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ECOTOURISM RESOURCES OF OLD OYO NATIONAL PARK AND
THEIR LEVEL OF UTILIZATION

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ABSTRACT

National Park was established in Nigeria to protect, preserve, conserve and manage representative samples of indigenous flora and fauna, and to promote ecotourism in the country. This study identified and mapped out the ecotourism resources of Old Oyo National Park and evaluated their level of utilization from 1997 to 2017. The study utilized remote sensing data, field observation, Geographic Information System Technology, interview and information from administrative records. Data collected from the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study identified forty two (42) man-made and sixteen (16) natural attractions in the park. The study revealed that the Museum of Natural History was the most utilized facility within the period as it had the highest visitation record of 46,702 out of 97,453 tourists. This was followed by picnicking with a value of 20,224, while sport fishing had the least visit of 153 tourists, which represents 0.16% of total visits. This study indicates underutilization of some tourist attractions and facilities that are readily available. It is therefore important that the potentials of the Park as a tourist destination be better explored and widely publicized to further attract tourists, while efforts be made to remove constraints limiting ecotourism development and its utilization in the park.

Keywords: Ecotourism, potential, mapping, utilisation, national park.

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INTRODUCTION

Around the world, in countries at all development levels, many millions of jobs and businesses are dependent on a strong and thriving tourism sector. Tourism has also been a driving force in protecting natural and cultural heritage, preserving them for future generations to enjoy" (Pololikashvili, 2018), recreation and ecotourism are also expanding in the developing world (O'Connor *et al.*, 2009); visits to protected areas in Africa, Asia, and Latin America increased approximately 2.5 to 5% between 1992 and 2006 (Balmford *et al.*, 2009). Tourism is already the number one industry in many countries, in terms of foreign exchange earnings and job creation. National Parks, aside from its primary role of conservation provides valuable revenue that is used to support wildlife research, education, livelihood of local communities close to the Parks and helps to generate international awareness of conservation issues (Ngoka, 2013). National parks, by preserving recreational attraction such as wildlife, archaeological sites, landscape/seascape, scenic sites, waterfalls, and geomorphologic sites provide

the potentials for a wide range of recreational activities which include; park viewing, mountain climbing, nature appreciation of flora, a landscape, warm spring bathing, boating, sport fishing, wilderness experience, bird watching, nature trails, nature refuge, hiking, excursion, adventure trips, and sporting activities.

Ecological tourism (ecotourism) refers to nature based tourism. Ecotourism is defined as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education" (TIES, 2015). Although tourism generates wealth and employment, ecotourism has an added advantage of environmental conservation and management by having a lower impact on the environment compared to mass tourism / resort tourism. According to Ogunjinmi (2015), ecotourism as a sub-sector of global tourism, has become a growing phenomenon, particularly in developing countries.

National parks are large natural or near natural areas set aside to protect large-scale ecological processes, along with the complement of species and

ecosystems characteristic of the area, which also provide a foundation for environmentally and culturally compatible spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities (Dudley, 2008). Nigeria has seven national parks strategically located across five out of the six geo-political zones in the country (none in south east) with a diverse flora and fauna resources peculiar to the different zones. The total land area covered by Nigeria national parks is about 2.4 million hectares (Nigeria National Park Service, 2018). Ecotourism being an integral part of the objectives that led to the creation of the national parks, its tourism capacity and potentials are yet to be properly actualized. Also it has been debated that ecotourism activities sustain rural development and create considerable income for the park support zone communities. The long-term success of ecotourism is premised on the features and facilities available that could serve as anchors for sustainable tourism. Identifying tourism resources at Old Oyo National Park is very important to the overall development of tourism activities and policies necessary to improve the Park's tourism index and sustainability as well as tourism development planning and priority. Furthermore, studies on utilisation of the existing tourism resources is important for sustainability of the sites' goals as tourist destinations and conservation centre and could suggest innovative ways for increasing utilisation of the resources. Although, studies on tourism/ecotourism have been conducted in Old Oyo National Park (Oladeji *et al.*, 2012, Ogunjinmi and Braimoh, 2018, Ogunjinmi *et al.*, 2020), with focus on different aspects of ecotourism in the park, this study is germane for the identification of gaps in the utilisation of ecotourism resources and proffer solutions for increasing level of utilisation for sustained ecotourism development in the park. This study aimed to identify and map the ecotourism resources of Old Oyo National Park (OONP) and determine the level of utilisation of the ecotourism resources.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in Old Oyo National Park. Old Oyo National Park originated in two earlier administrative forest reserves; Upper Ogun established in 1936 and Oyo-Ile established in 1941. These were converted to game reserves in 1952, then combined and upgraded to a National Park by Decree Number 36 of 1991, which was later repealed

and- replaced with Decree (now Act) Number 46 of 1999 presently established by the National Park Service Act. Cap 65 of the law of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2004. Old Oyo National Park (Figure 1) is geographically located between latitude 8°10,' and 9° 05', North and longitudes 3° 35' and 4° 21' and centred on North latitude 8° 36' 00" and East Longitude 3° 57' 05". The Park covers a land area of approximately 2,512 sq Km making it the fourth largest National Park in Nigeria. The park is made up of six (6) administrative ranges, *Tede, Yemoso, Marguba, Sepeteri, Tessi, and Oyo-Ile* ranges.

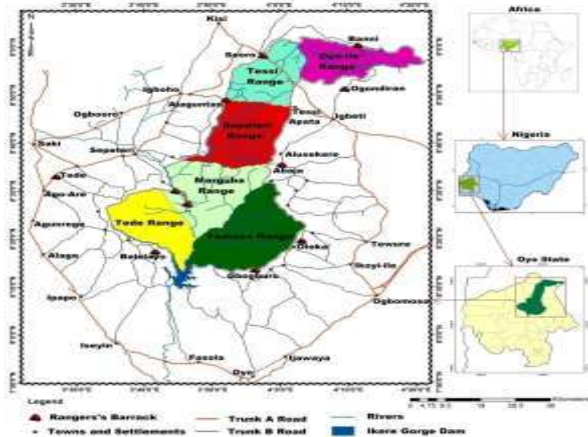


Figure 1: Map of Old Oyo National Park

Data Collection and Analysis

Identification and mapping of recreational potentials of Old Oyo National Park were carried out using Olaniyi *et al.* (2016) method of mapping ecotourism resource of T. A. Afolayan Wildlife Park. This was carried out by collecting the spatial data of ecotourism resources in the locations using handheld Global positioning System (GPS) with their photographs using a digital camera. The park boundaries and some nature trails were tracked using the same equipment. The data obtained were uploaded into Quantum GIS software (QGIS 2.8) environment for interpretations. From these, the map of the ecotourism recreational potentials resources was produced using GIS overlap including geo-tagging each of the ecotourism resource locations with its photograph to generate an ecotourism resource map.

Reconnaissance survey was carried out in the park through field survey to assess, locate and determine the potentials and tourism features in the area. The researcher also went round to confirm the recreational potentials identified from the tourism official. Each potential was geo-referenced and

Garmin 32. A recreation potential map was developed from the geo-referenced data through GIS ArcMap 10.2 because it is vector based. Information on visitation of tourists was obtained from the administrative record of Old Oyo national park.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Recreation and Tourism Facilities and Resources in Old Oyo National Park

Ecotourism and recreational facilities are presented in Tables 1-4 and Figure 2. Results show that the tourism and recreational features are a mix of natural features and manmade features. At the head office (Table 1), the facilities are tourists' chalets, bar, restaurants, orphanage animals (Plate 1), multipurpose hall (event centre), and museum (Plate 2). In Marguba Range, the facilities available at Akoto Base Camp include Standard chalets, VIP Suite, restaurants, and bar, swimming pool, table tennis court, and Gymnasium fitness Hall, fitness equipment, and students' hostels. In Ibuya (Table 3), the facilities and resources are Ibuya pool (Plate 3), wild animals (Plate 4), tourist lodge, research centre, and wooden hide. The tourist facilities and resources at Oyo Ile are the ruins of the Old Oyo Empire and include Mejiro industrial grinding stone (Plate 5), mounds of house ruins, information Centre, Kosomonu hill, outer defence wall ruins, Agbaku cave (Plate 6), Koso rock (Plate 7) Ogun Jokoro (Plate 8), Oke-Agbele rock formation (Plate 9), Royal tomb of four Alafins located at Igbo-oba, Igboho, and Ikere Gorge Dam for water recreation. At Yemoso range, Oke Gbogun (Plate 10) is discernable. These are indications that the park is rich in natural and manmade facilities and heritage resources that are important for the development of tourism. These imply that Old Oyo National Park is home to natural, historical and cultural resources significant for ecotourism development and the resources are comparable with what obtains in Kure mountains national park, Turkey (Açıksöz *et al.*, 2010).

Table 1: Recreational facilities located at the Park head office, Isokun, Iseyin Road, Oyo.

S/No.	Features	Quantity	Type of Attraction
1	Chalets as Tourist Points	2	Human Made
2	Restaurant and Bar	2	Human Made
3	Event Centre (201 visitor's capacity) (Multi - Purpose)	1	Human Made
4	Museum of Natural History (Capacity: 32 visitors)	1	Human Made
5	Indoor game House	1	Human Made
6	Captive animal (Duiker)	1	Natural
7	Captive animal (Tortoise)	1	Natural
8	Lawns (A, B, C) for outdoor events, camping	3	Human Made
9	Oranyan Festival (Aafin) (Annual - September or October)		Human Made

Table 2: Ecotourism and recreational facilities at Akoto Base Camp

S/No.	Features	Range	Attractions
1	Akoto Base Camp Gate House	Marguba Range	Human made
2	Akoto Restaurant	Marguba Range	Human made
3	Akoto Reception complex	Marguba Range	Human made
4	Akoto Standard Chalets	Marguba Range	Human made
5	Akoto Swimming Pool	Marguba Range	Human made
6	Gymnasium Hall	Marguba Range	Human made
7	Suite A	Marguba Range	Human made
8	Suite B	Marguba Range	Human made

Table 3: Tourist features at Ibuya (Marguba Range)

S/No	Features	Quantity	Type of attraction
1	River Ogun		Natural
2	Tourist Lodge	2	Human Made
3	Ajaku-Ibuya Track		Human Made
4	Maha Tracks A, B for game viewing		Human Made
5	Ibuya Pool		Natural
6	Wooden Hide	1	Human Made
7	Yemoso Hill	1	Natural

Table 4: Recreation and tourism facilities and resources in Oyo-Ile of the Park

S/No.	Features	Range	Attractions
1	Inner Defence Wall 1	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
2	Inner defence Wall 2	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
3	Outer defence wall 1	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
4	Outer defence Wall 2	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
5	Mejiro Industrial Site (consisting of black smiting, Iron forgerly and grain milling sites)	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
6	Mejiro Rock	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
7	A large water reservoir for dry season utilization	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
8	Palace (Aafin) of Alaafin alongside the town hall.	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
9	Akesan Market	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
10	Agbaku rock Shelter	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
11	Python Cave	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
12	Kosomonu Hill	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
13	Mounds of House Ruins	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
14	Esu Shrine	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
15	Idi Ara Cave	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
16	Baara	Oyo-Ile Range	
17	Koso rock	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
18	Ogun Shrine	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
19	Ogun jokoro	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
20	Grinding Stone	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
21	Old earthen Pots	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
22	Pot Shields	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
23	Snags	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
24	Mud walls	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
25	Mounds of ashes	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
26	Charcoal	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
27	Oke Agbele	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
28	Idi Are	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
29	Mejiro Caves	Oyo-Ile Range	Natural
30	Information Centre	Oyo-Ile Range	Human made
31	Antete Shrine	Yemoso Range	Natural
32	Ikere Gorge Dam	Tede Range	Natural
33	Royal Cemetery, Igboho	Sepeteri Range	Human Made
34	Sango Deity	Oyo-Ile Range	Human Made

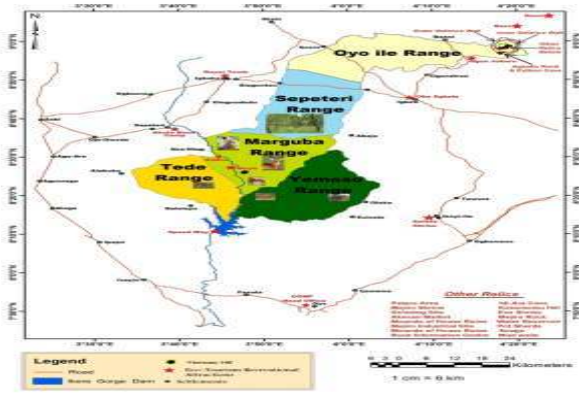


Figure 2: Map of Old Oyo National Park showing the recreation potentials and tourism facilities and resources in different locations of the Park



Plate 4: Kob (*Kobus kob*) at Marguba Range



Plate 1: Orphanage animals (Grey and Red Flanked Duikers)



Plate 5: Mejiro industrial Site 1



Plate 2: Museum of natural history



Plate 6: Agbaku Cave



Plate 3: Ibuya Pool in Marguba Range of the Park



Plate 7: Koso Rock



Plate 8: Ogun Jokoro at Jokoro village within Park environment



Plate 9: Oke-Agbele Rock Formation located at Igbeti



Plate 10: Oke Gbogun (Yemoso Range)

Levels of Utilisation of Ecotourism Resources and Facilities in Old Oyo National Parks

Table 2 shows that total number of tourists who participated in utilisation of recreational attraction in Old Oyo National Park for tourism from 1997 to 2017 was 97,453. The number of tourists observed in this study is higher than what was reported by Olaoye *et al.* (2019) from 2009 to 2018 with 40,991 tourists at Kainji Lake National Park.

The study revealed that visitation of tourists in the park was highest in the Museum of Natural History (46,702). This was followed by picnicking with a value of 20,224, while sport fishing had the least (153). This may not be unconnected with the fact that Museum in Old Oyo National Park is located at the Park entry point (Oyo town) which allows patronage of the visitor/tourists within the urban and highly populated setting. This could also be as a result of the proximity of Oyo town to some major cities, thus greater access to the head office of the park where the museum of natural history is located.

Table 5: Trends in utilisation of tourism activities in Old Oyo National Park

Year	Park viewing	Hiking	Sport fishing	Tour of historical/ Archaeological site	Picnicking	Lodging	Gym/ Swimmim	Education tours	Confer ence	Restau ranti/Ba r	Visit museum to
1999	257	0	20	122	0	34	0	0	0	32	0
2000	282	0	3	89	0	31	0	0	0	32	0
2001	97	24	10	77	356	45	0	0	0	38	326
2002	379	6	17	145	0	23	0	0	0	4	234
2003	158	13	6	176	167	45	0	0	0	3	157
2004	161	0	9	143	861	32	0	0	0	28	871
2005	75	0	8	241	845	49	0	0	0	53	875
2006	181	0	5	156	1637	31	0	0	0	29	1347
2007	502	0	12	77	1564	23	35	0	23	43	1714
2008	363	104	15	81	1977	46	300	96	32	52	1567
2009	760	0	0	45	3125	85	55	232	11	67	2895
2010	727	124	12	57	2733	16	167	615	6	68	3713
2011	807	6	14	100	256	89	87	382	10	76	4085
2012	1263	0	8	43	66	78	46	908	15	121	4194
2013	1031	0	3	12	407	59	345	1314	17	87	5619
2014	447	583	0	45	307	12	2366	72	23	58	6548
2015	759	386	0	28	2981	99	2266	940	12	123	2334
2016	1098	961	6	34	730	128	296	974	5	99	2123
2017	407	416	1	15	302	108	311	358	12	123	3428
2018	854	510	4	27	1910	79	0	167	17	107	4672
2019	10598	3133	153	1713	20224	1172	6274	6058	183	1243	46702
%	10.87	3.21	0.16	1.76	20.75	1.20	6.44	6.22	0.19	1.28	47.92

CONCLUSION

This study identified various ecotourism resources, recreational facilities and tourists attractions in Old Oyo National Park. The resources were manmade and natural attractions consisting natural, cultural, archaeological, and historical resources. Museum was the resource utilised most from 1999 to 2019 by the tourists. Findings from the study suggest low level of utilisation of ecotourism resources and facilities in Old Oyo National Park and the need for innovative marketing to ensure increased utilisation of the ecotourism resources in the Park.

FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER RATE IN HOTELS
IN NIGERIA: A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Employee turnover rate has contributed to the failure of most hotels to maximize profit and retain the customers. Many researches have been carried out on employee turnover rate in many countries but little work has been done in hotels in Nigeria. Factors influencing employee turnover rate in hotels in Nigeria: a conceptual review was therefore researched on. The study used secondary data in the review. Motivation, training and development, salary, motivation and work environment were identified as factors that influencing employee turnover rate in hotels in Nigeria. The study recommended that hotel proprietors should encourage their staff by motivating and providing a good working environment to retain them in their establishment.

Keywords: Employee motivation, employee turnover, job satisfaction, hotels.

To cite this article

Anyanwu, Dominic Ebere., Ojeikere, Josphine., Afita Mary Bathram & Emeka, Isaac (2021) Factors Influencing Employee Turnover Rate in Hotels in Nigeria: A Conceptual Review 11(1), 7 - 11.

INTRODUCTION

For any hotel to operate effectively and succeed, the workforce of the organization needs to be treated well (Samuel & Chipunza, 2009). An organization like a hotel needs employees that will be committed and use their skills and experiences to deliver quality service to customers thereby achieving the organizational goals. These can be possible if the employees are motivated in a good working environment. But if the environment is not conducive and the employees are not well remunerated, it will lead to employee turnover. The hospitality industry is very labour intensive and as such it relies on the performance and motivation of its employees to ensure success (Robin and Steven 2007).

Nigeria is a developing country that has different hospitality business but low remuneration, motivation and bad leadership style have caused a lot of employee turnover rate in hotel establishments (Anyanwu & Braimah, 2017). The hospitality industry is a field that experiences a disproportionate amount of turnover in hourly employee and management ranks when compared with other service industries. Employee turnover is a situation whereby employees leave an organization and the organization replaces the employee by someone else (Mcshane & Glinew, 2000). According to Hee and Ann (2019), employee turnover can be seen as "employees are going to leave an organization and new employees fill up the

vacancies". Ongori (2007) opined that "turnover basically means the percentage of employees who are within a particular period of time opting to leave the company or business for other companies". Woods and Macaulay (1989) estimated that turnover costs a hospitality employer between three thousand dollars and ten thousand dollars for each hourly employee that leaves an organization. The authors maintained that the cost of turnover is great given the financial expenses of recruiting, training, and retraining employees. These high costs of turnover create a need by hospitality practitioners to reduce voluntary, dysfunctional, and avoidable turnover and improve the retention rates of hourly employees in their organization (Pizam and Ellis, 1999 in Robin and Steven, 2009).

Wright & Bonett (2007) classified turnover into voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover is when an employee decides to leave an organization as a result of better offer or treatment in another company. Involuntary turnover on the other hand means when an employee was asked to leave the organization for variety of reasons including layoffs, or poor job performance or other performance harmful to the company.

It has been observed that many hotels are experiencing employee's turnover rate. This has resulted to huge lost of both human and material resources. Many scholars have researched on the factors affecting turnover rates in the hotel business

(Ganesh and Abubakkar, 2015; Vicent, 2018; Wafula, Kerubo; and Eunicares, 2017). Vincent (2018) on environmental factors, revealed that six (6) factors which include job insecurity, job dissatisfactory, lack of organizational commitment, poor working conditions, better job option and job stress and unfair treatment are the causes of employee turnover in hospitality industry in Ghana. Wafula *et al* (2017) disconnected that non compensation of workers, lack of training and development, poor salaries and allowances including service changes are the factors that cause employee turnover rate in hotels in Kisii town Kenya. However, this study is trying to conceptualize the factors affecting employee turnover rate in Nigeria hotels.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE:

1. Relationship between Motivation and Employee Turnover Rate

Motivation is an indispensable virtue in the hands of a good hospitality manager to attain the goals and aspiration of the establishment (Anyanwu *et al.*, 2017). Motivation is one of the major aspects in any organization that drive the human beings to put extra efforts (Mahpara Shah, Muzaffar Asad, 2018). A good manager ought to motivate his or her employees to bring out their natural best to increase the productivity of the organization. Springer (2011) exerts that employee motivation is the process of human behaviour to achieve the tasks effectively. In line with this, motivation is an inspirational process which impels the members of the team to pull their weight effectively to give loyalty to group, to carry out properly the tasks as they have accepted and generally to play an effective parts in the job that the group has undertaken.

According to Harold and Heinz (1990), managing requires the creation and maintenance of an environment in which individuals work together in group towards the accomplishment of common objectives. The authors maintained that a manager cannot do this job without knowing what motivates people. The building of motivating factors into organizational roles, the staffing of these roles and the entire process of leading people must be built on knowledge of motivation.

However, motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), intrinsic motivation is the type of job which enhances internal satisfaction of employees which includes appreciation, new work challenges, positive and soft

behaviour from employer and job succession (Ryan & Deci, 2000). For extrinsic Prabakaran Ispriya, Amsa and Angulakshmi, (2014) opined that extrinsic motivation can be described as pay, bonus, promotions and job security. The intrinsic motivation is an important aspect to increase motivation of employees and their intention to stay with the organization (Aguenza, 2012). Intrinsic and Extrinsic motivation are very important for all the employees (Asad, Haider Akhtar & Javaid, 2011) working in any industry, hotel sector inclusive.

