis remains modest and uneven, with the majority of establishments integrating only basic digital solutions such as online reservations, e-payment systems, and social media for customer communication. According to Folorunso et al. (2024), during the COVID-19 pandemic, most hotels in Ilorin did not possess advanced systems such as automated check-in kiosks, AI-powered guest management, or robotic cleaning devices, which were common in Asian and European contexts (Li et al., 2022; Marques et al., 2022). Rather, technology adoption was largely reactive, driven by the urgent need to minimize human contact during the pandemic. Comparatively, Obuene (2021) observed a similar pattern in Ibadan, where hotels relied heavily on low-cost ICT tools and ad hoc digital measures, rather than structured, long-term technological investments. This indicates that Ilorin's situation is not isolated but reflective of broader challenges in Nigeria's hospitality industry.

The second research question asked: How effective are these technological solutions in sustaining operations and enhancing resilience during public health crises? Evidence shows that while the limited technological innovations adopted by hotels in Ilorin did provide some level of operational continuity, they were insufficient to fully sustain business resilience. E-payment systems and online booking platforms helped maintain some flow of revenue when physical interactions were restricted, but their impact was limited because most mid-tier and budget hotels (categories B and C) lacked the infrastructure and resources to institutionalize such solutions (Folorunso et al., 2024). In Ibadan, Obuene (2021) similarly reported that although technology softened the immediate impact of COVID-19, it did not prevent significant revenue declines or restore guest confidence to pre-pandemic levels. The Ilorin case, therefore, reflects a dependence on short-term adaptations rather than integrated, technology-driven resilience strategies.

The discussion highlights that Ilorin hotels, like their counterparts in Ibadan, face structural challenges in adopting and scaling technological innovations. Cost, digital literacy, and infrastructural weaknesses constrain the extent of adoption, leaving hotels reactive rather than proactive in crisis management. In contrast, global evidence shows that where technology adoption was institutionalized, such as through contactless systems, AI guest services, and digital health monitoring, hotels demonstrated stronger resilience and quicker recovery (Ivanov et al., 2022; Alotaibi & Khan, 2022). Thus, the limited effectiveness of technological solutions in Ilorin lies not in the irrelevance of the tools themselves, but in their restricted and inconsistent application.

Overall, the study finds that Ilorin hotels have adopted technological innovations at a basic level, primarily as temporary responses to crises, rather than as permanent resilience strategies. Their effectiveness has therefore been partial, providing some continuity during disease outbreaks but falling short of ensuring robust, long-term resilience. Unless technology is mainstreamed into strategic hotel operations through investments in smart hospitality tools, staff training, and integration into crisis management frameworks, the hospitality industry in Ilorin will remain vulnerable to future outbreaks.

Conclusion

This study has shown that while technology offers powerful tools for resilience in times of public health crises, hotels in Ilorin metropolis have only embraced its potential in limited and uneven ways. The evidence reveals that most establishments rely on basic solutions such as online reservations and e-payments, with little progress toward advanced innovations that define global

best practices. As a result, technological responses in Ilorin have been largely reactive, easing the immediate pressures of disease outbreaks but failing to secure long-term operational stability. The comparison with Ibadan underscores that this challenge is not unique to Ilorin but reflects a broader pattern within Nigeria's hospitality industry, where structural barriers such as cost, infrastructure, and digital literacy hinder sustained technological transformation. Yet, the global experience demonstrates that resilience and recovery are strongest where digital tools are fully integrated into hotel operations.

The lesson for Ilorin's hospitality industry is clear: technology must move beyond crisis-driven improvisation to become a deliberate, institutionalized strategy for resilience. By embedding digital innovation into core operations, training staff in smart hospitality practices, and aligning with global standards of health security, hotels in Ilorin can not only withstand future outbreaks but also position themselves for sustainable growth in an increasingly uncertain world.

Recommendations

First, in alignment with SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), hotels in Ilorin metropolis should expand beyond basic ICT tools and invest in a wider range of technological innovations such as contactless check-in systems, mobile service applications, automated payment platforms, and digital hygiene solutions. These technologies should be institutionalized as part of long-term operational strategies rather than temporary responses to crises. To ensure sustainability, the Kwara State Tourism Board can support hotels through incentives, subsidies, and training programs that reduce the financial and technical barriers to adoption.

Second, consistent with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), hotels should foster collaborative partnerships with technology providers, government agencies, and public health institutions. Such collaboration will promote knowledge transfer, affordable access to innovations, and adherence to biosecurity standards, thereby enhancing customer trust, ensuring operational continuity, and strengthening resilience. This coordinated approach will enable Ilorin's hospitality industry to maintain guest confidence, protect jobs, and achieve sustainable growth even in the face of future disease outbreaks.

Limitations and Areas of Future Research

This study was limited by its reliance on secondary data and desk research, which, while effective for synthesizing existing knowledge, may not fully capture the real-time, on-ground experiences of hotel operators and guests in Ilorin metropolis. The absence of primary data collection means that the study could not directly observe or measure the actual implementation and impact of technological innovations in individual hotel settings. Additionally, variations in hotel size, ownership structure, and resource capacity—which may influence technology adoption—could not be empirically explored. These limitations suggest that the findings, while insightful, should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive.

Future research should build on this study by employing field-based methods such as surveys, interviews, and case studies to capture firsthand data on the use of technology in Ilorin's hospitality industry. A comparative analysis between Ilorin and other Nigerian cities like Lagos, Abuja, or Port Harcourt could also provide deeper insight into regional disparities and best practices. Furthermore,

longitudinal studies assessing the sustained impact of digital transformation over time would be valuable in determining whether technology adoption leads to long-term operational resilience and customer retention in the face of recurring health crises.

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A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE ON THE ROLE OF EVENTS IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY (1995 TO 2025)

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Abstract

The study examines the role of events in tourism and hospitality from both historical and contemporary perspectives between 1995 and 2025, with emphasis on Nigeria's cultural festivals. Drawing on a systematic review of peer-reviewed literature, the research traces the evolution of events from communal and religious practices into structured tourism products, paralleling global trends in tourism development. Four major festivals the Calabar Carnival, Osun Osogbo Festival, Eyo Festival, and Ojude Oba Festival are analysed alongside emerging urban phenomena such as Lagos' "Detty December." Findings confirm that these events serve as both cultural markers and economic drivers, stimulating demand for hospitality, employment, and local enterprise growth, while reinforcing identity and community pride. Persistent challenges are identified, including governance inefficiencies, infrastructural deficits, over-commercialisation, environmental pressures, and uneven benefit distribution. Comparative insights reveal continuity in the cultural significance of festivals but transformation in their commercialisation, branding roles, and technological integration. The study concludes that the sustainability of Nigerian event tourism depends on strengthened public-private partnerships, consistent digital marketing, robust community engagement, and improved governance frameworks. By situating Nigerian festivals within global debates on event tourism, the research highlights both their contributions to cultural preservation and their potential as vehicles for sustainable socio-economic development.

Keywords: Event tourism; Cultural festivals; Hospitality; Sustainability; Public-Private Partnerships.

Introduction

Events have demonstrated a prominent role in human societies throughout history, serving as a basis for cultural expression, social interaction, and economic exchange. In tourism and hospitality, events offer platforms for destinations to market their heritage, create community identity, and stimulate economic activity (Dwyer et al., 2020). The events sector has also bounced back worldwide, in line with the overall tourism recovery. The events sector has expanded to encompass cultural festivals, corporate meetings, sports events, and mega events, all of which support urban growth and tourism development (OECD, 2022; UNWTO, 2024). Destinations are increasingly linking their event portfolios to higher-level policy objectives, urban renaissance, creative economy growth, and community cohesion, integrating sustainability measures, risk management, and resident involvement in event cycles (OECD, 2022). At the same time, events based on heritage highlight the importance of proper visitor management to conserve cultural sites and intangible traditions as popularity grows.

Throughout Africa, and Nigeria more broadly, cultural and heritage festivals have become centres for indigenous and foreign tourism, drawing tourists into local economies and preserving intangible cultural heritage. Diversity expressed in languages, religion, and artistic expression in Nigeria has resulted in a lively calendar of events. Festivals such as the Calabar Carnival in Cross River State (established in 2004), the Osun Osogbo Festival in Osun State (rooted in pre-colonial traditions, formally recognised in the 1960s), the Eyo Festival in Lagos (with origins dating back to the 18th century), and the Ojude Oba Festival in Ijebu-Ode (dating to the late 19th century) demonstrate the connection between festivals, identity, and tourism. The festivals are not just spectacles, but also processes for sustaining traditions, generating employment, and attracting tourists to the hospitality sector through accommodations, transportation, and food services. Empirical evidence demonstrates that the Osun Osogbo Festival generates substantial revenue increases for host enterprises, also fostering cultural appreciation among the locals (Asifat et al., 2025). The Calabar Carnival has been identified as generating significant economic spillovers, with tourists' spending uplifting hotels, eateries, and ancillary services (Esu et al., 2021; Odere & Ojong, 2021).

The aim of this study is to explore the role of events in tourism and hospitality from both historical and contemporary perspectives (1995–2025), with a focus on Nigerian cultural festivals. The specific objectives are: (i) to trace the historical development of festivals in Nigeria and how they became tourism products; (ii) to assess the current role of events in boosting tourism and hospitality, considering cultural, economic, and technological influences; and (iii) to compare past and present perspectives to highlight lessons, challenges, and opportunities for making festivals more sustainable in future tourism and hospitality strategies.

Event tourism is presented as a dynamic force in global tourism and hospitality, with this study offering a comprehensive review of its evolution, impacts, and future potential, particularly in Nigeria. Through a systematic review of peer-reviewed literature, it integrates historical and contemporary perspectives, bridging fragmented research and framing events as economic, cultural, and social drivers of tourism. The study expands theoretical discussions on feasibility and sustainability, highlighting practical pathways for policymakers, tourism boards, and event organisers to design inclusive and resilient strategies. The study also addresses digital transformation, including hybrid and virtual formats, which broaden access and safeguard intangible heritage in the post-pandemic era. Finally, it identifies avenues for future research on digital engagement, sustainability metrics, and community impacts.

Literature Review

Defining Events in Tourism and Hospitality

Events are typically considered structured, short-term phenomena that provide experiences for attendees as well as onlookers, distinguishing them from ordinary hospitality services. Umejei (2021) explains that events are "time-limited phenomena that have meaning attached by organisers and audiences," thereby transforming public spaces into places of meaning. In the hospitality and tourism sector, events serve dual functions: they are attractions in their own right and animators of existing attractions, making a destination more attractive overall. Within the Nigerian context, events such as the Dettý December celebrations have become pivotal drivers of urban tourism, demonstrating how mass entertainment is both a cultural and tourism commodity (Ajayi, Adeyinka, & Peter, 2025).

Typologies of Events

Events in tourism and hospitality are often classified by scale, purpose, and cultural role. Four main typologies dominate scholarship. Mega events are large-scale international gatherings requiring substantial investment. Nigeria has not hosted global events like the Olympics, urban phenomena such as Lagos' Detty December share similar traits (Oladipo & Akinola, 2024). Hallmark events are tied to a location's image and cultural identity. The Calabar Carnival, launched in 2004, attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually and generates measurable gains in transportation, lodging, and small businesses (Esu et al., 2021). Community and cultural festivals originally cater to local audiences but are increasingly marketed as tourist attractions. The Osun Osogbo Festival exemplifies this (Asifat et al., 2025). Business and MICE events (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) remain underdeveloped but hold potential (Lawal et al., 2022).

Historical Development of Events in Tourism and Hospitality (1995–2025)

The historical trajectory of event tourism from 1995 to 2025 reveals significant transformations. Between 1995 and 2005, global event tourism witnessed the consolidation of mega-events as drivers of urban regeneration, exemplified by the 2000 Sydney Olympics and the 2004 Athens Olympics (Gold & Gold, 2021). In Nigeria, this period saw the revival of festivals such as the Osun Osogbo Festival following its UNESCO recognition in 2005, alongside the centenary celebrations of the Ojude Oba Festival. From 2005 to 2015, event tourism expanded rapidly with the launch of the Calabar Carnival in 2004, which grew into West Africa's largest street party (Esu et al., 2021). This decade also witnessed increased academic attention to event impacts, with studies employing Social Exchange Theory to assess resident perceptions (Nwaobi, 2020). From 2015 to 2025, digital transformation reshaped event tourism through live streaming, mobile applications, and data-driven marketing (Li & Petrick, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022) accelerated the adoption of hybrid formats (Sigala, 2021), the emergence of "Detty December" positioned Lagos as a premier African entertainment destination (Oladipo & Akinola, 2024). Main milestones, including the 2005 UNESCO inscription of the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove, the 2018 launch of the National Tourism Development Authority, and the 2023 presidential declaration of a national tourism policy, shaped this evolution.

Contemporary Role of Events in Tourism and Hospitality

1) Economic, Social, and Cultural Impacts: Events significantly contribute to Nigeria's tourism economy through increased hotel occupancy, revenues, and employment (Esu et al., 2021; Odere & Ojong, 2021). Lagos' "Detty December" has become a major driver of urban hospitality demand (Oladipo & Akinola, 2024). Beyond economics, events such as the Ojude Oba strengthen cultural identity and diaspora involvement (Agbabiaka, Omisore, & Olugbamila, 2023). Issues of over-commercialisation, congestion, and rising costs highlight the need for sustainable event management (Esu & Eyo, 2022).

2) Events and Community Engagement: Social Exchange Theory suggests that resident support is contingent upon perceptions of overall benefit (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025). Surveys from the Calabar Carnival revealed that residents welcomed economic opportunities, frustrations with infrastructure and crowd management reduced their support. Smaller culturally rooted festivals, such as the Asa Festival in Ikorodu and the Ijakadi Festival in Offa, exemplify how local events can be repositioned as tourism assets while reinforcing community identity and cohesion (Adeyanju & Ogunraku, 2021; Ojo & Okanlawon, 2022).

Comparative Insights: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Comparing historical and contemporary perspectives reveals both continuity and transformation. Continuities include the enduring capacity of events to stimulate mobility, create demand for hospitality, and reinforce cultural identity. Pilgrimage networks share similar visitor flow dynamics with contemporary religious festivals such as Osun-Osogbo. Transformations are significant: historical events primarily emerged from cultural or religious traditions, modern events are strategically designed, marketed, and embedded in destination competitiveness agendas (Mair & Smith, 2021). Technology now amplifies their reach, sustainability and inclusivity considerations add dimensions absent in earlier centuries.

Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Integration

Opportunities include reducing seasonality and fostering economic diversification (Osagie, 2022). Cultural showcases enhance visibility and attract investment (Balogun & Nkebem, 2022). Technology further extends access through streaming, apps, and analytics (Li & Petrick, 2020). Challenges remain substantial: environmental damage, uneven benefit distribution, security concerns, infrastructure deficits, and inadequate data systems (Akintoye & Adegbite, 2021; Rogerson, 2019; NTDA, 2023). Balancing these dynamics requires holistic strategies, strong policy frameworks, and active community involvement.

Case Studies (1995–2025)

Calabar Carnival (2004–2025): The Calabar Carnival is both an economic driver and a socio-cultural showcase. Esu et al. (2021) highlighted its role in stimulating hospitality, transport, and retail. Odere and Ojong (2021) confirmed significant links between the carnival and job creation, income growth, and infrastructure development. Balogun and Nkebem (2022) noted broad public support tied to pride and unity, though benefits were unevenly distributed. Nwadigwe (2024) examined costume semiotics, positioning the carnival as a platform for cultural diplomacy.

Eyo and Ojude Oba Festivals: Agbabiaka et al. (2023), using principal component analysis, found that attendance at the Eyo Festival is mainly driven by psychosocial factors (22.9% of variance), reflecting emotional and symbolic attachment. For the Ojude Oba Festival, attendance was primarily explained by sociocultural and psychological factors (35.4% of variance). Adesiji and Adeogun (2022) showed that younger tourists are motivated by cognitive needs such as exploration and cultural exposure.

Osun Osogbo Festival (1995–2025): Asifat et al. (2025) demonstrated the festival's socio-economic impact, with 89.4% supporting sustainable tourism and 85% of local businesses reporting increased sales. Etuk and Idowu (2025) found that heritage promotion improves attendance, though 2024 outcomes lagged behind 2023. Mejabi (2021) noted persistent weaknesses in innovation, planning, and marketing.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two complementary theoretical perspectives: Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Stakeholder Theory. Social Exchange Theory, originally developed by Homans (1958) and later applied to tourism contexts by Ap (1992), posits that individuals and communities support tourism development when they perceive that the benefits outweigh the costs. In the context of event tourism, SET explains resident support for festivals based on perceived economic, social, and

cultural benefits, as well as concerns about congestion, environmental degradation, and over-commercialisation (Gaonkar & Sukthankar, 2025). Studies on the Calabar Carnival have demonstrated that resident support is contingent upon perceptions of overall benefit, with frustrations over infrastructure and crowd management reducing support (Balogun & Nkebem, 2022).

Stakeholder Theory, as articulated by Freeman (1984) and applied to event tourism by Getz and Page (2016), emphasises the importance of engaging all parties with an interest in event outcomes, including government agencies, private sector operators, local communities, and tourists. The theory suggests that sustainable event tourism requires balancing often competing stakeholder interests through transparent communication, inclusive planning, and equitable benefit distribution. In the Nigerian context, Stakeholder Theory has been used to analyse public–private partnerships in festival governance, with studies calling for decentralisation of state control and increased private sector involvement (Ozili et al., 2019). Together, these theories provide a robust analytical framework for examining the complex interplay between economic benefits, social impacts, and governance structures in Nigerian event tourism.

Methodology

This study employs a systematic literature review, drawing solely on peer-reviewed sources to examine the role of events in tourism and hospitality from both historical and contemporary perspectives between 1995 and 2025. Using databases such as JSTOR, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, relevant works were drawn from peer-reviewed journals, professional industry publications, and hospitality organisations covering event tourism, cultural festivals, economic impact, sustainability, and community engagement. Only scholarly articles, conference papers, and book chapters addressing tourism, hospitality, and event management were included, with emphasis on Nigeria and comparable emerging markets. The selected studies were analysed through thematic coding to identify recurring patterns, conceptual models, and methodological trends. This approach brought together fragmented insights, particularly on feasibility, and allowed for an integrated view highlighting resilience, sustainability, and socio-cultural relevance.

Findings and Discussion

Based on the systematic literature review methodology, the findings of this study reveal a multi-dimensional understanding of event tourism within the Nigerian context between 1995 and 2025.

Economic Stimulation and Hospitality Demand: The literature consistently demonstrates that events have a significant impact on tourism-related economic activity. Festivals such as the Calabar Carnival and Lagos’ “Detty December” lead to spikes in hotel occupancy, transportation usage, and consumer spending (Esu et al., 2021; Oladipo & Akinola, 2024). This aligns with global examples, such as the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, which similarly generates high levels of economic activity.

Cultural Identity and Heritage Preservation: Findings highlight the dual role of festivals in promoting tourism and safeguarding cultural heritage. Events like Ojude Oba and Osun Osogbo serve as platforms for cultural expression, diaspora engagement, and intergenerational transmission of traditions (Agbabiaka et al., 2023; Asifat et al., 2025). These festivals reinforce local identity simultaneously attracting tourists interested in authentic cultural experiences.

Community Participation and Social Cohesion: The review emphasises the importance of community involvement. Smaller festivals, such as the Asa Festival in Ikorodu and the Ijakadi Festival in Offa, demonstrate how events can foster resident pride and social cohesion (Adeyanju & Ogunruku, 2021; Ojo & Okanlawon, 2022). When communities perceive net benefits, they are more likely to support event tourism, as articulated by Social Exchange Theory.

Challenges and Sustainability Concerns: Positive impacts, the literature identifies challenges such as overcrowding, commercialisation, and rising costs (Etuk & Idowu, 2025). Governance inefficiencies and over-reliance on state administration have been criticised (Ozili et al., 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic exposed vulnerabilities, prompting a shift toward hybrid and virtual formats (Sigala, 2021; Folorunso et al., 2023).

Digital Transformation and Diaspora Engagement: Recent studies underscore the role of digital platforms in expanding event reach and enhancing diaspora participation. Events like “Detty December” have evolved into digitally networked experiences, blending physical attendance with online engagement (Oladipo & Akinola, 2024). This transformation has redefined the spatial and temporal boundaries of tourism.

