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PREFACE

Focusing on the expansion of the hospitality and tourism sector globally has become a top priority, especially on how to provide the essential managerial, technical, interpersonal, communication, and social skills that are needed to explore, manage and sustain the tourist potential in Nigeria, West Africa, the black continent and the entire world.

However, both the industrial and the academic sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry have pertinent roles to play in developing the entire industry, thus, academia is expected to embark on sustainable research which would provide the frameworks required to grow the industry while the industry sector on the other hands would be needed to provide both the managerial and other essential skills in consideration of the global approach in running the administration of the hospitality and tourism sector.

Meanwhile, this volume (IV) of this Journal is an improvement on the previous ones, in this edition we have introduced and gotten the approval to publish the journal online (ISSN ONLINE), It has also provided the basic prerequisites for growing the sector of the economy as obtainable worldwide. Hence, one would be amazed to read the contributions of Authors of great repute which are drawn from both academics and the industrial sector. The Journal has, however, a combination of researchable topics with valuable results, conclusions and recommendations that proffers prominent solutions to the myriads of challenges that are confronting the hospitality and tourism industry and most importantly, some vital contributions from the versed and experienced Hoteliers/administrators/Managers (including tour operators and other practitioners in the industry).

Also, the Journal updates the current trends, happenings, creativity, innovations, techniques and modalities which are aimed at sustaining the growth of the sector beyond post covid 19 era.

In conclusion, the hospitality and tourism sector is hoping to help in revamping the dwindling nation's economy and the sole reliance on petroleum in Nigeria. This Journal has provided the impetus towards the direction and gateway to the growth, development and expansion of the hospitality and tourism sector of the economy. While we appreciate all our academia and professionals, we also extend our gratitude to the professional bodies most especially the HATMAN.

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FORWARD

Elizade University Journal of Research in Hospitality and Tourism Management is proudly an International double-blind peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles on diverse aspects of hospitality and Tourism, and related aspects. Our mission is to promote knowledge that will facilitate total quality management and sustainable tourism development in Africa, solve global unemployment problems, stabilize economies, promote festivals, preserve cultures, conserve biological diversity, improve food processing, packaging and service delivery, discover new destinations and products, guarantee guest retention and address emerging issues in the hospitality and tourism sector. Authors are encouraged to submit complete, unpublished original works that are not under review in any other journal. The journal annually.

Prof H.M Ijeomah

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SPORT TOURISM AS A TOOL FOR ENHANCING UNITY: 2023 FEDERATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE GAMES MINNA, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Sporting events served as energizer and enhancement of social interaction, particularly tourism sport. This study investigated sport tourism as a tool for enhancing unity with focus on 2023 Federation of Public Service Games held in Minna Niger State Nigeria. The study used quantitative research technique with the use of questionnaire survey. A total of 140 respondents was considered as the population while 105 respondents served as the sample size. The respondents were chosen using purposive sampling and willingness to participate on the survey. Percentages, mean, inferential statistics was used for data analysis. The study, therefore, found that respondents were present in the sporting arena to support their teams and enjoyed sporting environment. It further found that tourism sport enhances unity and facilitates conflict resolutions. In addition, it found that tourism sport enhances entertainment and create memorable events. Furthermore, it creates jobs and enhance socio-economic activities especially of the host communities. Hence, tourism sporting events not only entertains, integrate people's culture, but also create avenue for youths for social interaction which serve as alternative of diverting attention of youths away from the societal social menaces. The study, therefore, suggests that tourism sporting events should not be limited to the Federal Public Servants alone but should also be extends to private sector workers as well as secondary school's teachers across the country. Thus, tourism sporting events should be seen as an alternative of creating jobs for teeming youths in the country.

Key Word: Tourism sport, Entertainment, Public service, Unity, Life-long memory

INTRODUCTION

Sport tourism have been in existence but the level of aware among the tourist seem to be low due to the fact that some tourists see sport general as physical exercise and not associated with tourism activities. Notwithstanding, sport tourism events creates specific impact on host communities as well as funs. Sport tourism therefore continuing to have ever-increasing industry with influences on the economic and social restructuring of the both of the urban and rural areas (Nyikana and Tickaawa, 2018). However, sport tourism has cordial relationship with local entrepreneurs and their handcrafts such as souvenirs, this therefore enhanced cultural tourism. Sport tourism not only make the sport funs happy but also the environment makes their mind relax towards home and office challenges (Radichi, 2013).

Thus, sport tourism is an attractive tool for destination development and enhancement of tourism products. Therefore, sport tourism goes beyond hosting events such as Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Swimming pool, and athletics but also bring benefits such as social unification, local patriotism, event management skills and experts, and thus contributes to peace and reconciliation among sport lovers, event organizers, participants, and the host communities. For instance, it is argued that the Olympic Games have postponed conflicts and ceased hostilities (Reid, 2006). For example, 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, South and North Korea agreed to talk, drawing the two countries closer to each other (Lee and Kim, 2018).

In addition, sporting events offer opportunities in promoting national image, identities and cultures. Thus, sport events create social change among people of different race. It is in this assertion that Chersulich Tomino, Perić, and Wise (2020) report that there are main differences among sport funs and athletes regarding social-economic characteristics and motivations. They further argued that for millennia's, 'escaping from daily routine' whilst for thrill and sensation, 'overcoming challenges', and Adrenalin appeared as relevant motivations.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate sport tourism as a tool for enhancing unity with emphasize on the 42th Edition of the 2023 Federation of Public Service Games (FEPSGA).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sport Tourism Influence

One can talk of sport tourism in relation to sport emerging as a competition that has its root in the ancient Greece. Sport tourism is likened to Games being played and observed by interested individuals across the globe. These Games can be traced to 20th century that marked the beginning of sports show as the key reason for travelling. Therefore, in ancient Greece, the Pan-Hellenic games being a manifestation of the Greeks' National Unity played a significance role. The Pan-Hellenic Games were held in Olympia, Delphi, Corinth and Nemea. Hence, the year 776 BC is considered to be the date of the origin of the Olympic Games that emphasized sport tourism that involved participants in all kinds of sports events and the actual participants of the events (Ratkowski and Ratkowska, 2018).

Tourism can therefore be seen as having correlated relationship with sport. This relationship includes among others enhancing human health, recreation and leisure, and management of time which has cognitive values and economic values. Thus, sport has become tourist's phenomenon, hence, cities and events are one of the most tourists' destinations, like the Olymic Games, World and European Championships, etc. Sport tourism, therefore, is a social phenomenon that entails interplay of activities, people, and places at a certain time point (Weed & Bull, 2009). Sport tourism participation can be individual or group (spectators), travels to watch sport in most cities relates to sport events as an aspect of sport tourism (Getz and Patterson, 2013). Tourists taking part in an organized events like the 2023 Federation of Public Service Games and Pan African Games can be classified as an active sport event (Perić and Tanković, 2021).

In tourism sport, tourists served as a spectator as well as an actor, thus, active sport tourism can be associated as a form of 'creative tourism' which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destinations (Richards and Wilson 2006). These event centres have become promotional tools for countries and cities, they improved images as well as contributed to preserve the sport heritage and strengthen the local cultural identities (Malchrowicz-Mosko, & Munsters, 2018). Sports tourism is a sport based on competitions between two competitors with the expectation that one defeating one another. However, sports tourism was previously considered as a fashionable hobby for young people, it was positioned in the health service market as an area of active recreation for the society. There are two types of sports tourism: active and passive. With an active form of tourism, the basis is the need to engage in some kind of sport. When passive - this is an interest in a sport or an observation. Sport tourism, therefore, relates to specific travel for either passive or active involvement in sports where the sport is the prime motivational reason for travel (World Tourism Organization, 2010).

These forms of tourism can further be classified into hard and soft (Gammon and Robinson, 2003). Hard sport tourism relates to active sport tourism that is designed to attract a large number of visitors to a particular place to witness an event in a group setting such as Olympic Games, 238 MIP, 342 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup among others. Soft sport tourism refers to tourists traveling to participate in a recreational setting or signing up for leisure activities such as hiking, swimming, rafting, etc. A significant activity of soft sport tourism relates to ecotourism.

Sport Event and Entertainment

Sporting events are considered as an indispensable tool in today's socio-entertainment, promoting socio-economic developments, social health, and international diplomacy. It is therefore argued that sport event played a key role in the creation of the active sport tourists' experiences through sharing and integration of travel resources which enhances destination loyalty (Hsu, Wu, Chen, and Cheung, 2020). Sporting events thus provide entertainments,

promotes social health, economic development, and promote local culture. It also served as a tool -for creating community awareness, enhance citizen or nation pride and quality of life.

Sporting events hence improves destination image of the hosts and served as an avenue to study tourists' behaviours on tourism services. However, it is argued that fewer empirical studies have been conducted in relation to sport events image maker and unity particularly with regards to hosts (Chersulich Tomino, Perić, and Wise, 2020). Therefore, image creation through sporting events contributes to the social environment, entertainment services, and quality of life (Yoo, Newland, and Lee, 2021). Thus, sport events influence creation of the active sport tourists' experiences through sharing and integration of travel resources (Usmanova, 2022).

It is thus observed that sport event characteristics are essential for increasing attendance to active sport events. For instance, destination revisitation, repeat participation in the event, and word-of-mouth about the event predict sport tourists' loyalty played a key role in the eye of tourists (Yoo, Newland, and Lee, 2021). Thus, the event characteristics play a major role than the destination attraction (Newland and Aicher, 2018). For example, Lindblom, Vogt, and Andereck(2020) found that while the destination attraction did not impact the sport image, the destination did have an impact on the intention to participate in sport activities. Therefore, the image of the host community will directly influence political support for tourism development and destination attraction.

Sport Economic Impact

Tourism particularly sport tourism has been reported as creating jobs to enhance socio-economic activities of nations and people. Thus, it is observed that sport tourism had a positive significance effect on indirect job creation and all its dimensions (Mirzaie, Salimi, and Rahimi Sarshabadrani, 2022). Similarly, it is opined that it is one of the most influential and significant sectors in the tourism industry that has the potential to become a multi-sector issue; attracting large number of sport tourists (Shahbazi, Jalali Farahani, and Khabiri, 2019). It is further reports that it provides appropriate and diverse opportunities for job creation and economic development (Mirzaie, Salimi, and Rahimi Sarshabadrani, 2022).

For instance, organized Olympics provide means for generating jobs in various fields. Therefore, sport tourists are seen as one of the primary sources of revenue and employment for the host community like Minna which hosted 2023 Federation of Public Service Games, attracting large number of tourists as either spectators or active participants. Thus, it is further argued that in the studies conducted by Hematinezhad, Shahriary, and Malek–Akhlagh (2015) that sport tourism is a critical development component of third-world countries by adopting appropriate strategies, it will enable them to grow accordingly. Thus, many countries have absorbed the benefits of sports tourism as a critical source of economic, social and political development to increase their employment and income, infrastructure, and raising their fundings in the market (Giango, Hintapan, Suson, Batican, Quiño, Capuyan, and Ocampo, 2022).

It is therefore reported that it is the most popular recreational activity that enhance rapid development in relations to socio-economic and culture activities of the nations and people which influenced both local and foreign direct exchanges (Mollah, Cuskelly, and Hill, 2021; Mirzaie, Salimi, and Rahimi Sarshabadrani, 2022). Thus, sport tourism seems to be the largest world diverse industry that creates jobs, enhance private sector growth, and infrastructure development. The popularity of the sport tourism or events seem to be attributed to diverse benefits it brings to the host communities through luring customers (spectators and participants) in spending money, investors investing on related sport projects, served as urban renewal, enhance image of the host communities, and platform for cultural adaptation. Therefore, the researcher seeks to investigate how sport tourism enhances unity.

The Study Area

FEPSCGA, is a Federal Public Service Games organized by the Federal Government of Nigeria for all Federal Public Employees. The 42th edition hosted by the Niger State Government, Minna between 6th December to 14th December, 2023, which featured Football, Basketball, Athletics, Swimming pool, Badminton, among others. It was declared opened by the Head of the Civil of the Federation, Dr Folashade Yemi-Esan in Bahago Sports Centre

Minna Niger State with the aims of strengthening unity through the spirit of sportsmanship, to appraise contributions of Federal public servants to nation-building, and to encourage healthy living.

The events were keenly competed by various federal public servants (See Figure 1). The underlying objectives of this study is not to determine the winners but to investigate unity through sportsmanship especially among the Federal Public Servant Sports in Nigeria.



Figure 1: Participants Pictures and Winners
Source: 2023 Field Survey

METHODOLOGY

Materials and Methods

This study adopts quantitative research techniques with the aim to explore the views of sport tourists, spectators and active sport participants on sport tourism as a tool for enhancing unity.

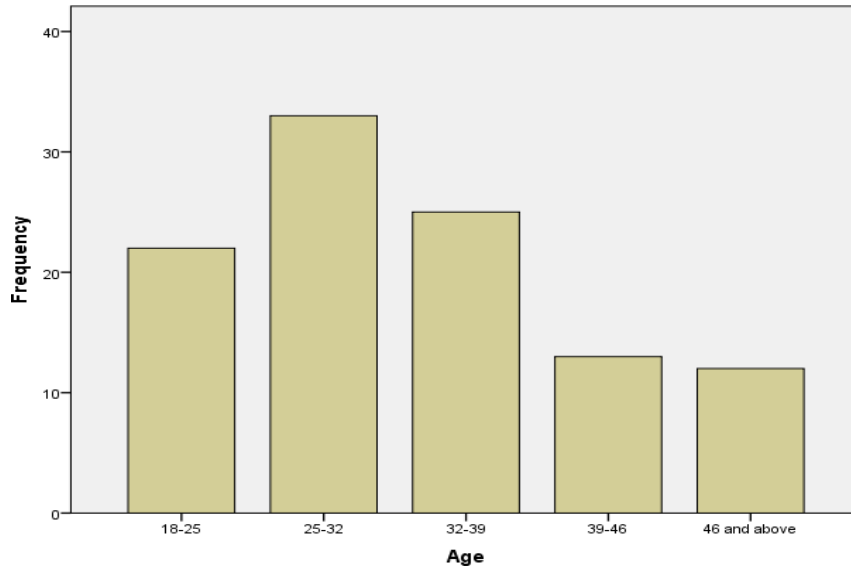
A total of one-hundred and forty (140) was considered as sample population. However, a total of one-hundred and five (105) respondents were considered as the sample size represent the questionnaire returned. The questionnaire designed covers three main areas of sport tourism influence, event and entertainment, and economic impact. Thus, the respondents were chosen using simple purposive sampling techniques and their willingness to participate on the survey. Among the 105 respondents that participated on the survey, Public Servants 53, Businessmen 26, Students 18, and Tourists 8. In line with the suggestion by Tang and Zeng (2021), the responses were classified into 1.0 - 1.80 (Strongly disagree), 1.81-2.60 (Disagree), 2.61-3.40 (True to some extent), 3.41 – 4.20 (Agree), and 4.21 – 5.00 (Strongly Agree). The instrument's reliability was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha analysis (Cronbach, 1951). Thus, the reliability coefficients for sport tourism influence (0.863), event and entertainment (0.853) and economic impact (0. 739). Descriptive (percentages, mean, and bar-chart) and inferential statistics were used for data analysis and interpretation thereof.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Findings and Discussion

The following are discussed as the findings:

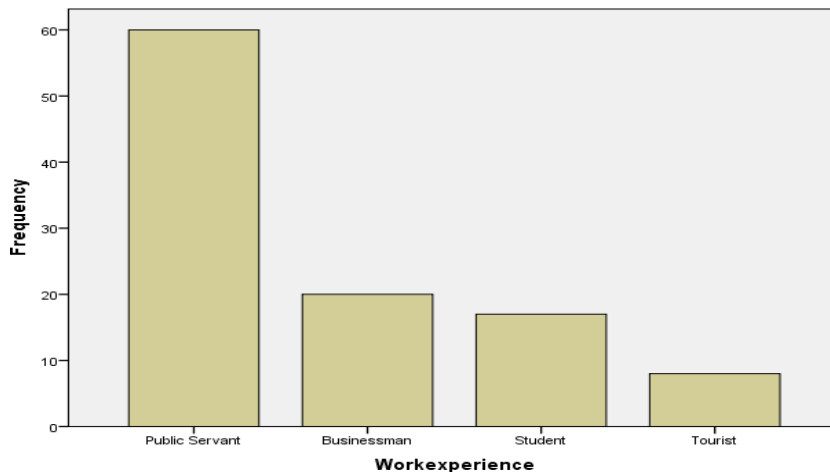
Figure 2: Respondents Age



Source: Field Survey 2023

Figure 2 reveals that the majority of the respondents fall within the age group of 25-32 (31.4%) which can be concluded as the youths who has energy for sporting activities and also willing to be spectators in any sporting events. This followed by the age group of 32-39 (23.8%) who can be classified as youths who are likely to have fun for sporting events. Thus, is also proceeded by the age group of 18-25 (21.0%), although they are youths, their desires for sporting activities are competing with the future expectations like skill jobs and going to school. The age group of 39-46 (12.4%), these are people likely to be retiring from active sporting activities but rather who have developed interests on sporting events like spectators and entertainers. The last age group are the people with 46 and above (11.4%) who can be refers to as sport entertainers. This analysis can be concluded that age matters in sporting activities and therefore, tourism sporting events served as tool for nation's unity and cultural enhancement.

Figure 3: Respondents Working Experience



Source: Field Survey 2023

Figure 3 reveals that public servant dominates the event with 57.1% which reemphasized that the sporting event was mainly organized for public servants. This followed by businessmen with 19.0%, they are group of people who take advantage of business opportunities in any environment they found themselves. This is followed by the

students with 16.2%, these are group of sporting entertainers who want to have experience of events close to them. The last group are tourists with 7.6% who travel to sporting events to have fun. It can be concluded that the underline objective for organizing the sporting events was met as the public servants dominates the event.

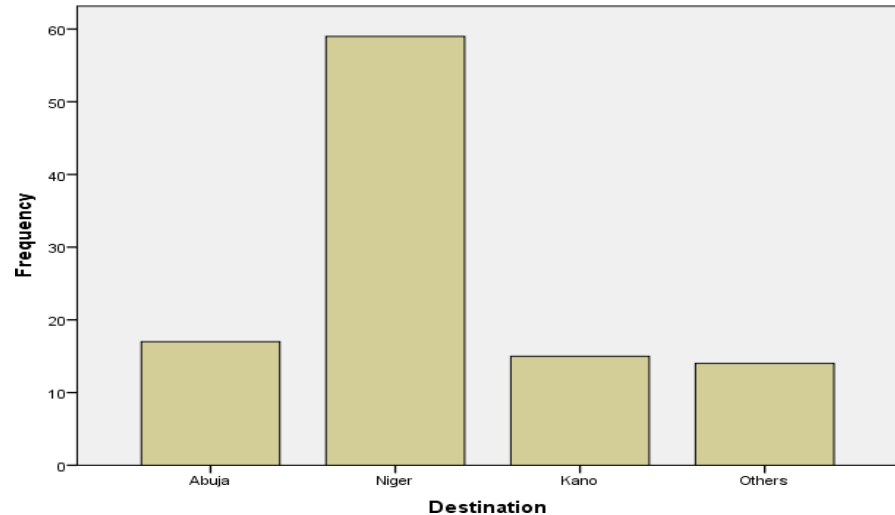


Figure4: Respondents Destination
Source: Field Survey 2023

Figure 4 reveals that 56.2% of the respondents which participated on the survey came from Niger State the host, this is followed by Abuja (16.2%), this could be attributed to closeness of the state. Kano with 14.3% as respondents whilst others which could be Lagos, Maiduguri, Ogun, Imo, Enugu and others accounted for 13.3%. This analysis, therefore, established that Nigerites came in large number to grace the event as the host of the sporting event.

Table 1: Income of the Respondents

Occupation	Income Range	Frequency	Percentage
Public Servants	₦50,000 - ₦100,000	53	50.5
Businessmen	₦100,000 - ₦150, 000	26	24.8
Students	₦150,000 - ₦200,000	18	17.1
Tourists	₦200,000 and above	08	7.6
Total		105	100.0

Source: Field Survey 2023

The income of the respondents varied, however, Table 1 reveals that the public servants whose income ranges between ₦50,000 - ₦100,000 (50.5%) are the majority. It is evidence that Nigeria is still a developing country where the wages of the public servants is still an issue. This is followed by businessmen whose income ranges ₦100,000 - ₦150, 000 (24.8%) which reveals that the economic activities of the country are hashed on the business activities. Students with 17.1% are the next group of respondents who are likely to be private students who are self-sponsored. The last group of people in this study are tourists 7.6%, this reveals that attraction of tourists to sporting events is influenced by the security and socio-economic activities of the destination. For sometimes, Niger State have been threatened by Boko Haram and kidnapping activities, this could account for low attraction of tourists.

Table 2: Sport Tourism Influence, Event and Entertainment, and Economic Impact Variables

Test Items	Mean	ST. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
To support my team	3.6952	1.30917	0.863
To enjoy stadium atmosphere	3.4190	1.17491	
To spend time without worrying about work or studies or family challenges	3.3619	1.27191	
To escape from the routine environment at home	3.1048	1.30032	
To see and experience a new destination	3.5238	1.35941	
To meet new people and for social interaction	4.0000	1.15192	
To participate on physical activity	3.8095	1.21762	
To learn other people's culture	3.8095	1.09277	
Sport tourism enhances unity	4.0381	1.24749	
Sport tourism heal faster conflicts among people and culture	3.6286	1.45614	
Sport tourism provide highest excitement	3.8476	1.05412	0.853
To create memories that will last a lifetime	3.8381	1.17771	
To take photos and videos, sharing them in social media	3.5143	1.20188	
To enjoy nightlife and entertainments	3.4286	1.37181	
To enjoy nature	3.6742	1.18885	
Spectators' presence influences me to tourism sport arena	3.6667	1.26985	
Football game influences me to tourism sport arena	3.7333	1.30286	
Valley ball game influences me to tourism sport arena	3.4286	1.39268	
Athletes influences me to tourism sport arena	3.4571	1.37301	
Free accommodation and entrance fees influence me	3.4190	1.41951	
Sport tourism creates jobs for the local people	3.8476	1.23086	0.739
Sport tourism enhances socio-economic activities	3.7714	1.29538	
Sport tourism encourages tourists to spend more money	3.6762	1.23643	

Source: Filed Survey 2023

Discussion on Table 2

Table 2 reveals that respondents generally agreed with questions on the survey instrument. For example, they agreed that they are in the sporting arena to support their team (Mean:3.6952), enjoying sporting environment (Mean: 3.4190). However, they had contrary views with regards to escaping from routine activities (Mean: 3.1048). Also, they agreed that sporting event is a tool for social interaction (Mean: 3.6667), to learnt other people's culture (Mean: 3.8095). In addition, they agreed that sporting events enhances unity (Mean: 3.4571) which is the main purpose of this study and facilitate conflict resolutions (Mean: 3.6286). This is in line with the studies conducted by Richards (2006) that active sport tourism offers opportunity to develop creative potentials and enhances participation in courses and learning experiences.

The study also found that it served as an entertainment and creating life long memories (Mean: 3.4286; 3.881) respectively which are influenced by Football and Athlete's activities (Mean: 3.7333; 3.4571). These findings corroborate with the finding on Figure 2 that the majority of these public servants are youths with 51.7% who were on the event for social activities. This is in agreement with the studies carried out by Hsu, et al. (2020) that sport events played a vital role in active sport tourists' experiences.

The study further reveals that sport tourism creates jobs and enhances socio-economic activities with (Mean: 3.8476; 3.7714). It therefore, encourages active participants and spectators to spend more money on sporting events (Mean: 3.6762). This is in accordance with the studies conducted by Mirzaie, et al. (2022) that sport tourism

provides appropriate and diverse opportunities for job creation and economic development which also enhances socio-economic activities of the third World countries like Nigeria (Haddaioe, 2018) and influences foreign direct exchanges (Mollah, et al. 2022).

CONCLUSION

This study therefore concludes that tourism sporting events enhances unity and creates jobs for the host communities and promote cultural heritage. Hence, tourism sporting events should be encouraged among the youths both at the federal, state and level government levels.

RECOMMENDATION

Tourism sport not only good for health purposes, but also enhance and integrate people and culture, therefore, the study recommend that its activities should be encouraged among employees of all enterprises and rural communities to stimulate unity.

Marketing Implications

Tourism sporting event has marketing and economic implications for both the stakeholders and active participants in the hospitality and tourism industry. The stakeholders in the industry should focus on the policy to foster unity and cultural heritage. Active participants should not only focus on their participation but see their activities to enhance host community social enhancement, entertainments, and job creation.

Acknowledgement

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AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF RECREATION FACILITIES AMONG THE YOUTH OF ILORIN WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KWARA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examine the availability and utilization of recreation facilities among the youth of Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State. Purposive and simple random techniques were used for data collection. Data collected for the study were analyzed through descriptive statistics and simple frequency count and mean. The various recreational facilities available in the study area shows that soccer field scored the highest with a mean value of 2.98, followed by viewing centre and fitness room with a mean value of 2.94 and 2.90 respectively. The least recreational facility available in the study area is gulf course with a mean value of 2.57. The amount of leisure time at the disposal of or available for youth in the study area shows that a large part of young respondents (66.0%) have free time. A significant majority of young people (62.0%) state that they have 1 to 4 hours of free time per day, and 34% say that they have 5 to 8 hours. The study shows the benefit of recreation which indicates that participation in recreation benefits the youth educationally had the highest mean value of 2.94, this was followed by it gives joy to the youth and it benefits youth emotionally with a mean value of 2.93 and 2.91 respectively. The least benefit is it reduces crime rate with a mean value of 2.64. has physical benefits (59%). The study recommends that government should provide young people with recreational opportunities and programs they can participate in to protect them from the limits of antisocial behavior and boredom.

Keywords: Availability; Facilities; Recreation; Youth

INTRODUCTION

Youth leisure activities are being sacrificed as a result of Nigeria's cities' expanding population, which also necessitates additional land for residential, commercial, industrial, related to agriculture, and other land uses (Ogundele and Jegede, 2011). The great importance and necessity of recreational facilities in today's cities, however, cannot be disregarded in light of these widespread and extensive planning and construction infractions. Recovering impaired motor skills or emotional states is referred to as recreation. In addition to freeing young people from labor, it is a socially acceptable pastime that frequently offers variety, fulfillment, and job readiness (Hutchinson, 2005). According to Okolie (2008), recreational facilities are green areas where people congregate, encourage youth community bonding, and impart life's social lessons. Young people's time habits, particularly during their free time, reveal a lot about their opinions, social experiences, and social roles. Recreation is a kind of amusement and play, a means of mind and body renewal, and an enjoyable way to spend time after work. It can also be viewed as a lighthearted activity that promotes self-expression, relaxation, happiness, and fulfillment.

In essence, recreation is a motivated, voluntary activity done for enjoyment and leisure, according to Butler (1960). In essence, the primary goal of recreation is to help individuals unwind and revitalize so they can effectively resume their everyday tasks, which is not only economically advantageous but also non-recreational. The advantages of open areas for human recreation, both psychologically and physically, have been the subject of several research. Numerous Nigerian cities, including Lagos (Akinola, 1985), Ile-Ife (Farado, 1988), and Ibadan (Obateru, 1981), have listed the importance of open spaces in fostering a healthy atmosphere. But a genuine understanding of the

role that recreation plays in improving the environment's quality of life is justified, and it seems that more than just platitudes from authorities are needed. Recreation is a significant social issue that gives youth the chance to compete, test their physical prowess and stamina, raise their standards, and gain more life experience in general. Recreation, according to Edgington *et al.* (1995), is just something we want to do for fun. In both urban and rural settings, daily living can be quite stressful and monotonous, therefore it's physiologically necessary to maintain a normal balance. Every society has moments when people are spared from paid labor, household chores, or academic obligations. According to Jones, Kennaugh, and Ross (1996), leisure time is the time that people have available to them after their essential needs such as sleep, employment, and other obligations are satisfied. People should schedule time for activities that revitalize their bodies and minds, according to Opadiji (2002). According to Uti and Ojeme (2003), everyone needs to set apart time for work and play. People's leisure activities are currently rising due to the development of numerous contemporary time-saving technology (Ward *et al.*, 1994).

METHODOLOGY

Study Population and Sample Size

The youth in the Ilorin West Local Government area and staff of ministry of youth and sport in the study area make up the population. One hundred respondents was the estimated sample size.

Method of Data Collection

Two approaches are used in this study to acquire data i.e primary and secondary data sources. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire. A number of questions pertaining to the research project were included in the questionnaire. The secondary source, which includes textbooks, newspapers, articles, periodicals, journals, and so on, is the secondary method.

Sampling Techniques

Purposive and simple random techniques was used in this study, purposive sampling was use to select 80 youths in the study area while 20 staff of ministry of youth and sports development were selected through the use of simple random

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 17.0 was utilized to analyze the data in this investigation. Descriptive statistics and a basic frequency count and mean were used to examine the data that the questionnaire was used to collect for the study.

RESULTS OBTAINED

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	65	65.0
	Female	35	35.0
Age Group	15-19	11	11.0
	20-24	32	32.0
	25-29	34	34.0
	30-34	18	18.0
	35-40	5	5.0
Marital Status	Married	28	28.0
	Unmarried	72	72.0

Level Of Education	Primary	0	0.0
	Secondary	17	17.0
	NCE/ND/HND/BSc	83	83.0
Occupation Status	Employed	31	31.0
	Unemployed	20	20.0
	Student	49	49.0
Member of youth Organization, association or club	Yes	33	33.0
	No	67	67.0
Total		100	100

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are revealed in table 1, in which 65.0% of the respondents were male while 35.0% were female. 11.0% of the respondents were between 15-19 years of age, 32.0% were between 20-24 years of age, 35.0% were between 25-29 years of age, 18.0% of the respondents were between 30-34 years of age, while only 5.0% were between 35-40 years of age. The finding also revealed that 28.0% of the respondents were married while 72.0% were unmarried. It was also shown that majority (83.0%) of the respondents had tertiary education while 17.0% had secondary education. Also, 49.0% of the respondents were students, 31.0% were civil servants while 20.0% were unemployed. Majority (67.0%) of the respondents did not belong to any youth organization.

TABLE 2: Perceived understanding of recreation by the Respondents

Statement	Mean	S.D	Rank
Refresh yourself	3.46	0.435	2 nd
Have fun at your own pace	3.38	0.480	5 th
Enjoy your free time	3.43	0.431	3 rd
Participate in sports, games and play	3.48	0.427	1 st
Travel to places for sightseeing	3.35	0.484	6 th
To be with yourself in your free time	3.31	0.489	7 th
Get involved in activities that bring you joy and personal growth	3.39	0.445	4 th

The above table revealed the perceived understanding of recreation to the youths in the study area, majority of the respondents see recreation as to participate in sports, games and play have the highest mean value of 3.48, followed by refresh yourself with mean value of 3.46 and to be with yourself in your free time is the least with a mean value of 3.31. This suggests that majority of the respondents involve in games and sports during their free time.

TABLE 3: Perceived Recreational facilities Available in the Study Area

Facilities	Mean	S.D	Rank
Soccer Field	2.98	0.412	1 st
Dancing hall	2.79	0.441	6 th
Tennis court	2.61	0.469	10 th
Swimming pool	2.86	0.428	4 th
Parks and Garden	2.74	0.452	7 th
Viewing Centre	2.94	0.417	2 nd
Gulf Course	2.57	0.473	11 th
Fitness room	2.90	0.423	3 rd
Video Game Room	2.81	0.435	5 th
Community hall	2.68	0.463	9 th
Basketball courts	2.71	0.456	8 th

Table 3 shows various recreational facilities available in the study area, it was indicates that soccer field scored the highest mean value of 2.98, followed by viewing centre and fitness room with a mean value of 2.94 and 2.90 respectively. The least recreational facility available in the study area is gulf course with a mean value of 2.57. This indicates that soccer field and viewing centre were the only two leisure facilities are considered to be relatively well equipped, it is clear that leisure facilities as a whole were not sufficiently accessible to young people.

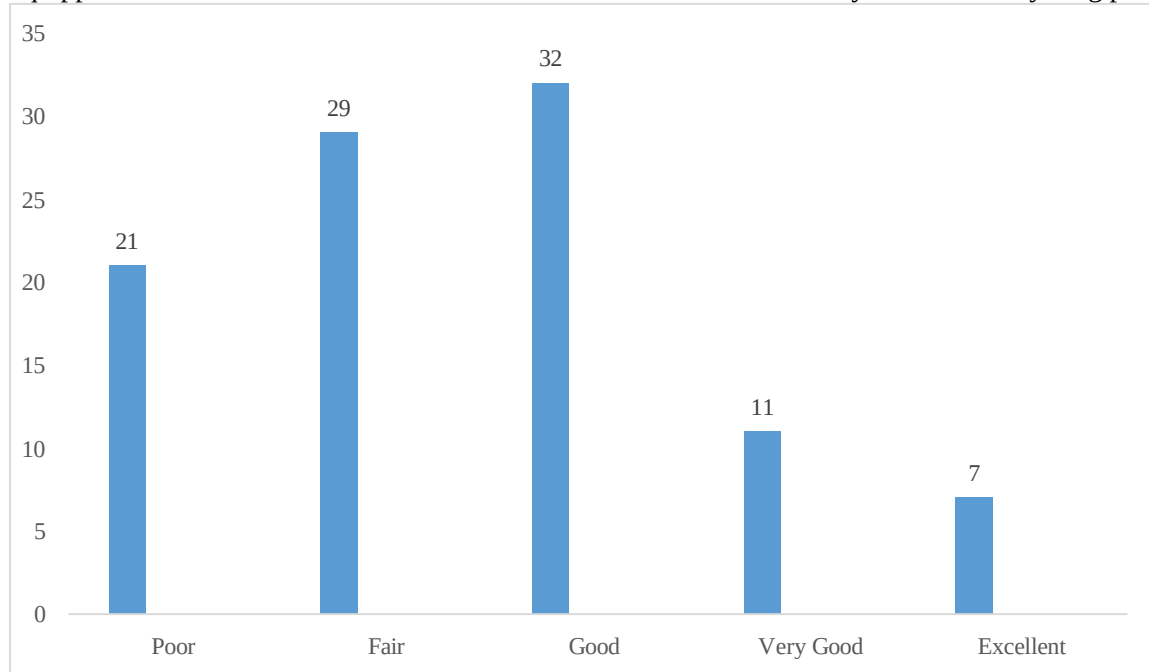


Fig1: Current Status of the Recreational Facilities in the Study Area

The current status of the recreational facilities in the study area was revealed in Fig1, it was revealed that the Good recorded the highest frequency of 32, followed by fair with 29 frequency and excellent is the least with 7.

TABLE 4: Free Time Available for the Youths in the Study Area

Statement	Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Do you have free time at your disposal?	Yes	66	66.0
	No	34	34.0
Approximately free time would you say you have per day?	1-4 hrs.	62	62.0
	5-8 hrs.	34	34.0
	Above 9hrs	4	4.0
Total		100	100.0

Table 4 shows the amount of free time for young people in the study area according to the table. The fact that a large part of young respondents (66.0%) have free time. A significant majority of young people (62.0%) state that they have 1 to 4 hours of free time per day, and 34% say that they have 5 to 8 hours. It is clear that young people have a lot of free time. It implies that majority of the utilized there free time in one recreational activity or the others,

TABLE 5: Significance of Recreation among the Youth in the Study Area

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Rank
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)		
Recreation benefits youth secretly	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	11(11.0)	59(59.0)	40(40.0)	2.79	7 th
Recreation benefits youth educationally	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	32(32.0)	68(68.0)	2.94	1 st
Recreation benefits youth emotionally	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	8(8.0)	41(41.0)	51(51.0)	2.91	3 rd
Recreation reduces crime rate	10(10.0)	22(22.0)	34(34.0)	14(14.0)	20(20.0)	2.64	10 th
Recreation gives health benefits to the youth	0(0.0)	24(24.0)	36(36.0)	40(40.0)	20(20.0)	2.69	9 th
Recreation benefits youth psychologically	0(0.0)	2(2.0)	6(6.0)	40(40.0)	52(52.0)	2.89	4 th
Recreation benefits youth economically	18(18.0)	12(12.0)	25(25.0)	27(27.0)	28(28.0)	2.73	8 th
Recreation helps youth to ease tension	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	19(19.0)	31(31.0)	50(50.0)	2.84	5 th
Recreation gives joy to the youth	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3(3.0)	25(25.0)	72(72.0)	2.93	2 nd
Recreation provides youths an opportunity to test skills and physical endurance	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	21(21.0)	38(38.0)	41(41.0)	2.81	6 th

The above table 5 shows the opinions of the respondents about the different benefits that young people can get from participating in recreational activities. In which the respondents agree that participation in recreation benefits the youth educationally with a mean value of 2.94, followed by it gives joy to the youth and it benefits youth emotionally with a mean value of 2.93 and 2.91 respectively. The least benefit is it reduces crime rate with a mean value of 2.64. has physical benefits (59%). The finding suggests a close relationship between emerging interests. All these benefits are important and must be achieved at the end of the recreational activity. Participating in recreational activities is physically participating, but at the same time interacting with others; learn a lesson by participating;

and finally he becomes mentally satisfied with the participation. Emotional values include a sense of accomplishment, overcoming stress, finding relaxation, increasing self-awareness, or simply enjoying the experience.

CONCLUSION

Young people should be encouraged to stay away from anti-social behavior such as drugs, alcoholism and crime. The best way to keep young people away from such antisocial behavior is to involve them in recreational activities and provide programs that develop self-esteem and good character. It was revealed from this study that soccer field and viewing centre are the most available recreational facilities available to the youth in the study area. Majority of the youth have a lot of free time at their disposal ranging from 1-8 hours per day. The benefits derive from recreation were categorized as physical, social, educational and emotional etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should provide young people with recreational opportunities and programs they can participate in to protect them from the limits of antisocial behavior and boredom.

Recreational awareness programs must be made available to the youth

- Young people must be mobilized and trained to participate in recreational activities, because participation in recreation leads to the development of the individual and ego, as well as self-esteem

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BAD CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF NODES AS A BARRIER TO SUCCESSFUL TOURISM PATRONAGE PATTERNS WITHIN ADO EKITI REGION.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined bad connectivity and accessibility of nodes as a barrier to successful tourism patronage patterns within the Ado Ekiti Region. An established method for analysing transportation networks, the study used the Alpha (α), Beta (β), and Gamma (γ) indices together with their related numbers and the Shimmel index to determine the degree of connectedness and accessibility of nodes in the studied area (Kansky, 1963). This method simplifies a network by separating it into its constituent nodes and the connections between them by means of edges. As a result, we can now count all the potential pairs of connections between the nodes. A graphical representation was created by abstracting the road network map into arcs and vertices. Routes leading to significant tourist destinations were also snapped and displayed on plates using the observation method. According to the research, poor connection is why tourism patronage is so low. Most routes on the plates are meant to lead to the study centre's tourist centres. The lack of motorability has a negative impact on the research area's tourist attractions. The study recommends that both the State and Local government Authorities should open up new and isolated areas within the region through the construction of motorable roads and adequate transport facilities to promote socio-economic activities and enhance easy access to tourist sites.

Keywords: Connectivity, Accessibility, Nodes, Tourism, Patronage patterns, Ado Ekiti

INTRODUCTION

The connectivity and accessibility of nodes within the Ado Ekiti Region pose a significant barrier to successful tourism patronage patterns. This challenge is further amplified by the insufficiency of basic amenities such as proper parking arrangements, reliable electricity, fresh water supply, and decent accommodations, which have been identified to influence tourists' satisfaction in the region.(Omotoba et al., 2022). Improving the connectivity and accessibility of nodes within the Ado Ekiti Region is crucial to attracting more tourists and enhancing their overall experience. Therefore, investing in infrastructure and service improvements could undoubtedly increase the visibility and attractiveness of tourist sites in Ekiti State, perhaps resulting in heightened tourist satisfaction and subsequent positive publicity(Azhar et al., 2021). Additionally, the level of connectivity and accessibility can impact the success of tourism patronage patterns within the Ado Ekiti Region. Moreover, residents' perceptions should not be overlooked in developing ecotourism attractions in Ado Ekiti. This is because residents' perceptions can significantly shape the success or failure of these attractions. For example, suppose residents perceive that developing ecotourism attractions will increase traffic congestion, pedestrian congestion, and parking problems. In that case, they may resist or discourage the development of such attractions.

Conversely, if residents perceive the development of ecotourism to be beneficial, such as providing opportunities for employment and improving the local economy, they could be more receptive and supportive of these initiatives (Orimaye et al., n.d).

It is necessary to invest in improving connectivity and accessibility, addressing the concerns and perceptions of residents, and addressing residents concerns and perceptions essential for the successful development of ecotourism attractions in Ado Ekiti and its potential for sustainability (Omotoba et al., 2022). Investing in infrastructure and service improvements is crucial to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of nodes within the Ado Ekiti Region, attracting more tourists and enhancing their overall experience. In conclusion, the connectivity and accessibility of nodes within the Ado Ekiti Region can be a barrier to successful tourism patronage patterns. Improving connectivity

and accessibility is vital to overcome this barrier and promote successful tourism patronage patterns. Therefore, the local government and relevant stakeholders must prioritise investment in infrastructure development, such as improving road networks, transportation systems, and signage, as well as providing information and resources to residents regarding the benefits and impacts of ecotourism development.

There is a need for ongoing dialogue between all stakeholders to ensure the sustainable development of ecotourism, taking into account its potential impact on the livelihoods and lifestyles of residents while enhancing their quality of life and preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the region. Connectivity and accessibility of nodes, such as transportation networks and infrastructure, can hinder successful tourism patronage patterns within the Ado Ekiti Region. The primary objective is to identify and examine the level of connectivity of road networks and the accessibility of nodes within the study area. The study will, therefore, use this to assess the level of patronage pattern of tourism sites within the study area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brief History of Road Transport in Nigeria

According to Anyanwu et al. (1997), the first attempt to build a road in Nigeria was made by Lord Lugard in 1904, when he attempted to construct a mule route connecting the Northern states of Zaria and Zungeru. Later, the route was widened from Zaria to include the cities of Sokoto, Katsina, and Maiduguri. Nonetheless, the first motorable road in Nigeria was built in 1906, connecting Ibadan and Oyo. When Nigeria gained its independence in 1960, the country's landscape was crisscrossed by a rudimentary network of trunk roads, secondary roads, and feeder roads whose characteristics reflected their construction's purpose, which was to facilitate the evacuation of agricultural produce from the interior to the ports for exports.

The Federal Government of Nigeria established the Road Board in 1926, with H.E. Walker at its helm, to propose a primary trunk road network connecting the country's principal cities. These thoroughfares were conceived as a framework upon which the system of secondary roads could be constructed, turning the road network into a coherent whole rather than a collection of unrelated pieces. The overall length of government-maintained roads increased from 5,875 miles in 1938/39 to 9,453 miles by 1937/38. (5,875 miles). The country's overall length of paved roads increased dramatically between 1951 and 1980.

From the various publications of the Nigerian Federal Office of Statistics, we learnt that only 1.782 kilometres of Nigeria's total 44,414 roads were paved in 1951. These 1.782 kilometres were single-lane roads with sharp turns and inadequate drainage. Between 1958 and 1980, the total length of roads increased from 44,414 kilometres to 114,768 kilometres, with tarred routes increasing from 1.782 kilometres to 28632 kilometres and earth/gravel roads increasing from 4232 kilometres to 86136 kilometres. The Central Bank of Nigeria (2003) reported approximately 20,000 kilometres of roads in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

Ado-Ekiti region, with spatial extent covering Ado Local Government Area and Irepodun/Ifelodun Local government (The defunct Ekiti Central Local Government), is one of the 299 Local Government areas created nationwide in 1976 with its headquarters in Ado-Ekiti, having a total population of about 262,377 in 1977. Ekiti central local government was split into two, giving rise to Ado and Irepodun/Ifelodun local government Areas in 1989. The region is homogenous regarding physical and human elements like the physiographic units, drainage basins, climatic belts, and vegetation. Also, the Ado-Ekiti region is delimited and defined administratively as the geographical area to which Ado-Ekiti, as a significant town, performs central place functions in terms of social and economic services. A region is where neighbouring settlements are centrally governed or controlled administratively. As a result, the surrounding towns and villages provide rural roads through which the bulk of the agricultural produce gets to Ado Township and reaches other parts of the state.

Ado-Ekiti region is located between latitudes $7^{\circ}31'$ and $7^{\circ}49'$ north of the equator and longitudes $5^{\circ}07'$ and $5^{\circ}27'$ east of the Greenwich meridian. It is bounded in the north by Ido-Osi and Oye Local Government Areas, in the west by Ijero and Ekiti West Local government Areas, in the east by Gboyin and Ekiti East local government areas, in the South by Ekiti South West, Ikere and Ise-Orun Local Government Areas as shown in figure 1.

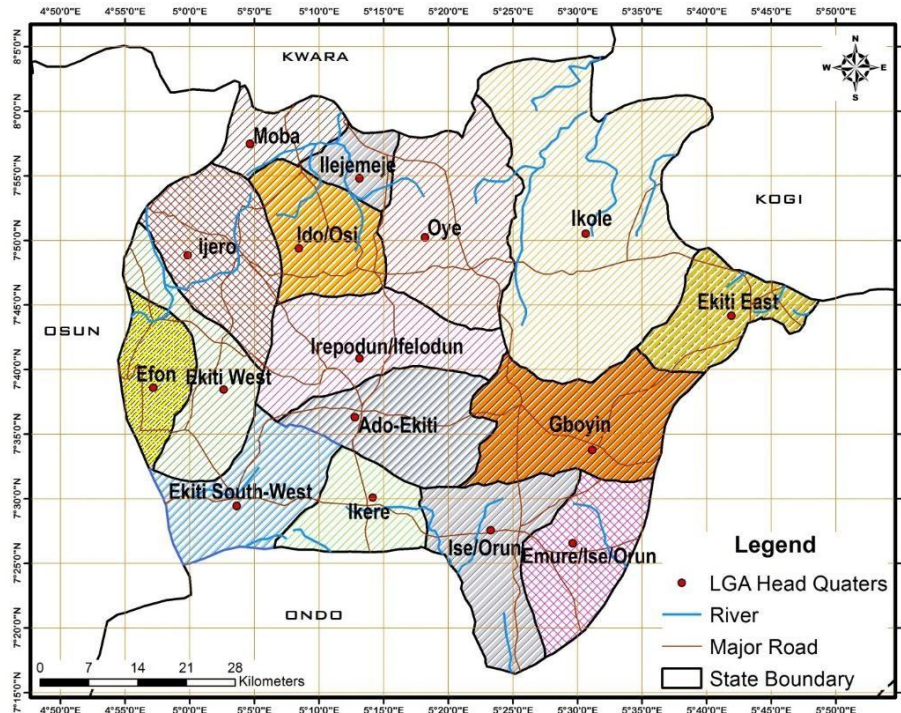


Figure 1: Map of Ekiti State
 Source: Arc GIS (2020)

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objective, which is to identify and examine the level of connectivity of road networks and the accessibility of nodes within the study area, a widely acceptable procedure in the analysis of transportation networks (Kansky, 1963), the Alpha (α) Beta (β), Gamma (γ) indices associated number and shimbel index were used. In this approach, the network is abstracted into nodes (points) and edges (links) connecting these nodes. Therefore, it becomes possible to enumerate all the pairs of relationships between the nodes. The map of the road networks was abstracted into arcs and vertices and was presented in a graphical form (fig. 1)

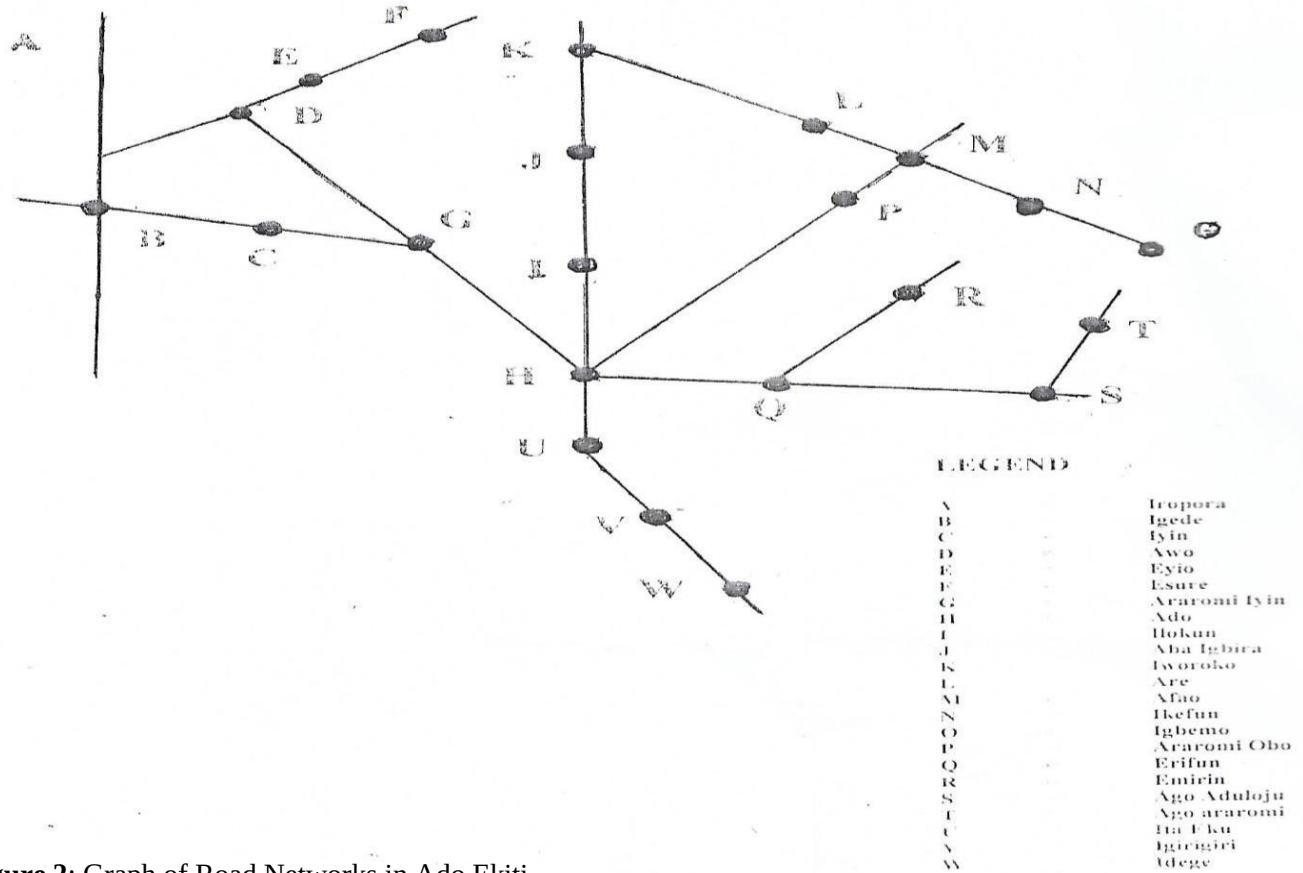


Figure 2: Graph of Road Networks in Ado Ekiti

Source: Fieldwork, 2020

From Figure 2, it can be seen that there are twenty-six (26) edges (e) and twenty-three (23) nodes (v). The connectivity values were derived using the Gamma and Alpha indices as follows;
The formula is

Gamma (γ) index:

Using the Gamma index with the formula:

$$\gamma = \frac{e}{3(v-2)} \dots\dots \text{Equation (i)}$$

$$\frac{e}{3(v-2)} \times 100 \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation(ii)}$$

$$\frac{26}{3(23-2)} = \frac{26}{63} = 0.41$$

$$0.41 \times 100$$

$$= 41\%$$

The Gamma index is the ratio of the number of edges in a network to the maximum possible in the network, which can also be expressed in percentage. For a wholly connected network in the Gamma index, the value always lies between 0.0 and 1.0. The connectivity level of road networks in the Ado-Ekiti region is 0.41 or 41%, indicating a low level of road network development in the area. This index is applied because the Beta index did not quite show the degree to which the roads in the study area permit direct movement to various nodes.

Alpha (α) index

Using the alpha index with the formula;

$$\alpha = \frac{e - v + 1}{2(v-5)} \dots \dots \dots \text{Equation (i)}$$

$$\frac{e - v + 1}{2(v-5)} \times 100 \dots \dots \dots \text{Equation (ii)}$$

$$\frac{26 - 23 + 1}{2(23-5)}$$

$$= \frac{3 + 1}{2(18)}$$

$$= \frac{4}{36} = 0.11 \qquad = 0.11 \times 100 = 11\%$$

The Alpha index is the ratio based on the number of circuits in a network rather than the number of edges. This measure is the most suitable for measuring connectivity because its definition range is a closed interval with a convenient limit of 0 and 1 (Kansky, 1963). Based on this, the index showed that the road network in the Ado-Ekiti region is 0.11 or 11% connected.

RESULTS OBTAINED

The measure of Accessibility of Nodes within the study area using the Shimbel index and associated numbers.

The matrix as a square table was used to determine the accessibility between different nodes in the study area. Letters A to W denote the towns and villages in the Ado-Ekiti region as follows: A represents Iropora, B = Igede, C = Iyin, D = Awo, E = Eyio, F = Esure, G = Araromi Iyin, H = Ado, I = Ilokun, J = Aba Igbira, K = Iworoko, L = Are, M = Afao, N = Iketun, O = Igbemo, P = Araromi Obo, Q = Erifun, R = Emirin, S = Ago Aduloju, T = Ago Araromi, U = Ita-Eku, V = Igrigiri and W = Idege.

Node H has four as its associated number and 53 as its shimbel index; this node has the least associated shimbel index of all the nodes in the Ado-Ekiti region and, thus, represents the most accessible node. Therefore, Ado-township is the most accessible settlement to all other regional territories.

Table 4.6 Matrix showing shimbela and associated number indices.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	ASSOCIATED NUMBER	SHIMBEL INDEX
A	-	1	2	3	4	5	3	4	5	6	7	76	7	8	5	5	6	6	7	5	6	7	8	8	116
B	1	-	1	2	3	4	2	3	4	5	6	6	5	6	7	4	4	5	5	6	4	5	6	7	95
C	2	1	-	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	6	3	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	6	76
D	3	2	1	-	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	6	3	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	6	76
E	4	3	2	1	-	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	5	6	7	4	4	5	5	6	4	5	6	7	95
F	5	4	3	2	1	-	3	4	5	6	7	7	6	7	8	5	5	6	6	7	5	6	7	8	116
G	3	2	1	1	2	3	-	1	2	3	4	4	3	4	5	2	2	3	3	4	2	3	4	5	62
H	4	3	2	2	3	4	1	-	1	2	3	3	2	3	4	1	1	2	2	3	1	2	3	4	53
I	5	4	3	3	4	5	2	1	-	1	2	3	3	4	5	2	2	3	3	4	2	3	4	5	68
J	6	5	4	4	5	6	3	2	1	-	1	2	3	4	5	3	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	6	83
K	7	6	5	5	6	7	4	3	2	1	-	1	2	3	4	3	4	5	5	6	4	5	6	7	94
L	8	7	6	6	7	8	5	4	3	2	1	-	1	2	3	2	4	5	5	6	4	5	6	8	92
M	6	5	4	4	5	6	3	2	3	3	2	1	-	1	2	1	3	4	4	5	3	4	5	6	76
N	7	6	5	5	6	7	4	3	4	5	3	2	1	-	1	2	4	5	5	6	4	5	6	7	95
O	8	7	6	6	7	8	5	4	5	5	4	3	2	1	-	3	5	6	6	7	5	6	7	8	99
P	5	4	3	3	4	5	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	3	-	2	3	3	4	2	3	4	5	64
Q	5	4	3	3	4	5	2	1	2	3	4	4	3	4	5	2	-	1	1	2	2	3	4	5	67
R	6	5	4	4	5	6	3	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	6	3	1	-	2	3	3	4	5	6	88
S	6	5	4	4	5	6	3	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	6	3	1	2	-	1	3	4	5	6	86
T	7	6	5	5	6	7	4	3	4	5	6	6	5	6	7	4	2	3	1	-	4	5	6	7	107
U	5	4	3	3	4	5	2	1	2	3	4	4	3	4	5	2	2	3	3	4	-	1	2	5	69
V	6	5	4	4	5	6	3	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	6	3	3	4	4	5	1	-	1	6	88
W	7	6	5	5	6	7	4	3	4	5	6	6	5	6	7	4	4	5	5	6	2	1	-	7	109

Source: Field survey 2020

General Characteristics of Road Networks in the Study Area

The physical survey method was used with the aid of two trained field assistants, measurement was carried out with meter tape at different intervals, and a personal observation method was used to examine the condition of roads in the study area. The study showed that the majority of the road networks in the region are earth roads; some are unpaved, while some are untarred and even where tarred roads exist; some are very narrow and are characterised by potholes, no drainage system, and easily flooded during the rainy season. Some are busy and mainly plied by the local inhabitants, mostly farmers, a few civil servants and traders.

The study also revealed that the level of traffic in the study area, especially along the rural–rural links, is very low, and as a result, most of the farmers have to trek over a long distance before getting to their farmland, some market men and women have to wait for a long time before they could be able to get a means of transport to convey their goods to the market. Also, because of the condition of roads, most farmers face difficulty transporting agricultural inputs to their farms and evacuating agricultural produce, especially perishable ones like vegetables, garden eggs, pineapple, oranges and other crops to the market. The case of the rural dwellers is not different from the above as many of them have to wait for a long time before they can get any means of transport to convey them to the nearest health facilities in neighbouring towns, to get to their places of work, attend social functions in other places and to even get other wholesales items in city centres.

This corroborates the work of Ogunleye (2004), who discovered that the level of transport development in the Ikole local government Area is far below expectation, that most villages and towns are not connected with motorable roads. And this, to some extent, has hindered effective interactions among the settlement, consequently retarding the level of socio-economic advancement of the region. This is further bolstered by Adedeji et al. (2014) in their study in the Obokun Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria. They found that there is inequality in the provision of road infrastructures and rehabilitation of roads in the study area, resulting in disparities in socio-economic development. They also noted that poor roads in the study area negatively affect agricultural activities and sales of commodities in periodic markets, which is the residents' major source of income, thereby increasing the poverty rate. The most common means of transport are motorcycles, bicycles, human portage, pickups, vans, a few buses which ply some of the roads once or twice a day and private cars whose owners are either residents or are just passing through those routes.

Based on the different attributes of the road networks observed within the study area, the roads were classified into four categories, further discussed below.

Structure of Road Network in the Study Area

Four types of roads were identified in the study area: bush paths, earth roads, surfaced roads and express highways. Thus, these network structures were categorised as follows:

- (i) Rural – Rural Links
- (ii) Rural-Urban Links
- (iii) Urban – Urban Links
- (iv) Federal roads

Rural – Rural Links

The bush paths are the class of roads in this category. They are Local Government (trunk c) roads constructed to link the villages and hamlets. They are very narrow and untarred; they lack transport facilities, like road signs and drainage; they are very flooded and impassable during and after excessive rainfall; and they are very narrow, with just less than 3.5 meters according to the measurements taken at different intervals and as such can only accommodate walking in and some cases bicycles and motorcycles. Hence traffic on these roads is always very light; these roads serves as links to distant farmlands, example of such roads are Eyio – Iropora, Ago Ologunja – Kajola, New Igede-Awo-Iyin-Iworoko roads, OdoUro-Elemi-Aroto, Obaidu-Kajola, Ago-Aduloju-Ategbado-Igbo Reserve (plate 1, 2 and 3).



Plate 1: New Iworoko-Iyin-Awo-Igede road

Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 2: Part of the road and view of some buildings at Elemi Village along Aroto

Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 3: Earth Road from the main road linking AraromiIyin-Odo-Uro-Elemi

Source: Field survey, 2020

Rural-Urban Links

The study area has numerous earth roads that fall within this category. The Local Government maintains some of them, while the State Government maintains some. They are widened footpaths that can accommodate motor vehicles and are constructed to connect “big” villages. The width of the roads in this category ranges between 4.5m – 5.5 meters. They are in deplorable conditions and highly flooded during the rainy season. Generally, these roads are partly tarred. Even the tarred ones are highly characterised by potholes, which dot their surface at close intervals and become flood pools and narrow bridges during the rainy season. While some are not tarred at all in some cases, they also lack basic transport facilities like drainage, pedestrian walkways, and road signs. Also, these roads are dusty, especially during the dry season; some airborne diseases may result. Examples of some roads in this category are Esure – Eyio link, Iropora – Araromi – Epe link, Awo-Ara, Ago Aduloju – Igbogun link, Ita-Eku-Itamo link, Odo Ado – Ita-Eku, Idege – Igimokogo – Igrigiri link, Araromi-Iropora and Oke Ureje link. Hence, most people plying these routes are conveyed on motorcycles, bicycles, tippers, station wagons and a few cars to evacuate farm products (plates 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7).

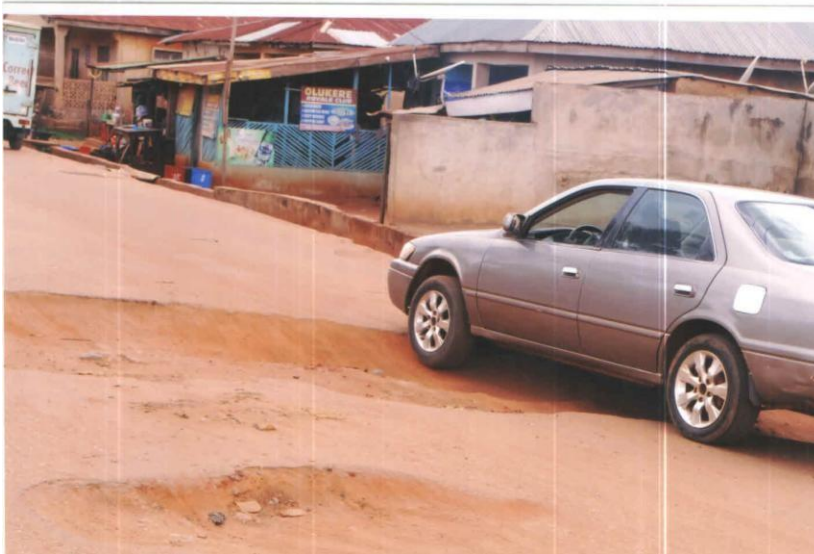


Plate 4: Potholes along Odo-Ado via Ado LGA linking Ita-Eku road.

Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 5: Earth road along Idege-Igimokogo-Igirigiri

Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 6: Failed Segment of Road between Esure and Eyio

Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 7: Failed Segment of road along Esure-Eyio-Awo road

Source: Field survey, 2020

Urban – Urban links

These are the state-maintained roads (Trunk B) designed to connect the various settlements (towns and villages). This category of roads started as earth roads and has gradually developed to its present status due to the diverse purposes these roads serve, ranging from economic, agricultural, political and socio-cultural purposes. Based on a reconnaissance survey and personal observation of these different roads, most roads are still not tarred and are characterised by potholes. Some are partly tarred with breakings at different intervals. The width ranges between 5.50m – and 6.70m examples of roads in this category are Odo-Ado – Igrigiri, New Ado-Iyin road, Ado-Afao, Iworoko-Igbemo – Iluomoba, Awo-Esure – Ifaki, Igede-Awo – Iropora links some of the roads in this category are partly tarred or highly characterised with potholes and series of breakings. Traffic in some routes in this category is a bit high. Taxi cars, lorries, buses, motorcycles, and other means of transport ply some of these routes with difficulties (plates 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11).