Motivation plays an important role in any hospitality establishment because when managers motivate their workers, the intention of workers leaving the establishment is minimized. This is in line with Marshall *et. al.* (2016) that in hospitality industry, motivation remains the key behind employee retention due to frequent contact with the employees and clients or visitors. However, when business relation are being maintained in the organization, it leads to higher level of employee motivation and thus lower levels of turnover (Bettye Holston-Okae 2018). Clark and Estes (2002) in Robin and Steven (2007) are of the view that employee turnover may not be purely a function of remuneration but rather employee motivation. The maintained that management will have to consider how best to create conditions and provide information that will result in improved motivation if they wish to lower employee turnover.

2. Training and Development and Employee Turnover

Any organization that wants to remain in business and retain their workers must train and retain its staff (Anyanwu, Okoli and Onyeonoro, 2017). Training plays an important role in any organization by upgrading employee performance and contributing effectively to the cause of the organization. Training and development are important management tools for changing and directing job behaviour towards specified organizational goals. According to Akanwa (2008), training and development is a process of putting somebody through a learning experience to perform a job. For Nwachukwu (1988), training is organizational effort aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skill required for efficient execution of the function for which he was hired. However, any staff that is given required training in an organization will find it difficult to leave the organization. This is supported by Costen and Salazar (2011) that employees who feel they have the chance to develop

new skills through training and development in the workplace are more satisfied with their jobs and are, as a result, more likely to remain loyal to an organization. But when training and development are lacking in an organization it will lead to staff turnover. This is in line with Pousston (2008) that training and development affect jobs satisfaction and organization commitment which in turn affect staff retention; an organization that provides inadequate training increases staff turnover and threatened quality standards and profits.

Research has shown that training and development is a strategy managers in a hospitality industry are using to retain their workforce, even help to assure the new employees in the organization that their development and learning of new skills is guaranteed (Govaert *et al.*, 2011; and Lashley and Best, 2002). For Dh,r (2015), when employees are given adequate training, it will assist the workers to deliver quality service to their customers for profit maximization which will in turn make the management of the organization to retain the workers for a long period of time.

3. Relationship between Salary and Employee Turnover Rate

Salary is something given in exchange for services rendered in an organization (Shaw *et al.*, 1998). It has played a significant role in retaining and rewarding high quality human resources. One of the critical factors of employee turnover is lower salary and insufficient financial rewards (Lavob, 1997).

Employees in different organizations seek to improve their level of income (Betete, 2018).

Pay satisfaction is the amount of negative or positive feelings individuals have toward their pay (Miceli & Lane, 1991). Pay refers to all forms of compensation, such as salary and benefits, including the administration of the pay system (Miceli & lane 1991). Pay satisfaction is important because it can impact important work outcomes such as job satisfaction, intention to leave, job performance, organizational performance, and competitiveness (Dreher, Ash, & Bretz, 1988; Jana & Petr, 2013; Rynes, Gerhart, & Minette, 2004).

In today's work environment where salary is one of determinant factors, employee quit current job and accept the job with higher pay opportunity and pay level has a potentially important direct influence on voluntary turnover (Belete, 2018).

4. Work Environment and Employee Turnover Rate

Work environment is one factor that retains an employee in his working place. Sedarmayanti (2011)

in Ira, Feri, Hijriyantomi and Pasaribu (2019) opined that the work environment is the entire tooling equipment and materials faced, the surrounding environment where a person works, work methods, and work arrangements both as individuals and as a group. According to online dictionary the term work environment is used to describe the surrounding conditions in which an employee operates. For Ray, Katherine, and Don (nd), a 'good workplace' is characterised by low levels of stress, employees feeling appreciated by management and not feeling threatened at work. Within 'good workplaces,' some key attributes of the QWE have a greater impact on the quitting intention than when the workplace is perceived to be bad.

Research has shown that when the working environment is not conducive for workers it can lead to employee turnover. Sims and Kroeck (1994) in Rego & Cunha (2008) stated that the determinants of individual performance in organizations are individual factors and environmental factors, they also explain that someone chooses to work in an organization / company with a work climate that is suitable for his desires.

5. Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Turnover Rate:

Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's expression of personal well-being related to job performance (Gibson *et al.*; 2000). Job satisfaction is a general attitude towards job and the affective, cognitive and evaluative reaction of the job performed (Baron and Greeberg, 2003). Job satisfaction refers to the degree of contentment in the individual with the reward he or she receives from intrinsic motivation at work (Baron & Green berg, 2003). Job satisfaction can be described as the feeling of fulfillment of employees when they perform well in the job and being recognized by the employers and it increased productivity (Arokiasmg, 2013).

Factors that influence job satisfaction include compensation, recognition, training opportunity, and relationship with colleagues as well as challenges at work, pay, promotion, work content and supervision (Thwala *et al.*, 2012, Ganesan , 2010). If job satisfaction is high, it will decrease employee turnover rate in return.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents a proposed research framework for this study based on the factors influencing employee turnover

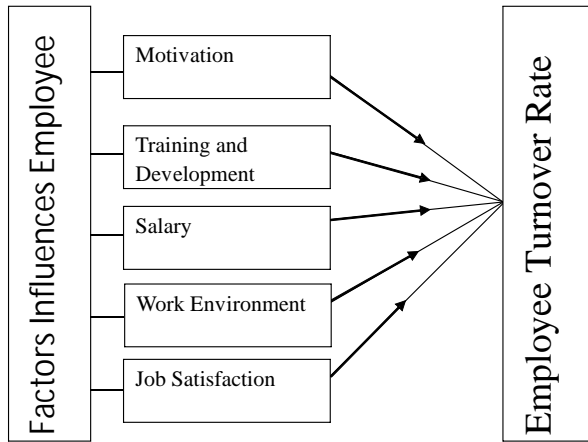


Figure1: Conceptual Framework of Factors Influencing Employee Turnover Rate in Hotels in Nigeria

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the factors that influence employee turnover rate in hotels in Nigeria. Motivation, training and development, salary, motivation and work environment were identified as the factors influencing employee turnover rate in hotels in Nigeria. Hotel owners and their management team should, therefore, try to investigate and know why their employees always leave their establishment, and devise some measures to attract and retain employees in their organization. It is less expensive to re-train the employee than to recruit, train and place new ones. The study therefore recommended that hotel proprietors should encourage their staff by motivating and providing a good working environment to prevent them from leaving. The study can be helpful for scholars and researchers who are doing research in related field.

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ACCEPTABILITY OF SELECTED INDIGENOUS RICE FOR SALE IN LOCAL RESTAURANTS IN NIGERIA

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¹The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Nigeria²Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu, Nigeria^{*}Corresponding Author: edwin.nwokorie@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng**ABSTRACT**

Three selected indigenous rice grains were prepared and subjected to sensory assessment to determine their acceptability for sale in local restaurants. Three different dishes were prepared from the three rice species using a prescribed recipe for the study in comparison with three control rice dishes. A group of 30 panelists was selected for acceptance test using a nine-point hedonic scale to test for appearance, texture, taste, aroma, and overall acceptability. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and standard error. Correlation and Analysis of Variance were carried out to determine relationships between the rice dishes. Results showed a variation in the colour, texture, taste, and aroma of the rice dishes. While fried Abakaliki rice has the highest acceptance score, a very strong positive relationship was indicated between Jollof Abakaliki rice and boiled Gboko rice, with a weak negative relationship between fried Ofada rice and Jollof Ofada rice. The study concludes that the concurrent introduction of the two indigenous rice dishes with a strong positive relationship in the study would assist in stimulating culinary tourism and promoting the cultural heritage of the localities cultivating the grain, and would also promote local agriculture and farm produce. It was recommended that all food commodities to be used in preparing and cooking indigenous rice dishes should be procured fresh and wholesome to ensure maximum portion yield, and acceptable colour, taste and aroma.

Keywords: Culinary tourism, customer loyalty, indigenous rice, Nigerian restaurants, sensory assessment.

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INTRODUCTION

Rice has been a staple food that has shaped the eating out pattern of most Nigerians over the years. The consumption of rice in local restaurants is occasioned by its year-round availability and easy preparation characteristic, which makes it relatively cheap than most other food products in local restaurants (Nwokorie, 2015). Over the years, hotel and restaurant operators have depended on the importation of rice for its availability. However, recent government policies prohibiting rice importation into Nigeria put tremendous pressure on restaurant operators for product availability since the demand for the product has to be met. Although imported rice grain is scarcely available in the local market, the cost of purchasing rice is relatively high. While indigenous rice grains compete unfavourably with the imported grain in the local market, the need for restaurant operators to remain competitive and maintain customer loyalty by ensuring the availability of the food remains vital for business survival. Most well-established restaurants may have a way of ensuring the availability of the foreign grain which, invariably, enhances patronage due to customer perception of its 'specialness' over other indigenous

rice grains (Nwokorie & Ayogu, 2019). Specifically, customer perception is a major determinant of product acceptability in the hospitality industry (Nwokorie & Adeniyi, 2021).

As government agencies have intensified machinery for the prohibition of rice importation, the need for local restaurant operators to standardize the preparation method of indigenous rice for general acceptability of consumers has become important to ensure customer satisfaction and retention. Fortunately, local rice grain is readily available in the local market following local farmers' embrace of rice cultivation in recent years, with many states in Nigeria producing different species of indigenous rice grain (Longtau, 2003; Ajala & Gana, 2015; Adams, 2018; Aremu & Akinwamide, 2018).

Acceptability of indigenous rice is influenced by various factors including palatability, aroma, stickiness, rate of breaking, ease of cooking, taste, and purchasing power of customers (Ogunde, 2014; Obih & Baiyegunhi, 2018). Arguably, the acceptability is as a result of the presentation of the different rice dishes as influenced by the skill of the chef involved (Ogunleke & Baiyegunhi, 2019). To this end, standardizing the preparation method for the

various rice dishes, using a set of recipes, is important to ensure the general acceptability of the different indigenous rice grains.

Bucharian (2009) described recipe standardization as the process of tailoring a recipe to suit a particular purpose in a specific foodservice operation. It is a food preparation method that could be tried, adapted, and retried for food production and could produce the same good result and yield each time the exact procedure is used with similar equipment, quantity, and quality of ingredients.

Ceserani and Kinton (2008) stated that standardization brings innovation because it provides a structured method and reliable data that saves time in the innovation process. It also helps to disseminate groundbreaking knowledge about leading-edge techniques. Besides, it stands apart as an indispensable development tool for foodservice establishments because it builds customer trust in the product, service, and systems.

While concerted efforts are being made towards developing the local hospitality industry to benefit from its revenue earning capacity (Nwokorie, 2021; Nwokorie & Adeniyi, 2021), there is a need to have a look at the indigenous rice dishes to standardize their preparation methods. This will result in the emergence of standardized recipes that can be used anywhere in the world for various Nigerian rice grains.

Various ethnic groups in Nigeria eat most of the rice dishes but have different methods of preparation. Some of the minor ingredients are not commonly used by all ethnic groups. Also, most of the ingredients used for some of the indigenous dishes are seasonal (Ogundele, 2014; Nwokorie, 2015).

Little research has been carried out on standardizing local rice dishes in Nigeria, thereby limiting information for inbound tourists who can become consumers of the rice dishes.

Most restaurants in Nigeria have neglected indigenous dishes in their menu on the excuses given that most of the local dishes are not quick to cook (Otemuyiwa & Adewusi, 2012; Awosan *et al.*, 2014). Most ingredients used in the preparation of the local dishes are seasonal which will not allow the dishes to be available all the time (Adedoyin, 2012; Nwokorie, 2015; Obih & Baiyegunhi, 2018). Still, restaurant operators do not want to take the risk of disappointing their customers by not providing the dishes anytime on demand (Ogundele, 2014; Omuemu & Omuemu, 2018).

Nigerian food is essential to Nigeria's culture.

It defines the citizens and the way of life. In Nigeria, eating out is becoming more common in recent times, even though people eat at home. Onyiriuka, Umoru, and Ibeawuchi (2013) found out that the majority of young Nigerians buy most of their daily meals outside their homes due to difficult time management and busy schedules. Therefore, preparation of Nigerian foods must be common and standardized, especially for restaurant operators as advised by Nwokorie and Ezeibe (2017), and Nwokorie and Kwusi (2020).

Nwokorie (2021) wrote that western influences especially in urban centers have transformed Nigerians eating habits in many ways. City dwellers are familiar with the canned, frozen, and pre-packaged food found in most western-style supermarkets. However, supermarkets and restaurants often are too expensive for the average Nigerian. Thus, only the average diner can afford to eat like westerners (Cayot, 2010).

Most urban Nigerians seem to combine traditional cuisine with a little of western-style food and conveniences (Nwokorie & Adeniyi, 2021). Rural Nigerians tend to stick more with traditional foods and preparation techniques. But with the growing number of restaurant entrepreneurs in both rural and urban locations (Obiora & Nwokorie, 2018; Nwokorie & Igbojekwe, 2019), there would be a consequent surge in food innovation and culinary tourism.

Therefore, traditional and indigenous foods would gradually find their way into the local restaurant industry, and it is important to standardize preparation methods for these dishes to make them globally acceptable.

Studies have found out that local dishes have always been used as the last choice in the menu list of most local restaurants who rarely include local dishes in their menu (Oktay & Sadikoglu, 2018; Omuemu & Omuemu, 2018). This study will help to promote Nigerian cuisine, strengthen culinary heritage by serving local produce. Also, it will assist restaurant operators in applying acceptable methods in preparation of a variety of indigenous rice dishes that are of great value in strengthening the tourism industry.

Consequently, the major objective of this study is to standardize local recipes for the preparation of three indigenous rice dishes for sale in Nigerian restaurants. Specific objectives are to:

Prepare indigenous rice dishes from three Nigerian localities of Abakaliki, Gboko, and Ofada using selected ingredients.

Determine the sensory qualities of the indigenous rice dishes prepared
 Determine the acceptability of the indigenous rice dishes through sensory assessment.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Indigenous rice from three geopolitical zones of Nigeria were purchased from the local market for the study. The rice are cultivated in the localities of Abakaliki in Ebonyi State, Gboko in Benue State, and Ofada in Ogun State. The three species of rice were selected as a result of the history of the acceptability of the indigenous people where they are cultivated (Longtau, 2003; Nwali & Anyalor, 2019; Ogunleke & Baiyegunhi, 2019). The rice varieties were prepared with selected rice ingredients and a prescribed procedure for possible standardization. The rice dishes prepared are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Rice varieties prepared in various dishes

S/N	Jollof Rice	Fried Rice	Boiled Rice	Control Rice
1.	Ofada	Ofada	Ofada	Jollof
2.	Abakaliki	Abakaliki	Abakaliki	Fried
3.	Gboko	Gboko	Gboko	Boiled

Three control rice portions were provided as a comparison for the acceptability factor. The control portions were evenly compared with each variable in the study during the sensory assessment of each portion of the indigenous rice dishes prepared. The control is important to increase the reliability of the results of the sensory assessment.

A nine-point Hedonic scale was distributed to the panelists to test for the likeness of the products. The scale ranged from 'like extremely' to 'dislike extremely' to determine the acceptability level of the rice dishes. Data from responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics for mean and standard deviation. Correlation and Analysis of Variance were carried out to determine the significant relationship between colour, taste, texture, aroma, and overall acceptability for the products, as well as sources of variation between the variables.

Thirty panelists were selected for the acceptability test on the different rice dishes prepared. The selection of the taste panelists was premised on the subjective nature of the response (Rai, 1987; Rutenbeck & Gacula Jr., 2006; Seaman et al., 1993). It is important to note that the respondents are representative of product users and the target market as a result of product preferences. Therefore, no special training or expertise is required from the panelists. Non-consumers can easily provide different results that would mislead product decisions

and wrongly predict marketplace success (Gengler, 2010). However, respondents were informed beforehand of the need to have their breakfast before the time of the assessment in order not to allow contextual factors (like hunger and salivation) to influence the outcome of acceptability decisions as suggested by Murray and Baxter (2003).

Table 2. Recipe for Jollof rice using the three indigenous rice grains

Indigenous rice	300g
Margarine	25g
Vegetable oil	62ml
Tomato puree	1 tablespoon
Salt	1 teaspoon
Maggi (or equivalent)	3 cubes
Chicken stock	1 liter (1kg chicken)
Ground pepper	85mg
Sliced onions	25mg
Thyme	1 teaspoon
Curry	1 teaspoon

Method of preparation

Heat the vegetable oil and margarine in a pan
 Add sliced onions and stir
 Add tomato puree and allow to fry on low heat for 5 minutes
 Add chicken stock
 Add pepper, Maggi, thyme, and curry
 Stir and taste
 Add salt as required. Stir and taste
 Add water and cover the lid of the pot to boil for 2 minutes
 Add the washed drained rice and allow to cook for 45 minutes

Table 3. Recipe for fried rice using the three indigenous rice grains

Indigenous rice	300g
Margarine	25g
Vegetable oil	62ml
Green peas	25gms
Salt	1 teaspoon
Maggi or equivalent	1 teaspoon
Chicken stock	1 liter (1kg chicken)
Runner beans	25gms
Carrot	25gm
Fried rice seasoning	1 teaspoon
Onions	25gms
Cow liver	1kg

Method of preparation

Parboil the rice and strain in a colander
 Dice onions, cow liver, and other vegetables
 Sieve chicken stock into the cooking pot and boil
 Pour the parboiled rice into chicken stock
 Add salt as required, and fried rice seasoning to

touch colour
 Cover with lid and allow to cook thoroughly for 40 minutes
 Transfer rice to a casserole dish for cooling, to avoid stickiness of the grains
 Suaté onions, cow liver, and other vegetables on low heat for 5 minutes
 Add suatéd vegetables bit by bit to the required quantity of rice
 Stir to mix well, and transfer to a dry casserole dish.

Table 4. Recipe for boiled rice using the three indigenous rice grains

Indigenous rice	300g
Water	1½ liter
Salt	1 teaspoon

Method of preparation
 Wash the rice and strain in a colander
 Add the rice to the boiling water
 Add salt and allow to cook for 30 minutes

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of sensory assessment of the rice dishes are presented in descriptive statistics. Table 5 shows the result of the sensory evaluation of the indigenous rice dishes. The mean response of CJR, CFR, CBR, and FAR of approximately 8 implies that on average, the colour of the three indigenous rice dishes was 'very much liked' based on the sensory assessment. However, mean response of JAR, JGR, BOR, and BAR indicates that on average of approximately 7, the colour of the rice dishes was 'liked moderately' with JOR and FOR 'slightly liked' on average of 6. Therefore, considering appearance, CJR, CFR, CBR, and FAR have a greater mean response than the other samples. This result implies that FAR has greater acceptability than the other dishes under consideration in terms of appearance. The studies of Ebuehi and Oyewole (2007) and Adekoyeni, Fagbemi and Ismaila (2018) agreed that appearance plays a great role in food product acceptability, and can influence consumer decision on food choice.

Table 5: Result of sensory evaluation of the indigenous rice dishes

food recipe	appearance		texture		taste		Aroma		overall acceptability	
	\bar{x}	\pm	\bar{x}	\pm	\bar{x}	\pm	\bar{x}	\pm	\bar{x}	\pm
JOR	5.76	.391	6.23	.414	6.42	.388	5.71	.410	5.96	2.235
JAR	6.63	.312	6.63	.357	6.81	.369	6.62	.312	7.03	1.691
JGR	6.51	.358	6.56	.302	6.46	.313	6.46	.408	6.93	1.436
FOR	6.33	.390	6.12	.393	6.23	.399	6.56	.341	6.73	1.638
FAR	7.66	.210	6.93	.244	6.96	.273	7.06	.275	7.53	1.224
FGR	6.93	.239	6.83	.240	7.13	.196	6.93	.234	6.96	1.159
BOR	6.62	.388	6.73	.306	6.71	.314	6.23	.357	6.92	1.668
BAR	7.16	.262	7.13	.210	6.81	.285	6.83	.288	6.92	1.668
BGR	6.86	.306	6.83	.214	7.00	.229	6.91	.193	7.21	1.270
CJR	8.36	.122	7.73	.172	7.86	.228	7.72	.204	8.43	.773
CFR	7.93	.165	7.63	.131	7.73	.214	7.46	.265	8.00	1.313
CBR	8.16	.144	7.86	.196	7.46	.233	7.63	.242	8.23	1.072

Codes

- (JOR) – Jollof Ofada Rice
- (JAR) – Jollof Abakaliki Rice
- (JGR) – Jollof Gboko Rice
- (FOR) – Fried Ofada Rice
- (FAR) – Fried Abakaliki Rice
- (FGR) – Fried Gboko Rice
- (BOR) – Boiled Ofada Rice
- (BAR) – Boiled Abeokuta Rice
- (BGR) – Boiled Gboko Rice
- (CJR) – Control Jollof Rice
- (CFR) – Control Fried Rice
- (CBR) – Control Boiled Rice

For texture, the mean response of CJR, CFR, and CBR of approximately 8 implies that the rice dishes were 'very much liked.' Also, the mean response of JAR, JGR, FAR, FGR, BAR, and BAR indicate that on an average of approximately 7, the texture was 'liked moderately' with JOR 'slightly liked' on an average of 6. The CJR, CFR, and CBR have the best texture among other rice dishes in the study. The JOR and FOR were the least of the dishes with mean response 6. The texture described in this context is the softness versus the hardness of the rice dishes. Texture helps in determining the eating quality and food choice of individual consumers because it influences the rate of food intake (Kohyama, 2020; Anuonye et al., 2016). Descriptive statistics of taste for the rice dishes were also analyzed. Mean response of CFR, and CJR of approximately 8 showed that on average, rice dishes 'very much liked' based on the sensory assessment. However, the mean response of JAR, JGR, FAR, FGR, BOR, BAR, and BGR indicates that the taste of the rice dishes were 'liked moderately' with JOR, JGR, and FOR 'slightly liked' on an average of 6. Considerably, all the rice dishes tend to have a good taste for CFR and CJR. Customers emphasize of the sensory function of taste to make repeat purchase decisions in food service, as it has a multiplicity of functions for food acceptability (Wang, 2016).