Conclusion

This study has examined the role of events in tourism and hospitality from both historical and contemporary perspectives between 1995 and 2025, with a particular focus on Nigeria’s cultural festivals. The findings confirm that events such as the Calabar Carnival, Osun Osogbo Festival, Ojude Oba Festival, and Lagos’ Detty December are not only cultural markers but also significant economic engines. They stimulate hospitality demand, generate employment, and foster cultural pride reinforcing community identity. From a historical perspective, Nigerian festivals have transitioned from primarily religious and communal gatherings to structured tourism products, paralleling global trends. Contemporary dynamics introduce new dimensions’ digital technologies, diaspora-driven participation, and branding functions positioning Nigerian events within broader global tourism markets. Nonetheless, persistent challenges undermine the sustainability of these festivals, including governance inefficiencies, infrastructural deficits, over-commercialisation, environmental pressures, and inconsistent marketing. The limited academic evaluation of emerging phenomena such as Detty December highlights the need for deeper empirical investigation.

Recommendations

To trace the historical development of festivals (Objective 1), there is a need for deliberate efforts to document and research their evolution, especially underexplored traditions. Cultural mapping initiatives should be prioritised, situating festivals within Nigeria’s diverse heritage and reinforcing their value as resources for both tourism and community identity. Archival research to document pre-colonial festival origins as well as post-1995 transformations is essential.

In assessing the current role of events (Objective 2), investment in infrastructure transportation, accommodation, and digital platforms is essential to support mass gatherings like the Calabar Carnival and emerging phenomena like Detty December. Sustainability standards, including ISO 20121, should be integrated into event planning. Inclusivity in benefit distribution must be ensured to avoid elite capture. Expanding digital integration through live streaming, mobile applications, and data analytics can further enhance operational efficiency.

When comparing past and present experiences to inform the future (Objective 3), stronger governance frameworks are required. Public–private partnerships should be encouraged to decentralise state control, strengthen professionalism, and diversify funding sources. Community participation must be embedded in planning and evaluation processes to ensure that social and cultural benefits are distributed equitably. More scholarly and policy attention should be directed at emerging events such as Detty December, recognising their economic and branding potential addressing risks of over-commercialisation and inequality.

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EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT AND RESTAURANT SERVICE QUALITY: ANTECEDENTS OF GUESTS' SATISFACTION IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SECTOR

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of employee empowerment, restaurant service quality on guest satisfaction in the restaurant industry in Abeokuta South LGA, Southwest Nigeria, with comparative insights for the global hospitality industry. While empowerment has been widely studied in hotel contexts, less attention has been given to restaurants in emerging economies. Using a quantitative design, data were collected from 355 respondents across six restaurants and analyzed using regression analysis. Findings reveal that employee empowerment positively influences service quality with a p-value of .002 and also the influence of employee empowerment in the relationship between service quality and guest satisfaction is insignificant with a p-value of .065. Service quality strongly predicts guest satisfaction, confirming its central role in hospitality management. The study contributes to global debates by situating evidence from Nigeria within broader literature on employee empowerment management, highlighting the need for empowering hospitality industry employees to enhance guest experiences. The study concludes that a good empowerment practice leads to delivering of quality service by employee which in turn will lead to guests' satisfaction. Practical implications emphasize continuous staff training, decision-making autonomy, and supportive policies, while theoretical contributions refine the application of expectancy and structural empowerment theories in hospitality research. Future research should examine cross-cultural comparisons and digital empowerment in post-pandemic contexts.

Key Word: Hospitality management, Restaurant Industry, Employee empowerment, Restaurant Service quality, Guest satisfaction.

Introduction

The hospitality industry is primarily a service-oriented industry, which is one of the important tools for economic development worldwide. Restaurants are essential aspect of the hospitality industry that caters for food and drinks to be consumed by individuals on-site or through pick-up or delivery service. It equally involves rendering different types of catering services, or banquet (Geordiev, 2024). Guest satisfaction is a critical determinant of success in the restaurant industry. It refers to the extent to which customers' expectations regarding food, service, ambiance, and overall dining experience are met or exceeded.

Employee empowerment has been a growing concern for the hospitality industry worldwide (Enemuo, et al, 2022). Employees are the backbone of any restaurant establishment because they are the ones that interact directly with the customer on the time-of-service delivery. Empowerment is a process of giving power to persons. Empowerment involves delegating authority or granting others legal power (Samir, et al, 2023). Empowerment fosters some degree of autonomy and self-determination in employees and equally in the job environment (Hummel et al, 2021).

Empowerment is the process of empowering employees to perform what is necessary rather than what is instructed. It entails delegation, personal accountability, independent decision-making, and a sense of self-efficacy (Shunda, 2018). In work setting recently, empowerment is utilized as a human resource guideline to increase productivity, effectiveness, and employee satisfaction for the majority of employees. This gives them the ability to act independently and responsibly while representing the interests of the establishment. Employees in service industry sector who are not permitted to make decisions that impact their careers are likely to provide bad quality service.

Evaluating restaurant service quality is quite challenging because it is based on both the process and outcome of service delivery. Service quality is not a product that can be quantified but it is the customer's evaluation and subjective perception about a service. According to Ansari & Jalees (2018), food quality, the physical atmosphere (such as lighting), and employee service (such as professionalism and dependability) are all components of restaurant service quality. According to Anwar and Qadir (2017), service quality may be viewed as an evaluation of how well a service matches the expectations of the guests. Service quality takes into consideration what customers perceive as the overall perfection and superiority (Abullah & Afshar, 2019). Providing high-quality service is seen as a crucial tactic for restaurant establishments to succeed and survive in today's competitive business. Examining service quality from a different perspective reveals that it is an end result of the comparison that customers make between their expectations and what they actually receive from the relevant service provider (Abdullah et al, 2017). The Guest perceptions of overall excellence and superiority are taken into account when evaluating service quality. Service quality is an attitude of general judgment regarding service superiority.

Guest's Satisfaction are inherently fragile in nature because it requires the interaction of guests. Expectations and quality standards are two major elements that has a great impact on guests' perceptions (Abdullah 2018). According to Opatola & Balogun (2025), Customer satisfaction within the hospitality sector has become a key performance indicator because it influences brand reputation, revenue growth and customer loyalty. In a developing country such as Nigeria, with an emerging economy, the restaurant industry sector is rapidly growing. Unlike other production sectors that produces and sells only goods, the restaurant sector produces and sells both goods and services to guests simultaneously. The satisfaction of guests has become one of the utmost priorities of restaurant operators. The level of guests' satisfaction in the restaurant industry depends significantly on the empowerment of the employees and the quality of service rendered by the employees. Hospitality services are evaluated largely through intangible experiences such as responsiveness, empathy, and professionalism. Most previous research on employee empowerment, service quality and guests' satisfaction in the hospitality industry focused mostly on the hotel sector, leaving restaurants relatively underexplored. In this context, examining how employee empowerment practices such as autonomy level, decision making, communication, training opportunities shape restaurant service quality and their impact on guest satisfaction offers both theoretical and practical contributions to hospitality management. Although empowerment is recognized as a driver of service excellence, its application in restaurants, particularly in developing countries, remains limited. In Nigeria, restaurant operators often emphasize cost efficiency and pricing strategies over employee development, resulting in weak service delivery and inconsistent guest experiences.

The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of employee empowerment on restaurants service quality, and also to evaluate the mediation effect of employee empowerment in the relationship between restaurant service quality and guest satisfaction and vice versa using some selected restaurants in Abeokuta South Local Government Area, Ogun state, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Employee empowerment has emerged as a central concept in modern organizational management, particularly in service-driven industries such as hospitality and the restaurant sector. In today's competitive business environment, restaurant operators cannot rely solely on capital and technology to achieve sustainability. Instead, they must strategically invest in their human resources. One of the most effective strategies for improving employee performance, commitment, and productivity is empowerment. Delegating tasks, decision-making authority, and allowing self-satisfaction in job performance are all integral aspects of empowerment. A well combination of communication, empathy, and responsiveness should result in guests' impressions of good restaurant service quality, which in turn will boost their loyalty, retention and giving of good reviews about the restaurant.

Training equips employees with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and confidence required to perform their duties efficiently. It enhances their competence, builds self-efficacy, and enables them to respond effectively to service challenges. It plays a vital role in empowering employees, particularly by giving them access to opportunities, valuable information, support, and organizational resources. Training positively influences job satisfaction by making employees feel valued and supported by management. When organizations invest in employee development, workers perceive that their growth is important to the organization. This perception enhances motivation, commitment, and loyalty. Empowered employees are more innovative, proactive, and committed to achieving organizational goals. They are better equipped to handle responsibilities independently, which reduces managerial burden and increases operational efficiency. Training therefore not only improves employee performance but also empowers employees psychologically by increasing their sense of control and responsibility. Yao, et al (2019) suggested that restaurant managers can enhance their employees' job performance and satisfaction by using training to build their skills, knowledge, and talents. Jaworski (2018) further emphasized that good training reduces errors by enhancing employee capacities.

An appreciation program in the hospitality industry involves formal and informal methods used to recognize employees' efforts and achievements. These programs may include awards, incentives, public recognition, bonuses, training sponsorships, promotions, and non-monetary acknowledgements. Empowerment provides employees with authority and autonomy, while appreciation reinforces and sustains that empowerment. Without recognition, empowered employees may feel their efforts are unnoticed, leading to disengagement. However, recognizing and appreciating employees should not be a one-time event. It should be done consistently and should be free from favoritism. According to San et al (2012), employee appreciation programs can occur in many forms, such as tangibles and intangibles. Regular recognition also increases employee engagement and self-confidence.

Understanding how employee empowerment contribute in the delivering of quality service to guests is very important. Empirically, Nwokorie (2020) asserts that employee performance, which is highly influenced by their degree of empowerment, determines the provision of high-quality

service. Similarly, Bello and Bello (2017) reviewed a statistically significant positive correlation between guest satisfaction, service quality, and employee empowerment in a study with some selected hotels as the case study. The study concluded that empowering employees supports the development of intrinsic capability, and self-determination, hence assisting employees to deliver on the enterprise mandate of providing quality service. According to Enemu, et al (2022), the empowerment practices being practiced by the management helps the develop employees' self-motivation and decision-making skills, which enabled the employees to deliver quality service which is the organizational mandate that impact positively on customer's satisfaction.

In a study conducted in Nairobi, Kenya by Nekesa (2020), small and medium-sized restaurants were chosen to examine employee empowerment and customer service delivery. With the particular objective of examining the impact of training, leadership, employee involvement, and incentives on customer service delivery. The results of the study showed a substantial association between customer service delivery and employee empowerment, with a positive correlation. Based on the findings, there is a substantial association between employee empowerment and service delivery as measured by training, leadership, employee involvement, and incentives. Nwokorie (2021), conducted a study that evaluated the influence of service management on guest satisfaction. The study concluded that customers' perceptions of service quality are largely influenced by their long-term assessments of the establishment's performance; that is continuous visitation, which disagrees with Abdulllah et al (2022) that concluded that customers are likely to revisit the restaurant when they are satisfied with the quality of service that they received on their first visitation. Similarly, Putta, (2023), examined how customer satisfaction in restaurants sector is impacted by service quality, the study's conclusions indicated that there was a strong and positive correlation between customer satisfaction and service quality in restaurants, with higher service quality translating into higher customer satisfaction. Consequently, the researcher did not indicate whether the physical or non-physical components of service quality has more impact on customer satisfaction.

Guest satisfaction and loyalty are essential factors that determine the success and sustainability of any restaurant establishment. Guest satisfaction is the foundation of loyalty. Guest loyalty refers to a customer's commitment to repeatedly patronize a particular restaurant over time, despite the availability of competitors. The major long-term goals of every hospitality industry includes gaining her guests' loyalty. Loyal guests tend to be more committed to the business and with great emotional ties (Uslu, 2020), which in turn makes them less susceptible to the marketing tactics of rival businesses (Nguyen, 2018). When customers are satisfied with their experience, they are more likely to become loyal. However, satisfaction alone may not always guarantee loyalty. Restaurants operators should go beyond meeting expectations by creating memorable experiences and building strong relationships with guests. Loyalty is built on trust, satisfaction, emotional connection, and positive experiences. In addition to being a predictor of overall satisfaction, revisit intention is measured frequently alongside satisfaction (Konuk, 2019). Positive word-of-mouth, increased patronage, higher prices, and loyalty are all commendable behavioral goals (Maisya, 2019).

This study was guided by Kanter structural empowerment theory, then supported by theory of Expectancy. Structural empowerment theory focuses on how organizational systems and practices support empowerment. This involves decentralizing decision-making, improving access to information, resources, support and creating opportunities for growth at all levels of employees.

The theory argues that people naturally react to their work settings. When the structures of a restaurant industry are arranged in a pattern that makes the employees feel empowered, they are likely to be more satisfied with their job and should be able to render a very good restaurant service quality. When the workplace is arranged in a way that enable employees to perform their duties with freedom, empowerment takes place. Yale School of Management Professor Victor Vroom originally put up expectancy theory as a theory of motivation in 1964. The Theory of Expectancy is a motivational theory that explains how individuals choose behaviors based on expected outcomes. The theory suggests that employees are motivated to act in certain ways if they believe their efforts will lead to good performance and desirable rewards. Expectancy theory relates to delivering of quality service by employee and satisfaction of guests. Based on the theory, expectations have an impact on the perceived quality that is produced when a product or service is consumed (Sokun et al, 2024). The customer is unsatisfied if the perceived performance is less than their expectations (Chen, 2017). Meanwhile, customers are satisfied if the perceived performance of service matches their expectations, or even exceed their expectation. The quality of restaurant service quality delivered by employees is influenced by the level of empowerment that they received and also guests' level of satisfaction is determined by their expectation on service quality to be delivered by the employees.

Research Methodology

Quantitative survey method was adopted to investigate the relationship between employee empowerment, restaurant service quality and guests' satisfaction. Six restaurants in Abeokuta South, Southwest Nigeria, were purposively selected based on their standard, scale of operation and high level of customer patronage. The target population consisted of guests and employees of the selected restaurants with a sample size which comprised of 155 employees and 200 guests, making a total of 355 respondents. Employees' sample size was guided by Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for determining adequate sample sizes in finite populations, while questionnaire was issued to guests until a reasonable sample size was obtained. Two structured questionnaires were administered; one for employees and the other for guests, as an instrument for data collection. Each questionnaire included two sections: demographic information and research constructs measured on a five-point Likert scale. The instrument used for the study underwent expert review to ensure content validity. A pilot test with 20 participants was conducted at a different location to confirm clarity of items. Respondents' participation was voluntary. Respondents provided informed consent, and confidentiality of responses was assured. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the demographic information of the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. To test hypotheses and ascertain correlations between employee empowerment, service quality and guest satisfaction, regression model summary, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and regression coefficient analysis were utilized.

Result and Discussion

Majority of the respondents (guests) were male, with a population of 123 out of 200 guests making 61.5% of the total population, while the 77 respondents with 38.5% are females. Respondents within the age range of 26-30 years old has the highest percentage with 28.5% followed by 31-35 years old with percentage of 24%. Respondents with a degree has the highest percentage, while respondents with SSCE have the lowest percentage. Similarly, under length of patronage, 1-5 years has the highest percentage of 51%, while less than 1 year has the lowest percentage of 19.5%.

The demographic information of the employees that served as the respondents revealed that majority of the employees are female with 73.5%. Also, majority of the respondents are within the age range of 31-35 years with 38.7%, followed by the age range of 26-30 years old. Similarly, 50(32.3%) of the employees has degree, 45(29%) has Diploma, followed by 40(25.8%) that has SSCE. Furthermore, 80(51.6%) has worked in the restaurant industry for 5-10 years being the highest, and those that have worked for 16 years and above being the lowest with 20(12.9%)

Table 1: Hypotheses 1

H₁: Employee empowerment has no impact on restaurant service quality.

H₁ Model					
Summary					
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1		.251 ^a	.063	.057	.31917
H₁ Anova					
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	1.046	1	1.046	10.270
	Residual	15.586	153	.102	
	Total	16.632	154		
H₁ Regression between Employee Empowerment and Restaurant Service Quality					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T
1	(Constant)	3.123	.197		15.835
	Employee Empowerment	.170	.053	.251	3.205

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

The impact of employee empowerment and Restaurant service quality showed that the indicators of employee empowerment used for the study which include decision making authority, training opportunities, autonomy level, information and motivation has a positive and significant relationship with restaurant service quality. In respect to the strength of the relationship, the result showed a very low positive relationship with ($r = .251$), and with r^2 of .063, which indicates that about 6.3% variation in restaurant service quality could be attributed to employee empowerment. The ANOVA shows that $F(1, 153) = 10.270$, $p < .05$. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and restaurant service quality. The coefficient result shows that there is 17.0% increase in restaurant service quality as employee empowerment increases. This is in confirmatory with some earlier research done in the area of employee empowerment and service quality such as Timothy & Abubakar (2013); Ogutu & Okolo, (2012), which concluded that empowerment improves employees' ability to provide high-quality services. The result also agrees with Alabi, et al (2024), which states that empowerment of staff through programs empowerment strategies leads to a higher increase in service quality delivering in the

hospitality industry. The result equally aligned with one of the theories that guided the study: Kanter's Structural empowerment theory.

Table 2: Hypotheses 2

H₂: There is no effect of employee empowerment, restaurant service quality in the relationship between restaurants' service quality, employee empowerment and guest satisfaction.

H₂ Model					
Summary					
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2		.863 ^a	.744	.741	.20803
H₂ Anova					
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
2	Regression	19.112	2	9.556	220.810
	Residual	6.578	152	.043	
	Total	25.691	154		
H₂ Mediation effect of Employee Empowerment, restaurant service quality in the relationship between Restaurant Service Quality, employee empowerment and Guest Satisfaction					
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T
2	(Constant)	-412	.209		-1.974
	Service Quality	1.043	.053	.839	19.797
	Employee Empowerment	.066	.036	.079	1.858

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2025

The model summary in table 2 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between employee empowerment, restaurants' service quality and guests' satisfaction ($r = .863$), and this suggest that the two factors accounted for 74.4% variance in the prediction of guest satisfaction.

The ANOVA reveals that $F(2, 152) = 220.810$, $p < 0.05$, which shows that the relationship between employee empowerment, restaurant service quality and quest satisfaction is statistically significant. Similarly, the findings revealed that the mediating effect of employee empowerment in the relationship between restaurant service quality and guest satisfaction is insignificant, with a p-value of .065 and a t-value of 19.797. This means that restaurant service quality has more direct significant effect to guest satisfaction than employee empowerment. The result the study confirms with Bello (2012), which suggested that Guest satisfaction is as a result of service quality rather than Employee empowerment. Consequently, it disagrees with Lee, et al (2006), which concluded that Guest satisfaction is strongly predicted by employee empowerment; especially structural empowerment. Theoretically, this study refines Expectancy Theory by showing that empowerment alone may not guarantee guest satisfaction unless paired with a good standard of restaurant service quality.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the impact of employee empowerment on restaurant service quality and the mediating effect of employee empowerment in the relationship between restaurant service quality and guest satisfaction and vice versa. The cost of attracting new customers is higher than the cost of retaining the existing ones, in order to achieve sustainability, restaurant operators should concentrate on retaining existing customers, implementing effective policies of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Modern technology such as online reservations, mobile ordering, digital payment systems, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems enhance convenience and improve customer experiences. Restaurants operators may face challenges including high staff turnover, inconsistent service delivery, economic fluctuations, changing customer preferences, and increased competition. To overcome these challenges, management of restaurant industries must prioritize quality control, continuous improvement, and strategic planning.

The results of the analysis conducted showed that employee empowerment is statistically significant to restaurant service quality. Also, Restaurant service quality has more direct impact to guest satisfaction when compared with employee empowerment. This study concludes that a good practice of employee empowerment contributes to an increase in restaurant service quality, which in turn leads to guest satisfaction. To achieve meaningful impact in the hospitality industry in Nigeria, restaurant operators should have and practice a very good empowerment program. The study contributes to global hospitality sector research by applying Structural Empowerment and Expectancy theories in an underexplored context.

Restaurant operators should put the following recommendations into practice in order to achieve a good guest satisfaction:

- i. Invest in continuous employee training on modern methods of providing services to build confidence and competence.
- ii. Grant employees decision-making autonomy to handle guest concerns promptly.
- iii. Grant permission for employees to form quality work groups which can be checked periodically, as employees feel free and expresses themselves better when relating with fellow employees with similar or same level.
- iv. Bonuses such as service charge should be shared to the employees accordingly to encourage them to put in more work into satisfying guests.