Plate 8: Failed Segment of road along Are-Afao-Igbemo road
Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 9: Failed Segment of road along Eyio and Awo
Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 10: New Iyin road after FERMA office in Ado Ekiti.
Source: Field survey, 2020



Plate 11: New Iyin Road after Ifeoluwa group of schools in IyinEkiti
Source: Field survey, 202

Federal Road

These federal roads pass through some parts of the study area (Trunk A). They are constructed and maintained by the Federal Government. The width ranges from 6.70 – 7.80 meters. Such roads include Ado-Iyin – Igede – Aramoko links and Ado-Iworoko– Ifaki links. They are in good condition however some parts of the streets are characterised by potholes, inadequate traffic signs, dangerous bends and lack of other transport facilities.

It is, therefore, observed that, although some parts of the roads are averagely good, the more significant proportion of the streets within the study area, which would have facilitated the free flow of pedestrian and vehicular flow, are in a deplorable condition that hinders easy evacuation of farm produce, easy movement of market men and women as regards trip to periodic markets, easy access to the few available health facilities, also times most parents finds it challenging to convey their children to some schools especially during or after heavy rainfall as most of those roads are always difficult to pass through during these periods. Hence, the difficulty in even getting a means of transport and consequently resulting in high cost of transportation, thus affecting market men and women and cost of transporting agricultural inputs and outputs and affecting the prices of perishable and food items because the urban centres rely either directly or indirectly on the rural areas for the supply of most of these items.

Tourism Patronage and Connectivity within the study area

From the study, it was deduced that tourism patronage is very low as a result of lousy connectivity. Most roads shown in the plates above are supposed to be access to tourist centres within the study centre. Unfortunately, it is

not motorable and reduces the patronage of tourist sites within the study area. This report is in tandem with the work of Tijani and Kukoyi (2013), who noted that while road connectivity could not be used alone to measure tourism patronage, bad roads have significantly contributed to the low patronage pattern of tourists within the study area.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the bad connectivity of roads and their effects on tourism patronage in the Ado Ekiti region. The study uses the Alpha and Gamma formulas to show the region's connectivity level. Also, the study indicates that lousy connectivity harms the patronage of tourist sites within the study area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this, the following recommendations were made.

Both the State and Local government Authorities should open up new and isolated areas within the region through the construction of motorable roads and adequate provision of transport facilities in places like Eyio – Iropora, further Ado – Iyin road, Igede – Awo– Iyin – Iworoko, Idege – Igimokogo, Aba Ekiti along Afao road through Igrigiri Federal Poly roads to promote socio-economic activities and as well enhance easy access to tourist sites. The government should also give the rural-rural and rural-urban links a facelift to facilitate the movement of agricultural products from the rural areas to the urban centres for sale and promote a high level of spatial interaction in the study area.

Construction of bridges where necessary and effective drainage system to prolong the road's life span and protect it from being

Adequate infrastructures should also be provided to make rural areas more attractive, especially to prospective market men and women, entrepreneurs and investors.

There should be a good maintenance culture to maintain the road networks effectively.

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BANQUET SERVICES AND REVENUE PERFORMANCE OF FIVE STAR HOTELS IN NAIROBI, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The non-optimal performance of banquet services as revenue centres in hotels have been attributed to a combination of many factors such as inadequate seating capacity, theft, overcrowded venues, insecurity, insufficient equipment, unattractive changes, exodus of customers to lower star hotels and lack of effective management. Therefore this study sought to assess banquet services and revenue performance of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The study hypothesized that banquet services are not significant source of revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The study target population consisted of five star hotels in Nairobi and random and purposive sampling procedures were used to identify one hundred and five respondents comprising of banquet Managers, banquet Supervisors, head chefs, banquet waiters, banquet agents, account officers and clients. The data collected through questionnaire and secondary information from sampled establishments were analysed using descriptive statistics to determine variable characteristics while chi-square was used to determine the level of significant of the study. The results indicated a positive variations of revenue derived from banquet services which indicated $F = 2.170$, $p\text{-value} = 0.007$. The study revealed that banquet services are significant source of revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The study concluded that banquet services constituted significant source of revenue as they contributed to the profits of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The study recommends the need to improve on banquet facilities and diversify banquet products and services.

Key words: Banquet services, Revenue performance, Five star hotels.

INTRODUCTION

The banquet unit is a subsection of the food and beverage department which is considered as the most profitable section in income generation and account for relative important overall profit contribution of five star hotels (Angus, 2011). Banquet services are essentially carried out to cater for the countless number of large functions and events in five star hotels. Banquet services involve the provision of food and drinks at functions and conferences (Hunter, Tinton and Mannal, 2010). Now a days, hotel banquet services has attracted immersed competition from other event planners, as such hotel managers are seek alternative methods of revenue generation (Yeh, Chen, and Hu, 2012).

The reliance on international tourism market has declined in the recent years while enormous domestic market has not been exploited fully in Kenya. In recent past, there has been a steady decrease in banquet sales severely affecting the total gross profit in the hotel industry and this has been due to reduction in international market and unexploited enormous domestic market (Akama and Ondimu, 2002). Notwithstanding banquet services potential for relatively high revenue contributions to the national economy, majority of hotels have witnessed a steady decrease in banquet sales (Dieke, 1999). This decline has led the stakeholders to redefine its policy by not only reducing charge rates to attract domestic market but also to sustain hotel business during the low season. The concept of diversification of revenue in hotels has become a key strategy for ensuring sustainable and optimal performance (World Bank, 1990). Despite the critical situations, hotel banquet services makes up a substantial contribution to the total revenue and net earnings of a hotel (William and Liguori, 1980).

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to assess banquet services influence on revenue performance of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.

Hypothesis of the Study

Banquet services are not significant source of revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hotel Banquet Services

Banquet is a service for meeting or a service for an event which are held in hotel or out of hotel premises. Banquet services are blend of tangible and intangible products that are consumed at a pre-designed location (Hunter et al., 2010). Banquet services may be formal meals including breakfast, lunch, dinner, meeting, conference and party events or buffet reception (informal meals) where guests dish food and beverage by themselves, for instance breakfast, lunch, dinner, wedding party, and birthday party. Banquet section of the food and beverage division is responsible for handling all events which are held in hotel. Banquet is considered important to increase the income of the hotel. Therefore, banquet service has major impact on the hotel operation cost.

About forty years ago, the food and beverage director of Hotel Corporation of America Hubsch (1966) figured out that food and beverage has become new a revenue centre with banquet sales contributing between 25-35% profits. Previous study revealed that banquet services are characterized by high level of expectations and demands (Napompech, 2011). Also, Rao (2014) study revealed that hotel operators can no longer rely on accommodation revenue to survive the economic slump.

Revenue Contributions of Banquet Services

Banquet departments may generate revenue in excess of costs and contributes significantly to the total earnings of the hotel industry (Ninemeier, 2004). According to Purtell (2003) study which reveals that 78% of the hotels' revenue is derived from the banquet department. However, Astroff *et al.*, (1998) state that profit margin on sales of banquets is often 35 to 40 percentages due to flexibility in pricing and lower food costs because of large volume preparations as customers normally receive identical meals. In addition, no large inventory is needed and labour costs are significantly lower because banquet servers and bartenders are casual employees.

According to Connor (2000) study commissioned by the Convention Liaison Council (CLC) in Britain disclosed that the average customer at banquets spends \$188 (Kshs 14, 288) per day and that \$82.8 billion dollars annually is generated directly from banqueting (equivalent to Kshs 629.28 trillion as at 2005). It is becoming an important tool as it influences banquet business to predict when a hotel can sell -space and rooms at higher rates. Revenue outturns in many hotels have contracted and returns on investment severely impaired due to weak bargaining power of customers. The trend shows that there has been a slump in the number of tourists dining in the Kenyan hotels since the war in Iraq began (Ashley, 2003). The decline has inevitably created unemployment in the sector.

In response to this decline in performance, the hotel industry has tried to improve domestic market through policy and management by reducing charge rates to attract the local demand (Markandya, 2000). The depreciation of the shilling particularly against the euro also improved the country's competitiveness as a destination for travel by group tourists to Kenya, according to World Bank (2000). The recovery in the hospitality sector is bound to support economic activity including banquet services as well as transport services that have strong linkages with the activity and hence improvement in overall economic activity.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in Nairobi a cosmopolitan and capital city of Kenya that play hosts to most social, cultural, economic, political and religious activities. Most banquet services are held in major hotels and many international and regional organizations hold meetings, conferences, workshops and seminars. Also, Nairobi has developed infrastructure, high tourism traffic and a fairly large number of five hotels with facilities and capacity to host both local and international functions. As such, this formed a good base for the conduct of the study in Nairobi.

The study target population consisted of five star hotels in Nairobi and random and purposive sampling procedures were used to identify one hundred and five respondents from seven five star hotels. The respondents comprised of banquet Managers, banquet Supervisors, head chefs, banquet waiters, banquet agents, account officers and clients with 85.7% response rate. The data collected through questionnaire and secondary information from sampled five hotels were analysed using descriptive statistics to determine variable characteristics while Pearson correlation was used to establish the pattern of relationship and association of the variables and logistic regression was involved to determine the level of significant and test the hypothesis.

RESULTS OBTAINED

The study results and discussion cover the frequency of banquet services, percentage revenue contribution banquet services, revenue accruing from banquet services per function and revenue flow from banquet services of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.

Frequency of banquet services

The results of the frequency of banquet services in five star hotels, Nairobi are presented in table 1.

Table 1: Frequency of banquet services in 5-star hotels, Nairobi

Period	Frequency	%
Daily	7	18
Weekends	8	20
Weekly	14	36
Fortnightly	5	13
Monthly	5	13
Total	39	100

Source: Field survey 2017

The results in table 1 showed that 36% of the five star hotels recorded 36% weekly banquet services, followed by 20% weekends and 13% fortnightly and monthly respectively. This indicated that banquet services are characterized by fluctuating demands, seasonality and concentration of events especially during weekends. This result is in line with Napompech (2011) study which revealed that banquet services are characterized by high level of expectations and demands.

Percentage Revenue Contribution of Banquet Services

The results of percentage revenue contribution banquet services in five star hotels, Nairobi are displayed in Figure 1.

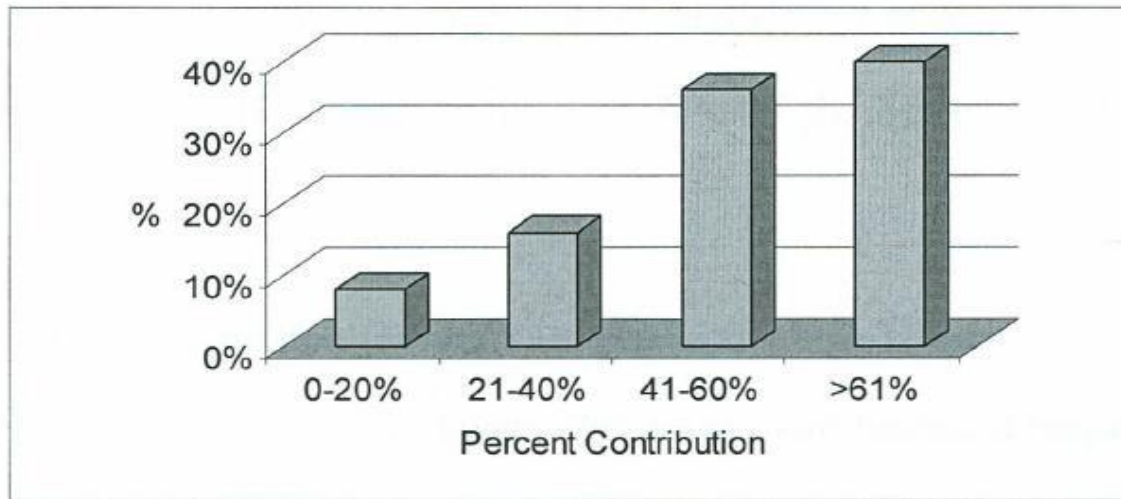


Figure 1: Percentage revenue contribution of banquet services in five star Hotels

Source: Field survey 2017

Results in Figure 1 revealed that 40% of the five star hotels averagely generated over 61% of the total revenue from banquet services. Also, 36% of the five star hotels derived total revenue of between 41- 60% from Banquet services while 16% and 8% of the five star hotels reported that the total revenue from banquets were between 21-40% and below 20% respectively. These findings agree with Astroff *et al.*, (1998) who asserted that banquet services involving food and beverage produce substantial revenues for hotels. Successful banquets can contribute to the overall profitability because the profit margin on sales for banquets is often between 35 to 40 percent. Also, Hubsch (1966) report figured out that food and beverage has become new a revenue centre with banquet sales contributing between 25-35% profits. According to Purtell (2003) study it is possible for hotels to generate as high as 78% of the hotels' revenue from the banquet services. This meant that the five star hotels should be more tactful in employing yield management to banquet services.

Banquet Services Revenue Per Function

The results of the revenue accruing from banquet services per function in five star hotels, Nairobi are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Banquet revenue per function in five star hotels, Nairobi

Amount Spent	Frequency	%
Below 100,000	2	5
100,000 – 500,000	32	76
500,000 and above	6	19
Total	40	100

Source: Field survey 2017

The results in Table 2 indicated that majority of the five star hotels (76%) recorded more functions frequented by clients who spent between Kshs. 100,000-500,000 as a substantial collection of money from one banquet function. Also, during the high season there are possibilities of having multiple bookings and functions in a single day. The findings further revealed that few corporate clients (19%) constituted clients that spent huge amount of money per function which is translated into high revenue to hotels. The remaining proportion of 5% clients spent between Kshs

below 100,000 and these cadre of clients comprised of small groups of people for specific functions such as birthday parties, cocktails, fund raising and other small events. Hotel banquet services makes up a substantial contribution to the total revenue and net earnings of a hotel (William and Liguori, 1980).

Revenue Flow of Banquet Services

The results of revenue flow from banquet services of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya are displayed in Figure 2.

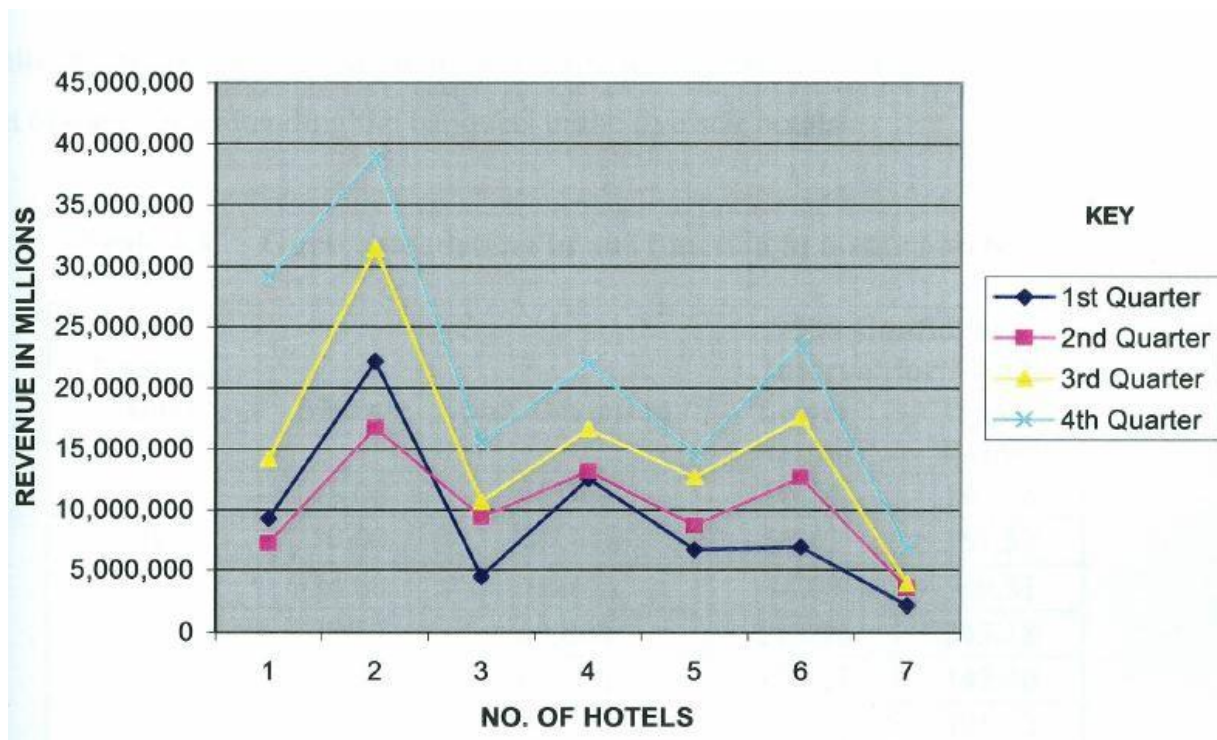


Figure 2: Revenue Flow of banquet revenue from Jan-Dec, 2017 of five star Hotels in Nairobi

Source: Field survey 2017

The results in Figure 2 indicated that there were distinct variations of revenue collected from the five star hotels in the year, 2017. The overall collection of revenue was about Kshs 400,000,000 (Million) from banquet services in the year 2017. The finding tallied with Connor (2000) study which disclosed progressive trends of average banquet spending in Kenya.

However, the amount of money charged for banquet events were found to be rather high and the main reason was the high banquet overheads which have made five star hotels set some fixed profit percentages. Also, lack of flexibility and rigidity has compelled made some clients to seek cheaper facilities as options with affordable rates, some of which are government institutions that charge functions only to meet break-even costs. There was distinct uneven contribution from each hotel due to a number of performance indicators such as bargaining power of customers, client loyalty, seating capacities, and spacious venues, disposable income particularly in weddings and parties as well as negotiable charges. The distinct variations of the quarterly collection is due to a number of factors including number and size of function, equipment, quality of meeting rooms, quality of food service, previous experience in dealing functions, the quality of staff and the socio economic and political environments.

The low variations of banquet services revenue in first two quarters were due to hard economic times while the last two quarters indicated rejuvenated banquet services revenue. These last two quarters revenue scenarios may likely be repeated in future if the government avails sound economic policies and enviable political environment to attract not only foreign investors but also improve the domestic market. This result has an implication to the growth and development not only for the hotel industry but also for the national economy.

Test of Hypothesis of the study

The assumption of the study was that banqueting services are not a significant source of revenue and contributor to the profit of hotels. The test of hypothesis to determine the significance of the study was conducted by using chi-square statistics. The results of the test of hypothesis are shown in table 3.

Table 4: Test of Hypothesis of the study

	Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig.
Between Groups	163405.119	6	2.170	.007
Within Groups	414092.381	33		
Total	577497.500	39		
P-value = 0.007				

Source: Field survey 2017

The null hypothesis (H_{01}) stated that banquet services are not significant source of revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The alternate hypothesis (H_{a1}) stated that banquet services are significant source of revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. The chi-square statistics results in Table 3 indicated $F = 2.170$, $p\text{-value} = 0.007$ and since the $p\text{-value} = 0.007 \leq 0.05$, the study rejected null hypothesis and accepted alternate hypothesis. Therefore, “banquet services are significant source of revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.” This meant that banquet services significantly contribute to the revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. This finding concurred with Ninemeier, (2004) study that banquet contributes significantly to the total earnings of the hotel industry.

Summary of the Findings

An assessment of the revenue derived from banqueting services in the study area revealed a significant and substantial collection of revenue about Ksh.400, 000,000.00 (Million) in the year 2017. However, there was distinct uneven contribution from each hotel due to a number of performance indicators such as bargaining power of customers, client loyalty, sufficient seating capacities, and spacious venues, disposable income particularly in weddings and parties as well as negotiable charges. The finding revealed that during the high season there were multiple bookings and functions in a day. Also, the corporate clients spent huge amount of money per function which translated into high revenue of five star hotels.

Furthermore, there are other sources of banquet revenues from small group of clients particularly during the low season when charge rates are lower. More also, most of the hotels tactfully employ yield management whereby clients are charged various rates rather than fixed prices. The revenue variations in performance of each five star hotels are reflected in their relationships with the clients, their facilities and marketing strategies adopted. Political patronage plays a big role in some key hotels in which the government has some shares and this enables them to generate more revenue than their competitors.

The study hypothesis revealed that banquet services significantly contribute to the revenue of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya. However, there were substantial revenue variation collections from banqueting services between

the five star hotels. And these differences were due to their various capacities among other factors. Generally, hotel banquet services depended more on corporate clients as they spend enormous resources than individual groups. There were differences in the number of banquet services and revenue between and within the five star hotels. This analysis therefore indicated that the amount spent by each client varies within and between the five star hotels.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that banquet services are significant source of revenue and contributes to the total profits of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study therefore recommends the need for five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya to offer special flexible charges and rates for banquet services during the low seasons in order to increase patronage. The study also, recommends the need to diversify and improve banquet products and services through conversion of restaurant space into banquet halls during the day and the same into restaurants at night and tactful use of yield management in low season.

The study assigns great significance to the improvement of banquet services though the provision of essential banquet facilities and services that will result in optimal banquet revenue performance of five star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya.

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DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGIES IN TOURISM: A GAME CHANGER FOR TODAY'S TOURISM ORGANISATION

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ABSTRACT

Game-changers refer to revolutionary advancements that are believed to alter the rules of the game and reshape the organization of society in accordance with contemporary understandings, values, institutions, and social connections. Disruptive innovation and technology is transforming the tourism experience from augmented reality-enhanced tours to AI-driven catboats for customer service, technology is enhancing convenience and personalization. While relying on literature review research methodology alongside qualitative method of relying on secondary research instruments, the paper acknowledges that the advent of the internet, robotics and online booking platforms has made it easier for travelers to research and book their trips among others were identified as game-changers in today's hospitality and business environments. These technologies had been employed with intentions to improve efficiency and profitability. However, the need to balance these technology introductions to hospitality and business needs is paramount and of utmost important to the industry as the study observed limited and non-regulation of these technology disruptions in the hospitality and tourism marketplace by government. The paper alludes to the fact that technology has enhance the positive experience of tourists and visitors making them to stay longer in a destination and in turn boost the economy of the destination.

Key words: Disruptive innovation, Technology, Tourism, Hospitality game-changers

INTRODUCTION

Innovation encompasses the act of introducing novel and effective ideas to address problems. These ideas can range from reorganizing processes, reducing expenses, implementing new budgetary systems, enhancing communication, to fostering teamwork in product assembly. Game-changers, on the other hand, are revolutionary innovations that are believed to alter the rules of the game and reshape the organization of society according to current knowledge, values, institutions, and social connections (Haxeltine et al., 2013; Avelino et al., 2017 and Diercks et al., 2019). Over the past years, experts in tourism industry have been strategizing on how to turn its concentration to the status of sustainability and development in the industry operations as it relates with the use of disruptive innovation and technology; as according to Werthner et al (2015) technology game changers have Since the 1960s, the shape of global distribution systems (GDS), as well as booking and reservation systems, has evolved. (GDS), booking and reservation systems. The advent of technology has helped consumers find relevant information and service providers to facilitate transactions. According to Risius and Spohrer (2017), disruptive technology and disruptive innovation is now available in many industries, including the hotel and tourism sector the integration of technology and disruptive innovation assist in effectiveness and efficiency of services provided to guests and Tourists. The emergence of technological advancements, such as Internet services and autonomous devices like automatic vending machines, billing machines, advanced analytical capabilities (artificial intelligence), and immersive media (virtual and augmented reality), is leading to the development of intelligent environments. These smart environments are revolutionizing industry frameworks, procedures, and methodologies. The advantages associated with these disruptive technologies encompass decentralization, traceability, durability, and a diverse range of applications, including cryptocurrency, Internet services, financial services, and public services (Zheng et al., 2018).

There are some debates regarding the future of technological innovation. Otto et al. (2020) have suggested that technological development is likely to play a role in achieving net-zero through adapting existing technologies (primarily in the power sector and the smart utilisation of energy) rather than novel, innovative technological solutions, although Guttentag and Smith (2017) asserts that information and communications technology ICT presents a fresh wave of intelligent technologies that revolutionize best practices and drive service providers to optimize their performance in a dynamic manner.

The aims of this research paper can be summarized as follows:

- i. To identify the advantages of innovation and technology in the tourism and hospitality industry.
- ii. To determine the obstacles faced when implementing innovation and technology in the tourism and hospitality industry.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how technology disruptions impact the service management processes in the tourism and hospitality industry. It also explores the potential disruptions and challenges associated with the newly created value in day-to-day tourism and hospitality services, while explaining the various types of disruptive innovation utilized in the sector. Ultimately, this research draws lessons from the tourism and hospitality services that can be applied to broader services management and marketing.

Statement of Problem

Although, Phillips and Moutinho (2014) acknowledge the service management and marketing sectors are set to experience significant impacts due to the rapidly progressing wave of technological advancements. In order to effectively adapt to these changes, it is crucial to take inspiration from the tourism industry, which serves as a frontline service sector. By incorporating the latest insights Valuable insights can be gained from incorporating technological advancements into strategic planning processes. The ever-changing landscape of technology has significant implications for service management and marketing. By looking at the tourism industry as a prime example of a frontline service sector, we can observe how it effectively integrates new knowledge on technological advancements into its strategic planning processes. Innovative technology has transformed tourism and hospitality services and products to form an electronic market-place where access to guest related information can be achieved rapidly due to the development of disruptive innovation in technology. As a result of this technological explosion, the packaging of tourism activities is becoming much more individualistic and personalisation leading inevitably to a certain degree of channel disintermediation - a process that will offer new opportunities and threats to this industry. Many hospitality establishments have adopted self-service channels in order to cut costs, enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, and attract new customer segments. Despite the success and entertainment value of these self-service channels, traditional personal service is seldom completely eliminated. Instead, hospitality organizations usually offer a range of service-delivery channels, giving guests the freedom to choose how they interact. While there has been extensive research on the use of technology in the global tourism industry, there is a lack of studies on disruptive innovation specifically within the Nigerian context..

1.0 Research Questions:

The paper also examined the subsequent research inquiries:

1. What advantages does innovation and technology bring to the tourism and hospitality sector?
2. What are the challenges of implementing innovation and technology in the tourism and hospitality industry?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technologies in Hospitality and Tourism

Disruptive innovation has the potential to disturb an already established market by concentrating on a specific niche in order to capture a significant portion of the market. Overriding the former one. Technology is transforming the tourism experience from augmented reality-enhanced tours to AI-driven Chatbot for customer service, technology is enhancing convenience and personalization. Over time, the concept of marketing has become increasingly evident, particularly due to the rapid advancements in technology and the ability of individuals to engage in marketing through technology and social media platforms (Pantouvakis, 2013). Various factors have been shown to have an impact on the strategic plans adopted by organizations in their marketing efforts, including technological

advancements, awareness, and the importance placed on service quality (Sotiriadis and Gursoy, 2016). However, today's travel industry disruptors are developing augmented reality apps through which tourists can enhance visual locations and tourist attractions by which a tourist may point their phones at a landmark and learn more about it. As Fraga (2016) posits, tailored experiences are gaining popularity. Travelers are seeking unique and personalized adventures that cater to their individual interests and preferences. Tourist destinations have become increasingly cognizant of the significance of adopting the most appropriate strategies to enhance the popularity of their establishments and make them more enticing and aligned with tourists' preferences. The ensuing technological advancements and transformative factors are elaborated upon below.

A. Artificial Intelligence (AI) – This concept was initially defined as a technology or machine capable of performing tasks that would typically require human intelligence to complete (Minsky, 1967). However, Stanford (2016) and Sterne (2017) have pointed out that AI not only has the ability to quickly respond to queries, but also possesses the capacity to sense, reason, take action, and even autonomously detect, deliberate, and develop insights from data to identify the most predictive elements or attributes. Currently, AI is primarily used as a decision-support tool in specific areas, but it has the potential to be applied across a wide range of business operations (Wirtz et al., 2018). The adoption and impact of AI on service industries are expected to be significant, affecting information and operations management, research and development, finance and accounting, supply chain management, strategy, sales, marketing, and customer services. Customer-facing service robots like Siri and Alexa have become widely adopted, and AI-powered chatbots, such as the travel booking template, guide customers through the booking process by asking intelligent questions. These technologies enable consumers to integrate resources in real-time, allowing for scalable decision-making across various social contexts through process automation. It is crucial to investigate the correlation between ongoing technological advancements and the learning capabilities of AI, as they constantly learn from interactions with tourists and autonomously perform tasks. Disruptive innovation in the hospitality and tourism industry can also manifest in the form of smart climate control systems, such as Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC), which consume significant amounts of power. Guests can program their room's thermostat based on occupancy, enabling hotels to maximize energy savings.

b. Cybersecurity -This technology serves as a safeguard against cyber-attacks and unauthorized access to data. It ensures the protection of hardware, the software ensures the protection of software, data, and information against any fraudulent or harmful usage. Moreover, it integrates data security measures right from the initial stages of the design process (Binxing et al., 2018). Cybersecurity encompasses various tools utilized to safeguard information produced by software, including malware, ransomware, and spyware, which are widespread in today's market landscape.. Conversely, computer insecurity poses a significant threat to business continuity. In the realm of travel management, cybersecurity is of utmost importance as the industry faces an increasing risk of cyber-attacks and data breaches. Critical systems, including those related to identification, finance, energy, and healthcare, are particularly vulnerable to phishing attacks and ransomware. For example, in 2018, it was revealed that approximately 500 million guest accounts of Marriott were compromised in a breach of the Starwood reservation database (Luna, 2018). The need to reassess cybersecurity measures persists, necessitating multidisciplinary approaches that encompass engineering, networks, systems, and human behavioral perspectives.

c. Billing and payment methods - Payment platforms such as PayPal, Tap'n'Go technology, and dedicated payment apps like Palmpay are streamlining the purchasing process, making it easier for tourists to access goods and services. While these platforms are widely used, the tourism industry is at the forefront, with payments for Uber rides, delivered meals, and accommodation stays being seamlessly separate from the services provided. Notable advancements in the tourism sector include digital wallets, which store credit/debit card information for convenient contactless payments using smartphones, similar to PayPal. Additionally, mobile point of sale allows users to tap their smartphones (linked to a digital wallet) on card terminals instead of using physical cards. Near Field Communications (NFC) is another significant development, enabling wireless interaction between smartphones and other devices within a radius of approximately 4 cm, without requiring an internet connection. Nowadays, travelers prefer making online reservations instead of relying on traditional travel agents and tour operators for booking accommodations and tourism facilities. Contactless technology has become the preferred method of payment in

daily transactions, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when people were concerned about contracting the disease.

d. Robots - These are machines designed to perform specific tasks accurately be it physical, text or speech related. They can be completely autonomous or semi-autonomous. They use technology ranging from speech recognition and AI which can facilitate complex learning. Robotic technology is actively gaining popularity in hospitality and tourism industry, hence, changing consumer habits concerning tourism. Robots delivers excellent customer services, for example; chatbot can be made available for 24/7 with instant response which may be impossible for human staff, and are used to reduce a long queue. Hennna Hotel located in Nagasaki, Japan is recognized as the world first robot staffed hotel where robots served as customer information point at front desk, storage purposes and using of facial recognition and AI technology. Hilton Hotels Hilton Hotels has implemented robotic technology through the introduction of Connie, an AI concierge. Connie is capable of addressing inquiries and engaging with guests through the utilization of speech recognition technology. Additionally, the hotel has introduced Travel mate, a robotic suitcase that can independently accompany its owner by employing collision detection technology. Travel mate (robotic suitcase) can follow its owner around autonomously, utilizing collision detection technology and 360-degree turning capacity removing the burden to carry the case. Tourists can ask robotic assistance questions to find out information and get them to perform key tasks like room service. More interesting aspect of robots is that they understand and can communicate in multiple languages, therefore, they can be used to gather information on what the visitors are looking for and feed them back to the travel agents, thereby improving efficiency.

e. Recognition Tech – Through the examination of a finger pressed against a smooth surface, this process operates. The purpose of this technology is to analyze the ridges and valleys on a person's finger, pinpointing specific points where these features intersect or end. This process is crucial for identifying individuals. Another application of this technology is iris recognition. it scans the ridges and valleys of the finger, identifying minutiae - specific points where the ridges and valleys intersect or terminate. It is use for identifying individual. Iris recognition is an automated method of biometric identification, taking unique patterns within a ring-shaped region surrounding the pupil of each eye. It is an extremely reliable and accurate identification method with very low false match rates. A facial recognition system is a technology with the ability to compare a human face from a digital image or video frame with a database of faces.

f. Smart environments. The objective of incorporating ambient technologies, including sensors, telecoms networks, IoT, and AIs, is to attain sustainable resource efficiencies and extract valuable insights from intricate data for businesses and their stakeholders (Salguero and Espinilla, 2018). The Internet of Things (IoT) is an innovative technological concept that facilitates the connection of everything and everyone, regardless of time and location, resulting in the creation of novel applications and services (Lu et al., 2018).

Numerous industries have implemented intelligent service environments, including healthcare, hotels, and cities. In the context of smart cities, ICT is utilized to enhance infrastructure, mobility, and public services, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for citizens. Similarly, ambient technologies are being employed in the hospitality sector, specifically in hotel rooms, to assist both guests and personnel through integrated sensor technologies. These sensor-equipped rooms allow guests to control their surroundings and interact with hotel facilities and staff. The integration of various devices, such as TVs, lights, window blinds, hospital beds, and toilet devices, into a network ensures seamless functioning. Hotels are increasingly exploring and testing smart environments in guest rooms to effectively manage their surroundings and foster service innovations (Sheivachman, 2018). Prominent hotel chains like Hilton and Marriott have successfully deployed ambient technologies that seamlessly integrate with sensors on devices and equipment, enabling guest-controlled service experiences.

Furthermore, the use of smart assistants that simulate real conversations and interact with users in a natural manner has gained traction. These assistants employ a data-driven approach to personalize tourist offers based on factors such as time, location, and price points (Govinsider, 2018).

The hospitality and tourism industry is constantly evolving with new innovations. The hospitality and tourism industry, like other service sectors, is often seen as less innovative compared to manufacturing and technology industries. However, there is a debate within the literature on service and tourism innovation regarding the compatibility of product and service innovation. While there is no agreed-upon definition of innovation in hospitality and tourism, it is generally understood to encompass anything new. Technological innovations have become prevalent in the hotel industry, improving productivity, reducing costs, and enhancing the value of services and products for customers. Camisón and Monfort-Mir (2012) propose a comprehensive approach to assess technological and organizational innovations and innovative capabilities in tourism firms. Despite challenges in measurement and comparison, the tourism industry has historically demonstrated significant innovation. For instance, Hjalager (2010) highlights the industry's innovativeness in creating new travel experiences, developing media-synergized theme parks, and revolutionizing food provision. Ryanair's introduction of extremely low fares is another example of innovation in the industry.

Technologies in the hospitality and tourism industry encompass a wide range of personalized services. In recent times, private room rentals have gained immense popularity as an alternative to traditional hotels, particularly among millennials. Consequently, this poses a significant threat to hotel companies. In order to tackle this problem and draw in a greater number of visitors, a practical approach would be to provide the most up-to-date technological advancements in the lodging industry. Nevertheless, incorporating these tools can present difficulties and expenses, which is why bigger hotel chains are more inclined to adopt them in their offerings. The incorporation of new innovations and technologies began with keyless entry in 2015 and has since evolved to include wearable applications that offer convenient, efficient, and intelligent choices for accessing rooms and controlling lighting. Smart TV operation, food ordering, as well as enhanced security and access to safety lockers. While many hoteliers rely on internet and mobile technologies, the latest trend involves room enhancements through various means, such as custom coffee machines capable of brewing. The role of technology in travel and tourism services is constantly changing, with advancements such as the availability of coffee at all times, digital mirrors, stylish mini-bars, color-changing smart floor tiles, remote control for services like blinds, and intelligent alarm clocks, among other innovations. These technological enhancements aim to enhance the overall customer experience becoming accustomed to planning and enjoying their vacations with the aid of new technologies. Hotels are also embracing various innovative methods to attract more tourists through digitalization and technology, thereby enhancing their services. When utilized effectively, technologies have the potential to make hospitality and tourism even more comfortable, distinctive, and captivating

RESULTS OBTAINED

Benefits and Opportunities of Disruptive Technologies / Game Changers in Hospitality and Tourism

The most important of the benefits of technology in tourism industry is the ability to function in a dangerous environment where human may not possibly work. These machines will not get tired nor be bored, they do not require motivation to increase their productivity, they do not require salary to be paid, they are not subjected to employment regulations and can be operated 24/7 without requesting for break or holidays like human. They encourage tourists by making them have positive experience and personalization through the booking from the comfort of their home using phones. With the advent of new technology and the rise of social and economic ratings, customers now have the means to share information and access ratings on various aspects such as destinations, service quality in hotels and restaurants, and environmental and social conditions. In today's era of wireless communication, mobile phones have become an essential tool for providing services at destinations. Additionally, cultural hospitality has responded by introducing multimedia museum guides that utilize mobile device screens to enhance the overall tourist experience. These advancements in technology allow for personalized services based on individual preferences, language skills, and the desired level of information. As suggested by Buhalis and O'Connor (2015), the future of e-tourism will revolve around consumer-centric technologies. Therefore, organizations must embrace modern technology in order to offer superior services, remain competitive, and foster innovation. Through new technology and social and economic ratings (e.g., social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, blogs)

customers have the ability to share information and research ratings on destination, quality of service in hotels and restaurants and environmental and social conditions.

In this era of wireless communication, mobile phones have become an essential tool for providing services at the destination. To enhance the tourist experience, cultural hospitality has responded by introducing multimedia museum guides that utilize mobile device screens. These guides allow for personalization of services based on individual preferences, language skills, and the desired depth of information. As suggested by Buhalis and O'Connor (2015), the future of e-tourism will revolve around consumer-centric technologies. To remain competitive and innovative, organizations must embrace modern technology and offer a high level of service. (Stock and Zancanaro, 2015; Langelund, 2017).

a. Social Media -.In addition to the well-known platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok, and Snapchat, social media encompasses various other platforms. These include YouTube, Flickr, personal blogs, and individual websites that facilitate the creation and dissemination of fresh content. Moreover, there are platforms like Wikitravel, Lonely Planet forums, Whirlpool, and Fodor's Travel Talk, which foster social interaction through the sharing and editing of content and knowledge. Additionally, TripAdvisor and Yelp provide individuals with the ability to review and rate companies, experiences, or locations.

b. Sharing Economy - The emergence of the sharing economy has led to the creation of platforms like Bolt, Airbnb, Uber, and Deliveroo. These platforms have been highly successful in providing travelers with new options for accommodation, transportation, and food services. However, their success has also caused significant disruptions to traditional operators in these industries.

Individuals who have utilized sharing economy services have benefited from several advantages, including cost savings, reduced waiting times, and improved safety. Additionally, ride-sharing companies have expanded their services to include various modes of transportation. For example, Uber now offers boat-hailing services in Egypt and Croatia, and has been operating helicopters in the southern region of France since 2016. In India and Pakistan, Uber also provides rickshaws and motorcycles as transportation options.

Furthermore, the sharing economy has brought about the emergence of new payment platforms, revolutionizing the way transactions are conducted. App-based payment systems and Tap'n'Go technology have made transactions swift and secure, seamlessly integrating payment processes into the background without disrupting the customer experience. Prominent examples of these platforms include PayPal, Pay Wave, Pay Pass, Palmpay, Apple Pay, Union Pay, and Alipay.

d. Visitor Tracking - Using devices or apps to track movements offer visitors real time information on travel and waiting times and provide personal reviews on nearby offerings. Operators can use the data to adapt their offerings to better meet visitor expectations.

Challenges of Technology in Hospitality and Tourism

There are drawbacks in the use of disruptive innovation. An over reliance on technology can lead to automation crises where machines replace humans thereby creating unemployment. These technologies cannot adapt to unanticipated events, they can malfunction, initial cost of installation is usually high while cost of maintenance can be outrageous.

Security is a primary concern for individuals traveling abroad. Consequently, the utilization of emerging payment platforms presents an appealing alternative. The transition towards digital wallets replacing physical currency can alleviate safety apprehensions and enhance the overall visitor experience, as stolen wallets can be remotely blocked. However, the slow and inconsistent implementation of these technologies means that consumers are unable to utilize digital wallets and NFC, even if they desire to do so.

For travelers, there are several barriers to the adoption of disruptive technologies. These include the cost of the technology, a lack of familiarity with its usage, and concerns regarding privacy. Additionally, personal habits such

as using cards or cash for payments, as well as surcharges, can impede travelers from embracing these technologies. Insufficient awareness or exposure to these technologies may also contribute to privacy and safety concerns. By increasing familiarity with emerging payment platforms, existing concerns can be overcome, leading to a greater utilization of these technologies.

For tourism operators, the adoption of technology within the industry may be hindered by the costs associated with it. The significant initial investment required, as well as the need for skills in setup and maintenance, commercial considerations, and the impact on the visitor experience, can pose challenges. Barriers and difficulties, such as employees' willingness and ability, managers' support, and customers' attitudes and expectations, The hindrance of information technology implementation in hotel organizations can pose a significant obstacle. Moreover, the expenses associated with innovation, opposition from proprietors, resistance to change, training complications, the rapid pace of technological advancements, and limitations in time and budget present further challenges and potential barriers to the integration of disruptive technologies and transformative applications and systems in the hospitality and tourism sector.

CONCLUSION

Disruptive innovation and technologies have emerged as powerful catalysts reshaping the landscape of the hospitality and tourism industry. In today's dynamic and competitive environment, hospitality and tourism organizations need to recognize and embrace these changes to stay relevant and thrive. The adoption of disruptive technologies has the potential to revolutionize various facets of the hospitality and tourism industry, from customer experience and marketing to operations and sustainability.

One of the key findings is that disruptive innovation can significantly enhance the overall tourism experience for both travelers and service providers. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and data analytics have the capability to personalize services, streamline operations, and create unique, immersive experiences for tourists. This not only improves customer satisfaction but also contributes to the long-term success of tourism organizations. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for digital transformation in the tourism industry. The adoption of contactless technologies, online booking platforms, and virtual experiences has become imperative for ensuring safety and resilience in the face of unexpected challenges.

The travel and tourism industry is constantly evolving and changing due to the role of technology. Customers are increasingly relying on new technologies to plan and enhance their vacations, while hotel managers are finding innovative ways to incorporate technology to attract more tourists, gather data, and improve their services. When used effectively, technology has the potential to make travel and tourism experiences even more convenient, unique, and captivating. It is clear that tourism companies are embracing innovation, as seen through the implementation of keyless entry systems in accommodations. These systems provide easy, fast, and intelligent options for accessing rooms, controlling lights, operating Smart TVs, ordering food, and accessing safety lockers. Other technological advancements include customized coffee machines that can brew coffee at any time, digital wallets, digital mirrors, stylish mini-bars, smart floor tiles that can change colors, remote controls for services such as blinds, and intelligent alarm clocks. To maximize the benefits of technology disruptions, hospitality and tourism businesses, as well as industry players.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Embrace Digital Transformation: It is crucial for hospitality and tourism organizations to prioritize digital transformation initiatives in order to remain competitive in the evolving landscape. This involves investing in technologies such as AI, IoT, and data analytics to enhance operational efficiency and improve customer experiences.

2. Enhance Personalization: By utilizing data analytics and AI algorithms, hospitality and tourism organizations can gain insights into customer preferences and behaviors. This enables them to offer personalized recommendations and services, creating a more engaging and satisfying experience for their customers.

3. Invest in Sustainability: Disruptive technologies can also be leveraged to address sustainability challenges in the tourism industry. Implementing eco-friendly practices, utilizing technology for energy conservation, and promoting responsible tourism can contribute to a more sustainable future.

By following these recommendations, hospitality and tourism businesses can fully harness the potential of technology disruptions and provide enhanced experiences for their customers.

The role of technology in travel and tourism services is constantly evolving and changing. Customers are becoming more accustomed to using new technologies to plan and enjoy their vacations. Hotel managers are also finding creative ways to implement these technologies in order to attract more tourists, gather data, and enhance their services. When utilized effectively, technologies can greatly enhance the comfort, uniqueness, and interest of travel and tourism experiences. It is undeniable that tourism firms are innovative, as evidenced by the implementation of keyless entry systems in the accommodation sector. These systems provide easy, fast, and smart options for entering rooms, controlling lights, operating Smart TVs, ordering food, securing and accessing safety lockers, and even custom coffee machines that can brew coffee at any time. Other technological advancements include digital wallets, digital mirrors, trendy mini-bars, smart floor tiles that can change colors, remote control for services like blinds, and smart alarm clocks. The following are however recommended for hospitality and tourism businesses as well as industry players to enable maximization of the benefits of technology disruptions among others:

- a. Embrace Digital Transformation: Hospitality and tourism organizations should prioritize digital transformation initiatives to stay competitive in the evolving landscape. This includes investing in technologies such as AI, IoT, and data analytics to enhance operational efficiency and customer experiences.
- b. Enhance Personalization: Utilize data analytics and AI algorithms to understand customer preferences and behaviors. By offering personalized recommendations and services, hospitality and tourism organizations can create a more engaging and satisfying experience for their customers.
- c. Invest in Sustainability: The tourism industry can address sustainability challenges by investing in disruptive technologies. By implementing eco-friendly practices, utilizing technology for energy conservation, and promoting responsible tourism, organizations can contribute to environmental preservation.
- d. Embrace Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR): To enhance the experience for potential tourists, incorporating AR and VR technologies is crucial. This can involve offering virtual tours, providing destination previews, and creating interactive content that allows travelers to effectively explore and plan their trips.
- e. Foster Collaboration and Networking: To accelerate the adoption of disruptive technologies and drive innovation within the hospitality and tourism industry, forming strategic partnerships with technology providers, startups, and other stakeholders is essential.
- f. Prioritize Cybersecurity: As digital solutions become more integrated into hospitality and tourism organizations, prioritizing cybersecurity is of utmost importance. Implementing robust cybersecurity measures will safeguard sensitive customer data and ensure the trust of travelers.

In conclusion, disruptive innovation and technologies have the potential to revolutionize the tourism industry. Organizations that embrace these changes, invest in digital transformation, and prioritize customer-centric approaches are likely to thrive in the evolving landscape. By staying agile and leveraging technology, tourism organizations can overcome current challenges and position themselves for sustained success in the future.

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EFFECT OF INTERACTION BETWEEN CUSTOMERS AND SERVICE PROVIDER ON PATRONAGE IN HOTEL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

The lack of effective communication between customers and service providers often leads to a decline in patronage within the hotel industry. This issue has prompted researchers to examine the impact of customer-service provider interaction on patronage. The primary objective of this study is to determine the relationship between customer interaction and service providers in the hotel industry, as well as to assess the effect of customer interaction on continuous patronage. To achieve these goals, an exploratory research design was employed, utilizing structured questionnaires as the research instrument. The hypotheses of this study were tested using regression models and Spearman correlation. The findings of this study revealed a significant correlation between customer interaction and organizational performance. Additionally, it was found that good communication, regular customer check-ins, and ethical conduct positively influence customer patronage. Based on these analyses, it is recommended that hotel management prioritize maintaining good communication, regularly checking in on customers, and upholding ethical conduct, as these factors are crucial for attracting and retaining hotel patrons. Furthermore, interpersonal relationships should be considered essential in hotel management, and investments should be made in training and retraining staff on effective customer interaction to continually enhance customer patronage.

Keywords: Interaction, Customers, Service Provider, Patronage

INTRODUCTION

Every exchange that takes place between a client and a business is referred to as a customer interaction. Each engagement with a client offers an opportunity to establish a rapport, satisfy them, and boost advocacy and retention. An engagement between a company and a client is referred to as customer intervention. This involves clients phoning you for assistance or messaging you on social media with inquiries. All interactions and engagements with customer service are important. In reality, according to Johnson, Gustafsson, Andreassen, Lervik, and Cha (2022) about half of consumers indicate they do go to a rival after just one negative encounter.

The hospitality sector is built on providing outstanding customer service. Unlike other industries, hospitality is demonstrated through interactions. These interactions can be verbal, nonverbal, physical, facial, and body language. Customers are frequently directly involved in or witness interactions throughout the service delivery system, including booking, on-site consumption, and social media posting and sharing, and taking part in loyalty programs offered by the business. As technology-mediated services have proliferated, virtual and digital interfaces are crucial interactions for businesses to have with customers (Keiningham, and Cooil, Aksoy, Andreassen, and Weiner, 2023). Managing guest interactions has proven to be a delicate interaction. The industry has seen revolutionary changes over the last ten years, including increased customer competition, the emergence of new rivals (like sharing economy services), hyperconnected virtual platforms (like social media sites and user-generated content), and the emergence of new service actors (like self-service technologies and artificial intelligence). In particular, the start of the Covid-19 worldwide epidemic has altered how hotels see customer relations. As the number of touch points and digital interactions during the guest experience increases, are companies preparing to serve consumers with their best interests in mind? How can encounters with the hotel industry assist managers in creating well-informed plans to affect visitors' attitudes and actions? Using recent information from scientific studies, this study aims to illuminate the significance of service interactions and provide insights to assist companies take advantage of them for increased profitability (Akbar, and Parvez, 2023).

Hotels frequently see service encounters as face-to-face conversations between staff and patrons. But indirect interactions—like watching staff members and other patrons—are important sources of information for customers to learn about the company.

Statement of problem

This paper focused on the effect of interaction between customers and service provider on patronage in hotel industry. Poor interaction between hotels owners or those saddled with such responsibilities and the hotel customers often results into loss of such customers. In the hospitality industry, lack of interaction is a common problem. Leaving customers and employees feeling uninformed and uncertain, bad interaction leads to anxiety, mistakes and wasted time.

A lack of effective interaction with the customers by the hotel service providers can result in lower sales, bad reviews and stressed staff. Lack of interaction between the hotels and the customers' leads to one of the most common customer complaints in the hotel industry.

Hotel services must be closer to their customers for a variety of reasons, because where a hotel changes their services or address and visitors will be unhappy if a service or facility, they had intended to use is no longer available. Hotel management fail to convey the status of their position either change of services, or closed services to existing and future visitors, customers will regret having business with such hotel, hence, and interaction with the customers is germane in enhancing patronage. Hence, this study examines the effect of interaction between customers and service provider on patronage in hotel industry.

Objective of study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of interaction between customers and service provider on patronage in hotel industry. The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the relationship between customer's interaction and service provider in hotel industry.
2. Examine the effect of customer's interaction on continuous patronage in hotel industry.

Statement of Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between customer's interaction and service provider in hotel industry.

H₀₂: Customers interaction has no significant effect on continuous patronage in hotel industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Internal Interaction in Hotels

Internal interaction structures are thought to be crucial in the hotel sector, since service standards are crucial. Internal interactions are an element of the service package that business and tourism have grown to respect as an area of competence, according to Gee, Coates, and Nicholson (2023). Others contend that staff members' ability to effectively manage their interactions with clients and visitors is what determines the success of the hospitality industry.

In addition to the conventional hotel sector, peer-to-peer lodgings also depend heavily on service interactions to foster customer loyalty. Still, given the increasingly blurred lines between traditional accommodation and home-sharing enterprises, the fast expansion of home-sharing platforms (e.g., Airbnb, HomeAway, Vrbo, FlipKey) has posed new issues about how service interactions prevail in this alternative model. For instance, a recent program by Airbnb aims to encourage building owners to transform existing structures into Airbnb accommodations that function similarly to hotel brands like Niido (Goyal and Singh, 2023). By introducing their own brands, such as Homes and Villas, hotel chains like Marriott International have been able to capture a portion of the short-term rental industry. Host-guest interactions are one of the main ways that guests assess their experience and make future behavioral decisions in the context of the standard Airbnb model, in which the company assigns independent hosts to oversee the guest experience throughout their stay. Recent findings (Ha, and Jang, 2023) indicate that how visitors engage with their hosts can have a big impact on how they handle service issues that arise while they stay at their

house. Using a personal style in the first contacts with guests is proven to increase their perceived trust even more than acting politely and professionally. Early on in encounters, guests are more tolerant of service errors and are less likely to complain or leave the home-sharing platform when a host builds confidence with them by exhibiting a personal style.

Since internal contact might affect service satisfaction, management should concentrate primarily on the communication components of the service encounter (Han and Ryu, 2023). Everyone agrees that establishing and maintaining connections with customers is crucial in the service sector. This is important in situations when transactions are based on human relationships and there is no exchange of real items.

Hyun (2023) argues that it's critical to link efficient usage of internal communication channels with exterior interaction functions in order to create a really internal communicative organization. The majority of people think of internal channels as things like a weekly or monthly staff newsletter that offers opportunity for internal recognition and appreciation for excellent performance. Of course, problems with interactions between the inside and outside can be distinguished. According to Jamal and Anastasiadou (2023), the need for excellent internal interaction skills inside an organization's management stems from the internationalization of the hospitality profession and the swift changes in client needs. Clear and timely internal communication is essential in an increasingly automated workplace, and understanding and effectively addressing human factors is a critical management role as the workforce grows more diverse (Kim and Han, 2023).

Effective internal contact is essential for effective management in a competitive market, as leading and managing are mostly achieved via these kinds of interactions (Kim, Suh, and Eves, 2023).

Relationship Marketing Theory

The foundation of this research is relationship marketing theory. Relationship marketing is a field that is seeing enormous growth in attention (RM). Establishing robust ties between business companies and customers is crucial for business organizations operating in a competitive business climate. In the domains of industrial marketing and service marketing, relationship marketing first appeared (Davies and Howard, 2022). In the contemporary corporate landscape, relationship marketing was presented to RM as more than just one-off deals (Ganesan and Shankar, 2022). Relationship marketing is thought to incorporate transactional marketing (Garbarino, and Johnson, 2021). Through relationship marketing, businesses may create enduring relationships with both current and potential clients.

Approach to draw in, keep, and improve consumer contact is relationship marketing, according to Gee et al. (2023). Management of relationships, networks, and interactions are fundamental concerns in the context of relationship management (RM), according to Gee et al. (2023). relationship marketing, according to Getty et al. (2022), is a way to create, preserve, and improve relationships with clients and other partners while turning a profit and meeting the goals and expectations of all parties. Benefiting from one another and keeping your word will help achieve this (Goyal et al., 2023). As described by Gwinner et al. (2021) as a strong-held commitment to repurchase or promote a chosen service or product in the future, even in the face of situational pressure and marketing initiatives that may encourage behavior switching, relationship marketing is another tool for building customer loyalty. The retention of customer is more profitable than looking for new customers (Ha, and Jang, 2023).

Companies now need to build and maintain long-term relationships with their customers in order to foster consumer loyalty and achieve optimal productivity. Researchers have been captivated by the expansion of successful, long-lasting, and mutually beneficial relationships for the past few decades. For a business to enhance its services and products, it is essential to comprehend the relationship with its customers. The ability to retain clients in a long-term relationship opens the door for service providers to retain customers with ease. Maintaining current customers is always preferable to seeking out new ones. Two essential components of relationship marketing are commitment and trust. In long-term commercial transactions, it fosters a bond between two businesses by encouraging customers to have faith. According to Han and Ryu's (2023) research, trust and commitment are essential components in

understanding relationships. According to Haskett, Sasser, and Schlesinger (2019), a basic definition of commitment is the ongoing desire to maintain a valued connection.

Within the field of service relationship marketing, Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Grmler, and Michael (2018) explored how mutual commitment might serve as the foundation for a successful partnership. To be trustworthy is simple to have faith in the honesty and dependability of one's trading partner. According to Moorman et al. (1993), trust is the ability to rely on a partner in trade who inspires confidence. Any party that betrays another party's confidence might become a defector. Maintaining relationships requires keeping your word and fulfilling your responsibilities. According to Hennig-Thurau, Guinner, and Gremler (2018), cooperative behavior may be changed by commitment and trust in order to develop healthy relationships. Harvesting relationships also requires this behavior. In any type of connection, the customer's attitude is likely to be important; therefore, the stronger the relationship, the more important the customer perceives the relationship to be, and the stronger the relationship that is built with the service provider (Heung, Mok, and Kwan, 2019).

According to relationship coordination, marketing should prioritize keeping clients by fostering and sustaining win-win partnerships throughout time (Jin and Kim, 2022). The relationship should be built so that clients interact with the service provider more frequently (Jones and Sasser, 2022). Where, service is incessantly provided over prolonged time perio

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on effect of interaction between customers and service provider on patronage in hotel industry. The study considered Ikorodu Metropolis as a study area. The researcher employs the use of structured questionnaire as research instruments to solicit data from respondents. The respondents of this study are the customers of Giant Star Hotel, Ikorodu, Lagos.

The population of this study are the entire population of Giant Star Hotel which cannot be pre-determined (infinite). However, upon visitation to the hotel (Giant Star Hotel, Ikorodu, Lagos), it was observed that during the weekdays, the hotel reported about 37 to 50 customers (at bar, restaurant, and lodge), however, on a weekend (Saturdays and Sundays) the hotel reported about 55 to 65 customers (at bar, restaurant, and lodge). Hence, the highest point (65 customers) remain the population of the study, and by implication, the research instrument (questionnaire will be administered during the weekend, so that the researcher can capture the entire customers.

Simple random sampling techniques was used for this study. Using golden rule for sample size determination, since the entire population are few (65 customers), it is advisable to study the entire population, hence, the entire population (65 customers) remain the sample size of the study.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics includes, percentages, frequencies, graphs and tables. For the inferential statistics, Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method of data analysis was used to test the hypotheses of the study at 5% level of significance.

Regression Model will be employed using quantitative data. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive zero order correlations and Regression Modelling using SPSS version 25.

Regression model was employed for this study as stated below:

$$CI = \alpha + \beta_1 (SP) + e. \quad \dots \quad 1$$

$$Patr = \alpha + \beta_1 (CI) + e. \quad \dots \quad 2$$

Where:

CI = Customer Interaction

SP = Service Provider

Patr = Continuous Patronage

α = Intercept

β = Beta Value

e = error term

RESULTS OBTAINED

Out of the targeted sample size of 65, those who responded to the administered questionnaire were 60. The high response rate (92.8%) is attributed to fact that a personal (self-administered) approach was employed in collecting data. More so, the researcher maintained useful contacts with the respondents and the hotel staff, which were instrumental in identifying the relevant sampled respondents and maintaining good relationships with them, which yielded excellent response rates. Table 1 summarizes the response rate:

Table 1: Response Rate

	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Issued	65	100
Responses Received	60	92.8
Responses Discarded	1	1.9
Responses Used	59	98.1

Source: Researcher's Questionnaire, (2023).

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

	Freq	Percentage (%)
Male	49	83
Female	10	17

Source: Researcher's Questionnaire, (2023).

Table 2 shows the gender of the respondents; the table shows that 83% of the respondents (customers in Giant Star Hotel) were male, while the female was just 17%. This is a clear indication that most of the guests that visits Giant Star Hotel are male, this could also be so because the day that the research instrument was administered was during a major football match, perhaps the male gender came to watch the football match.

Table 3: Relationship Between Customers Interaction and Service Provider

Questions	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
The hotel staff don't maintain good interaction with customers with their customers	24	41	15	25	5	8	7	12	8	14
There is quality relationship between customers interaction and service provider	10	17	12	20	3	5	15	25	19	32
Checking up on customers by service provider propels customer patronage	21	36	19	32	2	3	10	17	7	12
Ethical conducts by service provider can propel customer patronage	19	32	18	31	6	10	9	15	7	12
Service providers trained their staff on quality customer interaction and gusts management.	7	12	9	15	10	17	13	22	20	34

Source: Researcher's Questionnaire, (2023).

Table 3 shows the relationship between customer's interaction and service provider. The table shows that 41% of the respondent strongly agreed that the hotel staff do not maintain good interaction with customers with their customers. This was supported by 25% of the respondents. However, 14% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the respondent strongly agreed that the hotel staff do not maintain good interaction with customers with their customers.

Only 17% was the respondents strongly agreed that there is quality relationship between customer's interaction and service provider. In the same light, 20% of the respondents equally agreed that there is quality relationship between

customer's interaction and service provider. However, largest percentage (32%) of the respondent strongly disagreed that there is quality relationship between customer's interaction and service provider.

Largest percentage (36%) of the respondent strongly agreed that checking up on customers by service provider propels customer patronage. This was similarly to the opinion of about 32% of the respondents that checking up on customers by service provider propels customer patronage. However, 12% of the respondents strongly disagreed that checking up on customers by service provider propels customer patronage.

Considering how ethical conducts by service provider can propel customer patronage. Larger percentage (32%) of the respondents strongly agreed that ethical conducts by service provider can propel customer patronage. About 10% of the respondents remain undecided regarding how ethical conducts by service provider can propel customer patronage. However, 15% of the respondent disagreed that ethical conducts by service provider can propel customer patronage.

Lastly, larger percentage 34% of the respondent strongly disagreed that service providers trained their staff on quality customer interaction and guests management. In the same light, about 22% of the respondent disagreed that service providers trained their staff on quality customer interaction and guests management. However, about 12% of the respondent strongly agreed that service providers trained their staff on quality customer interaction and guests management.

Table 4 Analysis of Customers Interaction and Patronage

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Good customer relations enhance organisational performances.	21	36	19	32	2	3	10	17	7	12
Customers are willing and ready to pay any price provided they are satisfied with the interaction with customers.	19	32	18	31	6	10	9	15	7	12
Not paying quality attention to interaction with customers has significant effects on the organisational performance.	24	41	15	25	5	8	7	12	8	14
Management of hotel often faces the challenges balancing interpersonal relation between employees and guests.	33	56	10	17	4	7	5	8	7	12
There is significant relationship between interaction with customers and organizational performance	21	36	19	32	2	3	10	17	7	12
Interaction with customers have significant effect on customers' patronage in hotel industry	19	32	18	31	6	10	9	15	7	12
If customers are not satisfied with the interaction with customers of the staff, it will translate into loss of revenue.	21	36	19	32	2	3	10	17	7	12
Due to the challenge of determining most preferred interaction with customers, management of hotels often loss customer's patronage.	31	53	19	32	1	2	5	8	3	5
Management of hotel regard the opinion of customers most superior in determining varieties of foods and beverages.	5	8	10	17	10	17	15	25	19	32
If hotel industry can enhance the quality of interaction with customers, it will have significant positive effect on the customers' patronage.	33	56	14	24	0	0	7	12	5	8

Source: Researcher's Questionnaire, (2023).

Table 4 considered customer's interaction and its effect on continuous patronage in the hotel industry. The table shows that 36% of the respondents strongly agreed that good customer relations enhance organisational performances. Similarly, 32% of the respondents equally agreed to this opinion, however, about 17% of the respondents disagreed that good customer relations enhance organisational performances.

Table 4 further shows that 32% of the respondents strongly agreed that customers are willing and ready to pay any price provided they are satisfied with the interaction with customers. However, about 12% of the respondents strongly disagreed that customers are willing and ready to pay any price provided they are satisfied with the interaction with customers. Meanwhile, about 10% of the respondents remain undecided as to whether they are willing and ready to pay any price provided they are satisfied with the interaction with customers.