The mean response of CJR and CBR of approximately 8 showed that the aroma of the rice dishes was 'very much liked' by respondents. However, mean response of FOR, FAR, FGR, BAR, and CFR indicates that on average of approximately 7, the aroma of the rice dishes was 'liked moderately' with JGR and BOR 'slightly liked' on the average of 6 respectively. Considering the direction of the responses for aroma, all the dishes tend to have good taste and acceptability tendencies in line with the studies of Ogunleke and Baiyegunhi (2019) and Wang (2016).

For the overall acceptability of the rice dishes based on sensory assessment, the mean response of FAR, CJR, CFR, and CBR of approximately 8 showed that on the average, overall acceptability for the dishes considered was 'very much liked.' Also, the mean response of JAR, JGR, FOR, BOR, BAR, and BGR showed that on the average of approximately 7, acceptability ratings of the rice dishes were 'liked moderately'. The outcome of the response shows that all the dishes considered tend to have wider acceptance. However, FAR was found to be 'very much liked' with higher acceptance assessment among the indigenous rice varieties considered in the study, while JOR has the lowest score on overall acceptability. Objectives within the fields of sensory assessment have determined the acceptance rates of numerous food commodities by consumers. Acceptability ratings are used extensively during the development and introduction stages of new food products in the food industry and have mostly provided successful results (Gámbaro, 2012). Evidence from the correlation matrix in Table 6 shows a coefficient of 0.7 and above to indicate a strong relationship between the different rice dishes under investigation. The correlation coefficient of 0.974 implies a very strong positive relationship between JAR and BGR. But FOR and JOR pose a weak negative relationship since the respective coefficient was found to be -0.622 in the first column. As the product with the highest acceptance rating in the study, FAR has a weak negative relationship with JOR and a strong positive relationship with FOR at -0.581 and 0.524 respectively. This implies that FOR can be a successful alternative for FAR, and can be introduced simultaneously by restaurant operators to enhance demand and patronage in line with the suggestion of Nwokorie and Ezeibe (2017) and Nwokorie and Kwusi (2020).

Table 6: Correlation analysis of the rice dishes for colour, taste, texture, aroma and overall acceptability

	JOR	JAR	JGR	FOR	FAR	FGR	BOR	BAR	BGR	CJR	CFR	CBR
JOR	1.000											
JAR	0.258	1.000										
JGR	-0.034	0.852	1.000									
FOR	-0.622	0.536	0.635	1.000								
FAR	-0.581	0.327	0.460	0.524	1.000							
FGR	0.412	0.409	-0.121	0.025	-0.090	1.000						
BOR	0.567	0.727	0.678	-0.073	0.249	0.113	1.000					
BAR	-0.201	-0.390	-0.055	-0.379	0.417	-0.671	0.191	1.000				
BGR	0.103	0.974	0.821	0.688	0.341	0.444	0.552	-0.518	1.000			
CJR	-0.300	0.586	0.628	0.483	0.942	0.076	0.535	0.310	0.556	1.000		
CFR	-0.001	0.662	0.632	0.274	0.809	0.171	0.744	0.315	0.573	0.953	1.000	
CBR	-0.435	0.350	0.675	0.416	0.852	-0.475	0.470	0.615	0.296	0.837	0.759	1.000

The outcome of the test of significance in Table 7 shows that there is a significant difference in the mean response of the indigenous rice varieties evaluated since F of 30.14621 > F crit of 2.641845 respectively. The result also implies that there is variation in colour, taste, texture, and aroma of the indigenous rice dishes used for the study.

Table 7: Test of significance on mean difference using ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	18680.6	11	1698.236	30.14621	7.85E-18	2.641845
Within Groups	2704	48	56.33333			
Total	21384.6	59				

CONCLUSION

The standardization procedure were effected following recommended food service procedures. In the course of the standardization, many dishes having two or three methods of preparation and cooking were harmonized following the studies of Alozie and Ene-Obong (2018), Obanla et al (2016), Oguntona, Odunmbaku and Ottun (1999), Oguntona and Adekoya (2009). The benefits of standardization, such as measurement control, consistent food quality, appropriate food cost, and elimination of guess cooking procedures, were demonstrated in this study. Preparation of the indigenous rice dishes in the acceptable state using the selected ingredient goes to prove that indigenous rice grains are easy to cook, and can compete favourably with foreign rice grains in the local restaurant industry. The assessment of the level of acceptability of the indigenous rice dishes for promoting culinary tourism for the development of the tourism industry through sensory evaluation is also a point to note and can be replicated for other indigenous food products. Though the fried Abakaliki rice has the highest acceptability score for the study, other indigenous rice dishes considered in the study did not record dislike scores during sensory evaluation which is also suggestive of their acceptability for sale in local restaurants. The boiled Gboko rice can equally serve

as an alternative for the fried Abakaliki rice because of the very strong relationship with Jollof Abakaliki rice. This relationship suggests that the fried Abakaliki rice should not be introduced in isolation for sale by restaurant operators. The concurrent introduction of the indigenous rice dishes with a strong positive relationship in the study would assist in stimulating culinary tourism and promoting the cultural heritage of the localities cultivating the grains, and would also promote local agriculture and farm produce.

Given the crucial role that indigenous Nigerian rice dishes have to play in the growth and development of tourism, the following areas in food standardization and research need to be addressed:

All food commodities to be used in preparing and cooking indigenous rice dishes should be procured fresh and wholesome to ensure maximum portion yield, acceptable colour, taste and aroma.

Indigenous rice grains required for producing rice dishes should be purchased from reliable sources and areas devoid of contamination and spoilage. Proper adherence to suggested recipes should be ensured to guarantee the acceptable output of the rice dishes.

The Gboko rice should be introduced as an alternative to the Abakaliki rice because of the strong relationship established in the study. The Ofada rice should equally be considered with the prescribed recipe because of its unique indigenous outlook compared to the similarity in appearance between Gboko rice and Abakaliki rice. The concurrent introduction can gradually enhance acceptability for the products within a short period.

Local restaurant operators should give indigenous rice dishes more prominence through the promotion of Nigerian cuisine to strengthen the culinary heritage by serving more of the local rice produce than foreign rice dishes often served as a show of class.

Sustenance and promotion of traditional food culture should be adhered to by restaurant operators, to ensure rejuvenation of the various forgotten culinary expertise of the local people. Promotion of the local culinary culture can help reinvigorate inbound tourism and positive tourist perception of our traditional food system.

Local rice producers in Nigeria should emulate some developing countries that have carried out surveys on indigenous foods and dishes, maintained a database on the grains available, nutrient composition, and predictable yields.

The government should assist local rice farmers in ensuring that the quality of the rice grains is maintained, especially by providing chemicals and storage facilities during cultivation and storage, to ensure that pests' infestation does not affect the quality and nutritional composition of the rice grains. The government should assist local rice farmers in ensuring that the quality of the rice grains is maintained, especially by providing chemicals and storage facilities during cultivation and storage, to ensure that pests' infestation does not affect the quality and nutritional composition of the rice grains.

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CLASSIFIED HOTELS AWARENESS AND PRACTICE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Tourism involves the movement of people from one geographical location to another for leisure, business or other purposes usually for not more than one year. The hotel sub-sector of the hospitality industry provides for the food, drinks, lodging, recreation, and entertainment needs of tourist visitors. As an indispensable tourism sub-sector, it is imperative for hotels to collaboratively contribute to actualising sustainable tourism both locally and globally by adopting environmentally sustainable business best practices. There is however a perceived environmental insouciance as well as unsustainable energy, water material resource and waste management practices among hotels in Bauchi State of Nigeria which necessitated this study. The objectives of this study were to determine the levels of hotels operators' environmental awareness, to find out how hotels achieve energy, water and material resource efficiency as well as hotels' sustainable waste management and pollution prevention strategies. Cross sectional descriptive survey design was adopted by the study which engaged 185 hotels operators made up of 49 managers and 136 departmental heads. A ten-item semi-structured (5-point Likert scale) questionnaire was used to obtain data from departmental heads while managers were interviewed. Quantitative data were analysed using the One-Way ANOVA while qualitative data were described using measures of central tendency. The study discovered that the level of hotels operators' environmental awareness in Bauchi State is to a moderate extent, that there is no significant difference between the levels of environmental awareness of hotels managers and departmental heads. The study also discovered that strict portion control strategy is used to achieve material resources efficiency while water and energy resources are sometimes used generously to ensure that visitors' satisfaction is not compromised. The study recommends immediate national environmental campaign targeting especially both hotels operators and visitors on the need for environmental conservation and sustainability.

Keywords: Classified hotels, sustainable tourism, environmental sustainability, Bauchi

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INTRODUCTION

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines Tourism as comprising the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (Bloggy, 2018). Tourism involves the movement of people from one geographical location to another for leisure, business or other purposes usually for not more than one year. Tourists, whether outbound, inbound, local or international, all require products and services which are made available by various tourism sectors to enhance their tourism goals (go2 Tourism HR Society, 2018). The hotel sub-sector of the hospitality industry provides for the food, drinks, lodging, recreation and entertainment needs of tourist visitors.

Tourism holds many economic, social and environmental benefits not only to local host communities but also to nations as a whole (UNWTO, 2017). Sustainable tourism aims at balancing the requirements of tourists with the needs of local communities and to protect the environment (BBC,

2014), whereas unmanaged tourism activities can have a negative effect on communities and the environment (National Parks UK, 2018) (United Nations, 2016).

The UNWTO defined sustainable tourism as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities." (UNWTO, 2017) One of the pillars of sustainable tourism according to the UNWTO definition is the environment. The environment in the context of this study refers to the ecosystem, which is the interaction between plants, animals and the non-living elements such as soil, water, sun, earth, weather, climate and atmosphere (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018). Environmentally sustainable tourism entails reducing the adverse impacts of tourism on the environment especially through reducing the tourism industry's carbon footprint, improving business performance to meet growing demand for sustainable practices and minimizing resource use, pollution and waste production.

There is a growing global concern about the continuous degradation of the environment, which has given rise to the global crusade for sustainability (Mondal, 2018). Two of the most important factors of environmental degradation relevant to this study are un-renewed natural resource exploitation as well as waste and pollution generation. During the process of providing products and services for tourists, the hotel harnesses a lot of energy, water and material resources while at the same time creating huge volume of waste both as by-product of hotel catering operations and by-products of tourists' consumptions. Environmental degradation results in the depletion and scarcity of natural resources while unsustainable waste management and pollutions result in harm to human and animal health, as well as destruction to plants and the eco-system (HelpSaveNature, 2018).

The tourism industry and the hotel sub-sector are environment dependent both for resources and for aesthetics thus making them major beneficiaries of a sustainable environment. As an indispensable tourism sub-sector, it is imperative for hotels to collaboratively contribute to actualising sustainable tourism both locally and globally by adopting environmentally sustainable tourism business best practices. International tourists are becoming more sophisticated in their choices of tourists' destinations and environmental sustainability is becoming part of the site attractions that tourists consider when making selections of where to visit. (BBC, 2014; Iberostar Hoteles y apartamentos, 2017). Bauchi State in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria is alias the "Pearl of Tourism" (Bauchi State, 2018). This is because Bauchi State is endowed with many tourists' attractions and is considered to be one of the most preferred tourists' destinations in Nigeria. Hotels in Bauchi State have continued to play the very important role of facilitating tourists flow into the State by providing necessary tourism support services (Adebitan & Abdullahi, 2017). There is however, a perceived environmental insouciance as well as unsustainable energy, water and material resource management practices among the hotels. This is further reinforced by Ayeni (2012)'s assertion of a seemingly tourism service sectors' disregard for the conservation of environmental landscaping for tourism development. It is assumed that if this situation persists, it may render Bauchi State unattractive to especially environmentally conscious international tourists the result of which include loss of foreign exchange,

stunted industry growth and loss of jobs among other negative effects. It is this assumption that has prompted this study with the aim of empirically ascertaining the extent to which classified hotels in Bauchi State are aligning themselves to the global trend of environmentally sustainable tourism. The specific objectives of this study were to determine the levels of hotels operators' awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment, to ascertain the levels of classified hotels operators' awareness of the impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment, to find out how hotels are currently achieving energy, water and material resource efficiency, to determine how hotels are currently achieving sustainable waste management and pollution prevention as well as the ways by which hotels have involved staff and guests in their environmental sustainability programmes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism and sustainable tourism

The tourism industry has continued to be the industry of choice for many nations as foreign exchange earner and socio-economic booster. Tourism reportedly accounts for 10% of the world's GDP (Iberostar Hotels apartments, 2017). Tourism together with its allied industries have continue to take the lead in several countries' direct and indirect income generation (Lapitskiy, 2018; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2017), jobs and employment creation (Institut za turizam, 2018), boost for local entrepreneurs as well as factor of national, international and regional integration (Taylor, 2017; Postma & Schmuecker, 2017). In addition to the array of benefits for which tourism is known for, tourism is also being handpicked by many countries as a major tool for attaining the enlarged sustainable development goals (UNWTO, 2017).

The tourism industry has continue to grow both globally (Farr, 2018) and in Nigeria. Nwokorie, Akalazu, & Ojo (2014) and Oxford Business Group (2018) reported that Nigeria has maintained the status of preferred tourism destination in the sub-saharan Africa, with a recorded tourism-related capital investment of NGN1,129.4bn in 2016, 1.7 million tourism-related jobs generated in 2017 and direct income of NGN1,861.4bn (1.7% of the national GDP) from tourism activities in 2017 (Proshare, 2018). This is despite the many security, political and infrastructural challenges which tourism industry in Nigeria is faced with (Oxford Business Group, 2018).

The success of the tourism industry as noted by Masa?deh, Nasseef, Sunna, Suliman, & Albawab (2017) and Iberostar Hoteles y apartamentos (2017) cannot be dissociated from the performance of other service industries such as transport, cleaning, catering and accommodation, amusement and retail trade, all of which make impacts on the environment (National Parks UK, 2018). In spite of the numerous economic, social and environmental advantages, tourism activities are known to have the propensity for adversely affecting the environment and damaging the ecosystem by means of non-renewable pattern of drawing natural resources such as water, wood, energy, and fossil fuel, waste and pollution generation as well as unsustainable consumption styles. Some of the negative environmental impacts of tourism as observed by Masa?dehet *al.* (2017) and Farr (2018) include waste and effluent discharges into the sea, increased pollution, and soil erosion among others.

Unregulated Tourism activities are known to sometimes place burdens on water, energy and other resources in certain tourism locations, creating scarcity that may result in competing for the use of these critical resources with local communities, cause environmental degradation or cause erosions and destruction of fragile ecosystems (Institut za turizam, 2018), cause damage to landscapes and marine life through waste and litter (National Parks UK, 2018). Environmental degradation and the attendant consequences are parts of the reasons that gave rise to the need for environmental conservation and preservation, of which the concept of environmentally sustainable tourism is an offshoot. Sustainable tourism stems from the concept of sustainable development as set out in the 1987 Brundtland report, which defined sustainable development as 'development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WECD, 1987; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2017). The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) defines sustainable tourism as tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. The objective of environmentally sustainable tourism is to retain the economic and environmental advantages of tourism development while reducing or mitigating any undesirable impacts on the natural environment (Tourism Victoria, 2009).

The concept of environmentally sustainable tourism centres on avoiding the depletion of resources and

protecting the environment against all forms of pollution (Lacanilao, 2017). Success of environmentally sustainable tourism is obligatory on the tourism industry and every allied tourism service sector of which the hotel sub sector is key. This is because as observed by Institut za turizam (2018), the objectives of environmentally sustainable tourism is only achievable by balancing the needs of tourists which are provided by the tourism service sector with those of the destinations.

Rationale for Hotels' Involvement in Sustainable Tourism

As hotels services such as foods, beverages and accommodation are central to successful accomplishment of tourism goals, the progression of the tourism industry logically translates to an equal progression of the hotels sub-sector (Adebitan & Abdullahi, 2017; Zoe, 2017). Read (2018) noted that tourists prefer to visit places that are unique, safe and clean. Sustainable tourism also referred to as responsible tourism is critical for achieving environmentally attractive destinations and improving tourism competitiveness. Tourist destinations encompass not only the transportation, adventure and recreation but also the accommodation, foods & beverages, events and conferences which constitute the hospitality offerings of the hotel sub-sector.

Every hotel guest is a tourist of some sort. The way hotels conduct their hospitality operations in order to provide hospitality services to tourists as well as what tourists are allowed to do on the hotels sites can result in negative tourism impacts on the environment if carried out without recourse to environmental protection and sustainability. In order to mitigate this, and given that more and more tourists are becoming environmentally conscious (Mbasera, Plessis, Saayman, & Kruger, 2016), Iberostar Hoteles y apartamentos (2017) advocates that hotels pay attention to environmental sustainability just as much as they do to providing comfort and satisfaction for their clients. This can be achieved by hotels integrating sustainability into their hospitality operations especially in the areas of energy, water and materials resource use as well as waste and pollution prevention, which according to Taylor (2017) and Mbasera *et al.* (2016), are the major areas of concern for environmentally sustainable tourism.

Hotels have been reported to rank among the top five energy consumers (Tang, Fu, Cao, Shen, Deng, &

Wu, 2016). This is due to their unique operational features of using energy-intensive technology to provide modern conveniences and recreational activities such as heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems (GreenHotelier, 2018:2). Energy is used for powering machines in almost every department in the hotel. Energy is used to power computers at the front desks, used for powering ranges, steamers, refrigerators and other cooking appliances in the kitchens, used for powering washing machines in the laundry to wash guests' linens, sheets, towels and staff uniforms among other uses. Taylor (2017) noted that energy use accounts for as much as 60% of a typical hotel's carbon footprint and McCormick (2017) alleges that hotels contribute 60 million tons of CO₂ emissions on the environment annually contributing negatively to ozone layer depletion, which results in global warming and climate change.

Water is another resource which is extensively used by hotels. Hotels' daily operations need for water include foods and beverages preparation, in the swimming pools, for flushing in the toilets, for showers, for grounds maintenance, for cleaning and in the laundry. According to McCormick (2017), an average 150-rooms hotel uses 6,000 gallons of water every month. The need for water conservation is captured in the United Nations' report that about 783 million people are without access to clean water, and 2.5 billion without adequate sanitation (Taylor, 2017; Mbasera *et al.* (2016)

Hotels use different types of materials resources extensively in the effort to provide for all the needs of individual guests per day (Sloan, Legrand, & Chen, 2013). Foods and beverages materials, guests' amenities in the forms of soaps and toiletries, papers for office and registration works are a few of the types of materials resources hotels use daily. Materials resources efficiency is described by Boissonneault (2014) and Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (2018) as the best alternative for the environment as it reduces the need for the Earth to supply new raw materials. This reduces the amount of new raw materials drawn from the Earth each time there is a need. Maximizing resources by using them more efficiently as argued in Walker, Seuring, Joseph, & Robert, (2014) and EPA NSW (2017) is necessary to reduce consumption of already depleting natural resources.

Aside from the potential harm which over exploitation of material resource, water and energy emissions, waste and pollution also pose a great deal of risk on

the environment. Uncontrolled waste generation and improper waste management are a threat to the environment which hotels so heavily depend on as hotels require healthy, attractive and resourceful natural environment to be able to attract, satisfy and retain tourists patronage hence the need to adopt sustainable waste management methods and practices. Waste is unwanted material left over from a production process (Business Dictionary, 2018:3) however, waste can also be an indication of overconsumption and inefficient use of materials and resources (Burton, 2013). The lodging industry according to Sharman (2015) discards about 7 million tons of waste annually and is ongoing. The hotel sub-sector is known for massive waste production as large volumes of waste are produced from the different departments and units of hotels including guest rooms, bathrooms, kitchens, lounges, restaurants, bars, laundries, offices, purchasing departments, conference rooms and gardens (Pirani & Arafat, 2014).

Waste as observed by Baker (2015) comes from guest's amenities such as soap wrappers, tissue cardboard rolls, aluminum cans, bottles, newspapers and magazines among others. Pirani & Arafat (2014) observe that on average, a guest creates upwards of 1kg waste per night. These multiplied by the number of guests in an hotel sum up a significantly huge amount of waste. Waste generation in hotels is unavoidable because resources are always being used either during production processes or during consumption so also are items discarded by guests (Burton, 2013). When tourists are served with disposables, they consume and leave behind a great deal of waste such as straws and plastic packaging. Tourists' activities contributing to the negative impacts of tourism on the environment include littering, guests using a lot of water without restraint from the hotels, using multiple energy-consuming appliances simultaneously and sometimes leaving the lights on even when there is no one in the rooms. Without recycling solid and liquid wastes generated by the hotels and tourists or educating them to consume resources with restraint, SustainableTourism.net (2014) noted that the volume of waste would continue to increase with all the attendant effects on the physical environmental aesthetics as well as damage to the ecosystem. Bogoro, Bukar, Samson, & Rasheed (2014) raised the concern that in Bauchi State, the problem lies not only in the quantity of waste generated but also in the

unsustainable waste disposal methods employed such as land filling, incineration without the intention of energy recovery and dumping, which are the usual waste management methods employed in almost all the cities in Nigeria. The effect of improper and unsustainable waste management on the environment include environmental deterioration, Soil, water and air pollution, Public health risk, Flooding caused by clogging drains, Odour nuisance as well as Unattractive appearance of the environment among others (Zhang, Qingfeng and Robert Crooks, 2012; Painter, 2015 and Skye, 2015). Sustainable waste management methods as suggested by US EPA, (2018), Hierarchy Structure, (2018) and Zendesk (2018) include waste avoidance, waste reduction, waste reuse, waste recycle, energy recovery, waste treatment and disposal.