Policy Implications

Regulators and professional associations in hospitality industry should establish industry-wide standards that promote empowerment practices as a strategy for service improvement and guest satisfaction, also monitor service industries to ensure that the employees are empowered, standards are maintained, equally penalized defaulters.

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THE ROLE OF SPONSORSHIP IN EVENT SUCCESS: ANALYZING STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIP IN TOURISM EVENT

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Abstract

This research explores the impact of sponsorship and stakeholder relationships on the success of Nigerian tourism events, specifically the Calabar Carnival and Osun Osogbo Festival. Through a qualitative case study approach, the research investigates how sponsorship strategies and stakeholder collaboration affect event outcomes. The findings highlight the critical role of sponsorship in providing funding, amplifying brand visibility, fostering community engagement, and facilitating resource-sharing among stakeholders. Effective stakeholder relationship management, characterized by clear communication, collaboration, and mutual respect, is identified as a key driver of event success. The study also reveals challenges such as sponsor-event misalignment and economic volatility, which can impede the maximization of sponsorship returns. By integrating stakeholder theory into event planning, the research concludes that transparency, trust, and long-term partnerships can be enhanced. To optimize sponsorship benefits, the study recommends adopting digital sponsorship tools, formalizing stakeholder engagement frameworks, and aligning sponsorship goals with corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. By adopting these strategies, Nigerian tourism events can strengthen stakeholder relationships, improve event outcomes, and contribute to the growth and development of the tourism industry. This study provides valuable insights for event organizers, sponsors, and policymakers seeking to develop and sustain successful tourism events in Nigeria and beyond. The findings of this study have implications for the development of effective sponsorship strategies and stakeholder relationship management in tourism events. By understanding the complex relationships between sponsorship, stakeholder relationships, and event outcomes, event organizers and policymakers can make informed decisions to enhance the success and sustainability of tourism events.

Keywords: Sponsorship, Stakeholders relationship, Tourism events, Event success, Event management.

Introduction

The global events industry has witnessed significant growth over recent decades, emerging as a vital component of tourism development, destination marketing, and cultural preservation. Tourism events ranging from music festivals and sporting competitions to religious pilgrimages and cultural parades have evolved into powerful instruments for enhancing destination appeal, fostering social cohesion, and stimulating local economies (Getz & Page, 2020; UNWTO, 2023). These events offer curated, often immersive experiences that attract both domestic and international visitors, generate media attention, and serve as platforms for intercultural dialogue. In Nigeria, the tourism sector contributes approximately 5% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with hallmark events

such as the Calabar Carnival, Osun Osogbo Festival, and Argungu Fishing Festival promoting the country's cultural assets and community identity (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2023).

Despite their cultural and economic significance, the successful planning and execution of tourism events require more than creativity and tradition. Effective event delivery hinges on access to adequate funding, skilled management, and coordination among multiple stakeholders with divergent interests. Sponsorship has emerged as a critical enabler of tourism event success, providing financial resources, increasing event visibility, and fostering community engagement. It offers a reciprocal value proposition: while event organizers benefit from capital and logistical support, corporate sponsors leverage the platform to achieve marketing objectives, enhance brand positioning, and fulfill CSR mandates (Lin, 2025; Catane *et al.*, 2025).

In Nigeria, multinational corporations and indigenous firms including MTN, Airtel, Glo, Nigerian Breweries, and Coca-Cola have adopted sponsorship as a strategic tool to penetrate markets and deepen customer loyalty through association with high-profile events (Nwankwo & Hammedi, 2020; Odoom, Kosiba, & Djamgbah, 2021). Beyond financial support, sponsorship directly influences the scale, quality, and sustainability of tourism events, determining the extent to which such events attract audiences, deliver value, and achieve long-term viability (Getz & Page, 2020; Parent & Smith-Swan, 2021).

Equally central to event success is the effective management of stakeholder relationships. Tourism events are inherently multi-stakeholder ventures involving government institutions, private sponsors, local communities, event professionals, tourists, and media partners. These stakeholders often hold varying levels of power, interest, and investment in event outcomes. Stakeholder engagement must therefore be strategic, inclusive, and transparent. When well-managed, stakeholder collaboration enhances event legitimacy, fosters accountability, and reinforces socio-cultural relevance (Waligo, Clarke, & Hawkins, 2020; Getz & Page, 2020). The stakeholder strategy matrix (Getz *et al.*, 2007), alongside stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984) and its contemporary applications in tourism governance (Font & Pourfakhimi, 2021), provides analytical tools for understanding and prioritizing stakeholder expectations, influence, and contributions.

Nonetheless, the Nigerian tourism event landscape faces structural and operational challenges. Economic volatility, sponsor-event misalignment, inadequate relationship management, and poor communication often undermine sponsorship and stakeholder participation (Okumus, 2023). Sponsorship frequently remains transactional rather than strategic, and stakeholder relationships are underutilized for long-term value creation. Addressing these gaps is essential for building a resilient events ecosystem capable of contributing to Nigeria's broader tourism and development agenda (Vance-Gadagbui, 2020; Umenyilorah & Abigail, 2024).

In light of these issues, there is a critical need for scholarly inquiry into the interplay between sponsorship and stakeholder engagement within the Nigerian tourism event context. A nuanced understanding of these dynamics can help reveal best practices, identify contextual barriers, and propose models that are economically feasible, socially inclusive, and culturally appropriate. Such insights are essential for building a resilient events ecosystem capable of contributing meaningfully to Nigeria's broader tourism and development agenda.

While the importance of sponsorship in enhancing the scale and sustainability of tourism events is well established, event organizers in Nigeria continue to struggle with securing and maintaining effective sponsorship partnerships. Challenges such as limited access to reliable sponsors, unstable economic conditions, misalignment between sponsor goals and event objectives, and inadequate stakeholder engagement practices persistently undermine event outcomes (Umenyilorah & Abigail, 2024).

More critically, there is a noticeable gap in empirical research that explores the interplay between sponsorship and stakeholder relationship management in shaping tourism event success within the Nigerian context (Vance-Gadagbui, 2020). In the absence of such insights, event planning often remains ad hoc, reactive, and dependent on short-term patronage rather than strategic collaboration. This not only jeopardizes the financial viability of events but also threatens their cultural relevance, social acceptance, and long-term developmental impact. Addressing this gap is essential for building a resilient and inclusive tourism event ecosystem, one that leverages strategic sponsorship and stakeholder synergy to deliver sustainable, high-impact outcomes.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

Tourism events have become powerful drivers of cultural expression, economic development, and destination branding. However, the sustainability and success of such events often depend on two critical pillars: effective sponsorship and robust stakeholder relationships. In Nigeria, flagship events like the Calabar Carnival and the Osun Osogbo Festival exemplify the rich cultural assets embedded in tourism, yet they also highlight the challenges of maintaining long-term support and collaboration among key players.

This study therefore aims to explore how sponsorship and stakeholder relationships contribute to the success of tourism events in Nigeria, using these two prominent festivals as case studies. It seeks to understand how strategic financial support and inclusive engagement with stakeholders can enhance the quality, reach, and sustainability of tourism events in a developing economy.

To achieve this aim, the study is guided by the following specific objectives:

- I. To examine the role of sponsorship in supporting event planning, logistics, marketing, and overall delivery.
- II. To analyze the dynamics of stakeholder relationships among organizers, sponsors, government agencies, local communities, and attendees.
- III. To investigate the measurable impact of sponsorship on event outcomes, including attendance, revenue, participant satisfaction, and perceived event quality.
- IV. To identify factors shaping effective stakeholder engagement and their influence on the sustainability of events.

Research Questions

To guide the inquiry into the role of sponsorship and stakeholder relationships in tourism event success in Nigeria, this study will address the following research questions:

- I. In what ways does sponsorship contribute to the planning, execution, and overall success of tourism events in Nigeria?
- II. How do stakeholder relationships; particularly among event organizers, sponsors, attendees, local communities, and government agencies shape the management and performance of tourism events?

- III. What is the measurable impact of sponsorship on key event success indicators such as attendance levels, revenue generation, and participant experience?
- IV. What are the critical factors that influence stakeholder engagement in tourism events, and how do these factors affect the long-term sustainability and success of such events?

Scope of the Study

This study is geographically and contextually focused on two of Nigeria's most prominent cultural tourism events: the Calabar Carnival in Cross River State and the Osun Osogbo Festival in Osun State. It examined sponsorship dynamics and stakeholder engagement within these specific contexts. The study involved stakeholders such as event organizers, sponsors, local and state government representatives, community leaders, and event attendees. It explored both historical and current practices, with emphasis on developments in the post-COVID-19 recovery era.

Significance of the Study

This study on tourism sponsorship offers significant value to various stakeholders. This study offers insights for event organizers and sponsors into building strategic partnerships that enhance event quality, audience engagement, and destination branding (Adebayo, 2020; Chien *et al.*, 2022). Effective stakeholder relationship management is crucial for success. Policymakers and Tourism Planners informs the design of frameworks that encourage private sector investment in cultural events, promoting economic growth, cultural preservation, and community engagement.

The research supports cultural preservation, inclusive community engagement, and economic stimulation, aligning with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 8, 11, and 17). Grounded in Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), the study provides a lens for understanding stakeholder expectations, power dynamics, and collaborative potential. This enables a more inclusive and sustainable approach to event sponsorship and planning.

The study's findings will benefit stakeholders in the tourism industry, contributing to sustainable tourism development and events that benefit local communities and economies. By understanding the importance of stakeholder relationships and collaboration, stakeholders can work together to achieve sustainable development outcomes.

Justification of the Study

This study aligns with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). By exploring mechanisms to enhance tourism event productivity and stakeholder investment, the study contributes to job creation and economic stimulation. SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). The research supports cultural preservation and inclusive community engagement through effective event management. SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). It underscores the importance of public-private partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration in achieving sustainable development outcomes. The study is theoretically grounded in Stakeholder Theory (Freeman, 1984), which asserts that the success of any initiative depends on the balanced management of stakeholder interests. In the tourism event context, the theory provides a lens through which organizers can understand the expectations, power dynamics, and collaborative potential among different stakeholder groups. Integrating this perspective allows for a more inclusive and sustainable approach to event sponsorship and planning.

Conceptual Review

Sponsorship

The significance of sponsorship in driving successful outcomes in tourism events has been well acknowledged across existing literature, particularly in contexts where state funding is either insufficient or inconsistent. Within the Nigerian tourism and cultural landscape, sponsorship has evolved into a crucial mechanism for supporting event planning, enhancing visibility, and ensuring stakeholder participation. Kim *et al.*, (2019) highlight that sponsorship plays a pivotal role in organizing impactful events by contributing to logistics, audience mobilization, and brand reinforcement. Lee *et al.*, (2020) reinforce this by linking effective sponsorship strategies to heightened audience satisfaction and repeat attendance, underscoring the long-term value sponsorship can offer to both event organizers and brand partners. These studies, while rigorous, are largely situated within Western and East Asian contexts, limiting their generalizability to African cultural settings where informal stakeholder structures and fluctuating economic realities often shape event outcomes. For instance, while Lee *et al.*, emphasize structured sponsorship models, such models may not seamlessly translate into Nigeria's fragmented event sponsorship terrain, where relationships often rely on informal networks and political goodwill.

Further extending this discourse, Zhang *et al.*, (2018) and Li *et al.*, (2019) explore the broader implications of sponsorship beyond immediate event benefits, situating it within destination marketing and cultural tourism development. Zhang *et al.*, contend that sponsorship can help build the image of host destinations, thus increasing tourist arrivals and revenue. Li *et al.*, draw attention to the potential of cultural sponsorship in heritage preservation, stating that well-sponsored events often elevate the cultural profile of destinations and attract heritage-focused tourists. However, these studies tend to adopt a functionalist view of sponsorship, emphasizing its utility without critically engaging with how sponsorship arrangements are negotiated within socio-politically complex contexts like Nigeria. They also fall short of interrogating how sponsorship interplays with deeply rooted cultural values, which are often central to event legitimacy and community acceptance in African settings. While the findings are useful, they offer little insight into how sponsorship arrangements evolve in environments characterized by competing stakeholder priorities, informal decision-making processes, and limited regulatory oversight.

Nigerian-focused studies such as those by Adeyemi *et al.* (2020), Ogunnaike *et al.* (2020), and Akinbode (2020) attempt to localize the debate by emphasizing the centrality of sponsorship in promoting indigenous culture and strengthening local economies. Adeyemi *et al.* stress the need to manage sponsor relationships to maintain cultural authenticity and long-term support. Akinbode importantly argues that sponsorship should be framed as a partnership rather than a mere financial transaction, advocating for a shared value model that integrates sponsor objectives with stakeholder values. Yet, these studies often employ descriptive methodologies with limited empirical depth, lacking robust analytical frameworks to explore causality or the dynamics of sponsor-stakeholder interactions. Conceptually, most Nigerian studies treat sponsorship and stakeholder engagement as distinct phenomena, without critically examining how the two intersect and influence each other in practice. Methodologically, few adopt longitudinal or comparative case study designs that would allow for deeper insight into the evolving nature of sponsorship relationships over time. Thus, despite a growing body of work that affirms the importance of sponsorship, there remains a significant gap in understanding how sponsorship is strategically managed in contexts like Nigeria where multiple actors, fluid stakeholder roles, and limited institutional support converge to shape

the trajectory of tourism events. This study therefore seeks to bridge these gaps by investigating not only the independent effects of sponsorship and stakeholder relationships but also their intersectional influence on event success, using empirical evidence from two of Nigeria's most prominent cultural festivals.

Stakeholder Engagement

Robust stakeholder engagement is fundamental to the effective planning, execution, and sustainability of tourism events, particularly in socio-culturally complex and multi-interest environments such as Nigeria. Tourism events are not isolated spectacles; they are social ecosystems where the interests of diverse actors, sponsors, government bodies, event organizers, local communities, media, and tourists must be harmonized. Byrd *et al.*, (2019) assert that the quality of stakeholder relationships defined by open communication, mutual respect, and cooperative action plays a critical role in shaping event outcomes. Their work, however, tends to treat stakeholder engagement as a static construct, offering limited insight into how these relationships evolve over time or are strategically managed across different phases of event implementation. This limits its applicability in dynamic, informal systems like those in Nigeria, where stakeholder influence is often shaped by power asymmetries, cultural norms, and fluctuating political commitments.

Nwosu *et al.*, (2019) reinforce the argument that trust-based stakeholder relationships form the bedrock of long-term event success, especially in contexts where state support is minimal and reliance on community participation and private sponsorship is high. Their findings underscore the importance of inclusivity and mutual benefit, particularly in fostering local legitimacy and ownership. Yet, methodologically, their study adopts a largely narrative and descriptive approach, falling short of employing rigorous empirical tools to measure the impact of stakeholder engagement on event performance indicators such as satisfaction, retention, or community development outcomes. Additionally, the literature often views stakeholders as a collective block rather than unpacking the nuanced roles and motivations of different actors such as the distinct expectations of sponsors compared to local community members or government agencies thereby overlooking the tensions and negotiations inherent in multi-stakeholder contexts.

Building on this, Adeosun *et al.*, (2020) introduce the concept of experiential marketing into the sponsorship-stakeholder discourse, suggesting that modern sponsorship has evolved from passive funding into active co-creation of branded experiences. This perspective is particularly relevant in the Nigerian context, where cultural tourism events are increasingly being commodified as platforms for immersive brand storytelling. However, while Adeosun *et al.* provide a fresh conceptual lens, their work lacks empirical grounding in real-world case studies, and does not adequately address how these experiential sponsorship models are received by local communities or aligned with cultural integrity. Furthermore, their study does not examine the potential conflicts that may arise when commercial imperatives clash with community values an increasingly visible challenge in culturally sensitive events across Nigeria.

Despite a growing acknowledgment of the centrality of stakeholder engagement in tourism events, significant gaps remain in the literature. Conceptually, few studies have interrogated the intersection between stakeholder engagement and sponsorship management treating them as parallel rather than interdependent forces. Empirically, there is limited data on how stakeholder

relationships are built, negotiated, and sustained in the face of conflicting interests and limited institutional frameworks, especially in sub-Saharan African contexts. Methodologically, many of the existing studies rely on cross-sectional surveys or qualitative anecdotes, without deploying mixed-method approaches or longitudinal data to explore how stakeholder dynamics influence event success over time. These gaps are particularly troubling given the increasing professionalization of tourism events in Nigeria and the rising expectations of both sponsors and host communities.

Thus, there is a pressing need for context-specific, empirically grounded research that explores not just the presence of stakeholder relationships, but the quality, structure, and strategic management of those relationships in tandem with sponsorship practices. By focusing on how these two critical dimensions interact in shaping tourism event outcomes, this study aims to contribute a more nuanced understanding of sustainable event planning within culturally rich yet institutionally fragile settings like Nigeria

Theoretical Review

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory, first introduced by R. Edward Freeman in 1984 in his seminal book *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, offers a compelling framework for understanding the complex web of relationships that influence organizational success. Freeman's argument departed from the traditional shareholder-centric model of business and instead emphasized that organizations must be accountable to a broader network of stakeholder's individuals or groups who are affected by, or can affect, the organization's actions. This includes not only investors, but also employees, customers, suppliers, communities, governments, and others whose interests are tied to the organization's activities. The theory integrates insights from strategic management, systems thinking, and business ethics, asserting that long-term sustainability and performance are best achieved when stakeholder interests are actively identified, respected, and balanced.

At the heart of Stakeholder Theory is the notion that organizations are embedded in a broader social system and thus must create value for all legitimate stakeholders, not just economic shareholders. The theory rests on several foundational tenets: that organizations operate in interdependent relationships with multiple actors; that stakeholders differ in power, legitimacy, and urgency, which affects how they are engaged; and that ethical treatment, transparency, and mutual benefit are essential to building durable relationships. Furthermore, stakeholder relationships are dynamic and must be continuously managed through communication, negotiation, and trust-building. Freeman's framework is both normative prescribing how organizations should behave and instrumental providing strategic benefits when stakeholder engagement is effectively managed.

Applied to the context of event-based tourism in Nigeria, Stakeholder Theory provides a powerful lens through which to examine how sponsorship and stakeholder engagement jointly shape event outcomes. In the Nigerian context, tourism events such as the Osun-Osogbo Festival, Argungu Fishing Festival, and Calabar Carnival are rich cultural platforms involving a constellation of actors' government agencies, sponsors, event organizers, host communities, tourists, and the media. These stakeholders do not function in isolation; their interests are often overlapping, and in some cases, conflicting. For instance, while a sponsor may seek brand visibility and media attention, host communities may prioritize cultural preservation, job creation, and respect for traditional values.

Stakeholder Theory helps unpack these competing priorities and guides how event planners might balance them in a way that fosters cooperation and shared value creation.

In this study, Stakeholder Theory is applied to understand how sponsorship serves not only as a financial mechanism but also as a tool for stakeholder alignment and trust-building. When sponsors go beyond transactional relationships and actively engage with communities and event organizers by supporting local artisans, respecting cultural sensitivities, or investing in community infrastructure their involvement is perceived as legitimate and meaningful. This perception, in turn, increases the likelihood of event success, as community members become more willing to volunteer, share local knowledge, and support logistical arrangements. Conversely, a lack of stakeholder engagement or tokenistic sponsorship can breed mistrust, weaken local participation, and ultimately undermine event outcomes.

The Nigerian context adds layers of complexity that make the application of Stakeholder Theory particularly relevant. Stakeholder relationships in tourism events are often shaped by political allegiances, ethnic identities, and historical marginalization. As such, effective engagement requires more than strategic planning it demands cultural sensitivity, transparency, and an appreciation of local power dynamics. For example, in many Nigerian festivals, traditional rulers or custodians of heritage are not just symbolic figures but key gatekeepers whose endorsement or rejection can influence the trajectory of an event. Sponsors and organizers must therefore approach these actors not merely as participants but as co-creators of the event experience.

Methodologically, this theory supports the study's adoption of qualitative tools such as stakeholder mapping, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions to capture nuanced perspectives and power dynamics. It also informs the study's evaluation criteria by emphasizing outcomes that reflect shared benefits rather than singular success metrics such as profit or attendance. The theory encourages a shift from top-down, sponsor-driven planning to inclusive, stakeholder-driven governance, where diverse voices are heard and integrated throughout the event lifecycle.