Larger percentage (41%) of the respondents strongly agreed that not paying quality attention to interaction with customers has significant effects on the organisational performance. This was equally supported by 25% of the respondents. However, about 14% of the respondents strongly disagreed that not paying quality attention to interaction with customers has significant effects on the organisational performance.

Larger percentage (56%) of the respondents strongly agreed that management of hotel often faces the challenges balancing interpersonal relation between employees and guests. However, about 12% of the respondents strongly disagreed with this assertion.

Table 4 clearly shows the opinion of largest respondents (36%) that there is significant relationship between interaction with customers and organizational performance. About 32% of the respondents equally agreed that there is significant relationship between interaction with customers and organizational performance. However, about 17% of the respondents disagreed that there is significant relationship between interaction with customers and organizational performance.

About 32% of the respondents strongly agreed that interaction with customers have significant effect on customers' patronage in hotel industry. Also, 32% of the respondents agreed that interaction with customers have significant effect on customers' patronage in hotel industry. But about 15% of the respondents disagreed that interaction with customers have significant effect on customers' patronage in hotel industry.

Larger percentage (36%) of the respondents strongly agreed that if customers are not satisfied with the interaction with customers of the staff, it will translate into loss of revenue. This was similar to the opinion of about 32% of the respondents who agreed that if customers are not satisfied with the interaction with customers of the staff, it will translate into loss of revenue. However, about 17% of the respondents disagreed that if customers are not satisfied with the interaction with customers of the staff, it will translate into loss of revenue.

Worthy to note is the opinion of 53% of the respondents who strongly agreed that due to the challenge of determining most preferred interaction with customers, management of hotels often lose customer's patronage. However, only 5% of the total respondents strongly disagreed that due to the challenge of determining most preferred interaction with customers, management of hotels often lose customer's patronage.

Larger percentage (32%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that management of hotel regard the opinion of customers most superior in determining varieties of foods and beverages. Although, only 8% of the respondents strongly agreed that management of hotel regard the opinion of customers most superior in determining varieties of foods and beverages.

Lastly, larger percentage (56%) of the total respondents strongly agreed that if hotel industry can enhance the quality of interaction with customers, it will have significant positive effect on a customers' patronage. Meanwhile, about 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that if hotel industry can enhance the quality of interaction with customers, it will have significant positive effect on the customers' patronage.

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between customer's interaction and service provider in hotel industry.

Table 5: Correlations between variables

Spearman's rho		Good communication	Checking up on your customers	Ethical conducts	Organisational Performance
Good communication	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.079	.250	.564*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.755	.317	.015
	N	18	18	18	18
checking up on your customers	Correlation Coefficient	.079	1.000	.158	.484*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.755	.	.531	.042
	N	18	18	18	18
ethical conducts	Correlation Coefficient	.250	.158	1.000	.403
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.317	.531	.741	.007
	N	18	18	18	18
Organisational Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.564*	.484*	.403	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.042	.097	.
	N	18	18	18	18

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

Considering the correlation between interaction with customers and organizational performance. The correlational table revealed that good communication as a parameter for measuring interaction with customers has about 76% (.755) correlation with organisational performance. This correlation is found significant at 0.05 level of significance. The table further revealed that proper checking up on customers as an index to measure interpersonal relation about for about 53% changes in the organisational performance. The table finally revealed that there is significant correlation between ethical conduct and organisational performance ($p = 0.007 < 0.05$)

Decision

Since p value (0.015, 0.42, and $0.007 < 0.05$), we hereby reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is significant correlation between interaction with customers and organizational performance.

H₀₂: Customers interaction has no significant effect on continuous patronage in hotel industry.

Table 6: Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.698 ^a	.487	.377	.40605	1.008

a. Predictors: (Constant), ethical conducts, checking up on your customers, Good communication

b. Dependent Variable: customer patronage

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

Table 7: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.192	3	.731	4.431	.022 ^b
	Residual	2.308	14	.165		
	Total	4.500	17			

a. Dependent Variable: customer patronage

b. Predictors: (Constant), ethical conducts, checking up on your customers, Good communication

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

Table 8: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.021	.181		5.639	.000
	Good communication	.384	.210	.362	1.828	.009
	Checking up on your customers	.370	.195	.368	1.895	.009
	Ethical conducts	.342	.212	.323	1.616	.008

a. Dependent Variable: customer patronage

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

The model summary indicated that there is about 70% (.698) relationship between good communication, checking up on your customers, ethical conducts and customer patronage. R square also revealed that about 50% (.487) of changes in customers' patronage can be determined by good communication, checking up on your customers and ethical conducts. The ANOVA table shows that at 5% level of significance, good communication, checking up on your customers and ethical conducts are potential propellers of customer patronage (Sig. = 0.022 < 0.05).

The coefficient table revealed that good communication has about .384 unit effect on customer's patronage. This implies that whether any customer will have returned for another patronage will be determined by good communication. In the same light, proper checking up on customers also create a good interpersonal relation between the clients and the hotel owners. The coefficient table revealed that checking up on customers has about .370 unit effect on customer's patronage. Lastly, the coefficient table also revealed that ethical conduct plays a Significant role in determining customers' patronage (B = .342, t = 1.616, p = 0.008 < 0.05).

Decision

Since p value (0.022 < 0.05), we hereby reject the null hypothesis and conclude that Good communication, checking up on your customers and ethical conducts does not propels customer patronage.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the effect of interaction between customers and service provider on patronage in hotel industry. Many industries today seem to be migrating from transactional mind-sets to relational mind set in their dealings with customers. The hotel industry is highly competitive and the right knowledge about customer values and demand is essential to differentiate from competitors and gain sustainable competitive advantage. Despite being differentiated by star ratings, most hotels in Nigeria offer similar core products and services. In this regard, development of relationships with customers can be considered as fundamental to the Nigerian hotel industry. Ulrich (2010), observed that interaction with customers at work is governed by personality traits.

The idea that business relationships require both the service firm and the customer to benefit from the relationship has recently stimulated academic interest on the types of benefits consumers receive as a result of engaging in long term relationships with sellers (Gwinner et al, 2017; Hennig-Thurau et al, 2002; Reynolds and Beatty, 2016). As a result, Interaction with customers is becoming more important in today's global markets, especially in terms of finding out the compatibility levels of individuals.

The hospitality industry consists of large category of fields within the service industry that includes lodging, restaurants, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise line and additional fields within the tourism industry. Traditional marketing thoughts have primarily focused on discrete transactional exchanges with anonymous customers (Ganesan 2018; Morgan and Hunt 2018). As a result, acquiring new customers and increasing sales rather than enhancing relationships were the leading priorities of marketers (Berry 2018). Later, marketers realized that securing existing customer's loyalty (Reichheld, 1996) and their lifetime value (Bolton, 2017) could be strategically favourable and financially rewarding.

This study concluded that good communication, checking up on your customers and ethical conducts propels customer patronage; there is significant correlation between interaction with customers and organizational performance; and interaction with customers have significant effect on customers' patronage in hotel industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arisen from the findings of this study, the researcher recommended that:

1. Management of Hotels should ensure that good communication, checking up on your customers and ethical conducts are not compromised because they are vital mechanisms for patronage of hotel products.
2. Hotel management should consider interpersonal relation more vital because there is significant correlation between interaction with customers and organizational performance.
3. Lastly, Customers' patronage is very essential. Management of hotels should invest more in training and retraining of staff on interaction with customers so that customer's patronage can continually improve.

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EFFECTS AND BENEFIT OF FOOD ADDITIVES ON THE HEALTH OF THE CONSUMER

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are to ascertain the health consequences of poor use of additives in foods; and to determine the health benefit of proper use of additives in foods as there has been continuous increase in ill-health of people as a result of poor use of food additives. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional approach where data was collected at a particular point in time from customers of the selected restaurants. Regression Model was employed using quantitative data. The result revealed that poor use of additives in foods has significant negative health consequences; the opinion of the respondents revealed that where no artificial additives are added to foods, health of the consumer will not be negatively impaired. However, consumers are not satisfied with the food prepared without additives. This study revealed that poor use of food additives has negative significant health consequences, the p value is higher than 0.05 level of significant ($0.001 > 0.05$ p). Since p value ($0.001 < 0.05$), we hereby reject the null hypothesis and conclude that poor use of additives in foods has significant negative health consequence. This study recommended that management of Hotel industry should ensure that they are sensitive to customers' needs and complaints regarding food additives. To ensure increase in patronage, proper use of food additives should be encouraged and comply with all the professional requirement of food production in the area of proper use of food additives; and natural food additives should be encouraged in the production of foods.

Keywords: Food, additives, Benefit, Health of the consumer

INTRODUCTION

The use of food additives is only justified when their use has a technological need, does not mislead consumers, and serves a well-defined technological function, such as to preserve the nutritional quality of the food or enhance the stability of the food (Dusdieker, Getchell, Liarakos, Hausler, and Dungy, 2019). Food additives can be derived from plants, animals, or minerals, or they can be synthetic. They are added intentionally to food to perform certain technological purposes which consumers often take for granted. There are several thousand food additives used, all of which are designed to do a specific job in making food safer or more appealing (George, Wiklund, Anstrap, Pousette, Thunholm, Saldean, Wernroth, Zaren, and Holmberg, 2019). WHO, together with FAO, groups food additives into 3 broad categories based on their function. In China, food-safety issues that are related to food additives, such as their misuse or overuse due to anthropogenic stressors, or the reckless use of nonedible chemical substances, have become increasingly prominent. Studies have shown that, between 2006 and 2018, a total of 253,617 food-safety incidents were reported in China, of which 75.5 percent were caused by anthropogenic factors. Moreover, the highest number of food-safety incidents was caused by the illegal use of food additives, which accounted for 34.36 percent of the total. Indeed, the latest information that has been released by China's State Food and Drug Administration revealed that, out of 257,000 batches of food samples that were collected nationwide, there were 8224 batches of substandard food, 33.6 percent of which was caused by the misuse or overuse of food additives by food production and processing organizations (Gupta, Seth, Bassin, and Gupta, 2019).

What is worse, some illegal enterprises used nonedible chemical substances in order to pursue their economic interests, which have caused real or potential damage to consumers' health. A typical example is when an infant formula was contaminated with melamine, which occurred in October 2008 and resulted in 296,000 infants and young children having varying degrees of a urinary-system abnormality. The social impact of this incident was devastating in China, and, as a result, many customers have become increasingly worried about the safety of food additives. Indeed, there is a great amount of evidence that has repeatedly shown that food-safety incidents occur frequently in China, which is mainly due to the abuse of food additives (The abuse of food additives refers to the

practice of misuse or overuse of food additives, as well as the use of fake, shoddy, or expired food additives.) by food-production operators, whose goal is to pursue economic benefits regardless of their moral duty. It is therefore not surprising that such illegal practices have become one of the most worrying aspects of food-safety risks in the country (Hatcher, Planalp, Cho, Torti, and Torti, 2018).

In Nigeria, most people tend to eat the ready-made foods available in the market, rather than preparing them at home. Such foods contain some kind of additives and preservatives, so that their quality and flavour is maintained and they are not spoiled by bacteria and yeasts (Khanavi, Hajimahmoodi, Ranjbar, Oveisi, Ardekani, and Mogaddam, 2020). More than 3000 additives and preservatives are available in the market, which are used as antioxidants and antimicrobial agents. Some of the commonly used food additives and preservatives are aluminium silicate, amino acid compounds, ammonium carbonates, sodium nitrate, propyl gallate, butylated hydroxyl toluene (BHT), butylated hydroxy anisole (BHA), monosodium glutamate, white sugar, salt, potassium bromate, potassium sorbate and sodium benzoate. Some artificial colours are also added to the foods to give them an appealing look. Some of these colouring substances are erythrosine (red), canthaxanthin (orange), amaranth (Azonic red), tartrazine (Azonic yellow) and annatto bixin (yellow orange) (Ito, Hirose, Fukushima, Tsuda, Shirai, and Tatematsu, 2021).

Most death and illness in the world especially in some part of Nigeria are traceable to poor usage of additives. Excessive use of additives becomes poisonous and could lead to untimely death. The reduction in life expectancy among Nigerians are traceable to what they consumed due to the additives that are used to preserve the foods most of which are not properly measured (Mohamed, Attia, Mahmoud, Somaia, Samar, and Gihan, 2019). This study hereby examines the effects and benefit of food additives on the health of the consumers.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the effects and benefit of food additives on the health of the consumers. The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain the health consequences of poor use of additives in foods;
2. Determine the health benefit of proper use of additives in foods.

Conceptual Review Effects of Food Additives

According to Virtanen, et.al. (2019), some people are sensitive to particular food additives and may have reactions like hives or diarrhoea. This does not mean that all foods containing additives need to be automatically treated with suspicion. All foods are made up of chemicals and food additives are not always 'less safe' than naturally occurring chemicals (Ward, Wen-Ham, Yu-Juen, Feng-Hui, Louise, Chien-Jen, Mow-Ming, I-How, Paul, Czau-Siung, and Allan, 2019).

Many of the food additives used by the food industry also occur naturally within foods that people eat every day. For example, MSG is found naturally in parmesan cheese, sardines and tomato in significantly greater quantities than the MSG present as a food additive. People with food allergies and intolerances are also often sensitive to chemicals found naturally in certain foods, such as nuts or shellfish (FDA, 2018).

Many people view food additives as a major food threat. However, in terms of health risk, food additives would come in at the end of the line, after food-borne microorganisms (like salmonella), inappropriate hygiene and eating habits, environmental contaminants and naturally occurring toxins (Whysner, Wang, Zang, Iatropoulos, and Williams, 2019).

Types of Food Additives

According to Tuormaa (2019), the different types of food additive and their uses include: Anti-caking agents – stop ingredients from becoming lumpy; Antioxidants – prevent foods from oxidising, or going rancid; Artificial sweeteners – increase the sweetness; Emulsifiers – stop fats from clotting together; Food acids – maintain the right acid level; Colours – enhance or add colour; Humectants – keep foods moist; Flavours – add flavour; Flavour enhancers – increase the power of a flavour; Foaming agents – maintain uniform aeration of gases in foods; Mineral salts – enhance texture and flavour; Preservatives – stop microbes from multiplying and spoiling the food; Thickeners and vegetable gums – enhance texture and consistency; Stabilisers and firming agents – maintain even food dispersion; Flour treatment – improves baking quality; Glazing agent – improves appearance and can protect food; Gelling agents – alter the texture of foods through gel formation; Propellants – help propel food from a container; Raising agents – increase the volume of food through the use of gases; and Bulking agents – increase the volume of food without major changes to its available energy (Floch, 2021).

Food Additives and Processed Foods

There is a common misconception that processed foods automatically contain food additives. Foods like long-life milk, canned foods and frozen foods are all processed, yet none of them need extra chemicals (Floch, 2021). If someone is unsure whether or not a product contains an additive, check the label. However, some listed ingredients may contain food additives without mentioning them on the label. For instance, 'margarine' might be a listed ingredient and margarine contains food additives (Gan, Sun, Wu, Jing, and Yu, 2021).

For most people, additives are not a problem in the short term. However, 50 of the 400 currently approved additives in Australia have been associated with adverse reactions in some people (Haley, and Lyn, 2021). Some food additives are more likely than others to cause reactions in sensitive people. It is often the additives that are used to give a food a marketable quality, such as colour, that most commonly cause allergic reactions. Some of these hypersensitive reactions include: Digestive disorders – diarrhoea and colicky pains; Nervous disorders – hyperactivity, insomnia and irritability; Respiratory problems – asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis; Skin problems – hives, itching, rashes and swelling (Hallagan, Allen, and Borzelleca, 2021).

It is important to realise that many of the symptoms experienced as a result of food sensitivities can be caused by other disorders. Medical diagnosis is important. If someone try to diagnose itself, the person may restrict its diet unnecessarily and neglect an illness (Halldorsson, Strom, Petersen, and Olsen, 2021).

Some food additives that may cause problems for some people include: Flavour enhancers – monosodium glutamate (MSG) 621. Food colourings – tartrazine 102; yellow 2G107; sunset yellow FCF110; cochineal 120; Preservatives – benzoates 210, 211, 212, 213; nitrates 249, 250, 251, 252; sulphites 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225 and 228; Artificial sweetener – aspartame 951 (Wu, et.al, 2020).

If someone think he/she may have a food additive sensitivity, it's important to seek professional help since all of the symptoms you may be experiencing can also be caused by other disorders. It may help to keep a food diary and note carefully any adverse reactions. In the case of a sensitivity being identified, the usual practice is to eliminate all suspect foods from the diet and then reintroduce them one by one to see which additive (or additives) causes the reaction (Xing, et.al., 2020). This should only be done under medical supervision, since some of the reactions – such as asthma – can be serious.

Health Benefits

The essential health benefits are a minimum federal standard and states may require that qualified health plans sold in state health insurance exchanges also cover state-mandated benefits. The act gives "considerable discretion" to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to determine, through regulation, what specific services within these classes are essential. However, the Act provides certain parameters for the secretary to consider. The secretary (Haley and Lyn, 2021) must "ensure that such essential health benefits reflect an appropriate balance among the

categories so that benefits are not unduly weighted toward any category"; (Hallagan, Allen, and Borzelleca, 2021) may "not make coverage decisions, determine reimbursement rates, establish incentive programs, or design benefits in ways that discriminate against individuals because of their age, disability, or expected length of life; (Halldorsson, Strom, Petersen, and Olsen, 2021) must take into account "the health care needs of diverse segments of the population, including women, children, persons with disabilities, and other groups"; and (Feng, et.al., 2019) must ensure that essential benefits "not be subject to denial to individuals against their wishes on the basis of the individuals' age or expected length of life or the individuals' present or predicted disability, degree of medical dependency, or quality of life (Ghoreishi, Behpour, and Golestaneh, 2019).

Food Production in Hotels

Food production is the transformation of raw ingredients by food production staff into final dishes and meals (Hoover and Milich, 2019) and takes place in the food production area (Gupta, Gupta, & Gupta, 2019). A complete kitchen in a large hotel involves a hot section (stock kettles, broilers, grills, steamers, fry kettles, and roasting ovens); the garde-manger (cold food) sections; the pantry (salad) area; the butcher shop; the pastry shop and sometimes a bake shop; the scullery (dish and pot washing) area; an employees' cafeteria; banquet kitchen(s); and room service kitchen (Kashanian, and Zeidali, 2019). Most kitchens involve two production areas: a central production area in which basic preparation of food is undertaken and satellite kitchens for the final preparation of foods in which foods are finished immediately before service (Knobeloch, 2019).

The food production area is headed by an executive chef or food production manager who carries out various duties (Knobeloch, 2019). Louis and Botulism (2019) argued that the chef profession represents the most stressful profession amongst hospitality industry careers. The head chef should not spend all his/her time cooking in the kitchen and s/he requires skills beyond technical skills to undertake administrative work, management, developing staff training, purchasing functions, stock control, staff selection, supervision through good communication and leadership, designing menus, and overall maintaining the quality of the food leaving the kitchen. Thus, the main duties of the head chef are organizing, supervising and administering not cooking (Ward, 2018). The responsibility of developing and changing menus is ascribed to the executive chef who in turn identifies which items are in demand and should be left on the menu and which items are less popular and should be removed from the menu (Whysner, J., Wang, Zang, atropoulos, and Williams, 2019). The majority of restaurants change their menus every three to six months - no less - to ensure stability. Williams, Iatropoulos and Whysner, (2021) contended that to improve commitment and motivation amongst people in the kitchen, the head chef should motivate and support those in his charge, e.g., giving tangible support (technical help or information) and acknowledging good work. Good communication between kitchen staff and management and cross training directly reduced the level of work stress and increased job satisfaction.

According to Winter (2019) since food production has a very short operational cycle providing little time to correct mistakes, it is critically important to achieve quality food right first time. To discuss this further, Wu, Lin, Lin, Ken, and Wen, (2020) listed the following principles which should be taken in mind to achieve excellent food production: Develop a proper attitude towards cooking; Use standard recipes; Use the right technique and equipment; Train employees accurately; Supervise employees properly; Maintain production equipment; Schedule food production according to needs; Have variety of menu items.

The Theory of Consistent Quality

Wu, et.al. (2020) stated that quality management should involve measures to achieve a consistent level of quality. Haley and Lyn (2021) shed light on the importance of consistent quality products through documenting work flow and issuing standards as evidence to conforming to standards. Yet, consistency is a big challenge (Xing, Meng, Xue, Zhang, Yin, and Xi, 2020).

From an operational perspective, consistency is recognized as a significant factor for delivering quality and meeting customer expectations. Yang, (2021) emphasized the importance of detailed standards underpinned by an effective

system to make sure that all staff produce a consistent level of quality. According to Yang, Qin, Gao and Zhang (2019) inconsistent quality products are a significant barrier to quality in organizations.

Haley and Lyn (2021) emphasized the importance of delivering consistent quality as vital amongst eight critical factors relating to the design of operating system in hospitality organizations. Moreover, Hatcher, Planalp, Cho, Torti, and Torti (2018) pointed out through a review of quality practices in British hotels that functional dimensions which involve consistent quality provide competitive advantage. Furthermore, Haley and Lyn (2021) stressed the consistent quality as a key feature of the services provided in hospitality operations.

METHODOLOGY

This study research focus on the Effects and Benefit of Food Additives on the Health of the Consumer, a case study of two (2) restaurants in Ishaga/Ogba axis of Ikeja, Lagos state, Nigeria, namely: Unique Grills and Hangoutfoodie Restaurants. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional approach where data is to be collected at a particular point in time from customers of the selected restaurants. The population for the study consists of all the customers of the two selected restaurants located at Ishaga/Ogba axis of Ikeja, Lagos state, Nigeria. A total of about 95 customers visits the restaurants on a daily basis, hence, these categories of customers shall form the population of the study on the day the researcher visit the restaurants to administer questionnaire. In order to draw a precise inference about the population, a simple random sampling shall be used. The researcher obtained the sample frame of 77 respondents using Taro Yamani sample size determination formula.

Method of Data Collection

Primary data provided by the respondents constitute the main source of data. As stated earlier, the respondents for this study comprise of customers of the selected restaurants from the study area. A total of seventy-seven (77) structured questionnaire was distributed and Sixty-three (63) was completed and returned

Method of Data Analysis

This study uses a cross-sectional and quantitative approach to achieve the study objectives. Therefore, Regression Model was employed using quantitative data. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive zero order correlations and Regression Modelling using SPSS version 25.

Model Specification

Regression model was employed for this study as stated below:

$$HC = \alpha + \beta_1 (PADD) + e. \dots 1$$

$$HB = \alpha + \beta_1 (NADD) + \beta_1 (RecADD) + \beta_1 (HADD) + \beta_1 (NaADD) + e. \dots 2$$

Where:

HC = Health Consequences

PADD = Poor use of Additives

HB = Health Benefits

NADD = No Food Additives

RecADD = Recommended or Normal Food Additives

HADD = High Food Additives

NaADD = Natural Food Additives α

= Intercept

β = Beta Value.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Data Presentation

Out of the targeted sample size of 77, those who responded to the administered questionnaire were 63. The high response rate (82%) is attributed to fact that a personal (self-administered) approach was employed in collecting data. More so, the researcher maintained useful contacts with the respondents (Customers of the Restaurants), which

were instrumental in identifying the relevant sampled respondents and maintaining good relationships with them, which yielded excellent response rates. Table 1 summarizes the response rate:

Table 1: Response Rate

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Questionnaires Issued	77	100
Responses Received	63	82%
Responses Discarded	2	3%
Responses Used	61	88%

Source: Researcher's Questionnaire, 2021.

Table 2: Multi-collinearity Results Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.841	.114		3.24	.002		
Proper use of food additives	.77	.061	.133	2.11	.001	.411	2.51
Health benefits	.130	.047	.177	2.33	.007	.433	2.61

Source: Field survey, 2021.

KMO and Bartlett's Sphericity Test

To evaluate the feasibility of the study, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sampling adequacy index and Bartlett's sphericity test were conducted; both methods suggested the existence of an acceptable inter correlation. The Maximum extraction method was performed because it best reproduces the population values when the data has normal, multivariate distribution and the statistical significance of the extracted factors can be calculated. The results for all the five variables show the KMO values are above 0.7 (table 3). This implies that the items in our questionnaire correlate well with other items within their respective clusters to measure the underlying dimension, hence, adequate to continue with further analysis

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Results

Variable	KMO	χ^2	Bartlett's test		No of factors
			Df	Sig	
Proper use of food additives	0.877	541.214	15	.001	2
Health benefits	0.744	784.362	21	.001	2

Source: Field survey, 2021

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Poor use of additives in foods does not have negative health consequences.

Table 4 Model Summary for Hypothesis One

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.631a	.721	.545	32151477.321	2.54

a. Predictors: (Constant), Poor use of food additives

b. Dependent Variable: on health consequences

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

Table 5 Coefficients for Hypothesis One

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3624151	12121		2.201	.001
Poor use of food additives	-3.3621	32161	-2.144	-3.177	.006

a. Dependent Variable: health consequences

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

The relationship between the use of food additives and health consequences/benefits is about 63%. R being the determinant of correlation explains the extent to which the independent variable could explain the dependent variable. R square as shown in model summary is about 72%, this implies that the independent variables can predict or determine dependent variables up to 72%. This simply means that poor use of food additives can determine the health consequences/benefits up to about 72%. This study revealed that poor use of food additives account for about -2.14-unit change in health consequences/benefits. Meaning that poor use of food additives has negative impact on the health of consumers. This study revealed that poor use of food additives has negative significant health consequences, the p value is higher than 0.05 level of significant ($0.001 > 0.05$ p). Since p value ($0.001 < 0.05$), we hereby reject the null hypothesis and conclude that poor use of additives in foods has significant negative health consequences.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Proper use of additives in foods does not have significant effects on health benefit.

Table 6 Model Summary for Hypothesis Two

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.661a	.617	.625	324154.21	2.51

a. Predictors: (Constant), No Food Additives;

b. Dependent Variable: health benefits.

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

Table 7 Coefficients for Hypothesis Two

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	362577	321		2.36	.021
No Food Additives	2.24	.311	2.341	3.33	.145
Recommended or Normal Food Additives	1.24	.451	1.241	2.11	.001
High Food Additives	2.31	.324	-2.314	-1.21	.002
Natural Food Additives	1.11	.241	2.113	1.14	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Health benefits

Source: SPSS version 25 output.

As shown in the coefficients table (table 9), the beta value of 2.341 implies that in a situation where no artificial additives are added to foods, there will be about 2.24 positive unit impact on health, meaning that the opinion of the respondents revealed that where no artificial additives are added to foods, health of the consumer will not be negatively impaired. However, the p-value of 0.145 which is higher than 0.05 level of significance implies that consumers are not satisfied with the food prepared without additives. Meaning that though food prepared without artificial additives has positive impact on health of the consumers, they are not satisfied with the tastes of the foods, hence, appropriate measure of additives is required. The table further revealed that in a situation where recommended and normal measure of additives is added to foods, it will have positive impact on health of consumers. The beta value of 1.24 implies appropriate use of additives will translate into positive impact on health of consumer, this is found significant at 5% level of significance ($0.001 < 0.05$). However, in a situation whereby high food additives is added to foods, it will results into negative impact on the health of consumers ($b = -2.314$, $t = -1.21$, and $p = 0.002 < 0.05$), which is highly significant at 5% level of significance. The table further revealed that in a situation where natural food additives is added to foods, it will result into positive health benefits ($b = 2.133$, $t = 1.14$, and $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). This finding therefore encourages the use of natural additives.

CONCLUSION

Many different food additives have been developed over time to meet the needs of food production, as making food on a large scale is very different from making them on a small scale at home. Additives are needed to ensure processed food remains safe and in good condition throughout its journey from factories or industrial kitchens, during transportation to warehouses and shops, and finally to consumers. The use of food additives is only justified when their use has a technological need, does not mislead consumers, and serves a well-defined technological function, such as to preserve the nutritional quality of the food or enhance the stability of the food. Food additives can be derived from plants, animals, or minerals, or they can be synthetic. This study concluded that poor use of additives in foods has significant negative health consequences; where no artificial additives are added to foods, health of the consumer will not be negatively impaired. However, consumers are not satisfied with the food prepared without additives; in a situation where recommended and normal measure of additives is added to foods, it will have positive impact on health of consumers; however, in a situation whereby high food additives are added to foods, it will result into negative impact on the health of consumers. The study further revealed that in a situation where natural food additives is added to foods, it will result into positive health benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Arisen from the findings of this study, the study recommended that:

1. Management of Hotel industry should ensure that they are sensitive to customers' needs and complaints regarding food additives.
2. To ensure increase in patronage, proper use of food additives should be encouraged and comply with all the professional requirement of food production in the area of proper use of food additives.
3. Natural food additives should be encouraged in the production of foods.

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EFFECTS OF MOTIVATION ON EMPLOYEES RETENTION IN SELECTED HOTELS IN OGBOMOSHO NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the influence of motivational factors in ensuring employee retention and service effectiveness in the hotel industry in Ogbomosho North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The major challenges confronting the implementation of the motivational strategies are employee training cost and poor leadership structure. Purposive sampling technique was used to select ten (10) hotels while twelve (12) employees was randomly selected from each of the ten (10) selected hotels. The sample size was one hundred and twenty (120) respondents but one hundred and six (106) questionnaire were retrieved. This involved the use of primary data, which involve questionnaire administration. The questionnaire contained a set of structured questions related to the study and addressed to the respondents. Data obtained was subjected to statistical computation using descriptive statistical and inferential statistic (Regression). All statistical analyzes were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The finding revealed that standard salary structure and incentives/bonus has major effect on employee retention with a mean of 4.21 and 4.19, followed by emergency fund for employee with a mean of 4.15 while sick leave with pay recorded the least mean of 3.87. The major challenges confronting the implementation of the motivational strategies are employee training cost and poor leadership structure. Thus, the research suggests that the working condition of the employee should be improved, this may include flexibility in selection of shifts, balancing of work and personal life for the employees.

Keywords: Employee, Hotel, Motivation, Retention

INTRODUCTION

The hotel industry is a dynamic service sector that requires optimal human resource management to ensure professionalism and efficiency in service delivery (Hanzaee and Mirvaisi, 2011). Therefore, it is a challenge for hospitality-based organizations to recruit and develop potential service providers to better serve domestic and international guests. Because the hotel industry provides intangible services and products, effective human resource management (HRM), especially recruitment, is critical to the success of the industry (Walker, 2004). Employee motivation is critical to optimal functioning and productivity of an organization. The success of an organization, whether public or private, largely depends on how it attracts, motivates, develops, and retains its employees (Samuel and Chipunza, 2009). Motivation is the catalyst for achieving organizational efficiency. Closely related to employee motivation is retention (Ololube, 2005). Retaining qualified employees remains a serious concern for human resource managers around the world, especially given the ever-increasing employee turnover rate (Ololube, 2005). Today's business environment is so competitive that skilled employees have become the most important differentiator for most companies. Competent employees are the key to a company's growth. Both public and private organizations rely heavily on specialized knowledge to compete in the market and gain competitive advantage (Pienaar and Bester, 2008).

Employee retention is an important factor that can influence the success of the hotel industry (Guilding *et al.*, 2014). An employee retention crisis has been observed in many industries, including the hotel industry (Gursoy *et al.*, 2012). Employee retention is important because the hospitality industry employs more people nationally and globally than any other private sector (Ogbonna and Lloyd, 2002). Achieving employee retention in the hospitality

industry requires effective leadership with a long-term vision (Enderwick, 2011). Retention in the hospitality industry is challenging as the industry faces the hurdles of an ever-changing workforce. It is a common and evolving practice to retain the best workforce (Alexakis, 2011) staying with an organization when the organization's retention strategy may reduce the benefits of leaving. Poor employee retention management in the hospitality industry can cost companies thousands of dollars when considering the loss of human capital (Freedman and Kosová, 2014).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics said a total of 4.5 million employees left their jobs in 2014, leading to high turnover rates due to layoffs, layoffs, and attrition. The company's most commonly cited issue is employee retention, which ultimately impacts overall profitability and employee satisfaction. Despite its centrality as an important tool for employee retention and productivity, motivation is often underutilized by most managers in the workplace (Bassel, 2009). In Nigeria today, instead of encouraging (motivating) workers and providing them with the means to maintain effective performance, workers are being forced to ignore their physiological needs through salary insecurity, delays in salary payments and benefits. This affects the productivity and motivation of workers (Babangida, 2014). Therefore, there is a need to investigate the influence of motivational factors in ensuring employee retention and service effectiveness in the hotel industry in Ogbomosho North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

Ogbomosho North is a local government area in Oyo State, Nigeria. This local government is home to one of Nigeria's finest educational institutions, the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) and its teaching hospital. Also home to the Nigerian Baptist Medical Center and Bowen University Teaching Hospital. Soun Palace is the main traditional residential building in the city. Ogbomosho North is the most populous local government area of the city and the main economic sector of the city. The city has an area of 235 square kilometers. According to the 2006 census, it is the most populous local government area in the city.

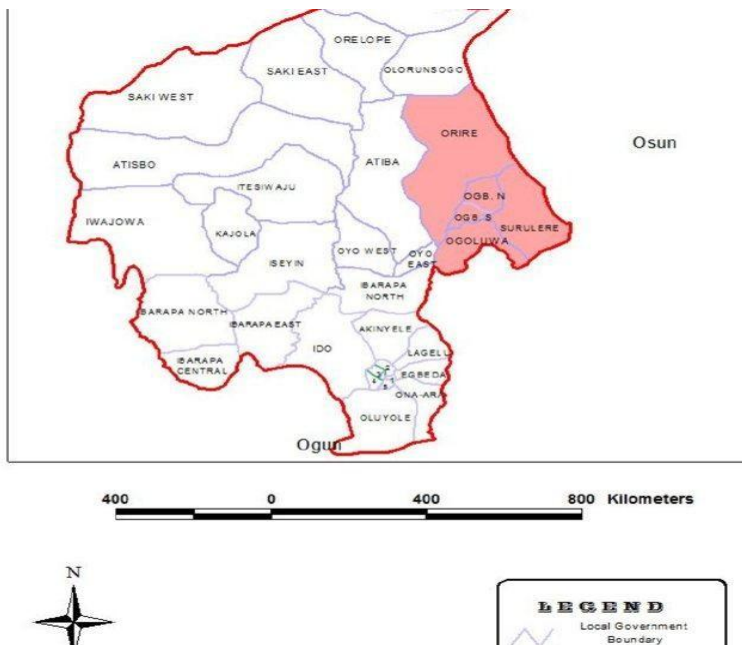


Fig 1: Map of Oyo State showing Ogbomosho North LGA

The target populations were employees and employers of the selected hotels in the study area. The selected hotels are Peacock Hotel, Nest Hotel, Omo o Jeun Hotel, Siktiam Hotels, Jolanis Hotel, Destination Luxury Hotel, Divine Hotel, Living Soul Harden Hotel, Ajarat Guest House and Imperial Hotel.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Purposive sampling technique was used to select ten (10) hotels while twelve (12) employees was randomly selected from each of the ten (10) selected hotels. The hotels were selected base on their size and popularity in the study area. This puts the sample size to one hundred and twenty (120) respondents but one hundred and six (106) questionnaire were retrieved

Data Collection

This involved the use of primary data, which involve questionnaire administration. The main research tool to collect the necessary information from the data sources used was the questionnaire method. The questionnaire contained a set of structured questions related to the study and addressed to the respondents.

Data Analysis

Data obtained was subjected to statistical computation using descriptive statistical and inferential statistic (Regression). All statistical analyzes were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

RESULTS OBTAINED

Table 1: Demographic Characteristic of the Respondents

Demographic	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	49	46.2
	Female	57	53.8
Age Group	≤27	28	26.4
	28-37	66	62.3
	38-47	11	10.4
	48 and Above	1	0.9
Marital Status	Married	46	43.4
	Unmarried	60	56.6
Level Of Education	Primary	1	0.9
	Secondary	17	16.0
	Tertiary	88	83.0
Department	S	25	23.6
	Purchase and Store	16	15.1
	Food and Beverages	22	20.8
	Housekeeping	31	29.2
	Marketing	8	7.5
	Human resources	4	3.8
Service Year	≤5 Yrs	55	51.9
	6-10 Yrs	49	46.2
	11-15 Yrs	2	1.9
Employment Status	Full time	97	91.5
	Part time	9	8.5

Total	106	100.0
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Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 1 above displays the respondents' demographic data. Of the respondents, female made up the largest 53.8%), followed by men (46.2%). Age 28–37 years old had the highest percentage (62.3%). followed by age group ≤ 27 with 26.4% while 48 years and above is the least with 0.9%. Majority of the respondents (56.6%) are unmarried. The table also showed that 83.0% of the participants had completed tertiary education. Majority of the respondents worked as an housekeeping (29.2%), followed by front office with 23.6% while human resources recorded the least with 3.8%. Majority of the respondents (46.2%) had worked for hotels for 6-10 years. Also 91.5% of the respondents are full time employee while 8.5% are part time.

Table 2: Motivational Strategies put in place in the Hotel

Variables	Applicable F (%)	Not Applicable F (%)	Mean	Rank
Standard salary structure	105(99.1)	1(0.9)	1.99	2 nd
Incentives/bonus	106(100.0)	0(0)	2.00	1 st
Medical facilities	67(63.2)	39(3.7)	1.61	10 th
Sick leave with pay	56(52.8)	50(47.2)	1.54	11 th
Accommodation facilities	101(95.3)	5(4.7)	1.93	5 th
Recognition	103(97.2)	3(2.8)	1.96	4 th
Staff training and Career development	91(85.8)	15(14.2)	1.84	7 th
Emergency fund for employee	99(93.4)	7(6.60)	1.93	5 th
Better work environment	103(97.2)	3(2.8)	1.96	4 th
Free meal during working hours	74(69.8)	32(30.2)	1.67	9 th
Flexible work hour	97(91.5)	9 (8.5)	1.89	6 th
Job security	88(83.1)	18(16.9)	1.82	8 th
Compensation	104(98.1)	2(1.9)	1.97	3 rd

Source (Field survey, 2022)

Table 2 revealed the motivational strategies put in place in the hotel in which incentives/bonus and standard salary structure recorded the highest mean of 2.00 and 1.99, followed by compensation with 1.97 while sick leave with pay recorded the least with 1.54. This implies that apart from salary, employees are been motivated with incentives/bonus. This support Branham (2005) as they observe an increasing understanding that high pay cannot be sufficient for employee retention but other factors such as promotion, incentives, economic cycles etc which can motivate employee and leads to their retention within the organization.

Table 3: Effects of Motivational Strategies on Employee Retention

Management Strategies	Major Effects		Moderate Effects		Uncertain		Minor Effects		No Effects		Mean	Rank
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Standard salary structure	79	74.5	27	25.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.21	1 st
Incentives/bonus	71	66.0	31	29.2	4	3.8	-	-	-	-	4.19	2 nd
Medical facilities	41	38.7	25	23.6	25	23.6	13	12.3	2	1.9	3.95	12 th
Sick leave with pay	38	35.8	27	25.5	22	20.8	11	10.4	8	7.5	3.87	13 th

Accommodation facilities	66	62.3	36	33.0	4	3.8	-	-	-	-	4.11	4 th
Recognition	61	57.5	31	29.2	10	9.4	4	3.8	-	-	4.07	6 th
Staff training and Career development	50	47.2	30	28.3	21	19.8	5	4.7	-	-	4.00	10 th
Emergency fund for employee	68	64.2	35	33.0	3	2.8	-	-	-	-	4.15	3 rd
Better work environment	45	42.5	27	25.5	22	20.8	7	6.6	3	2.8	3.98	11 th
Free meal during working hours	54	50.9	27	25.5	16	15.1	9	8.5	-	-	4.03	8 th
Flexible work hour/shift	51	48.1	25	23.6	19	17.9	10	9.4	1	0.9	4.01	9 th
Job security	55	51.9	28	26.4	10	9.4	8	7.5	5	4.7	4.04	7 th
Compensation	64	60.4	34	32.1	8	7.5	-	-	-	-	4.09	5 th

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Effects of motivational strategies on employee retention are revealed in table 3, the finding showed that standard salary structure and incentives/bonus has major effect on employee retention with a mean of 4.21 and 4.19, followed by emergency fund for employee with a mean of 4.15 while sick leave with pay recorded the least mean of 3.87. This study corroborates with Santa-Cruz *et al.*, (2009) which affirms that important factors that can leads to staff retention is attractive pay packages as it will meets the financial and material needs of the staff.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Effects of Motivational Strategies on Employee Retention

	R-Square		Adjusted R-Square		Standard Error of the Estimate	
	.846		.716		.685	
Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient		T	P-value
	B	Standard Error	B			
Standard salary structure	.714	.091	1.458		7.899	.000
Incentives/bonus	.620	.101	1.351		6.127	.000
Medical facilities	.114	.130	.246		8.566	.004
Sick leave with pay	.647	.076	1.344		8.551	.003
Accommodation facilities	.492	.067	.991		7.345	.000
Recognition	.425	.077	.773		5.500	.000
Staff training and Career development	.889	.108	1.826		8.269	.000
Emergency fund for employee	.715	.091	1.458		7.899	.000
Better work environment	.482	.117	.942		4.141	.000
Free meal during working hours	.169	.137	.234		5.565	.009
Flexible work hour/shift	.644	.075	1.349		7.555	.001
Job security	.459	.064	.945		7.321	.001
Compensation	.267	.142	.221		6.546	.001

Source (Field survey, 2022) P-value ≤ 0.05 is significant

The table above revealed the regression analysis of effects of motivations on employee retention, Result have shown that all the independent variable have positive impact on dependent variable (Employee retention). So it indicated

that employee motivation is very crucial for explaining the employee retention. The employee retention component (Independent variable) accounted for 84.6% of the variance in the total motivation, according to the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.846. The positive regression coefficients showed that the regression model was statistically significant and that the independent factors had a positive impact on the respondents' overall agreement with the variable measures for motivation strategies. The t-values of all the independent variables were less than the significant level of 0.05.

Table 5: Challenges Confronting the Implementation of the Motivational Strategies

Management Strategies	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Mean	Rank
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Retaining talented employee	55	51.9	28	26.4	10	9.4	8	7.5	5	4.7	4.02	5 th
Owner-manager attitudes	68	64.2	33	31.1	5	4.7	-	-	-	-	4.06	4 th
Inadequate fund	69	65.1	22	20.8	15	14.1	-	-	-	-	4.08	3 rd
Employee training cost	78	73.6	21	19.8	7	6.6	-	-	-	-	4.20	1 st
Competitors who pay high salary	47	44.3	28	26.4	19	18.0	12	11.3	-	-	3.95	7 th
Government policy	39	36.8	26	24.5	22	20.8	11	10.4	8	7.5	3.67	8 th
Fear of failure	50	47.2	30	28.3	21	19.8	5	4.7	-	-	3.97	6 th
Poor leadership structure	73	68.9	20	18.9	9	8.5	4	3.7	-	-	4.12	2 nd

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The challenges confronting the implementation of the motivational strategies are indicated in table 5, in which employee training cost recorded the highest mean of 4.20, follows by poor leadership structure with a mean of 4.12 while government policy recorded the least mean of 3.67. The cost of training employee is the major challenges.

CONCLUSION

The research has confirmed that Incentives/bonus, standard salary structure, compensation, better work environment etc. are the motivational strategies put in place in the hotels. Standard salary structure, incentives/bonus and emergency fund for employee have major effects on employee retention. The major challenges confronting the implementation of the motivational strategies are employee training cost and poor leadership structure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The working condition of the employee should be improved, this may include flexibility in selection of shifts, balancing of work and personal life for the employees.

Award night can be organize for the employee to boost employee morale

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EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ON EMPLOYEE'S PRODUCTIVITY IN HOTEL INDUSTRY IN ILORIN, KWARA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The research investigates the effects of organizational commitment on employee's productivity in hotel industry in Ilorin, Kwara State. The challenges facing employee productivity in hotel industry has been that of irregular payment and less salary is the major challenges facing employee productivity in hotel industry. The target population for this research study consisted of employees from six purposively chosen hotels. Twenty (20) employees was randomly selected from each of the six (6) hotels. This puts the sample size to one hundred and twenty (120) respondents. Data collection involved the use of primary data, which involve questionnaire administration. The questionnaire approach was the primary research and closed-end questions tool used to get the required data from the sources of data used. Data was analysed with the use of descriptive statistics and the results were presented as tables, frequencies and percentages. The result revealed that the challenges facing employee productivity in hotel industry revealed that irregular payment and less salary is the major challenges facing employee productivity in hotel industry with mean value of 4.13 and 4.11, followed by less increment with a mean value of 4.10 and insufficient medical allowance is the least with mean vale of 3.98. It can be concluded from the findings that giving employee autonomy and involving them in decision making leads to a good productivity and also appreciating and recognizing the work done by the employee also have impact on productivity.

Keywords: Employee; Commitment; Hotel; Productivity

INTRODUCTION

The idea of organizational commitment is significant because it brings about the commitment of employees, organizations and society as a whole. Employees' derives commitment from using the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that were relevant to the organization (Buchko, Weinzimmer and Sergeyeve, 1998). Globalization movement has leads to rapid development in hotel sector which makes the development of hotel sector to be in need of qualified and dedicated employee. Ergun Özler, (2008) affirms that receiving maximum level of efficiency is by improving employee talents and skills by the management which in turns can leads to employee commitment within the organization. Benefit from employee's competence at the highest level is directly proportional to how employees are commitment to their organization (Yazicioğlu and Topaloğlu, 2009). Organizational commitment is an idea which is positively associated with performance enhancement (Koch, 1996). In this perspective, workers who exhibit a higher level of organizational commitment can believe that their company outperforms competitors in terms of performance and uses fewer organizational resources for tasks like hiring new staff members and enforcing discipline (Perry and Wise, 1990). One of the job-related attitudes that has been thoroughly studied by academics and professionals in the field of human resource management is organizational commitment, whose importance has been acknowledged in the literature. Because strong organizational commitment produces a number of positive organizational outcomes, organizational commitment is a crucial organizational topic (Folorunso, Adewale and Abodunde, 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The body of research indicates that people join organizations for a multitude of reasons, such as an emotional connection to the organization's principles, an awareness of the expenses associated with quitting, or a feeling of duty to the group (Boehman, 2006). Khan, Razi, Ali, and Asghar (2013) assert that loyal workers have numerous advantages for their companies. They will work more to do their jobs well, act beyond the call of duty, and

contribute to the smooth operation of the company. Previous research shows that organizational commitment is positively correlated with work performance (Chen and Francesco, 2003), employee motivation (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990), and turnover intentions (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005; Farrell and Stamm, 1988). The management, retention, and motivation of human resources has been a persistent concern for the hotel business throughout the years (Enz, 2001). Regretfully, there is a perception that positions in the service sector are low-paying and high-stress, which undermines employee loyalty to the company and motivation (Stamper and Van Dyne, 2003). However, individual differences in motivation and organizational commitment make it difficult to quantify, classify, and draw generalizations about them (Nicholson, 2003). These days, organizational commitment is regarded as one of the most crucial and contentious aspects of human resource management. It is primarily associated with work values, work motivation, and work involvement.

METHODOLOGY

The target population for this research study consisted of employees from six purposively chosen hotels. Twenty (20) employees was randomly selected from each of the six (6) hotels. This puts the sample size to one hundred and twenty (120) respondents.

DATA COLLECTION

This involve the use of primary data, which involve questionnaire administration. The questionnaire approach is the primary research tool used to get the required data from the sources of data used. In addition to closed-ended questions, the questionnaire asked respondents a number of structured questions pertaining to the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data and the results were presented as tables, frequencies and percentages.

RESULTS OBTAINED

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC OF THE RESPONDENTS

Demographic	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	51	42.5
	Female	69	57.5
Age Group	18-27	39	32.5
	28-37	45	37.5
	38-47	27	22.5
	48 and Above	9	7.5
Marital Status	Married	37	30.8
	Unmarried	83	69.2
Level Of Education	Primary	11	9.2
	Secondary	49	40.8
	NCE/ND	44	36.7
	HND/Bsc	16	13.3
Department	Receptionist	43	35.8
	Housekeeping	16	13.3
	Purchase and Store	21	17.5
	Security	17	14.2
	Food and Beverage	4	3.3
	Marketing	13	10.8
	Administration	6	5.0

Service Year	≤5 Yrs	56	46.7
	6-10 Yrs	38	31.7
	11-15 Yrs	15	12.5
	≥15 Yrs	11	9.2
Employment Status	Full time	48	40.0
	Contract	18	15.0
	Part time	38	31.7
	Casual	16	13.3
Total		120	100.0

Table 1 above shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents, it was observed that 42.5% of the respondents were male, while 57.5% were female. 32.5% of the respondents were between 18-27 years of age, 37.5% were between 28-37 years of age, 22.5% were between 38-47 years of age, while only 7.5% were between 48 years and above. It can equally be noted from the table that 9.2% of the respondents had primary school certificate 40.8% had secondary school certificate, 36.7% of the respondents had NCE/ND while 13.3% are HND/BSc holders. The table also revealed that 30.8% of the respondents were married while 69.0% were unmarried. The table also showed that most employees identified reception as their department with 35.8% of the respondents. The smallest number of respondents worked in the food and beverage department with 3.3% of the respondents. The table also revealed that 46.7% of the employees had served in the organization for ≤5years, 31.7% had served for 6-10 years, 12.5% had served for 11-14 years, and 9.2% had served for ≥15 years in the hotel. The findings showed that 40.0% of the respondents were fulltime employees in the hotel, 15.0% were employees on contract, 31.7% were part time and 13.3% of the respondents were casual workers.

Table2: Perceived Relevance of Organizational Commitment within the Hotel Industry

Variable	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Remark
	f	%	F	%	f	%	F	%	F	%		
My manager gives me more freedom and authority, which makes my job easier, faster, and more effective	0	0	5	4.2	17	14.2	42	35.0	56	46.7	4.05	3 rd
Great autonomy and decision-making abilities make my job easier, especially for our customers	0	0	8	6.7	10	8.3	26	21.7	76	63.3	4.09	1 st
Sharing authority among employees can reduce work-related stress	0	0	0	0	41	34.2	35	29.2	44	36.7	4.03	5 th
Without support from top management, employees cannot gain more power and authority	10	8.3	12	10.0	23	19.2	36	30.0	39	32.5	4.00	6 th
Mutual trust among employees increases	11	9.2	22	18.3	13	10.8	41	34.2	33	27.5	3.87	8 th

authority and authority in decision-making												
My manager appreciates my work and this is an extrinsic motivation for my work	0	0	12	10.0	14	11.7	29	24.2	65	54.2	4.07	2 nd
I received useful feedback from my manager or supervisor on my job performance	6	5.0	22	18.3	35	29.2	26	21.7	31	25.8	3.98	7 th
My employer cares for my family	0	0	10	8.3	30	25.0	49	40.8	31	32.5	3.85	9 th
Work security, loving and caring colleague gives me confidence to do my work	0	0	5	4.2	21	17.5	43	35.8	51	42.5	4.04	4 th

Relevance of organizational commitment within the hotel industry was shown in table 2, From the results, majority of the respondents indicated to a small extent that the great autonomy and decision-making abilities make my job easier, especially for our customers with a mean value of 4.09, follow by my manager appreciates my work and this is an extrinsic motivation for my work with a mean of 4.07, my manager gives me more freedom and authority, which makes my job easier, faster, and more effective recorded a mean of 4.05 and my employer cares for my family had the least mean value of 3.85. This infers that decision making, recognition, and freedom influence employee commitment in the hotel industry. The study's findings support those of Bin *et al.*, (2011), who defined employee involvement in decision-making as encompassing all aspects of an employee's involvement with the work itself, including relationships with supervisors and coworkers, organizational culture, opportunities for personal growth, job feedback, workplace communication and acknowledging an employee effort. When workers are aware of how their contributions impact the organization with which they are associated, their work takes on a greater sense of significance (Adekola, 2012). Employees need to be supported and valued in order to be motivated. Make sure to provide them with lots of feedback. Organizations need to pay attention to their teams and develop collaborative relationships with their employees (Boxall and Macky, 2010). Involving employees in decision-making processes and problem-solving not only allows employees to contribute to the organization's success, but also saves the organization time and money, increases productivity, and reduces outsourcing (Grant, 2010). When employees are involved in decision-making, they not only have a professional and personal stake in the company and its overall success. Participating in the decision-making process also gives all employees the opportunity to express their opinions and share their knowledge with others. This not only improves the relationship between managers and employees, but also promotes a strong sense of teamwork among employees. This commitment leads to increased productivity as employees actively participate in various aspects of the organization and want the overall success of their efforts (Rehman, 2011).

Table 3: Perceived Effect of Organizational Commitment on Employee Productivity In Hotel Industry

Variable	No Effect		Minor Effect		Uncertain		Moderate Effect		Major Effect		Mean	Remark
	f	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
It enhance effective and quality employee productivity	0	0	0	0	11	9.1	47	39.2	62	51.7	3.98	1 st
It lead to poor employee productivity	13	10.8	41	34.2	52	43.3	10	8.3	4	3.3	3.82	11 th
It motivates and encourages the employee	0	0	1	0.8	10	8.3	50	41.7	59	49.2	3.97	2 nd
It make the working environment unconducive for the employee	16	13.3	34	28.3	47	39.2	15	12.5	8	6.7	3.85	10 th
It enhance the sustainability and the effective growth of the hotel industry	0	0	5	4.2	18	15.0	41	34.2	55	45.8	3.95	3 rd
I take great pride in work I do	10	8.3	22	18.3	41	34.2	27	22.5	20	16.7	3.88	8 th
I'm happy with my prospects of receiving pay raises	0	0	6	5.0	19	15.8	43	35.8	51	42.5	3.94	4 th
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me	11	9.2	15	12.5	24	20.0	31	25.8	40	33.3	3.90	7 th
Management takes into account ideas made by employees for enhancement	6	5.0	11	9.2	21	17.5	37	30.8	45	37.5	3.91	6 th
Employees are developed for more responsibilities	14	11.7	25	20.8	49	40.8	21	17.5	11	9.2	3.86	9 th
Employees are original thinkers and have ability to go beyond traditional approaches	0	0	9	7.5	17	14.2	46	38.3	48	40.0	3.93	5 th

The above table revealed the effect of organizational commitment on employee productivity in hotel Industry, in which organizational commitment enhance effective and quality employee productivity recorded the highest mean value of 3.98, follow by It motivates and encourages the employee with a mean of 3.97, It enhance the sustainability and the effective growth of the hotel industry with a mean of 3.95 and It lead to poor employee productivity recorded the least mean of 3.82. This finding is consistent with the findings of Kaburu (2011) who found that organizational commitment increases employee engagement and productivity. Engaged employees in an organization play an important role in improving organizational performance. Therefore, it is important to provide employees with development and learning opportunities (Arnord, 2014). These employees effectively maintain their capabilities,

driving cost savings and organizational profitability. Chang (2011) examined the role of job commitment through training on the relationship between employees' organizational commitment and turnover intentions. He said that training is motivation and leads to commitment which leads to organizational performance. In a study by Gunu *et al.*, (2011) found that organizational commitment was positively related to employee productivity.

Table 4: Challenges Facing Employee Productivity in Hotel Industry

Variable	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Remark
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%		
Irregular Payment	0	0	0	0	0	0	49	40.8	71	59.2	4.13	1 st
Less Salary	0	0	0	0	14	11.7	41	34.2	65	54.2	4.11	2 nd
Improper Management	0	0	7	5.8	32	26.7	30	25.0	51	42.5	4.07	5 th
Job Placement	7	5.8	24	20.0	52	43.3	15	12.5	22	18.3	4.02	9 th
Better Job Option	10	8.3	26	21.7	55	45.8	12	10.0	17	14.2	4.01	10 th
Noisy Work Environment	13	10.8	28	23.3	59	49.2	9	7.5	11	9.2		11 th
Insufficient Medical Allowance	15	12.5	26	21.7	61	50.8	12	10.0	6	5.0	3.98	12 th
Job Insecurity	0	0	29	24.2	46	38.3	20	16.7	25	20.8	4.03	8 th
Job Dissatisfaction	0	0	22	18.3	41	34.2	22	18.3	35	29.2	4.04	7 th
Working Time	0	0	19	15.8	33	27.5	25	20.8	43	35.8	4.06	6 th
Less Increment	0	0	0	0	20	16.7	39	32.5	61	50.8	4.10	3 rd
Delay of Promotion	0	0	3	2.5	24	20.0	35	29.2	58	48.3	4.09	4 th

The challenges facing employee productivity in hotel industry was shown in table4, it was revealed from the table that irregular payment and less salary is the major challenges facing employee productivity in hotel industry with mean value of 4.13 and 4.11, followed by less increment with a mean value of 4.10 and insufficient medical allowance is the least with mean vale of 3.98. This implies that salary has a great influence on employee turnover. Employer should endeavor to pay there employee a good salary. Intelligent employers realize the importance of retaining the best type of employee

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the findings that giving employee autonomy and involving them in decision making leads to a good productivity and also appreciating and recognizing the work done by the employee also have impact on productivity. The effect of organizational commitment shows that it enhance effective and quality employee

productivity and also it motivates and encourage the employee. It was also revealed that less salary, irregular payment, improper management and working time are the major challenges of employee productivity within a hotel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Managers must adopt a democratic leadership style and encourage junior staff to participate in decision-making
- The compensation offered to employees must be reasonable within and outside industry standards
- Employees should be promoted from time to time according to opportunities within the organization and should be promoted either vertically or horizontally

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EVALUATION OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONSERVATION (Case study of Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove, UNESCO World Heritage Site)

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ABSTRACT

Study evaluated tourism infrastructure in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove. Purposive sampling method was used to elicit data from 116 respondents which comprised tourists, Osun grove devotees and government officers in charge of tourism development. Descriptive statistics like tables, frequency count and percentage were used for analysis. Majority of the respondents. 51 (60.72) and 30 (35.71) strongly agreed and agreed respectively with statement that available tourists infrastructure in Osogbo metropolis provide comfort and satisfaction to the tourists during the festival but were not up to international standard. Results revealed that there is an abundance of cultural heritage and ecotourism resources in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove that meets the highest standards in the heritage tourism industry. Government allocates insufficient resources to tourism sector and in some occasions, they divert funds meant for tourism infrastructure to politics. It concludes that Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove promotes cultural heritage development, generates foreign exchange and enhances better International relations between the nation and the tourists. It is recommended that planning for sustainable tourism development in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove should involve the integrated development of basic tourism infrastructure along with physical elements to ensure that destination is adequate enough to provide worthwhile experience for tourists.

Key words: Evaluation, Heritage tourism, Infrastructure, Conservation, Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove.

INTRODUCTION

Global context on protection of world heritage site emphasises that, the new urban agenda adopted at the 2016 United Nations conference recognized the significance of cultural and natural heritage that destination protection should include stakeholders who should work together to access necessary data and information to enhance best practices to protect world heritage sites. Research maintains that 190 countries have ratified the World Heritage Convention of 1972 (protecting the world's cultural and natural heritage), and 962 sites are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in which Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove was privileged to have been enlisted in 2005 (UNESCO, 2018; Yoade, 2022). This List includes 745 cultural, 188 natural and 29 mixed properties in 157 State parties. Together with other culture and nature areas, these World Heritage Sites are important tourism attractions. Indeed, inscription on the World Heritage List can quickly cause a site to become a major tourist attraction. It has been reported that heritage travellers are reputed to stay longer and spend more than other tourists, thereby making it very attractive to continue to build this sector of tourism market. Olatunji (2018) averred that quality of environment influences length of stay of visitors. Also, there is no contradistinction in the fact that the length of stay of tourists plays significant roles in the quality of life of the host community (Olatunji and Yoade, 2022).

Studies described heritage tourism as travelling to experience the place, artefacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present (Olatunji, *et al.*, 2022 and Iniyan, 2015). It includes cultural, historic and natural resources (Olatunji and Yoade, 2022). It is a leisure trip with the primary purpose of visiting historic, cultural, natural, recreational and scenic attractions to learn more about the past and present in an enjoyable way.

There exists a link between infrastructure and tourism development. Similarly, studies have theoretically established the special role of tourism in modernizing infrastructure, and on the other hand the generation of multiplication

effects of infrastructure development on tourism (Daramola, *et al.*, 2021; Gunn and Var, 2020; Eagles and McCool, 2018). The level of tourist satisfaction and the degree of a visitor's trip experience are described to have high correlation with the level of use or lack of infrastructure and technology in a destination (Smith, 2017). Infrastructure presence is fundamental to a tourist overall impression and image of a destination. Also, Boers and Contrell (2017) asserted that tourism planning and development would not be possible without roads, airports, electricity, telecommunication, sewage and potable water. Basically, infrastructure describes the set of interconnected structural elements that provide framework supporting an entire structure of development (Parikshat, Lalita, and Ajayi, 2016). It is basic physical and organization structures needed for the operation of a society or enterprise, or the services and facilities necessary for an economy to function (Yang, 2016). However, the infrastructure dimension is thus a necessary element for tourism development as it promotes comparative and competitive advantage on destinations (Olatunji, 2014).

Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove, a UNESCO World Heritage site was enlisted in June, 2005 (UNESCO, 2005). It is one of the special sites which has been selected and managed because of its outstanding value for the people of Osogbo and indeed the Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria. The grove is an inimitable symbol of identity for the whole Yoruba community (NCMM, 2014). The kind of tourism resources, assets and values that are available from reconnaissance survey at Osun sacred grove are historical value, architectural value, artistic value, educational value, religious, economic and social - cultural value. The Osun grove is the symbol of the development of Osogbo community/society from its pre-history beginning to the present day. The first palace is located at Agbala Osun - Osun courtyard inside the grove. The designs in the grove are spiritual settings; they are maintained in the grove as envisioned by the indigenous knowledge system. The grove is being used by teachers, students, researchers and film makers for educational and scientific purposes. Fauna and flora species are in the grove for nature studies. The grove has kept most of its characteristics alongside Yoruba traditional religious practices. All deities of ancient Yoruba tribes such as Ogun, Sango, Obatala, Eesu, Sanpona, Ela etc are present in the grove for rituals, protections and spiritual purposes. Festivals, traditions, worship, music, dance and rituals are some of the intangible heritage

that constitutes social and cultural values of the Osun grove. The grove received over 120,000 visitors and tourists within a year which is one of the social capital strengths. The flora potency of the medicinal plants, the traditional technology of using indigo dye “ELU” which is believed to have provided employment and income to the society / community, the production and sales of souvenirs from art and crafts. Fauna creates scenes and entertain visitors/tourists. Man is close to nature manifolds. Film making, picnic and excursions take place in Osun grove regularly. The grove is a spiritual ground, Yoruba traditional unalloyed religion and worship shrines locations are found in the grove. ‘Spiritism’, ‘cultism’, ‘rituals’, ‘initiations’ etc take place in the grove. Osun is the goddess of life and fertility ‘Osun Olomoyoyo’. Osun image of water signifies a relationship between nature, spirit and human being.

These, among other significant value chains are what need protection in Osun Osogbo grove while various activities concerning World Heritage sites, such as inscription, monitoring and recommendations have been mainly directed towards conserving their cultural heritages have also been utilized as outstanding tourism resources in each tourism destination in line with World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme (UNESCO, 2014). From this premise, the cultural heritage resources of Osun Osogbo grove are valuable and very significant. It is therefore worthy to attempt to conduct study on evaluation of heritage tourism infrastructure of Osun Osogbo sacred grove, Osun State, Nigeria.