After waste, other critical environmental problem which may affect the environmental sustainability of tourism sites is pollution. Clean air just like clean water are essential for life and also very important for tourism activities. Water, air, soil, radiation and noise pollutions not only affect all forms of life but also make tourist destinations unattractive especially to the environmentally conscious tourists. Hotels may contribute to environmental pollution through discharging effluents into water bodies, through improper solid waste management methods such as burning and land filling, through emissions from high energy consumption when using the various electric gadgets and through the increasing release of greenhouse gases that cause changes in the atmosphere (Mbasera *et al.* 2016; McCormick, 2017).

Hotels' environmentally sustainable tourism predisposition will not only benefit the environment and the tourism sector, but will also benefit the hotels' businesses in many ways. "Environmentally compliant" hotels have the proclivity to attract more guests as well as enjoy better environmentally conscious tourists' loyalty. This invariably translates into more profits for the hotels (Styles, Schoenberger, & Galvez-Martos, 2015; International Tourism Partnership, 2014).

Achieving environmentally sustainable tourism in the hotel sub-sector

Hotels' environmental sustainability management systems proposed by Pereira-Moliner, Font, Tarí, Molina-Azorin, Pertusa-Ortega, & Lopez-Gamero (2015) involves a review of all the technical and operational activities of the hotels with the aim of

reducing the environmental impact caused by these activities. Hotels' operational environmental indicators capable of causing environmental hazards and degradation suggested to be reviewed include among others, water, energy and material resource use, waste management, pollution reduction as well as green procurement and consumption programs. reducing the environmental impact caused by these activities. Hotels' operational environmental indicators capable of causing environmental hazards and degradation suggested to be reviewed include among others, water, energy and material resource use, waste management, pollution reduction as well as green procurement and consumption programs. Energy consumption and its effect on the environment can be reduced by using energy-efficient light bulbs, instituting lighting control, optimizing room and water temperatures, and raising energy awareness among staff as recommended by Tuppen(2013). Other ways of controlling energy usage in the hotels suggested by Conserve Energy Future (2018); Conserve National Restaurant Association, (2014) and Tuppen (2013) include setting a dead band between heating and cooling to ensure both heating and cooling systems are not running at the same time, controlling bedroom temperatures, reviewing automatic timed heating settings, cutting down on bulbs, using low temperature cleaning products to reduce the need for hot water as well as switching to the economy setting on dishwashers and washing machines. Strategies for reducing water usage and wastage include installing devices which limit water flow or stopping automatically, choosing hotel kitchen and laundry equipment that uses minimal water, keeping equipment maintained and drains clean, operating washing machines only on full loads and at minimal temperatures as well as modernizing swimming pool filtration systems to help minimize water use (Conserve National Restaurant Association , 2014). Other ways by which water consumption can be reduced are by installing flow restrictors in wash hand basins, adding water reducers for toilets and sinks, encouraging tourists to use showers while bathing as showers consume less water than bath tubs. Choosing a low-maintenance landscape design that uses few chemicals and little water, not overwatering lawns and landscapes and by replacing old washing machines with both water and energy conserving models.

Material efficiency is one of the key factors of any organization's sustainability effort and is linked

directly to waste reduction (Poldrugovac, Tekavcic, & Jankovic, 2016) Poldrugovac, GreenHotelier (2010) notes that if hotels are more efficient with resources, less waste will be produced and natural resources will be preserved (Encyclopedia.Com, 2017). Sustainable use of operational materials may be achieved in hotels by running paperless office operations, providing guests amenities in dispensers rather than as individually wrapped items. Substituting reusable items such as cloth napkins, glass cups and ceramic dishes for disposable ones, serving tap water in jugs rather than plastic bottles, substituting reusable plastic bags for laundry use, serving food with reusable utensils and persuading suppliers to take packaging away with them on delivery so that waste is not created. Other strategies include employing appropriate and strict portion control and donating untouched leftover food to local charities such as homeless shelters (GreenHotelier, 2010; Mwangi, 2018).

Hotels may contribute to environmental sustainability by procuring environmentally friendly products and packaging guests' amenities in biodegradable materials. Hotels must also focus on how much food is wasted.

Involving hotels staff and tourists

Human activities have repeatedly been blamed for the degradation of earth's surface (Concern Energy Future, 2018:2) (Mondal, 2018). Certain tourists' activities have also been blamed for environmental degradation (Farr, 2018; National Parks UK, 2018). To effectively implement hotels associated environmentally sustainable tourism therefore, Iberostar Hoteles y apartamentos (2017) advises hotels to incorporate sustainability practices into their corporate social responsibility policies while Dubai Municipality (2014) recommended a high level of hotels top managers' commitment and the necessary involvement of both hotels' staff and tourists. The top managements' commitment encompasses crafting a policy statement on sustainable hotels' operations explicitly made available to all staff.

The success of a hotel's environmental sustainability efforts as observed by GreenHotelier (2010:2); Krukow (2016); WRAP (2018:2) depends to a very large extent on the involvement and ownership of the hotel's employees as well as the tourists noting that, no matter how laudable a hotel's sustainability system may be, it can be frustrated without the cooperation of the hotel' staff and guests. Both staff and guests need to be incorporated into actualizing

the developed environmental sustainability plans by training and constantly communicating environmental gains with staff (Chia-JungChou, 2014; McCormick, 2017), getting suggestions and feedbacks from staff (GreenHotelier, 2010:2; NIBUSINESSINFO, 2018:4), and motivating both staff and guests (Chia-JungChou, 2014 and Zero Waste Europe, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on Ajzen and Fishbein (1975)'s Theory of Planned Behaviour which is based on the premise that individuals make logical, reasoned decisions to engage in specific behaviours by evaluating the information available to them. The assumption of this study was that the awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources will serve as impetus for hotels' operators to craft and implement policies on sustainable use of energy, water and material resources and also engage the cooperation of both hotels staff and guests in the implementation of the policies.

Cross sectional descriptive survey design was used for this study. The study engaged 185 classified hotels operators made up of 49 managers and 136 departmental heads who were purposively selected. Hotels managers and departmental heads were selected to be involved in this study because hotels managers are the policy makers for their hotels while departmental heads were selected because they are the ones in charge of policy implementation in their respective departments.

As at the time of this study, there were fifty-two classified hotels within Bauchi metropolis. Out of the fifty-two classified hotels, 49 hotels managers representing 923% of the hotels agreed to participate in the study. The study examined the distribution of the different classes of hotels within the number of hotels whose managers which have agreed to participate in the study to ensure that all the different classes were equitably represented.

This study anticipated to engage four departmental heads each from the fifty-two hotels making a total of 208 departmental heads. The study anticipated to engage four departmental heads per hotel because being cognizant of the fact that lower classes of hotels may not have very many departments, the study engaged only the Front office, the Housekeeping, the Food & Beverage and Accounts departments being the four core departments that are expected to be found in any hotel irrespective of

the classification. Since only 49 out of the 52 hotels were available for the study, the number of anticipated departmental heads then summed up to be 196. This study was however able to administer 140 questionnaires to departmental heads from the 49 available hotels. The disparity between the 208 anticipated respondents and the available 140 respondents was because some of the hotels especially the lower classes of hotels did not have all the four departments.

Out of the 140 copies of the questionnaires administered, four were found to be invalid and were discarded leaving a total of 136 copies questionnaires. This number represents 65.38% of the projected 208 departmental heads respondents. The hotels managers' 923% and departmental heads' 63.38% response rates were considered adequate when compared with the 50% response rate threshold recommended by Kothari (2004).

A ten-item semi-structured Likert scaled questionnaire was used to obtain data from departmental heads while managers were interviewed. The interview schedule contained the same questions as were on the questionnaire. Quantitative data gotten from the interviews conducted with hotels managers were transcribed and transferred unto dummy questionnaires to make them equitable with the questionnaires filled by the departmental heads, for easier analysis using the SPSS version 22.

Quantitative data were analysed using the One-way ANOVA. This was to determine the means of respondents' awareness of the impact which the use of energy, water and materials may have on the environment as well as respondents' awareness of the impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment. All qualitative data were transcribed, read through in order to get a general concept of the discuss, related responses categorized into themes for coding into the SPSS software and then analysed as prescribed by Mugenda (2008) and Cresswell (2009). The interpreted results were used for writing the report in an analytical and interpretative manner. Data presentation and discussion

Analysed data have been presented and discussed in this section based on the research objectives.

Levels of hotels operators' awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment

Hotels operators response to the question seeking to establish their levels of awareness of the impacts of

excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment was scaled from 1 to 5 with 1 being "Not at all", 2 = "To a small extent", 3 = "To a moderate extent", 4 = "To a large extent" and 5 = "To a very large extent". Result of analysed data using the One-way ANOVA is presents on Table 1.

Table 1: Hotels operators' awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment

Respondent's Designation	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
Hotels Managers	49	3.14	1.208	Aware to moderate extent
Departmental Heads	136	2.96	2.633	Aware to a small extent
Total	185	3.01	2.339	Aware to a moderate extent

The descriptive result presented on Table 1 shows that hotels operators in Bauchi State are aware of impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment to a moderate extent with a general mean of 3.01.

Table 2: ANOVA result of hotels operators' awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.259	1	1.259	229	.633
Within Groups	1005.735	183	5.496		
Total	1006.995	184			

From the result in Table 2, the p-value result of .633 is greater than the specified alpha value of .05 therefore, it is concluded there is no significant difference in the levels of awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment between hotels managers and departmental heads. Even though result presented on Table 1 shows that hotels managers' are aware to a moderate extent (Mean = 3.41, SD = 1.208) against departmental heads' awareness which was to a small extent (Mean = 2.96, SD = 2.633), the ANOVA result on Table 2 shows that the extent of differences between the two groups is insignificant.

Hotels operators' levels of awareness of impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment Hotels operators response to the question seeking to establish their levels of awareness of impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment was scaled from 1 to 5 with 1 being "Not at all", 2 = "To a small extent", 3 = "To a moderate extent", 4 = "To a large extent" and 5 = "To a very large extent". Result of analysed data using the One-way ANOVA is presents on Table 3.

Table 3: Hotels operators' levels of awareness of possible impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment

Respondent's Designation	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
Hotels Managers	49	4.04	.763	Aware to a large extent
Departmental Heads	136	3.92	.751	Aware to moderate extent
Total	185	3.95	.754	Aware to moderate extent

The descriptive result presented on Table 3 shows that hotels operators in Bauchi State are aware of the possible impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment to a moderate extent with a general mean of 3.95.

Table 4: ANOVA result of hotels operators' awareness of the possible impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.534	1	.534	.938	.334
Within Groups	104.029	183	.568		
Total	104.562	184			

Result presented on Table 4 shows a p-value result of .334 which is greater than the specified alpha value of .05. This reveals that there is no significant difference in the levels of awareness of the possible impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment between hotels managers and departmental heads. Result presented on Table 3 shows however that hotels managers' are aware to a large extent (Mean = 4.04, SD = .763) while departmental heads are aware to a moderate extent (Mean = 3.92, SD = .751), the ANOVA result on Table 4 gives an indication that the extent of differences between the two groups is insignificant.

How hotels are currently achieving energy, water and material resource efficiency Hotels operators were required to state how their individual hotels achieve energy, water and materials sustainability. The qualitative data collected on each of the elements were organised into themes and analysed descriptively.

Achieving Energy efficiency

Hotels operators' responses as to how they achieve energy sustainability is presented on Table 5

Table 5: How hotels achieve energy efficiency

Respondents Designation	Putting off lights and appliances when not in use	Using Energy saving bulbs	Use of Solar Energy	Using energy generously	Total
Hotels Managers	59.2%	18.4%	10.2%	12.2%	100.0%
Departmental Heads	81.6%	10.3%	2.9%	5.1%	100.0%
Total	75.7%	12.4%	4.9%	7.0%	100.0%

After reflecting on the meanings of the individual responses of the respondents regarding how their

hotels achieve energy efficiency, study found that similar responses could be coded into four themes which were "Putting off lights and appliances when not in use", "Using Energy saving bulbs", "Use of Solar Energy" and "Using energy generously". Of these four themes, putting off lights and appliances when not in use was the most popular way by which hotels operators achieve energy efficiency with 75.7% of all the respondents attested to this.

The next most popular means by which hotels operators achieve energy efficiency as indicated by 12.4% of the respondents was by using energy saving bulbs. Nine respondents (4.9%) indicated that they achieve energy efficiency by the use of solar energy. Some of the hotels operators however do not conserve energy in any way. This is because they believe that their guests should be satisfied with as much energy as they require. These hotels (7.0%) use electricity generously.

Achieving water efficiency

Hotels operators' responses as to how they achieve water efficiency is presented on Table 4.6

Table 6: How hotels achieve water efficiency

Respondents Designation	Preventing taps from running unnecessarily	Using water generously	Total
Hotels Managers	55.1%	44.9%	100.0%
Departmental Heads	59.6%	40.4%	100.0%
Total	58.4%	41.6%	100.0%

Respondents' description of how they achieve water efficiency could be categorised under two themes only namely "Preventing taps from running unnecessarily" and "Using water generously". Over half (58.4%) of the respondents indicated that they make sure that taps are not left running wastefully. In the same vein, just a little less than half of the respondents indicated that they use water generously.

Achieving materials efficiency

Hotels operators' responses on how they achieve material efficiency is presented on Table 7.

Table 7: How hotels achieve materials efficiency

Respondents' Designation	Employing strict portion control	Buying foods when they are in season	Using resources generously	Total
Hotels Managers	95.9%	2.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Departmental Heads	98.5%	0.0%	1.5%	100.0%
Total	97.8%	0.5%	1.6%	100.0%

"Employing strict portion control", "buying foods when they are in season" and "using resources generously" were the three possible themes from the responses gotten from the hotels operators

regarding how they achieve materials efficiency. Of these three themes, employing strict portion control in order to prevent wastages was the most popular method which has been employed by 97.8% of the hotels operators in Bauchi State. Only one hotel manager (2.0% of hotels managers and 0.5% of the total number of respondents) indicated that the hotel buys foods when they are in season. A total of 1.6% of the respondents did indicated however that they use material resources generously. How hotels achieve sustainable waste management and pollution prevention Hotels operators were requested to state how their individual hotels sustainable waste management and pollution prevention. The qualitative data collected on each of the elements were organised into identifiable themes and analysed descriptively. The result is presented on Table 8.

Table 8: How hotels achieve sustainable waste management and pollution prevention

Respondents Designation	Maintaining environmental cleanliness	Adopting haulage rather than waste burning	Community service	By maintaining generators regularly	By planting trees	Government's responsibility	Total
Hotels Managers	73.5%	10.2%	8.2%	1%	2.0%	2.0%	100.0%
Departmental Heads	77.2%	14.7%	4%	2.2%	1.5%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	76.2%	13.5%	5.4%	2.7%	1.6%	0.5%	100.0%

Respondents' responses were categorised under five themes namely "Maintaining environmental sanitation", "Adopting haulage rather than waste burning", "Community service", "By maintaining generators regularly", "By planting trees" and "Government's responsibility". A combined 76.2% of the respondents indicated that they ensure sustainable waste management and pollution prevention by maintaining good environmental sanitation. Some hotels as indicated by 13.5% of the respondents opted for haulage as a way of dealing with waste rather than burning it. This, according to the respondents, prevents environmental pollution. "Community service" was another way by which 5.4% of the hotels claim to achieve sustainable waste management and pollution prevention. Another way by which 2.7% of hotels prevent pollution was by ensuring regular maintenance of their generator. While 1.6% of hotels have adopted tree planting as means of achieving sustainable waste management and pollution control, two hotels managers (2.0% of the managers) where emphatic that environmental sustainability was the responsibility of the government.

Ways by which hotels have involve staff and guests in their environmental sustainability programmes.

Hotels operators were requested to state how their individual hotels involve staff and tourists in achieving environmental sustainability. The qualitative data collected on each of the elements were organised into themes and analysed descriptively.

Staff's involvement in hotels' environmental sustainability programmes.

The result of how hotels involve their staff in their environmental sustainability programmes is presented on Table 9

Table 9: How hotels are involving their staff in achieving environmental sustainability

Respondents Designation	Involvement in Hotel's environmental cleanliness	Training on resource management	Staff awards	Total
Hotels Managers	85.7%	12.2%	2.0%	100.0%
Departmental heads	95.6%	2.9%	1.5%	100.0%
Total	93.0%	5.4%	1.6%	100.0%

Ensuring that staff keep hotels environment clean at all times was how 93.0% of the hotels engage their staff in achieving environmental sustainability. Other hotels provide trainings for their staff on resource management as indicated by 4.5% of the respondents.

Guests and tourists' involvement in hotels' environmental sustainability programmes.

The result of how hotels involve guests in their environmental sustainability programmes is presented on Table 10

Table 10: How hotels are involving guests and tourists in achieving environmental sustainability

Respondents Designation	Tourists' involved in energy and water conservation	Tourists' involved in environmental sanitation	No involvement	By encouraging tourists' feedback	Total
Hotels Managers	55.1%	22.4%	2.0%	20.4%	100.0%
Departmental Heads	66.9%	21.3%	0.7%	11.0%	100.0%
Total	63.8%	21.6%	1.1%	13.5%	100.0%

From result presented on Table 10, tourists are involved in energy and water conservation as indicated by 63.8% of the respondents. Another strategy for achieving environmental sanitation revealed by 21.6% of the respondents was Tourists' involvement in environmental sanitation.

Tourists are also engaged through the feedback mechanisms put in place by hotels as stated by 13.5% of the respondents. A combined 1.1% of respondents however expressed discouragement in tourists' involvement in any efforts of achieving environmental sustainability.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to establish how classified hotels in Bauchi State are contributing to the achievement of environmentally sustainable tourism in Bauchi State. The areas of investigation included energy, water and materials usage, sustainable waste management and pollution prevention as well as hotels' staff and tourists' involvement in hotels' environmental sustainability programmes. In order to achieve this aim, respondents were first requested to indicate their levels of awareness of the possible impacts which excessive use of energy, water and material resources may have on the environment, as well as the possible impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment. This study agrees with Safari, Salehzadeh, Panahi, & Abolghasemian (2018) and Wan, Chan, & Huang (2017) that an awareness about possible negative impacts of excessive use of energy, water, materials, unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment may serve as impetus for hotels operators to adopt sustainable approaches to their business operations in these regards.

Hotels operators' levels of awareness of the impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources and impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment
Analysed data shows that hotels operators in Bauchi State are aware of impacts of excessive use of energy, water and material resources on the environment to a moderate extent (Mean = 3.01, SD = 2.339) and are aware of the possible impacts of unmanaged waste and pollution on the environment also to a moderate extent (Mean = 3.95, SD = .754). Findings of Safari *et al.* (2018)'s study on the relationship between environmental awareness and employees green behaviour and a related study by Wu, Thongma, Leelapattana, & Huang (2016) found a direct relationship between managers' environmental awareness and their environmental behaviour and were able to draw a correlation between hotels' employees green awareness and hotels environmental performance.
In the same vein, Çakar & Alakavuklar (2014) and Safari, *et al.* (2018) suggested that lack of orientation about the future of the earth causes organizations to exhibit a lack of behavioural intentions and environmental initiatives in their business operations. Going by these studies' findings, hotels operators environmental performance in Bauchi State may expectedly be

compromised because of the moderate extent of their levels of environmental awareness. Hotels operator as presumed by Cegarra-Navarro, Martinez-Martinez, Gutiérrez, & Rodríguez (2013) and Mbasera *et al.* (2016), may not give environmental sustainability as much attention and the seriousness it deserves when making business operational decisions especially where such decisions may eventually impact on the environment. Hotels achieving energy, water and material resource efficiency

This study was able to ascertain that hotels in Bauchi state are making efforts at achieving energy efficiency mostly by ensuring that all lights and electrical gadgets are switched off when not in use, by using energy saving bulbs while very few of them have adopted solar energy to augment their energy supply. Hotels achieve water efficiency by making sure that taps are not left running indiscriminately and they achieve materials efficiency mostly by adopting strict portion control. These were similar methods employed by hotels in Zimbabwe and South Africa in achieving environmental sustainability as reported by Mbasera *et al.* (2016).

This study was able to discern however, that energy, water and materials conservation practices among the hotels were economic rather than environment motivated as was inferred from respondents' statements such as

"If we begin to ration water, we will lose our customers.

Sufficient water is what make us compete favourably with big hotels."

"All appliances and lights always switched off at night and when not in use for cost effectiveness"

"We switch off light in all unoccupied rooms to reduce electricity bill"

This salient economic motive behind hotels' energy, water and materials efficiency strategies in Bauchi State confirms this study's insinuation that hotels operators' environmental performance may be compromised due to the moderate extent of their environmental awareness. Besides the salient economic motivation, it can also be inferred that fear of losing customers' loyalty and continued patronage influences hotels' choice of operational practices which also causes them to lay more emphases on customer satisfaction at the expense of environmental sustainability. This is evident from the descriptive analysis of the strategies deployed by hotels operators in achieving energy, water and

stated that they use energy, water and materials generously. The reasons advanced for this by the respondents was the hotels not wanting to lose guests' patronage.