Despite its growing adoption in tourism studies, there remain notable gaps in how Stakeholder Theory has been applied within the Nigerian context. Most existing literature tends to be descriptive, often failing to analyze the mechanisms through which stakeholder relationships shape event effectiveness. Moreover, few studies explore how sponsorship practices either reinforce or destabilize stakeholder legitimacy, especially in contexts marked by historical distrust or economic disparities. This study seeks to fill these empirical and conceptual gaps by offering a nuanced, context-sensitive application of Stakeholder Theory to the dynamics of sponsorship and engagement in Nigeria's tourism events. In doing so, it contributes to both theoretical development and practical insights for policymakers, sponsors, and event managers working to harness the transformative potential of tourism in Nigeria.

Gaps in Literature

While prior studies affirm the centrality of sponsorship and stakeholder relationships in event management, several gaps remain, particularly within the context of Nigerian tourism events (Fadeyebi, 2021). Much of the existing literature is rooted in Western or Asian settings, offering limited applicability to sub-Saharan African realities. This geographical and cultural gap has led to

a lack of contextualized understanding of how sponsorship functions amid the financial constraints, cultural sensitivities, and infrastructural challenges common in Nigeria.

Additionally, while sponsorship and stakeholder engagement are both individually recognized as key components of event success, their interrelationship remains under-explored. Few studies have examined how sponsorship strategies influence stakeholder trust, cooperation, or satisfaction and vice versa. This gap prevents the development of integrated frameworks that account for the mutual dependency of these variables.

Another overlooked area is the co-creation of experiential value. While recent scholarship has noted the rise of experiential marketing in events, research seldom addresses how these immersive experiences are collaboratively produced through sponsor stakeholder interaction. This is especially important in culturally rich environments like Nigeria, where local identity and community involvement shape tourist perceptions.

Furthermore, the predominant reliance on cross-sectional or single-case studies limits the understanding of long-term trends and outcomes. There is a need for longitudinal studies that assess how sponsorship and stakeholder relationships evolve over time, particularly in sustaining repeat tourism events.

Lastly, existing literature often treats these variables in isolation. There is a shortage of holistic models that integrate sponsorship, stakeholder relationships, and event success in a way that reflects the complexities of developing tourism destinations. Addressing these gaps is critical for developing more effective and context-sensitive strategies for event management in Nigeria and similar settings.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach, which is well-suited for exploring complex, context-dependent phenomena such as stakeholder relationships and sponsorship in tourism event management. As Yin (2023) suggests, case studies are particularly valuable when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its real-life context are not clearly defined. The case study method allows for an in-depth, holistic exploration of the dynamics of sponsorship and stakeholder engagement within specific tourism events. Two prominent cultural tourism events in Nigeria, the Osun Osogbo Festival and the Calabar Carnival have been selected as case studies. These events are not only among the most established and widely attended in Nigeria, but they also represent distinct cultural and regional identities. Their significance lies in their capacity to attract sponsorship and engage multiple stakeholders, making them ideal for investigating the interplay between sponsorship and stakeholder relationships in tourism event success.

Data

The study relies exclusively on secondary data, an established methodological approach when direct primary data collection is constrained or when the research objective is to synthesize existing evidence (Smith, 2021). Sources include academic journals and books focusing on tourism, event management, and stakeholder theory, government reports and policy documents related to tourism and cultural heritage in Nigeria, event-specific reports and evaluations, including sponsorship records and stakeholder engagement strategies, online media articles and news reports providing

real-time accounts and commentary on the festivals. These sources will be systematically reviewed to extract data relevant to sponsorship practices, stakeholder engagement, event planning, and perceived outcomes in the selected festivals.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a flexible yet rigorous qualitative technique that enables the identification and interpretation of recurring themes within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The process followed six iterative phases: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. Themes explored include, but are not limited to forms and sources of sponsorship in Nigerian tourism events, stakeholder roles, expectations, and levels of involvement, challenges and benefits of stakeholder sponsor collaboration, impact of sponsorship and stakeholder relationships on event success and sustainability. Thematic analysis allows for comparative insight into how the two case studies converge or differ in terms of sponsorship dynamics and stakeholder engagement, as recommended in multi-case research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Folorunso et al., 2023). Employing a qualitative case study grounded in secondary data offers the advantage of drawing from a broad range of perspectives and documented experiences, which is particularly useful in understanding historically embedded events such as the Osun Osogbo Festival and Calabar Carnival. Previous research (Waligo *et al.*, 2021; Richards, 2021) has shown that stakeholder theory is best examined through in-depth contextual analysis, where multiple actors interact over time within culturally significant environments. Moreover, the use of secondary data aligns with contemporary qualitative inquiry, which values the interpretive potential of pre-existing knowledge and its ability to reveal insights into social and organizational processes (Silverman, 2020). Given the focus on stakeholder theory, secondary sources also allow for a more comprehensive analysis of stakeholder perceptions and institutional frameworks, which might be less accessible through primary interviews alone.

Although the study relies on publicly available secondary data, ethical academic practice was strictly observed. All sources were appropriately cited and referenced. No confidential or proprietary data was used. The analysis was conducted objectively and reflectively to avoid bias or misrepresentation of the cultural significance of the case studies.

Findings and Discussion

This study set out to examine the roles of sponsorship and stakeholder relationships in the success and sustainability of tourism events in Nigeria, using the Calabar Carnival and Osun Osogbo Festival as case studies. The findings, organized around the four guiding research questions, reveal important insights.

What role does sponsorship play in the success of tourism events in Nigeria?

Sponsorship emerged as a critical enabler of tourism event success. In both case studies, sponsors provided essential financial and logistical support that enhanced the quality, reach, and overall execution of the events. At the Calabar Carnival, major sponsors including MTN, DSTV, and Guinness financed core components such as float production, artist bookings, and event promotion. This sponsorship not only ensured operational feasibility but elevated the carnival's international profile. Similarly, the Osun Osogbo Festival, though smaller in scale and more culturally rooted, benefits from the support of local sponsors and state tourism bodies, which contribute to event logistics and cultural exhibitions. These examples reinforce Meenaghan's (2001) view that

sponsorship is integral to sustaining large-scale events, especially where public funding alone may be insufficient.

How do stakeholder relationships particularly among event organizers, sponsors, attendees, local communities, and government agencies affect the management and success of tourism events?

The quality of stakeholder relationships significantly influenced event outcomes. The Calabar Carnival exemplifies effective stakeholder coordination through a structured festival management framework that includes representatives from government, private sponsors, and local communities. This inclusive approach fosters collaboration, minimizes conflict, and ensures smoother planning and execution. In contrast, the Osun Osogbo Festival benefits from strong community ownership and cultural legitimacy but faces challenges in aligning traditional custodianship with commercial interests. Sponsors at times hesitate to fully engage due to concerns about clashing with sacred rituals. These dynamics underscore Freeman's (1984) and Byrd *et al.*, (2016) argument that stakeholder engagement must be carefully managed to balance competing interests and sustain trust.

What is the impact of sponsorship on key success indicators such as event attendance, revenue generation, and the overall event experience?

The study found that sponsorship directly correlates with increased event attendance, media visibility, and revenue performance. At the Calabar Carnival, years of strong sponsorship consistently produced higher visitor numbers, extensive media coverage, and vibrant event atmospheres enhanced by digital activations, celebrity appearances, and branded experiences. These factors contributed to tourism growth and local economic impact. The Osun Osogbo Festival, though less commercialized, also sees tangible benefits from sponsorship in terms of improved organization and exposure. Its appeal lies more in authenticity and cultural richness, which sponsors use to position themselves as supporters of heritage and social responsibility. Thus, sponsorship does more than fund logistics it shapes the quality and perception of the entire event experience.

What factors influence effective stakeholder relationships in tourism events, and how do these factors affect event sustainability and success?

Several factors were identified as essential to successful stakeholder relationships: early involvement in planning, open and transparent communication, shared goals, and respect for cultural values. These elements contribute to trust-building, reduce friction, and promote long-term engagement. The Calabar Carnival's success has been partly attributed to its professionalized and inclusive stakeholder model, while Osun Osogbo thrives on deeply embedded communal ties and shared identity. However, the latter's more informal structure occasionally limits broader sponsorship appeal and expansion. Both examples suggest that stakeholder cohesion whether rooted in formal planning or cultural alignment is key to event continuity and adaptability.

Conclusion

In responding to the research questions, this study affirms that the dynamic interplay between sponsorship and stakeholder relationships is not only integral to the effective planning and execution of tourism events in Nigeria, but also to their long-term sustainability. Sponsorship serves as a critical enabler, providing the financial and promotional support necessary to elevate event quality and reach. At the same time, inclusive and strategic stakeholder engagement ensures that

events are culturally grounded, socially accepted, and locally relevant fostering a sense of ownership and resilience among host communities.

These findings offer meaningful contributions to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism development and underscore the importance of integrated planning approaches that balance economic imperatives with social and cultural considerations. In doing so, the study aligns with key global development frameworks, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Ultimately, tourism events that are supported by well-aligned sponsorship models and inclusive stakeholder strategies hold significant potential to advance not just economic growth, but also cultural preservation and community empowerment.

Recommendations

This study, guided by four key objectives, offers practical insights into enhancing the success and sustainability of tourism events in Nigeria through effective sponsorship and stakeholder engagement.

In addressing the first objective to examine the role of sponsorship in event success, the study recommends adopting digital tools for sponsorship management. These platforms can streamline communication, monitor performance, and offer real-time insights into audience engagement. Such systems not only improve sponsor satisfaction but also enable organizers to use sponsorship more strategically to scale events and reach wider audiences.

Aligned with the second objective, analyzing stakeholder relationships. The study advocates for clear, structured engagement frameworks that define stakeholder roles and communication protocols. Especially in culturally sensitive events like the Osun Osogbo Festival, participatory planning fosters trust, reduces conflict, and strengthens local ownership which is the key to cultural authenticity and community support.

To meet the third objective; investigating the impact of sponsorship on event outcomes, the study highlights the value of aligning sponsorship with broader CSR initiatives. When sponsors are seen as partners in social, cultural, or environmental development, the relationship becomes more meaningful, enhancing audience connection and long-term sponsorship potential.

In line with the fourth objective; identifying factors influencing stakeholder relationships, the study calls for ongoing feedback and evaluation mechanisms. Regular reviews help organizers respond to stakeholder concerns, improve engagement strategies, and adapt to evolving needs.

To ensure financial resilience, the study also recommends diversifying funding sources beyond corporate sponsorship. Exploring government grants, ticket sales, merchandising, and community-based support can reduce vulnerability and safeguard event continuity in periods of economic uncertainty. In sum, thoughtful sponsorship strategies and inclusive stakeholder practices are not just administrative tools, they are essential to creating tourism events that are impactful, sustainable, and culturally resonant.

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HYGIENE PRACTICES AND CUSTOMER PATRONAGE OF FAST-FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS IN ILORIN METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper investigates the role of hygiene in increasing the patronage of food service establishments. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) confirms that between 70% and 75% of international tourists' expenditure goes to hospitality services on annual basis. This accentuates the strategic importance of the sector to tourism, hence, the need to maintain the highest possible standard of hygiene in the industry. Hygiene is an important component of good health assurance. There are quite a number of forms in which hygiene can be exhibited in the hospitality industry; however, there is no sufficient literature on its role in promoting hospitality businesses through increasing patronage of food service establishment. The paper adopted a descriptive research design majorly using primary data, secondary data, and participant observation at selected hospitality outlets within Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. The Findings revealed that hygiene practices have a key role to play in ensuring the growth of hospitality business and can as well enhance revenue generation for hospitality establishment. The paper therefore recommended that Management of Fast Food establishments should adopt the implementation of HACPP system, improve environmental hygiene, and promote hand hygiene among both the staff and customers to ensure food safety; food safety regulations, regular inspections, and public awareness campaigns must be ensured Management of Fast Food establishments, and that Staff of Fast Food establishments must be trained and retrained regularly.

Key Words: Hygiene, Patronage, HACCP, Hospitality, and Sanitation

Introduction

The hospitality industry encompasses broad range of service related to lodging, food and drink service, event planning, theme parks, travel, and tourism. The hospitality industry provides services for people who are away from home regardless of whether it is for a long or a short period of time. These services can vary according to the specific needs of both the person away from home and the organization operating those services. The hospitality industry is important to the development of many parts of the world. In some regions, income from it becomes one of the main sources of foreign exchange e.g. Fiji, the Caribbean and Hong Kong. The industry is also important because it contributes to the growth of an economy by providing a lot of employment opportunities for the people, funding a large percentage of a country's Gross Domestic Product, GDP, thereby helping to raise the national income and by earning foreign currencies through the goods and services provided to foreign visitors, thus improving the balance of payments (Cracolici and Nijkamp,

2005). The industry is known for its focus on customer service and creating positive experiences for guests which are often obtainable in fast food establishments (Diener and Seligman, 2022).

Fast food is the term given to foods that can be prepared and served very quickly and refers to food sold in a restaurant or store with preheated or precooled ingredients and served to the consumers in a packaged form for take-out or take away. Easterlin (2023), described fast food or junk food as those foods that do not belong to a major food group. The major food groups according to him are breads and grains, vegetables, fruits, dairy meat and beans. He described junk food as visible fats (butter, margarine, oils, dressing and gravies); sweetness (sugar, syrup, candy and sweetened beverages); deserts (cookies, cakes, pastries, ice cream, pudding); salty snacks (potato chips, corn chips, plantain chips, etc.), miscellaneous (coffee, tea). The menus offered by Fast food are usually called convenience food. The advent of fast food has contributed to the expansion of the hospitality industry. There is no doubting that hospitality industry is the livewire of tourism at all levels. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) confirms that between 70% and 75% of international tourists' expenditure goes to hospitality services on annual basis. This confirms the strategic importance of the sector to tourism, and it therefore becomes essential to maintain a certain level of hygiene in these outlets.

Diener and Seligman (2022), see hygiene is an act of cleanliness as a means to healthy living, to be free from diseases and germs. It is the observance of effective sanitary measures in food production, purchasing, processing and marketing. Hygiene is an important component of good health assurance. Health is the level of functional or metabolic efficiency of a living organism. In humans it is the ability of individuals or communities to adapt and self-manage when facing physical, mental or social challenges. The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health in its broader sense in its 1948 constitution as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Folorunso *et al.*, (2024) affirms that hygiene is a set of practices performed for the preservation of health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "Hygiene refers to conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases." Whereas in popular culture and parlance it can often mean mere 'cleanliness', hygiene in its fullest and original meaning goes much beyond that to include all circumstances and practices, lifestyle issues, premises and commodities that engender a safe and healthy environment. While in modern medical sciences there is a set of standards of hygiene recommended for different situations, what is considered hygienic or not can vary between different cultures, genders and age groups. Some regular hygienic practices may be considered good habits by a society while the neglect of hygiene can be considered disgusting, disrespectful or even threatening.

Hygiene in hospitality is a concept related to cleanliness, health and medicine, as well as to personal and professional care practices related to most aspects of operation in the industry. In hospitality, hygiene practices are employed as preventative measures to reduce the incidence and curtail contaminations WHO (2014). In the manufacture of food, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and other products, good hygiene is a key part of quality assurance i.e. ensuring that the product complies with microbial specifications appropriate to its use. The terms cleanliness (or cleaning) and hygiene are often used interchangeably, which can cause confusion. In general, hygiene mostly means practices that prevent spread of disease-causing organisms. Since cleaning processes (e.g., hand washing) remove infectious microbes as well as dirt and soil, they are often the means to achieve hygiene. Other uses of the term appear in phrases including: body hygiene, personal hygiene, sleep

hygiene, mental hygiene, dental hygiene, and occupational hygiene, used in connection with public health. Hygiene is also the name of a branch of science that deals with the promotion and preservation of health, also called hygienic. Hygiene practices vary widely, and what is considered acceptable in one culture might not be acceptable in another. Washing one's hands, a form of hygiene, is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

The perceived role of hygiene practices in customer patronage of fast food establishments in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria, is a pressing concern. Despite the growing awareness of food safety and hygiene, many fast food establishments in Ilorin still struggle with maintaining adequate hygiene standards, potentially compromising customer health and patronage. With the background established for this work, this study therefore aims to investigate the perceived-role of hygiene practices in the hospitality industry and its impacts on customer satisfaction and customer patronage in food service establishment.

Literature Review

Forms of Hygiene in Hospitality Industry

There are quite a number of forms by which hygiene can exist, some of them include medical hygiene, and medical hygiene pertains to the hygiene practices related to the administration of medicine, and medical care, which prevents or minimizes disease and the spreading of disease. Also, home hygiene pertains to the hygiene practices that prevent or minimize disease and the spreading of disease in home (domestic) and in everyday life settings such as social settings, public transport, the work place, public places etc (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2023). Hygiene in home and everyday life settings plays an important part in preventing spread of infectious diseases. It includes procedures used in a variety of domestic situations such as hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, food and water hygiene, general home hygiene (hygiene of environmental sites and surfaces), care of domestic animals, and home healthcare (the care of those who are at greater risk of infection).

At present, these components of hygiene tend to be regarded as separate issues, although all are based on the same underlying microbiological principles. Preventing the spread of infectious diseases means breaking the chain of infection transmission. The simple principle is that, if the chain of infection is broken, infection cannot spread. In response to the need for effective codes of hygiene in home and everyday life settings the International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene has developed a risk-based approach based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), which has come to be known as "targeted hygiene". Targeted hygiene is based on identifying the routes of spread of pathogens in the home, and applying hygiene procedures at critical points at appropriate times to break the chain of infection (Faber *et al.*, 2010).

Other important form of hygiene is hand hygiene; hand hygiene is defined as hand washing or washing hands and nails with soap and water or using a waterless hand sanitizer. Hand hygiene is central to preventing spread of infectious diseases in home and everyday life settings. Respiratory hygiene on the other hand implies the use of correct respiratory and hand hygiene when coughing and sneezing reduces the spread of germs particularly during the cold and flu season. Similarly, food hygiene is concerned with the hygiene practices that prevent food poisoning. The five key principles of food hygiene, according to WHO, are:

III. Prevent contaminating food with mixing chemicals, spreading from people, and animals.

- IV. Separate raw and cooked foods to prevent contaminating the cooked foods.
- V. Cook foods for the appropriate length of time and at the appropriate temperature to kill pathogens.
- VI. Store food at the proper temperature.
- VII. Use safe water and raw materials

Hygiene in the kitchen, bathroom and toilet: Routine cleaning of (hand, food, & drinking water) sites and surfaces (such as toilet seats and flush handles, door and tap handles, work surfaces, bath and basin surfaces) in the kitchen, bathroom and toilet reduces the risk of spread of germs. The infection risk from the toilet itself is not high, provided it is properly maintained, although some splashing and aerosol formation can occur during flushing, particularly where someone in the family has diarrhea. Germs can survive in the scum or scale left behind on baths and wash basins after washing and bathing (Diener and Biswas-Diener, 2023).

In the developing world, for decades, universal access to water and sanitation has been seen as the essential step in reducing the preventable ID burden, but it is now clear that this is best achieved by programs that integrate hygiene promotion with improvements in water quality and availability, and sanitation. About 2 million people die every year due to diarrheal diseases, most of them are children less than 5 years of age. The most affected are the populations in developing countries, living in extreme conditions of poverty, normally peri-urban dwellers or rural inhabitants. Providing access to sufficient quantities of safe water, the provision of facilities for a sanitary disposal of excreta, and introducing sound hygiene behaviors are of capital importance to reduce the burden of disease caused by these risk factors (Cummins, 2020). Other hygiene practices, such as safe disposal of waste, surface hygiene, and care of domestic animals, are also important in low income communities to break the chain of infection transmission (WHO, 2022).

Ultimately, personal hygiene involves those practices performed by an individual to care for one's bodily health and well-being, through cleanliness. Motivations for personal hygiene practice include reduction of personal illness, healing from personal illness, optimal health and sense of well-being, social acceptance and prevention of spread of illness to others. What is considered proper personal hygiene can be cultural-specific and may change over time. In some cultures, removal of body hair is considered proper hygiene. Other practices that are generally considered proper hygiene include bathing regularly, washing hands regularly and especially before handling food, washing scalp hair, keeping hair short or removing hair, wearing clean clothing, brushing one's teeth, cutting finger nails, besides other practices. Some practices are gender-specific, such as by a woman during her menstrual cycle. People tend to develop a routine for attending to their personal hygiene needs. Other personal hygienic practices would include covering one's mouth when coughing, disposal of soiled tissues appropriately, making sure toilets are clean, and making sure food handling areas are clean, besides other practices. Some cultures do not kiss or shake hands to reduce transmission of bacteria by contact.