The objectives of site management should not only focus on conservation issues and the management of visitors but also on increasing visitor numbers, visitor experience, visitor spending, visitor entertainment and more importantly how to ensure that visitors revisit the site (and/or pass along good recommendations to others). However, in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove - Nigeria with its associated visitor's facilities, statistics have shown that the site is recording low visitor-ship since attaining the World Heritage status except for the month of August when thousands of tourists/visitors/devotees or worshippers attend the annual Osun Osogbo Festival (NCMM, 2014).

There is, of course, every reason to be worried about the basic cultural resource at the site that these tourists are coming to see. However, the sustainability of cultural resources depends on their use (Iniyan, 2015). This implies that proactive means must be found of harnessing tourism for the good of Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove and Osogbo city. In order to achieve this, however, it has to be realized that tourists will not come, unless their needs are met. The effective and sustainable use of heritage properties as the basis of tourism requires significant amounts of planning both to ensure economic and conservation success (Yoade, *et al.*, 2023). There is the desire for an attraction to appeal to broader audiences and to generate increasing levels of external income. It has been established that the changing patterns of leisure time and discretionary income are influencing the form of attractions wanted by consumers, thereby resulting in products that meet their needs and quality expectations (Zhao, 2018). Thus, tourism infrastructure is fundamental for tourism development. It is second in importance only to a destination's attraction resource base.

In Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove, studies have concentrated on archaeological, conservation, social and economic impacts (Ogundiran, 2019; Enemuoh and Oduntan, 2015; Aina *et al.*, 2020). Studies seldom make serious consideration of the visitor service infrastructures. The need to evaluate and conserve infrastructure to enhance more tourists patronage to the destination can not be over looked. This makes the current study significant. The study intends to evaluate heritage tourism infrastructure in Osun Osogbo sacred grove, assessing how heritage tourism infrastructure and visitor facilities can be used effectively to attract tourists and thereby enable tourists to stay longer and contribute to quality of life of residents and the sustainable use of heritage tourism resource in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove and Osogbo town as an historic city in Nigeria.

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate heritage tourism infrastructure, case study of Osun Osogbo sacred grove, one of the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Nigeria. What qualities are the facilities available at the destination? Are there impacts of the stakeholders caused by imperfect infrastructure at the site? What are the tourism infrastructures available for successful balancing of viable cultural and heritage tourism enterprise in the study area? The study provides answers to the above stated research questions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Good infrastructure enhance tourist visit to any destination. Infrastructure is regarded as the basic physical structure needed for the operation of any given society or facilities necessary for an economy to function. It is one of the factors influencing quality of life (Olatunji *et al.*, 2022). It can be regarded as all forms of constructions required by an inhabited area that support and make economic development possible. Infrastructure is the basic system and services which are necessary for a country or an organisation to become effective. It is a significant structure which helps to boost tourism industry. It develops the community, region or state where tourist site is located. Infrastructure are needed for tourism activities viability, besides, tourism can induce the local environment or region to also improve the infrastructure by creating better water and sewage system, good road, power supply, public transport, communication networks, drainage and other public places. These infrastructures serve the need of the tourists and the community (Olatunji, Atoyebi and Oladipupo, 2019).

Tourism infrastructure refers to the networks of roads, transportation, communication, accommodation, sewage, and energy infrastructure together with supporting visitor facilities. Evaluating tourism infrastructure at heritage destination has become complex and multi-dimensional. It has wide range of aspects such as political aspects, property safety, health and sanitation, personal data safety, protection of tourists, consumer protection, information and communication safety, disaster management, environmental security, quality assurance of services among others (Daramola *et al.*, 2023 and World Tourism and Tourism Council, 2012). The highest standard of protection is imperative at destinations if tourism will yield appreciable and gross domestic products (GDP) to any country. Nothing is more important in any service industry than keeping investors and customers happy and safe. In recent times, no other service industry has the burden of keeping patrons safe as much as tourism. Criminals can take advantage of both local and foreign tourists if wrongly guided at destinations (Yoade and Olatunji, 2018). It becomes imperative to evaluate infrastructure of tourism industry sectors such as transportation, accommodation, attractions, events, commercial outdoor and indoor recreation facilities, theft of arts and crafts and secured standard tourists services delivery require excellent and absolute attention.

There are many potential cultural heritage destinations in Nigeria awaiting for investors and entrepreneurs but the issues of protection of infrastructure of foreign investment in tourism, their assets, and other tourists has become worrisome. In fact, it is a thing of concern all over the world.

Maintenance of highest standard infrastructure has been taken for granted in tourism sector in Nigeria. This is due to inadequate implementation of some maintenance policies in Nigeria. Tourism is mostly enjoyed with the provisions of state of the earth infrastructure in a peaceful environment (Olatunji, Yoade and Adeyemi, 2021). However, evaluation of tourist facilities for investors and tourists alike is imperative in order to promote the well-being of investors, tourists, tourism personnel and the environment. Tourism is described as the collection of activities, services and industries; of which transportation, accommodation, eating and drinking establishments, retail shops, entertainment, business, conference, and hospitality services/are provided for individuals and groups of people travelling away from home with the intention of returning back (Oladokun, Ololajulo and Oladele, 2014). This implies that tourism is a multi-dimensional activity. It involves movement of people from their normal residence to destination(s). The primary goal is to experience change in the environment and enjoy infrastructure. This makes tourism to be described as the sum of the phenomenon and relationship arising from the travel and stays of non-resident for at least one night and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, recreation and other purposes, as far as they do not become permanent residents and their activities is not connected with any earnings (UNWTO, 2013)

Tourism is vital to the economy of many countries due to its contributions with their goods and services. It provides opportunity for employment in the service industries associated with tourism. These service industries include transportation services, such as airlines, cruise ships, and taxis; hospitality services, such as lodging and accommodations, including hotels and resorts; and entertainment venues, such as amusement parks, national parks, casinos, shopping malls, various musical concerts and the theatre. Without effective and adequate infrastructural protection management all these refreshing activities and services cannot be enjoyable.

No foreign investor will be willing to take the risk of direct investment in a cultural heritage destination without infrastructure and measures to protect the available facilities (Olatunji, Adeyemi and Yoade, 2020). Both local and foreign tourists will be enhanced if there is a palpable evaluation in the available infrastructure and property at cultural heritage destinations in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was used. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection in combination with the use of relevant literature were employed. The reason for choosing this technique is because the researchers need to generate data through primary source from direct observation of the assets and resources in Osun grove, interactions with participants (tourists). Also, indepth interviews were conducted to obtain relevant information from Osun devotees and key informants (stakeholders) in the government ministries and agencies saddled with the responsibilities to identify, develop and market cultural and heritage attractions in the study area. The study used a total of one-hundred and sixteen respondents as proposed population. Copies of one hundred closed-ended questionnaires were randomly distributed to the selected respondents and different stakeholders through convenient sampling technique method at the Osun Osogbo festival in August, 2023. The completed copies of the questionnaire were collated, coded and analyzed using descriptive and narrative analyses.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Research question with the use of a 4 point Likert measurement scale to elicit information concerning the state and quality of the facilities available at the Osun Osogbo sacred grove and UNESCO approved World heritage site.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents' responses to answer to research question one

S/No	Transportation Facility	SA (Freq/%)	A (Freq/%)	D (Freq/%)	SD (Freq/%)
1.	Mini-buses provide comfort and satisfaction	51 (60.72)	30 (35.71)	03 (3.57)	0 (0.0)
2.	Tourists feel safe riding in a tri-cycle	31 (36.91)	44 (52.38)	08 (9.52)	01 (1.19)
3.	Tourist are satisfied with the speed of mini- bus	53 (63.10)	28 (33.33)	03 (3.57)	0 (0.0)
4.	Tourist are satisfied with road network to Osogbo for tourism purpose	40 (47.62)	39 (46.43)	05 (5.95)	0 (0.0)
5.	Car hire service from Lagos airport to the grove meet tourist expectation	35 (41.67)	41 (48.81)	04 (4.76)	04 (4.76)
6.	Tourist feel safe using the suspended Bridge	15 (17.86)	26 (30.95)	37 (44.05)	06 (7.14)
7.	Tourists are satisfied with the walk way	12 (14.29)	30 (35.71)	38 (45.24)	04 (7.14)
8.	The Parking area is convenient	14 (16.67)	10 (11.91)	30 (35.71)	30 (35.71)
Accommodation facility					
9.	The Hotel accommodation is sufficient during the festival	10 (11.91)	18 (21.42)	42 (50.0)	14 (16.67)
10.	The hotel provided high quality service	27 (32.14)	42 (50.0)	10 (11.91)	05 (5.95)
11.	The rooms are well furnished	30 (35.71)	45 (53.57)	09 (10.72)	0 (0.0)
12.	The hotel staff are courteous	35 (41.67)	48 (57.14)	01 (1.19)	0 (0.0)
13.	The hotel provide twenty four hours electricity	39 (46.43)	45 (53.57)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
14.	The staff are prompt in delivery of service	68 (80.95)	15 (17.86)	01 (1.19)	0 (0.0)
15.	The price of accommodation is affordable	58 (69.05)	24 (28.57)	02 (2.38)	0 (0.0)
16.	The security measures put in place in the hotel is satisfactory	59 (70.24)	25 (29.76)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
17.	Tourist enjoy good food and beverages	60 (71.43)	22 (26.19)	02 (2.38)	0 (0.0)
18.	The hotel provide good food and beverages	60 (71.43)	22 (26.19)	02 (2.38)	0 (0.0)
Attraction Essential services					
19.	The presence of security personnel makes tourists feel safe at Osun Osogbo festival	54 (64.29)	30 (35.71)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
20.	Entering the palace without your shoes on is comfortable	15 (17.86)	21 (25.0)	40 (47.62)	08 (9.52)
21.	The lighting system at the groove is satisfactory	20 (23.81)	10 (11.91)	30 (35.71)	24 (28.57)

22.	The supply of water is adequate during Osun Osogbo cultural festival	38 (45.24)	45 (53.57)	01 (1.19)	0 (0.0)
23.	The shopping mall offer quality goods at affordable price	60 (71.43)	24 (28.57)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
24.	Tourists feel comfortable using the public convenience	25 (29.76)	30 (35.71)	20 (23.81)	09 (10.72)
25.	The public internet access at the groove is satisfactory	38 (45.25)	14 (3.57)	11 (13.10)	21 (25.00)
26.	The clinic at the groove is well equipped	0 (0.0)	05 (5.95)	34 (40.48)	45 (53.57)
27.	The clinic offers quality service	0 (0.0)	03 (3.57)	31 (36.91)	50 (59.52)
28.	The firefighting equipment is obsolete	2 (2.38)	9 (10.72)	56 (66.67)	17 (20.23)
29.	Tourists enjoy cultural dance during the festival	75 (89.29)	09 (10.72)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
30.	The Close Circuit Television (CCTV) put in place is efficient	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	12 (14.29)	72 (85.71)

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023.

Result of research question one as obtained from the research instrument presented on table above. The variables tested are transportation facilities, accommodation facilities and attractions essential facilities. Researcher sought to determine the extent of agreement and disagreement of the respondents satisfaction with the available facilities with a 4 point scale Likert scale on Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1).

Concerning tourists satisfaction on transportation facility, majority or the respondents 81 (96.43%) strongly agreed, and agreed respectively to the statement that the available mini buses in Osogbo metropolis provide comfort and satisfaction to the tourists. The implication of the response is in tandem with the argument of Kuklina, *et al.*, (2021) research in Indonesia that, good and affordable transportation is an integral required facility which contribute to infrastructure development in tourism destinations. The statement whether tourists feel safe riding tri-cycle also received a positive responses as 31 (36.91%) and 44 (52.38%) of the respondents were of the opinion that they strongly agreed and agreed respectively with riding tri-cycle. It indicates that tourist were satisfied and safe with the transportation system.

Also, it was affirmed that tourists were well satisfied with the speed of mini- bus within the capital city of Osun state where the World heritage site is located. Moreover, respondents were equally satisfied with the condition and situation of the road network. This is owing to the fact that the question which says that tourists are satisfied with the road network has the positive strongly agreed response from the majority 79 (93.03%). This means they were satisfied with the road network at Osun Osogbo cultural heritage tourist destination.

In the same vein, most tourists strongly agreed with the statement that whether tourists were satisfied with tour operators or car hire service providers from different parts of the nation and especially from Lagos Airport hub. The implication is that car hire operators and travel agencies meet tourists expectation. This study establishes that tourists from outside Osogbo locality were satisfied with the transportation services to the Osun Osogbo cultural festival. Majority of the tourists confessed to the researcher that Lagos enroute Osun State road network is fair.

The researchers also found out that some of the attraction and facilities in the grove is the colonial master suspension bridge. The statement to ascertain if tourists feel safe on the suspension bridge or not were answered with different perspectives. 15 (17.86) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement whereas from anothe perspective, 26

(30.95) and 37 (44.05%) of the respondents agreed and disagreed respectively. The findings indicate that there are mixed feelings as majority 63 (84.0%) of the respondent could not make clear confirmation that they enjoy passing through the suspension bridge at Osun Osogbo World heritage destination. This is a colonial bridge built over the Osun River within the heart of the grove in 1935/36. It probably served as a bridge to link Osogbo with other southern Yoruba towns, to carry supplies and men during the World War II. It now serves as a tourist trail and infrastructure and a viewing point of the Osun River as well as the surrounding grove (NCMM, 2013). Finding corroborates with the United Nations (2016) submission on recognition of the significance of cultural and natural heritage destination protection. Meaning that there is an urgent need to protect and improve the status of the suspension bridge as one of the infrastructure at the heritage site.

The walk ways inside the sacred grove are natural. It is an eco tourism site. The walk way leads to the palace court yard called Agbala Osun. Tourists enjoyed closeness to nature, therefore, they felt so satisfied with the walk way being an ecotourism site. Although, 60 (76.41%) which represents majority of the tourists disagreed and not satisfied with the parking arena in the sacred grove. The implication is that tourists at the destination prefer that there should be a specific parking space for all vehicles with adequate security at Osun Osogbo cultural festival and the grove in particular. This finding is similar to Yoade *et al.*, (2018) study on impact of urban crime on property values in Osogbo, that crime constitute a serious impediment to tourism socio-economic development globally. Tourists feel not safe and they were of the opinion that Osun sacred grove should have parking space outside the grove rather than allow the tourists or government officials driving vehicles into the ecotourism destination.

The second variable tested with the same research instrument is accommodation facility at Osun Osogbo sacred grove and world heritage destination.

The study found that accommodation facilities are not sufficient at the study area. Hotel accommodation is available in the study area based on the responses from the respondents. 42 (50.0%) and 14 (16.67%) of the respondents respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed that there were not enough hotel accommodation at the heritage destination during the peak of the festival. Tourists responses indicates that most tourists who arrived a week before the grand finale of the cultural festival have occupied the available accommodation. This implies that the festival attracts thousands of tourists. This makes hotel accommodation becomes insufficient. Tourists professed that accommodation were sought for in the neighbouring towns such as Ile Ife, Ilesa, Ikirun, Ede, and Iwo. The implication of this current findings is that at the peak of Osun Osogbo cultural festival accommodation facilities are insufficient. This supports Olatunji *et al.*, (2021) assertion that there are needs for more accommodation infrastructural facility like hotels, resorts and super structure development at Osogbo metropolis, Osun state, Nigeria. Similarly, Yoade and Olatunji (2018) opine that quality of food enjoyed by tourist influences decision to revisit such site in future. The importance of food delicacy in accommodation facility within heritage sites can never be overstated.

It is based on the experience from all the tourists at various hotel within and outside Osogbo metropolis that the majority 69 (82.14%) of the respondents strongly confirmed that personnel in the hotels delivered quality services and tourists were satisfied.

Findings from table 4.4 reveals that majority 83 (98.81%) of the respondents confirmed that hotel personnel are courteous. The study reveals that hotel staff delivered quality services to the tourists. Tourists commend quality services deliverable of the hotels that are available at the Osun Osogbo heritage destination. The implication of the result is that professionalism played out among the staff of the hotels at the tourists destination. Therefore, based on the above data, it was revealed that the hotel rooms are well furnished, power is uninterrupted as electricity supply is constant. Accommodation price is also affordable. The data gathered from the study shows that majority 59 (70.24%) of the respondents strongly agreed that security measures put in place are very adequate at the hotels in the study area. Security is never an issue for tourists as all individuals and group were satisfied. This is in tandem with the study of Yoade and Olatunji (2018) on urban crime on property values.

On a general note, virtually all respondents were satisfied and enjoyed good food and beverages during the 2023, Osun Osogbo cultural festival.

Attraction of Essential Services is another tested variable on research question one.

Exactly, 54 (64.29%) and 30 (35.71%) respondents strongly agreed and disagreed respectively with the statement that the presence of security personnel makes tourists feel safe at the Osun Osogbo sacred grove. Security of tourists is a strong pull factor of attraction's essential services. All tourists destinations should ensure security of tourists and infrastructure because there will be no patronage without essential infrastructure at destinations. Study has established provision of security measures as an essential attraction services. The majority of the tourists adhere to the custom of the host community. the statement that entering the Osun court yard at the grove demand cultural ethic with the custom of removing one shoes with respect to the believe that the culture must be respected. data showed that the local culture were gladly respected by the tourists. 40 (47.62%) of the respondents disagreed with the condition of removing one shoes before entering the Osun court yard, not because it is not acceptable but rather for the uncontrollable crowd. It was observed that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that tourists could misplace their shoes or pick shoes that do not belong to them based on mix up . It was advised that if to observe the culture is mandatory, tourists may pick and hold their shoes while entering osun yard in their hands. In another view, it is also advisable that during the peak of the festival, tourists may have to avail themselves to get a small bag at affordable price to keep their shoes to comply with the norm. This finding implies that tourists respect the custom of the land but their opinion that the presence of mommont crowd at the peak of the festival may suggest an alternative for keeping safe tourist shoes.

It was observed that power was supplied through generating plant. the government and individuals who see the need for electricity supply at the grove make provision for power supply at the destination. The implication is that tourists were satisfied. More importantly, tourists were satisfied with the provision of drinking water at the destination. However, it is a packaged bottled water but it is available and affordable. Tourists were satisfied with the water supply at Osun Osogbo tourists destination. The majority of the respondents also showed satisfaction with the offers at the available shopping malls in Osogbo metropolis. Shopping to get sourvenir and other essential commodities is an imperative attraction essential service. Tourists affirmed that shopping mall have basic essential tourists needs and were affordable.

25 (29.74%) and 30 (35.71%) of the respondents respectively strongly agreed and agreed with the statement that tourists feel comfortable using the public convenience at the heritage destination. It was observed that at the peak of the festival, private companies are engaged to provide public convenience and these were place at some strategic points in the grove for the use of tourists. The implication is that tourists have access to toilet facilities during Osun Osogbo cultural festival in year 2023.

Research question two and three engaged narrative analyses. The data generated from the interviewees were audio-recorded and interpreted using narrative analysis. As intended, the composition was highly biased to stakeholders who had first-hand administrative knowledge and experience on Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove and could therefore speak authoritatively about the grove and the available infrastructure. This qualitative analysis method helped the researchers to have in-depth knowledge of available infrastructure for the purpose of the study. The interviews sought primarily to investigate protection and improvement of Tourism Infrastructure in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove-Nigeria. This aimed to ascertain key participants' opinions and perspectives about the available infrastructure at UNESCO World heritage site, Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove in the respondents' own words. The list of stakeholders (which represented senior staff with experience, relevant information and having worked for a number of years with the government that make provision of tourists' infrastructure) was compiled in the study area to avail strong and reliable data.

The researchers purposively selected sixteen potential interviewees, maximum of four experienced and information rich stakeholders in the study area. These stakeholders are Osun devotees and senior personnel of the government agencies, ministries and parastatals with statutory responsibilities to develop tourism, monitor infrastructure protection and work on improvement of the tourists facilities in Osun State, Nigeria. The stakeholders view will guide the researcher to come to a generalised outcome on the findings of the study.

Secondly, the researchers scheduled meetings with the respondents and conducted interviews which were guided

by schedule as described below:

Respondents have diverse knowledge and experiences, it is not impossible to have lead questions because it is an open ended questions. The interviewees have the liberty to point to various elements and features that if well managed and improved upon could promote the heritage site, more of these attractions which could be one of the factors to sustain the interest of tourists. The interviewees are mostly experience officers of government agencies that are responsible to identify, promote, develop and market tourism in the state and Osun devotees. They are aware that there are tremendous numbers of tangible and intangible heritage resources at the site.

The interviewees pointed out various elements of imperfect system that diminish heritage destination values. Some of the stakeholders considered insufficient infrastructure as the major issues affecting tourists' patronage to Osun Osogbo sacred grove, UNESCO world heritage destination. Majority of the interviewees were of the opinion that government should be responsible for construction of road and provision of infrastructure and that both public and private organization should engage competent tourism managers to handle Osun Osogbo cultural heritage destination development. Majority of the stakeholders in the Government Ministry were not certificated in the tourism discipline. Most of the interviewees agreed that fewer officers are expert in tourism and hospitality sectors. The implication is that tourism officers are not sufficient and those in the sectors with no formal training should get adequate knowledge of the discipline. This is good for heritage tourism development. The respondents opined that to make heritage tourism viable, sufficient infrastructure are required. These infrastructures should be provided by the government and private investors. This will enhance heritage tourism destination patronage in the study area.

The researchers asked further about the attitude of government to infrastructural development of the heritage site in the study area:

The interviewees articulated imperfect infrastructure to government nonchalant attitude and lack of interest in the promotion of cultural heritage associated with traditional belief. Government allocates insufficient resources to tourism sector and in some occasions they divert funds meant to provide tourism infrastructure to politics. Also, responsible are non-inclusion of the host community in heritage destination development, poor maintenance culture and lack of monitoring of developmental projects. The heritage tourism infrastructures are imperfect because majority of the government functionaries are either Christian or Muslim and they have been beclouded with religion. According to some interviewees, lack of appreciation of our culture and insufficient heritage tourism education makes the issue of lack of interest a strong factor. A respondent said; most of the government officers responsible to identify, promote, develop and market heritage tourism are religious fanatics. They were of the opinion that cultural heritage akin to traditional belief would not attract a lot of Nigerians based on religion intolerance. However, they all agreed that it is imperative to remember that the past and the unborn generation should have the feelings of our heritage. The interviewees also mentioned climate variability and ecological collapse, inadequate environmental conditions and civilization as some of the factors causing imperfect infrastructure. They also established that if adequate attention is not paid to heritage destination site the values will continue to diminish.

Interviewees reaffirmed that Osun Osogbo grove promotes cultural heritage development, generates foreign exchange and enhances better International relations between the nation and the tourists. Majority of the interviewees agreed that tourism is a money spinning venture if destinations are well developed. They mentioned that a well-developed heritage destination offers series of opportunities for emerging economies to come up in such a place like Osun State, Nigeria. Interviewees were of the opinion that improved modern transportation system could be one of the factors that will motivate tourists. Also, it was agreed that super structures are good tourists' attraction and both government and private investors can make waves in this area of infrastructural development. Furthermore, it was gathered that road network, construction of bridges and protection of suspension bridge, picnic and entertainment facilities, restaurants facilities, club house and casino require improvement. Transportation infrastructure improvement means that all high ways, roads, bike paths, sidewalks, airports, rail lines, water ways and dockings facilities need to be effective and efficient at heritage tourism destinations.

Some of the interviewees suggested new use of heritage resources and that the issues of conflicting values should be addressed. More so, to improve infrastructure for successful balancing of viable cultural and heritage tourism enterprise, transportation infrastructure, environmental infrastructure and social infrastructure are to be adequately provided in the study area. The implication is that sufficient provisions of these infrastructure and peaceful

atmosphere will help to sustain quality of life for both locals and tourists. This will also promote public safety and support flow of interstate and international commerce. The interviewees strongly held that provision of tourism infrastructure are the prerequisite for patronizing heritage destinations.

CONCLUSION

This study findings pointed out that the role of heritage tourism infrastructure as a viable and consistent developer and shaper of a community's economic and cultural diversities is indisputable.

Based on the finding, it appears that there has been no concerted effort to project Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove as heritage tourism destination with attractions to provide the tourists 2-3 night stays or beyond. There is, therefore, an urgent need to make the site a robust tourism destination, an environmental, cultural and eco-friendly destination for all categories of tourists. To achieve these goals, there is a need to develop the basic tourism infrastructure, enhance accessibility to tourist destination, provision and protection of local facilities and identification of thrust areas of tourism promotion.

For infrastructure protection, residents should be involved in tourism development process. It was pointed out that residents can be employed as tourist guide, cultural troupe member, driver and security guards. However, residents need to be sensitized about the benefits of tourism infrastructure development so that they will support the project. Locals should be given cultural tourism education and the advantages of provision and protection of heritage tourism infrastructure should be clearly spelt out to them. Residents need positive information on ways to protect heritage tourism infrastructure.

Osun Osogbo sacred grove as a historical and cultural heritage has abundance of cultural heritage and ecotourism resources that meets the highest standards in the heritage tourism industry. Based on the findings of the current study, the researcher made the following

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- i. Planning for sustainable tourism development in Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove should involve the integrated development of modern basic infrastructure and amenities along with physical elements to ensure that the destination is adequate enough to provide worthwhile experience for tourists;
- ii. More attention should be given to development of an integrated tourist complex, a centre with version of traditional part offering a delightful amalgam of arts and craft, food, cultural activities and hands-on experiences unique to the destination. This may keep tourists to stay more than 2 - 3 nights at the destination;
- iii. There is a need to establish a museum and gallery as tourists' infrastructure. The objective is to showcase the rich art, culture and heritage of Osogbo and to provide quality leisure time for the tourists along with the shopping experience; and
- iv. There is a need to shift away from static representation of heritage to more active and involving form of culture. The tourist village concept will provide an opportunity for visitors to participate in traditional pastimes. Therefore, a tourism village is needed at the site.

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STRATEGIES FOR ELDERLY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate strategies for developing tourism for the elderly in Lagos State, Nigeria, as there has been limited research in this area. Primary data collection methods were used to gather firsthand information that aligns with the objectives of the study. A non-probability sampling technique known as convenience sampling was employed, where 200 respondents were selected based on their availability to ensure practicality and convenience in data collection. The data collected was interpreted using percentage and inferential statistics. The study focused on five local government areas: Epe, Etiosa-Ibeju Lekki, Ikeja Badagry, and Lagos Island. The study revealed that 55% agreed that there are adequate tourist attractions suitable for elderly tourists, 40% agreed that participating in leisure activities is beneficial for the elderly. Furthermore, 35% strongly agreed that there are transportation options available for elderly travellers, such as air, car, boat, and bicycle. 40% agreed that international, domestic, or regional travel is preferred. When it comes to travel companions, 35% strongly agreed that elderly individuals often travel alone, while 30% agreed that they travel with their spouse or husband/wife. Lastly, 40% agreed that elderly individuals rely on their own savings, family, and children for income during travel. It thus recommend that marketing communication strategy as well as marketing promotion in order to connect with those who play a major role in making decision on tour arrangement for the elderly targets should be employed.

Key words: Elderly tourists Development, Strategies, Lagos state,

INTRODUCTION

Elderly tourism, also known as senior tourism or silver tourism, refers to travel activities specifically designed for older adults. These trips often cater to the needs and preferences of senior citizens, considering factors such as accessibility, leisurely pace, and amenities suitable for an older demographic. Elderly tourism destinations and packages may focus on cultural experiences, relaxation, or health and wellness activities tailored to the interests and capabilities of older travellers.

The development of elderly tourism has been influenced by several factors. As populations in many parts of the world age, there has been a growing recognition of the significant market potential for senior travelers. Here are key aspects of its development:

Demographic Shifts as there are aging populations in many countries that have led to an increased number of retirees with time and resources for travel, creating a substantial market for elderly tourism.

Improved Health and Longevity has led to advances in healthcare which has contributed to increased life expectancy and better health among seniors, enabling them to engage in travel activities.

Economic Power of seniors that have disposable income and financial stability, the travel industry recognises them as a lucrative market segment, leading to the development of specialized services and packages. Customised travel services with tour operators and hospitality providers now respond to offering customised services, such as accessible accommodations, health-focused travel options, and activities tailored to the preferences and comfort of older travellers.

Technological Advancements with use of technology, such as online booking platforms and travel apps, has made it easier for seniors to plan and embark on trips, contributing to the growth of elderly tourism

Awareness and Education has increased the awareness about the benefits of travel for seniors' physical and mental well-being has encouraged older individuals to explore new destinations.

Also with the community and social Considerations which influences the desire for social engagement and community experiences has led to the development of group tours and activities designed to foster connections among senior travellers.

Government Initiatives in some aspects have recognised the economic potential of elderly tourism and have supported initiatives to make tourist destinations more senior-friendly.

As the population continues to age globally, it is likely that the elderly tourism sector will continue to evolve, with further innovations and offerings tailored to the needs and desires of older travellers.

Elders are therefore new significant target tourists to be focused. Western population is getting older and older, so that the importance of these seniors is growing and is a booming market. A related study is necessary to explore tourism development for the elderly tourists. The elderly are undeniably specific clients, who possess large amounts of free time, and are thus a large potential source of economic growth.

The elder tourists are so important to the future of the tourism industry. As the number of older consumers increases, so will their spending power. Traditionally, they have looked to travel as an indulgence in their later years. And travel and leisure marketers have responded to this segment in the past. Elderly people travel because is the perfect escape for them and motivates them to maintain their health, explore new things and release stress. They will be happier for the rest of their lives with improved physical, mental, and psychological health.

Elderly tourists are elderly persons in Nigerian aged are over 60 years upwards. The population of the elderly aged 60 years is 2.79%. In this study, elderly tourists are Nigeria and international tourists from the age of 60 years and up. The attractions for elder tourists need to provide appropriate amenities for their physical conditions and travelling behaviours. The attractions for elders should consist of essential factors such as accessibilities, security, tranquility, economy (due to their decreasing income,) useful information (for them to prepare themselves properly.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate elderly tourism as a tool for enhancing tourism development strategies appropriate for elderly tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

While elderly tourism has gained attention as a growing market, there is limited specific information on studies solely dedicated to this niche. However, several research papers and reports touch upon aspects related to senior travel. Here are a few examples: Zolotovskiy, Ye. Stelnik (2019). Senior Tourism (2019). This review explores the existing literature on senior tourism, discussing factors influencing the travel behaviour of older adults and the challenges and opportunities in catering to this demographic. Kaung-Hwa Chen ,Feng-Hsiang Chang and Fang-Yu Liu (2015)Tourism Trends of Senior Citizens in Taiwan(2015) focuses on the travel preferences and behaviours of senior citizens in Taiwan, shedding light on their motivations, destinations of choice, and the impact of health-related factors on their travel decisions. Li Xie and Brent W Ritchie (2014). Examined the motivations and constraints faced by senior tourists, providing insights into factors influencing their travel choices and the challenges they might encounter. Linghan Zhang and Junyi Zhang (2018) Impacts of Leisure and Tourism on the Elderly's Quality of Life in Intimacy: A Comparative Study in Japan Senior Tourism: A Case Study of Japanese Elderly Travellers (. This study investigates the travel patterns, motivations, and preferences of elderly Japanese tourists, offering valuable insights into the senior tourism market.

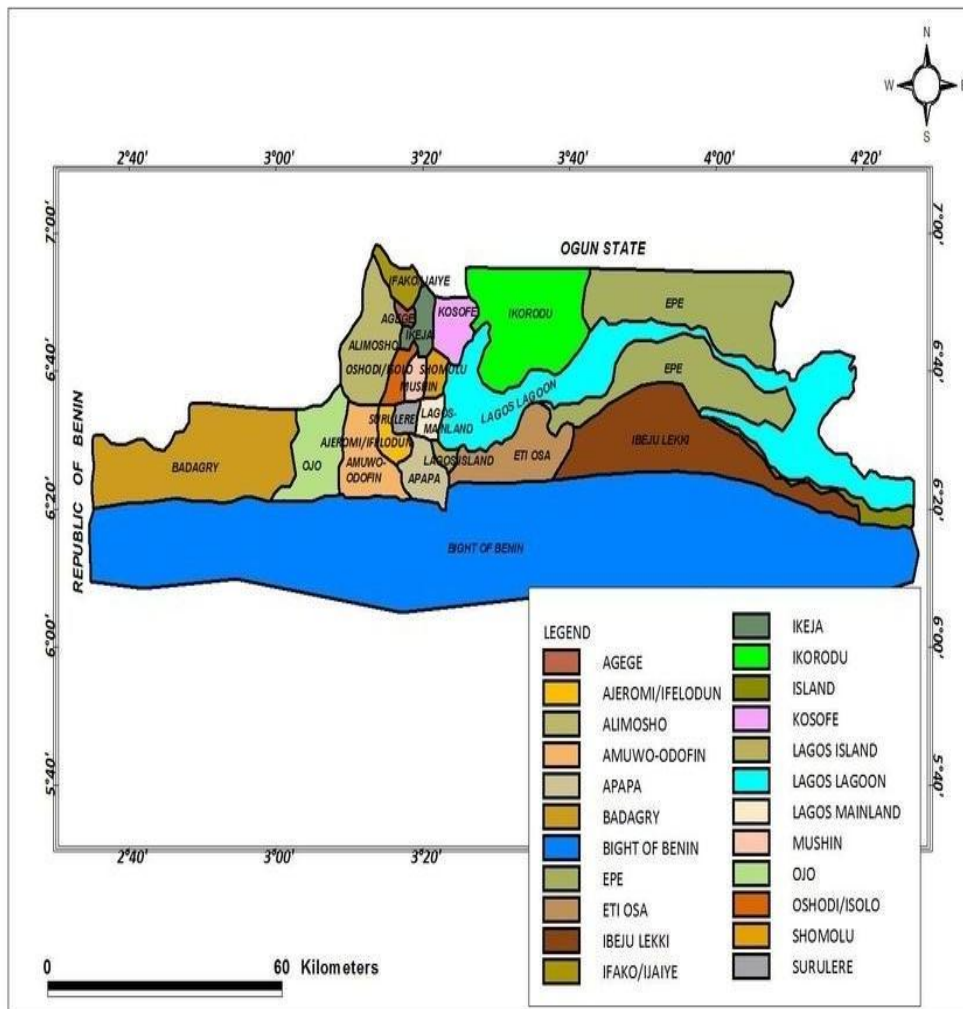
While these studies provide valuable insights, it is essential to note that research on elderly tourism is still relatively scarce compared to broader tourism studies. The field is evolving, and as the elderly tourism market continues to grow, more dedicated research is likely to emerge.

Past studies also highlighted the need for the tourism industry to carefully consider demographic changes, various tourism market analyses segmented the market based on age, income levels, education and family composition (Li, Z. et al., 2019) as there is an increasing number of senior tourist seen as an emerging market in the tourism sector.

The progressing demographic changes influence various aspects of our life, including tourism traffic. The structure of travellers undergoes changes, as well as their expectations, needs, and motivations (Kim and Kim 2020). (Tourism, Economies 2021) said that tourism being one of the most dynamically growing industries, in order to continue to expand, must account for new trends and regularities. In connection with high development potential. The elderly are undeniably specific clients, who possess large amounts of free time, and are thus a large potential source of economic growth

THE STUDY AREA

Lagos state is well endowed with abundant water bodies which include lagoons, creeks, rivers, swamps, waterways. Water bodies and wetlands cover over of the total land area of the state with lagoons and creeks consisting of its area of 3577Km).With a teeming population of 9,113 605 according to the National Population (2006) of the state provides a ready market for ecotourism.



Map of Lagos State .Fig 1

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted to investigate strategies for elderly tourism development in Lagos State Nigeria, Primary data collection source was employed to gather first-hand information that aligns with the objectives of this work. These sources entail direct interaction with the key elements relevant to the study, such as conducting surveys, observations, experiments, administering questionnaires, organizing focus groups, or conducting interviews. In this case, a questionnaire was employed as the primary research instrument to collect data pertaining to the impact of event centers on local businesses in Ilorin metropolis. The population of this study

includes five local government areas of :Epe, Etiosa-Ibeju Lekki, Ikeja Badagry and Lagos Island.The research study employed a non-probability sampling technique known as convenience sampling, wherein a sample of 200 respondents were selected based on their availability to offer practicality and convenience in data collection.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Table 1. Frequency Distribution Table for Demographic Information

<i>Demographic Information</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender		
Male	72	45%
Female	84	53%
Other	4	2%
Age		
Under 18	16	10%
18-24	48	30%
25-34	16	10%
35-44	24	15%
60 and above	56	35%
Occupation		
Retired	64	40%
Employed (Full-time)	48	30%
Employed (Part-time)	16	10%
Self-employed	12	8%
Unemployed	8	5%
Other	12	7%

80 participants, a comprehensive understanding activities of elderly tourists. The demographic breakdown indicates a relatively balanced representation of gender, with 45% identifying as male, 53% as female, and a smaller percentage of 2% identifying as other. Age distribution is diverse, with 30% falling in the 18-24 age range, 35% in the 60 and above age range, and other age groups making up the remaining percentages. In terms of occupation, 40% are retired, 30% are employed full-time, and 10% are employed part-time, showcasing a mix of participation.

Table 2 Tourist attractions and centers in the four local Areas are appropriate for elder tourist

Adequate tourist attractions available in your local government area are appropriate for elderly tourists..	SA (30) 40%	A (45) 55%	N (12) 15%	D (6) 8%	SD (2) 2%
Partaking in these leisure activities good for elderly.	SA (16) 20%	A (32) 40%	N (20) 25%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%
The provision of these attractions provides strategies for the development of tourism.	SA (28) 35%	A (24) 30%	N (16) 20%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%

**Table 3. Perception and Experiences toward tourism development
The most important information source for making decision**

Got information from : Own personal experience. Relatives, Travel agencies and social media.	SA (20) 25%	A (32) 40%	N (12) 15%	D (10) 12%	SD (6) 8%
Transportation mode, available for the trip: air, car, boat bicycle. for elderly	SA (24) 30%	A (36) 45%	N (8) 10%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%
Types of destination of travel during retirement.: International, domestic or regional	SA (22) 28%	A (32) 40%	N (12) 15%	D (8) 10%	SD (6) 7%

Table 4: Economic contribution to Community

Economic contribution to Community					
Travel mates during travel: Individual, spouse, husband /wife.	SA (28) 35%	A (24) 30%	N (8) 10%	D (12) 15%	SD (8) 10%
Available income gotten from: Own savings, family, children	SA (24) 30%	A (32) 40%	N (12) 15%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%

Table 5

Travel Mate During Retirement Pension	SA (20) 25%	A (28) 35%	N (16) 20%	D (12) 15%	SD (4) 5%
Transportation mode during retirement.	SA (22) 28%	A (24) 30%	N (20) 25%	D (12) 15%	SD (4) 5%
Organisation of holiday trip during retirement	SA (24) 30%	A (28) 35%	N (12) 15%	D (12) 15%	SD (4) 5%

Transportation pattern and organisationElderly tourist

Table 6 : Travel patterns for elderly tourists

Travel Pattern	Respondents	Percentage
<u>Length of holidays</u>		
1–3 nights	40	20
4–7 nights	60	30
8–14 nights	6s0	30

DISCUSSION:

When assessing the available tourist attractions contributions, the survey found that 40% strongly agreed and 55% agreed Adequate tourist attractions available in your local government area are appropriate for elderly tourists as 20% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that Partaking in these leisure activities good for the elderly .The provision of these attractions provides strategies for the development of tourism. With 35% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing that Transportation mode, available for the trip: air, car, boat bicycle for elderly 30% of respondents strongly agreed and 45% agreed that Types of destination of travel during retirement.: International, domestic or regional 28% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that. 35% strongly agreed that elderly travel Travel mates during travel: Individual, spouse, husband /wife, 30% agreed15% disagreed 40% agreed that Available income gotten from: Own savings, family, and children while 30% strongly agreed. Age-wise, the largest group falls within the 25-34 age range (35%), indicating that the event center attracts a diverse range of age groups. In terms of occupation, students constitute the largest portion at 40%, followed by those employed full-time (30%).

- i. It thus recommend that exploring strategies for tourism development for the elderly tourists in Lagos State should contain marketing communication strategy as well as marketing promotion in order to connect with those who play a major role in making decision on tour arrangement for the elder targets.

The survey responses indicate that leisure activities plays a significant role in taking decision on where to go and how to get there and how much they have to spent and what type of transportation is adequate for

TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS

It was important to ask specific questions of the motivating intention to embark on tourism activities in Lagos state:

- i. Especially as the reason for travel has not changed and ask what their motivation intentions were
- ii. Whether tourism travel affects their elderly age as tourists?
- iii. Whether age, gender, monthly income, qualification and travelling has anything to do with their travel intentions?

TRAVEL MOTIVATIONS

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SUMMARY

This study aim to investigate the strategies that can promote tourism development for the elderly tourists in Lagos state. Using primary and secondary data sources. The population of study consists of four selected four local government areas of Lagos state. The survey results indicating the motivating factors on how the elderly make their travel decisions, where to visit, to get money from, what type of transportation they will take and whether it will be an international, domestic or interregional trip. The country has been experiencing a shift toward shifting its marketing and advertising towards the new market for the elderly tourists which is now been packaged in advance countries.

AFTER RETIREMENT

- i. They plan and organise holiday trips individually.
- ii. And for making important decisions
- iii. Rely on their own
- iv. n personal experience for travel at 50%
- v. Decisions are made by recommendations from others at 10%
- vi. Their mode of transportation airplane 50%, cars 25%

This prove that the elderly tourist prefer and is open to travel abroad. Some prefer to stay short period of time and travel especially by their car

DISCUSSION

The market for elderly tourists has positive impact on present opportunity for tourism development in Lagos state,

CONCLUSION: elders are different from the social groups are better educated and well informed about available information

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ii. It is hoped that, through recognising and raising awareness on the need for equal travelling opportunities, elder tourists will be encouraged to undertake more tourism activities.
- iii. Tourism entrepreneurs and service providers are found not prepared for the elders. The services should therefore be exclusively different from the overall tourism services.
- iv. Exploring strategies for tourism development for the elder tourists in Lagos State should contain marketing communication strategy as well as marketing promotion in order to connect with those who play a major role in making decision on tour arrangement for the elder targets.
- v. As a reason of physical limitation, unstable income, and more free time, the exploration of strategies for tourism development for the elder tourists should be proper and consistent to the characteristic of the elder tourists.
- vi. The trip should be like slow tourism to allow the elder tourists enjoy their journey, take a rest, refresh their mind, and add values for their lives.
- vii. However, the attractions should provide necessary facilities for the elder tourists such as ramp, elevator or first aid point including food and accommodation services to fit their physical condition. These will be driven to serve the rapid growth of elder tourism.
- viii. The attractions for elders should consist of essential factors such as accessibilities, security, tranquility, economy (due to their decreasing income,) useful information (for them to prepare themselves properly

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EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON GUEST SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY UTILIZING THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN OYO STATE.

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ABSTRACT

To determine the essential THSQ dimensions that have a substantial impact on guest satisfaction and loyalty, this paper conducts a thorough examination of the consequences of THSQ on these aspects. The paper considers the respondents' national traits, as defined by Hofstede's dimensions of national cultures, and matches its findings with the changing needs of contemporary travelers.

The study, which employs empirical research methodology, comprises 175 participants who are exclusively hotel guests. The findings support the notion that THSQ has a highly favorable effect on guest satisfaction and loyalty. Assurance, tangibility, and empathy stand out as critical aspects of quality that are essential in determining consumer happiness and loyalty levels. The Dufour Monte Carlo Simulation test process was employed to verify the results and confirm the findings' robustness. The research findings provide significant understanding of the complex dynamics of hotel service quality and practical recommendations for raising guest satisfaction and cultivating guest loyalty in the modern hospitality environment.

Keywords: Dufour test process, SERVQUAL, satisfaction, loyalty, and service quality.

INTRODUCTION

In the fiercely competitive landscape of hotel management, where customer expectations are increasingly sophisticated, delivering exceptional service has become a pivotal factor for the success of hotel enterprises. The commitment to enhancing service quality is driven by the desire to offer patrons a distinctive and memorable travel experience, thereby elevating the core values of the services provided. Hotels dedicated to meeting and exceeding customer expectations in areas such as staff behaviour, responsiveness to requests, and timely resolution of guest requirements are the ones that set high standards, as highlighted by (Gelter, M, Lexhagen, M. Fuchs 2021).

Recognizing that a guest's perception of a hotel is shaped by the functional, symbolic, and sensory benefits it provides, hotels aim to excel in organizational and functional quality. This emphasis allows them to compensate for any shortcomings in the physical services offered. As a result, the continuous improvement of service quality emerges as a strategic imperative for hotels seeking to not only survive but thrive in the dynamic and competitive hotel management industry.

In the competitive landscape of the hotel industry, the intangible aspect of service, specifically interpersonal relationships, plays a pivotal role in distinguishing hotels within a crowded market. The pursuit of excellent service quality is not merely an end but rather a strategic means to secure customer loyalty and satisfaction. The level of satisfaction a customer experiences with a hotel's services significantly influences their behaviour and likelihood to return.

It is particularly noteworthy that consistent fulfilment or even surpassing of guests' expectations over multiple visits creates an environment where excellent service becomes a catalyst for fostering guest loyalty. Hotels recognize that cultivating a base of happy and devoted customers is a crucial long-term investment that yields a competitive advantage. This emphasis on customer loyalty, coupled with a commitment to service quality and satisfaction, becomes even more paramount for larger hotels operating in bustling areas with diverse service offerings. In such competitive environments, prioritizing these aspects becomes a key strategy for sustaining success and standing out in the market.

Ensuring satisfaction across all facets of service quality can pose challenges, especially for three- and four-star establishments catering to budget-conscious customers. In this context, identifying the fundamental quality parameters for this demographic becomes crucial. It is essential to discern how specific elements of a country's culture impact the expectations of visitors regarding the standard of hotel services, given that national cultures play a substantial role in shaping visitors' attitudes, values, and behaviours.

The paper unfolds in a structured manner, commencing with the introduction presented in the first section. Subsequently, the research technique is expounded upon in the second section. The third part provides a comprehensive account of the final empirical study and its findings. Following this, the results are succinctly summarized, and the paper concludes by drawing overarching conclusions in the final section. This systematic organization ensures a coherent progression through the various components of the study, offering readers a clear and logical understanding of the research process and outcomes.

OBJECTIVES of this study

Is to investigate various dimensions of hotel service quality with a specific focus on the influence of national visitor cultures.

Research Hypotheses:

The primary hypothesis (H1) posits that overall hotel service quality exerts a substantial and positive influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study endeavours to explore six interconnected research

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the Concept of Service Excellence

In recent times, there has been a growing focus on the significance of service quality, capturing the attention of scholars, managers, and practitioners alike (Zheng and Wu, 2023). The importance of service quality has become increasingly vital for success, particularly in fiercely competitive industries such as the hotel business. Within this sector, guest attitudes emerge as a pivotal factor in shaping perceptions of service quality (Soemari et al., 2020). As highlighted by (Zeithaml, L. Berry, and Parasurama 1996), perceived service quality involves evaluating the overall excellence or superiority of services from the client's perspective, emphasizing its multifaceted nature (Ladhari, 2009).

Impacts of Hotel Classification

The significance of delivering top-notch service extends beyond mere customer satisfaction, influencing customer retention, attracting new business, and elevating both revenue and reputation for hotels. Notably, a hotel's classification, as denoted by its star rating, stands out as a significant gauge of its service calibre. According to UNWTO (2015), a hotel's star rating serves as a widely accessible indicator of its commitment to service excellence, even in the absence of global standards.

Alongside the considerable expenses incurred by higher-end hotels to uphold quality standards, there is a correlation between classification and pricing. Higher-rated hotels often command premium rates, as pointed out by (Ahani, Nilashi, and Yadegaridehkordi 2019). Bihamta, Jayashree, and Rezael (2017) contribute to this understanding by asserting that service quality directly influences price elasticity, indicating that customers experiencing superior services tend to be less responsive to price increases.

Customer Expectations and Perceptions:

When evaluating service quality from the customer's perspective, considerations of expectations and perceptions come into play before, during, and after service utilization (Gallarza, and Arteaga 2019). Customer expectations, heavily influenced by prior experiences, referrals, marketing efforts, and perceptions of the service provider, hold significant importance. Conversely, perception encompasses the emotions that surface during and after the service

experience. It is only when the perceived performance of the service meets or surpasses customer expectations that it is deemed of high quality.

Challenges in Determining and Evaluating Quality:

The intricate nature of service quality and the challenges associated with it stem from its intangible, heterogeneous, and inseparable attributes. The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1993) remains widely utilized for measuring five crucial elements of service quality: tangibility, reliability, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy. Notably, Gronroos, (1984) propose additional features specific to the hotel sector, adding a layer of complexity to the assessment of service quality in this domain.

Loyalty, Satisfaction, and Service Quality:

Conventional wisdom asserts a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and service quality (Cakici, Akgunduz, and Yildirim 2019), with some theorists proposing that these attributes may foster client loyalty. In addition to direct satisfaction, service quality also exerts an indirect influence on loyalty (Perić et al., 2019). A substantial body of research supports the notion that both customer satisfaction and perceived service quality significantly contribute to fostering customer loyalty. (Bihamta et al., 2017)

Insights from Research:

Research focusing on the distinct characteristics of services, particularly within the Nigerian hotel sector, highlights the challenges in defining, measuring, and managing service quality (Lee and How, 2019) In this context, a pathway to loyalty is identified through the continuous enhancement of consumer satisfaction. Customer loyalty is intricately tied to the degree of satisfaction with the provided service (Keshavarz and Jamshidi, 2018). However, conflicting studies suggest that loyalty may not be strongly influenced by customer satisfaction alone (Han, Kiatkawsin, and Jung 2018)

Understanding Customer Satisfaction

Despite its pivotal role in a thriving business, customer happiness often takes a back seat in research evaluating the effectiveness of hotel operations. Customer satisfaction emerges from the dynamic interplay between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase performance, encapsulating the guest's impression of anticipated product or service delivery (Anderson and Fornell, 2000). Oliver (1990) introduced the concept of disconfirmation of expectations, emphasizing that guest satisfaction hinges on the alignment of their expectations with the actual service received.

Disconfirmation Stages:

Positive Disconfirmation:

Definition: Occurs when the actual performance or experience exceeds the guest's expectations.

Outcome: Results in customer satisfaction and a positive evaluation of the service or product.

Implications: Guests may feel delighted, impressed, and are likely to have a favourable perception of the business.

Neutral Disconfirmation:

Definition: Takes place when there is a match between the guest's expectations and the actual performance or experience.

Outcome: Leads to a neutral or satisfactory evaluation.

Implications: Guests may feel content or satisfied, but there may not be a particularly strong positive or negative emotional response.

Negative Disconfirmation:

Definition: Arises when the actual performance or experience falls below the guest's expectations.

Outcome: Results in customer dissatisfaction and a negative evaluation of the service or product.

Implications: Guests may feel disappointed, upset, or frustrated, potentially leading to negative word-of-mouth or a reduced likelihood of repeat business.

These stages emphasize the dynamic nature of customer satisfaction, which is influenced by the alignment or misalignment of expectations and actual experiences. Effective management of guest expectations and consistent delivery of high-quality service are essential for achieving positive disconfirmation and fostering guest satisfaction and loyalty.

Diverse Perspectives on Contentment:

According to Ros, (2006) contentment is the immediate emotion that ensues following the purchase of a good or service.

Radivojević et al., (2019) present the view that satisfaction can manifest in various forms, such as confirmation of a high-quality purchase, contentment with performance, or joy when a product meets or exceeds expectations.

Luo and Qu, (2016) define satisfaction as a measurable state that encompasses multiple facets of goods and services, representing an emotional response to the encounter in relation to expectations.

While Kim et al., (2016) underscore satisfaction as a post-consumption experience involving the comparison of quality perceptions with predicted quality, Gursoy et al., (2014) perceives satisfaction as a fusion of cognitive and emotional reactions.

Levels of Guest Satisfaction:

Satisfaction:

Routine services are delivered satisfactorily.

Enjoyment:

The guest's experience evokes happiness.

Excitement:

Positive surprise and an experience surpassing expectations.

Relief:

Service allows overcoming a delicate situation, leading to satisfaction (Torres and Kline, 2006).

Satisfaction and Loyalty:

While it is commonly believed that content customers become loyal consumers, recent research introduces skepticism into this notion (Gallarza and Arteaga 2019). Although customer satisfaction may not consistently translate into loyalty, it remains a crucial factor in retaining clients (Wszendybył-Skulska and Zawartka, 2018). The relationship between loyalty and satisfaction is intricate, influenced by factors such as evolving consumer preferences and dynamic market conditions.

Service Quality and Satisfaction:

The literature engages in a nuanced and often debated exploration of the intricate relationship between satisfaction and service quality. Some scholars argue that elevating service quality necessitates heightened levels of satisfaction, while others posit that enhancing satisfaction demands elevated levels of service quality. (Gallarza et al., 2019; Han et al., 2018; Lee and How, 2019). According to the prevailing perspective, the customer's inclination to make a purchase is predominantly influenced by service quality, which concurrently exerts a substantial impact on satisfaction. (Meesala and Paul, 2018; Z. A. Memon et al., 2015)

Consumer Enthusiasm:

In recent discussions, consumer enthusiasm has garnered increased attention, particularly focusing on how visitors react when their expectations are not only met but exceeded. Scholars draw a distinction between customer contentment and enthusiasm, with the latter representing the pinnacle of the experience that customers have during their hotel stay (Cakici et al., 2019; Lee and How, 2019). Surprise is identified as a crucial element of enthusiasm,

closely tied to customer loyalty(. Memon et al., 2021). Enthusiastic guests are those who have encountered an extraordinary experience that leaves an indelible mark on their stay.

Understanding Customer Loyalty:

Customer loyalty is defined as a commitment to a product, service, or brand rooted in a robust positive attitude, demonstrated through repeated purchases. It stands as a vital element contributing to long-term company success (Alrawadieh, Guttentag, et al., 2020). In the perspective of Adeola and Ezenwafor, (2016), loyalty is a nuanced concept hinging on two primary factors: behaviour and attitude. Loyalty evolves from a distinct mindset and responsive behaviour towards a company or product.

Dimensions of Customer Loyalty:

Attitude and Behaviour in Customer Loyalty:

Strong Loyalty:

Indicators: Clear positive attitude and responsive behaviour signify robust loyalty.

Implication: Demonstrates a solid commitment and likelihood of continued patronage.

Questionable Loyalty:

Indicators: Weak attitude or sporadic behaviour suggests uncertain loyalty.

Implication: Raises doubts about the customer's commitment and repeat engagement.

Latent Loyalty:

Indicators: Strong attitude with unresponsive behaviour implies potential or latent loyalty.

Implication: Indicates a positive predisposition, but actions do not align consistently.

Factors Influencing Customer Loyalty:

Research indicates that customer satisfaction is pivotal in nurturing loyalty, as contented guests are more likely to revisit and engage with hotel services again (Madera et al., 2020).

According to Mosimanegape et al., (2020), customer loyalty transcends individual transactions and encompasses the likelihood of a consumer returning, making additional purchases, and recommending goods or services to others.

Furthermore, Amin et al.,(2019) posit that a company's competitive standing, increased revenue, and operational stability are all significantly influenced by the strength of its loyal client base.

Marketing Strategies and Customer Loyalty:

As outlined by Ali et al., (2021), the purpose of marketing initiatives is to cultivate enduring relationships and enhance customer loyalty.

Paret's rule underscores the significance of prioritizing existing clients over acquiring new ones, underscoring that a significant portion of a business's revenue is derived from a small yet dedicated group of customers.(Alrawadieh, Cetin, et al., 2020)

The Significance of Guest Satisfaction:

Ensuring the fulfilment of customer expectations stands as a primary objective for the hotel and restaurant industries, as it significantly influences customers' decisions to engage with specific services and cultivates higher levels of loyalty (Amissah et al., 2022).

In contrast to conventional sales approaches where communication often ceases after a transaction, guest loyalty results in increased revenue through repeat business (Zygiaris et al., 2022).

Loyalty Programs in the Hospitality Industry:

Numerous hotel chains implement loyalty programs that reward customers based on the frequency of their stays. Visitors earn points for every transaction, allowing them to redeem these points for various services such as complimentary nights, upgraded room amenities, butler services, resort packages, and more. (Ojekalu et al., 2018) These loyalty programs often categorize visitors based on their frequency of use, with top-tier members receiving incentives like discounted rates and additional perks (Bello and Bello, 2021).

While these programs offer measurable benefits, there are certain drawbacks, particularly in terms of establishing personalized marketing connections with each visitor, which may potentially diminish the impact of loyalty development. (Goswami and Dsilva, 2019)

METHODOLOGY

This study concentrates on three- and four-star hotels in Oyo State, employing a survey approach to gather primary data. The empirical study took place from July to October 2023, with 184 participants engaging in the survey, of which 175 successfully completed the questionnaires.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Demographic Profile of Respondents:

Gender Distribution:

35% of respondents are female.

65% of respondents are male.

Educational Background:

30% have completed secondary school.

10% have completed high school.

60% have attended college.

Research Instrument - Questionnaire:

The questionnaire, tailored to align with the study's objectives while drawing inspiration from the SERVQUAL concept, comprises four sections.

Service Quality Evaluation:

The first two sections consist of a total of 22 statements each, assessing respondents' expectations and perceptions concerning various aspects of service quality.

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty:

The third section includes two statements gauging the level of patron happiness and loyalty.

Demographic Traits:

The fourth section delves into the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Measurement Scale:

All responses were quantified using the Likert five-point scale, ranging from 1 (I totally disagree) to 5 (I absolutely agree).

Respondents were prompted to select one of the five provided answers for each statement.

Research Hypotheses:

The primary hypothesis (H1) posits that overall hotel service quality exerts a substantial and positive influence on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study endeavours to explore six interconnected research.

Among the sub hypotheses are:

- (H1a) The Influence of Tangibility on Satisfaction and Loyalty.
 (H1b) The Effect of Reliability on Satisfaction and Loyalty.
 (H1c) The Influence of Assurance on Satisfaction and Loyalty.
 (H1d) The Impact of Empathy on Satisfaction and Loyalty.

Building upon prior research in the field, the study formulates relevant questionnaire items designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how perceptions of service quality impact customer satisfaction and loyalty within three- and four-star hotels in Oyo State.

Verification of the Reliability of Variables

Building upon prior research in the field, the study formulates relevant questionnaire items designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of how perceptions of service quality impact customer satisfaction and loyalty within three- and four-star hotels in Oyo State.

Table: 1 Cronbach's Alpha

Hotel Service Quality Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Empathy	814	5
Assurance	740	4
Responsiveness	750	4
Reliability	760	5
Tangibility	721	4
Empathy	895	5
Assurance	894	4
Responsiveness	.867	4
Reliability	902	5
Tangibility	860	4
Satisfaction	.915	2
Loyalty	.940	2

Author' Calculations

Variable Reliability Validation: PCA and Cronbach's Alpha

The study employed Principal Component Analysis (PCA) along with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to assess the reliability of the variables. Assuming interval data meeting the requirements of a normal distribution, PCA was conducted, utilizing the maximum likelihood technique for parameter evaluation.

It is noteworthy that the participants involved in the variable validation stage differed from those contributing to the data collection on how various variables influenced loyalty and satisfaction. This deliberate separation aimed to mitigate response bias. Variable validation engaged a total of 120 respondents, aligning with the general recommendation of at least 10–15 participants per item.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Okin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) was applied to assess the appropriateness of the sample size, with the determination that the sample of 120 individuals was suitable for the study. Principal factors were identified through Promax rotation with Kaiser normalization, facilitating correlations between components. The rotation revealed five key components representing various facets of service excellence.

Table 2:

The table presented discloses the percentage of variance explained by the extracted factors. Significantly, the five retained parameters collectively contribute to approximately 88.267% of the variance in the dimensions of service quality. Through a meticulous reliability verification process, the variables are ensured to be robust for subsequent analysis.

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loading			Rotation Sums of Squared Loading
	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	26.518	30.747	30.747	26.518	30.747	30.747	15,736
2	6.007	18.888	49.635	6.007	18.888	49.635	14,656
3	5.329	17.504	67.139	5.329	17.504	67.139	12,272
4	5.029	14.889	82.028	5.029	14.889	82.028	10,197
5	4.793	6.240	88.268	4.793	6.240	88.268	15,245

Author's Calculation

Nevertheless, upon scrutinizing the component 4 matrix, it becomes evident that factors 2, 4, and 5 exhibit a significant presence of blended elements. In light of this observed mixing, factor analysis was employed to generate scores for subsequent analyses, rather than relying on the original items.

Table 3

Overview of Expectations and Perceptions:

Figure 3 provides a comprehensive comparison of expectations and perceptions for each of the five service quality characteristics, as well as for the overall service quality. Notably, there is a consistent unfavorable gap between perception and expectation across all dimensions and the total service quality.

The dimensions of Assurance (M = 4.6425), Responsiveness (M = 4.4975), and Reliability (M = 4.484) exhibited the highest expectations from guests. In contrast, the dimensions of Tangibility (M = 4.2625) and Empathy (M = 4.104) demonstrated comparatively lower expectations.

Upon hotel check-in, visitors assigned the highest perceived quality ratings to the Assurance (M = 4.1825), Responsiveness (M = 4.0775), and Reliability (M = 4.054) dimensions. Conversely, the dimensions of Empathy (M = 3.912) and Tangibility (M = 3.9725) garnered lower quality perceptions.

Analysis of the gaps between expectations and perceptions revealed that Tangibility and Empathy displayed the least negative gaps, while the Security dimension exhibited the largest, followed by Responsibility and Reliability. The total service quality score stands at -0.3584, indicating a subpar rating.

Table 3 Total Service Quality Gap and Hotel Service Quality Dimension Gap

Quality of Service Dimensions	Perception (P)	Rank	Expectation (E)	Rank	Total Service Quality Gap (E-P)
Empathy	3.912	4	4104	5	-0.192
Assurance	41825	3	46255	1	-046
Responsibility	4.0775	2	44975	2	-0.42
Reliability	4.054	1	4484	3	-0.43
Tangibility	3.972	5	42625	4	-0.29
Total Service Quality	4.0397		43981		-0.3584

Source: Author's Calculation

The subsequent phase involved assessing the normal distribution using the Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests to determine whether to employ parametric or non-parametric correlation. The data demonstrated a lack of conformity to a normal distribution, evident from the obtained significance values ($\text{sig} < 0.05$) in both tests. Consequently, the non-parametric Spearman's coefficient of correlation method is deemed appropriate in this context. Conversely, if $\text{sig} > 0.05$, suggesting a normal distribution, Pearson's coefficient of correlation and the parametric correlation method would be applied.

The non-normal distribution is reaffirmed by the sig values for all variables, detailed in Table 4, each falling below 0.05. Consequently, the subsequent step involves employing Spearman's coefficient of correlation for the study.