A similar study carried out by Wan, Chan, & Huang (2017) confirmed that hotels in Macau also place more priority on customer satisfaction over environmental concerns. Even though several literature reports prove that all around the world, people are becoming more environmentally conscious and are demanding for environmentally sustainable products and services (Sharma & Bansal, 2013), the result of this study proves otherwise. From the information gathered from hotels operators in Bauchi State, guests' kind of demands place more emphasis on getting the most value for their money, rather than put pressure on the hotels to become pro-environment as is the case in other parts of the world.

Hotels in Bauchi State seem to have not been able to attract many environmentally conscious clients who could have through their preferences for environmentally sustainable products and services mounted pressure on the hotels to begin evolving their products and services to suit the visitors' demands. In the alternative, environmentally conscious visitors have continued to shun hotels in Bauchi State because they have not been identified as pro-environment hotels. (Sharma & Bansal, 2013) indicated that customers are usually a force to reckon with when formulating business policies.

Since hotels' target customers are not exhibiting pro-environment consumer behaviours, the hotels organizations are also not challenged to factor in better innovative environmental sustainability into their business operational practices as suggested by (Sharma & Bansal, 2013).

Another salient point worthy of note emerging from respondents' statements is the notion that a resource is to be conserved based on its availability or none availability. Some of the respondents assume that there was no need for water efficiency since they are not in short supply. Other respondents reasoned that since power was in short supply, there was no need for considering energy conservation.

This study assumes that respondents' perception of conditional resource conservation and efficiency as well as minimal strategies in achieving energy, water and materials efficiency as exhibited in their responses is an offshoot of the moderate extent of their level of environmental awareness. This is more so that none of the managers or departmental heads

respondents have mentioned that they give priority to sourcing materials naturally or engaging in procuring environmentally friendly products or packaging guests' amenities in biodegradable materials or substituting reusable items for disposable ones as suggested by GreenHotelier (2010), Poldrugovac, Tekavcic, & Jankovic (2016) as part of materials efficiency programmes.

Hotels achieving sustainable waste management and pollution prevention

Maintaining environmental cleanliness was the main waste management and pollution prevention strategy adopted by hotels in Bauchi State followed by adopting haulage rather than waste burning, community service, maintaining generators regularly and by planting trees. These also included a disturbing notion by some of the respondents that waste and pollution management are the exclusive responsibility of the government. From this result, there seem to be a misconception about environmental cleanliness and environmental sustainability among hotels operators in Bauchi State.

None of the respondents mentioned any of the sustainable waste management methods of waste elimination, waste reduction, waste reuse, waste recycle or energy recovery as prescribed by Hierarchy Structure (2018) and International Tourism Partnership (2014). This study proposes that hotels operators' moderate extent of environmental awareness could be responsible for this. This is in tandem with Bogoro, Bukar, Samson, & Rasheed (2014), Mbasera et al.

(2016) and Cegarra-Navarro et al. (2013)'s concern that lack of environmental awareness among hotels' managers is a major challenge to their adopting and implementing inovative sustainable operational practices. Cegarra-Navarro et al. (2013) recommended for an unlearning of conventional environmental and operational beliefs and the adoption of new innovative knowledge among hotels operators.

Hotels involving staff and guests in their environmental sustainability programmes Closely related to the environmental cleanliness strategies adopted by hotels in Bauchi State to deal with waste and pollution, is the involvement of staff and guests in environmental cleanliness as means by which hotels staff and guests have been co-opted into hotels' environmental sustainability operational program. In addition to this, hotels guests are also

being requested to switch off lights behind them as they leave their rooms and to not leave taps running when water is not being used. These strategies have been recommended by Taylor (2017) and National Parks UK (2018) who also recommended that more elaborate and deliberate efforts should be employed in involving hotels staff in organizational environmental sustainability programmes by creating "a green" team.

In the data collected, some respondents mentioned that they usually request hotels guests for feedbacks concerning their experiences in the hotels. It is not clear to this study if the guests' comments have included recommendations for hotels' improvement in environmental performance or if the hotels have considered such recommendations useful.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussion of analysed data, this study draws the following conclusions and makes recommendations for course of action as follows;

It is concluded that the level of hotels operators' environmental awareness in Bauchi State is to a moderate extent, that there is no significant difference between the levels of environmental awareness of hotels managers and departmental heads and that hotels operators' levels of environmental awareness may have an effect on their environmental behaviour and organizational environmental performance. Since there is a direct relationship between environmental awareness and environmental behaviour, this study recommends therefore that relevant authorities should step up environmental awareness campaign among hotels operators in order to improve their levels of awareness with the intent that this will lead to an improvement in their environmental behaviour and organizational environmental performance.

This study was able to ascertain that hotels in Bauchi State have adopted certain strategies for achieving energy, water and materials efficiency. It is however perceived that economic, rather than environmental benefit is their strongest motivating factor. This study recommends therefore that while relevant authorities increase environmental awareness drive among hotels operators, emphasis should be placed on raising their awareness to the fact that they stand to make more revenue when they also target the environmentally conscious niche of the tourism market. This niche of the market can be attracted by hotels improving on their environmental performance while innovatively meeting the peculiar needs of their current clients.

Hotels' notion of resources self-sufficiency and fear of losing existing clientele have been discerned to be two of the factors impeding hotels from embracing environmentally sustainable operational practices.

This study concludes that the hotels in Bauchi State do not see the need for energy, water and materials conservation because they are not in short supply and that unlike the environmentally conscious tourists from western countries, the peculiar types of customers which hotels in Bauchi State receive have preferences for lavish hotels products and services which hotels are eager to provide without recourse to the effect on the environment.

This study concludes that this scenario is an indication that both hotels operators and hotels clients need to be educated on environmental sustainability presentable in the forms of sustainable operations and sustainable consumption among others. For these reasons, this study recommends for massive public enlightenment campaign on the need for and benefits of environmental sustainability among the populace as well as how everyone can contribute to a "better common future."

It was noticed that the waste management strategies adopted by hotels in Bauchi State as specified by the respondents in this study do not include any of the prescribed sustainable waste management methods. This study therefore proposes that any environmental awareness campaign that will be carried out should necessarily include how hotels may incorporate waste elimination, waste reduction, waste reuse, waste recycle and waste recovery practices in their everyday operations.

This study concludes that hotels have incorporated staff and guests' involvement in achieving their environmental sustainability programmes. This study observed however that staff and guests have been involved only to the level to which the hotels have embraced environmental sustainability into their business operations. This study therefore recommends that hotels should improve on their environmental sustainability efforts while still engaging staff and guests at more involving levels. One of the salient observations of this study is that hotels in Bauchi are driven by the dictates of their guests' demands which could be described as lavish rather than pro-environment. This study perceives that hotels in Bauchi State seem not to have been able to attract many environmentally conscious clients who could have mounted pressure on them for environmentally sustainable products and services. This segment of the tourism market is known to be mostly international tourists from the western countries where environmental awareness is common.

The implication of this scenario is that hotels in Bauchi State are losing the patronage and revenue accruable from this tourism market segment. This study therefore recommends that hotels as a matter of urgency, improve on their organizational environmental performance with a view to attracting more foreign exchange through the environmentally conscious tourists guests.

Policy recommendations

Tourism Victoria (2009), Masa?deh *et al.* (2017) and SustainableTourism.net (2014) have opined that for the objectives of sustainable tourism to be achieved, there is need for the active participation of governments at all levels, tourism regulatory bodies and every industry connected to tourism. In addition to relevant authorities stepping up awareness campaigns among hotels operators, hotels' visitors and the public, This study recommends that hotels' environmental information and waste management initiatives be made to compulsorily form part of individual hotels' policy statements and that they be publicly displayed.

This study further recommends that sustainable environment operational requirements and guidelines be developed and distributed to all hotels. It is also recommended that the enforcement arms of tourism and hotels regulatory bodies ensure that hotels in Bauchi State abide by these guidelines and if possible, hotels are licenced or have their licences renewed only when they have fulfilled all the requirements for environmentally sustainable tourism along with other necessary requirements.

Recommendation for further studies

This study assumes that environmentally conscious international tourists are not attracted to hotels in Bauchi State due to their perceived lack of visibility in the international tourism arena as environmentally sustainable destination service providers. This study assumes that environmentally conscious visitors have continued to shun hotels in Bauchi State because they have not been identified as pro-environment hotels. For this reason, this study recommends that an online study be carried out to investigate the factors which affect tourist's behaviours in the choice of hotels in Bauchi State. This is to empirically establish the factors that attract or repel especially international tourists visitors to or from patronise the hotels in Bauchi State. It is expected that the outcome of such research will help hotels improve on their environmental performance and other areas that are necessary for influencing tourists' behaviour in the selection of tourism destinations in Nigeria.

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EVALUATING SELF-SERVICE TECHNOLOGY APPLICATION AND ITS CHALLENGES
IN HOTEL BUSINESS IN AWKA, ANAMBRA STATEObinwanne, Cletus Okechukwu*
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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the effect of self-service technology on the performance of hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The study aimed at examining different types of self-service technology available to customers in hotel business, ascertaining customer perception on the use of self-service technology, examining the effect of self-service technology on sales volume, exploring the effect of self-service technology on customer patronage, comparing the preference of hotel guests in selecting between human service and self-service technologies and identify the challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. To achieve the objectives of the study, survey research design was adopted. The researcher used structured questionnaire as an instrument for data collection, while descriptive statistics were used to analyze data collected. The sample size of the study was 222 for hotel management and staff and 68 for the customers. The instrument was validated to determine its suitability and reliability for the study. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was given to three research experts. For its reliability the correlation result of test-retest reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.74. The findings revealed that telephone-based technologies, interactive kiosk, interactive voice response systems, internet based interfaces, video technologies, automated check outs and electronic kiosk are the types of self-service technology available in hotels. The findings further revealed that self-service technology affects both sales volume and customer patronage. The study recommends that Hotels should train their staff and educate their customer on the use of self-service technology in their hotel. Also, Hotels should always maintain their self-service technologies for effective use by customers or guests that will help in enhancing the performance of hotels.

Keywords: Guests, hotels, self-service technology, Anambra

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INTRODUCTION

In recent times, the delivery of services has moved away from human interaction to technology services. Services that were commonly performed by service employees are gradually being replaced by self service technologies. Research has shown that personal interactions between service employees and customers are crucial for customer satisfaction and commitment. However, the introduction of *self-service technology* (SST) facilities, reduce the need for human interactions, and force customers to deliver the service themselves with the aid of technology.

The introduction of new generation of travelers who use technologies for most aspects of their lives has also made it imperative to apply self-service technology in hotel and tourism operations. Consumers are also becoming more sophisticated and comfortable with technology interactions. For hotels, self-service technology presents an opportunity for them to deliver more services and options to their customers as generally seen in banking, and airline industries which introduced these services aggressively in their service escape

(Beatson, Coote, and Rudd, 2006). Technology has helped tourism and hospitality industry to replace expensive human labour with technological labour. Firms started introducing part of the service delivery process to customers. This allowed them to enjoy cost savings, and to improve their speed and availability of delivery (Messinger, Li, Stoulia, Galletta, Ge, and Choi 2019). This helps to reduce labour cost as well as avoid customer service issues. A good example is the introduction of automated teller machines (ATM) by banks that saved labour costs, and allowed customers to perform banking services at their convenience (Fitzsimmons, 2013). The majority of consumers of the service industry are now valuing new technology because of its convenience. The control given by new technology provides more freedom to these customers. Increased technological adoption in the service industry (Kim, Park, and Morrison, 2018) is the reason behind the introduction of a number of self service technologies such as airport self check-in kiosks, electronic tourist guides, tourism information kiosks, self-service systems in dining facilities, hotel self-check-in, and automated hotel check-out.

Self-service technologies are technological interfaces, which allow the customer to produce the service independent of direct involvement from the service employee (Meuter, 2015). This adoption of technology based service solutions is often in place of interpersonal service solutions as the use of self-service technology occurs during the service encounter. The service encounter is where the customer directly interacts with the service organization. Traditionally, this service encounter is with an employee but more recently it has become person to technology through the introduction of self-service technology. Despite this, there is an absence of research into both technology in the service encounter and the frameworks used by service marketers (Bitner, 2000). The majority of research on service encounters still focuses on the traditional interpersonal nature of the service encounter, as usually this was the gauge to measure the standard of the encounter (Meuter, 2015). It is becoming apparent, however, that the introduction of technology in the service encounter is not only altering the traditional service encounter but also in some instances eliminating the need for the interpersonal interaction with service staff (Bitner, 2010). One of the ways of making service easier and effective to customers in hotel industry is self-service technology.

Hotel is a service business of receiving and entertainment of guests, visitors, customers or strangers. It is concerned with the way people treat others in a friendly and warm manner. Hotel is a service oriented business which focuses on the relationship between a host and a guest (Orel, 2014). While the guest is the patrons, the host is the service provider. The majority of these hotel services are provided at hotels, restaurants, bars, and other tourism businesses. Hotel business involves human interaction. Because of the level of human interaction needed to complete the business transaction in hotel establishments, this has resulted into human error and high cost of labour. The hotel industry is one of the largest and fastest growing businesses around the globe (Poulston, 2018).

The performance of hotel industry depends on the level of customer patronage and customer satisfaction. Customers are the engine for every business operations, their satisfaction is paramount. The major determinant of customer patronage is customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction depends on the quality of product or service rendered to them. Effective and quality service delivery is very

important in hotel. It contributes significantly to the growth and performance of hotel business. Hotels traditionally distributed their room inventory through intermediaries such as travel agents, and tour operators. Nevertheless, the rise of the internet created fundamental changes to the way hotels conduct their businesses. The internet allowed automated self service in the form of online bookings to take place (Kang, Brewer and Baloglu, 2017). Today, there are more advanced service delivery processes and electronic information deployed to allow customers to navigate on their own. Because of the lack of tangible evidence, customers tend to depend on other numerous ones for evaluating service quality, and these service cues have been investigated by many researchers over time. Service quality has been recognized as the gap between customers' expectations towards the service and their actual service perceptions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 2015; Orel and Kara, 2014). It has a significant impact on both customers and service providers. This is because service quality improves service organizations' sales, images, and total benefits, and customers tend to look for high-quality services from service providers.

In the last decade Nigeria tourism trade has recorded increase in growth as a result of the Federal government's plan of promoting tourism (Baum, 2012). In 2015, the economy slowed down as annual GDP growth declined to 2.7% from 6.2% in 2014. Consequently, many travelers from all over the world nowadays enter Nigeria for businesses and job contracts. Most if not all of these travelers visited tourist centers and majority of them lodged in hotels throughout the period of their stay. This has helped to some extent in the development of hotel industry in Nigeria.

In earlier decades, majority of the innovations and related theories primarily focused on development of products rather than services (Yang and Fang, 2014); the major emphasis was on product development because of its economic impact. However, over the past few years, adoption theories have been successfully applied to the service contexts. With an increase in the prominence of services, emphasis has shifted from product development towards service development. As a result, new technologies are being implemented in the service sector, and self-service technologies (SSTs) are increasing being applied in the service delivery processes. SST is one of the most frequent used and widely accepted technological interfaces (Yen, 2015). Being part of the

service industry, hotels constantly invest in SSTs for improving their service quality and reducing overall cost.

Service industries such as the hotel industry are witnessing new technological innovations and these industries are integrating modern practices with traditional service delivery processes. Customers who have earlier had less than satisfactory experiences such as long waiting queues and operational delays now prefer to interact using latest technologies. Increased acceptance of newer SSTs has encouraged more hotels to implement SSTs for enhancing service quality standards, operational efficiencies, and most importantly, overall customer satisfaction. The evolution of ICT applications has led to the appearance of a variety of SSTs in the marketplace.

The rise of information technologies has greatly transformed how business processes work. The hotel industry has been confronted with technological advances which have resulted in the transformation of traditional service delivery practices. Customers who were once frustrated with incompetent and inexperienced service employees, long waiting queues, closure of businesses at the time the customer prefers are now turning towards self-service technology. With the wide popularity and acceptance of SSTs in the marketplace, more hotels are now eager to leverage on SSTs to improve service standards, operational efficiencies, and improve customer service. It is believed that the drastic progression from interpersonal service encounters to SSTs is crucial for the hotel and service industry to continue thriving (Chin, 2016). With technological advancement in the service delivery processes, 'high-touch and low-tech' method has been replaced with 'high-tech and low-touch' method. It is against this backdrop that this study intends to examine the effect of self-service technology on the performance of hotel industry in Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of self-service technology on the performance of hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The specific objectives are to:

- (i) examine different types of self-service technology available to customers in hotel business in the State.
- (ii) ascertain customer perception on the use of self-service technology in hotel business in the State.

- (iii) examine effect of self-service technology on sales volume of hotel business in the State.
- (iv) Compare the preference of hotel guests in selecting between human service and self-service technologies.
- (v) identify the challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business the State.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study

- (i) What are the different types of self-service technology available to customers in hotel business in the State?
- (ii) What are the customer perceptions on the use of self-service technology in hotel business in the State?
- (iii) How does self-service technology influence sales volume of hotel business in the State?
- (iv) What is the difference between hotel guest preference of human service and self-service technology in the State.

What are the challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business in the State?

METHODOLOGY

A survey research design and observation were used for the study. In the survey research design, data were collected through administration of questionnaire and personal interview. Observation was also used where the researcher took time to visit and to identify the types of self-service technology being used by each of the hotels under study. Survey research method is important in this kind of research because it has the ability to clearly explain and organize complex phenomenon in a simpler and understanding form.

The population for the study was made up of both hotel staff and customers of hotels within the study area. The population of customers was not known which enabled the researcher to employ infinite population (when the population is not known) formula as a statistical technique to determine the sample size, given as thus;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

n = population size
 q = probability of failure (0.1)
 p = probability of success (0.9)
 z = standard error (1.96)

$$e = \text{level of significance (95\%)} = (0.05)^2$$

$$\frac{1.65^2(0.5)(0.5)}{(0.1)(0.1)}$$

= 68 Customers

The researcher adopted convenience sampling technique to get to the customers, while purposive sampling technique was used in the case of hotel staff. The population of the hotel staff used for the study was 500. This value was arrived at through the information supplied by the personnel unit of the hotels through their records. The respondents used for the study were those found to be more informed and in position to give reliable information that would answer the research questions. The sample size of the study 222 was statistically determined using Taro Yamane formula, thus $N / 1 + N(e)^2$.

To ensure the determination of accurate sample size, the statistical formula derived by Yamane (1964) was employed.

The formula states thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

N = population of the study which is 500

e = margin of error and in this case, e = 5%

1 = constant

Therefore;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{500}{1 + 500(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{500}{1 + 500(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{500}{1 + 1.25}$$

$$n = \frac{500}{2.25}$$

$$n = 222$$

Therefore the number of respondents was 222. The instruments used for the study was questionnaire, observation and personal interview. The questionnaire contained two sections (section A and section B). Section A contained respondents' personal data while section B contained structured questions relating to objectives of the study. The questionnaire was designed in four point rating scale close ended questions. Closed ended questions were used because the questions did not require respondents to give more than one word answer. The close ended includes; VHE = Very High Extent (4), HE = High Extent (3), LE = Low Extent (2) and VLE = Very Low Extent (1).

The instrument was validated to determine its suitability for the study. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was given to three research experts from the Department of Home Science/Hotel Management and Tourism within the same period, in

different locations to examine its fitness for the study. Corrections were made where errors were observed by the experts before administering the questionnaire on the respondents.

In research, the term reliability means consistency in terms of scores obtained when a test is repeatedly. In this study, the test-re-test method of reliability was used. The first five copies were administered first while the second five copies were distributed after two weeks interval to the same group of five for the reliability test. The scores on the two occasions were correlated. This correlation is known as the test-retest-reliability coefficient, or the coefficient of stability. The closer each respondent's scores are the more reliable the test measure. The correlation result of test-retest-reliability coefficient was 0.74 which means that the instrument for data collection was reliable.

The researcher administered the questionnaire with the help of research assistants to enable her carry out the research effectively. The simple descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentage and mean (X) were used to analyze the research questions. Based on research questions, mean value above or equal to 2.5 and above is acceptable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table 1 shows the result on the mean responses of respondents on the different types of self-service technology available to customers in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The result shows that telephone-based technologies, interactive kiosk, interactive voice response systems, Internet based interfaces, Video technologies, Automated check outs and Electronic kiosk are the types of self-service technology available in hotels.

Table 1: Mean responses of respondents of different types of self-service technology available to customers in hotels

SST	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Weighted score	Mean	Decision
Telephone based technologies	142(64%)	64(29%)	16(7%)	0	222	792	3.57	Accept
Interactive kiosk (face-to-face)	129(58%)	66(30%)	27(12%)	0	222	768	3.46	Accept
Interactive voice response systems	115(52%)	91(41%)	16(7%)	0	222	765	3.45	Accept
Internet based interfaces	155(70%)	47(24%)	13(6%)	0	222	787	3.64	Accept
Video technologies	113(51%)	76(34%)	33(15%)	0	222	746	3.36	Accept
Automated check outs	130(59%)	73(33%)	18(8%)	0	222	775	3.49	Accept
Electronic kiosk	30(15%)	76(34%)	91(51%)	0	222	530	2.39	Reject

Source: Field survey, 2019 Criterion Mean=2.50

All the items had an acceptable mean response score of 2.50. Item 4 which is internet based interfaces has the highest mean of 3.64, followed by item 1 with mean of 3.57 and then item 6 with mean of 3.51. The 7th item has the lowest mean of 2.64. This implies that customers' perception are more on the availability of internet based interfaces than any other self service technology, while the least in their perception of the available self service technology by customers in hotels is Electronic kiosk. Generally, the result as revealed in the above table implies that telephone-based technologies, Interactive kiosk, Interactive voice response systems, Internet based interfaces, Video technologies, Automated check outs and Electronic kiosk are the types of self-service technology commonly available in hotels for customer's use. The finding of this study is in line with that of Chikwe (2019), which revealed similar items as the major types of self-service technology available in hotels. Also in the work of Forbes (2018), he mentioned items similar to the above items as the major types of self-service technology available in hotels.