Food Production and Hygiene

In food production, culinary hygiene pertains to the practices related to food management and cooking to prevent food contamination, prevent food poisoning and minimize the transmission of disease to other foods, humans or animals. Culinary hygiene practices specify safe ways to handle, store, prepare, serve and eat food. In addition, personal service hygiene pertains to the practices

related to the care and use of instruments used in the administration of personal care services to people. Personal hygiene practices include sterilization of instruments used by service providers including hairdressers, aestheticians, and other service providers. It also includes sterilization by autoclave of instruments used in body piercing and tattoo marking. Lastly, sleep hygiene is the recommended behavioral and environmental practice that is intended to promote better quality sleep. This recommendation was developed in the late 1970s as a method to help people with mild to moderate insomnia, but, as of 2014, the evidence for effectiveness of individual recommendations is "limited and inconclusive".

Hygiene is therefore a very important practice in food production and service, as it has the capacity to make or mar the hospitality business establishment. It is on this premise that this study tends to examine the contribution of hygiene in all its forms to the patronage of food service establishments in the hospitality industry using selected fast food outlets in Ilorin, Kwara State as case studies.

Customer Patronage

The act of consumer buying goods and services from a particular enterprise is referred to as customer patronage. Acee-Eke and Ogonu (2020) posited that customer patronage provides the basis for stable and growing market share. The term customer patronage has been defined by various authors in the academic world. Adiele, Greid and Ezirim (2015) defined customer patronage as the customers' efforts to purchase a firm's goods and services on a regular basis. According to Kabuoh, Onia, Oundiwin and Erigbe (2020) customer patronage is a passionate obligation exhibited by a customer to consistently adhere to a particular brand and repurchase the product no matter what the situation is, due to already established brand loyalty. Njelita and Anyasor (2020) asserted that patronage in marketing can be seen as an exchange process that involves two parties, the giver and the receiver. The giver (business organization) must have something of value (goods or services) to offer to the receiver (consumer/customer), who will pay money or offer something in exchange for the goods or services received. From the above definitions, it is clear that people purchase or patronize organization's goods and services at different times and for various reasons to satisfy their needs and wants. However, the extent to which an individual will patronize an organization depends on how he/she perceives the organization's physical environment (servicescape) and how the individual also thinks and feels that the condition of the service environment is consistent with his/her personality (Adiele et al, 2015).

In today's competitive world, satisfying customers should be the main aim of any organization that wants to sustain patronage. Customers urge to purchase /patronize a product is born out of the desire for satisfaction (Njelita & Anyasor, 2020). Customer patronage demeanor can be measured by a variety of factors which include devotion, sum of money spent, reorder rate, number of visits, extent of satisfaction, time taken and amount of goods purchased (Umeanyika, Eze, Anyasor & Anetoh, 2021; Shonubi, et al., 2025).

Repositioning of product is also vital in achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty. This is necessary to change the organization's image in order to take a new place and value in the customer's mind. As noted by Chendo, Oguanobi and Anyaegbunam (2025) repositioning can help businesses gain competitive edge by encouraging patronage and ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. Organizations in the service industry such as hotels can improve customers purchase behaviour by creating value in their product offerings to meet customers' expectations and satisfy

their needs. In addition, Kabuoh et al (2020) state that the satisfaction customers derived from goods or services offered by an organization will improve patronage and loyalty. Satisfaction has greater influence in customer loyalty because when organizations attach more value to the expectations of its customers, then it derives the customer loyalty (Sarwar, Abbasi & Pervaiz, 2012). Adiele et al, (2015) noted that there exists strong bond between patronage and loyalty, as patronage emanate as a desire to be committed to an organization either as a result of its service quality or perceived service qualities.

Loyalty can be seen as the response that reflected buyers' continuous purchasing behaviour to embark on repeat purchase, stick with the same brand and convey positive information about the brand. Therefore, there is need for hotels to always strive to improve their services beyond customers' expectations for enhanced customer experience that will lead to customer loyalty.

Theoretical Review

Health Belief Theory/Model

The Health Belief Theory/Model is the underpinning theory for this paper. The health belief was chosen over other models in the study to understand what factors are involved in the provision of safer and hygienic foods by food service operations (Abdussalam, & Käferstein, 2020). The health belief model was at the start developed in the 1950's by American social psychologists and used in order to account for why people failed to participate in health promotion programs. The model has developed over the years as a response to public health concerns (Champion & Skinner 2018). The model is constructed on two major sources: Cognitive Theory and Stimulus Response Theory. As noted by Stimulus Response Theory on the term reinforcements, Skinner developed the hypothesis: "the frequency of behaviour is determined by its consequences or reinforcement" (Champion & Skinner 2018). This indicates that, for a behaviour to be repeated, an act of reward for such behaviour needs to be reinforced (Acho-Chi, 2021). The Health Belief Model (HBM) is normally used in order to prevent health risks, and its purpose in this study is to find how factors to safer and hygienic food provision can be enforced in food service operations for the prevention of diseases. The primary ideas of the HBM constructs is to predict why people will take action to prevent disease or to control illness conditions through their behaviour, therefore the behaviour of food handlers in food service operations is of interest in this study (Gershon, Nuoh, & Atelu, 2021).

Methodology

This study perceived the role of Hygiene Practices in Customer Patronage of Fast Food Establishments in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria, adopting a descriptive research design majorly using primary data, secondary data and participants' observation at selected hospitality outlets within Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. Simple random sampling was used to select 120 respondents were sampled across six (6) selected fast food establishments and questionnaires were used to obtain data. Also, a review of existing report from governing bodies on health and hygiene as applicable to hospitality industry was equally used to buttress the primary survey, participant observation and shadow survey of the selected hospitality outlets. These techniques were employed in order to gather unbiased and naturalistic data that are essential for this study as cases of hygiene is deemed to be a sensitive one among hospitality businesses. The findings are comprehensively discussed and necessary conclusions were drawn.

Findings and Discussion of Results

Hygiene as a motivating factor in customers' patronage of hospitality outlets

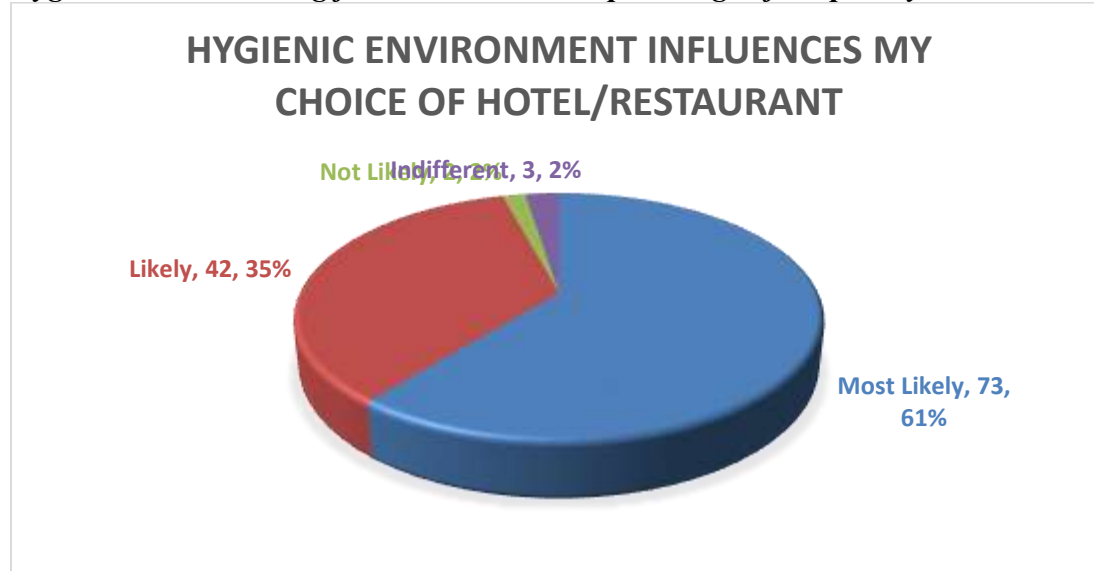


Fig. 1: Customers preferences and choices of hospitality outlets

Source: Authors' compilation, 2024

Role of Hygiene in Hospitality Business Development

Table 1: The Role of Hygiene in Hospitality Business Operations

S/N	QUESTIONS	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Hygiene is a motivating factor in my choice of hospitality outlets	64	53.3	44	36.7	6	5	3	2.5	3	2.5	120	100
2	I will be loyal to a hygiene compliance outlet	78	65	30	25	8	6.6	2	1.7	2	1.7	120	100
3	I'm encouraged to spend more when the environment is conducive	89	73.4	27	22.5	1	0.8	3	2.5	1	0.8	120	100
4.	Employees are aware of hygiene practices in my preferred outlets	62	51.7	41	34.1	12	10	3	2.5	2	1.7	120	100
5.	Management have measures in place to ensure consistency	68	56.7	40	33.3	3	2.5	4	3.3	5	4.2	120	100

Source: Authors' compilation, 2024

Figure 1 above shows that 61% of the respondents are most likely to select their choice of hospitality business to patronize due to the level of hygiene obtainable in such outlet, 35% are equally likely to follow suit. This shows that a hospitality establishment must ensure that all forms of hygiene are obtainable in their outlet. This submission was buttressed by 53% of the respondents in **Table 1**, who strongly opine that hygiene is a motivating factor in their choice of hospitality outlets. A further 65% affirm that they will be loyal to a hospitality establishment that is hygiene compliant. A very significant 73.4% strongly agreed that a hygienic hospitality establishment can spur them to spend more money while in the establishment. This implies that hygiene can enhance revenue generation for hospitality establishment. 57% of the respondent strongly agreed that management of their preferred hospitality outlets have measures in place to ensure continuous and consistent hygiene practices. Similarly, 52% strongly agreed that employees are well oriented about hygiene practices in their preferred hospitality outlets. This was supported by the study of Njelita & Anyasor (2020), that in today's competitive world, satisfying customers should be the main aim of any organization that wants to sustain patronage. Furthermore, Umeanyika, Eze, Anyasor & Anetoh (2021) corroborated this that Customers urge to purchase /patronize a product is born out of the desire for satisfaction. Customer patronage demeanor can be measured by a variety of factors which include devotion, sum of money spent, reorder rate, number of visits, extent of satisfaction, time taken and amount of goods purchased.

Summary

This study examined the role of hygiene in customer patronage of selected fast food outlets in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. The materials and method for the research design is survey method through which close and open ended questionnaires were administered. The findings evidently showed that it is imperative for hospitality establishments to have effective hygiene measure in place which cut across all the facet of their businesses. This includes food hygiene, kitchen hygiene, environmental hygiene and personal hygiene. It substantially also includes fire and accident safety and general safety in the workplace for staff, in the lodging place for guests. A total number of 120 questionnaires were recovered and found useful for the purpose of this research; they were administered to both staff and guests of the six selected fast food outlets in Ilorin.

It could be deduced from the results analyzed that standard hygienic practices promote growth of fast food businesses and also increase customer loyalty. The customer loyalty equally leads to word of mouth marketing for the establishment as satisfied customer tends to share the good will of the fast food establishment to other prospective customers. Since guests want to be accommodated in a safe and secured environment and they don't want to be exposed to food poisoning, it is expedients and germane for hospitality establishment to main consistency in its exhibition of standard safety and hygiene practices which lead to business growth and development.

Conclusion

The paper highlights the significant impact of hygiene practices on customer patronage in fast food establishments in Ilorin Metropolis. The findings suggest that customers are increasingly concerned about food safety and hygiene, and are more likely to patronize establishments that maintain high standards of cleanliness and hygiene. To improve customer patronage, fast food establishments should prioritize hygiene practices, including regular training for staff, proper food handling and storage, and maintaining clean environments. Regulatory authorities should also enforce food safety regulations and provide support for establishments to improve hygiene standards.

Recommendations

The researchers hereby recommended that;

1. Management of Fast Food establishments should adopt the implementation of HACPP system, improve environmental hygiene, and promote hand hygiene among both the staff and customers to ensure food safety.
2. Food safety regulations, regular inspections, and public awareness campaigns must be ensured Management of Fast Food establishments.
3. Staff of Fast Food establishments must be trained and re-trained regularly.

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SECURITY THREAT TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Tourism is a vital driver of socio-economic development and cultural preservation, yet its sustainability in Kwara State, Nigeria, has been severely undermined by rising insecurity in the form of kidnapping and banditry. This study investigated security threats as barriers to tourism flourishing and sustainability using a mixed-methods approach. A quantitative survey of 400 respondents was complemented by qualitative interviews with 30 key informants, including community leaders, tourism stakeholders, and security officials. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative responses were thematically interpreted. Findings revealed that 55.9% of respondents strongly agreed that kidnapping and banditry are major security threats, while 52.7% confirmed insecurity has reduced tourist arrivals. Similarly, 58.5% reported increasing incidents of kidnapping, particularly in border and forested communities, with highway ambushes identified as a common pattern. Socio-economic consequences were pronounced, as 57.2% agreed insecurity reduces tourism income, 51.9% noted job losses, and 58.5% emphasized that tourism sustainability is threatened. Qualitative insights reinforced these patterns, highlighting festival cancellations, investor withdrawal, and erosion of community trust. Government policies and security measures were perceived as inadequate, with 53.2% of respondents agreeing that policies have not effectively addressed kidnapping, while 55.9% noted that banditry persists despite interventions. However, consensus emerged around strategies for mitigation, as 61.2% strongly supported government–community collaboration, 59.8% endorsed strengthening law enforcement, and 58.5% emphasized investment in security infrastructure. The study concludes that sustainable tourism development in Kwara State requires a multi-stakeholder approach integrating government commitment, community resilience, and private sector investment. Without decisive action, insecurity will continue to erode the economic and cultural potential of tourism in Kwara State.

Keywords: Banditry, Kidnapping, Security Threats, Tourism Flourishing, Tourism Sustainability

Introduction

Tourism is recognized as one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, significantly contributing to national economies through Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment generation. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2023) estimated that tourism accounted for approximately 10% of global GDP and supported over 300 million jobs. Beyond its economic benefits, tourism fosters intercultural exchange, promotes peace, and supports

community development (UNWTO, 2020). However, the industry remains highly vulnerable to security threats such as terrorism, political violence, organized crime, and kidnapping, which have repeatedly disrupted tourist flows across various regions. Akamavi, Ibrahim, and Swaray (2023) demonstrated that political violence exerts persistent negative effects on international tourist arrivals, often necessitating prolonged recovery periods for affected destinations. Similarly, WTTC (2023) emphasizes that perceptions of crime and insecurity substantially influence destination image, often deterring tourists even when actual risks are localized. Recent scholarship underscores the necessity of integrating security considerations into tourism governance frameworks, highlighting that resilience and securitization are vital for maintaining competitiveness in an increasingly volatile global environment (Wendt & Bógdał Brzezińska, 2024). Historically, incidents such as the September 11 attacks in the United States, terrorist bombings in European cities, and organized crime activities in Latin America exemplify how insecurity undermines tourism's economic and cultural potential (Hall, 2010; Wendt & Bógdał Brzezińska, 2024). For instance, Mexico and Colombia have experienced significant declines in tourist arrivals, diminished destination reputation, and reduced foreign investment due to security concerns (Britton, 2013; Sanchez, 2019). These examples underscore the industry's vulnerability to security threats and the critical importance of stability for sustainable tourism development.

Africa presents immense tourism potential, driven by diverse attractions such as wildlife reserves, eco-tourism initiatives, and rich cultural heritage sites. Countries like Kenya, South Africa, and Morocco have leveraged tourism as a major source of foreign exchange (UNWTO, 2022). Nonetheless, security challenges—including terrorism in East Africa, political instability in North Africa, and banditry in West Africa—continue to impede growth. Notable incidents, such as terrorist attacks in Egypt and Tunisia, have led to sharp declines in inbound tourism (Ussher & Nkondo, 2020). Scholarly research indicates that insecurity diminishes Africa's global competitiveness by reducing tourist arrivals, damaging destination branding, and eroding investor confidence (Udu, Chukwu, Ibenwo, & Ogbaga, 2022; Omitola, 2023). Despite resilience initiatives, recovery remains difficult due to institutional weaknesses and limited resources. Nigeria, endowed with abundant tourism assets, including cultural festivals, historic sites, natural attractions, and a vibrant hospitality industry has recognized tourism as a potential catalyst for economic diversification away from oil dependency (Ogunleye & Olaniyan, 2020). However, security crises, notably Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, herder–farmer conflicts in the Middle Belt, militancy in the Niger Delta, and widespread kidnapping for ransom, have severely constrained this potential (Nwokorie, Akalazu, & Ojo, 2021). Kidnapping and banditry, in particular, have become pervasive threats, undermining tourist confidence, deterring investment, and reducing tourist arrivals (Onuche & Martins, 2024).

Kwara State, situated in North-Central Nigeria, exemplifies these challenges despite its rich cultural heritage, historical landmarks, and natural attractions. Historically regarded as a peaceful state, recent years have seen a troubling rise in insecurity, particularly kidnapping and banditry. For instance, in November 2025, Kwara recorded over 207 killings and 177 abductions within ten months, with incidents ranging from highway ambushes to attacks on communities and worshippers (ICIR Nigeria, 2025). Several rural communities, including Isapa, Oke-Ode, and others in Kwara South, have experienced raids by armed groups, resulting in trauma, economic disruption, and displacement (Olasehinde, Issah, & Yahaya, 2025; Leadership, 2025). The porous borders, extensive forested terrains, and weak security infrastructure exacerbate vulnerabilities, enabling

cross-border raids and bandit hideouts. These challenges, which could have both immediate and long-term effect threatens the sustainability of Nigeria's tourism industry and call for targeted, context-specific interventions.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, insecurity has become a significant obstacle to the sustainable development of tourism. Despite the country's rich cultural and natural resources, incidents of kidnapping and banditry are increasingly prevalent, undermining the growth and resilience of the sector (Nwokorie, Akalazu, & Ojo, 2021; Onuche & Martins, 2024). These security challenges not only discourage potential tourists but also erode investor confidence, disrupt cultural festivals, and weaken social cohesion within communities. While existing research has primarily focused on the Northeast and Northwest regions where insurgency and banditry are most intense (Udu, Chukwu, Ibenwo, & Ogbaga, 2022; Omitola, 2023), insecurity is gradually spreading to other parts of Nigeria, including Kwara State, which has traditionally been regarded as relatively peaceful and hosts notable tourism assets such as the Esie Museum, Owu Falls, and the Durbar festival in Ilorin, alongside numerous vibrant cultural festivals. Despite this potential, recent trends indicate a rise in kidnapping and banditry, particularly in rural communities such as Baruten, Kaiama, Babanla, Sagbe, Oke-Ode, Obo-Ile, Obo-Ayegunle, Esie, and Osi. The porous borders, extensive forested areas, and rural settlements hosting attractions make these regions especially vulnerable to cross-border raids and bandit hideouts (Oni, 2024; Olasehinde, Issah, & Yahaya, 2025). These security breaches have generated widespread fear among residents and potential visitors, significantly undermining perceptions of safety and the viability of the tourism industry in the state. The public perception of insecurity in the State has led to a decline in tourist arrivals, with cultural custodians lamenting poorly attended festivals, hospitality businesses experiencing reduced patronage, and investors withdrawing from ongoing projects.

Moreover, many communities are experiencing restricted movement and participation in tourism-related activities, further aggravating economic stagnation and cultural erosion. Despite the gravity of these challenges, the academic literature remains limited with regard to Kwara State. While national (Olasehinde et al., 2025) and international (Wendt & Bógdał-Brzezińska, 2024) studies have explored the nexus between insecurity and tourism broadly, there is a notable dearth of research focusing specifically on the vulnerabilities and dynamics within Kwara. This gap impairs the development of targeted policies and effective interventions that address the unique security challenges facing the state's tourism sector.

Research Objectives

The overarching aim of this study is to examine kidnapping and banditry as barriers to tourism flourishing and sustainability in Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Investigate the prevalence of kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria and how these phenomena affect tourism activities.
- ii. Analyze the specific manifestations of kidnapping and banditry in Kwara State and their implications for tourism growth.
- iii. Evaluate the socio-economic consequences of insecurity on tourism sustainability in Kwara State.
- iv. Identify gaps in government policies, community responses, and security measures that hinder tourism development in the state.

- v. Recommend strategies for mitigating security threats to enhance tourism flourishing and sustainability in Kwara State.

Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, the study will be guided by the following research questions:

- i. How do kidnapping and banditry manifest in Nigeria, and what are their impacts on tourism activities?
- ii. What are the specific patterns and dynamics of kidnapping and banditry in Kwara State, and how do they affect tourism growth?
- iii. What socio-economic consequences do insecurity and fear of crime have on tourism sustainability in Kwara State?
- iv. To what extent have government policies, community responses, and security measures addressed kidnapping and banditry in Kwara State?
- v. What strategies can be adopted to mitigate security threats and promote sustainable tourism development in Kwara State?