Table 4: Tests for normalcy

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		Shapiro-wilk	
	Statistic	Sig	Statistic	Sig
Empathy	0.177	0.000	0.898	0.000
Assurance	0.165 0.195	0.000	0.872	0.000
Responsiveness	0.192	0.000	0.931	0.000
Reliability	0.195 0.165	0.000	0.888	0.000
Tangibility	0.177 0.198	0.000	0.918	0.000
Total Service Quality P-E	0.088	0.002	0.948	0.000

The Spearman's coefficient correlation study was conducted due to the non-normal distribution of the data. The results indicate that all observed independent and dependent variables exhibit statistically significant and positive associations. This is evident in the positive Spearman's coefficient values and significance levels ($\text{sig} < 0.01$) for all variables, signifying strong correlations.

Specifically, the study reveals positive correlations ($\text{sig} < 0.01$; $0.3 < \text{coef correl} < 0.5$) between all hotel service quality parameters and customer loyalty and satisfaction. This implies that as hotel service quality improves across various aspects, customer loyalty and satisfaction also increase.

Moreover, a substantial and positive correlation ($\text{sig} < 0.01$; $0.5 < \text{coef correl} < 0.9$) is identified between overall hotel service quality, contentment, and loyalty. This finding suggests that a comprehensive enhancement of hotel service quality, coupled with increased customer contentment, significantly contributes to higher levels of customer loyalty.

In summary, the Spearman's correlation coefficient study underscores strong and positive relationships between customer happiness, loyalty, and satisfaction, and the overall improvement of hotel service quality across multiple dimensions. These insights emphasize the importance of focusing on various aspects of service quality to enhance customer experiences and foster loyalty in the hotel industry.

Table 5: Spearman's coefficient of correlation

Service Quality Dimension	Satisfaction	Loyalty
Empathy	.443**	.478**
Assurance	.525**	.461**
Responsiveness	.485**	.461**
Reliability	.474**	.444**
Tangibility	.420**	.365**
Total Service Quality (PE)	.753**	.729**

***** This indicates significance on 1%, 5%, & 10%

Table 6 displays the results from a simple regression analysis examining the association between Total Hotel Service Quality and customer happiness and loyalty. The analysis reveals that customer satisfaction is significantly, positively, and strongly impacted by total hotel service quality (sig < 0.01; B = 0.767). In Model 1, the relationship is modeled, and with an R2 of 0.588, this model explains 58.8% of the variation in customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, Model 2 demonstrates that customer loyalty is significantly and positively influenced by total hotel service quality (sig < 0.01; B = 0.734). This model accounts for 53.9% of the variations in customer loyalty, as indicated by an R2 value of 0.539. It is noteworthy that neither Model 1 nor Model 2 exhibits issues related to autocorrelation (Durbin-Watson statistic between 4-du) or multicollinearity (VIF < 10).

These findings underscore the substantial impact of total hotel service quality on both customer satisfaction and loyalty. The models provide valuable insights into the factors influencing patron opinions and loyalty, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between service quality and customer perceptions.

Table 6. Simple regression analysis (dependent variables: customer satisfaction –Model 1 and loyalty – Model 2)

Variables	Model 1 (Satisfaction)				Model 2 (Loyalty)			
	Beta	R	VIF	Durbin-Watson	Beta	R	VIF	Durbin-Watson
Service Quality	.767**	.588	1.000	2.154	734***	.539	1.000	2110

*****This indicates significance on 1%, 5%, & 10%

The subsequent phase involved the application of a multiple regression analysis to comprehensively examine the combined impact of all five service quality parameters on customer loyalty and satisfaction, as illustrated in Table 7. The outcomes of this investigation reveal that, within Model 3 focusing on satisfaction, only three dimensions—assurance (B = 0.356; sig < 0.01), tangibility (B = 0.216; sig < 0.01), and empathy (B = 0.192; sig < 0.05)—demonstrate a substantial and positive influence on visitor satisfaction. In contrast, the attributes of responsiveness and reliability exhibit no statistically significant impact. The R Square value for this model is 0.492, indicating that variations in the five service quality variables can account for 49% of the variability in satisfaction.

In Model 4, where guest loyalty is the dependent variable, only assurance (B = 0.309; sig < 0.01), empathy (B = 0.283; sig < 0.01), and tangibility (B = 0.201; sig < 0.01) exhibit significant and positive implications. This model's R Square value is 0.495, signifying that changes in the five observable service quality parameters explain 49% of the variability in guest loyalty.

These findings underscore the differential impact of specific service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The models contribute to a nuanced understanding of the nuanced relationships between individual service quality parameters and the overall satisfaction and loyalty of visitors.

Crucially, both Model 3 and Model 4 exhibit no indications of autocorrelation (as evidenced by the Durbin-Watson statistic between 4-du) or multicollinearity (with all Variance Inflation Factors, VIF, below 10). These results are significant as they offer valuable insights for enhancing overall service performance. By highlighting the specific aspects of service quality that significantly impact both client happiness and loyalty without encountering issues of autocorrelation or multicollinearity, these findings provide actionable information for improving service quality in a targeted and effective manner.

Table 7: Multiple regression analysis (dependent variables: loyalty – Model 4 and customer satisfaction – Model 3).

Service Quality	Model 3 (Satisfaction)				Model 4 (Loyalty)			
	Beta	R	VIF	Durbin-Watson	Beta	R	VIF	Durbin-Watson
Empathy	.195**	.492	2.316	2.077	247**	.495	2.316	2.125
Assurance	.356		2.920		309**		2.920	
Responsibility	.040		2.804		.025		2.804	
Reliability	.022		2.400		.048		2.400	
Tangibility	.216*		1.672		.201**		1.672	

*****This indicates significance on 1%, 5%, & 10%

The study aimed to validate the estimates of model parameters 1, 2, 3, and 4, considering potential issues associated with the use of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimators in linear regression models for ordinary data, as highlighted by Radivojevic et al. (2019). To achieve this, the Dufour (2006) Monte Carlo testing method was employed. Dufour (2006) established this testing approach to assess the validity of estimates in an infinite sample environment by deriving the null distribution of test statistics. A key advantage of this method is its capability to generate reliable tests based on any statistic, particularly when the finite sample distribution is challenging to estimate but can be simulated (Malecka, 2014).

Ten thousand simulations were conducted using the Monte Carlo test technique, with the sample size set to match the actual sample size of $N = 175$. The detailed results of the Dufour Monte Carlo test technique are presented in Table 8. This method provides a comprehensive evaluation of the validity and reliability of the estimated model parameters, offering valuable insights into the statistical significance of the study's findings.

Table 8 The outcomes of the Dufour Monte Carlo simulation process

Coefficient(beta)	P-Value	P-Value	P-Value	P-Value
Service Quality	.034**	0.042**	1	1
Empathy	1		.021	.051**
Assurance	1		.009**	.002**
Responsiveness	1		.072	.106
Reliability	1		.059	.091
Tangibility	1		.013**	.018

The study's findings align with prior research, highlighting that three specific factors significantly and positively influence visitor satisfaction and loyalty. This consistency resonates with the works of Smith (2014), Heo and Hyun (2015), Tribe and Mkono (2017), Bulchand-Gidumal et al. (2013), Zaid and Law (2019), and others, underscoring the statistical relevance of these three attributes across various hotel categories. Nevertheless, the present findings diverge from studies conducted by González-Mansilla (2019), Ahani et al. (2019), An and Shin (2019), and Gallarza et al. (2019), suggesting that the importance of quality aspects may vary based on hotel categories.

Unlike research by Kang and Gong (2019) and Kim et al. (2016), which examined quality characteristics in the context of service appropriations, this study provides a novel interpretation by framing the results within the context of national cultural dimensions. Remarkably, when considering the four Hofstede aspects of national culture, the results align with the national characteristics of the respondents.

For instance, the significance of assurance can be elucidated by the respondents from post-Nigeria States exhibiting a high degree of uncertainty avoidance, high power distance, valuing femininity, and a strong sense of collectivism. According to the criteria defining Assurance, visitors from these nations highly prioritize security, open communication, and safety during their interactions with hotels.

Similarly, the strong sense of group identity, caring disposition, and respect for collective spirit in these societies elucidate the correlation between women's values, collectivism, and the Empathy dimension. Visitors from these regions highly value attentiveness, awareness of individual needs, and a willingness to assist, underscoring the identification of empathy as a crucial feature in the hotel service quality assessment.

Moreover, the acknowledgment of Tangibility as a significant component underscores the importance of aesthetic values, hygiene, tidiness, cleanliness, and a pleasant atmosphere in societies with strong female values. This parallel emphasis can be attributed to the shared tendency of travellers from both cultures to evaluate the overall level of hotel service based on observable, concrete factors.

The study's findings suggest that the importance attributed to different aspects of hotel service quality is significantly influenced by country cultural factors. To adeptly meet the expectations and preferences of guests, it becomes imperative to prioritize specific characteristics of hotel service quality based on the nuances of their country's culture. Recognizing and tailoring services to align with cultural expectations can contribute to a more satisfying experience for guests, demonstrating the intricate interplay between cultural context and the evaluation of hotel service quality.

CONCLUSION

Enhancing hotels' competitive edge and overall business performance is crucial in the evolving landscape of the modern tourism industry. In this context, the emphasis on superior goods and services becomes increasingly prominent. Among the myriad expectations of contemporary consumers, service quality emerges as a pivotal success factor in the tourism business. Managing and arranging the provision of high-quality services, contingent upon meeting the needs and expectations of guests, is imperative. Customers serve as invaluable sources of information in this regard.

The symbiotic relationship between guest satisfaction, loyalty, and improved service quality is evident. Content visitors are more likely to become repeat customers, contributing positively to a hotel's brand and financial performance. Loyal customers, in particular, play a vital role in maximizing earnings—they are willing to pay more for new offerings, recommend positive experiences to their network, and provide constructive criticism for ongoing development. Recognizing that retaining repeat customers is more cost-effective than acquiring new ones, successful hotel businesses strategically prioritize service quality, customer happiness, and loyalty in their business plans.

This paper underscores the importance of measuring customer satisfaction for hotels, emphasizing its role in monitoring operational effectiveness and guiding decisions about future directions for product and service management. The study establishes a positive association between the attributes influencing visitor loyalty and the quality of the service process. Determinants of loyalty, such as supply variety and intangible quality characteristics, are identified.

Empirical research findings highlight the positive impact of physical components—contemporary and cozy furnishings, appealing hotel exteriors and interiors, and clear, visually appealing information about hotel services—on visitor satisfaction and the inclination to return. The data supports the theory that these tangible elements significantly influence overall satisfaction and the intention to revisit.

The study further explores the impact of Total Hotel Service Quality, comprising five dimensions, on customer happiness and loyalty through simple regression analysis. Assurance, Tangibility, and Empathy dimensions emerge as particularly influential predictors of patron loyalty and satisfaction.

While tangible features like accommodation comfort and lobby appearance continue to matter, non-material aspects of service, especially assurance and empathy, are gaining prominence. The study underscores the significance of staff expertise, friendliness, and willingness in determining service quality. Continuous training and improvement initiatives are recommended to sustain excellent visitor experiences and ensure high-quality service processes.

However, the study acknowledges limitations, including a brief research period, a limited sample size, and the need for longer-term observations of guest behaviours to assess the enduring effects of hotel service quality on loyalty. To enhance the robustness and comprehensiveness of future research, the report suggests exploring other statistical analytic techniques, such as factor analysis and structural equation modelling (SEM), to further confirm and investigate correlations between variables.

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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL GREEN PRACTICES ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Consumers in developed nations are increasingly seeking environmentally friendly products and services. To meet this demand and improve their reputation, hotel management is putting in extra effort to adopt sustainable practices. However, there is a surprising lack of empirical data on the positive impact of these "environmental" practices on guest satisfaction and loyalty in Nigeria. This study aimed to investigate the effect of environmental green practices on guest satisfaction and loyalty, as well as guests' knowledge and awareness of these practices in Nigeria. The study utilized sustainability and triple-bottom-line theory and employed a descriptive research design with a structured questionnaire. A total of 354 respondents were selected through random sampling. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that environmental green practices significantly influenced guest satisfaction and loyalty ($p < 0.05$, $\beta = 17.0616$). Additionally, the study revealed that guests in Nigeria are knowledgeable and aware of environmental green practices in hotels. In conclusion, the implementation of environmentally friendly practices is crucial for the daily operations of hotels in Nigeria, as it enhances guest satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, it is recommended that hotels in Nigeria prioritize the adoption of environmental green practices to ensure customer satisfaction and loyalty, which are vital for the industry's growth.

Keywords: Environmental practices, guest loyalty, customer satisfaction, sustainable practices, hotel

INTRODUCTION

Climate change, caused by the increase in global carbon emissions, poses the greatest challenge to sustainability initiatives. Its impact extends beyond the environment, affecting economic systems and exacerbating social inequalities. In response to this pressing issue, companies, particularly those in the hotel industry, are now compelled to adopt environmentally sustainable practices (ESPs). ESPs are recognized as essential measures to help organizations achieve their environmental management objectives. According to Abdou, Shehata, Mahmoud, Albakhit and Almakhayita (2022), ESPs are strategies employed by companies to preserve the quality of natural resources utilized in economic processes. Consequently, various industries, in their pursuit of providing services to customers, clients, and guests, contribute to environmental depletion. To strike a balance between industrial activities and the environment, the implementation of ESPs is imperative. Environmental sustainability, as a concept, aims to establish and maintain conditions that allow for the coexistence of people and nature in a productive and harmonious manner, while meeting present and future social, economic, and other needs (Nwokorie and Obiora, 2018). In other words, the importance of environmental sustainability has grown significantly among consumers due to the escalating number of environmental issues, such as drought, habitat destruction, and rising sea levels. Consequently, global literature on sustainability emphasizes environmental concerns and guest satisfaction (Shedid, Hewedi, Mosaad and Ali, 2022). Environmental consciousness is particularly crucial for industries, especially those related to tourism. Tourism and the environment share a symbiotic relationship, as tourism activities heavily rely on the quality of the environment, especially in the hotel sector.

In Nigeria, the hotel sector has expanded over the past ten years to become the single largest corporate sector (Nwokorie and Obiora, 2018a). While the hotel sector supports local and national economies, it also poses a number of major environmental and socio-cultural risks. Orekoya (2018) suggested that socio-cultural and

environmental problems must be prioritized in order to promote long-term economic development in local and national areas. This is because significant amounts of energy and water are wasted in providing comfort and amenities to guests, resulting in negative consequences for the environment (Ali, Danni, Latif, Kouser and Baqader, 2021; Prakash, Sharma, Singh, Vijayvargy, and Nilaish, 2022). Surprisingly, hotel guests are becoming more conscious of environmental issues and also demanding that hotels should increase their sustainability credentials (Rubio-Mozos et al., 2020). Various research (Ahmed, Siyal, Ahmad, Khan and Xin, 2021; Prakash et al., 2022) have linked environmental green practices to customer satisfaction and loyalty, however, these studies were done in developed countries. Similarly, extant literature (Wang, Chen, Shih, Tsai... Yao 2019; Ndubuisi-Okolo et al., 2020; Abdou et al., 2020) has also proven that adopting environmentally green practices is beneficial in saving resources and also building a customer base. Consequently, several sectors of the economy, including the hotel sector, are actively pursuing environmental practices, which is a serious issue for the sector's future. Numerous scholars (Salem, Elbaz, Al-Alawi, Alkathiri, and Rashwan 2022; Kim and Hall, 2020; Fitriani and Ajayi, 2022; Boronat-Navarro and Pérez-Aranda 2020) have also shown that the hotel industry's rapid growth greatly contributes significantly to global environmental degradation. In order to promote environmental preservation and enhance the quality of life, most hotels, especially those in developed nations, have adopted sustainable policies (Abdou et al., 2020). Environmental hotel practices encompass a range of strategies aimed at mitigating any detrimental effects on the environment. Likewise, environmental hotels are characterized as eco-conscious establishments whose management actively implements initiatives to conserve water, energy, and minimize solid waste, all while maintaining profitability and safeguarding the environment (Pérez-Aranda, 2020). Although various perspectives have been explored in the examination of environmental practices within the hospitality industry and numerous studies have found that implementing environmental green practices helps to improve guest satisfaction and retention, preserve the environment, and reduce the cost of operation, there has been relatively little empirical evidence to support these claims in Nigeria. Furthermore, few studies that were carried out in Nigeria were done in other sectors of the economy other than the hospitality industry. Against this background the study examined the effect of environmental green practices on hotel guest satisfaction and loyalty, and investigated guests' knowledge and awareness of these practices in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The hotel sector, according to Nimri, Patiar and Jin, (2020) has been associated with negative effects on the environment through the consumption of natural resources, the generation of greenhouse gases, and waste production. Different studies and academics (Olya, Altinay, Farmaki, Kenebayeva and Gursoy, 2021) have suggested ways for hotels to minimize these negative environmental impacts brought about by consumption, by engaging in environmental monitoring and/or collaborative efforts including product redesign and greening of production processes. A study by Yarimoglu (2019) summarized the environmental green activities that hotels need to implement as conserving energy, limiting water waste, ditching disposables, having guest reuse linens, equipping staff with eco-friendly cleaning supplies, serving local and organic food, and considering composting, installing eco-friendly filtered water dispensers. In addition, Han et al., (2018) suggested that these practices can be achieved in three broad ways which are water conservation, energy efficiency and, waste management. The authors further suggested that business organization (hotels) need to measure the environmental sustainability success rate which is crucial to determining the parameters of energy consumption, water management and waste management in order to improve their operations.

Water conservation management has been used widely as an important green management strategy in the hotel sector based on Abdou, Hassan, and Dief, (2020) findings. They aver that hotels consume intensive amounts of water on daily operation which depends on the hotel's size and capacity, occupancy percentage, type and standard of services and facilities provided. According to Han et al., (2018), the hotel sector should implement various water conservation measures to ensure the efficient use of water resources. These measures include the installation of water-efficient devices and appliances such as low-flow toilets, showerheads, and infrared-activated faucets.

Additionally, hotels can adopt towel and bed linen reuse programs, regularly fix leaks in toilets and baths, and water grass and plants during the early morning and late at night to minimize evaporation. Another effective strategy is to recycle grey water, which is water used for washing vegetables and fruits, for irrigation purposes. It is also crucial for hotels to monitor water consumption in each department to track and manage usage effectively. By implementing these ideas, hotels can contribute to water conservation efforts and secure a sustainable future for generations to come.

These practices have been found to reduce energy consumption and improve energy efficiency in hotel businesses.

The implementation of energy-efficient light bulbs (LED) and reliance on natural daylight instead of artificial.

In the same vein, Novacka et al. (2019) proposed that energy-saving initiatives should encompass the adoption of renewable energy initiatives such as solar and wind power, the installation of energy-efficient appliances and machinery, the regulation of guestroom energy usage through digital thermostats, the utilization of energy star-certified products, the incorporation of motion sensors that automatically switch off lights in areas with low foot traffic, the implementation of reflective glass or triple-glazed windows, the utilization of energy-efficient LED light bulbs, and the reliance on natural daylight instead of artificial lighting when cleaning unoccupied rooms has been proven to effectively reduce energy consumption and enhance energy efficiency within the hotel sector. This practice contributes to the overall goal of sustainability in the industry. The hotel industry is widely recognized as a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions due to the substantial amount of both wet waste (such as garden waste, food waste, and cooking oil waste) and dry waste (including cardboard, plastics, cans/metal, linen, paper, and other forms of garbage) generated by hotels. These wastes are typically disposed of in landfills, exacerbating environmental concerns (Ibrahim, Mariapan, Lin and Bidin, 2021). To address this issue, hotel operators have started adopting various waste management practices aimed at reducing hotel waste. These practices include the segregation of waste using clearly labeled containers and colored bins for recyclables, the procurement of products with recycled content, the separate collection of organic kitchen waste for composting, bulk purchasing of food items and cleaning chemicals, the implementation of donation programs to distribute leftover food and linens to charities, and the repurposing of leftover guest soaps as laundry detergent (Han et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2014; Çavusoglu, Demirag, Jusuf, and Gunardi, 2021). However, achieving sustainability in the hospitality industry is a complex endeavor, as highlighted by Abdou, Hassan, and Dief (2020). It requires a comprehensive reassessment of every aspect of hotel operations, from amenities to distribution, while also striving to create sustainable luxuries. Additionally, the cost associated with implementing sustainable practices poses a significant challenge. Therefore, effective control measures must be in place to ensure the successful attainment of environmental sustainability in the hotel industry. Numerous scholars have engaged in debates and presented their research findings on these issues to contribute to the achievement of environmental sustainability, particularly within the hotel industry. For instance, Adegbola and Arowosafe (2022) conducted a study examining sustainable green practices in hotels, aiming to enhance the knowledge of hotel managers and tourists regarding green practices for sustainable hotel amenities and the growth of tourism. Their research provides valuable insights into sustainable practices that can be adopted by hotels to promote environmental sustainability.

However, in Lammi and Tesfaye's (2021) studies, hotels' environmental practice indicators were examined under water-saving, energy-saving, green purchase, and waste management themes. Within these themes, the installation of energy-efficient bulbs, installation of a key card for light; using energy-efficient appliances; regular maintenance of water and electric facilities; the installing of dual toilets and other Low-flow water technologies; placing of dustbins; sorting and disposing of solid wastes, and buying of local products were implemented to a certain extent. These studies implicate the requirement of intervention to make hotel operations environmentally sustainable. Contrarily, Rawashdeh and Al-Ababneh (2021) attempted to link the tourists' perceptions toward green practices in hotels and their willingness to stay in eco-label hotels in Jordan. The study relied on the quantitative approach to measure the level of those practices such as Green hotel certification, Energy, Water, Waste and Purchasing

Management, Community Support, and Customer education comprising all areas of hotel operations, and three (3) statements to measure hotel guests' willingness to stay in green hotels. The study found a positive but moderate correlation between tourists' perceptions of environmental practices and their stay in green hotels. In addition, the various dimensions of environmental practices were positively related to tourists staying in an environmentally friendly hotel. In response to guests' behavior and outcomes on environmental sustainable practices, Zengeni and Leboho (2021) The objective of the study was to assess the effects of environmental awareness campaigns on guests' involvement and engagement in environmental conservation within the Zimbabwean hotel industry. The results revealed that hotels' environmental awareness initiatives had a favorable impact on guests' environmental consciousness and active participation. The more guests were encouraged and involved in resource conservation, the greater their commitment to conserving resources. Additionally, the study highlighted that hotel guests expressed a preference for receiving rewards for their conservation efforts, such as water and energy conservation, rather than paying additional charges. Additionally, previous studies (Nwokorie and Obiora, 2018; Owusu-mintah, 2018; Samengon, 2019; Hernandez-maskivker & Llull, 2017) have indicated that there has been a positive relationship between the environmental sustainable practices of hotels and customer satisfaction and loyalty. Across these studies, there is a consistent evidence to suggest that environmental sustainable practices have a positive influence on customers' satisfaction and loyalty. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence to support such claims in Nigeria. Hence the need to conduct this study.

Theoretical Review

The study relied on the theory of ecological sustainability. The theory was first coined by Hans Carl von Carlowitz in 1713. The theory is a perspective that emphasizes the necessity of preserving the balance and integrity of natural systems like ecosystems and biodiversity for the well-being of humans and other living beings. According to this theory, sustainability requires population and consumption restrictions, as well as respect for the constraints of a finite planet. Other approaches to sustainability that are more focused on economic growth, social justice, or human development may overlook or damage the environmental part of sustainability. The ecological theory of sustainability advocates for a holistic and systemic view of human-nature interaction, as well as the importance of protecting and restoring the natural capital that supports life on Earth. This theory could potentially be implemented as a resource management paradigm for natural resources through sustainable hotel practices

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) is a business theory that emphasizes corporate social responsibility, focusing on people, the planet, and profits. Postulated by John Elkington in 1994, the theory posits that instead of one triple bottom line, there should be three: profit, planet and people. By focusing on these three elements, businesses can achieve economic benefits such as decreased energy use, lower CO₂ emissions, and improved brand perception. This holistic approach to sustainability can be applied to hotel sustainability operations, focusing on renewable energy sources, water conservation, and biodegradable materials. By implementing the TBL theory, hotels can reduce their carbon footprint, improve brand perception, and reduce waste which is in line with the COP21 target. The Paris Agreement mandates the hotel sector to reduce its carbon emission by 66% by 2030 and 90% by 2050 in order to stay within the 2°C threshold (International Tourism Partnership, 2017)

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique in choosing the sample population. This comprises three major stages. The first stage involved the selection of two states from the six states comprising Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe, in the Northeast, using simple random sampling. The second stage involved choosing ten standard hotels from Adamawa and Gombe states capitals respectively using a stratified sampling technique. The rationale behind choosing the hotels within the state capitals is due to the clustering of standard hotels in them and for security purposes while the final stage involved a cluster sampling technique to generate the respondents for the study. A descriptive survey research design through quantitative approach was employed. Data was collected from 354 hotel guests and hotel managers respectively through the instrumentality and administration of a structured questionnaire. To this end, a 10-point questionnaire was prepared with strict reference to the contents

of the environmental practices in order to address the research objectives and form the basis for testing the hypotheses formulated for the study. Data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS.

RESULT OBTAINED

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 shows that 119 (67.2%) guests are male, while 58 (32.8%) are female. This gender imbalance in the hotel industry can be attributed to factors like travel patterns and preferences, as well as differences in hotel types and accommodations. To attract more female guests, hotels can use this data to tailor marketing and promotional strategies. The age distribution of respondents indicates that the majority of guests fall within the age range of 26-45 years, accounting for 64.4% of the sample population. However, the percentage of guests aged 18-25 and 46-55 is relatively small, accounting for only 11.3% each. To attract more guests, hotels should offer promotions or events catering to these age groups. Additionally, the small percentage of guests above 56 years may indicate that the hotel is not perceived as senior-friendly, which could be an area for improvement. Overall, analyzing age distribution can provide valuable insights into a hotel's marketing and operational strategies.

The data on the marital status of the hotel guests shows 66 respondents indicating 37.3 percent were single, 101 of the respondents indicating 57.1 percent were married while 7 respondents representing 4 percent indicated that they were divorced or separated and the remaining 3 respondents which is 1.7 percent indicated that they were either widow or widower. The implications of the results are that the majority of the hotel guests are married, accounting for 57.1 percent of the sample population. This suggests that the hotel may be popular among couples or families. The hotel management may want to consider offering family-friendly packages or promotions to further attract this demographic. Additionally, the relatively high percentage of single guests (37.3 percent) may indicate that the hotel is also popular among solo travelers or young adults. The hotel management could consider offering amenities or services that cater to this demographic, such as single occupancy rooms or social events for solo travelers. The small percentage of guests who indicated that they were divorced or separated (4 percent) suggests that the hotel may not be a popular destination for individuals traveling for business or personal reasons related to divorce or separation. However, this may not be a significant issue for the hotel, depending on their target market. Overall, analyzing the marital status of the hotel guests can provide valuable insights for the hotel's marketing and operational strategies, allowing them to tailor their services to better meet the needs of their guests.

The data on hotel guests' educational qualifications shows that 6.8% have a Master's or PhD degree, while 15.3% have an HND or degree. The low percentage of guests with secondary school and primary school education suggests that the hotel may not be a popular destination for budget-conscious guests. The hotel management could consider offering more affordable packages or promotions to attract this demographic. Total nights spent by hotel guests indicate that 38.4% spend between 1-5 nights, while 28.8% spend between 6-10 nights. This suggests that the hotel caters primarily to short-stay guests, who generate higher occupancy rates and are easier to manage. The remaining 21 respondents spend above 15 nights. The hotel management could offer special rates or packages for guests staying for extended periods to attract more long-term guests. Overall, analyzing the length of stay can provide valuable insights for the hotel's marketing and operational strategies, allowing them to tailor their services to better meet the needs of their guests.

Table 1 presents the response rates and frequency for information on environmental sustainability, which were measured using a 9-item instrument and scaled on a 5-point Likert scale. The data reveals that the first question item has a mean score of 2.27, indicating a disagreement or moderate stance on the scale. Similarly, the mean scores for the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th question items are 3.06, 2.96, 2.85, 3.31, 3.22, 2.95, 3.03, and 2.75, respectively. These scores suggest that the respondents lean towards agreement on the scale used for measurement.

Furthermore, the results demonstrate that all nine indicators for information on environmental sustainability in the target hotels are affirmed, as evidenced by the low disparity in response (SD <2.00).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Information on Environmental Green Practices

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
This hotel uses renewable energy(solar)	110	1	5	2.27	1.596
This hotel uses occupancy sensors in guest rooms	110	1	5	3.06	1.198
This hotel has a towel and linen program in place	110	1	5	2.96	1.049
Stock the room with reusable coffee mugs and glasses rather than plastic ware, paper, or Styrofoam	110	1	5	2.86	1.079
This hotel has water-saving showers, faucets, and flush tanks in place	110	1	4	3.31	.687
This hotel promotes healthy organic growing kitchen operation	110	1	4	3.22	.882
This hotel has a green roof to improve air quality	110	1	5	2.95	.980
This hotel has sustainable management policies in place	110	1	4	3.03	.784
This hotel opts for biodegradable, non-toxic products in sustainable packaging	110	1	4	2.75	1.018
Valid N (listwise)	110				

Source: Field survey, 2023

The data in table 2 illustrates the response rates and frequency for the customer satisfaction with the environmental sustainability of the hotels measured on a 10-item instrument and scaled on a 5-point Likert scale. From the data, the first question item shows a mean score of 3.15 which is on the agree range of the scale. The 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th question items with 3.05, 2.72, 2.53, 2.81, 3.21, 3.15, 3.28, 3.20 and 3.21 mean scores (x) respectively also implies that the respondents are more inclined to the agree range of the scale used in measurement. The results affirm to all ten indicators for customer satisfaction with the environmental sustainability within the target hotels as also supported by the low disparity in response (SD ≤2.00).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Customer Satisfaction with Environmental Green Practices

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The hotel uses renewable energy (solar)	177	1	5	3.15	1.266
The hotel uses electricity system which shuts down after leaving the room	177	1	5	3.05	1.221
The hotel uses occupancy sensors in guest rooms	177	1	5	2.72	1.496
This hotel opts for biodegradable, non-toxic products in sustainable packaging	177	1	5	2.53	1.496
Preferring non-packaged goods	177	1	5	2.81	1.397
The hotel uses energy saving lighting facilities	177	1	5	3.21	1.092
Uses water saving showers, faucets and flush tanks	177	1	5	3.15	1.034
The hotel has towel and Linen program in place	177	1	5	3.28	.977
The hotel has an environmental recycling policy	177	1	5	3.20	1.428
Stock the room with reusable coffee mugs and glasses rather than plastic ware, paper, or Styrofoam	177	1	5	3.21	.923
Valid N (listwise)	177				

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data in table 3 illustrates the response rates and frequency for customer loyalty in the hotels which were measured on a 5-item instrument and scaled on a 5-point Likert scale. From the data, the first question item shows a mean score of 2.98 which is on the agree range of the scale. The 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th question items with 3.24, 3.48, 3.07 and 3.21 mean scores (x) respectively also imply that the respondents are more inclined to the agree range of the scale used in measurement. The results affirm to all five indicators of customer loyalty within the target organizations as also supported by the low disparity in response ($SD \leq 2.00$).

Table 3: Response Rates and Descriptive Statistics for Customer loyalty

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am committed to the products and services of this hotel	177	1	5	2.98	1.314
I will engage in repeat purchase of this hotel's products and services	177	1	5	3.24	.819
I will recommend this hotel to my friends	177	1	5	3.48	.649
I am will return to this hotel on my next visit	177	1	5	3.07	1.066
I will stick with this hotel over time	177	1	5	3.21	.825
Valid N (listwise)	177				

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The model summary in Table 4 showed the extent to which environmental sustainability practice influences customer loyalty with regression value of ($R^2=0.645$). In this instance, the correlation coefficient represents a strong positive effect of environmental sustainability practice on customer loyalty. The coefficient of determination with ($R^2=0.638$) indicates that environmental sustainability practice for (63.8%) variation on guest satisfaction/loyalty in the northeast Nigeria while the remaining (36.2%) could be due to the effect of other factors that are not included in the study.

Ho₁: Hotels' environmental sustainable practices does not have a significant effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 4: Model Summary for the effect of environmental sustainability on guest satisfaction/loyalty

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	.803 ^a	.645	.638	.62367	.645	92.776	1	51	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), environmental sustainability practice

Source: SPSS Output

Furthermore, in Table 5 the analysis of variance (Anova) showed a regression sum of square value of (36.087) which is higher than the residual sum of squares value of (19.837). This implies that the model involving environmental sustainability practice accounted for most of the variations in the guest satisfaction/loyalty. The F calculated value of (92.776) depicts the significance and reliability of the model developed through the regression analysis results. In addition, the significant P-value of (0.000) is smaller than (0.05). This implies that there is a significant evidence to extrapolate that environmental sustainability practice is related to guest satisfaction/loyalty. This proposes that the model is measured to be fit and environmental sustainability practice influences guest satisfaction/loyalty

Table 5: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	36.087	1	36.087	92.776	.000 ^a
	Residual	19.837	51	.389		
	Total	55.925	52			

a. Predictors: (Constant), environmental sustainability practice

b. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction on environmental Green practice

From Table 6, it shows that environmental sustainable practice has a calculated t-value of 7. corresponding sig. value/probability value (PV) of 0.000. From the decision rule, since t-calculated is greater than t-tabulated ($t_{(0.05, 258)} = 1.96$); then the null hypothesis is rejected; therefore, there is an effect of environmental sustainability practice on guest satisfaction/loyalty in northeast Nigeria. finding implies that an increase in ($\beta = 0.616$) of guest satisfaction/loyalty was attributed to a unit environmental sustainability practice in northeast Nigeria.

Table 6:Coefficients^afor test of hypothesis one

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	1.761	.251		7.001	.000	1.256	2.265
Environmental sustainability practice	.616	.064	.803	9.632	.000	.487	.744

a. Dependent Variable: Customer satisfaction on environmental sus practice

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study shows that the hotel industry has a gender imbalance, with 119 male guests (67.2%) and 58 females (32.8%). To attract more female guests, hotels can use demographic data to inform marketing and promotional strategies. The majority of respondents fall within the 26-45 age range, with 64.4% of the sample population being between 18-25 and 46-55. Targeting these age groups through promotions and events can help the hotel better understand its target audience? The majority of guests are married, suggesting the hotel may be popular among couples or families. Offering family-friendly packages or promotions can cater to this demographic. Additionally, the low percentage of guests with a Master's or PhD degree may not make the hotel a high-end or luxury destination. Offering affordable packages or promotions can help the hotel better meet its guests' needs?

Findings from the study also revealed that environmental sustainable practices have a significant and positive effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Findings also revealed that an increase in customers' satisfaction and loyalty was attributed to a unit increase in environmental sustainable practices. Findings also reveal that the correlation coefficient represents a strong positive effect of environmental sustainable practices on customer satisfaction and retention. This implies that environmental sustainable practices had a strong positive relationship with customer satisfaction and retention and it accounted for a large proportion of the variation in the dependent variable. The study tested the knowledge and awareness of the various sustainable practices in the hotel and found that customers had knowledge and awareness of environmental practices. They were also willing to pay a premium for sustainable products and services offered by the hotels. This was indicative by the high mean scores for the environmental indicators. The implication of this result is that environmental awareness initiatives of hotels have a positive influence on customers' consciousness and participation. The study further revealed that "towel and linen program" had the highest mean score followed by "energy saving lighting facilities" and "energy efficient bulbs".

This finding offers a meaningful insight into how normative, volitional, habitual, and cognitive processes relate to eco-friendly decisions while guests are staying at a hotel and is consistent with the theory of sustainability which postulates that the implementation of environmental sustainable practices such as reducing energy and water consumption, eliminating single-use plastics and food waste etc. has the potential to attract and retain customers. This is also true for the Triple bottom theory. However, the theory suggests that (Wan et al., 2017)businesses should focus on the three bottom lines at the same time. And that by addressing the three elements of sustainability: planet, people, and profits, hotel businesses can obtain customer satisfaction and retention, cost reduction through efficient use of resources and improved brand perception and reputation.

The ecological theory of sustainability on the other hand emphasizes the necessity of preserving the balance and integrity of natural systems like ecosystems and biodiversity for the well-being of humans and other living beings. According to this theory, sustainability requires population and consumption restrictions, as well as respect for the constraints of a finite planet. Other approaches to sustainability that are more focused on economic growth, social justice, or human development may overlook or damage the environmental part of sustainability. The ecological

theory of sustainability advocates for a holistic and systemic view of human-nature interaction, as well as the importance of protecting and restoring the natural capital that supports life on Earth.

For the test of hypothesis, the study also revealed the extent to which environmentally sustainable practices affect customer satisfaction/loyalty with a regression value of ($R^2=0.645$). This implies that the correlation coefficient represents a strong positive effect of environmentally sustainable practices on customer satisfaction /loyalty. In addition, the P-value was significant at 0.05 levels. This implies that there is significant evidence to extrapolate that environmental sustainability is related to customer satisfaction and loyalty. Based on the decision rule when the $P>0.05$ the null hypothesis is rejected. It can therefore be deduced that customers are satisfied with the environmentally sustainable practices provided in the sampled hotels. The findings of Adegbola and Arowosafe (2022) agree with the findings of this study in which environmentally sustainable practices such as energy-saving bulbs, saving, low-flow water in the bathroom and toilet, reusable plastics, towels, cutlery, and bedding, and purchase of local or indigenous food in the hotel kitchen had a significant and positive effect on guests' satisfaction and retention. Similarly, the current study finding corroborates with Lammi and Tesfaye (2021) who found that there is a significant impact of hotels' environmental practice indicators which were examined under water-saving, energy-saving, green purchase, and waste management themes on guest satisfaction and retention.

In Rawashdeh and Al-Ababneh (2021) 'Hotel guests' perceptions of environmentally friendly practices found a positive but moderate correlation between tourists' perceptions of environmental practices and their stay in green hotels. In addition, the various dimensions of environmental practices were positively related to tourists staying in an environmentally friendly hotel. Also, the finding corroborates with the finding of Zengeni and Leboho (2021) Suchánek and Králová (2019) discovered that hotels' environmental awareness initiatives have a beneficial impact on guests' environmental consciousness and engagement. The study revealed that as guests became more involved and motivated to conserve resources, their actual resource conservation increased. Nevertheless, the findings indicated that hotel guests expressed a preference for receiving rewards, rather than paying extra, as an incentive for conserving resources like water and energy.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that environmentally sustainable practices have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction and loyalty in Northeast, Nigeria. This study highlights the importance of sustainable practices in the hotel industry and its impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. The findings suggest that hotels that implement environmental green practices are more likely to attract and retain customers compared to those that do not.

The findings underpin the theoretical considerations that hotel managers and owners should consider adopting environmental practices in their operations as a strategy to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. Investing in environmental practices is not only beneficial for the environment, but it also helps hotels attract and retain customers who value sustainability. Specifically, the study concludes that there is a significant positive effect of environmental hotel practices on customer satisfaction and loyalty in Nigeria. The findings suggest that hotels that adopt sustainable practices such as water and energy conservation, waste management, and eco-friendly initiatives are more likely to attract and retain customers who value sustainability.

Hotels in Nigeria can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty through environmentally sustainable hotel practices by adopting and implementing practices such as water-efficient fixtures, low-flow showerheads, and LED lighting can help reduce water and energy consumption, leading to cost savings for the hotel and improved satisfaction for guests who value sustainability. Also, they can develop and implement a comprehensive waste management program that includes recycling, composting, and reducing single-use plastics in guest rooms and public spaces. They can also promote eco-friendly initiatives: Offer eco-friendly amenities such as refillable water bottles, toiletries, and towels, as well as educate guests about environmental sustainable practices.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF GREEN ECONOMIC PRACTISES IN THE BRAND-NEW HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to promote the implementation of green economy practices in the emerging hospitality sector, specifically focusing on some hotels in the city of Osogbo. The project recognises the need for sustainable practices in the hospitality industry to mitigate the negative environmental impact caused by tourism activities. By incorporating sustainable practices, hotels and other hospitality enterprises can contribute to the promotion of a greener economy, attract more customers, improve their image and prestige, reduce costs, and increase customer satisfaction and occupancy rates thereby increasing their competitiveness and enhancing their guests' experience. The study explored various avenues through which sustainable practices can be implemented, considering factors such as energy efficiency, waste management and water conservation.

Keywords: Green economic practises, Hospitality industry, Marketing and branding, Osun State

INTRODUCTION

The global hospitality industry has grown dramatically in recent years, owing to rising travel trends, globalisation, and the rise of tourism. As the industry grows, there is a growing awareness of the environmental impact of hospitality operations. The growing trend towards environmentally friendly and sustainable practises has given rise to the concept of a green economy in the hospitality industry. Toke and Kalpande (2022) define a green economy in the hospitality industry as a business model that prioritises environmental responsibility and sustainability. Adopting environmentally friendly strategies and long-term initiatives is part of implementing green economic practises in the brand-new hospitality industry.

This includes a variety of factors such as energy efficiency, waste reduction, water conservation, and the use of environmentally friendly materials. Promoting green economy practises in the hospitality sector is a strategic move to meet the changing preferences of environmentally conscious consumers, as well as a response to environmental concerns. Adeleke (2019) reports that the hospitality industry in Osogbo town, Osun state, is rapidly expanding, with an increasing number of hotels and other accommodation facilities being established.

However, this expansion is accompanied by environmental challenges such as increased energy consumption, waste generation, and water consumption. To ensure long-term development, it is critical to promote green economy practises in Osogbo's emerging hospitality industry. Green economy practises are important in the hospitality industry because they have the potential to reduce environmental impact, improve operational efficiency, and attract environmentally conscious customers. These practises include waste reduction, energy and water efficiency, the use of eco-friendly materials, and the promotion of local and organic products Aleshinloye, (2017).

Implementing such practises can result in cost savings, an improved reputation, regulatory compliance, and a positive contribution to the global effort to combat climate change. As travellers become more conscious of their environmental impact, implementing green initiatives can provide hotels and other lodging facilities with a competitive advantage in the market. The goal of this study is to outline strategies and initiatives to promote sustainability and environmental responsibility in the sector, Montiel (2021).

Consumer Awareness and Demand are the primary factors driving green economy practises in the hospitality industry. Modern consumers are increasingly conscious of their environmental impact and seek sustainable options

in their purchasing decisions, which include travel and hospitality services. The increased demand for environmentally friendly accommodations and experiences has prompted hospitality businesses to adopt green practises in order to attract and retain environmentally conscious customers. Because of the environmental impact of hotels, the hospitality industry is increasingly focusing on sustainability. With rising guest demand for environmentally responsible lodging, minimising environmental harm through greening is critical for staying competitive and gaining a competitive advantage in the global lodging market. In the global lodging industry, sustainability is a critical issue, Han and Yoon (2015).

Butt and colleagues (2021) Regulatory Pressures and Compliance, Governments around the world are enforcing stricter environmental regulations and standards, requiring large corporations to adopt environmentally friendly practises. Concerns about the environment have prompted a global shift in consumer behaviour and decision-making towards eco-friendly lifestyles. Consumers are more loyal to companies that practise sustainable practises, which leads to increased green packaging adoption. The green marketing market in the United States is rapidly expanding, with global ecolabeled product purchases expected to increase by \$845 billion by 2015. Compliance with environmental regulations not only ensures legal standing but also contributes to positive brand image and estimation, according to Wang et al. (2017).

Green economy practises that result in cost savings and efficiency typically result in cost savings through energy efficiency, waste reduction, and resource optimisation Kshitij *et al* (2022). Adopting green economy practises can result in cost savings due to increased energy efficiency, waste reduction, resource improvement, renewable energy adoption, regulatory compliance, and improved brand reputation. These measures not only save money but also promote long-term environmental sustainability. Adopting sustainable technologies and practises can result in long-term financial benefits, making it a viable option for hospitality businesses.

Camilleri *et al.*, (2020). CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Many hospitality companies understand the value of CSR and are incorporating sustainable practises into their CSR initiatives. Green economy practises help to foster a positive public image, which in turn fosters goodwill among customers and communities. Indeed, many hospitality companies are recognising the value of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and incorporating sustainable practises into their initiatives. By incorporating sustainable practises such as energy efficiency, waste management, water conservation, community engagement, and sustainable sourcing into their CSR initiatives, hospitality companies

not only contribute to environmental and social well-being but also position themselves as responsible and forward-thinking businesses. This can improve their brand image, attract environmentally conscious customers, and contribute to the long-term viability of their business.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The promotion of green economy practices in the emerging hospitality industry in Osogbo, Nigeria, has its roots in both global and local efforts to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable development. At a global level, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, emphasized the need for sustainable development across all sectors, including tourism. This conference led to the creation of

Agenda 21, a comprehensive plan for sustainable development, which highlighted the role of the tourism industry in protecting the environment and supporting local communities. In Nigeria, the federal government has recognised the importance of sustainable tourism and the potential economic benefits it can bring. In 2001, Nigeria adopted the National Tourism Policy, which aimed to develop and promote sustainable tourism practices in the country. The policy emphasised the need for environmental protection, cultural preservation, community involvement, and the creation of green jobs in the tourism sector. In Osogbo specifically, the promotion of green economy practices in the hospitality industry has been influenced by factors such as environmental degradation, climate change concerns, global sustainability trends, government initiatives, and cultural heritage preservation.

Toke and Kalpande (2022) highlight the significance of environmental auditing and accounting in assessing environmental deterioration and economic development. They provide guidelines for green accounting in the Indian automobile industry, focusing on key performance indicators and addressing barriers.

Mahmood and Nasir's (2023) research on Pakistan's hospitality sector reveals that green HRM practices, including green intellectual capital and behavior, significantly mediate sustainability, with a 99% response rate, highlighting the need for employee performance improvement.

Taneja et al (2022) examine green finance progress in India, highlighting improved public awareness and financing options. They suggest reducing asymmetric information and increasing stakeholder collaboration for sustainable economic growth.

Al Rawashdeh et al's 2021 study found no significant difference in green HR practices between Movenpick and Intercontinental hotels in Jordan, highlighting the integration of environmental management and green activities.

Ulya et al (2023) examine Indonesia's coffee agroforestry systems (CAS) for sustainable development and green economy promotion, highlighting challenges like product certification, collaboration with NGOs, and policy coordination.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

The study explores green economic practices in the hospitality industry in Osogbo-Osun State, Nigeria. Osogbo, a city with a rich history and cultural heritage, is known for its annual Osun-Osogbo Festival and Osogbo Art School, which combines traditional Yoruba art with modern influences. Despite urbanization, Osogbo remains a vital cultural and religious center. The study was conducted in Osogbo, Osun State, and the ten local districts that surround it, which are located in Osun State, in the south-western region of Nigeria, located within latitudes 7° 46"N and 7° 48"N and between longitudes 4°31"E and 4°35"E. The area of study includes Osogbo, Ede North, Olorunda, Obokun, Egbedore, Ede South, Orolu, Ifelodun, Boripe, Atakumosa West, and Ilesa West. The study focused on Osogbo and its surrounding districts in Osun State, Nigeria. Since 1991, Osogbo has experienced rapid urbanisation, with neighbouring towns experiencing increased administrative and economic activities. Modern technology and administration in Osogbo have led to rapid population growth, causing rural-urban migration and increased construction of commercial and residential buildings.

MATERIAL OBTAINED

The data was collected from primary sources through questionnaire and uses a qualitative analysis approach with a survey distributed to key stakeholders to understand factors influencing green economy promotion in Osogbo's emerging hospitality industry. The study will focus on four selected hotels in Osogbo, including Ideal Nest Hotel, LAIM Hotel, Adolak International Hotel, and Aenon Suites Hotel, with specific research questions. This research study involved hotel owners, managers, and employees from Ideal Nest Hotel, LAIM Hotel, Adolak International Hotel, and Aenon Suites Hotel in Osogbo town, using random sampling and 40 questionnaires. This research uses questionnaires to collect quantitative and qualitative data from hotel owners and employees at Ideal Nest Hotel,

LAIM Hotel, Adolak International Hotel, and Aenon Suites Hotel in Osogbo. The researcher created a questionnaire after a thorough literature survey, which was thoroughly scrutinized by a supervisor for validity and reliability before being sent to the field for respondents. Data analysis, Excel is a powerful tool for statistical analysis of data collected through questionnaires, aiding in identifying patterns and trends in the research topic on green economy practices in Osogbo's emerging hospitality industry.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Table 1: Socio- DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION of the respondents

		Frequency N=40	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	14	35.0%
	Female	26	65.0%
Age	Below 30	21	52.5%
	Above 30	19	47.5%
Marital Status	Single	14	35.0%
	Married	26	65.0%
Occupation	Chief Executive Officer	4	10.0%
	General Manager	2	5.0%
	Director	1	2.5%
	Waiter	9	22.5%
	Hotelier	12	30.0%
	Account Analyst	3	7.5%
	Chef	1	2.5%
	Technician	2	5.0%
	Marketer	2	5.0%
	Front desk officer	2	5.0%
	Purchase manager	1	2.5%
	Hospitality	1	2.5%
Educational Qualification	Primary	0	0
	Secondary	11	27.5%

	Tertiary	29	72.5%
How long have hospitality business been established	1-5 years	12	30.0%
	5-10 years	9	22.5%
	10-15 years	16	40.0%
	15 years and above	3	7.5%
Types of employment	Professional	17	42.5%
	non-professional	23	57.5%
Is this your first hospitality business	Yes	11	27.5%
	No	29	72.5%

Source: field survey, 2023

The table above shows the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The majority of the respondent are female which imply that female gender is the one that use green economic practises services most however; the sample of the respondents represent both genders very well. Also the respondent are above 30 years and 65.0% female. Furthermore, the respondents are 65.0% married and 72.5 % of Tertiary education, 57.5% are non- professional.

Table 2: FOR EMPLOYER

Variables	Very Aware	Somehow Aware	Not Aware At all
What is your current level of awareness about sustainable development practices in the hospitality industry	55.0%	25.0%	20.0%
	Yes	No	
Have you ever implemented any sustainable development practices in your hospitality business?	27.5%	72.5%	
Do you think implementing green economy is a short-term goal	57.5%	42.5%	
Do you think that implementing a green economy is very expensive?	77.5%	22.5%	

	Extremely important	Somehow important	Not Important At all
How important do you think implementing sustainable development practice will be to the growth of your hostel business?	35.0%	47.5%	17.5%

	Energy-effective lighting	Water conservation measures	Waste reduction and recycling	Use of Renewable energy sources
If you have ever implemented any sustainable development which sustainable development practices have you implemented	65.0%	5.0%	27.5%	2.5%

Statement	Lack of awareness	Lack of Resources	Lack of Government support
If you have never implemented any sustainable development practices before, what are the reasons for not implementing sustainable development practices in your hospitality business	35.0%	47.5%	17.5%

	Strongly agree	Somehow agree	Neither agree or disagree	Strongly disagree
Do you think implementing sustainable development practices in your hospitality business would have a positive impact on your business?	57.5%	17.5%	10.0%	15.0%

	Financial incentives	Tax breaks	Education and training programs	Regulatory support
Which kind of support do you think is necessary to promote sustainable development practices in the hospitality industry in Osogbo?	35.0%	10.0%	40.0%	15.0%

Source field work, 2023

The table above presents employer on the current level of understanding about sustainable development practices in the hospitality industry. It was revealed that 55% of the respondents are very aware of understanding about sustainable development practices in the hospitality industry. While 72.5 % have not implemented any sustainable development practices in your hospitality business. Also findings reveal that 57.5% think implementing green economy is a short-term goal. While 77.5% agreed that implementing a green economy is very expensive. 47.5% somehow importance that implementing sustainable development practice will be to the growth of your hostel business, and 65.0% revealed that energy-effective lighting, 47.5% revealed that lack of resources have not made them to implement sustainable development practices in your hospitality business.

Table 3: For Staff

Statement	Less than 1 year	1-3years	3-4years	More than 5 years
How long have you been working in the hospitality business in Osogbo town?	17.5%	10.0%	25.0%	47.5%

Statement	Front desk staff	Housekeeping staff	Food and beverages staff	Management staff
What is your current role in the hospitality business in Osogbo town?	7.5%	32.5%	22.5%	37.5%

Statement	Yes	No
Have you heard about the concept of a green economy before?	57.5%	42.5%

Statement	Very important	Some important	Not important
How important do you think it is for the hospitality business in Osogbo town to adopt sustainable practices?	50.0%	42.5%	7.5%

Statement	Energy-efficient lighting and appliances	Water reduction and recycling programs	Water conservation measures	Locally sourced food and products	Renewable energy sources
What sustainable practices do you think the hospitality business in Osogbo town can adopt to promote a green economy?	5.0%	22.5%	17.5%	37.5%	17.5%

	Lack of awareness or understanding	High initial costs	Resistance to change from staff or management	Limited availability of sustainable products or services	Lack of government support or incentives
What challenges do you think the hospitality business in Osogbo town may face in adopting sustainable practices?	17.5%	5.0%	12.5%	35.0%	30.0%

	Providing financial incentives or grants	Offering training and education programs	Implementing regulations or standards for sustainability	Promoting awareness campaigns	Collaborating with industry stakeholders
What steps do you think the government can take to encourage the adoption of sustainable practices in the hospitality business in Osogbo town?	7.5%	22.5%	17.5%	42.5%	10.0%

Statement	Attracting environment conscious customers	Reducing operational costs	Enhancing the reputation of the business	Meeting regulatory requirements	Contributing to the local community and environment
How do you think the promotion of a green economy can benefit the hospitality business in Osogbo town?	10.0%	2.5%	42.5%	17.5%	27.5%

CONCLUSION

Promoting green economy practices in the emerging hospitality industry is not just a responsibility but an opportunity for growth and sustainability. This proposal outlines a comprehensive plan to integrate eco-friendly practices into our operations, aligning with consumer expectations and contributing to a more environmentally conscious future. By embracing green practices, we position ourselves as industry leaders committed to both business success and environmental stewardship.

Promoting green economy practices in the emerging hospitality industry is a critical step towards a sustainable and environmentally responsible future. By addressing the challenges and capitalizing on the driving factors, businesses can not only contribute to global environmental conservation but also enhance their competitiveness in a market increasingly shaped by eco-conscious consumers. Embracing a green economy mind set is not just a responsibility but an opportunity for the hospitality industry to thrive in a changing and environmentally aware landscape.

RECOMMENDATION

The hospitality industry is experiencing rapid growth globally, driven by increasing travel trends and tourism. However, this expansion has come with environmental consequences. To address these concerns and align with the growing demand for sustainable practices, we propose the implementation of green economy practices within our hospitality operations. This proposal outlines the key strategies, benefits, and a roadmap for integrating environmentally responsible practices into our business model.

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UNLOCKING THE CULINARY POTENTIAL: PAWPAW SEED OIL EXTRACTION FOR DELICIOUS SNACKS AND MAIN DISHES

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ABSTRACT

This study examined extraction of oil from pawpaw seed in the production of snacks and main dishes. The objectives of this study was to identify the methods that can be used to extract oil from pawpaw seed, to find out the health benefits associated with pawpaw seed oil and to find out the level of acceptability of pawpaw seed oil in the production of main dishes and snacks. The study adopted questionnaire and sensory evaluation, 40 copies of sensory evaluation/questionnaire were distributed and 30 copies of the questionnaire were duly filled and returned by the respondents. The 10 other copies were incorrectly filled. 30 respondents agreed that oil can be derived from pawpaw seed. The study concluded that *Carica papaya* seed is a rich source of nutrients. Palmitic and oleic acids were the principal fatty acids and the proportion of unsaturated fatty acids was greater than the saturated fatty acids. The study therefore recommended that the government should provide more accessibility to the farmers in the local area so that there will be more production of Pawpaw, so that people will be able to have the local products, the government should also provide funds to all farmers lacking capital in order to execute the proper planning.

Key Words: Extraction oil, Paw paw seed, Acceptability, Senory evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Papaya (*Carica papaya* L.), a plant abundant in many tropical regions, often sees its seeds discarded despite holding untapped potential. To maximize the utility of papaya, exploring the extraction of oil from its seeds becomes a worthwhile pursuit. Notably, crushed papaya seeds contain benzyl is thiocyanate, believed to combat helminthic intestinal parasites, and studies show its impact on vascular contraction in a canine carotid artery in vitro model (Wilson and Kwan, 2020). Although papaya seed oil, when used in abundance, may pose a risk of coronary heart disease, its high oleic content provides stability suitable for demanding applications like frying. Areas such as snack production, cracker manufacturing, cereal and dried fruit processing, and bakery goods benefit from papaya seed oil, enhancing product quality and palatability (Corbett et al., 2021).

The historical significance of vegetable oil extraction in both industrial and culinary realms is undeniable. Currently, two principal extraction processes stand out: the hydraulic method followed by further purification, and the chemical process involving organic solvents (McGlone et al., 2016). While the latter yields high oil extraction, its drawbacks include significant capital and operational costs and quality issues due to elevated process temperatures (Christensen et al., 2018). An alternative, aqueous extraction, boasts advantages such as safety, non-toxicity, and mild processing. However, it suffers from lower efficiency, leading to reduced oil content of not more than 35% (Tano-Debrah and Ohta, 2019).

These extraction processes contribute substantially to global losses in fats and oils within the food production system, a concern magnified by the increasing global demand for fats and oils (Tano-Debrah and Ohta, 2019). Amid growing value for oils and a push for higher quality, enzyme-assisted extraction has gained attention, showing promise in improving oil yield, minimizing acid development, and reducing oxidation during further processing and storage. Enzymes have been employed in diverse seeds, including sunflower, shea tree, canola, cocoa beans, and coconut (Dominguez et al., 2017; Tano-Debrah and Ohta, 2019; McGlone et al., 2016). Despite the wealth of research on enzyme-assisted extraction, scant literature exists on using this process for extracting oil from papaya seeds, which are acknowledged for their valuable oil content (Harvey et al., 2018).

Statement of Problem

Pawpaw seeds, often dismissed as waste, contain oil with reported applications in the hospitality industry, consumer soaps, textiles, and detergent manufacturing. This recognition of diverse uses prompts the undertaking of this research to extract oil from pawpaw seeds, specifically focusing on its potential utilization in the hospitality industry.

Objectives of the study

Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to evaluate and compare the physicochemical properties and oil quality extracted from papaya seeds using different enzymes, juxtaposed against traditional solvent extraction methods.

The objectives of this study are to:

- i. Identify the methods that can be used to extract oil from pawpaw seed
- ii. Find out the health benefits associated with pawpaw seed oil
- iii. Find out the level of acceptability of pawpaw seed oil in the production of main dishes and snacks

Research Questions

- i. Are there methods that can be used to extract oil from pawpaw seed?
- ii. What are the health benefits associated with pawpaw seed oil?
- iii. What is the level of acceptability of pawpaw seed oil in the production of main dishes and snacks?

Pawpaw, also known as papaya, is a tropical fruit celebrated for its sweet and succulent flavor. While the fruit itself is widely consumed, not many are aware of the hidden treasure within its seeds – the rich and nutritious

pawpaw seed oil. This article explores the fascinating process of extracting oil from pawpaw seeds and how it can be utilized to enhance the flavors of snacks and main dishes.

The Journey Begins: Seed Collection and Preparation

The first step in this culinary adventure is the careful collection of mature pawpaw fruits. Once gathered, the seeds are extracted, and a thorough washing process ensures they are free from any remaining pulp or debris. This meticulous preparation lays the foundation for the quality of the extracted oil.

From Wet to Dry: Drying the Seeds

To extract a pristine oil, the pawpaw seeds must be completely dry. After a few days of air-drying, the seeds are ready for the next phase. This crucial step prevents moisture-related issues and guarantees a longer shelf life for the extracted oil.

Roasting for Richness: Seed Roasting

The dried pawpaw seeds are then roasted to perfection. This process not only enhances the nutty flavor of the seeds but also contributes to the golden hue of the oil. Careful attention is paid to avoid over-roasting, ensuring that the seeds achieve an appetizing golden brown color without bitterness.

Turning Solid to Liquid: Grinding the Seeds

Once roasted, the seeds are allowed to cool before being ground into a coarse powder. Grinding is a pivotal step, as it prepares the seeds for the subsequent oil extraction process. Consistency in texture is paramount to achieve a high-quality pawpaw seed oil.

Pressing for Liquid Gold: Oil Extraction

Pawpaw seed oil extraction involves two primary methods: cold pressing and hot pressing. Cold pressing retains the oil's nutritional value by operating at lower temperatures, while hot pressing expedites the process through the application of heat. Whichever method is chosen, a hydraulic or mechanical press is used to extract the liquid gold – pawpaw seed oil.

Filtering for Purity: Refining the Oil

The extracted oil undergoes a meticulous filtering process to eliminate any remaining seed particles. Using fine mesh or cheesecloth ensures a crystal-clear, pure oil, ready to grace the kitchens of culinary enthusiasts.

Preservation and Quality Assurance: Storage and Testing

The final product, now in its purest form, is carefully stored in airtight containers away from sunlight and heat. Before making its way to the consumer, the oil undergoes rigorous quality testing to guarantee its safety and flavor profile, ensuring only the best reaches the kitchen.

From Kitchen to Table: Snack and Dish Production

Armed with this exquisite pawpaw seed oil, culinary enthusiasts can embark on a journey of flavor exploration. The oil proves versatile in the kitchen, suitable for frying, sautéing, or as an exciting addition to various recipes, both sweet and savory.

Recipe Innovation: Unleashing Culinary Creativity

The culinary journey doesn't stop at extraction – it extends to recipe development. Innovative chefs experiment with pawpaw seed oil to create delectable snacks and main dishes, each dish a testament to the unique flavor and nutritional benefits of this hidden gem.

Packaging and Promotion: Sharing the Culinary Secret

Finally, the pawpaw seed oil is carefully packaged in attractive containers, ready to grace the shelves. Marketing strategies focus on promoting the oil as a healthy and flavorful addition to any kitchen, unlocking the full culinary potential of this often-overlooked tropical ingredient.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design of survey type to gather the perspectives of respondents regarding the production of oil from pawpaw seeds. The use of an experimental research design facilitated the organization, implementation, and interpretation of experimental outcomes in a resource-efficient manner, ensuring the acquisition of valuable information through a limited number of trials.

Population of the study

The population consisted of undergraduate students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. Therefore, the target population for this study were 120 students drawn from Hospitality Management, Marketing and Accounting Department in Kwara State Polytechnics, Ilorin.

Table 1: Distribution of the product to the undergraduate students according to their class

Class	Number of students
Hospitality Department	40
Marketing Department	40
Accountancy Department	40
Total	120

Sampling Techniques

Simple random sampling technique was used to 40 students from each department, totaling 120 respondents.

Research Instruments

In this research study, the tools employed include a questionnaire and a sensory evaluation form. The researcher crafted questions for the respondents, administered through the questionnaire for Part A, which pertains to the respondents' bio data. Meanwhile, Sensory evaluation forms were utilized for Part B. A total of 120 copies of sensory evaluation forms and questionnaires were distributed for the study, and 30 copies were satisfactorily completed and returned by the respondents.

Data Collection Method

The researcher designed sensory evaluation by taste, appearance, aroma, colour were used to collect necessary information from the respondents.

This is the process of collecting, modeling and analyzing data to extract insight that support decision making. There are several methods and techniques to perform analysis depending on the industry and the aim of the investigation.

All these various methods are largely based on two core areas: quantitative and qualitative research.