The result in table 2 shows the customer perception on the use of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The result indicates that there is high level of use of telephone-based technologies, Interactive voice response system, Internet based interfaces, automated check outs and Electronic kiosk, while interactive kiosk and video technologies indicated low rate of use.

Table 2: Mean responses of respondents on the customer perception on the frequency of use of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State.

Frequency of Use	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Weight ed Total	Mean	Decision
Use of telephone - based technologies	39(58%)	16(23%)	8(12%)	5(7%)	68	225	3.31	Accept
Customers make use of interactive kiosk	10(15%)	17(25%)	20(29%)	21(31%)	68	152	2.24	Reject
Use interactive voice response systems by customers	34(50%)	14(20%)	10(14%)	11(16%)	68	209	3.07	Accept
Use internet based interfaces	37(54.5%)	24(35%)	7(10.5%)	0	68	234	3.45	Accept
Use video technologies	10(15%)	15(22%)	21(31%)	22(32%)	68	149	2.19	Reject
Use of Automated check outs in hotels	40(59%)	17(25.5%)	7(10%)	4(5.5%)	68	229	3.37	Accept
Use of Electronic kiosk in hotels	35(52%)	28(41%)	5(7%)	0	68	234	3.44	Accept
GRAND MEAN							3.01	

Source: Field survey, 2019 Criterion Mean=2.50

The items have mean response of 3.31, 2.24, 3.07, 3.45, 2.19, 3.37 and 3.44 respectively. All these items have a mean greater than 2.5 except interactive kiosk and video technologies that showed mean of 2.24

and 2.19 respectively. The findings on Table 2 shows that there is high level of use of telephone-based technologies, Interactive voice response systems, Internet based interfaces, automated check outs and Electronic kiosk. The finding is consistent to the findings of Lin and Hsieh (2011), which revealed that hotels have made available the self-service technology in their establishments that were regularly used by customers.

The result in table 3 shows the mean responses of the respondents based on the effect of self-service technology on sales volume of hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The result shows that telephone-based technologies (3.31), Interactive kiosk (3.40), Interactive voice response systems (3.61), Internet based interfaces (3.37), Video technologies (3.32), Automated check outs (3.34) and Electronic kiosk have effect on sales volume (3.29).

Table 3: Mean responses on the effect of self-service technology on sales volume of hotels Awka, Anambra State.

Influences	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Total Weight	Mean	Decision
Telephone-based technologies enhances sales of volume	31(46%)	32(47%)	5(7%)	0	68	225	3.31	Accept
Interactive kiosk enhances sales volume	34(50%)	27(40%)	7(10%)	0	68	231	3.40	Accept
Interactive voice response systems by customers enhances sales volume	44(64%)	20(29%)	5(7%)	0	68	246	3.61	Accept
Internet based interfaces enhances the sales volume	35(51%)	23(34%)	10(15%)	0	68	229	3.37	Accept
Video technologies enhances sales volume	34(50%)	22(32%)	12(18%)	0	68	226	3.32	Accept
Automated check outs enhances sales volume	31(46%)	31(46%)	5(8%)	0	68	227	3.34	Accept
Electronic kiosk enhances sales of volume	31(46%)	26(38%)	11(16%)	0	68	224	3.29	Accept
GRAND MEAN							3.38	

Source: Field survey, 2019 Criterion Mean=2.50

This is so because all the items had mean responses above 2.50. This implies that self service technology influences sales volume. It will be good for hotel managers to incorporate self-service technologies increase sales revenue to maximize profit. The result on Table 3 shows that telephone-based technologies, Interactive kiosk, Interactive voice response systems, Internet based interface, Video technology, Automated check outs and Electronic kiosk have effect on sales volume. The finding is consistent with the findings of Mayock (2010), which revealed that

self-service technology has a significant effect on sales volume. This is because as sales increase, profit will increase hereby leading to return on investment. The finding is in agreement with the findings of Nessler (2010), which revealed the use of self-service technologies significantly affects customer patronage. The findings is also in conformity with the findings of Chikwe (2019), which also revealed that the use of self-service technologies affect customer patronage.

Table 4: Mean responses of the respondents on the difference between hotel guest preference of human service and self-service technology

Difference between guest preference of human service and self-service technology	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Total Weight	Mean	Decision
Human service	40(58%)	20(30%)	8(12%)	0	68	236	3.47	Accept
Self-Service technology	10(15%)	23(34%)	35(51%)	0	68	179	2.63	Accept
GRAND MEAN							3.05	

Source: Field survey, 2019 Criterion Mean=2.50

The result shows the mean responses of respondents on the difference between hotel guest preference of human service and self-service technology. The result shows that guest prefer human service to self-service technology. This is because human service has the highest mean of 3.47 as against self-service technology which has the mean of 2.64. The finding is supported by the works of Prasad, Wirtz and Yu (2014), which revealed guest prefer human service to self-service. It is not a surprise the responses revealed that guests prefer human service to self-service technology because hotel is all about human touch, warm and friendly reception.

Table 5: Mean responses of the respondents on the challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State

Influences	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Total Weight	Mean	Decision
Unavailability of self-service technology	8(12%)	14(20%)	34(50%)	12(18%)	68	154	2.26	Reject
Poor knowledge on the use of self-service technology	31(46%)	31(46%)	5(8%)	0	68	227	3.34	Accept
Inadequate training by some staff and customers on the use of self-service technology	37(54%)	24(35%)	7(11%)	0	68	234	3.44	Accept
Lack of personal touch	39(58%)	16(23%)	8(12%)	5(7%)	68	225	3.31	Accept
Grand Mean							3.09	

Source: Field survey, 2019 Criterion Mean=2.50

The result presented in table 5 shows the mean responses of the respondents on the challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The result indicated that Poor knowledge on the use of self-service technology, Lack of training by staff and customers on the use of self-service technology, and Lack of personal touch were among the major challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State. The items have mean values of 3.34, 3.44, and 3.31 respectively. All the items had mean responses above the criterion mean of 2.50 except unavailability of self-service technology which has the mean value of 2.26. This implies that those items mean above 2.50 can hinder the effectiveness of self service technology by the users. The finding is consistent to the findings of Harris and Ogbonna (2012), which revealed similar items as the challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has shown that among the types of self-service technologies available in different hotels under study include telephone-based technologies, interactive kiosk, interactive voice response systems, internet based interfaces, video technologies, automated check outs and electronic kiosk are. Though, self-service technologies were used by the hotel guests preference was more on human service. These self-service technologies have effect on sales volume, and led to an overall improvement in the traditional service delivery process despite the fact that guests prefer human service to self-service. The study revealed that the challenges confronting self-service were poor knowledge of the use of self-service technology, lack of training by some of the staff and as well as some of the customers on the use of self-service technology and lack of personal touch are the major challenges faced by users of self-service technology in hotel business in Awka, Anambra State.

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PACKAGING AND ACCEPTABILITY OF YAM BALL (OJOJO) AMONG VISITORS TO AGODI GARDENS IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

There is a need to enhance and support the implementation of locally made (indigenous) food items and snacks. This can be done by making them more tasty and presentable. Ojojo is a popular delicacy among the Ijebu tribe of south-west Nigeria, and can be regarded as a savory snack/food. It can be referred to as an underutilized snack due to the fact that it is made from water yam which is underutilized in this part of the world. Indigenous and traditional foods/snacks, if properly utilized could help to solve the problem of poverty, hunger and malnutrition locally, and as such could be promoted to global level. The research was carried out in Agodi gardens located in Ibadan, Oyo state. One hundred and one copies of structured questionnaires (sensory evaluation form) were administered to respondents within Agodi gardens using convenient sampling to assess the organoleptic characteristics, different packaging and overall acceptability of ojojo. The questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (charts and percentage) and inferential statistics (spearman correlation, t-test, and multiple linear regression. Result from nutritional/proximate analysis revealed that ojojo contains moisture (51.4%), protein (5.9%), fat (8.5%), ash (2.9%), crude fibre (1.1%) and carbohydrate (30.2%). The organoleptic characteristic showed that 58.4% of the respondents liked the taste of the sample, and the mean distribution showed that taste ($x = 7.35$) ranked highest. The result for the different packaging materials showed that 85.4% liked the sample being served and 61.4% of the respondents preferred plastic pack compared to other packaging materials. The level of acceptability showed that ojojo was well accepted by the respondents as 86.1% of the visitors had above the score of 6 (liked slightly) in the sensory attributes evaluated. Different packaging materials affected the level of acceptance of ojojo among visitors to Agodi gardens. Also the nutritional benefits, taste, aroma, and overall packaging are major predictors of overall acceptability of ojojo.

Keywords: acceptability, underutilized indigenous snacks, yam ball, visitors

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INTRODUCTION

Water yam is the tuber of *Dioscorea alata* also called wild yam and is one of the oldest food crops so far and an important species of the dioscoreacea family (Agwu and Avoaja, 2012). According to Wireko-manu, Ibok, Ellis, and Maziya-Dixon (2013), water yam contains high level of Total Dietary Fiber (TDF) which makes it suitable for management of pile, constipation and diabetes. It is also rich in Vitamin C, beta carotene, vitamin E, calcium, potassium, magnesium, copper and antioxidants. These nutrients are known to play vital role in general body upkeep as well as immune functioning, wound healing, suppression of blood sugar, bone growth and anti-ageing. It is called *Jí abana* in Igbo, *Agbo* in Tiv and *Ewura* in Yoruba land (Okoye, Njoku, and Ugwuanyi, 2018).

Ojojo is a popular delicacy among the Ijebu tribe of south-west Nigeria. Although it was assumed to be underutilized by majority but today *Ojojo* is consumed in most of the southern parts of Nigeria (Alakali, Okache, and Agomo, 2016). Traditionally, *Ojojo* is prepared by grating edible portions of water

yam then adding salt and spices such as onion and pepper. It is then mixed thoroughly, scooped with spoon and fried in hot oil, which gives it a striking resemblance to *akara* balls (Okoye, Njoku, and Ugwuanyi, 2018).

There is a need to enhance and support the implementation of locally made (indigenous) food items and snacks. As there has been a decline in the use of indigenous snacks which has been replaced with modern foods including snacks and cannot be compared to the later in terms of nutritional content (Faber and Wenhold, 2007). This can be done by making them more tasty and presentable. Indigenous and traditional foods/snacks, if properly utilized could help to solve the problem of poverty, hunger and malnutrition locally, and as such could be promoted to global level (Faber and Wenhold, 2007). The goal of food packaging is to contain food in a cost-effective way that satisfies industry requirements and consumer desires, maintains food safety, and minimizes environmental impact (Shaw, 2013). Food is an important component in tourism as it serves as entertainment and cultural activity.

Traditional food and cuisine could be an excellent tourist attraction and an integral part of travel experience to rural travel destinations (EssaysUK, 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The research was carried out within Agodi Gardens. Agodi Gardens is located in Ibadan, Oyo state and was established in 1967. It is located between Latitude 7°24' and 7°25' N and longitude 3°53' and 3°57' E (Arowosafe and Ajayi 2018).

Purchase of Materials

Water yam (*Dioscorea alata*), crayfish, garlic, scotch bonnet (*atarodo*), onions, common salt, seasoning cubes, and groundnut oil were bought from Bodija market, Ibadan, Oyo state

Preparation of *Ojojo*

Ojojo was prepared in the Department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management Laboratory. 1kg of Water yam was peeled and washed/rinsed with water; it was then sliced and grated using the smallest holes of the grater into a bowl. 1 red Onion, 1 stick of spring onion, and 2 scotch bonnet pepper were chopped into smaller bits and added to the bowl of grated water yam. 1 tablespoon of grounded garlic, 2 tablespoon of grounded crayfish, 1 teaspoon of all-purpose seasoning and salt were added into the bowl of grated water yam and mixed together. Oil was heated, and the paste/mixture was scooped into the hot oil and fried.

Method of Data Collection

The method used for data collection include the preparation of *Ojojo* samples, the use of questionnaires, sensory evaluation form and laboratory work to analyze the nutritional benefits/composition of the sample.

Nutritional Composition

The nutritional compositions of the sample were calculated using standard methods as:

Moisture content:

$$\% \text{ Moisture content} = \frac{\text{Weight Loss}}{\text{Weight of Sample}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Ash content: Percentage Ash} = \frac{W_2 - W_1}{\text{Weight of Sample}} \times 100$$

Crude Fat content: the soxhlets extraction method (AOAC, 1996) was used. The fat extracted from a given quantity of sample was then calculated:

$$\% \text{ Fat (w/w)} = \frac{\text{Loss in Weight of sample}}{\text{Original Weight of Sample}} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{W_2 - W_3}{W_2 - W_1} \times 100$$

Protein content: it was determined using micro Kjeldahl method as described in AOAC (1996).

$$\% \text{ N} = \frac{\text{Molarity of HC1} \times \text{Sample titre} - \text{Blank titre} \times 0.014 \times \text{DF} \times 100}{\text{Weight of sample used}}$$

% N was converted to the percentage crude protein by multiplying by 6.25.

Crude Fibre content: calculated using the method described in AOAC (1996).

Carbohydrate content: was calculated by difference.

% CHO = 100 – (Sum of the percentages of moisture, ash, fat, protein and crude fibre)

Sensory Evaluation

Nine point Hedonic Scale was used and the sensory evaluation was carried out by one hundred and one (101) panelists made-up of visitors in Agodi Gardens. The attributes that was evaluated were the colour, taste, flavour, aroma, texture and overall acceptability.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of charts and percentage, and inferential statistics using spearman correlation, t-test and multiple linear regression.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Nutritional Composition/Proximate Analysis

Nutritional composition of *ojojo* samples are presented in Table 1. *Ojojo* sample consists of 51.4% moisture, 5.9% protein, 8.5% fat, 2.9% ash, 1.1% crude fiber shows the results of the chemical properties of *Ojojo* snacks. Total moisture content ranged from 51.4% to 51.7%, protein content ranged from 5.9% to 6.1%, fat content ranged from 8.5% to 8.4%, crude fibre and 30.2% carbohydrates.

There was slight increase in each of moisture content (ranged from 51.4%-51.7%), protein (ranged from 5.9%-6.1%) and carbohydrate (ranged from 30.2%-30.3%), while fat (8.5%- 8.4%), ash (2.9%-2.7%) and crude fibre (1.1%-0.8%) decreased and this could be

as a result of other additions such as salt and other spices.

Table 1: Nutritional analysis of *ojojo* snacks

Parameters	Moisture Content %	Protein %	Ether Extract (Fat) %	Ash %	Crude Fibre %	Carbohydrates (By Difference) %
Values	51.4	5.9	8.5	2.9	1.1	30.2
	51.1	5.7	8.7	2.7	1.2	30.6
	51.7	6.1	8.4	2.7	0.8	30.3

Source: Field survey, 2020

Organoleptic characteristics of *Ojojo*

Figure 1 shows that 58.4% of the respondents liked the taste of the sample, *ojojo*, 21.8% of them did not like the taste, while 19.8% were indifferent about the taste. The mean distribution in Table 2 shows that taste ($\bar{x}=7.35$) ranked highest among the organoleptic properties of *Ojojo*, this was closely followed by aroma ($\bar{x} = 7.33$), texture ($\bar{x} = 7.14$), flavour ($\bar{x} = 7.13$) while the least was colour ($\bar{x} = 6.70$). This may be attributed to the spices added in the course of its preparation. This is in line with Romany, Ginon, and Salles (2017) who asserted that when a food is made more palatable by adding salt, spices, herbs, and sweetness people tend to easily accept and consume most of the food that they previously did not prefer consuming. Also each of the sensory attribute (colour, taste, flavor, aroma, and texture)

significantly influenced the acceptability of *Ojojo*.

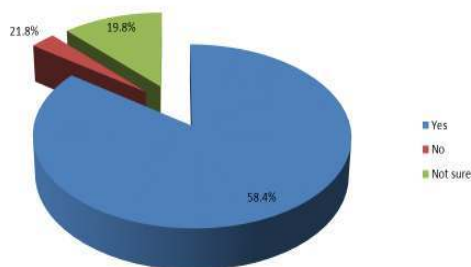


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of level of likeness of sample tasted

Table 2: Distribution by organoleptic properties and acceptability of *Ojojo* among respondents

	Like extremely	Like very much	Like moderately	Like slightly	Neither like or dislike	Dislike slightly	Dislike very much	Dislike extremely	Mean
Colour	5.0	21.8	39.6	18.8	6.9	5.9	0	2.0	6.70
Taste	14.9	45.5	18.8	14.9	0	2.0	4.0	0	7.35
Flavor	14.9	25.7	37.6	14.9	0	1.0	5.0	1.0	7.13
Aroma	21.8	32.7	20.8	15.8	5.0	2.0	0	2.0	7.33
Texture	19.8	22.8	34.7	12.9	1.0	5.0	1.0	3.0	7.14

Source: Field survey, 2020

Different packaging materials on the acceptability of *Ojojo*

Figure 2 shows that 85.4% of the respondents liked the sample being served, while 11.9% and 3.0% were indifferent and did not like the sample served, respectively. Figure 3 shows that 61.4% of the respondents preferred plastic pack as means of packaging *Ojojo*, 21.8% preferred foil paper, while 16.8% of the respondents preferred polythene. The rationale behind preference for plastic pack indicated by the respondents was attributed to its neatly packed nature, presentable manner and germs free nature. Those who preferred foil paper were of the opinion that it can easily be microwaved, while those who preferred polythene as a means of packaging *Ojojo* believed it to be handy (Table 3).

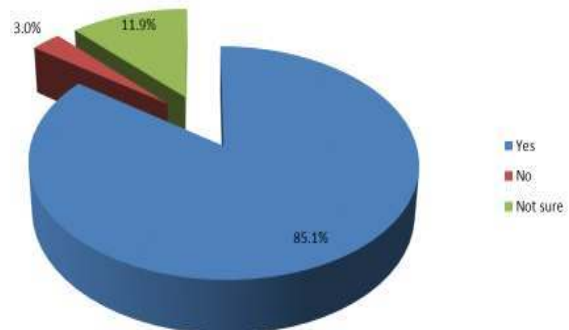


Figure 2: Percentage distribution of respondents' likeness of sample before being packed

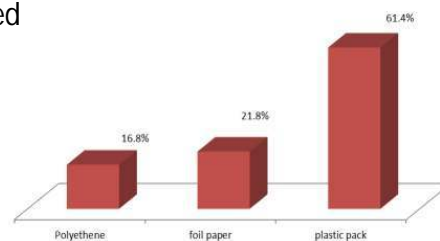


Figure 3: Percentage distribution of preferred material for packaging

Table 3 reveals that 64.7% respondents who preferred nylon as a means of packaging *Ojojo* believed it to be handy, while 35.3% were of the opinion that they can easily view the content when packed in nylon

Table 3: Distribution by reasons for preference for packaging materials among respondents

	Frequency	Percentages
Reasons for preferring plastic packs		
Neatly packed	25	40.3
Germs free	13	21.0
More presentable	24	38.7
Total	62	100
Reasons for foil paper		
Easily microwaved	13	59.1
Preserves it	1	4.5
Easy carriage	5	22.7
Neatly packed	3	13.7
Total	22	100.0
Reasons for Nylon		
It is handy	11	64.7
Can easily view the content	6	35.3
Total	17	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2020

The mean distribution in Table 4 shows that plastic (x = 7.33) was the most preferred material for packaging *Ojojo* by the respondents; this is closely followed by foil paper (x = 6.24) and polythene (x = 5.25) Table 4 also shows that 38.6% of the respondents liked the packaging materials very much, 23.8% extremely liked it, 20.8% moderately like it, 13.9% slightly liked it, while 2.0% and 1.0% disliked the packaging materials very much and extremely, respectively

Table 4: Distribution by respondents' perceived preference for packaging materials

	Like extremely	Like very much	Like moderately	Like slightly	Neither like or dislike	Dislike slightly	Dislike very much	Dislike extremely	Mean
Polythene	4.0	10.9	22.8	20.8	12.9	5.0	8.9	14.9	5.25
Foil paper	5.0	17.8	25.7	28.7	12.9	2.0	0.0	5.0	6.24
Plastic	19.8	40.6	18.8	8.9	7.9	0.0	1.0	3.0	7.33
Overall packaging	23.8	38.6	20.8	13.9	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.0	7.57

Source: Field survey, 2020

The sensory attributes presented in Table 5 ranges from 1 (Dislike extremely) to 9 (liked extremely). This shows that *Ojojo* was well accepted by the tasters, since the hedonic scale used in the sensory evaluation varied from 9 (liked extremely) to 1 (disliked extremely). This is also evidenced as approximately 86.1% of the respondents had above the score of 6 (liked slightly) in the sensory attributes evaluated.

The study shows that taste, aroma, nutritional composition and overall packaging were major determinants. This implies that consumer's characteristics, sensory attributes and packaging needs to be taken into consideration in making *Ojojo*

a formidable snack to reckon with. This is in congruent with the findings of Maina (2018) who noted that consumer and sensory characteristics constitute key areas in which food manufacturers can successfully use to differentiate their products to help enhance their acceptability.