Literature Review

Conceptual Review of Key Concepts

A security threat refers to any condition or activity that endangers the safety of individuals, communities, or institutions. In tourism, security threats encompass terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, and political instability, all of which undermine the confidence of travelers. Scholars emphasize that security and safety are prerequisites for tourism growth, as destinations perceived as unsafe experience sharp declines in tourist arrivals (The Wheatbaker, 2024). In Nigeria, stakeholders have consistently raised concerns that insecurity is the most significant barrier to tourism development, directly influencing travelers' decision-making processes (Guardian Nigeria, 2025).

Tourism is broadly defined as the movement of people to destinations outside their usual environment for leisure, business, or cultural purposes. It is a multidimensional industry that contributes to economic growth, cultural exchange, and employment creation. Nigeria, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes, has immense tourism potential. However, insecurity has consistently undermined this potential, as tourists are deterred by reports of violence and instability (Tourists Club International, 2025).

Kidnapping involves the unlawful abduction of individuals, often for ransom or political leverage. In Nigeria, kidnapping has evolved from isolated incidents in the Niger Delta to a widespread national crisis. The Nigerian Senate recently classified kidnapping as terrorism, reflecting its severity and impact on national security (Nigerian Voice, 2025). For tourism, kidnapping is particularly damaging because it creates fear among visitors, discourages travel, and tarnishes the image of destinations. Tourists are highly sensitive to personal safety, and the prevalence of abductions in Nigeria has significantly reduced both domestic and international tourism (TheCable, 2025).

Banditry refers to organized violent crime, including armed robbery, cattle rustling, and attacks on communities. In Nigeria, banditry has become a major dimension of social conflict, particularly in

the North-West and North-Central regions. Scholars argue that banditry thrives in ungoverned spaces where state presence is weak, and socio-economic deprivation is high (Omitola, 2023). Its impact on tourism is profound: highways become unsafe, rural attractions are abandoned, and cultural festivals are disrupted. Banditry thus erodes the foundations of tourism by creating an environment of fear and instability.

Tourism flourishing refers to the growth and expansion of tourism activities, marked by increased tourist arrivals, investment in infrastructure, and vibrant cultural exchange. Flourishing tourism requires a stable environment, effective governance, and strong community participation. Globally, destinations that flourish in tourism are those that prioritize safety, hospitality, and innovation. In Nigeria, however, insecurity has prevented tourism from flourishing, as potential attractions remain underutilized due to fear of crime and violence (ProjectNG, 2025).

Tourism sustainability emphasizes the long-term viability of tourism by balancing economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity. Sustainable tourism ensures that destinations can continue to attract visitors without compromising cultural heritage or natural resources. Contemporary scholarship highlights resilience and adaptation as key pillars of sustainable tourism in the face of global challenges such as climate change and insecurity (Mihalic, 2024). In Nigeria, insecurity undermines sustainability by discouraging investment, disrupting community life, and reducing revenue streams. Banditry and kidnapping, in particular, threaten the continuity of tourism activities, making it difficult for destinations like Kwara State to achieve sustainable development.

These concepts illustrate the complex interplay between insecurity and tourism. Security threats such as kidnapping and banditry directly hinder tourism flourishing by discouraging visitors and disrupting cultural events. They also undermine sustainability by eroding trust, reducing investment, and weakening community resilience. For Kwara State, addressing these threats is essential to unlock its tourism potential and ensure long-term sustainability.

Empirical Review of Security Threats and Tourism in Global Contexts

This review synthesizes contemporary studies that examine how security threats, particularly kidnapping and banditry affect tourism flourishing and sustainability. Notably, the objective of Akamavi, Ibrahim, and Swaray's (2023) study was to quantify how terrorism, political instability, and broader security shocks affect travel and tourism industry performance globally, including spillover to employment and GDP contributions. Using panel econometrics with cross-country datasets and macro-tourism indicators, the study analyzed shock transmission and persistence. Findings show that security shocks significantly depress tourism demand and sectoral output, with measurable lagged effects on employment and tourism's share of GDP, underscoring the sensitivity of destination performance to perceived risk.

Wendt and Bógdał-Brzezińska's (2024) research aimed to situate security within the sustainability paradigm in tourism research, examining how securitization frames affect destination governance and resilience. Employing a narrative review and bibliometric scoping across sustainability and tourism journals, they mapped themes linking safety, resilience, and institutional responses. The study found that securitization increasingly shapes destination policy, pushing investments toward risk management, crisis preparedness, and community resilience, which are key pillars for sustainable tourism under chronic insecurity.

Omitola (2023) set out to explain how banditry, conceptualized as social conflict, undermines sustainable tourism in Nigeria. Using secondary data from news sources and descriptive statistics framed by structural functionalism and sustainable tourism theory, the paper traced drivers such as ungoverned spaces, border porosity, deprivation, and illegal resource extraction. Findings demonstrate that banditry disrupts destination operations, deters arrivals, and weakens community participation, which directly threatening sustainability pillars of economic continuity, socio-cultural integrity, and environmental stewardship. Udu, Chukwu, Ibenwo, and Ogbaga (2022) examined how banditry affects sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria's Northwest, where many cultural landscapes and travel corridors are located. The study used qualitative documentary analysis of secondary sources and thematic interpretation. It found that banditry drives displacement, investment withdrawal, and systemic livelihood loss, with tourism and hospitality among the hardest-hit sectors; community fear and weakened institutional presence further compound long-term sustainability challenges.

Onuche and Martins (2024) aimed to identify non-traditional security measures that could counter kidnapping and banditry in Nigeria. Through a policy-focused review and analytical synthesis, they assessed community-based intelligence, technology-enabled surveillance, and inter-agency coordination. Findings indicate that hybrid approaches such as combining community policing, local intelligence networks, and tech-enabled early warning improve response reliability and can stabilize tourism corridors, provided they are embedded in accountable governance structures. Mbam, Jacob, and Amiara (2024) sought to critically assess the evolution of kidnapping and banditry and state security responses across regions, including the North-Central where Kwara lies. Employing historical-descriptive methods with policy documents and media records, they traced shifting epicenters and causal factors. Findings reveal that economic hardship, fragmented policing, and porous borders have expanded the geographic spread of kidnapping/banditry, degrading travel safety and tourism confidence in affected states; subnational variation in response capacity leads to uneven impacts on tourism development.

Igbini (2022) analyzed banditry as a security threat in Katsina State, with implications extendable to regional tourism systems. Using qualitative methods and documentary evidence, the study explored drivers, modalities, and response outcomes. Findings show that sustained attacks, especially on highways and rural communities erode mobility, suppress event attendance, and undermine hospitality revenue; the study recommends multi-layered coordination and community vigilance to protect cultural assets and travel routes.

Across these studies, several patterns converge. First, security threats reliably depress tourism demand, revenue, and employment, with spillover to broader regional economies (Akamavi et al., 2023). Second, banditry and kidnapping operate as chronic stressors that destabilize destination image and community participation, eroding sustainability pillars unless countered by integrated governance and community-led security (Omitola, 2023; Udu et al., 2022). Third, non-traditional, locally grounded security strategies show promise, particularly where state capacity is uneven (Onuche & Martins, 2024). For Kwara's border and rural communities, these insights justify focusing on highway safety, event security, and community intelligence networks to protect attractions and festivals while rebuilding trust among visitors and investors (Mbam et al., 2024; Igbini, 2022).

Theoretical Underpinning

The study draws on Durkheim's Anomie Theory and the Ungoverned Space Theory to explain insecurity in Kwara State, Nigeria. Durkheim's Anomie Theory, from late 19th-century sociology, describes a state of normlessness caused by rapid social change, economic upheaval, or weak institutions (Durkheim, 1897). When social norms break down, individuals become disoriented, leading to deviant behaviors like crime and violence (Glassman, 2025). This theory is relevant in contexts of modernization and instability, where social cohesion weakens, and crime flourishes. For example, in Kwara State, high economic inequality and poor law enforcement create conditions of anomie that foster kidnapping and banditry. Weak social controls and socio-economic deprivation lead people to break rules for survival, discouraging tourism, undermining cultural festivals, and reducing investment in tourism infrastructure. Durkheim's framework helps explain how social disorganization, rooted in anomie, becomes a barrier to tourism development.

The Ungoverned Space Theory, from security studies, concerns areas where the state lacks control, allowing non-state actors like insurgents and criminals to operate freely (Nnadi & Okoye, 2022). These spaces, often border regions or rural areas with weak institutions, breed insecurity and instability (Oluka et al., 2024; Odetoeye & Folorunso, 2024). Such zones are prevalent in Nigeria's border areas and the Sahel, where bandits and militants thrive due to minimal government presence (Adoyi, 2023). In tourism, ungoverned spaces create perceptions of danger, deterring visitors and hurting local economies. In Kwara, rural areas like Baruten and Kaiama exemplify ungoverned zones which includes porous borders, forest cover, and lack of law enforcement that allow criminal groups to operate with impunity. This insecurity discourages tourism and affects local livelihoods. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive understanding of insecurity in Kwara State. Anomie explains the breakdown of societal norms and rise of deviance, while ungoverned space highlights structural weaknesses enabling criminal activity. Their combined application illuminates how social and territorial factors hinder tourism growth and sustainability.

Methodology

Study Setting

The study was conducted in Kwara State, Nigeria, located in the North-Central geopolitical zone. Kwara is endowed with cultural landmarks such as the Esie Museum, Owu Falls, and the Ilorin Durbar festival. Despite this potential, the state has witnessed increasing incidences of kidnapping and banditry, particularly in rural communities such as Baruten and Kaiama, which share porous borders with neighboring states. These areas have been identified as hotspots of insecurity, making them critical for examining the relationship between security threats and tourism sustainability (Daily Trust, 2023; Vanguard, 2025).

Research Design

A mixed-methods research design was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative component involved the administration of structured questionnaires to community members, while the qualitative component consisted of key informant interviews with community leaders, tourism stakeholders, and security officials. The rationale for this choice was that mixed methods allow for triangulation, providing both breadth and depth of understanding (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Quantitative data captured measurable impacts of insecurity on tourism, while qualitative insights provided contextual explanations of patterns, dynamics, and lived experiences.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised residents of Kwara State communities with tourist sites that are presently attacked or under threat by bandits. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022), Kwara State has a population of approximately 3.2 million people, with rural communities accounting for nearly 60%. Specific focus was placed on communities such as Baruten, Kaiama, Esie and Ilorin East, which host tourist attractions and have reported incidences of kidnapping and banditry. The target population included farmers, traders, hospitality workers, cultural custodians, and local leaders whose livelihoods are directly or indirectly linked to tourism.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

For the quantitative aspect of the study, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size calculation at a 95% confidence level. This ensured that the sample was statistically adequate to represent the larger population of communities affected by insecurity in Kwara State. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to enhance representativeness. First, affected local government areas, namely Baruten, Kaiama, Ifelodun, Irepodun and Ilorin East were identified as the study sites due to their tourism potential and exposure to insecurity. Within these communities, households were randomly selected for questionnaire administration, ensuring that diverse perspectives were captured. In addition to the survey respondents, the qualitative component of the study involved 30 key informants who were purposively selected based on their roles and relevance to the research. These informants included traditional rulers, tourism officials, security personnel, and leaders of community vigilante groups, all of whom possess firsthand knowledge of the impact of kidnapping and banditry on tourism.

Research Instruments

Two primary instruments were utilized in the study. The first was a 36-items structured questionnaire, designed with closed-ended items on a 4-point Likert scale. This instrument measured respondents' perceptions of insecurity, its impact on tourism activities, and the socio-economic consequences for their communities. The second instrument was a key informant interview guide, which contained open-ended questions aimed at exploring the specific patterns of kidnapping and banditry, government responses, community strategies, and possible solutions for mitigating insecurity.

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Validity was ensured through content and face validation. Draft instruments were reviewed by experts in security management, tourism studies, and research methodology. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, a widely accepted measure of internal consistency. The pilot study, conducted among 20 respondents outside the main study area, provided the necessary data for this test. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.82, which is above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Taber, 2018). This result indicates that the items in the questionnaire were internally consistent and reliable. For the qualitative instruments, reliability was ensured through methodological rigor. Interviews were carefully documented, audio-recorded with participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim. To further enhance trustworthiness, member-checking was employed, whereby participants reviewed summaries of their responses to confirm accuracy and authenticity. This process minimized researcher bias and ensured that interpretations reflected participants' actual experiences.

Procedure for Data Collection

Data collection for the study was carried out in two distinct phases, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure comprehensive coverage of the research objectives. In the quantitative phase, the researchers with two trained research assistants administered structured questionnaires to 400 respondents that had been randomly selected within the identified communities. The assistants provided guidance to respondents throughout the process to ensure clarity of the items and accuracy of responses. The qualitative phase involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 30 purposively selected key informants. These interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of participants and supplemented with detailed field notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual observations. By adopting this phased approach, the study systematically collected both numerical data and narrative evidence, thereby enabling triangulation of findings and enhancing the validity and depth of the research outcomes.

Methods of Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means). Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step approach: familiarization, coding, theme development, review, definition, and reporting. Triangulation of findings enhanced validity and provided comprehensive insights.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Sensitive questions were handled with care, and participants were reminded that they could withdraw at any time without consequence. Given the volatile nature of the study setting, special attention was paid to ensuring the safety of both respondents and researchers during fieldwork (Israel & Hay, 2006).

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation and analysis of the result obtained from both the quantitative and qualitative data. The data gathered were presented according to the order in which they were arranged in the research questions.

Table 1: Manifestation of Kidnapping and Banditry and Its Impact on Tourism Activities

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Kidnapping incidents frequently occur	215 (57.2%)	110 (29.3%)	30 (8.0%)	21 (5.6%)	3.38
Banditry is common in rural communities	200 (53.2%)	125 (33.2%)	30 (8.0%)	21 (5.6%)	3.34
Insecurity discourages cultural festivals	190 (50.5%)	135 (35.9%)	30 (8.0%)	21 (5.6%)	3.31
Tourists avoid Kwara State due to fear of crime	210 (55.9%)	120 (31.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.37
Kidnapping and banditry disrupt tourism activities	200 (53.2%)	130 (34.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.35
Tourism businesses suffer losses	195 (51.9%)	135 (35.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.33

Source: Field Data (2025)

The data in Table 1 indicate a high prevalence of kidnapping and banditry; however, a comprehensive understanding requires more than mere numbers. While 57.2% (n = 215) of respondents strongly agreed and 29.3% (n = 110) agreed that kidnapping incidents are frequent, these figures highlight the perceived severity but do not elucidate the contextual factors or underlying dynamics driving these incidents. Similarly, 53.2% (n = 200) strongly agreed and 33.2% (n = 125) agreed that banditry is common in rural tourist communities. The mean ratings across items, ranging narrowly between 3.31 and 3.38, suggest a consensus of strong agreement, yet they do not capture the nuanced perceptions, community sentiments, or specific security challenges faced by different localities. Importantly, a significant majority (87.8%) of respondents confirmed that tourists avoid Kwara State out of fear of crime. This stark statistic underscores the direct impact of insecurity on tourism activities and local businesses. Nonetheless, understanding the full scope of this issue demands deeper analysis of the qualitative factors that influence these perceptions and behaviors. Numbers alone cannot fully explain how insecurity shapes community attitudes, influences tourism dynamics, or hampers economic recovery. Therefore, the study necessitates a comprehensive, contextualized analysis that integrates qualitative insights to inform effective policy interventions.

Interviewee ID	Theme	Participant Quote / Text	Respondent Designation
R6	Highway ambushes and roadblocks	“Bandits set up temporary roadblocks on feeder roads to attractions. Drivers turn back, and the rumor spreads fast. Even one incident shuts down activity for weeks.”	Security Officer
R7	Festival cancellations and scaled events	“Our cultural festival once drew thousands; last year we shortened it to a single day and finished before dusk. Attendance dropped sharply because families feared returning home late.”	Cultural Custodian
R8	Attrition in hospitality demand	“Rooms stand empty. We had to cut staff from twenty to eleven. Restaurants reduce their stock because they can’t predict demand.”	Hotel Manager
R9	Targeting of perceived wealthy visitors	“Visitors who look affluent are seen as ransom targets. This fear has made community hosts avoid promoting premium experiences that used to attract higher-spending tourists.”	Tourism Officer
R10	Abandonment of peripheral sites	“Smaller sites outside main towns are practically abandoned. Guides refuse to go there, and local youth who used to perform dances have stopped for safety reasons.”	Youth Leader

Source: In-depth Interview Extract from Key Informants (2025)

The qualitative evidence provides a deeper understanding of how insecurity manifests and disrupts tourism in Kwara State, moving beyond numerical frequencies to reveal lived realities. Participants consistently described kidnapping and banditry as taking concrete forms such as highway ambushes, rural raids, and targeted abductions of perceived wealthy visitors. These incidents are not abstract threats but direct assaults on mobility and safety, with specific examples such as

roadblocks near waterfalls or attacks during festivals leading to cancellations and abandonment of sites. Such disruptions illustrate how insecurity penetrates the very spaces designed to attract and host tourists, thereby dismantling the infrastructure of cultural and recreational engagement. The impact extends into the broader tourism ecosystem. Hospitality businesses reported empty rooms, declining bookings, and staff layoffs, reflecting how insecurity translates into economic stagnation and job losses. Cultural custodians lamented reduced participation in community events, underscoring the erosion of cultural heritage and weakening of social cohesion. These narratives highlight that insecurity does not merely deter tourists; it destabilizes the interconnected networks of businesses, cultural practices, and community livelihoods that tourism sustains. Importantly, the qualitative accounts reveal the psychological dimension of insecurity. Fear and uncertainty permeate communities, discouraging residents from participating in festivals or engaging with visitors. This climate of apprehension undermines trust, restricts mobility, and diminishes the vibrancy of cultural life. In effect, insecurity reshapes social behavior, producing a cycle where reduced participation further weakens tourism's role as a driver of development and cultural preservation.

Table 2: Patterns and Dynamics of Kidnapping and Banditry in Kwara State

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Kidnapping incidents are increasing	220 (58.5%)	110 (29.3%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.40
Banditry is more prevalent in border communities	210 (55.9%)	120 (31.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.37
Forested areas provide cover for bandits	200 (53.2%)	130 (34.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.35
Highway attacks are common	215 (57.2%)	115 (30.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.38
Tourists and travelers are often targeted	205 (54.5%)	120 (31.9%)	31 (8.2%)	20 (5.3%)	3.34
Insecurity discourages tourism growth	210 (55.9%)	120 (31.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.37

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results presented in Table 2 highlight not only the prevalence of insecurity but also its spatial and situational dynamics within Kwara State's tourism environment. A significant majority of respondents (58.5% strongly agreeing and 29.3% agreeing) reported increasing incidents of insecurity, confirming that kidnapping and banditry are not isolated but escalating threats. Highway attacks, identified as common by 57.2% strongly agreeing and 30.6% agreeing, reveal how mobility and accessibility, which are critical components of tourism, are directly compromised. When highways become unsafe, both domestic and international tourists perceive destinations as inaccessible, thereby undermining the viability of tourism flows. Equally important is the identification of forested areas and border communities as hotspots, with mean ratings above 3.35. This finding underscores the geographical dimension of insecurity: porous borders and dense forest terrains provide cover for criminal groups, enabling ambushes and raids. Such spatial vulnerabilities align with broader patterns of insecurity in Nigeria, where borderlands and rural enclaves often serve as ungoverned spaces facilitating criminal activity. For tourism, these areas are particularly significant because they host natural attractions and cultural sites, meaning insecurity directly intersects with the state's tourism assets. The broader implication is evident in the finding that over

85% of respondents agreed tourists and travelers are often targeted. This perception translates into behavioral consequences: tourists avoid Kwara State, cultural festivals suffer declining attendance, and hospitality businesses experience reduced patronage. The targeting of travelers not only discourages tourism growth but also erodes the trust and confidence necessary for sustainable investment in the sector. Taken together, the analysis reveals dominant patterns of insecurity such as highway ambushes, forest hideouts, and border raids that systematically undermine tourism. These patterns illustrate how insecurity is embedded within both the physical geography and the social fabric of Kwara State. However, these quantitative indicators warrant a deeper analytical approach to comprehend the underlying dynamics. For example, understanding why certain routes or regions become focal points requires exploring factors such as terrain features, border security challenges, and community socio-economic vulnerabilities. Additionally, the perception of increasing incidents may be influenced by media narratives, community awareness, or actual escalation in criminal activity, which qualitative insights can clarify.