Flow Chart of extracting oil from pawpaw seed

Purchasing pawpaw from market
Washing
Peeling
Slicing
Removing of seed from pawpaw
Blend
Place on fire for 10-15 minutes

Equipment Required

Pot

Frying pan
Rolling pin
Bowl
Scale
Evaporated spoon
Turning stick
Cutters
Whisky
Spoon

Method of extracting oil from pawpaw seed

Get the seed from pawpaw and dry it either with oven or sun, after been dried well, blend it to smooth. After been blend turn it into elaborate bowl or pan, then, be squeezing/rubbing it. Then pawpaw seed oil is ready

Method of preparing Rice a coupling with pawpaw seed stew

Recipe	Quantity
Rice	10 cups
Water	6 cups
Salt	2 tablespoon

Rinse the pot to use to cook the rice then set it on fire, put the water to boil then measure the rice, rinse it well and put it in the boiled water on fire. Allow it to cook small then add the salt to taste.

Method of preparing pawpaw seed stew

Recipe	Quantity
Tomatoes	8 medium size
Pepper	6 medium size
Onion	2 bulbs
Magi	4 to 5 cubes
Salt	1 tbsp.
Oil	200g
Meat	500g

Wash the onion, tomatoes and pepper and blend it together. After that set your pot on fire and put oil to warm then, chop onion and put it on to the oil on fire, follow by the pepper been blended, stir together. Put the Ponmo and the fish to cook well with the seasoning then allow it to cook well together then our stew is ready.

Method of making doughnut fried with pawpaw seed oil

Recipe	Quantity
Flour	500g
Yeast	3tbsp
Sugar	150g
Butter	50g

Nutmeg 1tbsp

Mix all dry ingredients together in a bowl then followed by butter, mix very well then add water little by little to mix well and bring out the desirable dough. Then allow it to rise for little 10-15 minutes then knead it on a surface floor and cut it into your desirable size. After that set your pot on fire with oil, don't allow the oil to overheat to prevent the doughnut to be brown outside and not cook inside. Then our snack is ready.

Method of preparing Chin chin fried with pawpaw seed oil

Recipe	Quantity
Flour	500g
Baking powder	2tbsp
Butter	50g

Nutmeg 1tbsp
Egg 3
Sugar 100g
Oil 300g

Mix all dry ingredients in a bowl and mix well, then break the egg into a bowl to mix with water (little) and set aside. Add butter into the dry ingredients that has been mix before then add the water containing the egg into it little by little and mix well. Get a clean surface to roll the dough with rolling pin then cut into desirable size

Set the pot on fire then follow by oil, when the oil is been heat then be adding the cutting dough gradually. Then our chin chin is ready.

RESULT OBTAINED

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The following demographic data are analyzed in this research and are presented based on the variables received from the administered sensory evaluation form.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage%
Female	80	66.7
Male	60	33.3
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The table 2 above showed that 80 respondents representing 66.7% of the respondents are female while the remaining 60 respondents representing 33.3% are male.

Table 3: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage%
16-20 years	29	24.21
21-30 years	42	35
31-40 years	24	20
41 years and above	25	20.9
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The table 3 above showed that 29 respondents representing 24.21% are between the age of 16-20years, 42 respondents representing 35% are 21-30 years, 24 respondents representing 20% are 31-40years, while 25 respondents representing 20.9% are 41 years and above.

Table 4: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage %
Single	70	58.3
Married	50	41.7
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table above 4 showed that 70 respondents representing 58.3% are single, while 50 respondents representing 41.7% are married.

SECTION B

SENSORY EVALUATION DATA ANALYSIS

The following statistical results were obtained from the analysis of the sensory evaluation data analysis questions as structured in the administration sensory evaluation form.

Table 5: Appearance of pawpaw seed oil for production of stew

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	48	60
Very Good	36	20
Good	36	20
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 5 above showed that 48 panelists representing 60% agreed that the appearance of the product is excellent, 36 panelists representing 20% agreed that the product is very good, 36 panelists representing 20% agreed that the product is good, while no panelist selected fair or poor.

Table 6: Taste of pawpaw seed oil for production of stew

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	37	23.3
Very Good	45	50
Good	38	26.7
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 6 above showed that 37 panelists representing 23.3% of the total panelists rated the taste of the product excellent. However, 45 respondents representing 50% of the total panelists rated the product very good while 38 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists the taste of the product good. While none of the panelists rated the taste of the product fair or poor.

Table 7: Aroma of pawpaw seed oil for production of stew

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	41	34.2
Very Good	38	31.6
Good	33	27.5
Fair	8	6.7
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 7 above showed that 41 panelists representing 53.3% of the total panelists rated the aroma of the product excellent. However, 38 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good. While 33 panelist representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. Also, 8 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product fair. While none panelists rated the aroma of the product poor.

Table 8: Acceptability of pawpaw seed oil for production of stew

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	43	43.3
Very Good	44	46.7
Good	33	10
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 8 above showed that 43 panelists representing 43.3% of the total panelists rated the acceptability of the product excellent. However, 44 respondents representing 46.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good, 33panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. While none of the panelist rated the aroma of the product fair and poor.

Table 9: Colour of pawpaw seed oil for production of stew

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	40	60
Very Good	28	20
Good	26	10
Fair	26	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 8 above showed that 40 panelists representing 60% of the total panelists rated the colour of the product excellent. However, 28 panelists representing 20% of the total panelists rated the product very good. While 26 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. Also, 26 panelists representing 10% of the total sensory evaluator rated the product fair. While none of the panelists rated the aroma of the product poor.

Table 10: Appearance of pawpaw seed oil for frying Doughnut

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	48	60
Very Good	36	20
Good	36	20
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 10 above showed that 48 panelists representing 60% agreed that the appearance of the product is excellent, 36 panelists representing 20% agreed that the product is very good, 36 panelists representing 20% agreed that the product is good, while none of the panelists rated the appearance of the product fair or poor.

Table 11: Taste of pawpaw seed oil for frying Doughnut

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	47	56.7
Very Good	35	16.7
Good	38	26.6
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 10 above showed that 47 panelists representing 56.7% of the total panelists rated the taste of the product excellent. However, 35 panelists representing 16.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good while 38 panelists representing 26.6% of the total panelists rated the product good. While none of the panelists rated the taste of the product fair or poor

Table 12: Aroma of pawpaw seed oil for frying Doughnut

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	38	53.3
Very Good	30	26.7
Good	26	10
Fair	26	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 12 above showed that 38 panelists representing 53.3% of the total panelists rated the aroma of the product excellent. However, 30 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good. While 26 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. Also, 26 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product fair. While none of the panelist rated the aroma of the product poor

Table 13: Acceptability of pawpaw seed oil for frying Doughnut

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	43	43.3
Very Good	44	46.7
Good	33	10
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 13 above showed that 43 panelists representing 43.3% of the total panelists rated the acceptability of the product excellent. However, 44 panelists representing 46.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good. Also, 33 respondents representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. While none of the panelists rated the aroma of the product poor.

Table 14: Colour of pawpaw seed oil for frying Doughnut

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	31	26.7
Very Good	39	53.3
Good	25	10
Fair	25	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 14 above showed that 31 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the colour of the product excellent. However, 39 panelists representing 53.3% of the total panelists rated the product very good, while 25 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. While 5 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product fair. None of the panelist rated the product poor.

Table 15: Appearance of pawpaw seed oil for frying Chin chin

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	49	63.3
Very Good	38	26.7
Good	33	10
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 15 above showed that 49 panelists representing 63.3% rated the appearance of the product excellent. However, 38 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good while 33 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. none of the panelist rated the appearance of experimental of the product fair or poor.

Table 16: Taste of pawpaw seed oil for frying Chin chin

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	45	50
Very Good	42	40
Good	33	10
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	30	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 16 above showed that 45 panelists representing 50% rated the product excellent, 42 panelists representing 40% of the total panelists rated the taste of the product very good. However, 33 panelists representing

10% of the total panelists rated the product good none of the panelist rated the taste of the product excellent, fair or poor.

Table 17: Aroma of pawpaw seed oil for frying Chin chin

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	27	43.3
Very Good	31	20
Good	34	26.7
Fair	28	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 17 above showed that 27 respondents representing 43.3% of the total panelists rated the aroma of the product excellent. However, 31 panelists representing 20% of the total panelists rated the product very good. Also, 34 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product good. Also, 28 panelists representing 10% rated the total panelists of the product fair. none of the panelist rated the smell/aroma of the product poor.

Table 18: Acceptability of pawpaw seed oil for frying Chin chin

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	43	43.3
Very Good	38	26.7
Good	39	30
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 18 above showed that 43 panelists representing 43.3% of the total panelists rated the Acceptability of the product excellent. However, 38 panelist representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good. Also, 39 panelists representing 30% of the total panelists rated the product good none of the panelist rated the smell/aroma of the product poor or fair.

Table 18: Colour of pawpaw seed oil for frying Chin chin

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	41	60
Very Good	29	20
Good	25	10
Fair	25	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 18 above showed that 41 respondents representing 60% of the total panelists rated the product excellent. However, 29 panelists representing 20% of the total panelists rated the product very good, while 25 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. While 25 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product fair. none of the panelist rated the product poor.

Table 19: Appearance of pawpaw seed oil for frying meat

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	48	60
Very Good	36	20
Good	36	20
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

\The table 19 above showed that 48 panelists representing 60% agreed that the appearance of the product is excellent, 36 panelists representing 20% agreed that the product is very good, 36 panelists representing 20% agreed that the product is good, while none of the panelist rated the appearance of the product fair or poor.

Table 20: Taste of pawpaw seed oil for frying meat

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	47	56.7
Very Good	35	16.7
Good	38	26.7
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 20 above showed that 47 panelists representing 56.7% of the total panelists rated the taste of the product excellent. However, 35 panelists representing 16.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good while 38 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product good. While none of the panelist rated the taste of the product fair or poor.

Table 21: Aroma of pawpaw seed oil for frying meat

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	39	53.3
Very Good	31	26.7
Good	25	10
Fair	25	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The table 21 above showed that 39 panelists representing 53.3% of the total panelists rated the aroma of the product excellent. However, 31 panelists representing 26.7% of the total panelists rated the product very good. While 25 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product good. Also, 25 panelists representing 10% of the total panelists rated the product fair. While none of the panelist rated the aroma of the product poor

Table 22: Acceptability of pawpaw seed oil for frying meat

Variables	No. of respondent	Percentage%
Excellent	43	43.3
Very Good	44	46.7
Good	33	10
Fair	-	-
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 22, presented above, reveals that 43 panelists, making up 43.3% of the total panelists, assessed the product's acceptability as excellent. Furthermore, 44 panelists, accounting for 46.7% of the total panelists, rated the product as very good. In contrast, 33 panelist, representing 10% of the total panelists, rated the product as good. Notably, it's crucial to highlight that none of the panelist rated the aroma of the product as poor.

Table 23: Colour of pawpaw seed oil for frying meat

Variables	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Excellent	41	60
Very Good	29	20
Good	25	10
Fair	25	10
Poor	-	-
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 23 above illustrates that 41 panelists, constituting 60% of the total panelists, rated the product's color as excellent. In contrast, 29 panelists, making up 20% of the total panelists, rated the product as very good, and 25 panelists, accounting for 10% of the total panelists, rated it as good. Another set of 25 panelists, representing 10% of the total panelists, deemed the product fair. Notably, none of the panelist rated the product as poor.

CONCLUSION

Carica papaya seeds serve as a nutrient-rich source, with palmitic and oleic acids being the predominant fatty acids, showcasing a higher proportion of unsaturated fatty acids compared to saturated ones. With a notable fiber content, Carica papaya emerges as a potential source of beneficial dietary fiber. The extraction of pawpaw seed oil, conducted according to the specified method, aligns with edible standards. This oil not only promotes skin health improvement but also aids in the prevention and treatment of conditions such as hypertension. Moreover, the utilization of pawpaw seeds, initially deemed of no value, as raw materials in the oil extraction process, highlights a judicious use of natural resources, indirectly contributing to energy conservation.

The extraction of oil from pawpaw seeds unveils a world of culinary possibilities. From the careful collection of seeds to the creation of tantalizing snacks and main dishes, pawpaw seed oil is a testament to nature's bounty. As chefs and home cooks alike discover the richness within these tiny seeds, a new chapter in culinary innovation unfolds, promising delicious and nutritious creations for years to come.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The government should enhance accessibility for local farmers, fostering increased Pawpaw production and facilitating greater availability of local products.

Financial support from the government should be extended to farmers lacking capital, ensuring effective execution of their agricultural plans.

There should be an ample supply of preservatives to safeguard instant food for future consumption.

Increased financial investment by the government in the agricultural sector is advisable to bolster food sufficiency and security

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FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN STREET FOOD VENDING IN THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

A study conducted at the University of Ibadan in Oyo State, Nigeria, looked into the factors that influence women's involvement in street food vending. Using a random selection process, 160 female street sellers were chosen to provide quantitative data about the socioeconomic traits and variables influencing women's participation in street food vending in the study area. Descriptive (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential (multiple regression) statistical tools were used to analyze the acquired data. According to the results, the majority was married (73.1%), had a mean age of 43, and was Muslim (52.5%). 71.3 percent had completed secondary school, and 38.2 percent had worked in the food service industry for six to ten years. Additionally, the majority (85.0%) said they have no experience in catering, and nearly half (47.5%) of them work as street food vendors. Furthermore, the greatest mean of 2.73, which placed it first, indicated that economic necessity was the primary reason influencing women's participation in street food vending. Women's participation in street food vending in the research area was directly influenced by economic necessity (Beta=0.105) and income generation (Beta=0.150). The study came to the conclusion that women's participation in street food vending in the study area is directly influenced by economic necessity and money generation. For the women to improve their commercial activities, it is advised that training programs centered on financial literacy, company management, and entrepreneurial skills be set up.

Keywords: Women, Contributions, Involvement, Food, Street vending

INTRODUCTION

Food vending refers to the pedagogical practice of selling cooked meals on a small scale, typically in makeshift locations or structures or by ambulating wildly through streets, junctions, or marketplaces. Nigerians' budget for indigenous nutrition and employment are boosted by street food vendors (Edeme and Nkalu, 2018). Around the world, selling street food is a major economic activity and a dynamic part of the informal sector in urban centers. This phenomena is clearly visible in the vibrant city of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria, especially in and around university institutions. Street food vendors, who are frequently the backbone of this industry, are important to the urban economy, the population's nutritional needs, and food security. This study attempts to investigate the several elements that lead to women selling street food at Ibadan's higher education institutions in order to give a thorough grasp of the dynamics at work in this particular socioeconomic setting. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of street food vendors in Ibadan. It provides staff and students in higher education with accessible and reasonably priced meals; a large number of them depend on these vendors for their daily needs. Women who work as vendors see this as more than simply a way to make ends meet; for many, it's a way to navigate a difficult economic environment while also expressing their social identities and fulfilling their familial obligations. Through an examination of the economic, social, and cultural aspects, this introduction explores the complex factors that contribute to women's involvement in this field. The role of women in street food vending is mostly influenced by economic drivers. For women in particular, street vending offers a feasible means of making a living in a nation where economic chances are few. Selling food on the street becomes an easy and flexible way for many women to support their families, especially those with restricted access to formal jobs or low educational backgrounds. The sociocultural environment in Nigeria, where women frequently shoulder the majority of caring for their family's nutritional needs, further exacerbates this economic necessity (Edeme and Nkalu, 2018).

In most developing nations, street vending has become a standard practice and is a vital part of metropolitan economies all over the world. Every street food business is typically tiny, requiring only a few fundamental skills,

a small amount of capital, and minimum infrastructure. Because of this, these businesses have a lot of potential to provide income and jobs for the urban population, which is still growing (Hossen, Ferdaus, Hasan, 2020). Street food vendors have become an important part of the informal economy in the fast urbanizing Nigerian city of Ibadan, Oyo State, particularly in the thriving tertiary institution ecosystems.

This industry, which is primarily run by women, is crucial to maintaining urban food security, supporting the livelihoods of vendors and their families, and offering reasonably priced, easily accessible meals to a sizable segment of the populace, especially those who work in these institutions and are students. The reasons behind women's engagement in street food vending in this

particular setting, despite its seeming significance, have not yet been fully comprehended or addressed. The main issue that this research aims to investigate and clarify is this gap in knowledge and policy focus. The economic necessity that pushes women into street food hawking is one of the main concerns at hand. For women who may have less formal education and training, street food vending presents itself as a feasible and quick source of revenue in an environment where formal employment alternatives are few. But because of the intricate and varied economic ramifications of this requirement, it's important to comprehend the precise economic forces that encourage women to work in this field (Hossen, Ferdaus, Hasan, 2020).

Street food sellers are currently Nigeria's most popular food provisioning system, according to supplementary research by Resnick et al. (2019). This is especially true for the urban poor, who are frequently unable to prepare their own meals at home due to difficult living and working conditions. On the other hand, there are significant consequences of urbanization and globalization on street food vendors. These factors include shifting consumer tastes, evolving culinary trends, and competition from formal dining establishments, all of which can present obstacles or present opportunity for female vendors. Understanding the full range of factors influencing women's involvement in street food vending requires an understanding of how these women navigate changing dynamics, adapt their businesses, and respond to competition. For this reason, it's important to investigate the skills and training that women street vendors need and possess. Although many may have acquired their commercial acumen or culinary abilities through unofficial means, it's possible that they lacked the official education and training that would have enabled them to expand their companies and successfully compete. The transformation of women's vending enterprises from survivalist ventures to sustainable, growth-oriented businesses could be achieved by the provision of focused skill development, business training, and education.

In light of the aforementioned, it is crucial to look into the following specific goals while examining the reasons that led to women's participation in street food hawking at the University of Ibadan in Oyo State: Examine the respondents' socioeconomic backgrounds and the factors influencing women's participation in street food vending. The hypothesis that was investigated was that there was no discernible influence of any factor on women's participation in street food vending within the study area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of street food vending

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defined street food vending in 2019 as the production and sale of acceptable goods and services in public spaces and urban areas that are conducted in temporary structures and are not subject to formal legal oversight. The products are prepared and/or sold by traders and merchants without additional care or investigation, especially in streets and similar public areas, for either immediate or later consumption (Nkosi and Tabit, 2021; Chekol, anduaalem Qa Hussien, 2021). It is unknown how many vendors distribute their products worldwide, despite the fact that they comprise a sizable portion of the unorganized manufacturing sector. Information and research on officially recognized geographic regions, however, highlight the field's pervasive existence in particular developing nations. Street food vendors thrive in carefully chosen key locations such as bus stations, retail centers, markets, construction zones, business districts, outside of schools and hospitals, factories, residential suburbs, and other street corners (Kwol, Eluwole, Avci, and Lasisi, 2020). Regrettably, these locations do not adhere to the basic standards of food security and cleanliness as seen by the copious amounts of trash and other pollutants that have accumulated there, creating a

haven for parasites and unwanted animals (Gemed, et al, 2023).

Women and street vending

Street vending is a widespread practice in which men and women sell a range of things on the street to make a living, according to Werkneh, Tewelde, Gebrehiwet, Islam, and Belew (2023). To do so, they need to be knowledgeable about food hygiene and have positive, open attitudes toward it. Previous studies on street vendors have usually concentrated on the sellers' social and economic backgrounds. Most of the time, unemployment or economic downturns force vulnerable populations into the street vendor business. They are a diverse group consisting of several components. Whereas permanent vendors operate in locations such as bus stops and shopping centers, roadside vendors make their living from the sidewalks and corners of the road. Conversely, mobile sellers travel around a lot. In addition, compared to the general population, street vendors have lower levels of education. Women from Sub-Saharan Africa are more likely to be street sellers because to their high rates of productivity, low levels of formal education and skills, and declining employment in the official sector. Age groupings are also used to categorize those who work for street vendors and in the unauthorized sector.

Studies conducted in Uganda and Niger have shown that most street vendors are middle-aged, low-income people. In 2018, organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) stated that age and education have a strong correlation with simplicity. The informal economy's most recognizable face is street vending as more people live in cities. For the livelihoods of urban disadvantaged women, it is vital. Even though street peddling is a survival tactic for women, studies reveal that over 65% of people who sell things do so to support the government. Street vending makes up a sizable component of a country's economy, when business is the primary industry for employment. For instance, almost 40% of all informal, non-agricultural occupations in Sub-Saharan Africa are in the business sector. Research indicates that street vending is one of the most significant ways for women in the area to acquire employment. Women from the African subcontinent dominate the street vending business for a variety of reasons. One explanation is that some women are able to supplement their income by working as vending machines. Some women move to cities to work as street vendors, as is the case for women throughout most of the country. Street vendors provide a wide range of services and products to meet the demands of the general population.

Factor influencing street food vending in Nigeria

The quality of the food that is available where individuals live affects their nutritional demands and general health, and urban communities are no exception (Sawyer et al., 2021). Rapid population and economic growth in LMIC metropolitan areas has led to a change in lifestyle, with an increased demand for processed meals, animal products, and beverages with added sugars (Sousa et al., 2022). Studies carried out in low-income middle-income nations such as Tanzania, Uganda, and Nigeria have demonstrated an increase in dietary patterns that are low in fruits and vegetables, sugar-filled drinks, and soft drinks, and a high consumption of fast food restaurants (Dolislager et al., 2022; Pallangyo et al., 2020). People these days are spending more of their life outside of their homes due to jobs that pay well, which means they have less time to prepare meals. This has made the ready-to-eat, reasonably priced, and conveniently accessible food found on the roadways essential. Street food sellers have become more and more important when it comes to the daily sustenance of city dwellers in LMICs, since almost 70% of the population lives there (Rosales Chavez et al., 2021).

However, it is a national priority due to the link between its use and the provision of significantly inadequate and dangerous meals (Mamiro et al., 2019). Each commercial and homemade food item has an impact on the physiological composition of roadside feasts since it is often made up of both carbohydrates and fats, meaning each serving contains a substantial quantity of calories. These products include things like baked goods, candies, snacks, chips, pancakes, fried pastries, and main dishes. Due to added sugar, highly processed foods like soft drinks as well as handmade or traditional refreshments can produce foods that are high in sugar (Bouafou et al., 2021; Albuquerque, Lança de Morais, et al., 2022). The salt used in meal preparation is primarily to blame for the high sodium level in each serving. According to Albuquerque et al. (2020), the majority of the amino acids found in food on the streets come from animal-based goods such breakfast sandwiches and simmering beef, with a lesser portion originating from agricultural products.

Most studies conducted on street food vendors (Hassan and Fweja, 2020; Letuka et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2019; Madaki and Bavorova, 2019; Marutha and Chelule, 2020) focused on their strategies for ensuring food safety and hygienic conditions. When it comes to the nutritional worth of the food they serve and sell, street vendors, however, are woefully lacking in information and opinions. What individuals think and feel is a balanced meal, together with the foods and cooking methods that make dinners nutrient-dense, all have a big impact on the amount of calories in the food that is served (Pinto et al., 2021). Aims to elevate the mindsets and perspectives of street food vendors could perhaps result in more nourishing meals. People often adopt actions they perceive to be advantageous and refrain from actions they perceive to be harmful (Gebremariam et al., 2018; Van Der Velde et al., 2019).

Tanzania, Nigeria and other LMICs have benefited from investigations into mindsets and perspectives in raising the general caliber of their restaurants, especially with regard to hygienic and sanitary standards (Ncube et al., 2020; Letuka et al., 2021). Similar techniques could be useful to increase the dietary fiber content of these recipes. Therefore, in order to promote healthy eating as a global aim in combatting NCDs, a deeper understanding of the perspectives and views of street vendors regarding the healthfulness of the meals they sell is necessary. As a result, it will be simpler to plan more successful public health campaigns based on pre-existing attitudes and impressions, raising the caliber of meals offered on the streets.

METHODOLOGY

The University of Ibadan in Oyo State, Nigeria, was the site of the study. A random sample of 160 female street food vendors in the research region was used to gather quantitative data. Statistical tools for inferential (multiple regression) and descriptive (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) analysis were used to examine the acquired data.

RESULT OBTAINED

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

According to Table 1's results, the majority of respondents (73.6%) were between the ages of 38 and 53, with a mean age of 43. This suggests that most respondents were still in their prime years, full of energy and productivity. This might have an impact on their decision to sell street food in the research area. Additionally, Table 1 reveals that the majority of respondents (52.5%) practiced Islam, and Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents (73.1%) were married. Table 1 also reveals that more respondents (38.2%) had six to ten years of experience in the food service industry, while the majority of respondents (71.3%) had only completed secondary school. Additionally, Table 1 shows that almost half (47.5%) of the respondents are street food vendors and the majority (85.0%) of respondents said they lack catering experience.

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Age			43	8
22-29	5	3.1		
30-37	29	18.1		
38-45	64	40.0		
46-53	49	30.6		
54-65	13	8.1		
Religion				
Christianity	74	46.3		
Islam	84	52.5		
Traditional	2	1.3		
Highest level of education				
Primary education	26	16.3		
Secondary education	114	71.3		
Tertiary education	20	12.5		
Years of experience in food services				

Less than 1 year	5	3.1
1-5 years	57	35.6
6-10 years	61	38.2
Over 10 years	37	23.1

Catering services
education

No	13685.0
Yes	2415.0
Foodservice type	
Street food vending	7647.5
Canteen	5534.4
Bukateria/Cafeteria	2918.1

Source: Field survey, 2024

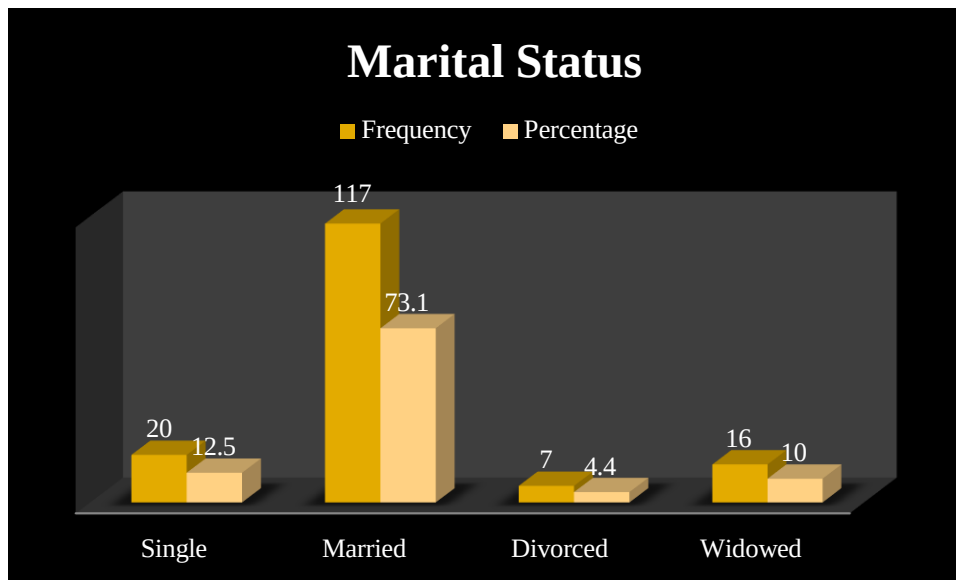


Figure 1: Marital status of the respondents

Factors determining women involvement in street food vending

The results of the factors influencing women's participation in street food vending in Table 2 indicate that the primary factor influencing women's participation in street food vending in the study region was economic need, which had the highest mean of 2.73 and was rated first. This is succeeded by the following: income generation (2.52) ranked third, family support (2.61) rated second, and jobless status (2.45) ranked fourth, and flexible hours (2.42) ranked fifth. However, the least important characteristics influencing women's participation in street food vending in the research region were low startup costs (1.25), ranked 15th, gender roles (1.53), ranked 14th, absence of shared support (1.70), and market demand (1.58), ranked 13th.

Table 2: Factors determining women involvement in street food vending

Factors	Major factor	Minor factor	Not a factor	Mean	Rank
Economic necessity	131 (81.9)	17 (10.6)	12 (7.5)	2.73	1st
Gender based violation (Financial/Economic)	80 (50.0)	44 (27.5)	36 (22.5)	2.25	7th
Lack of shared support	45 (28.1)	46 (28.7)	69 (53.1)	1.70	12th
Unemployment status	93 (58.1)	50 (31.3)	17 (10.7)	2.45	4th
Family support	113 (70.6)	34 (21.3)	13 (8.2)	2.61	2nd
Market demand	32 (20.0)	58 (36.3)	70 (43.8)	1.58	13th
Government regulatory environmental policy	78 (48.8)	55 (34.4)	27 (16.9)	2.26	6th
Income generation	107 (66.9)	33 (20.6)	20 (12.5)	2.52	3rd
Low startup cost	33 (20.6)	32 (20.0)	95 (59.4)	1.25	15th
Flexible hours	89 (55.6)	53 (33.1)	18 (11.3)	2.42	5th
Gender roles	46 (28.7)	26 (16.3)	88 (55.0)	1.53	14th
Entrepreneurial preference	78 (48.8)	40 (25.0)	42 (26.2)	2.14	8th

Source Field survey, 2024

Hypothesis finding

There is no significant contribution of Factors determining women involvement in street food vending

Contribution of factors determining women involvement in street food vending

In the study region, regression analysis was performed on the variables influencing women's participation in street food vending. The variables in the regression model taken as a whole could explain 13.9% of the variation that contributed to the factors determining women's involvement in street food vending in the research area, according to Table 3's R2 value of 0.139. The table also demonstrates that, in the study area, two (2) of the variables strongly predicted the characteristics determining women's involvement in street food vending. These include, in order, income generation (Beta=0.150) and economic necessity (Beta=0.105). In the study region, these two (2) had a direct impact on the participation of women in street food vending.

Table 3: Contribution of factors determining women involvement in street food vending

Variables	Beta	T	Sig
Constant		5.460	0.000
Economic necessity	0.105	0.032	0.004*
Gender based violation (Financial/Economic)	-0.087	-1.012	0.313
Lack of shared support	-0.043	-0.455	0.650
Unemployment status	-0.015	-0.149	0.882
Family support	0.028	0.261	0.795
Market demand	-0.051	-0.417	0.678
Government regulatory environmental policy	0.072	0.766	0.445
Income generation	0.150	-1.738	0.015*
Low startup cost	0.201	2.109	0.137
Flexible hours	0.134	1.259	0.210
Gender roles	-0.071	-0.720	0.473
Entrepreneurial preference	-0.245	-2.527	0.113

R=0.372, R²=0.139, Adjusted R square=0.063, Std Error=12.306 Source: Field survey, 2024

DISCUSSION

The majority of responders had a mean age of 43, according to the findings, suggesting that they were still in their prime years for activity, productivity, and vigor. Selling street food is a physically taxing job that involves standing for extended periods of time while preparing meals and engaging with patrons. Many people are still likely to have the physical endurance required for such jobs at 43 years old, which is essential for keeping up the pace and level of service that this line of work requires. These people are probably in their early forties and have reached a point in their careers when they have a lot of knowledge and expertise under their belts. Since they are probably knowledgeable about the ins and outs of their line of work, this age group is frequently linked to peak production. For street food vendors, this could entail treating customers with effectiveness, preparing food efficiently, and dealing the day-to-day difficulties of running their company with skill.

Additionally, the majority of those surveyed practiced Islam. Particularly in places where the Muslim minority is well-represented, the prevalence of Muslim sellers helps promote a sensitive and culturally aware atmosphere. It's possible that vendors are more sensitive to the religious and cultural customs of their main clientele, which fosters greater community involvement and patronage. Having food available in schools on Sundays may also contribute to a higher proportion of Muslim food vendors. Given that the vast majority of respondents are married, it is possible that street food vending is a family-oriented business that is motivated or impacted by the demands and obligations of the family. Married people could see street food vending as a flexible job that lets them manage work and family responsibilities. Given that the majority of respondents only completed secondary school, it is possible that although they possess a foundational education, they do not have advanced or specialized training in business management or the culinary arts. This might limit their capacity to develop or grow their company, as well as have an impact on how sophisticated their marketing plans and commercial procedures are. There appears to be a high degree of practical knowledge and abilities in food handling and customer service given that a sizable majority of respondents have 6–10 years of experience in the food services industry. Maintaining food quality, figuring out client preferences, and running day-to-day operations all benefit from this experience. The majority's lack of formal catering education may indicate a discrepancy between professional training and accepted cooking techniques. This might affect the variety, hygienic conditions, and quality of food options. Additionally, it creates chances for programs that give these vendors training and skill development.

The fact that almost 50% of the respondents sold street food shows how important it is as a source of income. A number of variables, including low entrance barriers, the requirement for a flexible work schedule, or the lack of

alternative career opportunities, may be motivating this involvement. These vendors may be in this industry by need rather than choice, given their marital status, educational background, and lack of formal catering education. Although they play a key role in the economy, businesses may also encounter obstacles like financial instability, competitiveness, and regulatory concerns. The demographic profile points to possible areas for development interventions that could assist professionalize the industry and enhance the incomes of these vendors. Examples of these initiatives include business training, culinary education programs, and health and hygiene courses. The involvement in street food vending along with one's marital status may have an impact on gender roles and family relations. It would be crucial to comprehend how these responsibilities affect and are affected by their line of work, particularly with regard to family decision-making, work distribution, and income management. The conclusion that the primary factor influencing women's participation in street food vending in the research region is economic necessity which has the highest mean score of 2.73 and is rated first, has several significant ramifications. This observation clarifies the socioeconomic factors affecting women's involvement in this field and raises a number of underlying concerns and possible areas for action. The importance of economic need suggests that women are mostly selling street food to make ends meet and provide for their families. The necessity to support the family financially is probably what motivates this commitment, particularly in situations where other employment options are scarce or insufficient.

The statistical investigation that shows women's participation in street food selling is directly influenced by economic necessity ($\text{Beta}=0.105$) and income generating ($\text{Beta}=0.150$), has important ramifications for comprehending the dynamics and motivations of this industry. The direction and degree of the link are indicated by these beta coefficients, which imply that both variables have a favorable impact on women's involvement in street food vending. The fact that both economic necessity and income generation have positive beta values indicates that women are primarily motivated to become street food vendors by financial considerations. This involvement is

probably not the result of a decision made from a variety of work possibilities, but rather from the pressing need to support themselves and their families.

SUMMARY

A study conducted at the University of Ibadan in Oyo State, Nigeria, looked into the factors that influence women's involvement in street food vending. Using a random selection process, 160 female street sellers were chosen to provide quantitative data about the socioeconomic traits and variables influencing women's participation in street food vending in the study area. Descriptive (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential (multiple regression) statistical tools were used to analyze the acquired data. According to the results, the majority was married (73.1%), had a mean age of 43, and was Muslim (52.5%). 71.3 percent had completed secondary school, and 38.2 percent had worked in the food service industry for six to ten years. Additionally, the majority (85.0%) said they have no experience in catering, and nearly half (47.5%) of them work as street food vendors. Furthermore, the greatest mean of 2.73, which placed it first, indicated that economic necessity was the primary reason influencing women's participation in street food vending. Women's participation in street food vending in the research area was directly influenced by economic necessity ($\text{Beta}=0.105$) and income generation ($\text{Beta}=0.150$).

CONCLUSION

The study came to the conclusion that women's participation in street food vending in the study area is directly influenced by economic necessity and money generation. The majority of responders were married adults who identified as Muslims. Furthermore, the participants possessed education and experience in the food service industry, notwithstanding their little understanding of catering education. Additionally, women's involvement in street food vending was mostly determined by economic necessity, and in the research area, women's involvement in street food vending was directly influenced by both economic necessity and income generating.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. To improve their commercial operations, food organizations should set up training courses on financial literacy, business management, and entrepreneurship.
2. Create or make more accessible microfinance programs designed especially for women who work as street food vendors.
3. The government needs to make sure that policies acknowledge and assist the unorganized sector. This can entail making it lawful to sell goods on the street, designating certain areas for this purpose, and making sure that the rules and prices are fair.

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GEMSTONE MINING AND ITS ATTRACTIVENESS: A STUDY OF ABUJA-LEATHER IN KOMU, OYO STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study explores the gemstone mining industry in Abuja-Leather, Komu, Nigeria, highlighting its potential for sustainable growth and addressing challenges to enhance its attractiveness for local and international stakeholders. The qualitative methodology of the study made it possible to fully understand the regional gemstone mining industry. The information came from primary and secondary sources. The primary source was a collection of in-depth interviews conducted using qualitative approaches; the secondary source was the body of existing literature on subjects pertaining to the study's main issues. We conducted in-depth verbal interviews with all of the present stakeholders in the area. Questionnaires were distributed to 61 individuals, who were randomly selected to serve as key informants and stakeholders in this research. Findings from this study reveal that there is a good rate of tourists' visits to Abuja leather and gemstone mining as a tourist destination; the major problem confronting the destination from the perspective of visitors was the absence of basic amenities, and the prospects of these attractions for tourism development were significantly high. We thus recommend that the government, in teamwork with the community and other organizations, should waste no time in exploiting this promising sector.

Keywords: Mining, Gemstone, Tourism, Value, Quality

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an activity that crosses traditional economic sectors (Camilleri, 2018). It necessitates economic, social, cultural, and environmental inputs. In this sense, it is frequently described as multifaceted. Tourists will not be compelled to visit a location unless there is an attraction (Cecilia, 2018). Mining tourism (Adesoji and Stephanie, 2018) is a fast developing subset of tourism that includes visits to both operating and abandoned mines. Attractions are one of the three main components of a tourist product, according to Roni and Hidehiko (2019). Tourists will not be motivated to visit a location unless there is an attraction. According to Washington (2018), attractions are those aspects of a product that affect a specific tourist's decision to visit one location over another. Attractions for gemstone mining could be cultural, natural, or archaeological in nature; historical structures and monuments; flora and wildlife; beach resorts; mining sites; national parks; or events such as trade fairs, exhibitions, arts and music festivals, games, and so on (Silas and Santos, 2019).

Mining tourism activities provide distinct tourist attractions, therefore gemstone mining villages stand out from other locations (Oyebamiji, Odebunmi, Fadamoro, and Falae, 2017). Mining tourism is a rapidly developing subgenre of tourism that includes both active and abandoned mine visits (Pawel and Diana, 2017). Gemstone mining tourism reflects a region's industrial and vocational past. Gemstones are naturally occurring organic materials, minerals, or stones found in igneous rocks and alluvial gravels (Oyebamiji, Odebunmi, Fadamoro and Falae, 2017). Cut and polished gemstones are used to manufacture jewelry and other adornments. Gemstone mining is an ancient tradition in Nigeria. Corundum, beryl, quartz and its variations, tourmaline, garnet, aquamarine, topaz, and spinel are all available in Nigeria (Oyebamiji, Odebunmi, Ruizhong, and Rasool, 2017). Gemstones can be found in almost all major geological regions, and each habitat has its own set of gem elements (Krishna, 2020). Gemstones are

classified as valuable or semi-precious stones based on their beauty, rarity, and durability (Adesoji and Stephanie, 2018). Diamond, corundum, beryl, topaz, and opal are examples of precious stones, whereas garnet, tourmaline, amethyst, and all other stones are examples of semi-precious stones (Omotayo, Ajilore and Adeyemi, 2023).

The geological context in which a gemstone is discovered or mined is referred to as the gemstone occurrence; most gemstones are available at the location where they were formed (Antonio, Virginio and Marcos, 2021). Some gemstones, however, are transported from their location of origin by rain, wind, or rivers; these are known as alluvial gem deposits. The locale of a gem deposit, according to Read (2016), is the country or area where the gem resides; some places of the world appear to have been more blessed than others by geological circumstances favorable to the production of gemstone deposits. Some countries and localities are lucky in this regard because of the richness of gem reserves (Kvint, 2010). Each form of gemstone is distinct from the others, and the gems have various mineral and chemical compositions.

Developing urban regeneration programs for former mining districts has become critical, as most of these areas lack economic options for future growth (Evans, 2020). Repurposing mining-related materials for touristic attractions is one of the most popular preferences at the gemstone mining site (Adesugba and Hoon, 2018). The idea is to provide visitors with their distinctive mining history and tangible legacy as the major tourism offering (Alexandra, 2021). This study examines gemstone mining and its attractiveness in Abuja-leather, Komu, Oyo State for mining tourism development in Oyo North by exploring some of the gemstone extracted nature and active mining sites in relation to the mining district's geological, cultural, and historical features, as well as the role of mining tourism in the sustainable development of the rural areas' economy in Oyo State as a tourist destination.

Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to determine the gemstone mining and its attractiveness in Abuja-Leather, Komu, Oyo State, while specific goals are sought to:

- i. Examine the rate of tourists' visits to the Abuja-leather gemstone mining site;
- ii. Identify the attractiveness of gemstone mining site as a tourist destination;
- iii. Determine the prospects of these attractions for tourist development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination attractiveness

Attractiveness refers to a destination's capacity to draw in and satisfy potential tourists (Cecilia, 2018). The most significant tourist destination's main assets are its destination attractions. Included are all resources, both natural and artificial (man-made), as well as customs, architecture, heritage, history, culture, and food (Aboali, Omar, and Mohamed, 2015; Chahal, and Devi, 2015). Attractiveness as a destination is defined by the World Economic Forum (2015) as "the relative importance of individual benefits and the perceived ability of the destination to deliver these benefits." The unique features of the location, including its infrastructure, attractions, or the people that work there, can raise this (Allam, et, al 2022).

Destination Competitiveness in tourism

The competitiveness of tourism destinations is complex (Roni and Hidehiko, 2019). This idea relates to the destination's capacity to increase traveler spending and draw in newcomers. It also has to do with the ability to build a brand and image to draw in more customers. Destination competitiveness includes economic competitiveness, attractiveness, enjoyment, and sustainability (Arcodia, Ruhanen, and Abreu Novais 2017). The traditional viewpoint sees the economic factor as the most important aspect of destination competitiveness, and it is easily quantified in terms of visitor numbers, jobs, and tourist spending. Meanwhile, the attractiveness and satisfaction aspects are linked to the destination's attraction to visitors.

Mining

Mining, according to Zaidi et al. (2012), is the backbone of industrial development since it provides raw materials for the construction of diverse commodities. Mining sites can be found all throughout the world, with different legislation controlling the extraction process in each country (Agboola, et al. 2020). Because Nigeria has significant resources of iron, coal, and bitumen, the mining sector is a critical driver of national economic development; yet, under-utilization of the mining sector has resulted in the importation of minerals that might be produced domestically (Nafisat, 2018; Usanga, 2023). Mining is seen as a major engine of economic growth and a leading sector that produces economic increment, which can lead to increased levels of social and economic wellbeing by development economists (Ahmed and Oruonye, 2016).

Gemstone

Gemstones, according to Adesoji and Stephanie (2018), are mineral crystals of precious stones discovered beneath the earth. When cut and polished for jewelry, they naturally form as minerals or substances of beauty and have been used in alternative and complementary medicine since prehistoric times. Gemstones, according to Olade (2020), are a subset of industrial minerals that are cut, faceted, and polished for use as jewelry and other personal adornments. Gemstones are lovely objects that are wanted and sought after by royalty and the wealthy due to their distinctive features such as beauty and color, shine and sparkle, durability and hardness, and great rarity (Afeni, and Ibitolu, 2018; Auble, 2011). According to Adesoji and Stephanie (2018), Nigeria is the only country in Africa having significant gemstone resources.

Mining heritage as a tourist attraction

Mining tourism (Jelen, 2018) or a sort of geotourism (Hose, 2016) could be described as cultural tourism focusing on the use of mining history and the representation, protection, and interpretation of its values and meanings for tourists. Geotourism differs from mining tourism in that it focuses on geology and geomorphology (Hose, 2012; Carrión-Mero, 2022). Mining tourism, on the other hand, concentrates on mining relics and mining heritage. According to Jelen (2018), persons interested in mining tourism are enticed by the opportunity of guided tours inside the underground workings of former or still operational mines, as well as its technological equipment and facilities. This, however, excludes many components, particularly those of a less material type, that are part of our mining legacy.

Gemstone Mining Tourism

There are three levels of appeal for gemstone mining tourism (Anyona and Rop, 2022). The first natural attractions for gemstones, industrial minerals, sceneries, mining landscapes, and mountains were created (Akintade and Ogunlade, 2022). The second category is for man-made attractions designed for Abuja-Leather mining settlement, Open paddock, Underground tunnel, Clamp rope, and Gemstone buying center, and the final category is for supporting infrastructural resources designed for accommodation facilities, transportation, Financial Services, and Petrol station (Akintade and Ogunlade, 2022). Concentration on the three categories of attractiveness of gemstone mining tourism locations, which are the most enticing resources discovered by visitors at the gemstone mining site.

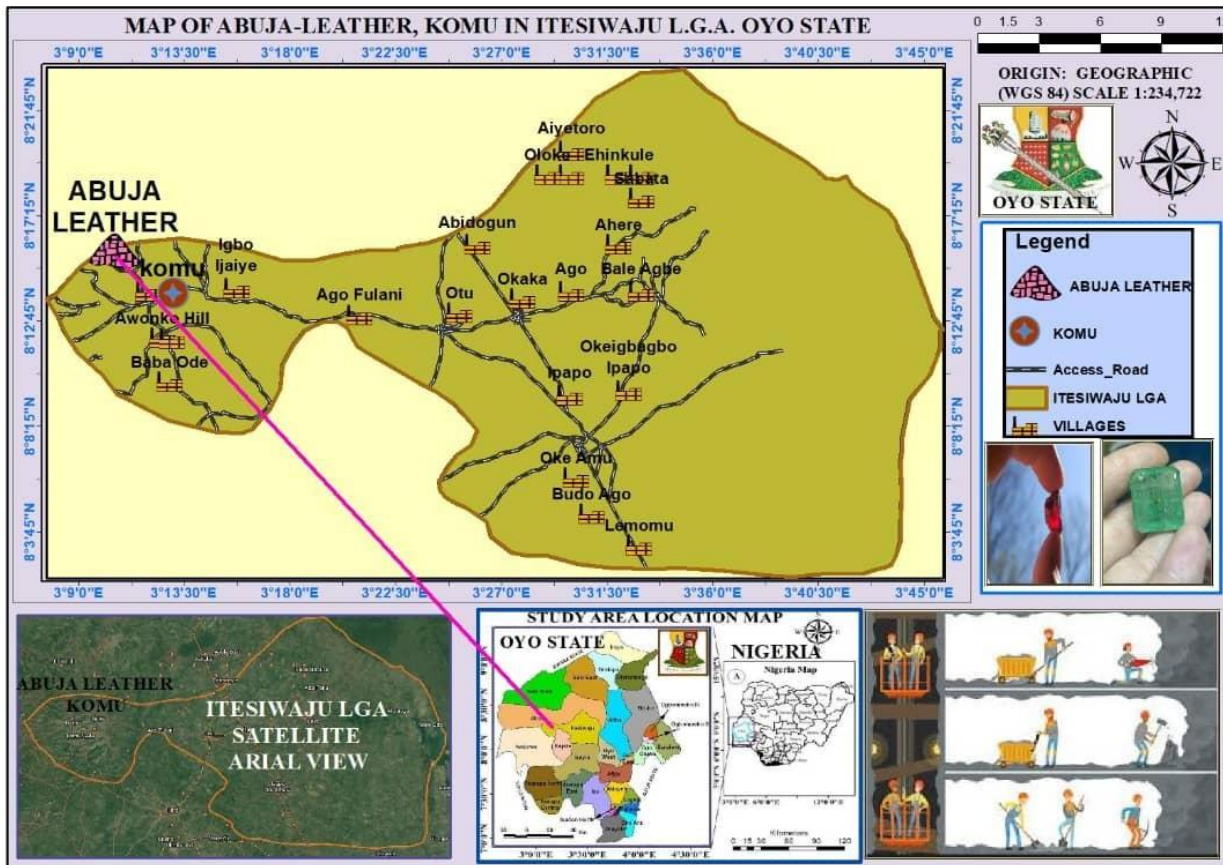
Gemstone Mining Resource Attractions

Natural resources and man-made resources were divided into two categories for attractions associated with gemstone mining, such as heritage resources, open and underground pits, special events, shopping, the economic importance of gemstones, accessibility, and hospitality (Adesugba, and Hoon, 2018). The interview consisted of four parts: personal background, number of previous visits, purpose of visit in relation to resources available, and likelihood of repeating.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

This research work was carried out in Abuja leather mining site, Komu, Oyo State. Komu lies within latitudes 8° 20' 0 N and 8° 20' 45 N, and longitudes 3° 14' 20 E and 3° 15' 20 E. It is one of the many settlements in the Itesiwaju Local Government Area (LGA). Collectively with nine other LGAs: Saki East, Saki West, Atisbo, Kajola, Iseyin, Iwajowa, Irepo, Irelope, and Olorunsogo. Together, they are referred to as Oke Ogun in Oyo State. The Abuja leather mining district is about 20km east of Komu. The Abuja leather mining site is one of the largest gemstone mining site in Africa, situated in the northern part of Oyo State. It is situated about 150km northwest of Ibadan and constitutes one of the communities in the Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State. The Komu Mining Site has huge potential for hospitality and tourism.



Figure

3.1: Map of Oyo State showing Abuja-Leather, Komu

Source: Researcher & Google source

Method of Data Collection

The research design chosen for this study was an exploratory survey design and a qualitative approach was used to enable the appreciation of the concepts. Structured interviews were used to collect data from key informants (i.e. communities, an employee at the mining site and a government official). Open ended interviews provided the interviewees with the platform to freely express their ideas, opinion and knowledge. This enabled the interviewer to gain more information and richer data. Face to face interviews were employed and a digital recorder was used to obtain the details of the interview.

Interviews were conducted with 65 informants, with 61 used for this paper. The interviews were chosen based on their knowledge and experience, with a snowballing technique used. Key officers from Komu Miner's Association, chiefs from Onibise Palace, company staff, and camp personalities were also interviewed. The sample size will be put at 61 people (men and women) that are residing in Ibadan and Abuja Leather mining site, Komu, out of which eight (8) members were drawn from the Federal and State Ministries of Mine and Steel; six (6) members from the

State Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism and Tourism Board; eighteen (18) key officers from the Komu Miner's Association; four (4) chiefs from Onibise Palace; nineteen (19) company staff at the mining site; and ten (10) distinguished personalities from the mining camp.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Distributions of the Respondents by Location and Gender

At the initial stage, 65 respondents were expected to partake in this study; as a result of the language barrier and the fear of the unknown, especially among the local miners, only 61 respondents were willing and able to take part. Their distribution according to the place of their work is as follows: 8 officials from the Federal and State Ministry of Mines and Steels, 6 members from the State Ministry Information, Culture, and Tourism, and the Tourism Board, 18 members were chosen from the Komu Mining Association, with one representative drawn from the Directors, Extractors, Mining Engineers, and Geologists each, 4 traditional chiefs were chosen from the Onibise Palace, 19 company officials staff at the mining sites, and 10 prominent personalities in Abuja Leather, Komu, were picked purposefully because of their status in the town.

Out of these respondents, 19 were female, while the remaining 42 were male. The female respondents were from the Federal and State Ministries of Mining in Ibadan, the State Tourism Board in Ibadan, and company officials' staff (with two being local miners) at the mining site. The results were presented in percentages and tables, and the qualitative data was transcribed as appropriate. All the data needed was obtained on the mining site. The contents analyses of these as obtained from the interviewees are as presented below.

Socio Demographic Data of the Respondents

The respondents were from various parts of the mining site in the Abuja Leather, Komu, and Oyo State. The table below represents the socio-demographic characteristics of study respondents. The table presents socio-demographic data from the first section of the questionnaire. The different socio-demographic data of the respondents on site in the Abuja Leather, Komu, and Oyo State chosen for this study are represented thus:

The data from the research work revealed socio-demographic characteristics of the various respondents, and the key characteristics were: gender, age, category of person with respect to purpose on the site, educational qualification, occupation, number of visits, and duration of residence. The data showed that 68.9% of the respondents were male, while few of them were female; most of the females were from the various ministries, while a few were miners and residents of the community. More so, the majority were males, as most mining sites are often dominated by men.

Also, the majority of the respondents were within the age bracket of 41–47 years, with 34.4% of them and 24.6% of them being between the age brackets of 33–40 years; this clearly reveals that the site was dominated by a workforce and is restricted to only mining activities alone. Based on the category of person with respect to purpose on the site, data showed that 37.7% of the respondents were tourists from various countries, academic institutions, and ministries, while another majority of the respondents were artisans, and just a few respondents were civil servants. The majority noted to be tourists were foreigners and researchers from various academic institutions of learning, followed by artisans, who were mostly miners, who visited the site first as tourists and later became miners.

Table 4.1: Socio Demographic Data of the Respondents

VARIABLES	Options	Frequency (N=61)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	42	68.9
	Female	19	31.1
	Total	61	100.0
Age	18 - 24 years	6	9.8
	25 - 32 years	11	18.0
	33 - 40 years	15	24.6
	41 - 47 years	21	34.4
	48 years above	8	13.1
	Total	61	100.0
Ethnic group	Yoruba	37	60.7
	Hausa	16	26.2
	Igbo	5	8.2
	Others	3	4.9
	Total	61	100.0
Marital status	Married	49	80.3
	Single	6	9.8
	Separate	1	1.6
	Divorced	1	1.6
	Widowed	4	6.6
	Total	61	100.0
Are you one of the following?	Civil servant	14	23.0
	Community leader	4	6.6
	Artisan	20	32.8
	Tourist	23	37.7
	Total	61	100.0
Educational qualification	O level	9	14.8
	ND/NCE	11	18.0
	HND/BSc	18	29.5
	MSc	7	11.5
	Artisan certificate	16	26.2
	Total	61	100.0
Status of employment	Unemployed	9	14.8
	Self employed	3	4.9
	Employee	49	80.3
	Total	61	100.0
Religion	Christianity	30	49.2
	Islam	19	31.1
	Traditional	10	16.4
	Others	2	3.3

	Total	61	100.0
Number of visitation	Once	1	1.6
	Twice	9	14.8
	Thrice	3	4.9
	Four times	48	78.7
	Total	61	100.0
Duration of residence	1 - 2 year	4	6.6
	3 - 5 years	7	11.5
	5 - 8 years	36	59.0
	9 - 12 years	14	23.0
	Total	61	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Concerning the educational status of the respondents, the most dominant educational qualifications were the HND/BSc holders, the artisan certificate holders, and the ND/NCE holders, respectively; this was evenly distributed mostly among the staff, chiefs, and miners, which is due to the recent recommendation by mining companies to certify their miners.

Based on their occupation, data showed that 80.3% of the respondents were employees of a mining company or civil servants from the various ministries, while a few respondents were unemployed and just a few respondents were self-employed; the majority were noted to be employees working directly or indirectly on the site, and all of the unemployed respondents were residents of the mining community who were unable to work at the site due to health and economic challenges, while the self-employed were all merchants and gemstone dealers.

Data on the number of visits by respondents showed that 78.7% of the respondents had visited the mining site four or more times, often for the purpose of tourism and trading, while a few of them had visited once, twice, and three times; this category of visitors was not a tourist but was sent for specific assignments. Finally, based on the duration of residence of the respondents, 59% of them have lived in the mining site community for between 1 and 2 years, while 23.0% of them have lived there for 9 to 12 years; all those who have resided there for 5 years and above were dominated by tourists and indigenes who took interest in the advent of the mining activities at the site, while most of those who have resided there for 5 years and below were immigrants who purposefully resided there as miners and had heard of how prolific the site is.

Analysis of Structured Interview

What is the rate of tourists' visits to Abuja-leather gemstone mining as a tourist destination?

"You mean how people come here a lot?" Yes, they patronize this mining site a lot. "Either they are here to buy gemstones, to sightsee, to do research, or something else that has to do with what we are doing here." (Male, 53 years old, local miner)

Responses from *Official KMA* stated that: *Gemstones are a very attractive material in every sense of the word. Have you seen them before? They are very different and beautiful to behold; no wonder some people call them precious stones. Indeed, they are very attractive and precious.*

Another prominent personality lent his voice that: *"By my own evaluation, it is positioned as a tourist attraction." Take a look at the beautiful site and landscape—isn't it beautiful? Also, its location makes it accessible and properly positioned as a tourist attraction any day, any time.*

Identification of gemstone mining attractions and resources visited by tourists

Man-made attractions such as open-cast pits, underground tunnels, and accommodations can be found in Abuja-Leather, Komu in Itesiwaju LGA, Oyo State. Natural attractions include gemstones of different names and colors, industrial minerals, and underground pulls.

According to the respondents, the top-ranking attractions consist of gemstones and their natural beauty. The Komu gemstone mining site consists of two mining settlements, namely Abuja-Leather and Aget, respectively. The Abuja-Leather mining site is the center where most mining heritage sites, lapidary features, and architectural features are located.

The Abuja-Leather gemstone mining site is expected to be included on the UNESCO World Heritage list's preliminary list. Open-cast pits, underground tunnels, industrial minerals, gemstones, and post-mining settlements occupy tourist spots. It has been utilized for a range of various activities such as sport and adventure tourism, gem business centers, and environmental tourism. Response from Mining Engineers, and Geologist stated that:

The Abuja-Leather mining site is also well known for the discovery of valuable gemstones such as tourmaline, which is a significant source of income for artisanal miners. For many years, gemstones have been extracted (winning) as a post-mining economic alternative, and they could be an alternative attraction for attracting visitors. Interestingly, various events, entertainment attractions, and available shopping centers throughout the city were deemed inferior when compared to natural and mining heritage resources.

Abuja-Leather mining site in Itesiwaju LGA, Oyo State have mineralization of tourism resources such as tourmaline of different type of tourmaline with different colours, industrial minerals of kunzite, morganite and octagon/pentagon quartz, dead stone, open pit, underground tunnel and underground pull.

Kunzite (Plate 1), open pit (Plate 2), and dead stone (Plate 3) are the main tourist attractions in Itasa. The major attractions are Morganite (Plate 4), Underground Tunnel (Plate 5) and Octagon/Pentagon Quartz (Plate 6). A portion of the property with rich kunzite mineralization is being worked by excavators.



Plate 1: Industrial Kunzite and Spodumene (Lithium Ore)



Plate 2: Open Pit: Stripping the overburden on the Spodumene (Li₂O) Deposit



Plate 3: Dead stone in flake

Plate 4: Industrial Morganite



Plate 5: Underground tunnel

Plate 6: Quartz Octagon Shape

What are the problems confronting the destination from the perspective of visitors?

Abuja-Leather, Komu located in a border region with abundant minerals resources, which drew a large influx of small and large number of mining companies as well as artisan miners looking to capitalized on these commercial opportunities. The neighborhood, in particular, saw this as a social, cultural and environmental issue. All the traditional chief from the community agreed with the anonymous and stated that:

The addition of noisy heavy mining equipment to mining site, damage to ecological system, carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide gases produced during the mining, as a result of the influx of visitors and mining activities, the cultural values and the serenity of the community suffer as well.

Gemstone mining site are lack of experience manpower and modern equipment that can fast tract their explorations.

According to the responses from FSMMS stated that:

"As a trained experts, who has been into mining for years, we can tell you categorically that we are still very crude with operations and techniques here on this site." (Male, 48 years old, FSMMS)

"If you asked me, we are not mechanized at all." "Compared to what I know about modern mining techniques, we are not there at all." (Female, 41 years old, Official KMA)

Entry and exit of the mining underground tunnels is it safe.

"The mining site is very safe." "I have not seen any unrest since I have been here." (Female, 40 years old, prominent personality, security)

"Forget it; this particular mining site is safe." "Compared to the others I have been to and what often goes on in mining sites, this site is much safer." (Male, 47 years old, FSMMS)

"The most pressing needs here are motorable roads, power supply, pipe-borne water, good drainage, and so on." "Everything that makes a developed mining community is what is lacking here." (Male, 59 years old, Traditional Chief)

Lack of infrastructural and institutional support.

"Good roads and a regular power supply are the only challenges we have here." "It is not just in this community alone; it is everywhere in the country." (Male, 43 years, prominent personality, security)

What are the way to position gemstone mining in Abuja-leather, Komu as a preferred tourist destination?

The respondents' ideas on how to position gemstone mining in Abuja-leather, Komu as a preferred tourist destination, who work for the state ministry information, culture and tourism, revealed the following: The government of Oyo State should start preserving, promoting and marketing the mining site as a tourist destination, raising awareness and enacting law to support the development of the gemstone mining attractions

According to the respondent from the MICT:

People will always seek out these attractions with effective preservation and aggressive marketing, as well as the construction of hotels of reasonable standards, and the expected outcome will be easily realized for future development.

Traditional Chiefs lent their credence to this, with view that:

Positioning of gemstone mining site as a preferred tourist destination can be properly executed by the right investor. But I don't know if this country is interested in developing such a lucrative sector many nations live on.

"Yes! "Based on what I am seeing here, it is developed to start with, but there must be an intervention by the government to make it even better." (Female, 40 years old, prominent personality, security)

"Development-wise, hmmm, I will say we can start from here, but subsequently, it will definitely need improvements, a lot of improvements." (Male, 47 years old, FSMMS)

"Yes, but it still needs a lot of improvement here and there to make it look much more attractive and inviting." (Male, 31 years, Company Staff)

"Yes, of course. With the right investment and management culture from the investors. That is what major cities in the world are surviving on. So why not?" (Male, 52 years old, FMICT)

"Yes! Like I said earlier, with the right investment and management culture from the investors it should compete favorably, if not more. "This mining site has a lot of potential that is still untapped." (Male, 52 years old, FMICT)

"Yes, it's a combination of the two attractions. As you can see, the landscapes include highlands, lowlands, tunnels, and so on. So, yes, I can call it the perfect combination of the two attractions. (Male, 31 years, Company Staff)

"Yes, of course. "The inflow of mining activities has huge influence on the social, cultural, and economic benefits to the community, judging by the rate of development over the years due to the level of mining activities here" (Male, 52 years, FMICT).

SUMMARY

The research was carried out to determine gemstone mining and its attractiveness in Abuja-Leather, Komu, Oyo State. The study was conducted in the Abuja-Leather, Komu, Oyo State. The purpose of the study was to examine the rate of tourists' visits to Abuja-leather gemstone mining site as a tourist destination, identify the problems confronting the community and visitors through gemstone mining and tourism activities, and determine how to position gemstone mining in Abuja-leather district, Komu as a preferred tourist destination. The theoretical frameworks used for this study were the motivation theory of destination image and social exchange theory. The model specification used for this study were gemstone mining path model, strength and weakness of visual gemstone mining and tourist's behavior on gemstone mining destination. The sample size for the study was determined by saturation of data and consisted of 65 respondents, but only 61 were successfully interviewed, thereby giving a 94% success rate. Data collection was done by means of a structured interview, and the data was transcribed and analyzed. Findings from this study revealed a fairly rate of tourists' visits to Abuja leather and gemstone mining as a tourist destination and identification of gemstone mining attractions and resources visited by

tourists. Man-made attractions such as open-cast pits, underground tunnels, and accommodations can be found in Abuja-Leather, Komu. Natural attractions include gemstones of different names and colors, industrial minerals, and underground pulls.