Table 5: Distribution by organoleptic properties and acceptability of *Ojojo* among respondents

	Like extremely	Like very much	Like moderately	Like slightly	Neither like or dislike	Dislike slightly	Dislike very much	Dislike extremely	Mean
Acceptability	20.8	38.6	26.7	9.9	1.0	0	1.0	2.0	7.51

Source: Field survey, 2020

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that *Ojojo* is a nutritious snack that is rich in carbohydrate, protein and vitamins, with low fiber. Sensory attributes of *Ojojo* such as colour, taste, flavour, aroma and texture were significantly related to acceptability of *Ojojo* snacks. This suggests that each of this sensory attribute influenced the acceptability of *Ojojo*.

The different packaging was found to be significantly related to acceptability of *Ojojo*. It then implies that packaging materials such as plastic packs, foil paper and polythene influences acceptability of *Ojojo* among visitors.

Visitors to the site showed a level of acceptance to *Ojojo*. Also, taste, aroma, nutritional composition and packaging were major determinants of the acceptability of *Ojojo*. This implies that consumer's characteristics, sensory attributes and packaging needs to be taken into consideration in making *Ojojo* a formidable snack to reckon with.

RECOMMENDATION

Further/future research on the Agodi Gardens should not be conducted during the raining seasons and working hours/week days, as this would affect the number of respondents and participation of respondents.

Future researchers to the site should ensure they approach prospective respondents in a good manner and ensure that samples are neatly packed so as to attract more respondents.

The site is a wonderful recreation center for those wanting to participate in recreational activities.

Further research is needed to explore the various ways in which factors that influence food acceptability can be utilized in formulating nutritional and sensory characteristics of food and unconventional snacks

There is a need for further research to establish the

ASSESSMENT OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN NEKEDÉ ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN AND OTAMIRI – IHIAGWA ECO-DESTINATIONS OF OWERRI, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated tourism development in Nekede Zoological Gardens (NZG) and Otamiri –Ihiagwa eco-destinations (OIE) of Owerri, Imo state, Data for the study were collected through personal observation, in-depth interview and administration of questionnaire. Three sets of questionnaire were administered in each eco-destination. The first set was administered randomly to 30 staff members in NZG, and 15 workers in OIE based on population of workers. The second set was administered randomly to 70 household representatives of the host community of NZG; and to 50 households of OIE host community while the third set was administered based on visitation trend to 80 and 40 tourists in NZG and OIE respectively. Data obtained were presented in form of frequency of counts, tables, percentage, charts while Chi-square was used to test for associations. The attractions at NZG include wild animals as the most popular attraction (80.0%), museum (51.8%), children amusement park (47.3%) among others. The Otamiri River is the most popular attraction (92.2%) at OIE, followed by birds sighting (67.2%) and serene environment (45.2%). The main tourist activities carried out and enjoyed by tourists in NZG is game viewing (75.5%) and Horse riding (38.7%) while in Otamiri-Ihiagwa, swimming (82.5%) is the most cherished activity, followed by fishing (70.0%). The host community of NZG perceived the location of the destination beneficial (78.6%) and Good (21.4%), while that OIE considered it partly good (46.0%), and bad (30.0%). Most tourists (77.5%) to NZG feel good about the destination. In the case of OIE, most tourist perceived it to be fairly good (70.0%). Challenges of tourism at NZG include insufficient tourist activities (80.9%) and financial constraint (36.3%). In the case of OIE, financial constraints (72.5%) and inadequate awareness (61.8%) are the major challenges faced in the destination. Most tourists at NZG (78.8%) were satisfied unlike in OIE where 75.0% of the respondents were not satisfied. Most visitors to NZG (71.2%) and OIE (55.0%) visited for the first time. Chi-square tests of association between family size and perception of tourist ($\chi^2=6.834$), Income level and willingness of tourist to repeat visit ($\chi^2=24.296$), and Educational qualification and willingness of tourist to repeat visit ($\chi^2=24.754$) were respectively significant ($p<0.05$). The eco-destinations possess potential variety of attractions and activities that can satisfy various categories of tourists when improved management strategies, adequate funding and proper maintenance are put in place and sustained with adequate awareness.

Keywords: Economic empowerment, Nekede zoological garden, Otammiri-Ihiagwa, , tourism

To cite this article

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (World Tourism Organization, WTO, 2011). Simply put, Tourism is a collection of activities, services and industries that delivers a travel experience, including transportation, accommodations, eating and drinking establishments, retail shops, entertainment businesses, activity facilities and other hospitality services provided for individuals or groups traveling away from home (Parks and Recreation Management, 2012). International tourism receipts

combined with passenger transport currently total more than US\$575 billion, making tourism the number one export earner, ahead of automotive products, chemicals, petroleum and food (<http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism>). Tourism has become a lucrative socio-economic and cultural phenomenon in the 21st century because of the publicized vast benefits it provides when properly planned and managed (Ashley, 2000; Ashley et al., 2000; Ayodele, 2002).

Tourism has, therefore, been adopted as a means for revenue generation and poverty alleviation in many countries (Ijeomah and Ayodele, 2011). Because of these colossal benefits from tourism many areas even those without attractive potentials are beginning to create attractions and develop

destinations (Ijeomah and Alao, 2007). Good understanding of tourism business operation and management is very needful to guide destination managers on the kind of activities to create that will satisfy customers, increase the rate of tourist's visitation and generate more benefits to households of destination host communities both at the formal and informal sector (Ijeomah et al, 2018). However, the effectiveness of tourism in poverty alleviation can only be achieved when the money spent by tourist trickles down to households in tourism host communities (Ashley, 2000; Ashley et al., 2000). And the sustainability of tourism and these benefits derived from it can only be sustained when the environment which it thrives on, is not eroded and the households of host communities are pacified with various kinds of empowerments.

Based on its conservation and empowerment principles, Ecotourism, and environmental aspect of tourism has become the fastest growing aspect of tourism (Scheyvnens, 1999). Ecotourism is a "Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people" (The International Ecotourism Society, 2012). By the principle of ecotourism, tourism is used as a tool to support conservation of habitats, species and historic sites; alleviate poverty, create employment opportunities, stimulate infrastructural development and foreign exchange earnings.

Owerri, the capital of Imo state was once rated the cleanest city in Nigeria with the prevailing slogan then, "Keep Green". The relative neatness of the city coupled with numerous relatively cheap hotels of various classes attracted different types of event and tourists to Owerri on regular basis (Ijeomah and Okoli, 2016).

This led to frequent visits by tourists (from different cities in Nigeria and abroad) to Owerri to spend weekends. Continuing increase in number of visitors to the city stimulated fast growth of hospitality industry in Owerri. Despite the continuous influx of tourists, the level of poverty in the city is still very high as the impact of the visitation is less felt by many persons, especially those in rural areas or suburb due to lack of destinations (Ijeomah and Okoli, 2016). The few existing destinations are not nature - based and are less concerned with the deleterious effects of unsustainable tourism operations on inhabitants of the area; whereas visitors have been craving for eco-destinations to enjoy unique experiences, while spending money on activities made available in such

destinations. The absence of eco-destinations in Owerri stimulates nature lovers to visit Oguta Lake which is far from Owerri, and this leads to leakage of capital, as the money that would have been spent in Owerri are now spent in Oguta area.

It was the yearning for eco-destinations with natural attractions and activities that made the Imo state government revived Nekede Zoological Gardens, and once proposed establishing a Wildlife sanctuary at Lagwa community. Although tourists visit these destinations, the attractiveness of the sites, tourists' satisfaction and perception of these sites including the age-old Otamiri- Ihiagwa destination need to be periodically assessed to ensure that the sites remain popular among different classes of tourists from various areas, and sustainable among host communities.

Most studies on tourism in Imo state focused on Oguta lake (Ijeomah et al., 2015). The few studies in Owerri area are on hospitality management. None of these studies has assessed the consistency of site attractiveness, development, tourists' satisfaction and perception of Nekede Zoological Garden and Otamiri- Ihiagwa eco-destinations. The aim of this study therefore is to assess tourism development in Nekede Zoological Gardens and Otamiri -Ihiagwa eco-destinations of Owerri, Imo state. Specifically the study seeks to:

- identify tourists attractions in the study areas.
- assess host communities efforts towards development of the study areas.
- evaluate tourists and host communities perception and challenges of the destinations of the study areas
- assess tourists visitation trends and satisfaction in the destinations.

METHODOLOGY

Study area

This research was carried out at Nekede Zoological Garden and Otamiri River of Owerri, Imo state.

Nekede Zoological Garden is situated in Owerri west Local Government Area Imo State, Nigeria. It is located between latitudes 5° 25" North and 5° 27" North, and longitudes 7° 01" and 7° 03" East (Figure1). The zoo is located in Umualum, same community with Federal Polytechnic, Nekede.

The Otamiri- Ihiagwa River has an average depth of about 7ft (2,134m), a width range of 18- 25ft(5488- 7621m) and channel ground elevation of about 1225ft (38109)(Obodo, 2002). The destination covers the Otamiri River channel in Ihiagwa along the

Nekede-Ihiagwa-Umuchima, Imo state, Nigeria. The destination is located between longitudes 6° 58" and 7°04" East and latitudes 5° 23" and 5° 30" North (Figure1).

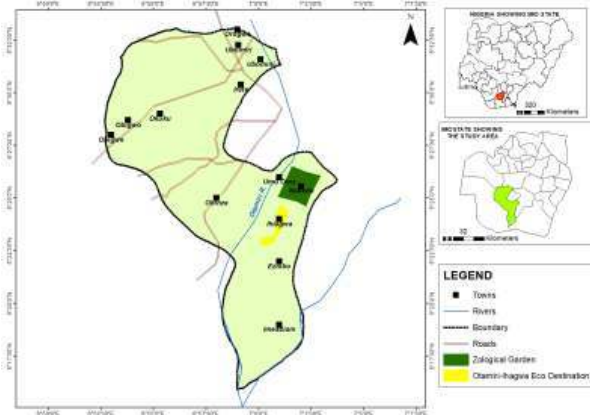


Figure 1: Map of Owerri west showing the location of Nekede Zoological Garden and Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destinations of Imo state, Nigeria.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data for this study were collected through direct observation, administration of questionnaire and in-depth interview. The sites were visited to observe the attractions, activities, challenges faced by tourists and management of the destinations. Three sets of questionnaires were administered for data collection: The first set was administered to the staff and management of the eco-destinations under study to obtain information on challenges of tourism in the area, suggestions for improvement, and trend of tourist visitation. The second set was administered to representatives of household members of the host communities. It was used to collect information on host community perceptions and support towards development of the destinations. The third set was administered to tourists to collect information on tourist attractions and activities, tourist satisfaction, visitation trend, challenges encountered by tourist, and tourist perceptions towards the eco-destinations.

In-depth interviews were conducted randomly with staff in the destinations who have worked for a minimum period of five years with the destinations. Members of the host communities who have lived in the communities for a minimum period of seven years were also interviewed to obtain information on the history of the eco-destinations and culture of host communities. Tourists were randomly selected and interviewed on their perceptions of the destinations. Information obtained from questionnaire were

complemented with the ones from in-depth interviews and observation. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of frequencies, percentages, bar charts and tables while Chi-square was used to test for associations.

RESULTS

Tourist Attractions

Results on tourist attractions are presented in tables 1, 2, 3 and Plates 1, 2 and 3. Table 1 shows that Wild animal is the most popular attraction (80.0%) at Nekede Zoological Garden. Other attractions at Nekede Zoological Garden include Museum (51.8%), Children amusement park (47.3%), among others. The Otamiri River is the most popular attraction (92.2%) at Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, this is followed by bird watching (67.2%), among others.

As presented in Table 2 the main tourist activities carried out and enjoyed most by tourists in the two (2) eco-destinations include game viewing (75.5%), horse riding (38.7%), viewing artifacts and taxidermized animals (20.0%), among others at Nekede Zoological Garden. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa, swimming (82.5%) is enjoyed most, followed by fishing (70.0%), among others.

According to Table 3, potential tourist attractions absent in the eco-destinations as indicated by tourist respondents include sit outs (80.0%), swimming pool (51.2%), picnic section (50.0%), and others at Nekede Zoological Garden while boat cruising (85.0%), horse riding (55.0%), fish sporting (45.0%) among others are identified at Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination.

Table 1. Tourist attractions in the eco-destinations as identified by staff and tourist respondents

Destination	Tourist attractions	Frequency	Percentage %
Nekede Zoological Garden	Wild Animal	88	80.0
	Museum	57	51.8
	Children Amusement park	52	47.3
	Serene environment	32	29.0
	Horse riding	29	26.3
	Fish pond	29	26.3
	Total	110	100
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Otamiri River	51	92.2
	Bird sighting	37	67.2
	Serene environment	25	45.4
	Wild animal	21	38.1
	Natural fish pond	16	29.0
	Total	55	100

Table 2. Tourists' activities enjoyed most as identified by tourists' respondents

Destination	Activities	Frequency	Percentage%
Nekede Zoological Garden	Game viewing	62	75.5
	Horse riding	31	38.7
	Viewing artifacts and taxidermized animals	16	20.0
	Feeding of fish	14	17.5
	Playing in children park	14	17.5
	Relaxation	8	10.0
	Total	80	100
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Swimming	33	82.5
	Fishing	28	70.0
	Relaxation	21	52.5
	Game viewing	12	30.0
	Total	40	100

Table 3. Potential attractions and activities missing in the destinations as suggested by tourists

Destination	Potential attractions	Frequency	Percentage
Nekede Zoological Garden	Sit outs	64	80.0
	Swimming pool	41	51.2
	Picnic section	40	50.0
	Sport fishing	27	33.7
	Games	24	30.0
	Total	80	100
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Canoeing	34	85.0
	Horse riding	22	55.0
	Sport fishing	18	45.0
	Picnic sections	18	45.0
	Bridge crossing games	16	40.0
	Sit outs	13	32.5
	Total	40	100

Source: Field survey, 2019



Plate 1: Children playing with toy train in the children play park inside Nekede Zoological Garden



Plate 2: Swimming, one of the main tourist activities in Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination enjoyed by children



Plate 3: Fishing in Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination

Host Communities Efforts

As presented in Table 4, host communities' efforts toward development of the eco-destination were as follows: patronizing tourist center (54.3%), awareness creation (20.0%) and security support (15.7%) at Nekede Zoological Garden. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, conserving wildlife (34.0%) and creating awareness (22.0%) topped the list of support from the host community.

Results on Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents from both destinations were willing to accept more development in the eco-destinations, mostly because of creation of employment among others.

Table 4. Efforts of host communities towards development of the eco-destination

Destination	Variables	Frequencies	Percentage %
Nekede Zoological Garden	Patronizing the tourist center	38	54.3
	Awareness creation	14	20.0
	Security support	11	15.7
	Donation of land used as tourists destination	4	5.7
	Non-encroachment into the destination	3	4.3
	Total	70	100%
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Conserving wild animals	17	34.0
	Creating awareness	12	22.0
	Donation of land by community	11	24.0
	Non-encroachment	10	20.0
	Total	50	100%

Table 5. Willingness of the host communities to accommodate more development in existing eco-destinations

Destination	Variable	frequency	Percentage %
Nekede Zoological Garden	Willing	67	95.7
	Non-willing	3	4.3
	Total	70	100%
If willing, why?	Enhancement of tourist centers	20	28.5
	Creation of more employment	18	25.7
	More generation of revenue	10	14.3
	Reduction of Rural-Urban drift	9	12.9
	It brings more development to community	5	7.1
	It will reduce crime rate	5	7.1
	Total	70	100%
If no, why?	Feeling deprived	2	2.9
	Traditional belief	1	1.4
	Total	70	100%
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Willing	46	92.0
	Non-willing	4	8.0
	Total	50	100%
If willing, why?	it will create more employment	22	22.0
	It will help boost the revenue of the Community	10	20.0
	it will reduce the rate at which Rural people drift to Urban areas	6	12.0
	It has tendency of bringing more development to the community	4	8.0
	It will reduce crime rate	2	4.0
	It will improve tourist center and activities	2	4.0
	Total	46	92.0
If no, why?	It will hamper traditional belief	2	4.0

Host Communities Perception

Perceptions of host communities in both eco-destinations of study towards location of eco-destinations are presented in Table 6. The table shows that majority of the respondents (78.6%) from

Nekede Zoological Garden perceived location of tourism site beneficial to the community. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, the location of the destination is perceived good and beneficial to 46.0% and 24.0% respectively.

Results on perceptions of tourists about the eco-destinations are presented in Table 7. Majority of the respondents perceived the destination to be Good (77.5%) at Nekede Zoological Garden, and fairly good (70.0%) at Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination.

Table 6. Perception of host community respondents towards location of destinations

Destination	Parameter	variables	Frequency	Percentage%
Nekede Zoological Garden	Perception of the destination	Good	15	21.4
		Beneficial	55	78.6
		Bad	-	
	Total		70	100%
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Perception of the destination	Good	23	46.0
		Beneficial	12	24.0
		Bad	15	30.0
	Total		50	100%

Table 7. Perception of tourists' respondents towards eco-destinations

Destination	Parameter	variables	Frequency	Percentage%
Nekede Zoological Garden	Perception of the destination	Good	62	77.5
		Fairly good	18	22.5
		Bad	-	0.00
	Total		80	100%
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Perception of the destination	Good	-	0.00
		Fairly good	28	70.0
		Bad	12	30.0
	Total		40	100%

Challenges faced in the Eco-destinations

Challenges of tourism in the eco-destinations are presented in Table 8 and 9. Table 8 lists the challenges in Nekede Zoological Garden as insufficient tourist activities (73.8%), financial constraint (12.5%), among others. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, financial constraints (23.8%) and insufficient awareness (20.2%), topped the list of challenges faced in the destination.

Suggestions on ways to improve tourism in the eco-destinations are presented in Table 9. The table shows that most respondents suggested provision of funds, creation of more awareness, proper management, creation of more tourist activities, among others as ways to improve tourism in both eco-destinations.

Table 8. Challenges towards utilization of destination as perceived by staff and tourists respondents

Destination	Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Nekede Zoological Garden	Insufficient Tourist activities	89	80.9
	Financial constraint	40	36.3
	Negligence	37	33.6
	Bad road leading to destination	33	30.0
	Disunity among households	10	9.0
	Total	110	100
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Financial constraints	40	72.7
	Inadequate awareness	34	61.8
	Bad road	30	54.5
	Negligence	24	43.6
	Religious belief	20	36.3
	Inadequate tourist activities	20	36.3
	Total	55	100

Table 9. Ways to improve tourism in selected destinations as suggested by staff and tourist respondents

Destination	Variables	Frequencies	Percentage %	
Nekede Zoological Garden	Provision of funds	64	58.1	
	Creation of more awareness	52	47.2	
	Proper management	34	30.9	
	Security provision	30	27.2	
	Creation of more tourist activities	20	18.1	
	Introduction of more animals	16	14.5	
	Provision of more sheds for refreshment	12	10.9	
	Improve roads leading to destination	10	9.0	
		Total	110	100
	Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Provision of funds for development of the destination	38	69.0
Creation of more tourists activities		34	61.8	
Improved management strategies		34	61.8	
Increase in the publicity of the place		24	43.6	
Provision of security		12	21.8	
Provision of sheds for relaxation		8	14.5	
	Total	55	100	

Tourist satisfaction and visitation trend

Results on tourists' satisfaction in the eco-destinations are presented in Figures 2 and 3. Figure 2 shows that majority of the respondents were satisfied (78.8%) with Nekede Zoological Garden unlike in Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, where most respondents were not satisfied (75.0%).

Figure 3 shows that 20.0% of tourists were highly satisfied while 48.8% were fairly satisfied in Nekede Zoological Garden. At Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, 25.0% were fairly satisfied and none was highly satisfied.

Table 10 shows the visitation trend of tourists in eco-destinations. Majority of the respondents in Nekede Zoological Garden (71.2%) were first timers while only 28.8% of tourists repeated visits. About 43% of the tourists visit all year round and 25.0% usually visit on weekends. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, 55.0% of the respondents visited for the first time, 45.0% of repeated visits, 47.5% visit every 3 months and 55.0% usually visit on festive periods.