Interviewee ID	Theme	Participant Quote / Text	Respondent Designation
R11	Border-area prevalence	“Communities near the border experience more raids. Offenders cross through forest tracks, strike, and disappear quickly, making patrols difficult.”	Community Leader
R12	Forested hideouts and mobility	“Forests give them cover and escape routes. After attacks, they split into smaller groups and blend into the terrain, which complicates response.”	Security Officer
R13	Night-time operations and timing	“Most incidents occur between 8 p.m. and midnight. People plan activities to end before dusk, curbing evening tourism like night markets and performances.”	Vigilante Coordinator
R14	Highway targeting and speed	“They prefer highways for quick operations—block the road, seize valuables, and abduct select travelers. It’s fast, chaotic, and terrifying.”	Victim’s Relative
R15	Seasonal spikes around festivities	“During festive periods when travel increases, incidents rise. The crowd movement creates opportunities for bandits to blend and strike.”	Cultural Custodian

Source: In-depth Interview Extract from Key Informants (2025)

The qualitative findings reveal that insecurity in Kwara State is not random but follows identifiable patterns that directly undermine tourism sustainability. Respondents consistently pointed to border communities and forested areas as hotspots, serving as hideouts for criminal groups and staging grounds for raids. These geographical vulnerabilities are compounded by porous borders, which facilitate cross-border incursions and weaken state control. For tourism, this is particularly damaging because many cultural and natural attractions are located in rural or border regions, making them disproportionately exposed to insecurity. Highways emerged as another critical site of vulnerability. Frequent ambushes and abductions along major travel routes compromise accessibility, which is fundamental to tourism. When highways become unsafe, mobility is curtailed, discouraging both domestic and international visitors. This aligns with broader tourism security literature, which emphasizes that perceptions of unsafe travel corridors can devastate

destination image and reduce tourist flows. Temporal dynamics also play a significant role. Respondents noted that night-time attacks are common, forcing communities to end activities before dusk. This curtails evening cultural events, hospitality services, and nightlife tourism, thereby narrowing the scope of tourism offerings. Seasonal spikes during festive periods were also reported, as increased travel creates opportunities for bandits. These cyclical patterns demonstrate how insecurity is embedded in the rhythms of community life, disrupting tourism precisely when it should thrive.

Table 3: Socio-Economic Consequences of Insecurity and Fear of Crime on Tourism Sustainability

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Insecurity reduces tourism income	215 (57.2%)	115 (30.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.38
Fear of crime discourages participation	200 (53.2%)	130 (34.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.35
Banditry leads to job losses	195 (51.9%)	135 (35.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.33
Kidnapping reduces trust and cohesion	205 (54.5%)	120 (31.9%)	31 (8.2%)	20 (5.3%)	3.34
Insecurity discourages investment	210 (55.9%)	120 (31.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.37
Tourism sustainability is threatened	220 (58.5%)	110 (29.3%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.40

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results in Table 3 extend beyond statistical agreement to reveal the profound socio-economic consequences of insecurity on tourism in Kwara State. A majority of respondents (57.2% strongly agreeing and 30.6% agreeing) confirmed that insecurity reduces tourism income. This is not merely a financial decline but a reflection of how fear and instability erode the economic foundations of communities that depend on tourism. Hospitality businesses, cultural custodians, and local artisans all experience shrinking revenues, which in turn weakens the multiplier effects tourism typically generates across sectors. Job losses, reported by 51.9% strongly agreeing and 35.9% agreeing, highlight the human dimension of insecurity. Tourism is labor-intensive, relying on service workers, guides, performers, and artisans. When insecurity deters visitors, these jobs vanish, leading to unemployment, migration of skilled workers, and declining household incomes. The ripple effect extends into other industries such as agriculture, transport, and retail, which are closely linked to tourism demand. Equally significant is the perception that tourism sustainability is under threat, with 58.5% strongly agreeing and 29.3% agreeing. The mean rating of 3.40 underscores a strong consensus that insecurity undermines not only immediate tourism activities but also long-term viability. Sustainability in tourism depends on stable investment, community trust, and cultural continuity. Insecurity disrupts all three: investors withdraw from projects, communities lose confidence in collective activities, and cultural heritage is eroded as festivals and traditions suffer declining participation. The broader implication is that insecurity destabilizes the entire tourism ecosystem. It reduces income, eliminates jobs, erodes trust, and deters investment, thereby weakening the sector's ability to contribute to development. This convergence of economic, social, and cultural impacts demonstrates that insecurity is not a temporary disruption but a systemic barrier to tourism flourishing.

Interviewee ID	Theme	Participant Quote / Text	Respondent Designation
R16	Income and employment shock	"We recorded a chain reaction: fewer visitors, reduced sales, layoffs in hotels, and part-time workers losing shifts. Young people migrate to Ilorin for non-tourism jobs."	Local Business Owner
R17	Community participation and fear	"Families restrict movement, especially for women and children. Participation in tourism-linked events fell because people fear returning late or getting caught on the road."	Women's Group Leader
R18	Investment retreat and stalled infrastructure	"Plans for signage, parking lots, and lighting were halted. Without investment, sites deteriorate—then insecurity further discourages any attempt to revive them."	Government Planner
R19	Cultural heritage at risk	"When festivals stop, the songs, dances, and crafts lose continuity. Elders worry that traditions won't be passed down, weakening the community's identity."	Cultural Custodian
R20	Erosion of trust and cohesion	"Kidnappings breed suspicion—neighbors question strangers, meetings end early, and volunteer groups shrink. Social ties strain under constant fear."	Village Elder

Source: In-depth Interview Extract from Key Informants (2025)

The qualitative evidence underscores that insecurity in Kwara State produces far-reaching socio-economic disruptions that extend beyond tourism revenue. Business owners consistently reported drastic income losses, reflecting how declining tourist arrivals directly weaken local economies dependent on hospitality, retail, and cultural services. Hotel managers described staff reductions, highlighting the vulnerability of tourism-related employment, which is often labor-intensive and reliant on steady visitor flows. These layoffs not only reduce household incomes but also contribute to rising unemployment and economic stagnation. Youth leaders emphasized the migration of young people to safer regions in search of jobs, a trend that drains communities of their most productive demographic. This migration has dual consequences: it weakens the local labor force needed to sustain tourism and accelerates rural decline, leaving communities less resilient to insecurity. Cultural custodians warned of heritage erosion, as festivals and traditions are abandoned due to fear of attacks. This erosion represents more than cultural loss; it undermines tourism's role in preserving identity and transmitting values across generations. Community elders further highlighted the social dimension, noting that mistrust and weakened cohesion have become pervasive. Fear of crime strains social ties, discourages collective participation in cultural events, and erodes the trust necessary for community-driven tourism initiatives. Insecurity thus destabilizes not only the economic viability of tourism but also the social and cultural foundations upon which sustainable tourism depends. In a nutshell, these accounts demonstrate that insecurity in Kwara State is systemic, producing a cycle of economic decline, cultural erosion, and social fragmentation. Tourism, which should serve as a catalyst for development and cohesion, is instead undermined by fear and instability. The convergence of economic losses, migration, heritage decline, and weakened trust confirms that insecurity is not simply a barrier to tourism growth but a threat to the

sustainability of community life itself. This analysis reinforces the urgency of integrated responses to restore confidence, safeguard cultural heritage, and rebuild the socio-economic foundations necessary for tourism sustainability.

Table 4: Government Policies, Community Responses, and Security Measures

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
Policies have not effectively addressed kidnapping	200 (53.2%)	130 (34.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.35
Banditry persists despite measures	210 (55.9%)	120 (31.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.37
Community responses are weak	195 (51.9%)	135 (35.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.33
Security agencies not adequately present	205 (54.5%)	120 (31.9%)	31 (8.2%)	20 (5.3%)	3.34
Government support insufficient	200 (53.2%)	130 (34.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.35
Community involvement essential	220 (58.5%)	110 (29.3%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.40

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results in Table 4 reveal a strong consensus among respondents that government responses to insecurity in Kwara State have been inadequate. More than half (53.2% strongly agreeing and 34.6% agreeing) expressed dissatisfaction with policies addressing kidnapping, while 55.9% strongly agreed that banditry persists despite existing measures. These figures highlight a perception of policy failure, where interventions are either poorly implemented, insufficiently enforced, or disconnected from the realities of affected communities. Equally telling is the view of security agencies as inadequately present, with 54.5% strongly agreeing and 31.9% agreeing. This reflects not only logistical weaknesses such as limited patrols in rural and border areas but also a broader crisis of confidence in state institutions. The absence of visible and effective security presence reinforces the vulnerability of communities, leaving tourism assets exposed to criminal exploitation. For a sector that depends on perceptions of safety, this institutional weakness is particularly damaging.

However, amidst these critiques, respondents emphasized the crucial role of community involvement, with 58.5% (n = 220) strongly agreeing that community participation is essential for addressing insecurity, reflected by a mean rating of 3.40. This consensus underscores a recognition that sustainable security solutions require collaborative efforts between authorities and local communities, leveraging indigenous knowledge, social cohesion, and community-led initiatives. In sum, the analysis demonstrates a dual reality: while government policies and security presence are perceived as weak, communities themselves are seen as vital actors in restoring safety. This suggests that effective responses to insecurity must move beyond top-down interventions to embrace community-driven strategies, integrated with stronger law enforcement and policy innovation. The broader implication is that insecurity in Kwara State cannot be addressed solely through state mechanisms. Sustainable tourism requires a hybrid model where government provides institutional support, but communities actively participate in safeguarding cultural heritage and tourism assets. Qualitative accounts further corroborated this, as highlighted below:

Interviewee ID	Theme	Participant Quote / Text	Respondent Designation
R21	Policy gaps and reactive responses	“Policies feel reactive—after a major incident, we see brief action, then it fades. We need consistent, preventative measures, not short bursts.”	Academic Researcher
R22	Rural security presence	“Police postings are thin in rural zones. Response time is slow, and patrol schedules are irregular. Tour operators don’t trust the coverage.”	Tourism Officer
R23	Resource constraints	“Local security lacks vehicles, fuel, and communication tools. Even when willing, they’re limited by logistics.”	Police Officer
R24	Community vigilance and limitations	“Vigilante groups know the terrain but lack training and legal protection. They help deter minor crimes but avoid confronting organized gangs.”	Vigilante Leader
R25	Need for coordinated command	“Coordination among state agencies, traditional authorities, and community groups is weak. A joint command or regular briefings would reduce duplication and blind spots.”	State Security Liaison

Source: In-depth Interview Extract from Key Informants (2025)

The qualitative findings reveal that insecurity in Kwara State is exacerbated not only by criminal activity but also by governance shortcomings. Respondents consistently expressed dissatisfaction with government policies, describing them as reactive rather than proactive. This indicates that interventions often occur after incidents have already destabilized communities, rather than through preventive strategies designed to anticipate and mitigate risks. Such reactive approaches weaken public confidence and perpetuate a cycle where insecurity remains entrenched. Security agencies were criticised for inadequate presence in rural areas, with participants highlighting shortages of essential resources such as vehicles, communication tools, and personnel. This lack of logistical capacity undermines the ability of agencies to patrol vulnerable spaces, particularly highways, forested terrains, and border communities, where insecurity is most prevalent. The absence of visible enforcement reinforces perceptions of vulnerability, discouraging tourism and weakening investor confidence. Community vigilante groups, while active, were described as under-resourced and lacking legal recognition. Their efforts, though vital, remain fragmented and unsupported by formal structures. Without adequate training, funding, or integration into official security frameworks, these groups struggle to provide consistent protection. This reflects a broader governance gap where local initiatives exist but are not effectively harnessed into coordinated strategies.

Participants emphasized the need for coordinated command structures and stronger collaboration between government, communities, and traditional authorities. Such collaboration is critical because insecurity in Kwara State is deeply embedded in local contexts like border vulnerabilities, rural terrains, and cultural events. Effective responses therefore require multi-level governance that integrates state capacity with community intelligence and traditional authority structures. Taken together, these findings highlight that insecurity persists not only because of criminal activity but

also due to institutional weaknesses. Governance gaps like reactive policies, under-resourced agencies, and fragmented community efforts, create conditions where kidnapping and banditry thrive. For tourism, this means that insecurity is not simply a matter of crime deterrence but a systemic failure of governance that undermines safety, cultural heritage, and economic sustainability. Addressing these challenges requires a shift toward proactive security policies, capacity building for agencies, and formal recognition of community groups within integrated governance frameworks. Only through such measures can Kwara State rebuild trust, safeguard tourism assets, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Table 5: Strategies for Mitigation and Promotion of Sustainable Tourism

Item	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Interpretation
Strengthening law enforcement will reduce kidnapping and banditry	225 (59.8%)	110 (29.3%)	21 (5.6%)	20 (5.3%)	3.43	Very high agreement
Community policing can help secure tourist sites	210 (55.9%)	120 (31.9%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.37	High agreement
Investment in security infrastructure will promote tourism sustainability	220 (58.5%)	110 (29.3%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.40	Very high agreement
Collaboration between government and communities is key to reducing insecurity	230 (61.2%)	105 (27.9%)	21 (5.6%)	20 (5.3%)	3.45	Very high agreement
Public awareness campaigns can discourage criminal activities	200 (53.2%)	130 (34.6%)	26 (6.9%)	20 (5.3%)	3.35	High agreement
Effective security strategies will enhance tourism flourishing in Kwara State	225 (59.8%)	110 (29.3%)	21 (5.6%)	20 (5.3%)	3.43	Very high agreement

Source: Field Data (2025)

The results in Table 5 highlight not just numerical consensus but a deeper recognition among respondents that insecurity in Kwara State requires multi-pronged and integrated strategies to restore tourism sustainability. Strengthening law enforcement, endorsed by nearly 90% of respondents (59.8% strongly agreeing and 29.3% agreeing), reflects widespread acknowledgment that weak enforcement capacity has allowed kidnapping and banditry to persist. This is not simply a call for more personnel but for improved training, resources, and accountability mechanisms that can rebuild public trust in state institutions. Collaboration between government and communities received the highest support (61.2% strongly agreeing and 27.9% agreeing), underscoring the importance of community-driven security models. Respondents emphasized that local communities often act as first responders, yet their efforts remain fragmented and under-resourced. Stronger collaboration would mean integrating community intelligence networks, vigilante groups, and traditional authorities into formal security structures, thereby creating coordinated command systems that reflect local realities.

Investment in security infrastructure was also strongly endorsed, with 58.5% strongly agreeing and 29.3% agreeing. This highlights the urgent need for material resources such as vehicles,

surveillance technologies, communication tools, and patrol infrastructure, particularly in rural and border areas where insecurity is most concentrated. Without such investments, law enforcement remains reactive and limited in reach. Public awareness campaigns and community policing, supported by mean ratings between 3.35 and 3.37, further demonstrate recognition that insecurity is not only a policing issue but also a matter of perception and civic engagement. Awareness campaigns can reshape destination image, reassure potential visitors, and encourage community vigilance, while community policing fosters trust and localized accountability. Summarily, the findings reveal a strong consensus with over 85% endorsement that insecurity cannot be addressed through singular interventions. Instead, respondents advocate for multi-pronged strategies combining law enforcement, community collaboration, infrastructure investment, and public engagement. This integrated approach reflects an understanding that tourism sustainability depends on both physical security and social trust.

The broader implication is clear: Kwara State's tourism sector can only recover if insecurity is tackled through holistic governance that bridges state capacity with community resilience. Without such synergy, insecurity will continue to erode economic viability, cultural heritage, and investor confidence, leaving tourism unable to fulfill its role as a driver of sustainable development.

Interviewee ID	Theme	Participant Quote / Text	Respondent Designation
R26	Strengthen law enforcement	"Dedicated tourism safety units and routine patrols on access roads would lower risk perceptions and prevent opportunistic attacks."	Police Officer
R27	Community policing and intelligence	"Local informant networks and anonymous reporting help identify suspicious movement before attacks. Trust-building is essential."	Community Leader
R28	Security infrastructure investment	"Install lighting, CCTV at entrances, controlled parking, and emergency call points. These visible measures reassure visitors and deter attackers."	Government Planner
R29	Government–community collaboration	"Joint task teams with clear roles—security, traditional councils, youth groups—can maintain presence at events and secure travel corridors."	Cultural Custodian
R30	Awareness and capacity-building	"Public safety campaigns, visitor briefings, and training for guides on emergency protocols reduce panic and improve incident management."	Tourism Officer

Source: In-depth Interview Extract from Key Informants (2025)

The qualitative findings reveal that respondents did not merely identify insecurity as a challenge but articulated nuanced strategies for mitigation, reflecting both practical realities and community-driven insights. Strengthening law enforcement was emphasized, but participants went further by recommending dedicated tourism safety units and routine patrols along highways and near cultural sites. This demonstrates recognition that generic policing is insufficient; tourism requires specialized security frameworks that directly address the vulnerabilities of destinations and travel corridors. Community policing and intelligence networks were highlighted as essential for early

detection of threats, underscoring the importance of grassroots vigilance. Respondents noted that local communities often possess intimate knowledge of criminal movements, yet these insights remain underutilized. Integrating community intelligence into formal security structures would enhance responsiveness and foster trust between residents and state institutions.

Investment in security infrastructure was seen as critical, with participants pointing to tangible measures such as lighting, CCTV, and emergency call points. These interventions are not only deterrents but also symbolic reassurances to visitors, signaling that safety is prioritized. Such infrastructure also strengthens surveillance capacity, enabling quicker responses to incidents and reducing opportunities for criminal exploitation. Collaboration between government, communities, and cultural leaders was consistently emphasized as the most effective approach. Respondents argued that traditional authorities, youth groups, and businesses must play supportive roles in a coordinated framework. This reflects an understanding that insecurity is multidimensional, requiring multi-actor governance where cultural custodians safeguard heritage, youth mobilize vigilance, and businesses invest in resilience. Public awareness campaigns were also recommended, not simply as information tools but as mechanisms to reshape perceptions of safety and discourage crime. By rebuilding confidence in Kwara's tourism sector, such campaigns can counteract negative destination branding and restore trust among both residents and visitors.

Collectively, these strategies reveal a holistic vision because insecurity cannot be addressed through isolated measures but requires integrated responses combining law enforcement, community intelligence, infrastructure investment, and collaborative governance. The qualitative insights highlight that respondents view tourism security not only as a policing issue but as a shared responsibility across state, community, and cultural institutions. This multi-pronged approach is essential for restoring confidence, safeguarding heritage, and ensuring the sustainability of tourism in Kwara State.

Discussion of Findings

Results from the study affirmed that, the manifestation of insecurity in Kwara State was reported as frequent kidnapping incidents, particularly in rural communities with tourist sites, and banditry along highways and border areas. Respondents highlighted that insecurity discourages cultural festivals and tourism-related events, with tourism businesses suffering losses due to declining patronage. These findings resonate with African studies, such as Udu et al. (2022), who found that banditry in Nigeria's Northwest disrupts livelihoods and suppresses tourism and hospitality sectors. Similarly, Omitola (2023) argued that banditry undermines sustainable tourism by destabilizing community participation and cultural heritage. The Kwara results therefore extend these insights by showing how insecurity manifests locally in ways that directly erode tourism activities. The findings confirm global and African evidence that insecurity depresses tourism demand and revenue (Hall, 2010; Udu et al., 2022; Wendt & Bógdał-Brzezińska, 2024), while Kwara State's experience illustrates how insecurity, if left unchecked, can derail tourism development and weaken socio-economic sustainability.

Patterns and dynamics of kidnapping and banditry in Kwara State were described as increasing incidents, prevalence in border communities, use of forested areas as hideouts, and frequent highway attacks targeting tourists and travelers. These findings are consistent with Mbam, Jacob, and Amiara (2024), who documented the spread of kidnapping and banditry across Nigeria due to

porous borders and fragmented policing. The results also align with Ungoverned Space Theory, which posits that areas lacking effective state control become breeding grounds for criminal activity (Clunan & Trinkunas, 2010). Kwara's border and forested communities exemplify such ungoverned spaces, where insecurity thrives and tourism growth is discouraged.