The Abuja-Leather gemstone mining site is expected to be included on the UNESCO World Heritage list's preliminary list. Open-cast pits, underground tunnels, industrial minerals, gemstones, and post-mining settlements occupy tourist spots. It has been utilized for a range of various activities such as sport and adventure tourism, gem business centers, and environmental tourism. The major problem confronting the destination from the perspective of visitors was the absence of basic amenities, and the prospects of these attractions for tourism development were significantly high. Finally, it was revealed that there is a significant relationship between gemstone mining and its attractiveness in Abuja-Leather, Komu Oyo State.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative study revealed that there is a fairly rate of tourists' visits to Abuja-leather gemstone mining as a tourist destination. The majority of respondents have visited the sites of these attractions up to twice a month, and the level of patronage is moderate, according to the respondents. According to the data, the following features make the site appealing to tourists: kunzite, open pit, dead stone, manganite, underground tunnel, and Octagon/Pentagon Quartz. Gemstone mining operations disseminate information about the origins, occurrences, and applications of gems. At a mining site, visitors can marvel at the various types and shapes of gemstones and the applications of gems. At a mining site, visitors can marvel at the various types and shapes of stone. Research shows that the general public and visitors can be informed about the benefits and properties of gemstones. A gemstone mining site is a place where visitors can have a spiritual encounter. The respondents noted that these sites have a high degree of open space for numerous visitors, a low level of modern touches, and the preservation of historic elements as well as a high level of historical elements.

This research work revealed the problems hindering the development of these attractions as tourist destinations, including vibrations caused by blasting can damage structures such as buildings, roads, and bridges near the mining site. Noise associated with drilling equipment can cause ear and heart problems, especially when combined with pulsation. Noise disturb the peace of the area due to the influx of vain miners as a result of sexually abusing women. The development of gemstone mining requires a significant amount of capital. One of the issues confronting the gemstone mining site is the insufficient release of funds from government coffers. Lack of awareness of the potential of the gemstone mining site has hampered its growth, particularly among the elderly, young elites, and people from all walks of life. A lack of understanding about mining tourism sites and their importance has hampered their development. Training is the process of imparting knowledge and skills to a person in order to improve their performance. The truth is that the majority of mining and tourism workers are not professionally trained. The study also revealed how to position the gemstone mining site as a preferred tourist destination, including declaring the mining site a national tourist destination; some see this as the start of the process of promoting and marketing the mining site as a tourist destination. In another segment, it was raising awareness, implementing, and developing tourism policies while taking into account Oyo State's needs and aspirations in order to make the gemstone mining site in Abuja-Leather, Komu, and Oyo State a sustainable and international-quality destination, as well as providing sufficient funds for mining companies to begin operations. Finally, respondents acknowledged the feasibility of marketing gemstone mining sites as tourist destinations. These include creating special projects and events, such as Independent Day, to improve the environment and it was worthy of note that there is a significant relationship between gemstone mining and the attractiveness of Abuja-Leather, Komu Oyo State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings from this study reveal that there is a good rate of tourists' visits to Abuja leather and gemstone mining as a tourist destination; the major problem confronting the destination from the perspective of visitors was the absence

of basic amenities, and the prospects of these attractions for tourism development were significantly high. The study makes the following recommendations:

- i. The government, in teamwork with the community and other organizations, should waste no time in exploiting this promising sector.
- ii. The singular challenge of a lack of basic social amenities should be sorted as soon as possible to begin this tourism campaign with.
- iii. The indigenes and the state government of Oyo State should harness their potentials to propose a project in favor of this study and push for a tourist center at the site.
- iv. Companies and organizations benefiting from this mining site should use their foreign relationships to convince foreign investors to harness the tourism potential of the Komu community mining site.

Implication of the Study

The obvious rate of tourists visiting the Abuja leather and gemstone mining industry as a tourist destination significantly implies an avenue and subsequently a need for the nation to look deeply inward at the salient sources of revenue that are considerably timeless and sustainable to keep the nation's economy afloat above the waters of economic recession and low GDP amidst its close call to total collapse.

It is worthy of note that the major problems confronting the destination from the perspective of the visitor are few, insignificant, not life-threatening, and also unrealistic in that they cannot be tackled. The major challenge of social and basic amenities is a must-have in any community, whether it has any economic gains or not, and as such is little or nothing to be tackled by the government. This implies that the site is a sure bet for tourism already.

Finally, the prospects of these attractions for tourism development are significantly high, implying that a failure to exploit this potential could be disadvantageous to the nation's economic strength and subsequently creep the economy in the near future.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study provided information on the factors that influence gemstone mining and its appeal as a tourist destination. Tourist perceptions of gemstone mining tourism resources and the uniqueness of gemstone mining may be found in other mining destinations, but the appealing and charming colors, as well as the economic value of gemstone mining heritage, are exceptional and connect visitors to the past. Tourist preferences and motivations can significantly influence mining tourism development decision-making and policies.

Suggestion for Further studies

Despite its contributions, this study highlights a few points for future researchers to consider. The study concentrated on the gemstone mining industry and its appeal in Abuja-Leather, Komu, and Oyo States. The sample size was drawn from government and non-government officials living in Oyo State. As a result, such a study and population should be considered in other southwest states and beyond. Researchers can also investigate the outcomes of hiring qualified professionals to manage the gemstone mining site, as well as the advantages of regular mining staff training. The study found that the number of females visiting gemstone mining sites in Abuja-Leather, Komu, and Oyo State is lower than that of their male counterparts. Researchers may investigate this area to determine the reasons for this development.

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INFLUENCE OF YOUTHS ON TOURISM DESTINATION INFLOW, ABDULSALAM YOUTH CENTRE MINNA NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The World continues to be challenged by socio-economic crises like unemployment, climatic change, war, and conflicts. Tourism destinations not only affected by these crises but limited it assess. The study examined the influence of youths on tourism destination inflow, Abdulsalam Youth Centre Minna Niger State Nigeria. A total of 150 was considered as the population, while 132 was used as the sample size. The respondents were chosen based on their willingness to participate on the questionnaire administered. Percentage and inferential statistics were used to interpret data collected. The study found that majority of the respondents as the youth's falls under the ages of 28 and above as people who knows their expectations and desire to explore their potentials. In addition, majority of these respondents came from various part of the state. The study further found that some of the respondents are not aware of the potential of the youth centre as a tourism tour. Similarly, the study reveals that majority of the respondents are not influenced by their professions or parental influence, rather, they take advantage of youth tourism activities to enhance their network relationship. Furthermore, the study also found that these respondents partake on the youth tourism due to nature, friends, and socio-economic benefits. Therefore, they see the youth tourism as vanguard for empowering youths economically and developing their potentials. However, the study found that the perception of youth in relation to female and male varied. Thus, youth tourism should be enshrined in our cultural heritage and school curriculum.

Keywords: Youth, Youth tourism, Youth centre, Destination inflow, Minna

INTRODUCTION

Youth tourism seem to be the newest and fastest-growing market in the tourism industry globally because it has a highly profitable tourism market (Cakar & Seyitoglu, 2020). It is reported that the global estimated youth tourism represents 336 million travellers which accounts for 23% of the international arrivals (UNWTO, 2016; Wyse Travel Confederation, 2021). Although, youth travellers are regarded as pioneers in exploring new tourism products, however, the existing literature indicates that a lack of understanding of youth travellers' decision-making process is obvious (Wilkening, 2010),

Therefore, youths seem to be the vibrate engine for the development and creation of any economic viable activities. The energy and desire to partake in socio-economic activities especially tourism adventures make them useful group for tourism development. They are refers to as youths or young tourists which take part in a major tourism activities worldwide. They are regarded as the fastest growing tourism groups throughout the world, represented over 20% of the entire tourism market (Han, Kim, and Kiatkawsin, 2017). Hence, their participation in different tourism types formed unique market.

Youths are therefore regarded as a dynamic, creative, and active group that are most valuable human resource for enhancing the political, economic, and cultural activities of nations. Although, different organizations and scholars described youth differently. It is a period of transition from childhood needs to adulthood's freedom and realization of connectivity as individuals in a community. Age seems to be the best checklist; thus, youth is a person between the ages of completing school and finding their first job. The African Youth Charter Defines youth as ages between 15 and 35. In addition, the National Youth Policy (2014) defines it as anyone between the ages of 15-29. For the purpose of this article, the age blanket for the youth or young people is between the ages of 12 and 35 years old. In line with this assertion, World Youth Student and Education Travel Confederation, WYSE (2021)

observed that the major motivation influence of young tourists is to interact with local people and to experience different daily life in relation to other people's culture.

Although, youth tourism is an increasingly and new market, few studies have been conducted in relation to youth perception and behaviours (Krnche, 2021). Also, Ramadhania, Munandar, and Tapachai (2021) in their studies on 'destination choice intention of young tourist' found that despite the enormous market, there is still limited study in youth tourism context. In addition, Blomgren and Ljungstrom (2018) also found that there is still a limited number of studies on the youth tourism market using activity-based segmentation (Eusébio and João Carneiro, 2015). Therefore, the objective of this study is to bridge these gaps identified in the literature with focus on influence of youths on destination inflow and impact of youths on a destination with emphasize on Abdulsalam Youth Centre Minna Niger Sate Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Destination Choice Intention

Destination is a crucial element to tourists which influences individual's choices made. A choice of a destination depends among others the accessibility, affordability and facilities. Destination choice intention is described as the decision-making process that determines the choice of a tourist's destination. Intention to visit a particular destination is individual decisions that is usually influence either by past tourists reviews or available information on that destination. Thus, intention is the individual's future behavior that can be defined as the likelihood to act. Intention drives people's behavior when they visit a destination.

Thus, measuring intention is an important element to predict behavior, because the behavioral intention associated with choosing a destination leads to a specific effect on tourists' values, which affects willingness to choose or to continue choosing the destination as well as recommending such destinations to others. Hence, intention is a consumer's plan to use a specific service or to enjoy it in a specific destination. For example, Ramadhania, Munandar and Tapachai (2021) report that distance desire for a destination play an intermediary role between tourist attitudes and travel intention as well as tourist subjective norms and travel intention.

Similarly, Buffa's (2015) studied young tourists' profiles and attitudes, he found that in the choice of destination motivations, several elements are considered paramount which include among others discovery of new cultures, discovery of new landscapes, contemplation of natural and artistic heritage, contact with local community as well as contact with nature (Tambunan, Sibarani, and Asmara, 2021). Thus, a destination choice intention will affect the tourists' future behaviours. In this study, behavioural intention is the respondent's anticipation of a destination that is the Abdulsalam's Youth Centre Minna Niger state Nigeria.

Youth Tourism

Youth tourism refers to young travellers who takes pleasure in affordable lodging, social meetings, social interactions and experience sharing, community engagement, willingness to invest their time and effort on new adventures, however, youth tourism is one of the unreached regular visitor segments in the market (Maoz, 2006). Youth tourism, therefore, is associated with backpacking, adventure travel, solitary travel, student mobility and employment travel. These group of tourists are found of associating with the event such as Youth Festivals, Youth Associations, and Youth Engagement and Experience Sharing. Thus, youth tourism focuses on local culture, social festivals and music concepts. It is noted to be the experiential type of tourism/traveller who seeks out new sights and activities.

It should be noted that youth tourism seem to be expanding quickly as a result of changes in the global socio-demographic characteristics, affordable travel, and the expansion of backpacker culture especially music concepts. Youths are therefore regarded as the torch bearers who carry their legacies and influence major social changes in the society (Chettri, 2011). Although, studies on youths focused on Europe, America, and Arab world, however, there are limited studies on youth tourism in Nigeria and in Africa. Similarly, despite quantum of researches on youth travel or tourism in Asia, there are still limited studies on youth influences on tourist destination (Kasim and Wickens, 2020). Also, it is opined that the higher the degree of consciousness, willingness to learn,

their availability and accessibility will continue to influence youths on tourism market (Buffa, 2015).

It is further acknowledged that the youths' psychological characteristics formed the influencing variables towards youth tourism; thus, they are characterized by fewer family ties and responsibility, selection of affordable accommodations, and willingness to engage in social tourism. Hence, the desire to learn, discover, and self-actualize are regarded as the important motivations that influenced young tourists (King and Gardiner, 2015).

Therefore, conducting studies on youths become imperatives because of their influence on socio-economic variables in a tourism destination. The growth of tourism generally can be associated with the desire of the youths for gaining new experience and social interaction (Richards, 2015). However, the increasing growth of the young traveller market segment in a globalized world, therefore, call for fragmentation of the youth travellers types such as tourists, travellers, volunteers, language students, exchange students and interns (Çakar and Seyitoğlu, 2016).

Ghete (2015) also observed that young people or youths' travels entails spending huge amount of money to enrich their experiences, serve as a learning new thing, meeting people to expand their network relationship, contact with other peoples' culture, enhancing career development and life style. Youths by nature, therefore, creates a diverse social and cultural understanding and socialization among social class of the society. This is enhanced through ICT tools; they used technologies to communicate and to make trip bookings. Although, booking for trips are carried out by some travel agencies. For instance, internet is used by young people or youths for references, reviews, ranking or recommendations, travelling plans and destination information generation.

Therefore, the youth tourism market will continue to be relevant due to its considerable size, rising trends in travel and tourism, resilience and likelihood to explore new destinations by this group of the society. Although, the market seems to be active for the tourism entrepreneurs, youth visitors segmentation based on activities has been widely neglected, notwithstanding, the young people have the propensity to undertake various activities in a destination (Eusébio and João Carneiro, 2015). For instance, it is opined that the studies on youth tourism market on segmentations suggests that youth activity preferences and participation in activities varied according to some socio-demographic variables, travel motivations and travel behaviour features. Frandberg (2010) for instance found that a single young people are usually more active than married young people, emphasizing the importance of youths.

It can be contended that youth tourism is important because it is the market of the future; it a socio-cultural mechanism through which youth talents and ability are discovered, and their potentials channeled towards socio-economic ventures of the society (Yunusovich, 2018). Thus, an increase in youth tourists have been reported to led to creation of a new segment in the tourism industry which seem that it will be the future growth market in the industry (Stevanović and Milenković (2017). Therefore, this study addresses these questions: Does tourist destination influence youth inflow? Does tourist destination have impact on youth inflows?

The Study Area

Minna is one of the 36 Federal Republic of Nigeria States in North Central, and it is the toll gate to the South West and South Eastern States. It is the capital city of Niger State with geographical coordinates of approximately between latitude 09° 025" N and 09 ° 04" N; and longitude 06 ° 015" E and 06 ° 0 35" E with an average elevation/altitude of 299 meters (Ojigi et al., 2013). The city sits at the crossroads of several major highways connecting northern and southern Nigeria (Aiyedun et al., 2017). The population is approximately 355,000 people, making it one of the major urban centres in Niger State. The inhabitants speak three main languages, including Nupe. Hausa, and Gbangi. The vegetation is predominantly Savanna, characterized by grassland and scattered trees. It is an agrarian State producing rice, yam, and corn, one of the closest States to the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The climate in Minna is classified as tropical Savanna, with a distinct wet and dry season. (Ir et al., 2020). During the wet season, which typically runs from May to October, the town experiences heavy rainfall and high humidity. On the other hand, the dry season lasts from November to April and is characterized by hot temperatures and minimal rainfall (Figure 1).

Abdulsalam Youth Centre is a communal facility located in Tunga Area of Minna. It is an event center set aside for Weddings, Birthdays ceremonies and Festive celebrations like Sallah and Christmas. The interior comprises of large halls and conference size spaces for events and other functions. The exterior has a lush green landscape at the rear end of the structure with 8 number of gazebos. The gazebos are circular in nature covered with aluminum zinc sheets for purposes of relaxation as well as for exhibition of products. The facility is owned and maintained by the Niger state Government. It is named after the former military president Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar.



Source: @jeremiahaluwong (2018)

Figure 1: Niger State Map

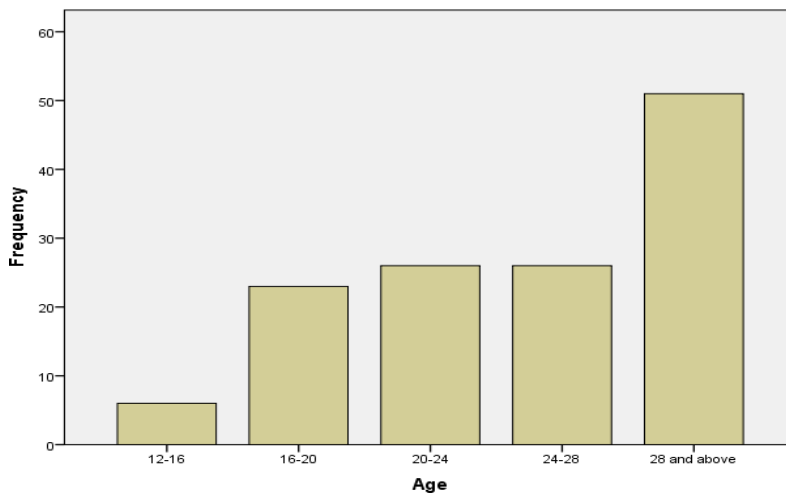
METHODOLOGY

This study adopts quantitative research techniques because the researcher aims to explore the views of tourists, students, artisans, public servants, and entrepreneurs on the influence of youths on tourism destination inflow. A total of one-hundred and fifty (150) was considered as sample population. However, a total of one-hundred and thirty-two (132) respondents were considered as the sample size which served as the questionnaire that returned among a total of one-hundred and fifty respondents questionnaire administered. These respondents were chosen using the purposive sample technique and their willingness to participate on the survey. Among the 132 respondents that participated on the survey, tourists 41, students 35, Entrepreneurs 30, Artisans 13 and public servant 13 respectively.

The questionnaire designed covers two main areas as youth intention and youth influence on a tourist destination inflow. In line with the suggestion by Tang and Zeng (2021), the responses were classified into 1.0 - 1.80 (Strongly disagree), 1.81-2.60 (Disagree), 2.61-3.40 (True to some extent), 3.41 – 4.20 (Agree), and 4.21 – 5.00 (Strongly Agree). The instrument's reliability was determined using the Cronbach Alpha procedure (Cronbach, 1951). Thus, the reliability coefficients were 0.802 for Destination intention, and youth influence (0.851), Descriptive (percentages, mean, and bar-chart) and inferential statistics were used for data analysis and interpretation thereof.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Figure 2: Age of the respondents



Source: Field Survey 2023

Figure 2 reveals that the majority of the youths are within the age blanket of 28 years and above, (38.6%) followed by 20-28 (19.7%), 20-24 (19.7%) years old, and proceeded by 16-20 years (23%) and 12-16 years (6%) as the least. This analysis shows that majority of the respondents are matured youths who delights in tourism activities in addition to the fact that the study is on youth participation and influence on tourism destination. Tourism activities mostly anchored by the youths because of their desire to gain new experience and making friends especially for tourism events at the tourism destinations.

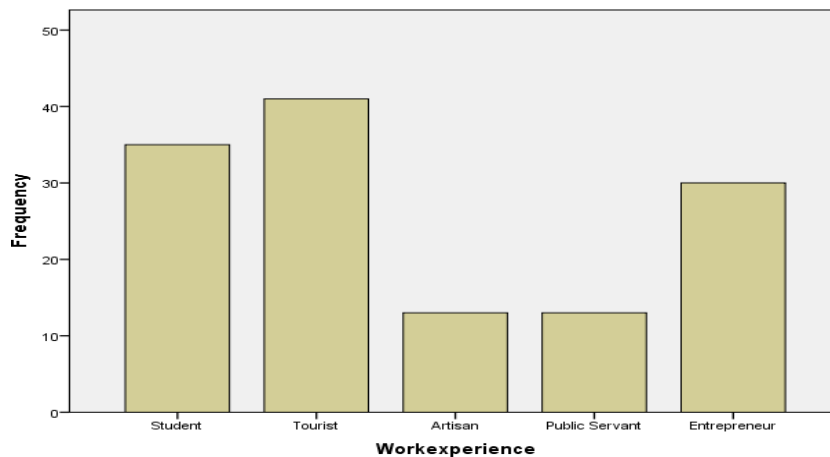


Figure 3: Work Experience

Source: Field Survey 2023

Figure 3 reveals that tourists 41 (31.1%) ranked the highest, followed by students 35 (35%), entrepreneur 30 (22.7%), and the least respondents are artisan (13) and public servants (13) with 9.8% each. This analysis show that Abdulsalam Youth Centre served as a central attraction for youth activities in the state.

Table 1: Income of the Respondents

Occupation	Income Range	Frequency	Percentage
Students and tourists	₦50,000 - ₦100,000	76	57.6
Entrepreneur	₦100,000 - ₦150,000	30	22.7
Artisans	₦150,000 - ₦200,000	13	9.8
Public servants	₦200,000 and above	13	9.8
Total		132	100.0

Table 1 reveals that the majority of the respondents who are students as well as tourists, their income falls within the range of ₦50,000 - ₦100,000 (57.6%) which is the least income earners, followed by the Entrepreneur ₦100,000 - ₦150,000 (22.7%), Artisans ₦150,000 - ₦200,000 (9.8%), and ₦200,000 and above public servants (9.8%). This analysis reveals that public servants and artisans who either engaged in personal or government works ranked as the highest income earners.

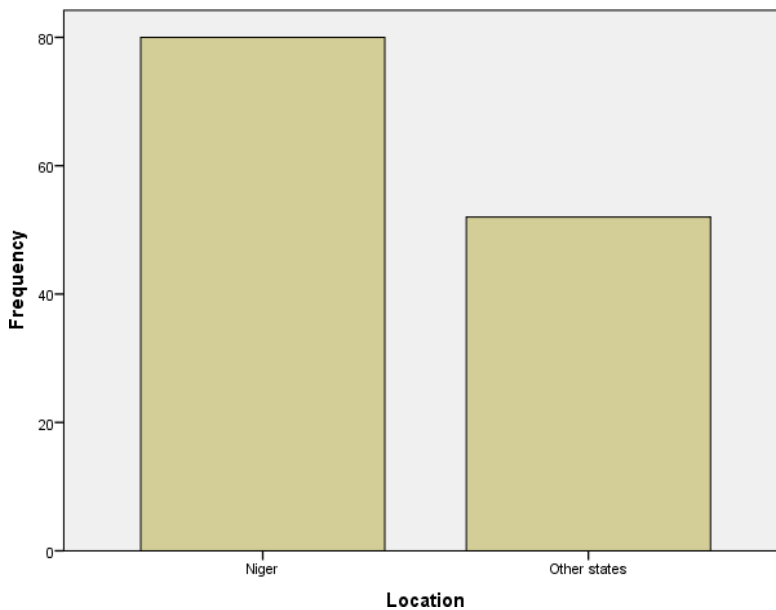


Figure 4: Respondents Location

Source: Field Survey 2023

Figure 4 reveals that respondents states which is categorized into Niger state and other states in Nigeria, it shows that respondents that come from Niger state that participated on youth's activities in Abdulsalam Youth Centre Minna ranked highest with 80 people (60.6%), and other states has respondents of 52 people (39.4%). This analysis shows that youths which is a combination of tourists and students in the state always take advantage of youthful activities that take place in the Abdulsalam Youth Centre Minna. This further reveal that the main objective for which the centre is established is being achieved.

Table 2: Youth Intention and Influence Variables

The concept of youth tourism even though it might look new seem to be in existence. Table 2 reveals that some of the respondents fail to accept the concept of youth tourism with (Mean: 3.3561). This imply that even though they engaged in youth tourism, they fail to note the activities they engaged in are tied to youth tourism. In addition, some of the respondents fail to agree that they ever participated on youth tourism with (Mean: 3.0530). This is in line with studies conducted by Kasim and Wickens (2020) that despite quantum of researches on youth

travels, there are still limited studies on youth influence on tourist destination. Also, youth tourism is one of the unreached regular visitor segments in the market (Maoz, 2006).

Furthermore, respondents disagreed that their participation on youth activities are not tied to the professional demands or parental influence with (Mean: 3.2045 and 3.1970). This is contrary to the studies conducted by Ramadhania, et al. (2021) that distance desire for a destination play an intermediary role between tourist attitudes and travel intention in addition to the subjective norms and travel intention.

Similarly, the respondents in their responses to youth tourism influenced by natures, friends, and socio-economic, political and technology respectively, they agreed to these questions with (Mean: 3.6742, 3.5000, 4.0682, 3.7803, 4.1061, and 3.9470). This is in agreement with the studied carried out by Buffa's (2015) that in the choice of destination intention and motivation, these elements played significance roles: discovery of new cultures, discovery of new landscapes, contemplation of natural and artistic heritage, contact with local community as well as contact with nature. However, in response to question of male and female tourists are the same in a tourism tour, they disagreed with ((2.9167). Youth by definition varied among scholars and therefore, their perception also varied. This is in line with the studied conducted by Krnche (2021) that youth activity preferences and participation in activities varied according to some socio-demographic variables, travel motivations and travel behaviour features.

In response to the questions of youth tourism as vanguard for empowering youths, information dissemination; the respondents agreed in with (Mean: 3.8258 and 3.5000). It is on this assertion that it is noted that youths by nature creates a diverse social and cultural understanding and socialization among social class of the society (Ghete, 2015). Similarly, the respondents agreed that cultural tourism and hospitality sector enhances youth activities with the (Mean: 3.6667 and 3.6061).

In addition, the respondents' responses agreed with regards to question on enjoying youth tourism tours and wish to recommend such to friends and family relations with the (Mean: 3.5682 and 3.7803). This is accordance with the studies by WYSE (2021) that the major motivation influence of young tourists is to interact with local people and to experience different daily life in relation to other people's culture.

Table 2: Youth Intention and Influence Variables

Test Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have heard about the concept of 'youth tourism'	3.3561	1.37665
I have ever participated in youth tourism tour	3.0530	1.15458
I am motivated to participate on youth tourism by natures	3.6742	1.08773
I am motivated to partake on youth tourism by friends	3.5000	1.29885
artake in youth tourism to make new friends	3.4242	1.14666
I participate on youth tourism because of my profession	3.2045	1.28252
I engage in youth tourism because of parental influence	3.1970	1.20076
Youth tourism is motivated by: Socio-Economic, Political and Technology influence	4.0682	1.02035
My country/state is one of the suitable destinations for youth tourism	3.5303	1.35037
Female youths and Male youths in tourism tours are the same	2.9167	1.15937
Youth tourism is a forum for social interaction	3.7803	1.13457
Youth tourism is an opportunity to learn new things	4.1061	1.02083
Youth tourism is a means of engaging youths on viable community projects	3.9470	1.17424
Youth tourism is a means of empowering youths on community's socio-economic projects	3.8258	1.20746

Youth tourism tours served as information dissemination centre	3.5000	1.17545
Youth tourism hold the future of Hospitality and Tourism Industry	3.7727	1.08135
Cultural tourism is one of the anchors of youth tourism	3.6667	1.13693
Hospitality sector enhances youth tourism activities	3.6061	1.14424
I enjoy youth tourism tours	3.5682	1.09957
I will recommend youth tourism tours to friends and family relations	3.7803	1.24370

Source: Field Survey 2023

CONCLUSION

Youths are not only vanguard for socio-economic development of nations, but they are also motivational tools for tourism destination growth. Tourism destinations no matter how good they are fascinated, they must be assessed by tourists, especially the youths because they hold future market of the industry due to their enthusiastic energy, desire to interact with other people, willingness to spend their little resources on tours, willingness to participate on new sights and events, and recommending destinations to others. Therefore, youth tourism should not only be research upon, but it should be enshrined as part of our cultural heritage and school curriculum. By so doing, this will provide platform for youth tourism activities while diverting their attention from social vices in the society.

RECOMMENDATION

Youth tourism seem not too popular in this part of the world (Africa), although, there are activities being engaged by youths which can be refers to as youth tourism like mountain hiking, and camp-fire. Therefore, in line with the findings of the study, youth centres and tourism destinations should be built both by government and private entrepreneurs to encourage youth tourism activities. In addition, government should encourage youths to partake in tourism tours while on holidays by subsidy entrance fees for students who are still youths. Destination managers also should engage in youth competitions that will take their mind away from the social vices.

Marketing Implication

This study has multiplied effect on the government, the destination management, and local community. Youths that engaged themselves on tourism tours especially at tourist destinations, such services will enhance government taxation and reduces social vices among the youths. Destination management by partaking in youth tourism tours will enhance the share of the market and expanding the future market of the industry. Local community benefits through sales of handcrafts and network relationship.

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THE IMPACT OF EVENT CENTER ON SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN KWARA STATE VIA M & M EVENT CENTRE, ILORIN, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This comprehensive study delves into the transformative influence of M & M Event Center on the social fabric of Kwara State society. The primary focus is on understanding how the event center facilitates social interactions, bolsters community engagement, stimulates economic activity, and fosters social cohesion. The study follows a quantitative approach, encompassing surveys for quantitative data collection and interviews for qualitative insights. With a participant pool of 80 respondents, the research captures a rich cross-section of demographics. The results are indicative of a vibrant ecosystem within the event center, where a diversity of social events and gatherings thrive, enhancing the social interactions of attendees. A prevailing positivity is observed among event participants, organizers, and the local community, corroborating the center's substantial social impact. Furthermore, the center's economic significance is underscored by its contribution to increased economic activity and the positive reverberations felt throughout the local community and the wider economy. An essential dimension of the study unveils the center's role in nurturing a sense of belonging, fostering unity, and amplifying community engagement. These findings are aligned with the evolving global trends in tourism, which emphasize experiential, community-based, and socially conscious travel. By offering an expansive range of social experiences and providing spaces conducive to networking, M & M Event Center emerges as a vital hub for interactions that transcend mere transactions. These interactions, in turn, contribute to economic growth, while the sense of unity promotes social cohesion.

Keywords: Event, Tourism, Hospitality, Social impact and Local community

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry holds a significant position globally, characterized by its glamour and sophistication. It encompasses the accommodation and food and beverage sectors, which together form the largest segment of the industry. The roots of hospitality can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as Egypt, Greece, and the Roman Empire. Throughout history, advancements in technology, transportation, and cultural and economic progress, as well as the growing desire for leisure and exploration, have shaped the evolution of hospitality. Hospitality can be defined as a deliberate and sustained endeavor to establish mutual understanding between an organization and the public, fostering friendship and promoting better communication. At its core, hospitality revolves around the relationship between a host and a guest. The hospitality industry is witnessing a significant growth in the realm of events and conferences. These gatherings, encompassing various themes such as music, sports, education, and luxury, are not only generating substantial revenue but also reshaping the operations of businesses, hospitality organizations, and resorts worldwide (WTTC, 2021).

The hospitality industry is a key component of the broader travel and tourism sector. The travel and tourism industry encompasses various businesses that share a common objective of providing products and services to cater to the needs and desires of travelers. It encompasses three main areas of activity: restaurant services, which encompass all aspects of food and beverage provision; accommodation, which includes overnight stays in a range of establishments such as hotels, guesthouses, hostels, and rural homes. Tourism plays a crucial role in the Nigerian economy, demonstrating consistent growth in recent years. Its significance lies in its ability to create employment

opportunities and generate income, which can greatly impact the local population and contribute to an improved standard of living. By fostering tourism, local communities have the potential to expand their earnings and enhance their socio-economic conditions (Mansour and Mahin, 2013). It is important to recognize the close connection between tourism and events. In fact, one cannot discuss events without acknowledging their intrinsic relationship with tourism (Min, Roh, and Bak, 2016).

Events have emerged as a significant component of the hospitality and tourism industry, permeating various sectors such as tourism, lodging, transportation, food and beverage, catering, and retail. They offer both direct and indirect benefits, including income generation, employment opportunities, and investment. In addition to being an industry in its own right, the event industry plays a pivotal role in the overall economy, particularly through business-related events organized by and for the business community, customers, employees, and suppliers. The growth of event tourism has had a substantial impact on the demand and supply of the tourism industry, making it one of the fastest-growing sectors (Min *et al.*, 2016). The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projected a 44% growth rate in the event industry by 2020 (Mansour and Mahin, 2013).

Events within the tourism context aim to attract more visitors, particularly during off-peak seasons, while also serving as catalysts for urban renewal and enhancing destination infrastructure and tourism capacity to create a positive destination image (Ui, Day and Cai, 2016). Event centers, such as exhibition halls, conference centers, exposition centers, and convention centers, play a significant role in hosting large-scale events and have become a popular attraction. The trend of celebrating functions in upscale indoor venues gained popularity in the early 1990s, as the ability to afford such venues became a status symbol (Iwuh, 2012). Event centers have become significant contributors to social activities in Kwara State, playing a pivotal role in shaping the social fabric of communities. These centers provide venues for a wide range of gatherings, celebrations, and events, bringing people together and fostering social interactions. They serve as platforms for cultural activities, community engagement, and economic growth. Understanding the impact of event centers on social activities is crucial for maximizing their potential benefits and informing future development strategies.

Nigeria, as a diverse and vibrant country, has a rich tradition of community engagement and social interactions. Events, such as weddings, parties, conferences, and cultural festivals, are essential parts of Kwara State society. Historically, these events were often held in private homes or public spaces not specifically designed for hosting large gatherings. However, the growing demand for event venues led to the establishment of dedicated event centers across the country. The success of event organization often hinges on the selection of an appropriate venue (Ui, *et al.*, 2016). Events held at event centers have a direct impact on participants, including the host community and event tourists, which can be either positive or negative. Event tourism can bring about social, economic, and cultural changes within a community. Hosting festivals and events at specific venues is considered a common tourism development strategy as they attract tourists, generate employment, and distribute economic benefits throughout the destination (Ui, *et al.*, 2016).

M & M Event Center, located in Kwara State, is one such establishment that has gained prominence in the region. As an influential event center, it has attracted a significant number of attendees, event organizers, and local community members. The unique characteristics and contributions of M & M Event Center make it an ideal case study for examining the impact of event centers on social activities in Kwara State.

Despite the growing prominence and widespread utilization of event centers in Kwara State, there is a need to conduct a comprehensive study to understand their impact on social activities. While event centers are assumed to play a significant role in social activities, community engagement, there is limited empirical evidence available specifically examining their contributions and evaluating their effectiveness in fostering social cohesion and economic growth. The lack of in-depth research on the impact of event centers, particularly in the Nigerian context, presents a gap in knowledge and understanding. It is crucial to investigate the specific ways in which event centers, such as the M & M Event Center in Kwara State, contribute to the social fabric of Kwara State society. This research

aims to address this gap by examining the impact of M & M Event Center on social activities, community engagement and economic development.

Furthermore, the perceptions and experiences of various stakeholders, including event attendees, event organizers, and local community members, need to be explored to gain insights into the social impact of event centers. By understanding their perspectives, we can identify any potential challenges, shortcomings, or areas for improvement in the functioning and effectiveness of event centers in Kwara State. Therefore, the central problem this research seeks to address is the lack of comprehensive understanding of the impact of event centers, using M & M Event Center as a case study, on social activities. By investigating these aspects, this study aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations for event center management, community development initiatives, and policy formulation to enhance the positive impact of event centers on Kwara resident society.

The aim of this research is to investigate the impact of M & M Event Center on social activities in Kwara State, with a focus on community engagement, cultural activities, economic growth, and social interactions. The following are the objectives guiding this work: to explore the ways in which M & M Event Center facilitates social interactions and enhances the social life of Oko-Erin residents; to understand the perceptions and experiences of event attendees, event organizers, and local community members regarding the social impact of M & M Event Center; to evaluate the economic contributions of M & M Event Center to Oko-Erin community and the overall economy; and to examine the role of M & M Event Center in promoting community engagement and social cohesion in Oko-Erin community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The economic benefits of tourism can be observed through its direct and indirect contributions to the balance of payments. Foreign exchange earnings generated from tourism activities, such as expenditure by international tourists on accommodation, dining, transportation, and attractions, bolster the national balance of payments. These earnings can help alleviate trade deficits, strengthen currency reserves, and enhance a country's overall economic stability. Moreover, tourism's positive economic impact extends beyond foreign exchange earnings. The industry generates direct employment opportunities across various sectors, including hospitality, transportation, entertainment, and retail (Mansour and Mahin, 2013). This job creation can contribute to reducing unemployment rates and improving the overall socio-economic well-being of local communities. Indirectly, tourism stimulates the growth of supporting industries, such as agriculture, handicrafts, and construction, through increased demand for goods and services. Additionally, tourism development often leads to infrastructure improvements, including transportation networks, hotels, and recreational facilities. These investments not only enhance the tourism experience but also create long-term assets that can benefit the local population and attract further economic activities (Sharpley and Telfer 2015).

The key component of tourism is the tourist themselves. Each tourist is unique, possessing different preferences and being attracted to distinct tourist destinations. They engage in various activities during their vacations and utilize different entertainment facilities. Furthermore, they may have diverse opinions and complaints about different aspects of their travel experiences (Orekoya, 2018). As the significance of tourism has grown, so has the recognition of its economic impact. Governments and organizations have increasingly focused on harnessing the potential benefits of tourism for their economies. The industry has become a crucial driver of employment, revenue generation, and regional development. It fosters entrepreneurship, stimulates various sectors of the economy, and supports the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and natural resources (Rasool, Maqbool and Tarique, 2021). Additionally, tourism has gained prominence as a tool for poverty alleviation, particularly in developing countries, by creating job opportunities and empowering local communities. Not only does tourism hold economic importance, but it also contributes to the exchange of ideas, cultures, and knowledge. It acts as a catalyst for cultural exchange and mutual understanding between travelers and host communities (Shahzadal, 2016).

Tourists have the opportunity to immerse themselves in different traditions, languages, and customs, fostering respect and appreciation for diversity. The growth and diversification of tourism have led to a greater focus on

sustainability and responsible practices. The industry now recognizes the importance of preserving natural environments, respecting local cultures, and minimizing negative impacts. Sustainable tourism aims to strike a balance between economic growth, environmental conservation, and social well-being. Initiatives such as eco-tourism and community-based tourism have gained traction, encouraging travelers to engage in responsible and respectful tourism practices.

Understanding Event Tourism

In the 1980s, public bodies began to recognize the significance of events in creating positive impacts. As a result, during the first decade of the 21st century, there has been increased attention and participation in events worldwide, acknowledging their potential to generate positive outcomes. Events have evolved to play a crucial role in shaping culture, arts, urban development, educating society, and contributing to travel and tourism (Çoban, 2016). Event studies emerged as a field in tourism literature during the late 1970s and gained significant attention in the 1980s. Various disciplines, including sports and business management, anthropology, tourism and leisure, recreation, and regional studies, have explored the social value of different types of events, such as sports, culture, and business events. Events have a long historical background, dating back to ancient times (Çoban, 2016). Attending events has always been a popular leisure activity, and recent factors such as increased leisure time, reductions in working hours, rising retirement rates, and higher disposable incomes have contributed to the growth in event attendance. In modern societies, events serve both economic and social purposes, and they have become more elaborate and detailed. The number of event attendees has also witnessed a substantial increase over time (Çoban, 2016).

Event tourism refers to the organized and professional planning, development, and marketing of festivals and special events as attractions for tourists. These events serve as image-builders, catalysts for infrastructure and economic growth, and draw cards for visitors. The field of tourism management focuses on analyzing the behavior and motivations of various types of tourists (Getz and Page, 2016). The sector of events tourism is often recognized as the fastest-growing segment, influencing both the demand for and supply of the tourism industry (Zlatanov, 2015). Events play a crucial role in promoting destinations and attracting visitor spending by creating an appealing destination image in the face of global competition. Additionally, events contribute to the development of infrastructure, including transportation, accommodations, attractions, and supporting services. This enhanced infrastructure further strengthens the tourism potential and capacity of a destination beyond the scope of leisure-based tourism alone, such as traditional holidays (Kusumawati, 2021).

Events provide opportunities for individuals to connect with a specific area, come together, celebrate, and experience diverse cultures. They also foster creativity and innovation, breathing life into communities and offering destinations a platform to showcase their unique tourism experiences. Moreover, events stimulate economic activity and contribute to increase spending within a destination. Event tourism involves the systematic planning, development, and marketing of festivals and special events as attractions for tourists. These events not only create opportunities for people to engage with a destination but also generate economic activity and facilitate infrastructure development. They serve as powerful tools for destination marketing and promoting the tourism experience, allowing communities to showcase their cultural diversity and foster creativity.

Classification of Events

Event can be classified into mega event, major event, local event and hall mark event

1. **Mega event:** Mega-events are temporary events that span a specific duration and attract a large number of visitors. They have extensive media coverage, significant costs, and substantial impacts on the built environment and the local population.
2. **Major event:** A major event refers to any function that is expected to draw more than 200 attendees. Examples of major events include concerts, dance parties, and large-scale exhibitions.
3. **Local event:** A local event pertains to any event held at a specific venue, such as an amphitheater, which is not classified as a national event. These events typically have a civic, community, educational, or cultural focus and are often sponsored by the city or other governmental, educational, or non-profit institutions.

4. **Hallmark event:** A hallmark event signifies a source of great pride for a community or region. These events are usually large-scale fairs, expositions, cultural festivals, or international sporting events that may occur either as one-time occurrences or on a recurring basis.

Event as a Form of Tourism

Events have emerged as a crucial segment of the hospitality and tourism industry, impacting various sectors such as lodging, transportation, food and beverage, catering, and retail. They provide direct and indirect benefits, including income, employment, and investment. Event tourism encompasses all forms of tourism related to events, which can range from large-scale public events to smaller private gatherings. Event tourism is considered a valuable contributor to the tourism economy, bringing substantial revenue to the host community. While events were traditionally viewed as part of the tourism industry, there has been a shift in recent years, with the recognition of the event industry as a distinct sector. Many universities now offer separate event management degrees, separate from travel and tourism programs development (Sighn, 2020).

Understanding tourism events holds significant prominence from a tourism perspective. Event tourism involves systematic planning, development, and marketing of festivals and special events as attractions, image-builders, catalysts for infrastructure and economic growth, and animators of built attractions. It falls between the fields of tourism management, which analyzes tourist behavior and motivations, and event management, which focuses on event marketing and design. Events have gained popularity as a means of entertainment and social interactions in both urban and rural areas. They have led to increased event organization and management by individuals and corporate bodies to harness their economic and socio-cultural benefits. Events take various forms, such as festivals, meetings, conventions, trade exhibitions, and fairs, and tourism management analyzes the behavior and motivations of tourists, while event management focuses on event marketing and design (Anenechukwu, 2019).

Event tourism lies at the intersection of these two sectors, aiming to fully exploit the potential of events to achieve tourism development for host communities. Event planners need to consider all aspects of event management and conduct significant research from a tourism perspective. Event tourism involves systematic planning and marketing of events as attractions, image-builders, catalysts for infrastructure and economic growth, and animators of built attractions. It shares similarities with other special forms of tourism, requiring analysis of both demand and supply sides. Demand-side analysis examines the motivations of event travelers, while supply-side management focuses on effectively hosting events to maximize positive impacts and minimize negative ones (kusumawati, 2021).

Event Center and Social Activities of Host Community

Social contact between tourists and hosts plays a crucial role in shaping the overall tourism experience, as it directly impacts the satisfaction levels of both tourists and hosts. The concept of social contact in tourism is multifaceted and has been defined and studied in various ways. However, it can generally be understood as the personal encounter that occurs between a tourist and a host during their interaction (Eusébio *et al.*, 2016). In many cases, tourist-host interactions tend to be brief, formal, and temporary in nature. These encounters may lack the depth and frequency of repeated interactions typically found in long-term relationships. Moreover, due to the transient nature of tourism, there is a potential for issues such as deceit, exploitation, and mistrust to arise during these interactions. The power dynamics between tourists and hosts can also be unequal and unbalanced, resulting in different meanings and implications for each party involved (Eusébio *et al.*, 2016).

The findings from Galina, Antonina, and Olga's study (2021) emphasize the importance of well-organized events as effective tools for achieving marketing goals and shaping the image of an enterprise. They highlight that successful event planning should ensure that advertising technologies remain subtle and unobtrusive to participants. The study also underscores the significant role of event tourism in addressing socio-economic challenges within territories, suggesting that local authorities should consider including event tourism in long-term development programs. Such programs should encompass funding for tourism infrastructure development, plans for personnel training, and a comprehensive strategy for promoting event tourism through information dissemination.

Events held in event centers play a significant role in the lives of communities. The events can become a vehicle for improving social relationships in surroundings, for attaining relationships between people, for strengthening people's abilities to understand one another, and for people's well-being (Marques, Borba, and Micheal, 2021). Berridge, (2014) hold that event held in event centers can impact on a community both positively and negatively. In certain contexts, when local people entertain tourists, they may adapt to the needs, attitudes, and values of the tourists, eventually adopting them as their own. This phenomenon is more commonly observed in societies where a dominant culture influences a weaker one, particularly in less sophisticated societies. The diffusion of cultural components within a social framework depends on several factors, including compatibility, advantage, and complexity of the cultural objects. When tourists introduce new ideas, practices, or material goods that are perceived as beneficial or advantageous, there is a greater likelihood of their adoption by the local community (Eusébio et al., 2016).

This impact is often more pronounced among the youth, who are more susceptible to changes in lifestyle and trends. They tend to emulate the behaviors and practices of tourists, leading to changes in the material goods they use, their gestures, and their postures. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as the demonstration effect. It is worth noting that women often exhibit greater openness and adaptability to new cultural influences compared to their male counterparts. They may be more proactive in adopting new practices and embracing changes associated with tourism. The demonstration effect can have both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, it can contribute to the economic development of the local community by aligning their offerings with the preferences of tourists. It can also lead to cultural exchange and mutual learning between tourists and locals. However, there is a risk of cultural homogenization and loss of traditional values if the local culture is overshadowed by the dominant tourist culture (Eusébio et al., 2016).

Event tourism can have notable impacts on the social activities of the host community, both positive and negative. It is important to recognize and address these impacts to ensure a harmonious relationship between the event and the local residents.

One of the negative impacts is noise pollution. Large events often generate high levels of noise, which can disrupt the peace and tranquility of the local community. This can lead to annoyance, sleep disturbances, and a decrease in overall quality of life for residents living in close proximity to the event venue (Moisescu, Gică, Coros, & Yallop, Anca, 2019). Vandalism and crime can also be a concern during events. The influx of a large number of visitors may increase the risk of theft, property damage, and other criminal activities. It is essential for event organizers and local authorities to implement appropriate security measures to ensure the safety of both residents and tourists (Moisescu et al., 2019). Traffic and parking issues are also common challenges associated with events. The increased number of vehicles can lead to congestion on local roads and difficulties finding parking spaces. This can inconvenience residents who rely on these transportation routes and parking facilities for their daily activities. Effective traffic management strategies and alternative transportation options can help alleviate these issues (Moisescu et al., 2019).

Furthermore, waste and damages to the natural environment are another concern. Events often generate a significant amount of waste, including litter and disposable items. If not managed properly, this can have adverse effects on the local environment, including pollution and degradation of natural resources. Implementing effective waste management and recycling practices is crucial to minimize these impacts (Moisescu et al., 2019). The pressure on local services and infrastructure is also a challenge. The sudden influx of visitors during events can strain the capacity of local amenities such as healthcare facilities, public transportation, and sanitation services. Local authorities need to ensure that these services are adequately prepared and equipped to handle the increased demand (Moisescu et al., 2019).

Apparently, the increased cost of living can be a consequence of event tourism. As the demand for accommodation, dining, and other goods and services rises during events, prices may escalate, making it more challenging for local

residents to afford their daily expenses. This can create social and economic disparities within the community (Moisesco *et al.*, 2019).

The positive aspect includes fostering of community/civic pride, creating sociocultural awareness and peace (i.e. Events take people to new places and can broaden their understanding and knowledge of other cultures and environments) and direct sociocultural support (i.e. event organisers or event center owners can assist in empowerment and welfare contribution to the society). In addition, in a study conducted by Deery and Jago (2010) titled "Social impacts of events and the role of anti- social behaviour," the researchers conducted a literature review to examine the available academic research on the social impacts of events on communities. The study revealed that anti- social behaviour (ASB), including actions such as drunkenness, rowdiness, and behavior that poses a threat to life and property, has a significantly negative impact on the community where the event is hosted. This negative social impact can overshadow any positive effects that may have resulted from the event being hosted by the center.

To mitigate the negative effects experienced by residents, event organizers, local authorities, and businesses should establish sustainable partnerships. By actively involving and engaging the local community, they can address concerns, seek input, and develop practices that minimize negative impacts. Embracing socially responsible practices, such as supporting local businesses and community initiatives, can help ensure that the benefits of event tourism are shared more equitably.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study to examine the impact of event center on social activities in Kwara State. Primary data collection source was employed to gather first-hand information that aligns with the objectives of this work. These sources entail direct interaction with the key elements relevant to the study, such as conducting surveys, observations, experiments, administering questionnaires, organizing focus groups, or conducting interviews. In this case, a questionnaire was employed as the primary research instrument to collect data pertaining to the impact of event centers on local businesses in Ilorin metropolis. The population of this study includes three main groups: event attendees, event organizers utilizing M & M Event Center, and local community members. The research study employed a non-probability sampling technique known as convenience sampling, wherein a sample of 100 respondents were selected based on their availability to offer practicality and convenience in data collection. This sampling method helps to enhance the ease and efficiency of the research process by selecting participants who were conveniently accessible.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Section 1 Response base on respondents' demographic information

Table 1 : Frequency Distribution Table for Demographic Information

<i>Demographic Information</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender		
Male	36	45%
Female	42	53%
Other	2	2%
Age		
Under 18	8	10%
18-24	24	30%
25-34	28	35%
35-44	12	15%
45 and above	8	10%
Occupation		
Student	32	40%
Employed (Full-time)	24	30%
Employed (Part-time)	8	10%

Self-employed	6	8%
Unemployed	4	5%
Other	6	7%

Based on the survey responses from 80 participants, a comprehensive understanding of the impact of M & M Event Center on the social activities of Kwara state residents emerges. The demographic breakdown indicates a relatively balanced representation of gender, with 45% identifying as male, 53% as female, and a smaller percentage of 2% identifying as other. Age distribution is diverse, with 30% falling in the 18-24 age range, 35% in the 25-34 age range, and other age groups making up the remaining percentages. In terms of occupation, 40% are students, 30% are employed full-time, and 10% are employed part-time, showcasing a mix of participation.

Section 2 Response base on research objective

Table 2 : Social Interaction and Enhancement of Social Life

<i>Social Interaction and Enhancement of Social Life</i>					
Q4 M&M Event Center offers a variety of social events and gatherings.	SA (30) 40%	A (45) 55%	N (12) 15%	D (6) 8%	SD (2) 2%
Q5 Attending events at M&M Event Center has increased my opportunities for social interactions.	SA (16) 20%	A (32) 40%	N (20) 25%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%
Q6 The event center provides spaces conducive to networking and meeting new people.	SA (28) 35%	A (24) 30%	N (16) 20%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%

Table 3 : Perception and Experiences toward social impact

<i>Perception and Experiences toward social impact</i>					
Q7 As an attendee, the events at M&M Event Center have positively influenced my social life.	SA (20) 25%	A (32) 40%	N (12) 15%	D (10) 12%	SD (6) 8%
Q8 Event organizers perceive M&M Event Center as contributing significantly to attendees' social experiences.	SA (24) 30%	A (36) 45%	N (8) 10%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%
Q9 Local community members believe that M&M Event Center has improved social connections within the community.	SA (22) 28%	A (32) 40%	N (12) 15%	D (8) 10%	SD (6) 7%

Table 4 : Economic contribution to Community

<i>Economic contribution to Community</i>					
Q10 The presence of M&M Event Center has led to increased economic activity in the local community.	SA (28) 35%	A (24) 30%	N (8) 10%	D (12) 15%	SD (8) 10%
Q11					

<i>The revenue generated from events at M&M Event Center positively affects the overall economy.</i>	SA (24) 30%	A (32) 40%	N (12) 15%	D (8) 10%	SD (4) 5%
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Table 5 : Community Engagement and Social Cohesion

<i>Community Engagement and Social Cohesion</i>					
<i>Q12</i> <i>M&M Event Center encourages participation from diverse community groups.</i>	SA (20) 25%	A (28) 35%	N (16) 20%	D (12) 15%	SD (4) 5%
<i>Q13</i> <i>Events at M&M Event Center foster a sense of belonging and unity among attendees.</i>	SA (22) 28%	A (24) 30%	N (20) 25%	D (12) 15%	SD (4) 5%
<i>Q14</i> <i>The presence of M & M Event Center has positively impacted community engagement and collaboration.</i>	SA (24) 30%	A (28) 35%	N (12) 15%	D (12) 15%	SD (4) 5%

DISCUSSION

When assessing the event center's contributions, the survey found that 40% strongly agreed and 55% agreed that M&M Event Center offers a variety of social events and gatherings. These events have notably impacted attendees' social interactions, as 20% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that attending events at the center increased their opportunities for social engagement. Networking and connecting with new people were facilitated by the event center, with 35% strongly agreeing and 30% agreeing that the venue provided spaces conducive to such interactions. In terms of perception, 30% of respondents strongly agreed and 45% agreed that event organizers view M&M Event Center as significantly enhancing attendees' social experiences. Similarly, 28% strongly agreed and 40% agreed that local community members believe the center has improved social connections within the community. The economic impact also garnered attention, with 35% strongly agreeing that the event center led to increased economic activity in the local community, and 30% strongly agreeing that the revenue generated positively affected the overall economy.

Moreover, community engagement and cohesion were apparent, with 25% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing that the event center encourages participation from diverse community groups. A sense of unity was fostered by the events, as 28% strongly agreed and 30% agreed that attendees felt a sense of belonging and unity. Community collaboration was also cited, with 30% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing that the presence of M&M Event Center had positively impacted community engagement.

Importantly, the survey underscores M&M Event Center's substantial influence on social interactions and community dynamics among Kwara residents. The center's diverse event offerings, conducive spaces, and positive perceptions by attendees, organizers, and community members collectively contribute to the social fabric of the region, promoting engagement, unity, and economic growth.

The analysis of the survey results reveals insightful patterns regarding the impact of M&M Event Center on the social activities of Kwara state residents. The demographic distribution of respondents reflects a relatively even gender split, with 45% male, 53% female, and 2% identifying as other. Age-wise, the largest group falls within the 25-34 age range (35%), indicating that the event center attracts a diverse range of age groups. In terms of occupation, students constitute the largest portion at 40%, followed by those employed full-time (30%).

The survey responses indicate that M&M Event Center plays a significant role in fostering social interactions. A substantial 95% (combined percentage of Strongly Agree and Agree) acknowledged that the center offers diverse social events, enhancing opportunities for engagement. Over 60% expressed agreement that attending events at the venue has heightened their chances for social interactions, demonstrating its effectiveness as a social hub. Notably, 65% saw the event center as facilitating networking, reflecting its role in cultivating connections. These findings support the broader concept presented by Marques *et al.*, (2021) in their study. It emphasizes the importance of events as platforms for social interaction. The findings specifically highlight the M & M Event Center's effectiveness in promoting diverse social events and networking opportunities. This aligns with the findings of Marques *et al.*, (2021) that events can serve as social interaction platforms, as discussed in the abstract.

Perceptions regarding the center's impact were also positive. A combined 75% believed that event organizers consider M & M Event Center as enhancing social experiences, while 68% felt the local community recognized its role in strengthening social bonds. These perceptions align with the 65% who believed that the venue contributes to increased economic activity within the community, underlining its multifaceted impact. This findings regarding the M & M Event Center's impact on social experiences and economic activity share some common ground with the study by Galina, Antonina, and Olga (2021). In both studies, there is a recognition of the significance of events as catalysts for positive social interactions and socio-economic development. Study's reveals that 75% of respondents believed event organizers considered the center to enhance social experiences resonates with the idea presented in the other study that events can effectively shape an enterprise's image and serve as a powerful tool for marketing objectives. Similarly, the finding that 65% of participants perceived the venue as contributing to increased economic activity aligns with the concept discussed in the other study, emphasizing the role of event tourism in addressing socio-economic challenges within regions. These shared perspectives underscore the potential of events, including the M&M Event Center, to simultaneously enhance social interactions and foster economic growth within a community.

Furthermore, the center's role in community engagement and cohesion is evident. Around 60% saw it as promoting participation among diverse groups, reflecting its potential as a unifying platform. Attendees' sense of belonging was also significant, with 58% acknowledging that the events cultivated unity. Similarly, 65% believed the event center had a positive impact on community engagement and collaboration, showcasing its potential to drive communal synergy.

In conclusion, the survey data underscores the transformative impact of M&M Event Center on the social landscape of Kwara state residents. Its ability to facilitate social interactions, foster diverse community engagement, and contribute to economic activity demonstrates its pivotal role. This analysis highlights the center's potential not only as an entertainment venue but also as a catalyst for forging social bonds and advancing local economies.

SUMMARY

This study delved into the impact of M&M Event Center on the social activities of Kwara state residents, shedding light on its multifaceted contributions. The research design chosen is a descriptive survey research design, aiming to investigate the impact of event centers on social activities in Kwara State, Nigeria, using primary data sources. The population of study consists of three main groups: event attendees, event organizers utilizing M&M Event Center, and local community members. Convenience sampling is the sampling technique used, selecting 100 respondents based on their availability and accessibility. The survey results indicating the positive impact of M & M Event Center on the social activities of Kwara state residents align with the current tourism trends in Kwara State. The country has been experiencing a shift towards more experiential and community-oriented tourism, which emphasizes engaging cultural and social experiences for both locals and visitors. Here's how the survey results relate to these trends:

- **Cultural and Community Engagement:** The survey highlights that M & M Event Center encourages diverse community participation and fosters a sense of belonging and unity among attendees. This resonates with the current tourism trend in Kwara State, where travelers are increasingly seeking authentic cultural experiences and interactions with local communities. The event center's role in promoting engagement

aligns well with this trend by providing a platform for locals and tourists to connect, share experiences, and forge meaningful relationships.

- **Event-based Tourism:** The survey's emphasis on the variety of social events and gatherings offered by the event center reflects the growing interest in event-based tourism in Kwara State. Tourists are drawn to destinations that host a range of events, from cultural festivals to music concerts, as these events provide unique and memorable experiences. M & M Event Center's ability to facilitate networking and provide spaces for diverse events contributes to positioning Nigeria as a vibrant destination for event-based tourism.
- **Economic Impact:** The survey underscores the economic contributions of M & M Event Center to the local community and the overall economy. This aspect aligns with the current tourism trend of recognizing the economic potential of cultural and entertainment hubs. Such centers not only create job opportunities but also attract spending from attendees and participants, boosting local businesses and the broader economy.
- **Promotion of Social Cohesion:** The survey's finding that the event center positively impacts community engagement and collaboration echoes the importance of social cohesion in tourism development. Modern tourists seek destinations that promote social inclusivity and positive interactions. M & M Event Center's role in fostering connections aligns with the desire for destinations that promote unity and shared experiences.
- **Generation of Buzz and Word-of-Mouth:** The positive perceptions of event attendees, organizers, and local community members regarding the impact of the event center highlight its potential to generate positive word-of-mouth and social media buzz. In today's digital age, such endorsements play a crucial role in attracting tourists to destinations and events. The event center's ability to create memorable experiences contributes to this trend.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the event center's ability to foster community engagement, encourage participation from various demographic groups, and enhance social connections echoes the rising emphasis on promoting social cohesion in the tourism sector. The positive perceptions of event attendees, organizers, and local community members signify its potential to generate organic buzz and contribute to a favorable destination image. In the context of Nigeria's evolving tourism landscape, characterized by a growing interest in event-based tourism, economic contributions from cultural and entertainment hubs, and the desire for social inclusivity, the survey results underscore the significance of M & M Event Center. By facilitating interactions, cultivating unity, and generating economic benefits, the center stands as a testament to the transformative power of well-organized events in shaping both local communities and the broader tourism narrative. As Nigeria continues to position itself on the global tourism map, the center's role emerges as a pivotal factor in nurturing a socially vibrant and economically sustainable tourism ecosystem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of this work, here are the recommendations ensued from the study:

1. **Diversify Event Offerings:** To continue catering to a wide audience, the event center should maintain a diverse range of events that appeal to various age groups and interests. This strategy aligns with the trend of experiential tourism, where visitors seek unique and engaging cultural experiences.
2. **Collaborate with Local Communities:** Strengthen partnerships with local communities to co-create events and initiatives that showcase authentic local culture and traditions. This collaborative approach will not only enrich visitor experiences but also empower local residents to actively participate and benefit from tourism activities.
3. **Embrace Sustainable Practices:** Incorporate sustainable practices in event planning and management, such as minimizing waste, conserving resources, and promoting eco-friendly initiatives. This approach aligns with the growing global trend of responsible tourism and appeals to environmentally conscious visitors.

4. **Leverage Digital Platforms:** Capitalize on social media and digital marketing to amplify the buzz around events. Encouraging attendees to share their experiences on social platforms can enhance the center's visibility and attract more visitors, aligning with the trend of digital influence on travel decisions.
5. **Cultivate Networking Opportunities:** Recognize the importance of networking spaces within the event center by strategically designing areas that facilitate interactions among attendees. This approach not only caters to the current trend of networking-focused events but also enhances the overall social experience.

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THE NEED FOR ORGANIC COCOA IN GLOBAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The cocoa industry must undergo a paradigm shift considering current concerns on chemical residue in food and beverages. This has to be done if cocoa beans produced in Africa must be acceptable to the European Union. The cocoa International Cocoa Organization has intimated member countries and observers on the enforcement of European Union Legislation on pesticides residues part of the letter reads thus. *“I am writing to inform you that the European Union (EU) Legislation on Pesticide Residues (Regulation 149/2008/EEC) will come into force shortly Producing member countries are therefore advised to take all necessary steps to ensure that consignments of cocoa beans being imported into the EU conforms to this EU regulation. For active substances for which no maximum residue level (MRI) is included in the regulation, default MRL of 0.01mg/kg will apply”* The authors of this paper postulate mitigating and pragmatic scientific and cultural steps, to achieve this standard of 0.01mg/kg chemical residue and propose organic agriculture as a panacea. Literature reviews shows that consumption of organic food including cocoa leads to improvement of health of the populace. They also seek to mediate with EU to extend the sanction period bearing in mind conversion period in organic agriculture

Key words: Legislation, Chemical residue, Organic agriculture; Conversion; Cocoa

INTRODUCTION

The cocoa industry must undergo a paradigm shift shortly from conventional to organic practices if it must be acceptable to the European Union. The International Cocoa Organization intimated member countries and observers on the enforcement of European Union Legislation on pesticides residues. Part of his letter reads thus: I am reaching out to notify you that the European Union Legislation regarding pesticides residues (Regulation 149/2008/EEC) will soon be implemented. It is crucial for member countries to undertake all essential measures to guarantee that shipments of cocoa beans imported into the EU comply with this EU regulation starting from 1 September. In cases where there is no maximum residue level (MRI) established for active substances, the regulation includes a default MRI of 0.01mg/kg (ICCO/IPARC, 2018).

The United States Department of Agriculture states that Organic Agriculture is a production system that refrains from or mostly eliminates the utilization of artificial fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulators, and livestock additives. Organic farming systems extensively depend on crop rotations, crop residue, animal manures, legumes green manures, off-farm organic wastes, and biological pest control to sustain soil productivity, provide plant nutrients, and manage insects, weeds, and other pests. Researchers in this area are committed to transforming cocoa into a profitable cash crop that adheres to organic practices throughout its entire production process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Organic cocoa is one of the programmes embarked upon by OOCORD – the Organic Agriculture Centre. Embracing this concept will not only make Nigeria relevant in the European market for cocoa, the new legislation on cocoa will not in any way implicate cocoa being produced in Nigeria, and in the process our environment will not be polluted and public health status will be improved (Gillalobos, 1989).