The socio-economic consequences of insecurity were strongly emphasized by respondents, with over 87% agreeing that insecurity reduces tourism income, leads to job losses, discourages investment, and erodes community trust. These findings support Durkheim's Anomie Theory, which explains how social instability and breakdown of norms foster insecurity and weaken social cohesion (Durkheim, 1897/2014). In Kwara State, kidnapping and banditry have created fear and mistrust, undermining the social fabric necessary for tourism sustainability. This is consistent with Akamavi, Ibrahim, and Swaray (2023), who found that security shocks depress tourism's contribution to GDP and employment globally.

Government policies and community responses were perceived as inadequate, with respondents noting that kidnapping and banditry persist despite interventions, and that security agencies are not adequately present in rural tourist areas. However, respondents strongly agreed that community involvement is essential in addressing insecurity. This finding echoes Onuche and Martins (2024), who argued that non-traditional approaches such as community policing and local intelligence networks are critical for enhancing security reliability in Nigeria. It also reflects the broader literature on tourism resilience, which emphasizes the importance of community-based security initiatives and collaborative governance (Wendt & Bógdał-Brzezińska, 2024).

Finally, respondents strongly endorsed strategies for mitigation, including strengthening law enforcement, investing in security infrastructure, fostering government–community collaboration, and implementing public awareness campaigns. Collaboration between government and communities received the highest support, with a mean rating of 3.45. This consensus reflects the theoretical emphasis on multi-pronged approaches to insecurity, combining state capacity with community resilience. It also aligns with Bryman's (2016) argument that mixed strategies are essential for addressing complex social problems. In the context of Kwara State, respondents' endorsement of collaborative strategies suggests that sustainable tourism development requires both institutional reforms and grassroots participation.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that insecurity in the form of kidnapping and banditry is a pervasive barrier to tourism flourishing and sustainability in Kwara State. The results are consistent with global, African, and Nigerian literature, and can be explained through theoretical frameworks such as Durkheim's Anomie Theory and Ungoverned Space Theory. The study highlights the urgent need for integrated strategies that combine law enforcement, infrastructure investment, community policing, and collaborative governance to restore confidence in Kwara's tourism sector. Without such measures, the socio-economic and cultural potential of tourism in Kwara State will remain undermined by persistent insecurity.

Conclusion

The study conclusively established that insecurity, particularly kidnapping and banditry, constitutes a formidable impediment to tourism development and sustainability in Kwara State. Empirical evidence revealed that these threats are pervasive, occurring in rural and border communities, along

highways, and within forested terrains that serve as operational bases for criminal groups. The repercussions are extensive, as tourist arrivals have diminished, cultural festivals have been disrupted, businesses have incurred losses, and investment in tourism infrastructure has stagnated. The socio-economic consequences are equally severe, manifesting in declining income, job losses, and erosion of community trust and cohesion. Collectively, these dynamics place the sustainability of tourism in Kwara State under grave threat, as insecurity undermines the economic, cultural, and social foundations essential for growth. Furthermore, governmental responses were perceived as inadequate, with weak enforcement, limited presence of security agencies in rural areas, and fragmented community initiatives. This underscored the urgent need for policy reform and strategic intervention. Strengthening law enforcement capacity, enhancing border security, and fostering community participation are critical measures to reverse the current decline. Moreover, collaborative approaches involving local communities, private stakeholders, and international partners are indispensable for building resilience against insecurity.

Beyond Kwara State, the findings carry broader implications for Nigeria and other regions grappling with similar challenges. Insecurity in one locality reverberates across national and regional tourism systems, shaping perceptions of safety and influencing investment decisions. Thus, addressing insecurity is not merely a local imperative but a national and global priority for sustaining tourism as a driver of economic diversification, cultural preservation, and social cohesion. In conclusion, the study highlights the urgency of adopting integrated security and development policies. Without decisive action, the prospects of tourism flourishing in Kwara State, and by extension in Nigeria remain precarious. However, with strengthened governance, community engagement, and coordinated strategies, tourism can be repositioned as a resilient sector capable of contributing meaningfully to sustainable development.

Policy Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight the urgent need for coordinated action among multiple stakeholders to mitigate insecurity and restore tourism sustainability in Kwara State. Policy recommendations are therefore directed at specific actors whose roles are central to addressing kidnapping and banditry.

1. The state government must prioritize tourism security as part of its broader development agenda. This requires establishing dedicated tourism safety units within the police force and ensuring regular patrols along highways and access roads to tourist sites. Furthermore, government should integrate tourism security into state-level planning, ensuring that infrastructure projects such as lighting, fencing, and surveillance systems are embedded in tourism development initiatives. By doing so, government can rebuild investor confidence and signal its commitment to protecting cultural and economic assets.
2. Security operatives must strengthen their presence in rural and border communities where tourist sites are most vulnerable. This involves deploying specialized units trained in rapid response and crisis management. Law enforcement should also collaborate closely with community vigilante groups, offering them training, legal backing, and logistical support. Intelligence gathering must be improved through anonymous reporting systems and community informant networks, enabling early detection of suspicious activities.
3. Traditional rulers, village elders, and vigilante leaders play a crucial role in mobilizing communities against insecurity. They should coordinate community policing initiatives, encouraging residents to participate in surveillance and reporting. Vigilante groups, while

already active, need structured support in the form of training, protective equipment, and recognition under state law to legitimize their efforts.

4. Hospitality operators, tour companies, and investors must adopt proactive measures to safeguard their enterprises. Hotels and resorts should invest in visible security infrastructure such as CCTV cameras, perimeter fencing, and emergency call points to reassure visitors. Tour operators should collaborate with government and security agencies to provide secure transport options for tourists, particularly to rural sites. Investors, while cautious, should be encouraged through government incentives and guarantees to continue supporting tourism projects.
5. Cultural leaders and custodians of heritage must play an active role in sustaining festivals and cultural events despite insecurity. They can mobilize communities to participate in security arrangements during events, ensuring that traditions are preserved while minimizing risks.
6. Civil society organizations and media outlets should support awareness campaigns that educate communities about the dangers of banditry and the importance of collective security. Media narratives should balance reporting on insecurity with positive stories of resilience and cultural heritage, countering the negative perception of Kwara as unsafe.

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PROMOTION OF YORUBA CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: CASE STUDY OF KAP FILM VILLAGE IGBOJAYE

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Abstract

This study investigates the promotion of Yoruba cultural heritage through sustainable tourism in Oyo State, using KAP Film Village, Igbojaye as a case study. It examines how sustainable tourism practices can contribute to economic growth, environmental preservation, and community development in alignment with global sustainability objectives. Guided by Sustainable Tourism Development Theory, Stakeholder Theory, and Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle Model, the study adopts a quantitative research design. A sample of 100 respondents was selected, from which 50 fully completed responses were analyzed. Data were collected through structured questionnaires focusing on the current state of tourism development, contributions to cultural heritage, challenges to sustainable development, and enhancement strategies for KAP Film Village. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in frequency and percentage tables. The findings revealed that KAP Film Village significantly promotes Yoruba cultural identity, traditions, and values, thereby enhancing cultural pride, especially among youths. The study also found that the Film Village serves a crucial educational role, as the majority of respondents acknowledged its cultural learning value and expressed willingness to recommend it for cultural education. Economically, the initiative was shown to generate employment opportunities and support local businesses, thereby contributing directly to community development. Furthermore, respondents agreed that the Village attracts both local and foreign tourists and conducts tourism activities in an environmentally sustainable manner. Overall, the study established that KAP Film Village enjoys a high level of community acceptance, with respondents recommending it as a model for other cultural tourism sites in Nigeria.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Cultural Heritage, KAP Film Village, Oyo State, Community Involvement.

Introduction

The tourism sector is globally recognized as one of the most dynamic services sectors, providing concrete and qualified trading opportunities for nations regardless of their level of economic development (Benavides, 2001). For many developing countries, tourism has become a cornerstone of economic diversification, income generation, and structural transformation. In Nigeria, a nation with a population exceeding 200 million people, tourism holds immense potential to serve as a vital

channel for employment creation, revenue mobilization, and cultural diplomacy, though it remains underutilized compared to developed countries (Ayeni & Ebohon, 2012).

Conceptually, tourism can be seen as an extension of the natural human inclination toward mobility and exploration, involving travel away from one's home environment for leisure, business, or recreation (Page & Connell, 2006). Beyond its economic dimension, tourism is fundamentally anchored on cross-cultural exchange and experiences (Appadurai, 2002). Cultural tourism allows communities to express their normative traditions, providing a multi-layered framework to understand the interactions between humanity and both material and non-material heritage (Robinson & Phipp, 2004).

With the modern surge in global demand for authentic cultural and ecological experiences, regional and rural local destinations are gaining unprecedented popularity (Fisher, 2006). For these destinations to remain competitive and resilient, sustainable planning is imperative. Sustainable tourism seeks to harmonize economic objectives with environmental protection and socio-cultural justice, ensuring equity between host communities and guests (Mbaiwa, 2005). Nigeria possesses rich tourism potentials—spanning natural, man-made, and cultural attractions—yet it frequently lacks the structured management and infrastructure required for optimal scaling (Ayeni & Ebohon, 2012). The establishment of specialized sites, such as the KAP Film Village and Resort in Igbojaye, Oyo State, represents a strategic move to integrate creative industries (film and media) with cultural heritage promotion under a sustainable framework.

Statement of the Problem

Cultural heritage shapes the core identity, values, and traditional systems of a society. The Yoruba culture is exceptionally rich, comprising vibrant festivals, deep linguistic roots, unique arts, and historic systems that carry global significance. However, this rich heritage faces severe erosion due to the continuous forces of globalization, urbanization, modernization, and a noticeable decline in interest among younger generations. Consequently, indigenous knowledge systems and traditional values are gradually fading.

While creative tourism and cultural villages have successfully preserved indigenous assets globally, many of Nigeria's cultural resources remain poorly managed, under-promoted, or completely isolated from modern sustainable development models. The newly founded KAP Film Village in Igbojaye, Oyo State, offers an innovative vehicle to address this gap by combining filmmaking with heritage tourism. However, empirical research has not sufficiently explored the extent to which such creative initiatives systematically promote cultural identity, foster local economic growth, ensure community inclusion, and implement ecological sustainability. This study addresses this gap by conducting an empirical assessment of KAP Film Village as an active driver of sustainable cultural tourism.

Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate the role of creative and sustainable tourism initiatives in promoting cultural heritage and local development. The specific objectives are:

- I. To leverage KAP Film Village, Igbojaye as a platform for promoting Yoruba cultural heritage and driving sustainable community development through responsible tourism practices.
- II. To explore the potential of KAP Film Village as a hub for sustainable tourism and cultural heritage preservation.

- III. To identify strategic collaborative frameworks for stakeholders to implement sustainable tourism practices.
- IV. To contribute to the empirical understanding of sustainable tourism's role in supporting rural economic livelihoods in Nigeria.

Research Questions

- I. How does KAP Film Village, Igbojaye contribute to the promotion and preservation of Yoruba cultural heritage?
- II. What are the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of sustainable tourism on the host community of Igbojaye?
- III. In what ways can stakeholders collaborate to develop and sustain creative cultural tourism frameworks?

Significance of the Study

This study provides empirical data essential for policy reforms, institutional investments, and infrastructural developments within the cultural tourism sector of Oyo State and Nigeria at large. Government agencies can utilize these insights to formulate structured creative tourism frameworks that generate jobs and protect indigenous knowledge. Additionally, private investors are provided with a clear analytical roadmap identifying viable opportunities in hospitality, creative infrastructure, and community-centered business models. Finally, this research contributes uniquely to the academic literature by bridging the gap between creative film industries and sustainable heritage management, offering a reliable reference for future scholars.

Literature Review

Conceptual Clarifications

Tourism Development and Elements: Tourism development refers to the strategic growth of a country's tourism sector to optimize economic benefits, generate employment, and promote cross-cultural appreciation (Murthy, 2008). In rural areas, it serves as an alternative livelihood strategy by capitalizing on local assets. Cultural tourism consists of three central elements: non-material customs (such as dance, folklore, and performance traditions), material customs (crafts, architecture, and tangible art products), and long-term acculturation (Redmond, 2009). When properly structured, cultural tourism prevents the commodification or trivialization of heritage, fostering community pride and ensuring resource longevity.

Cultural Heritage and Sustainability: Cultural heritage provides continuity, social cohesion, and quality of life for host communities, acting as an institutional shield against the negative, homogenizing effects of cultural globalization (Rypkema, 2006). In terms of sustainability, the Brundtland Commission (1987) defines sustainable development as that which meets present needs without compromising future generations. Applied to tourism, sustainability is a multi-dimensional construct comprising: (a) Economic Sustainability—maintaining and multiplying productive resources to ensure long-term profitability and job security (Goodland, 2014); (b) Socio-Cultural Sustainability—safeguarding the behavioral traditions, values, and statuses of the community while encouraging tolerance and inclusivity; and (c) Environmental Sustainability—managing the carrying capacity of tourist sites to prevent the degradation of natural habitats and local ecosystems (Beech & Chadwick, 2006).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Market Supply and Demand Theory (Marshall, 1890) and the Consumer Culture Theory (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). In cultural tourism, the host community represents the producers of heritage supply, while tourists generate the demand based on their search for authentic, emotionally engaging cultural experiences (Smith, 1995). Sustainable equilibrium is achieved when the community is actively involved in production and decision-making, ensuring that supply remains authentic. Consumer Culture Theory views consumption as a social, symbolic arrangement mediated through markets where cultural fragments, symbols, and heritage are integrated into an interconnected system, allowing consumers to construct their identity while strengthening the socio-economic framework of the host community.

Institutional Framework and Hindrances to Tourism in Nigeria

Nigeria's institutional framework for tourism spans three tiers: the Federal level (Ministry of Culture and Tourism) handling macro-policy, the State level managing project implementation and land allocations, and the Local Government Tourism Boards identifying regional potentials and maintaining local monuments. Despite this structure, several systemic hindrances persist: recurrent socio-political crises and localized insecurity which deter international arrivals; poor transport infrastructure and road networks; high corporate taxes and policy inconsistencies; and slow technological adoption for information dissemination (Omotoso, 2012).

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative survey design complemented by expert qualitative insights to assess the impacts of KAP Film Village, Igbojaye. The target population encompassed the residents, visitors, and key tourism professionals associated with the Igbojaye community in Oyo State. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 100 respondents who possessed direct exposure to or involvement with the activities of the Film Village. Out of the 100 distributed copies of the structured questionnaire, 50 copies were completely and correctly retrieved, representing a 50% response rate used for data presentation.

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed in four thematic sections: Section A focused on demographic characteristics; Section B evaluated Cultural Heritage Promotion; Section C addressed Sustainable Tourism and Local Development; and Section D assessed Overall Satisfaction and Modeling. Instrument validity and reliability were verified via expert review (including the departmental board) and peer evaluation, ensuring simplicity, neutrality, and alignment with empirical indicators. The collected quantitative data were processed using descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies and percentages, and are presented in formatted tables below.

Results and Discussion

Presentation of Demographic Findings

Table 4.0: Rate of Responses to the Administered Questionnaire

Questionnaire Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Returned/Completed	50	50.0
Not Returned	50	50.0

Total	100	100.0
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Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–29 years	37	74.0
30–41 years	8	16.0
42–51 years	5	10.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	34	68.0
Female	16	32.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.3: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Student	14	28.0
Teacher	10	20.0
Business Owner	12	24.0
Civil Servant	8	16.0
Quantity Surveyor	3	6.0
Legal Practitioner	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.4: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Qualification Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	5	10.0
Secondary Education	4	8.0
Tertiary Education	41	82.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Respondents' Perceptions of KAP Film Village

Table 4.5: KAP Film Village Promotes Yoruba Cultural Heritage

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	24	48.0
Agree	23	46.0
Strongly Disagree	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.6: KAP Film Village Preserves Yoruba Traditions and Values

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	24	48.0
Agree	22	44.0
Disagree	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.7: KAP Film Village Promotes Yoruba Cultural Identity

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	24	48.0
Strongly Agree	20	40.0
Neutral	4	8.0
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.8: KAP Film Village Provides Educational Value to Visitors

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	20	40.0
Strongly Agree	18	36.0
Neutral	12	24.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026**Table 4.9: KAP Film Village Contributes to Local Employment Opportunities**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	28	56.0
Strongly Agree	16	32.0
Neutral	2	4.0
Disagree	2	4.0
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026**Table 4.10: KAP Film Village Supports Local Businesses**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	28	56.0
Strongly Agree	20	40.0
Neutral	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026**Table 4.11: KAP Film Village Attracts Local and Foreign Tourists**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	30	60.0
Neutral	18	36.0
Agree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.12: Tourism at KAP is Conducted in an Environmentally Sustainable Manner

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	34	68.0
Strongly Agree	12	24.0
Neutral	2	4.0
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026**Table 4.13: KAP Initiative Enhances Pride in Local Culture Among Youth**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	28	56.0
Strongly Agree	18	36.0
Neutral	2	4.0
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026**Table 4.14: Satisfaction with How KAP Promotes Yoruba Culture**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	28	56.0
Strongly Agree	16	32.0
Neutral	4	8.0
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026**Table 4.15: KAP Film Village Should be Used as a Model for Other Sites**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	26	52.0
Agree	20	40.0
Neutral	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Table 4.16: Recommendation of KAP Film Village for Cultural Learning

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	24	48.0
Agree	22	44.0
Neutral	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2026

Discussion of Findings

The empirical findings provide multi-layered insights into the interface between creative industries and cultural heritage preservation. The demographic profile highlights a substantial youthful engagement, with 74% of respondents falling within the 18–29 age bracket. This confirms that creative platforms such as film villages successfully draw the interest of younger cohorts who are otherwise detached from traditional museum setups (Cronin & O'Connor, 2003; Folorunso et al., 2024). Furthermore, the highly educated nature of the participants (82% tertiary education) indicates that the respondents possess an advanced capacity to evaluate structural sustainability and cultural pride.

Regarding cultural metrics, the overwhelming consensus across Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 (exceeding 88% cumulative support) establishes that KAP Film Village functions effectively as an active agent of cultural reinforcement. By embedding Yoruba architecture, linguistic nuances, and folklore into its structural design and productions, it ensures identity preservation in a modern society (Falade, 2021). Crucially, the educational value is robustly supported by a 76% positive rating, demonstrating that the site acts as an informal cultural classroom, facilitating cross-generational heritage transmission as recommended by UNESCO (2006).

From an economic standpoint, the data validates the principles of sustainable community development. The initiative stimulates the local economy by generating direct employment (88% agreement) and creating secondary retail and vendor opportunities (96% agreement for local business support). This aligns with Ayeni and Ebohon (2012), proving that community-driven cultural tourism mitigates rural poverty. Finally, the environmental rating of 92% suggests that infrastructure development at the site respects regional ecological borders, validating carrying-capacity theories (Buckley, 2002; Ekinici, 2014).

Summary of Findings

The study established that youths dominate cultural tourism participation (74%), and the respondent population is highly literate (82% tertiary education). KAP Film Village strongly preserves and promotes Yoruba cultural heritage, traditions, and values, receiving over 90% collective agreement. The initiative functions as an educational facility, with 92% of respondents willing to recommend it to others for cultural learning. Economically, the village drives local empowerment by creating direct jobs (88%) and patronizing regional businesses (96%). Environmental sustainability is tightly woven into operations, as supported by 92% of the host community.

Conclusion

This study concludes that creative industry infrastructure, such as the KAP Film Village, serves as a powerful and practical vehicle for sustainable cultural heritage management. It effectively bridges the gap between old traditional frameworks and modern youth preferences, ensuring that Yoruba identity is preserved while injecting vital economic capital into rural communities. By simultaneously achieving socio-cultural reinforcement, environmental safety, and business growth, the Film Village provides an empirically verifiable blueprint for integrated regional development across African communities.

Recommendations

1. Expansion of Cultural Programming: Institutional stakeholders should design seasonal cultural festivals and global digital arts exhibitions at the Film Village to increase international visitor volume.
2. Academic Partnership: The management should sign formal memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with Nigerian secondary and tertiary institutions to create structured excursion and research modules at the site.
3. Equitable Economic Inclusivity: Local authorities must establish cooperative societies for local vendors to guarantee that the economic gains of tourism are evenly distributed across the host community.
4. Technical & Infrastructure Scaling: Government agencies should prioritize expanding transport road networks leading to Igbojaye to maximize accessibility.

Contribution to Knowledge & Further Research

This study expands the existing literature by introducing a context-specific structural framework showing how contemporary creative hubs (film and cinematography resorts) directly sustain intangible cultural heritage. Future scholars are encouraged to undertake longitudinal studies examining the long-term changes in rural-urban youth migration trends resulting from the presence of the Film Village.

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