Cocoa cultivation was first introduced into South-Western Nigeria in the last quarter of the nineteenth century by Fernando Po through some Lagos traders who were familiar with the demands of the European markets. These traders later became planters and started cultivation at Ijan village near Agege on the out skirts of Lagos where cocoa and the African church went profitably hand in hand. At the time of its introduction, cocoa had to compete with other forest products, particularly with palm produce. Unlike the palm trees cocoa is not indigenous to any part of West Africa, which today has surpassed its original home in Latin America as the World's leading cocoa producer. By 1920, in spite of the long and intensive labour required in the growing stages and the nature of its market, most farmers in South Western Nigeria seemed to have neglected the other export crops like oil palm and cotton for cocoa (Akingbohunge, 2008).

In the 1960s, Nigeria, being a developing nation, held the position of the second-largest global cocoa producer. This cash crop played a significant role in generating substantial foreign exchange earnings for the country. However, in recent years, Nigeria has experienced a decline in the production of cocoa for export due to various factors. Villalobos (1989) highlighted some of these factors as low yield, aging trees, inconsistent production patterns, disease outbreaks, pest infestations, and a shift in focus towards petroleum.

METHODOLOGY

Materials Obtained

Synthetic chemicals, such as herbicides, pesticides, and fast-acting inorganic fertilizers, have a detrimental impact on the microbial activity in the soil when applied in or around crops. This disruption or destruction of microbial activity diminishes the soil's ability to perform its functions, reducing it to merely supporting plant materials. In conventional agricultural practices, which have been used for only 75 out of 10,000 years of recorded agriculture, plants can only obtain air, water, and sunlight from their surroundings. All other necessary elements must be provided by farmers, often through inputs transported over long distances to reach the farm. Consequently, plants are typically supplied with only the essential elements required for their growth, making them reliant on farmers to address challenges posed by nature, such as pests, diseases, and drought.

One might question why consumers should be concerned about agricultural techniques if an organically cultivated green pepper appears identical to a conventionally grown pepper. The answer is intricate, but can be summarized as follows: an organically cultivated pepper is inherently healthier and more nutritious than its conventionally grown counterpart. By growing in a living soil, where microbial activity continuously breaks down organic matter and solid minerals into nutrients that plants can readily absorb, an organically cultivated pepper plant always has access to the precise resources it needs to thrive from germination to fruit set. Consequently, the plant remains healthier throughout its lifespan compared to a conventionally grown pepper plant.

An organically cultivated pepper plant has the ability to incorporate a wider range of intricate components into all of its parts, including its fruit. As a result, the pepper produced is rich in essential micronutrients for human nutrition. This principle also applies to cocoa cultivation. The cultivation of plants in a healthy, living soil yields a delightful flavor. This flavor arises from a combination of numerous complex molecules. Organic diets reduces the amount of toxic chemicals ingested, totally avoids GMO's. reduces the amount of food additives and colourings, increase the amount of beneficial vitamins such as thiamine (vitamin B) and nicotinic acid (vitamin B3), minerals, essential fatty acids and antioxidants consumed and appears to have potential to lower the incidence of common conditions such as cancer, coronary heart disease, allergies and hyperactivity in children.

The term "Pesticide" refers to any substance utilized in the management of pests throughout different stages of crop production, storage, or transportation. It is widely acknowledged that the term "pest" encompasses any organisms that cause harm to In the realm of agriculture, various challenges arise when it comes to safeguarding crops against

insects, diseases, and weeds. In the past, there has been some ambiguity surrounding the term "pesticide," as it was often linked solely to insect control agents and herbicides. Nevertheless, it has now transformed into a more encompassing concern within the field of agronomy. In the realm of agriculture, various challenges arise when it comes to safeguarding crops against insects, diseases, and weeds. In the past, there has been some ambiguity surrounding the term "pesticide," as it was often linked solely to insect control agents and herbicides. Nevertheless, it has now transformed into a more encompassing concern within the field of agronomy.

The main classifications of pesticides are as follows:

1. Fungicides - These are used to combat diseases in crops, such as black pod.
2. Herbicides - Designed to eliminate weeds.
3. Insecticides - Utilized for controlling insect pests, although they may also have properties that can kill mites.
4. Acaricides - Specifically formulated for managing mites.
5. Rodenticides are specifically designed to eradicate rats and mice, although their effectiveness against squirrels may be limited.
6. Molluscicides and bactericides - Used to combat mollusks and certain bacterial infections. These are not typically used on cocoa crops.

Occasionally some substances have multiple action (e.g metam is a fungicide, herbicide and nematocide). Unfortunately the term pesticide is often translated into words that also mean “medicines” or similar. Once again, it is important to be accurate and specific: there is a common misconception amongst farmers that all pesticides do some good, whatever their properties, yet they may actually be harmful.

Certified organic cocoa is associated with concerns regarding pesticides and comes with a higher price tag. One of the challenges faced by organic cocoa is the restriction on the use of copper fungicides. In the European Union, there was a proposal to restrict the utilization of copper to less than 8kg/ha/yr after 2002. Additionally, the International Federation of Organic Movements (IFOAM: www.ifoam.org) advocated for a complete elimination by 2010. This would imply a maximum of five applications per season, which is deemed economically feasible when taking into account typical application rates and cocoa prices. The precautionary principle, which holds significant importance in Europe (unlike the caveat emptor approach commonly observed elsewhere), has frequently served as a guiding principle for governing pesticide usage.

DISCUSSION

To combat pest and disease problems in cocoa production, our farmers have, over the years been using various types of chemicals (Ridomil, Bordeaux mixture, etc) on an annual basis without considering the implications for themselves their families and the residue effect on the consumers of the products from cocoa. (Akingbohunge, 2008).

The ICCO pronouncement and subsequent press release of June, 2008 (above) will now mean farmers need to return to organic Agriculture if they still want their cocoa to be accepted at the world market as Nigeria has not developed its local industries to accommodate the use of its cocoa production internally.

There is a global call to reduce agrochemical residues in food and there is a high priority for organically produced agricultural products, the process involved in the production of such organic crops are environmentally-and farmers-friendly (Holderness et al, 2000; Khan et al., 2002; Organic agriculture is founded upon the principles of health and ecology (IFOAM, 2008)., fairness and care. In conventional agriculture most of the agrochemicals used, in particular inorganic fertilizers used are not environmentally friendly. They are leached to water table and they pollute the water bodies. The run-offs from most of the inorganically fertilized fields cause eutrophication in the water bodies. Besides all these, health hazards may loom consuming agrochemicals residues in food (Fassuliotis,

1985; Kerry, 1987; Oyekanmi et al 2007). These agrochemicals are expensive and not readily available for farmers use when needed. Likewise, there are legislations against massive use of agrochemicals in crop production and protection, thus organic agriculture is of global interest.

Organic agriculture encompasses more than just the absence of harmful pesticides in food production. It places significant emphasis on the well-being of the soil and the overall ecosystem in which crops and livestock thrive. Organic farmers understand the importance of nurturing healthy and dynamic soils and ecosystems that coexist harmoniously with native plant life and inorganic minerals, which form the foundation of the soil.

CONCLUSION

It is a major source of concern to crop protectionists that the advocates of massive pesticides use in Agriculture result in cocoa not being acceptable in the world market due to high presence of chemical residues, and thus are hazardous to health.

Organic Agriculture Mission is to make agricultural production organic and cocoa being one of the major cash crops of both national and international importance is being given priority in our research. It takes a period of about three years before our cocoa is certified organic by international organizations such as Soil Association of UK. It is our pursuit that pest and soil management and necessary processing and preservation of cocoa beans will be organic in approach.

Some of the benefits that will accrue by making our cocoa production organic include:

1. Producing cocoa beans with high nutritional quality in sufficient quantity.
2. Avoiding all forms of pollution that may result from agricultural techniques.
3. Preventing all forms of health hazards associated with conventional methods.
4. Enhancing the financial returns to cocoa farmers and national development.
5. Improving diversification into organic arable crops production alongside with cocoa, therefore solving the crisis of food security and wealth creation.
6. Maintaining and increasing the long term fertility of soils.
7. Acceptability of Nigerian cocoa in the world market.

RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, it is advisable that in order to improve the well-being of the population and ensure the acceptance of African Cocoa beans in the global market, both the health of the populace and the economic benefits for African nations should be prioritised.

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- Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association.
<http://www.mofga.org/tabid/166/Default.aspx>

MAINSTREAMING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS INTO STUDENTS INDUSTRIAL WORK EXPERIENCE SCHEME

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ABSTRACT

There is a massive craving for white collar jobs by the teeming populace, such jobs are not readily available and as a result many people are unemployed or underemployed. Thus, there is need to broadly introduce entrepreneurial skill early in the career training of undergraduate students in Nigeria. This could be easily achieved through Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) of the Federal Government of Nigeria. Thus, the 1.2 billion young people aged between 15 and 24 years which account for 24.7% of the world's working age population and about 97% of them in the developing countries could be positively impacted. This paper provide a mechanism for structuring entrepreneurial skills into SIWES to professionally prepare graduands of tertiary institutions to be self-reliant thus becoming job creators and not job seekers which will in turn make the Nigerian economy robust. Therefore, making the SIWES programme a catalytic way of repositioning Nigeria for development.

Key words: Practical skills, Mainstream, SIWES; Unemployment, Entrepreneurial skills.

INTRODUCTION:

Unemployment continues to be a significant challenge worldwide, and the Nigerian economy is no exception (Efe-Imafidon et al, 2017). Today's world contains more than 1.2 billion young people aged between 15 and 24 years, that is 24.7% of the world's working-age population and about 87% of them live in developing economies. Information from International Labour Organisation on whose recommendation most countries of the world unemployment methodology is based including Nigeria, asserts that 201 million people globally are unemployed and this may rise to 219 million in 2019 (Efe-Imafidon et al, 2017). We need to ask ourselves as capacity builders for the nation, what can we do to solve the nagging problem of unemployment? How can we influence the Government to solve the various unemployment linked problems of the nation? As a pioneer Coordinator SIWES for Wesley University Ondo, after working assiduously in the SIWES unit for eight years, a passion for SIWES development in Nigeria kept growing in me which I cannot fully explain. This love for SIWES sets me thinking, thus making me a "clandestine think tank" SIWES. Also, as an author of a book on SIWES title "SIWES Encyclopedia" the question on how best SIWES programme can be structured and packaged to solve the myriads of problems ravaging the 21st century economy most especially in developing countries of the world in which our dear country Nigeria, is prominent is paramount in my heart.

In order to make this paper holistic it will go beyond looking into Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and Entrepreneurship as single entities. It will also x-ray the synergy that could exist between SIWES and Entrepreneurship. It will consider ways through which the SIWES Entrepreneurial Synergy could be realistically factored into the educational system. Thus, considering best practices through which our title: "Mainstreaming Entrepreneurial Skills into the SIWES Scheme" could be adequately presented within the time frame available. The main objective of this paper is to bring to the lime light a catalytic way of repositioning SIWES for National Development.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Mainstreaming means integrating or including something into an existing structure for a better performance. This could be inclusion of ideas, attitudes, activities and perspectives of stakeholders involved (Bailey and Castello, 2012). The philosophy of mainstreaming is getting appreciation across the globe. Entrepreneurship is the process of designing, launching and running a new business, which is often initially a small business but could be scaled up to generate a profit. The more modern entrepreneurship definition is transforming the world by solving big problems. Entrepreneurship, as an emerging field of study and as an area of human endeavor, it has received increasing interest of researchers, academia and policy makers the world over (Egwu, 2014). It has equally provoked controversies over its concept and definition. Entrepreneurship is widely recognized as an effective solution not only for addressing unemployment, poverty, and under-development in developing nations, but also as a key strategy for driving rapid economic growth in both developed and developing countries (Hamilton, 2000; Calusen, 2006; Praag and Versloot, 2007). According to Naude (2011), global development is now entering a phase where entrepreneurship will increasingly assume a more significant role. In Nigeria, the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) was introduced by the Federal Government and is coordinated by the Industrial Training Fund. This program aims to equip students in tertiary educational institutions with the necessary skills in specialized fields such as engineering, technology, applied sciences, veterinary medicine, applied arts, business education, and other relevant areas as outlined in the approved curriculum supervised by the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Commission on Colleges of Education (NCCE) (ITF, 2016).

The SIWES programme has the following very important elements: compulsory SIWES orientation programme, specified period of industrial training, proper documentation of students involved with supervising agencies, placement of students in relevant industries where they can have cognate experience of their courses of study, proper daily documentation of practical experience acquired, supervisory visit(s) of students by designated staff from students institutions, grading of students SIWES technical report, Log Book, post SIWES seminar and the payment of the students and their institutions by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF). Any competence building programme that does not have the above elements does not conform to the SIWES programme and considered under other forms of skill acquisition programmes.

The SIWES programme focuses majorly on what is considered to be the most important factor of production, skilled labour. There are four factors of production which are paramount for quality goods and services provision for the economy. The moment competent and qualified labour force is lacking in any industry, the industry will collapse within a short time, because the “unqualified and incompetent practitioners” in the industry will water down the quality of the products/services. This will be discovered by the end users of such products or services and dwindle the patronage. If care is not taken on time, such organizations could be sued for substandard products/services provision and make to pay for damages or close down.

Thus, no right thinking chief executive/manager will frivolously handle issues regarding competent labour force which SIWES assist to produce for our growing economy (Oyekanmi, 2017). The objectives of SIWES are embedded in the decree that established it, to avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation, the industrial training Fund policy document number 1, 1973 clearly stated the objectives of SIWES are as follows:

1. Higher education institutions aim to offer students the opportunity to gain practical skills and experience in the industry alongside their studies.
2. The objective is to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively navigate work environments after completing their education.
3. Students are exposed to various work methods, techniques, and equipment that may not be readily available in their own educational institutions.
4. The aim is to facilitate a smooth transition from academia to the professional world, while also fostering networking opportunities for future job placements.
5. By providing students with the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge in real work situations, the gap between theory and practice is effectively bridged.
6. SIWES actively involves and strengthens employers' participation in the entire educational process, further enhancing students' learning and career prospects.

METHODOLOGY

Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition

Entrepreneurial skill acquisition refers to the deliberate and focused effort made to acquire practical business-oriented skills. These skills go beyond just acquiring knowledge; they involve actively driving towards creating and managing enterprises that improve personal livelihoods through the establishment of sustainable business startups. By doing so, entrepreneurial skill acquisition not only enhances employment opportunities but also contributes to economic development and growth (Eme-Imafidon et al., 2017).

Nekchi and Okechukwu (2012) emphasize that entrepreneurial success relies on the ability of entrepreneurs to identify opportunities in the market, take initiative towards desirable change, and provide value-based solutions. Uzochuwu and Chidiebere (2015) and Tijani-Alawiye (2004) further highlight that entrepreneurs effectively run innovative enterprises, nurture their growth, and sustain them, all with the aim of achieving broader socio-economic development goals. In essence, through entrepreneurial development, such as skill acquisition, entrepreneurs create job opportunities or become self-employed. Entrepreneurial skill acquisition refers to the deliberate and focused effort made to acquire practical business-oriented skills. These skills go beyond just acquiring knowledge; they involve actively driving towards creating and managing enterprises that improve personal livelihoods through the establishment of sustainable business startups. By doing so, entrepreneurial skill acquisition not only enhances employment opportunities but also contributes to economic development and growth (Eme-Imafidon et al., 2017).

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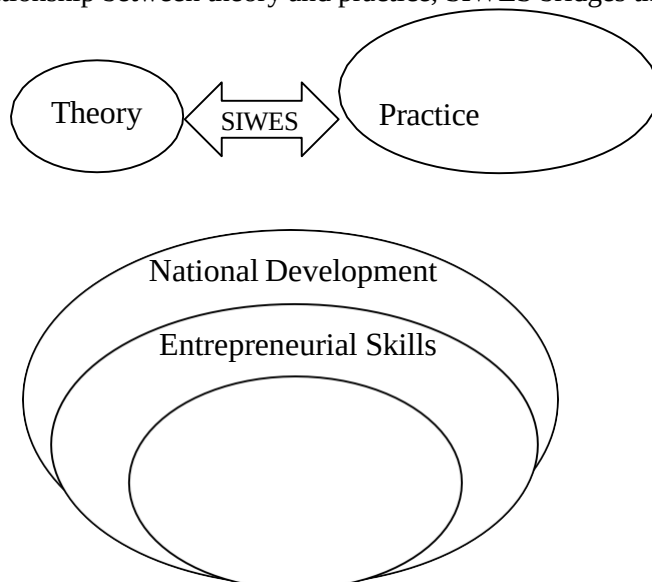
RESULTS OBTAINED

The SIWES programme is basically meant to inculcate technical skills into students in the industrial environment without laying emphasis on setting up one's industry in the future and profiting from it. Figure 1 depicts the relationship between theory and practical. The theory is on small scope while the practical is on a large scope of influence. Fundamentally speaking, entrepreneurship is about practical skill acquisition for the purpose of setting up small or medium scale industry, which will grow to become big business that will employ large number of people. This drive is enhanced through practical trainings. The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is designed to promote self-employment, job creation, and economic self-sufficiency among Nigerian youths. African countries, including Nigeria, have recognized the importance of TVET in poverty reduction and the development of employable skills through both short and long-term training programs. TVET encompasses any form of education that aims to equip Nigerian youth with the necessary skills for gainful employment, without solely relying on obtaining a certificate. To integrate the Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) into entrepreneurship, the following approach could be considered for its implementation.

- i. Entrepreneurial mainstreaming will be academic discipline oriented and aligned with the course of study of the prospective young entrepreneur.
- ii. Emphasis will not only be laid on practical skill acquisition but likewise on the enterprise component which will eventually yield profit, create job and lead to national development.
- iii. Students to include novel idea and business plan as chapter in their technical report to be submitted after SIWES.
- iv. Defense of such business plan will attract reasonable score during post SIWES technical seminar presentation.
- v. Government to institute entrepreneurial fund to finance young entrepreneurs after school.
- vi. A six months stop gap for entrepreneurship for all graduates before mobilization for National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to be coordinated by National Entrepreneurship Centres which could be hosted and coordinated by National Entrepreneurship Centres which could be hosted and coordinated by Industrial Training Fund.

It was revealed through a study of entrepreneurship development and growth of enterprises in Nigeria, that several policy interventions in Nigeria that were aimed at improving entrepreneurship development via small and medium scale enterprises have not been successful but instead in the areas where building in-country entrepreneurial capacity should have existed, entrepreneurs have been found to be distribution agents of imported products (Ebiringa 2012). There is need for the government and organized private sector to employ more efforts to support entrepreneurial training programmes in tertiary educational system.

Figure 1: Relationship between theory and practice, SIWES bridges the gap between theory and practice.



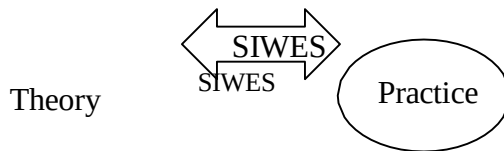


Figure 2: The concentric rings of SIWES Entrepreneurial skills and National development.

DISCUSSION

There is a clarion call to critically review SIWES and come up with position papers with recommendations on how SIWES could be better operated to profit the entire nation. This will be worth doing considering the fact that SIWES has being in existence 46 years ago, such that as we celebrate the golden jubilee in four years from now we will all be glad that our dear country Nigeria, has a scheme called SIWES. Indeed, SIWES could be used to boost our Gross Domestic Productivity (GDP) by encouraging our youth to diversify their mental and physical energies in both the oil and non-oil sectors strategic to the Nigerian economy by being productively involved in increasing productivity and coming up with feasible business plans in all these sectors of the economy. However, scholars and facilitators of entrepreneurial skill acquisition have often overlooked the significance of certain skills, such as hairdressing, make-up artistry, fashion designing, shoemaking, public speaking, food processing, catering services, and fish farming. These skills are often dismissed as insignificant and only meant for personal or immediate family needs. As a result, the importance of these skills in contributing to the Nigerian economy and providing self-employment opportunities for the youth is undermined.

In Nigeria, strategic industries are defined as those that have consistently contributed the most to the country's GDP over the past five years. While the oil sector remains a dominant force, there are other industries that have managed to thrive and contribute to the economy even during times of recession. These industries present opportunities for the Nigerian youth to acquire entrepreneurial skills and become self-employed.

It is important to recognize that the government alone cannot provide employment for all citizens. Active private participation is crucial in driving the economy and reducing dependence on the government. Despite Nigeria's high literacy level, it is essential that this translates into economic power and self-sufficiency.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Through Science, technology, innovation, applied art and sound management we can add value to life and make Nigeria a better country to stay. Entrepreneurial skills mainstreaming into SIWES will make our future generation to appreciate life and will not go through the harrowing experience most of us who are citizens of this country have went through. It is only of late that our mindset tends to go entrepreneurial after we have over-depend on white-collar jobs which are no longer easily available as it's used to be. To mainstream Entrepreneurship into SIWES the following recommendations could be adopted:

- i. Reappraisal of the six objectives of SIWES and inclusion of a seventh one to reflect entrepreneurship. A suggested seventh objective is as stated below: "Inculcate academic discipline-based entrepreneurial mindset and skills into students, geared towards job creation, self-reliance, profitability and national development".
- ii. Establishment of an Entrepreneurial office in all ITF offices nationwide.
- iii. Provision of entrepreneurship fund by government to fund the activities of the entrepreneurship stated in (ii) above.
- iv. Creation of awareness about the importance of the six months Entrepreneurship stop gap after graduation from tertiary institution before National Youth Service Corps.

- v. Enhancement of SIWES funding and full liberalization of SIWES for all programmes to prepare all students for the challenges that lie ahead after graduation.

This paper is advocated for policy consideration and adoption in order to grow the Nigerian economy using available and productive manpower. It is favourably considered that this is one of the magic tools that will translate Nigeria from a developing nation to a developed nation within a limited period.

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ENHANCING THE EFFICIENCY OF SMALL-SCALE RESTAURANTS IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF KOGI STATE THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EFFECTIVE FINANCIAL SKILLS.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the ways of improving the productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State via effective financial and management skills. This study is a descriptive-quantitative case study research that is consistent with a deductive approach. The data for this research was gathered through the use of closed-ended questionnaire. conveniences sampling techniques was used to identify two (2) restaurant owners from each of the three (3) selected local government areas (Lokoja, Idah and Okene), making a total of six (6) restaurants owners, with 117 respondents including restaurant owners, employees and customers were selected for this study. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The result of this study revealed that effective financial skills have significant impact in determining improvement in productivity of the restaurants businesses. This study finding also established that good customer relations have a positive significant relationship with improvement in productivity of restaurant businesses. Therefore, this study recommended that owners of restaurants should on a regularly basis embark on training targeted at improving their financial skills which will help in the development of restaurants financial spending, decision making and technical skills. In addition, it is suggested that further studies should be conducted on other factors aside financial skills that are crucial for the successful improvement of the productivity of small-scale restaurants.

Keywords: Small-scale restaurants, financial skills, customer relations, improving productivity.

INTRODUCTION

In order for a restaurant to achieve its long-term business objectives, profitability must be positively impacted by customer pleasure. Without first gratifying them, it is impossible to gain the loyalty of customers (Bryson, 2020). This is true since dissatisfied customers favor rival businesses. Lack of good financial, and customer service skills are a few of the main causes of brand switching by consumers. Because it takes multiple positive encounters to make up for a single unfavorable customer experience, restaurants must be active (Martin, 2021). Small-scale restaurant patrons are not known for their ability to be patient when receiving subpar service. When business decisions are based on customer satisfaction, it delivers better results for the restaurant on a long run. Therefore, any areas of the business decisions should be cohesive with the customers. Satisfied customers are the ones that come back and become loyal customers (Juhana, 2019).

The context in which businesses are placed now necessitates a very long-term engagement with customers since the company may become more effective and reflective by routinely evaluating customer satisfaction (Vats, 2019). As a result, customer pleasure increases customer loyalty, and businesses can keep consumers who are loyal by benefiting from greater sales. Additionally, restaurant owners can evaluate their business performance by looking at customer happiness as a result of some crucial talents. This is due to the fact that the restaurant's service or product has a big influence on how customers behave, such as whether they buy something or continue to patronize the business (Khairawati, 2019).

Furthermore, in this competitive period, having a standard restaurant with enhanced efficiency is tied to a number of elements, including effective financial abilities and customer relations skills. Small scale restaurants should be on the verge of using various abilities that will aid in improving their hospitality services because customers might readily switch their attention from one restaurant to another for any apparent causes (Zboja and Bouchet, 2021). Therefore, strong financial decision-making skills will enable restaurants to weigh options and make wise decisions for their financial situations, such as choosing how and when to save and spend, comparing costs before

a major purchase, and planning for retirement or other long-term savings of the business (Martin, 2021). Financial expertise is a combination of abilities and information that enables management of any restaurant business to utilize all of their financial resources to make wise and successful decisions.

Productivity can be seen as a byproduct or outcome of a business success on a daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. Productivity measures how well each work is done as well as how well organizational rules, standards, or requirements for a position are met. Sooriyakumaran, Thrikawala, and Pathirawasam (2022) define productivity as the results gained from actions with the abilities of workers who perform in a certain environment. Moreover, a small-scale business is defined as a company with a total capital employed of over N1.5 million, but not more than N50 million, including working capital but excluding cost of land, and/or with a workforce of between 11 and 100 employees (Mwobobia, 2019). Small firms have less resources, including assets, workers, and revenue.

An establishment that prepares and serves meals to customers is known as a restaurant. The restaurants often engage in the routine and customary sale of food, generally for consumption on the premises but occasionally for takeaway as well. According to Shi and Xu, (2021) services like lunch counters, barbecues, snack bars, quick food outlets, and so on are available at restaurants. Restaurants can also be defined as establishments that prepare and sell goods to patrons primarily for on- or off-site consumption. The word "eating and drinking establishment" includes, but is not limited to, cafes, lunch counters, cafeterias, and other similar businesses (Parsa et al., 2018).

In Kogi State, most small-scale restaurants have the tendency of not operating for a longer period of time and those who do are confronted with reduction in customer patronage. These challenges have been attributed to lack of financial knowledge because these restaurants see themselves as too small as their main goal is just to make profit either substantial or not. Effective financial skills are vital for the survival, sustainability and improved productivity of any restaurant business in the country as well as in the whole world in which Kogi State is not an exception. Financial skill is necessary for the growth of any firm and for good money management. These abilities can aid a business owner in debt relief, future planning, and emergency fund saving (Chisiri and Manzini, 2022). A solid financial talent is one that enables a company to comprehend its financial position, such as figuring out the monthly payment due on a loan or credit balance. A business owner who is financially savvy will be able to make wise choices regarding the kinds of investment opportunities that are best for their company (Dwangu and Mahlangu, 2021). Hence, this study examined how effective financial skills will assist in improving productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to determine the productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State through effective financial skills. Other objectives are to:

- i. investigate the role of effective financial skills in improving the productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.
- ii. examine the relationship between customers' satisfaction and productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.

Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: H_0 : Effective financial skills do not have significant impact on productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.

Hypothesis 2: H_0 : There is no significant relationship between customers' satisfaction and productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Small-Scale Restaurants

There are micro and small-scale restaurants everywhere in the world. Restaurants owned by individuals or groups are examples of small-scale businesses. These businesses are typically sole proprietorships, companies, or partnerships that are privately owned and run. Every country has a different legal definition of a micro and small-scale restaurant. By employing chefs and bartenders and providing food and beverages at a low cost to consumers

who cannot pay the super or high fast-food rates, small scale restaurants have helped the economy as a whole. Despite their size, Meseret (2018) asserts that the development and profitability of small-scale restaurants depends on the owners' abilities, skills, and personal traits. However, small scale restaurants across the world still face challenges of development. These restaurants' play some defined roles in the economy that support and strengthen the growth of a nation (Mwobobia, 2019).

Small-scale businesses have historically been classified based on factors like market share, independence, individualized management, number of employees, sales turnover, asset size, total capital investment, and others (Stephen & Wasiu, 2019). Despite the significant contributions small scale businesses make to the national economy, they continue to face a number of difficulties due to their small size, which limits their access to resources, knowledge, and market power and contributes to their low survival rates (Mwobobia, 2019). Consequently, less than one-third of new small enterprises still exist after working hard for ten years. Owners of small-scale restaurants are creating jobs within their community, pay taxes to the local government, expanding to expand tourism, helping to improve the diversity of their locality because different people patronize them and provide funding for local charities, community and organizations project (Harun, Prybutok, and Prybutok 2018).

When compared to larger companies, these small businesses, however, face a lot of challenges. Access to financial resources, corporate information, and overseas customers are a few of the difficulties. Additionally, a lot of small business managers lack fundamental management and financial abilities, including marketing and financial management (Sadeghi, 2017). Restaurant owners do often have experiences in common with those of other small company owners. Lack of education and training, inability to access formal financial resources, inadequate management competence, a lack of financial management abilities, and a bad location are some of the factors contributing to the high failure rate of small-scale restaurants (Carins, 2020).

Most owners of small-scale restaurants actually started using small amount of capital invested into their business. Their financial resources often come from personal savings, families, and friends due to the fact that only few of small-scale restaurants can actually get loans from banks and other financial institutions (Wei and Ho, 2019).

However, this factor has had great impact on their sustainability and long-term investment. Hence, owners of small-scale restaurants who have access to obtaining bank loans are more like to be successful in their business endeavors because of their financial capability (Chang and Suki, 2018). However, larger size restaurants have lower failure rate because the owners have more financial resource and extensive experience. Since owners of small-scale restaurants do have limited resource, accessing high-quality labor is a challenge.

Concept of Financial Skills

One of the key elements that can make or break a small-scales business is finance. Therefore, it's crucial for every restaurant owner to have strong financial skills in order to keep their businesses open. Financial management is the act of controlling financial resources. Financial management practices include planning and controlling, accounting, cash flow management, capital budgeting or appraisal, and working capital management, according to Nkundabanyanga et al. (2017). Similar to this, Sa'eed et al. (2020) described financial management skills practices as the regular operational processes created to enhance the correct execution of financial accounting, reporting, budgeting, and other related duties in order to improve a firm's technical efficiency. Financial management skills are activities that involve fund decision making or financial resource management (Dwangu and Mahlangu, 2021).

Working capital management, accounting and information systems, financial reporting and analysis, capital structure or financing structure, and capital budgeting are the four categories into which Musah et al. (2018) divide financial management abilities. Therefore, the term "financial skills" refers to the body of information and abilities that enable a person to utilize all of their financial resources in order to make wise and effective judgements. Making wise financial decisions is crucial for people since they have long-term financial repercussions. The management of a company's finances is a difficult process; SMEs must select from a broad range of financial requirements, many of which have intricate aspects.

Financial skills also give one knowledge of and an understanding of financial concepts as well as the abilities, drive, and confidence to apply that knowledge and understanding to a variety of financial contexts in order to improve the financial health of SMEs (Nketsiah, 2018). According to Chisiri and Manzini (2022), having good financial skills encourages people to make wise decisions, such as paying their bills on time and managing their debt effectively, which raises the creditworthiness of potential borrowers and supports economic growth, stable financial systems, and the eradication of poverty. Additionally, it gives one more control over their financial future, allows them to use financial products and services more effectively, and reduces their vulnerability to aggressive salespeople or dishonest schemes (Chisiri and Manzini, 2022).

Therefore, the goal of this study is to pinpoint the financial abilities that small-scale restaurants have been using and how they have helped to increase their production. The majority of small business owners do not employ financial managers to oversee the company's finances. Small-scale restaurant proprietors typically oversee and handle the company's finances independently. However, they lack the necessary skills and training to carry out the firm's financial management procedures.

Concept Customers' Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a key factor that organizations must consider seriously if they want to ensure the success of any organization. According to Suharyono and Widiyanto (2021), customer satisfaction measures how happy customers are with the goods and services that a company provides. As a result, when customers are pleased with an organization's goods and services, they frequently stick with those goods and services, giving the business a chance to keep those customers (Suharyono and Widiyanto, 2021). Customer service, according to Soderlund and Sagfossen (2020), is the degree to which customers are satisfied with a certain product or service provided by an organization. The level of customer satisfaction of a company is determined by the ratings provided by the customers. In addition, customer satisfaction is the strategy to keep the current loyal customers and retain new ones also (Bryson, et al., 2020).



Figure 2.1. Customer Satisfaction (Bryson, 2020).

Based on figure 1, customers' satisfaction is a way of measuring how well a company's products or services meets customers' expectations. Monitoring and evaluating consumer satisfaction is essential to stop customer churn, keep them loyal, and profit from their continuous business and growth. Because satisfied consumers are more likely to consistently use an organization's services, they do serve as ambassadors and marketers for its goods by recommending it to others (Bryson, 2020). A higher level of customer satisfaction has the effect of motivating customers to continue using the company's products. Businesses with long-standing relationships with their

customers will be better able to forge strong bonds with them, which will increase their customers' loyalty (Wang and Shukla, 2022).

Additionally, everyone's organization, especially those in the restaurant industry, focuses on pleasing their customers (Vats, 2019). A company can produce more income and sales the more delighted customers it has. For companies in the service sector, client happiness is particularly crucial (Wardana and Sumarmi, 2019). The behavior and performance of the staff is the primary factor in producing customer happiness (Juhana, 2019). This is the rationale behind the rising time and financial commitment that service businesses make to staff training. Customer satisfaction will increase if employees can communicate with customers directly. For instance, in the restaurant industry, the behavior and performance of the waiter, chef and the staff do have impact on the future business with their customers (Wardana and Sumarmi, 2019).

Concept of Organizational Productivity

Any organization in the world wants to produce positive outcomes by fulfilling its objectives and goals. The success of an organization depends on its productivity. Organizational productivity, according to Ahmad (2019), includes three distinct areas of organizational outcomes: financial productivity (profits, return on assets, return on investment), product market productivity (sales, market share), and shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added). According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), organizational productivity is one of the results that the organization initiates after implementing human resource management practices. Examples of these outcomes include product quality, customer satisfaction, new product development, the ability to retain employees, and relationships between management and employees.

According to Peccei and Van De Voorde (2019), an organization's capacity for success is reflected in its production. Effective operational productivity inside the organization itself heavily influences organizational productivity.

Organizational productivity, according to Kovaevi and Mladenovi (2018), is defined as profitability, growth, and staff retention. Peccei and Van De Voorde (2019) argued that organization productivity should take into account product-to-market time, profitability, degree of productivity, and rate of innovation. The enhancement of human resource management procedures should receive special emphasis if sustained growth and high organizational productivity are to be achieved.

Therefore, productivity is the result of activities with the talents of workers who perform in a given environment. The productivity of employees' work is crucial since it influences the productivity of a company as a whole (Jiang and Messersmith, 2018). Work productivity, according to researchers like Jiang and Messersmith (2018), is the contribution of employees to achieving organizational goals. Oke and Kefas (2019) add that when quality or productivity is high, organizational productivity will often be more efficient. According to Stewart (2019), productivity is the sum of all the actions that employees take to carry out their responsibilities and advance organizational aims and objectives.

METHODOLOGY

Study Areas

On August 27, 1991, Kogi State was created from portions of Benue, Niger, and Kwara States. The confluence of the Rivers Niger and Benue is located close to the state's capital, Lokoja, giving rise to the term "Confluence State" for the region. With an expected 4.5 million residents as of 2022, Kogi would rank as the 20th most populated and thirteenth largest in terms of area among Nigeria's 36 states (Ebiloma, 2019). Of all the states in the federation, Kogi State is the one with the best geographic location. It includes the former Kabba province's Igala, Ebira, Kabba, Yoruba, and Kogi divisions. Kogi State is located near the junction of the Niger and Benue rivers at latitude 7°49' N and longitude 6°44' E, at an altitude of 45–125 m. Niger, Kwara, Nassarawa, and The Federal Capital Territory are all bordered to the north by Kogi State. To the east, the state is bounded by Benue state, to the south by Enugu and Anambra States, and to the west by Ondo, Ekiti and Edo states.

The study areas (Lokoja, Idah and Okene) are shown in the map in figure 1:



Figure 3.1: Map showing the location of Lokoja, Idah and Okene in Kogi State.

Source: https://www.nigeriagallery.com/Nigeria/States_Nigeria/Kogi/

METHOD OBTAINED

Research Design

The descriptive research design was used for this study. The descriptive survey design is regarded by the researcher as the most appropriate and helpful in determining the perception and attitude of respondents on the variables being studied. The descriptive survey is very useful in generalizing from a sample to a population on the characteristics, attributes or behavior of the population.

Population of the Study

Kogi state has projected population of about 4.466,800 million residents as at 2022 speculated in 2016 census. The selected Local Government Areas have estimated and projected population census which are, Lokoja has 839000, Idah has 107500 and Okene has 494000 respectively as at 2022 speculations during 2016 census. This study took into consideration restaurants owned by male and female as there are no estimated figure on the total number of small-scale restaurants in Lokoja, Idah and Okene.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Having identified small scale restaurants in Lokoja, Idah and Okene all in Kogi State as the target group for effective conduct of this research, the respondents were selected using convenience sampling technique as a type of non-

probability sampling based on the availability and willingness of participants to participate in the study. Two (2) small scale restaurants were selected from each of the selected Local Government Areas (Lokoja, Idah and Okene), making it a total of six (6) restaurants with each restaurant comprises of twenty (20) respondents including restaurant owner, employees and customers. In total 117 respondents were sampled from this study.

. **Table 3.1** shows the details of how the respondents were selected from the six (6) restaurants.

S/N	Name of Restaurants	Local Government Areas	Number of Participants	Address	Location	Customer Patronage
1	Merry House	Idah	21	Along Ofukolo Road, Idah	Strategic	High
2	Chop House	Idah	22	Beside UBA bank Ajaka Road.	Strategic	High
3	Rafiki neighbourhood Africa Kitchen	Lokoja	17	Near Ganaja junction bridge, Lokoja	Strategic	High
4	Chills N Chill	Lokoja	18	New layout road, Lokoja.	Strategic	High
5	Chosen Restaurant & Bar	Okene	19	Nitel road, Okene.	Non-strategic	Low
6	Mr Bigg's	Okene	20	No 751 Lafia road , Okene.	Strategic	High

Source: Researcher's findings

Research Instrument

The instrument for data collection is a self-designed questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to elicit information from every selected owner of a restaurant. The instrument was divided into two sections, A and B. Section A is design to seek for background information about the respondents while Section B contain items designed to answer questions raised in the study. Question in section B were designed and guided using 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed.

Therefore, this study adopted the quantitative method of research in gathering sufficient data from the respondents because it is considered sufficient for the research analysis as it makes use of questionnaire to gather data from the owners, employees and customers of the selected small-scale restaurants in Kogi State.

Reliability of the Instrument

To carry out the reliability test, a pilot study was conducted among two (2) small scale restaurants in Ilara-Mokin, Ondo State on the questions in the questionnaire to show the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (α) consistency of the questions across the respondents.

Table 3.2: The results of the reliability test are revealed below:

S/N	Items	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (α)
1	Financial skills	0.86
3	Customers relations	0.91
4	Organizational productivity	0.83

Source: Researcher's fieldwork, July 2023

Administration of Research Instrument

The researcher visited the shops of the restaurants owners to seek their permission in order to administering the questionnaire to them. The researcher assured the respondents that their responses will be treated with confidentiality and for research work only. After getting permission to carry out the study in that location, the administration of the questionnaire was done during the respondents' day to day activities for a period of 3 working days. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the owners, employees and customers of the small-scale restaurants and of which the questionnaire was retrieved back on the spot to ensure a 100% collection of data.

After the collection of the filled questionnaire, the data was collated and scored accordingly. The researcher utilized the IBM SPSS quantitative analysis programmer version 26 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software to analyze the data acquired from the primary source of data collection. Descriptive statistics was used in the analyses to interpret the information acquired for this study. Frequency distribution was used in analyzing the demographic variables of the respondents' using percentages and bar charts while Chi square was used to analyzed hypotheses one and hypothesis two was analyzed using Pearson Product Movement Correlation (PPMC). All study hypotheses were evaluated at a significance level of 0.05.

RESULT OBTAINED

Analyses of Demographic Information of Respondents

Total number of respondents: 117 (6 Restaurants)

Table 1: Frequency Distribution

Demographic Variables	Data	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Female	97	82.9%
	Male	20	17.1%
	Total	117	100
Age Range	31-40 Years	41	35.0%
	41-50 Years	76	65.0%
	Total	117	100
Marital Status	Married	100	85.5%
	Single	17	14.5%
	Divorced and widow	-	-
	Total	117	100

Religion	Christian	41	35.0%
	Islam	76	65.0%
	Total	117	100
Educational Qualification	SSCE	17	14.5%
	HND/B.Sc.	100	85.5%
	Total	117	100
How long have you been into restaurant business	1-3 years	62	53.0%
	4-6 years	55	47.0 %
	Total	117	100
Forms of the restaurant business	Sole Proprietorship	97	82.9%
	Partnership	20	17.1%
	Total	117	100
Sources of finance	Micro Finance Loan	83	70.9%
	Personal Savings	34	29.1%
	Total	117	100
Local Government Areas	Idah	43	35.9%
	Lokoja	34	29.1%
	Okene	41	35.0%
	Total	117	100

Source: Researcher's findings, July 2023

Data shown on table1 showed the distribution of respondents according to their sex. Female respondents account for 97 (82.9%) and male respondents account for 20 (17.1%). Respondents within the age range of 41-50 years participated more in this study with 76 (65.0%), followed by respondents within the age range of 31-40 years with 41 (35.0%). The findings also showed the distribution of respondents according to marital status. Married respondents account for 100 (85.5%) while respondents that are single account for 17 (14.5%). None of the respondents tick the option of divorced and widow. Based on distribution of respondents according to their religion, 41 (35.0%) of the respondents are Christians while the highest number of respondents are Islam with 76 (65.0%). Based on level of education, majority of the respondents are HND/B.Sc. degree holders with 100 (85.5%), while respondents with SSCE are 17 (14.5%). In addition, respondents that have been into restaurant business between 1-3 years are 62 (53.0%) while respondents that have been in restaurant business between 4-6 years are 55 (47.0 %). Moreover, majority of the respondents with 97 (82.9%) said that restaurant is a sole proprietorship business while 20 (17.1%) of the respondents responded that their restaurant is a partnership business. Furthermore, majority of the respondents with 83 (70.9%) said that their source of income is through the micro finance loan while other respondents said that their sources of finance is through personal savings 34 (29.1%). Finally, respondents from

Idah local government are 43 (35.9%), respondents from Lokoja are 34 (29.1%) while respondents selected from Okene are 41 (35.0%)

Analysis of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis One:

Effective financial skills do not have significant impact on productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.

Table 4.2.1: Chi Square Test of the impact of financial skills on productivity of small-scale restaurants

	Value	Degree of Freedom	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	57.508 ^a	1	.000		
Continuity Correction ^b	54.572	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	73.382	1	.000		
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	57.017	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	117				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 19.33.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Source: Researcher's survey, July 2023.

Decision rule: In this result, the Pearson chi-square statistic is 57.508 and the p-value = 0.000. The likelihood chi-square statistic is 73.382 and the p-value = 0.000. Therefore, at a significance level of 0.05, it is concluded that there is association between the variables and they are statistically significant. In this case, the *p*-value 0.000 is smaller than the standard alpha value of 0.005, so the null hypothesis that asserts the two variables are independent of each other is rejected. The result suggests that the variables financial skills and productivity are associated with each other. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is therefore accepted which states that financial skills do have significant impact on productivity of small-scale restaurants in the selected local government areas of Kogi State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between customers' satisfaction and productivity of small-scale restaurants in selected local government areas, Kogi State.

Table 4.2.2: Pearson Movement Correlations on the relationship between customers' satisfaction and productivity of small-scale restaurants

		Restaurant Productivity	Customers Satisfaction
Restaurant Productivity	Pearson Correlation	1	.437**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Customers Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.437**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

N	117	117	Source:
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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Researcher's survey, July 2023.

Decision rule: The result in table 4.4. Revealed that customer satisfaction does have significant and positive relationship with restaurant productivity [$r = .437^{**}$, $p 0.000 < 0.01$]. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and therefore the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted, which state that there is significant relationship between customers' relations and restaurants productivity.

DISCUSSION

This study found in hypothesis one that financial management have significant impact on the productivity of small-scale restaurants. This finding implies that when restaurant owners are able to put into use all necessary financial skills and knowledge, it will help improve productivity. This finding is similar to the study of Sa'eed et al. (2020), they found that financial skills practices used by owners of business helps in enhancing the correct execution of financial accounting, reporting, budgeting, and other related duties in order to improve a firm's technical efficiency. The study of Nketsiah, (2018), found that financial skills give business owners the knowledge and understanding of financial concepts as well as the abilities, drive, and confidence to apply that knowledge and understanding to a variety of financial contexts in order to improve the financial health of small-scale businesses. In addition, this study corroborates with the findings of Chisiri and Manzini (2022), they found out in their study that having good financial skills encourages people to make wise decisions, such as paying their bills on time and managing their debt effectively, which raises the creditworthiness of potential borrowers and supports stable financial systems, and the eradication of poverty.

Finally, it was discovered in hypothesis three that customers' relations do have a positive significant relationship with restaurant productivity. This implies that when customers are satisfied with the services and food of the restaurants, they will be encouraged to always patronize the restaurant. This finding is similar to the findings in the study of Bryson, (2020), they opined that customer satisfaction is the strategy to keep the current loyal customers and retain new ones, which will on the long run improve profitability as well as productivity. The study of Piccoli et al., (2021) opined that customer satisfaction contributes to an indirect form of advertising for businesses through word-of-mouth recommendations, which boosts an organization's revenue. In addition, when customers are satisfied with the products of an organisation, this is beneficial for businesses in terms of launching new products or services, interested and satisfied customers will always show interest in the company's new products (Vats, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research, the study concluded that financial skills have significant impact on the improvement of the productivity of small-scale restaurants. To effectively run and operate restaurant businesses, there is need for sound and proper financial knowledge including the management in the use of finances. Finally, this study concluded that there is a significant relationship between customers' satisfaction and improvement of the productivity of small-scale restaurants. As the reason for the establishment of any restaurant is to satisfy and have good relations with customers, customer satisfaction is an essential factor for improving the productivity of small-scale restaurants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends that owners of restaurants should on a regularly basis embark on training targeted at improving their financial skills and knowledge which will help in the development of the restaurants financial spending and decision making.

This study also, recommends that the government of Kogi State should be willing and ready to support the small-scale restaurants financially by granting them small loans without interest and collateral because these small-scale restaurants are sources of hospitality and tourism to the state

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OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION IN THE RESTAURANTS OF A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY.

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Abstract

Operational efficiency in terms of restaurant profile, kitchen operations, dining area ambience, food attributes and customer's satisfaction in Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba were determined in this study. The purpose was to improve the operations of the restaurants for the benefit of the operators, customers and the University. 150 questionnaire were administered to respondents among restaurant operators, students, members of staff and visitors to the university selected by convenience sampling technique. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to establish the existence of relationship between the operational efficiency and customer's satisfaction. A significant and positive correlation coefficient was obtained between customers' satisfaction at $p < 0.01$ as follows; restaurant profile ($r = 0.864$), kitchen operations ($r = 0.855$), dining area ambience ($r = 0.867$) and food attributes ($r = 0.782$). Customers were generally not satisfied with the food attributes; price, portion, food quality and variety. The least mean score of 3.24 was obtained for the food attributes. The management of the University must put in place a Food quality compliance committee to monitor compliance with the uniform food attributes for customers to have value for their money.

Keywords: Operational Efficiency, Customer Satisfaction, Nigeria, University

INTRODUCTION

Many people are busy with work and everyday activities that make it imperative to dine out from time to time. Lee *et al.*, (2020) observed that many people are now taking part in restaurant operations to meet up with the challenges of increasing number of customers in search of convenient places to dine. The increase in the demand by customers creates competition among the restaurant owner (Liu *et al.*, 2018). In most cases, customers base their choice of restaurants on what the restaurants offer and they always seek for better services and comfort in their choices. According to Lugosi (2019) the success of any restaurants is hinged on customer experience. If a customer has a pleasing experience and he is convenient in his choice, he may likely make a revisit to the restaurant. Rashidi *et al.*, (2019) observed that customer's attitude and behaviour always change particularly in the higher education market that is competitive and global. University restaurant operators must therefore have to adapt to demanding expectations of their customers.

This study therefore examined the effects of operational efficiency of restaurants on customer's satisfaction in Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria with the aim of enhancing the business operations of the restaurants for more customers patronage, satisfaction and profits to the operators. The following hypotheses were raised to guide the study;

Hypothesis 1 H_{01} : Kitchen operations at the University restaurants have a significance effect on customers' overall satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 H_{02} : Restaurant ambience at the University restaurants have a significant effect on customers' overall satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 H_{03} : Food attributes offered at the University restaurants have a significant effect on customers' overall satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4 Ho₄: University restaurants staff attributes have a significant effect on the customers overall satisfaction

Literature Review

Many of the existing studies on University food service, have focused either on the students' satisfaction with products, services and service environment (Said and Fatty, 2015; Joung *et al.*, 2016). However, this study focused on the efficiency of the operations of restaurant and customer satisfaction. From customers perspectives, dining is not only about the food, they also seek for special attention and experience which make them feel fulfilled for choosing the right place to dine. Customers want to be appreciated, warmly received and attended to as very important personality (Wei & Ho, 2019).

Many factors are important in enhancing customer satisfaction. Srivalatha and Kumeringbe (2021) gave food quality and service quality. Serhan & Serhan (2019) reported that in university restaurants customer satisfaction is related to served food, beverage, quality, varieties and choices, hygiene and cleanliness, price and value. Harrington *et al.*, (2010) identified the attributes of restaurant as the main factor that influence customer satisfactions. The attributes of restaurants include, food safety, cleanliness, food quality, speed of service, perceived value of the food, quality of service, staff, friendliness, price, variety of menu and close travel distance. Kale (2020) suggested food quality presentation, preparation, menu design safety, food variety, appeal and diet. Apruebo (2010) suggested that customer satisfaction is achieved when there is an efficient operational efficiency. He stated that operational efficiency occurs when appropriate and right people, processes and technology are combined together to deliver products and services to the customers by organizing the core processes in response to the changes in market forces. Operational efficiency started from the purchase through food preparation, sitting of customers, service of foods and drink to the clean-up. Barten-Espin, (2017) stated that operational efficiency involves ensuring efficient use of resources and tune throughout the process of preparation of food to when it is served and clean-up. Kitchen operations, restaurant environment, food quality, staff, processes, layout of restaurant and physical environment are therefore significant to efficient operations in the restaurants.

Methodology

The survey method was used in this study, structured questionnaire were designed to obtain information from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of five sections. Section A was on the demographic characteristics and the dining out behaviour of the respondents. Section B was on the profile of the University restaurants. Section C was on kitchen operations of the restaurants, Section D was on the restaurants service area ambience, Section E was on overall satisfaction of the restaurants. One hundred and fifty (150). structured questionnaire were administered to the respondents who were selected by convenience technique of Non-probability sampling method. The convenience technique was used because it was not possible to have access to all members of the population at the same time. The respondents consisted of the restaurant operators, University students, staff of the University and the visitors to the University.

The validity of the research instrument was done by seeking the opinions of experts who affirmed that the instrument was valid and appropriate in terms of language, clarity of expressions in order to obtain the current information in line with the objectives and hypotheses of this study. The dependability of the instrument was determined by means of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (0.82). This represented a high consistency and reliability among statements in the questionnaire. Simple descriptive statistics of frequency tables, percentages and means were used to analyze the data obtained. The SPSS Statistical Software, Windows Version 23.0 (SPSS, Inc., Chicago II, USA) was employed in the analysis. Pearson correlations were also used to test the hypotheses generated for the study.

Results

Demographic characteristics and dining-out behaviour of the respondents were shown in Table 1. The result showed that male consisted of 36.7% and female were 63.3%. The result also showed 45.5% of the respondents were students, 16% were junior members of staff , 14.7% were senior non-teaching staff while 14.7% were academic staff and 9.3% were visitors to the institution. The age range of 48.7% of the respondents was between 10years to

25years, 26.7% were between 26 – 30years, 27.4% were between 31-40years and 7.3% were above 40years. On the dining-out behaviour of the respondents, 86% visited restaurants at least once a day, 14% visited twice a week. 74.7% visited restaurants during the week days while 25.3% visited both during the week days and the weekends. The average spending of 68% of the respondent on dinning out in restaurant ranged between ₦ 5,000 – ₦ 10,000 per week 17.3% average spending was between ₦ 10 – ₦ 15,000 per week, while 14.7% average spending on dinning out in restaurant per week was between ₦ 15,000 – ₦ 20,000.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics and Dining out Behaviour of the Respondents

Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	55	36.7
	Female	95	63.3
Age (Years)	16 – 20	42	28
	21 – 25	31	20.7
	26 – 30	25	16.7
	31 – 35	22	14.7
	36 – 40	19	12.7
	> 40	11	7.3
Occupation	Student	68	45.3
	Junior staff	24	16.0
	Non teaching staff	22	14.7
	Teaching staff	22	14.7
	Visitors	14	9.3
Dinning pattern	Once/day	129	86
	Twice/week	21	14
	Weekdays only	112	74.7
	Both weekdays/Weekend	38	25.3
Average spending (₦) per week	5,000 – 10,000	102	68
	11,000 – 25,000	26	17.3
	16,000 – 20,000	22	14.7

The profile of the restaurants were shown in Table 2. Many of the restaurants 55%, started operates within the last 10years. A high number of the restaurant, 90%, have above 10 workers in the restaurants. This indicates a high level of patronage. The sitting capacity of the restaurants ranged between 50 to 200. This also shows that the high sitting capacity allows for attending to a large number of customers at the same time.

Table 2: Profile of the Restaurants

Variables		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Numbers of years in business	1 – 5years	2	11
	6 – 10years	3	17
	11 – 15years	6	33
	16 – 20years	4	22
	> 20years	3	17
Number of Employee	1 – 5	-	-
	6 – 10	02	11.1
	11 – 15	08	44.4
	16 – 20	06	33
	21 – 25	02	11.1
Seating capacity	10 – 20	2	11
	21 – 30	3	7
	31 – 40	5	8
	41 – 50	5	8
	> 50	3	7

The responses of the respondents on the adequacy of the kitchens of the restaurants were shown in Table 3. The kitchen spaces were found to be adequate by 53% while 14% found them inadequate. Items of equipment recorded 65% adequate and 17% inadequate. Working tables were 52% adequate and 16% inadequate. Exhaust was 65% adequate and 16% inadequate. Refuse disposal was 46% adequate and 18% inadequate. Stores were 44% adequate and 20% inadequate.

Table 3: Adequacy of the kitchen operations

Item	Very adequate		Adequate		Undecided		Inadequate		Very inadequate		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Kitchen space	15	10	64	43	46	31	10	7	11	7	3.33
Equipment	11	7	56	58	58	39	15	10	10	7	3.29
Working table	14	9	54	43	52	35	10	9	10	7	3.15
Exhaust	10	7	42	58	73	49	14	9	11	7	3.15
Refuse disposal	14	9	55	37	54	36	16	11	11	7	3.30
Store	11	7	55	37	57	38	15	12	12	8	3.25
Work flow	16	11	50	34	60	40	12	11	11	7	3.30
Overall mean of kitchen operation											3.25

The level of adequacy of the dining area was shown in Table 4. Cleanliness was found to be adequate by 47% and 23% inadequate. Efficient service was 53% and 17% inadequate, ventilation was 49% and 20% inadequate, illumination was 52% adequate and 24% inadequate, traffic flow was 58% adequate and 17% inadequate. Number of seats was 66% adequate and 15% inadequate. Complaint handling was considered to be adequate by 51% of the respondent and 20% inadequate.

Table 4: Adequacy of the Dining Area Ambience

Item	Very adequate		Adequate		Undecided		Inadequate		Very inadequate		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Cleanliness	28	19	42	28	46	31	22	15	12	8	3.35
Efficient service	22	15	56	38	46	31	14	9	12	8	3.41
Ventilation	20	13	54	36	46	31	17	11	13	9	3.41
Illumination	27	18	50	34	41	27	22	15	13	9	3.43
Traffic flow	42	28	45	30	37	25	14	9	12	8	3.61
Flow of service	25	17	56	38	40	27	13	11	12	8	3.38
Adequate seats	47	31	52	35	30	20	10	8	10	7	3.75
Complaint handling	22	15	53	36	44	29	20	13	11	7	3.37
Overall mean of dining area ambience											3.46

The adequacy of the food attributes that influence customers' satisfaction in the restaurants were shown in Table 5. The result showed 41% found menu varieties to be adequate and 22% inadequate. Freshness of food was 41% adequate and 28% inadequate. Food temperature was 42% adequate and 25% inadequate, portion size was 9% adequate and 33% inadequate, price was 38% adequate and 32% inadequate, food safety was 39% adequate and 33% inadequate and lastly food presentation was 44% adequate and 33% inadequate.

Table 5: Adequacy of the food attributes

Item	Very adequate		Adequate		Undecided		Inadequate		Very inadequate		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	X
Menu varieties	13	9	48	32	56	38	22	15	11	7	3.24
Freshness of food	14	9	48	32	53	36	23	15	12	8	3.19
Food temperature	15	10	47	32	50	34	24	16	14	9	3.17
Pleasing aroma	13	12	47	32	43	32	27	18	15	10	3.01
Portion size	15	10	43	29	43	29	25	17	24	16	3.00
Price	13	9	43	29	45	30	26	17	23	15	2.98
Food safety	16	11	42	28	42	28	26	17	24	16	3.00
Food presentation	26	17	40	27	51	34	20	13	13	9	3.31
Overall mean of food attributes											3.11

The overall satisfaction of the respondents with the variables was displayed in Table 6. Kitchen operations were rated highest with the mean score of 3.50 while food attributes were rated lowest with the mean score of 2.98. The low rating of the food attributes was influenced by the price and the food production. The respondent complained about the high prices of the food and the portion sizes. The respondents were not also satisfied with non availability of food varieties. , The respondents expressed their satisfaction with the restaurants’ ambience, 3.35 and staff attributes, 3.43.

Table 6: Overall Satisfaction of Respondents with the Operational Efficiency

Item	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Neutral		Unsatisfied		Very unsatisfied		Mean
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	X
Restaurant profile	25	16.7	58	38.7	43	28.7	15	10	9.0	6.0	3.50
Kitchen operation	21	14	49	32.7	53	35.3	16	10.7	11	7.3	3.35
Running area ambience	21	14	47	31.3	47	31.3	17	11.3	18	12	3.24
Food attributes	24	16	52	34.7	49	32.7	15	10	10	6.7	3.43
Overall mean of food attributes											3.11

Test of Hypothesis

The result in Table 7 showed the correlation between the research variables and overall satisfaction of the respondents using the Pearson correlation coefficient.

Hypothesis 1, Ho1: There was a significant correlation between restaurant profile and overall satisfaction of the respondents ($r = 0.864$, $p < 0.01$). There was therefore a positive correlation between restaurant profile and customers satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2, Ho2: There was a significant and positive correlation between restaurant kitchen operations and overall customers’ satisfaction ($r = 0.855$, $p < 0.010$). Therefore, there was a positive correlation between kitchen operations and customers’ satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3, Ho3: The result indicated a significant and positive correlation between the dining area ambience and customers’ satisfaction ($r = 0.86$, $p < 0.01$).

Hypothesis 4, Ho4: The result also indicated a significant and positive correlation between the food attributes and customers’ satisfaction ($r = 0.782$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 7: Variables Correlations

		Restaurant attributes	Kitchen operations	Restaurant attributes	Food attributes	Overall satisfaction	Combined effect of research attribute
Restaurant profile	Pearson		.612**	.632**	.644**	.714**	.831**
	Sig (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N		150	150	150	150	150
Kitchen operations	Pearson	.643**		.665**	.631**	.731**	.811**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150		150	150	150	150
Restaurant ambience	Pearson	.674**	.668**		.668**	.765**	.822**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150		150	150	150
Food attributes	Pearson	.623**	.633**	.667**		.544**	.631**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150		150	150
Overall satisfaction	Pearson	.774**	.769**	.795**	.687**		.794**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150		150
Combined effect of research attributes	Pearson	.864**	.855**	.867**	.782**	.866**	
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150	

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion

The result in Table 1 showed that there were more females than the male. The result is similar to the findings of Sehan & Serhan (2019) who reported that more female are involved in dinning out. The respondents were predominantly within the age range of 16years to 25years. This is so because the respondents were mostly students 45.3%, within the University environment. Table 1 also showed that all the categories of staff of the University visited the restaurants within the University. Table 1 showed that the respondents mostly 74.7%, visit the restaurants during the weekdays and sparsely by the weekends. The restaurant operations must therefore have adequate plans and stock for the weekdays. The study had identified the restaurant attributes, kitchen operations, restaurant ambience, quality of food and service as the main factors of operational efficiency of the restaurants that affect customers satisfaction. Other factors identified were the food attributes, restaurant profile, dining area ambience and kitchen operations. The result in Table 1 showed 55% of the restaurant started operation within the last ten (10) years, suggesting an increase in restaurant business in the University. This agreed with the position of Lee *et al.*, (2020) that as many people are dining out, the number of people involved in the business will also increase. Average number of worker in the restaurant is above ten which indicated a high level of patronage by the customers. According to Barlan-Espino (2017) restaurants must have to employ more workers to cope with the high level of customer patronage. This is a challenge to the restaurant business. The sitting capacity of the restaurant ranged between 50 and 200. The high sitting capacity allowed for the restaurant operators to attend to a large number of

customers at a time. Barlan-Espino (2017) emphasized that sitting capacity is the determinant of the level of patronage of restaurants.

The result in Table showed that the kitchen facilities and operation were found adequate. The kitchen space, equipment and working tables were rated high. Others included refuse disposal and workflow. Significantly, the kitchen operation is important in the overall satisfaction of customers. The kitchen operations in this study were found to be adequate to achieve customers satisfaction (Liu *et al.*, 2018). The high mean scores as shown in Table for cleanliness, efficient service, ventilated, illumination, traffic flow, complaint handling and sitting arrangements means that the customers were satisfied with the variables. Therefore, the ambiances of the dining area were adequate to achieve customers' satisfaction. Raman & Subhasei (2011) in a similar study found that the ambience represented cleanliness, sitting arrangement and efficient service which if adequate would achieve customers' satisfaction. The food attributes as shown in Table consisted of menu varieties, freshness of food, food temperature, pleasing aroma, portion size, price, food safety and presentation. The mean scores for the adequacy were rated high suggesting they were acceptable by the customers. Food attributes are important determinants of customers' satisfaction. This agreed with the position of Lugosi (2019) that food portion size and price are important considerations by the customers in selecting a product. Also, the findings are corroborated by Fatima *et al.*, (2016) that food hygiene and safety significantly influence customers' choice of a restaurant. The level of correlation between the research variables and respondents satisfaction was shown in Table 7 of Pearson correlation coefficient. The result showed a significant correlation between kitchen operations and the overall satisfaction of the respondents.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the restaurants in Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko were adequate in terms of the profiles of the restaurants, the kitchen operations and the dining area ambience. However, the respondents were not satisfied with the food attributes. This aspect of restaurant operation have to be regulated for customers to have value for their money. The food portion size and quality must be in conformity with the price. Dissatisfaction of this aspect could lead to disenchantment among the customers particularly students thus affecting the smooth running of the University. The recommendation of this study is therefore that the University should set up a monitoring team to enforce appropriate food portion sizes, quality and variety among the restaurant operators.

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