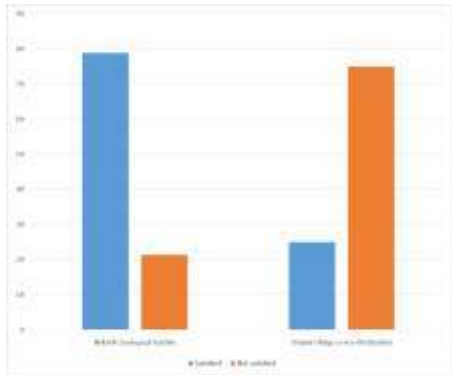


Figure 2: Satisfaction of tourists in eco-destinations

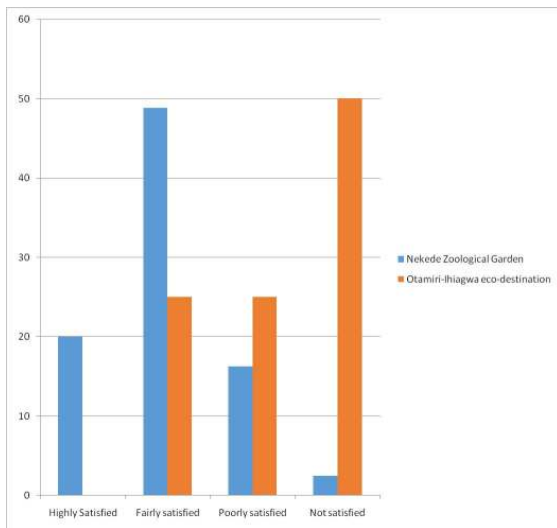


Figure 3: Levels of tourist satisfaction in eco-destination

Table 10. Visitation trend of tourists in selected destination

Destination	Parameter	Variables	Frequency	Percentage%
Nekede Zoological Garden	Have you been to this place before?	Yes	23	28.8
		No	57	71.2
		Total	80	100
	How frequent do you visit?	All year round	34	42.5
		Three times in six months	20	25.0
		Every 3 months	15	18.8
		Once a month	11	13.8
		Total	80	100
	When do you usually visit?	Weekends	20	25.0
		Vacation	19	23.8
		Festive periods	18	22.5
		Any time of the year	15	18.8
		Dry season	5	6.3
		Rainy season	3	3.6
	Total	80	100	
Will you come again?	Yes	73	91.3	
	No	7	8.7	
	Total	40	100	
Do you think Tourists frequent this place?	Yes	69	86.3	
	No	11	13.7	
	Total	80	100	
Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination	Have you been to this place before?	Yes	18	45.0
		No	22	55.0
		Total	40	100
	How frequent do you visit?	Every 3 months	19	47.5
		Three times in six months	10	25.0
		All year round	9	22.5
		Once a month	2	5.0
		Total	40	100

Table 11 represents summary of results on Chi-square tests of association. The table shows that there is a significant association between family size and perception of tourist ($p < 0.05$), Income level and willingness of tourist to repeat visit ($p < 0.05$), and

Educational qualification and willingness of tourist to repeat visit ($p < 0.05$), whereas test of association between other demographic parameters were not significant.

Table 11: Summary of results on Chi-square tests of association

Parameter	Chi square	P value	Significance	Inference
Family size and rating of satisfaction level	1.403	0.966	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Family size and willingness to repeat visit	1.435	0.488	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Family size and time of visit	9.191	0.514	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Family size and perception about the destination	6.834	0.033	$p < 0.05^*$	Significant association
Income level and tourist satisfaction	1.002	0.909	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Income level and rating satisfaction level	7.229	0.842	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Income level and willingness to repeat visit	24.296	0.000	$p < 0.05^*$	Significant association
Income level and time of visit	14.081	0.826	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Income level and perception about the destination	2.735	0.603	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Income level and media of awareness	13.932	0.305	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Educational qualification and tourist satisfaction	13.211	0.10	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Educational qualification and rating satisfaction level	15.389	0.221	$p > 0.05$	No significant association
Educational qualification and willingness to repeat visit	24.754	0.000	$p < 0.05^*$	Significant

DISCUSSION

Tourist attractions

The major attractions in Nekede Zoological Garden are wild animals displayed in different forms of enclosures. This agrees with the findings of Eltringham (1984) that most tourists to Africa are attracted to view wild animals. These animals attract tourists with their unique behavioural patterns which manifest in form of sounds and displays. The roaring of the lion interests many tourists. Children and students enjoy watching the lion (*Panthera leo*) roar, feed and waggle its tail. Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*) is another wildlife species that draws attention of most tourists with its majestic walking display, height and running skill. Without even being told tourists are scared of going close to the enclosure of ostrich as it is perceived that because of the species' relatively very long neck, can pluck off human eyes when tourists get so close to it. Similarly Ijeomah *et al.* (2019) reported that Ostrich is one of the major tourist attractions in Badagry zoo. Monkeys (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*) are social animals that also fascinate tourists with their unique acrobatic displays, especially when the presence of large number of tourists is noticed. Pythons (*Python sebae*) attract tourists with its feeding skills. Most tourists cherish watching Python strangle and swallow its preys which are made available by the management. Horse riding is one of the major attraction that brings so much thrill to tourists in the destination. There are two horses which tourists ride on around the zoo with the help of tour guides. Children Play Park is a section inside the destination where parents bring children, schools bring pupils on excursion and it is always filled up with children having fun with all the play facilities provided by the management. Most kids enjoy toy train that carries them about for a limited time in the section. Serenity of the

environment is another attraction that some tourists visit to enjoy after a hectic day. Some tourists were observed just walking, sitting and enjoying the freshness of the Garden. Fish pond that accommodates Cat fish (*Clarias gariepinus*) is located few meters away from the zoo section, where few tourists are allowed on request to view and feed fishes – an activity tourists enjoy carrying out.

The main tourist attraction in Otamiri- Ihiagwa eco-destination is the Otamiri river. Similarly Ijeomah *et al.* (2015) stated that the lake, is a major attraction in Oguta lake. As Otamiri river flows with the waves and coolness of the area, most tourists are intrigued. The river ripples and makes a unique flowing noise that catches the attention of tourists. Among the activities that take place in the river includes swimming, fishing, playing inside the river and viewing of Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) in a part where the river formed a lake. Similar activities were reported by Ijeomah *et al* (2019) at Elegbushi beach in Lagos. However, the waves observed from Elegbusi beach are more serious with the attendant greater effects as a result of the higher velocity of flow of the Atlantic Ocean. The Elegbusi beach has a larger area for playing, and more noisy than Otamiri –Ihiagwa eco-destination because of the location of Elegbusi in Lagos, an area with potentially more tourists and people who are richer and therefore budget for both recreation and tourism. There is no swimming facility in Nekede zoo. Swimming and fishing are the major activities in Otammiri eco-destination as water body is the major attraction to the site. Due to the presence of water body, birds of different species and colours inhabit vegetation surrounding the river, thus attract tourists who enjoy bird watching by the river bank. This corroborates the findings of Ijeomah and Emelue (2009) that many tourists visit Pandam lake purposely for bird watching and canoeing. Natural fish ponds exist at one end of the river. This is similar to the report of Ijeomah *et al.*(2015) of fishing activities in Oguta lake where fish serves as souvenir tourists buy from the destination. Some tourists who really love nature visit the Otammiri- Iheagwa destination to just interact with the environment- walk, sit and enjoy free air. The presence of canoeing facility would have made Otammiri more enjoyable. Boat will have deleterious effects on fauna resources in the water body. - the sound of engine boat will be a threat to the crocodile in the water body. Kamuaro (1996) reported that introduction of boating facility in lake Nakuru in East Africa hindered crocodiles in the water body from

breeding for many years as the noise produced by tourists' engine boats scared the crocodiles which dived inside the water (for safety) leaving the eggs being incubated that are then eaten by Monitor lizards due to its temporary absence. The use of canoe will have less deleterious effects on the fauna of the environment.

Efforts of host communities towards developments of eco-destinations As part of the efforts made towards development of Nekede Zoological Garden, respondents from the host communities patronize the zoo, allowed their community host the eco-destination, avoid any form of encroachment into the destination and fully support security of the zoo. Most household representatives indicated their willingness to accommodate more development or expansion of the zoo in existing eco-destination as that will bring more development to the host community, improve revenue generation, create more employment opportunities, reduce rural-urban drift and reduce the rate of crime. Very few who are unwilling to support further development of the destination perceived that it will increase the feeling of deprivation of natural inheritance because respondents are restricted to move into the zoo environment freely or to use the environment as desired, and that it will negatively affect their traditional beliefs. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, more households were willing to accommodate more developments in the destination as that will bring about more employments, development of the community and potentials in the destination and attract more investments that can benefit the entire community, reduce crime rate and improve revenue generation.

Perceptions towards eco-destinations and challenges

Most tourists perceived Nekede Zoo as a good destination for relaxation. However few respondents felt only fairly good about the destination because of inadequate activities. Most household respondents feel good about the location of the destination in their area, while few viewed it as a form of deprivation. Those who feel deprived may be those who are not benefiting in any way from the zoo. In the case of Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, most tourists felt that the eco-destination has potential attractions that are yet to be developed whereas numerous tourists are yearning for unique experience. Most household respondents feel good about location of the

destination in their community and view it as a heritage, however, some feel deprived from freely accessing and using part of their community land, while a few respondents feel bad about the destination as developing the destination will restrict their free movement to the area and negatively affect their culture- by culture, some respondents believe that the Otammiri – Ihiagwa inhabits a river goddess and that further development of the site will negatively affect the operation and strength of this goddess, and their belief. Households also believe that the water drowns those who have committed grave cultural offences (mostly males have been noticed drowned). However, non indigenes of the community perceive that only none members of the destination host community are drowned in the water body. This prevailing perception discourages students of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri; which is in the neighborhood of the destination, from visiting the site because of fear of drowning. This corroborates the report of Ijeomah and Adetoro (2006) that tourists would want to be assured of their safety as frequent as a newly married couple will want to be receiving text messages of 'I love you' from their partners. The fact that indigenes are hardly drowned can be ascribed to their experience in swimming due to their closeness to the water body. It could also be attributed to the fact that they are quite knowledgeable about the history, secrets of the Otammiri, and trend of drowning in the water body which can also be interpreted from local cultural perspectives. Drowning has been well reported in many water based eco-destinations across the globe. In fact about half a million persons are drowned annually (http://www.who.int/ith/precautions/travel_related/en/). This supports the report of Folarin (2018) that a bank manager - tourist got drowned in the presence of his family members in the Atlantic Ocean at Ibeno beach of Nigeria, in a manner that the family felt was mysterious. This prevailing fear exist due to none involvement of host communities in the destination management and if not addressed will likely hamper visitation even with developed facilities. Fear of hazards and insecurities in eco-destinations can be minimized or allayed by involving indigenous people who understand the area and have been interacting with the environment. This necessitates the involvement of members of host communities in the management of eco-destinations as one of the core principles of ecotourism is 'having respect for cultures of host community' while another is ensuring

tourist satisfaction (Hetzer, 1965; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987). The two can be achieved together to guarantee safety and sustain patronage in Otammiri- Ihiagwa eco-destination. The culture of the host community should be respected but not at the detriment of human lives. Tourist will even be interested in knowing about the culture of the host communities (as values) such as the chiefdoms and events linked to Otammiri river when properly packaged. This agrees with the findings of Richard (2020) that all potentials forms of values that could be generated from tourism including cultural, educational, symbolic and institutional rather than just economic be given consideration in developing an eco-destination. Concomitantly, the work of Onuchukwu and Ijeomah (2020) stated that the remains of king Jaja of Opobo ancient palace in King Jaja's compound preserved as cultural and historic heritage values are still cherished by tourists. Similarly, Ijeomah *et al.*(2015) reported that tourists are always fascinated to see ancestral homes preserved as ancient land marks and relics of history by most households in Oguta community. The none participation of these households in destination management partly agrees with the findings of Ijeomah and Okoli (2016) which reported low community participation in eco-destination management at both Okomu national park and Farin Ruwa waterfall eco-destinations but more in Oguta lake though at the private level. Each of the eco-destinations has challenges affecting tourism development. Problem of insufficient funds, insufficient sheds for refreshment, poor staffing and negligence are seriously affecting smooth operation of the sites and satisfaction of tourists. The access road to Nekede Zoological Garden is not easily motorable. In the case of Otammiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, insufficient tourist activities has posed a serious challenge to tourist satisfaction as most tourists complain that the eco-destination possess varieties of attractions but has less activities. Inappropriate management strategies is one of the challenges faced in the destination as the management is not seriously committed to developing the destination coupled with bad road and cases of insecurity. This agrees with the reports of both Uloko and Iwar (2011) and Omonona and Kayode (2011) that zoological gardens in Nigeria have the potentials to attract tourists but their poor level of development, patronage and funding have seriously hindered their growth. The challenges of insecurity and inaccessibility in Otammiri-Iheagwa

destination are similar to the findings of Onuchukwu and Ijeomah (2020) in coastal destinations of Niger delta, Nigeria.

Tourists' visitation trend and satisfaction in eco-destinations

Majority of the visitors to both eco-destinations were first timers. This is an evidence that ecotourism has a very bright prospect in the area as people of different backgrounds visit Owerri on daily basis for different purposes, and are interested in natural destinations. It also shows that if the visitors can be retained with good customer retention strategies their visitation will become sustainable whenever such tourists visit Owerri. The fact that many of the tourists in Nekede zoological garden who are not first timers visit all year round, and almost all the first time visitors are willing to repeat visit implies that they are at least fairly satisfied with their services especially in the absence of any better eco-destination in Owerri. Always seeing many visitors in the destinations may have also influenced their perception of none existence of better eco-destination within the city. In the case of Otammiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, 55% are not willing to repeat visits and majority of the respondents stated that tourists have not really been visiting the destination. This cannot be unconnected with the fact that the tourists were not satisfied. Majority of this 55% could be part of the 55% who visited for the first time and were not satisfied based on their expectations, and previous experiences of facilities and activities in ecotourism destinations. This also shows that the 45% willing to repeat visits are mainly old time visitors who have become used to the destination and have been 'tolerating' their services and undeveloped state in the absence of no better destination, however have always complained for improvement of the site, and may have believed that with time the site will be improved. These are likely to be among the tourists who visit once in three (3) months and during festive periods when there are cultural display of masquerades and other ceremonies. Chi square tests of association between educational qualification and willingness to repeat visits, and income level and willingness to repeat visits were significant ($p < 0.05$) as more educated persons have value for knowledge as travelling is a part of education, and also plans to travel for recreation as many times as possible to learn. People of high economic level have money to spend on tours after taking care of domestic responsibilities and can afford to repeat visits unlike those of low

income level who hardly have enough income to spend.

Satisfaction of tourists is one of the methods for sustaining tourist visitation in eco-destinations. Majority of tourists in Nekede Zoological Garden were satisfied while few were not satisfied. The satisfaction of most tourists could be attributed to the uniqueness in behaviours of the wildlife species and relatively more facilities and attractions than the Otammiri-Iheagwa eco-destinations. This agrees with the findings of Alarape *et al.* (2015) that different attractions motivate tourists to zoological gardens. Rating of tourists' level of satisfaction showed that only few were highly satisfied. This shows that many of the respondents have visited many other zoos and are quite knowledgeable about conservation. This corroborates the report of Ojo (2019) that the satisfaction level of visitors with high level of conservation awareness, may directly depend on the level of animal welfare. In the same vein Alarape *et al.* (2015) reported that many visitors to Makurdi zoological garden were only satisfied with the entrance fee but dissatisfied with the facilities and animal welfare. In the case of Otammiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination, majority of tourists were not satisfied while few were satisfied. None of those who claimed to be satisfied was highly satisfied but either poorly or fairly satisfied as more development concerning tourism need to be carried out in the eco-destination. This rating of satisfaction can be attributed to the fact that the expectations of the tourists were not met in the destination due to undeveloped potentials. This agrees with the findings of Operinde and Praise (2020), which identified inadequate recreational facilities as one of the most dissatisfying features to tourists in Agodi park and garden, Ibadan. Tourists perceived that the creation of more activities such as site outs, picnic section, sport fishing, swimming pool and indoor games in Nekede zoo eco-destination will increase the choice of activities tourists can participate in, thus bringing about increased chances of being satisfied. Also, provision of more animals especially big games like elephant and zebra will interest tourists. In the case of Otammiri-Iheagwa tourists desire to have facilities for canoeing, bridge crossing games, horse riding, site outs and picnics with good management that offer quality services. This corroborates the findings of Operinde and Praise (2020) on the importance of quality services to tourists' satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Nekede Zoological garden has lots of attractions for tourism development. Tourists from far and near visit this destination mostly on weekends to view attractions and participate in tourist activities such as animal sighting, horse riding. Though there are varieties of tourist attractions and activities in the destination, tourists still crave for introduction of more attractions and activities in the eco-destination such as sit outs and sport fishing among others. Nekede Zoo is faced with some challenges such as inadequate funding, bad condition of the access road, limited attractions and activities. These challenges can be combated if adequate funding is provided to improve the tourist site. Otamiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination is an aged- old destination which has unique water body. The river has drowned many persons in time past even though the justifications for death of such persons by the host community has not been accepted by most non indigenes. Irrespective of various opinions about Otamiri River, tourists still visit this destination because of its distinct attractions such as water body, presence of some aquatic animals, and bird species among others. Otamiri River is plagued with access road that is always muddy during rainy season; inadequacy of tourist activities, and poor and inefficient management. Otamiri – Ihiagwa is not developed. The destination is less popular than Nekede Zoo. Visitors to the eco-destination are hardly satisfied. Members of the host community perceive the site as a place for hunting and playing, thus killing some animals (such as Crocodile) inhabited by Otamiri that would have been part of attractions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

More awareness should be created concerning eco-destinations through forest extension programs, cultural and hospitality industry and through other media accessible by local people
 Funding of eco-destinations should be considered for proper management, development and creation of more tourist attractions and activities in order to ensure tourist satisfaction
 Efforts should be made towards improvement of access roads linking the eco-destinations
 Management strategies of both eco-destinations should be enhanced.
 Joint management of the Otammiri-Ihiagwa eco-destination by both the host community and Imo state Ministry of tourism and Culture will bring about development of the site and generate more benefit for the host community.

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INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN HOTEL INDUSTRY IN UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of personality traits on employee performance in hotel industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Three hotels were selected for the study in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The aim of the study is to identify the effect of personality traits on employee performance in hotels. Three specific objectives were raised from the study: to determine the effect of personality traits on employee's performance in hotel industries, to ascertain the relationship between personality traits and employee performance in hotel industry and to examine factors affecting employee performance in hotel industry. The study adopted survey method. The population of the study comprised of 30 Egan hotels, 30 staff of pick master hotel and 40 staff of Monty suite hotel in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, giving a sample size of one hundred respondents (100). Taro Yamane formula was used to determine a sample size of 80 from the population. Simple random sampling was the criteria used in selecting the population. Primary data were sourced from copies of structured questionnaire distributed to staff and management of Egan hotels, Pick master hotels and Monty suite hotel in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. A test re-test and Cronbach alpha were conducted to ensure validity and reliability of the data. One of the key empirical results hypothesized that personality traits and work-related attitudes such as job involvement and organizational commitment have direct positive significant relationships with employee work performance in hotel industry in Akwa Ibom State. It was recommended among others, that the management of the studied hotels should ascertain the relationship between personality trait and employee performance in hotel industry in order to motivate their workers to perform well, thereby attracting more income through repeat patronage from customers in the industry.

Keywords: Employee motivation, employee performance, hotels, personality trait

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INTRODUCTION

Personality is derived from the Latin word *persona* which means a cover or mask used by actors in the play to represent their character and personality. Personality is defined as the dynamic organization of those traits and characteristic patterns of behaviour that are unique to the individual (Callahan, 2014). Personality traits refer to characteristic, enduring patterns of thought, emotion, and behaviour that are stable over time and explain people's behaviour across different situations (Costa & Funder, 2011). Helmreich (2016) also commented that personality has a long-lasting feature which is not easily affected by the external interferences. Personality traits are the structures and propensities that explain individual's characteristic patterns of thought, emotion and behaviour and recurring regularities or trends in him/her trait. People's personality explains their enduring traits and characteristics in relation to emotions, motivations, interpersonal interactions and attitudes which differ from their abilities.

It endures and predicts people's attitudes towards situations and other people but is transient. It encompasses a person's relative stable feelings, thoughts, behavioural patterns; form unique personality that differentiates people from others but proper understanding of such personality provides clue about how he/she is likely to act and feel in various situations. Studies show that personalities influence the environments where people reside and play vital role in choosing condition within which people attempt to stay (Dele, 2016). Personality traits hold specific components in an organizational structure like hotels and have dynamic features, which will react differently to the changes of the environment (Lin & Chiu, 2015). According to Gujranwala (2016), personality trait is a distinguishing, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from another. Erdheim, Wang, and Zicker (2006) asserted that personality traits plays a very significant role in developing job performance which results in increased output in hotels. Bernard (2014) stated that teachers' personality traits can

make or mar students because it is a determinant of the students' success, confidence and interest to learning. According to Saucier and Goldberg (2010), there are five models of personality traits. They include: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion agreeableness and neuroticism. These five models of personality traits determine one's behaviour and influence one's job performance in hotel industry.

Individual characteristic and its effect on productivity

These include the following:

Openness: Openness to experience is how open minded a person is and people possessing this trait are highly imaginative, creative intellect; sensitive to inner thoughts; have the capability to analyze matters differently, exhibit intellectual curiosity, art, knowledge, independent-minded have a preference for novelty and variety; curious to know hidden things and deductive from different angles. Furthermore, open minded individuals are curious about both inner and outer world, and their lives are experientially richer. They are willing to accept novel ideas and experience both positive and negative emotions more keenly than do closed individuals. Research has shown that openness to experience individuals more often than not succeed in consulting, training and very adaptive to change (Vinchur, 2016). Therefore, reasonable effort is needed in the workplace by managers to understand these individual characteristics and the factors that are responsible for the way they behave in order to achieve the organizational goal. It can also be regarded as a personal desire for change, complexity, newness and interior desire for new experience (Syed, 2015). Those that earn high scores in openness to experience, reach high levels in exploration and willing to pursue alternatives to their jobs (Erdheim, 2015). Many other researchers found that people come together to work in hotels from different backgrounds and behave in manners at variance with other people's expectations. The need to understand their characteristics at different situations in hotels is important. Openness is a general appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, imaginative curiosity and variety of experience. It also features characteristics such as imagination and insight and those high in this trait tend to have a broad range of interests. People who exhibit low openness are labeled as "preservers" and tend to be conservative, have depth of knowledge, efficient and expert (Hakim, 2016).

Openness attracts customers to hotel establishment, due to employees' interpersonal skills, good relationship to customers and also enhanced originality, creativity, and innovation of individual in their work area.

Conscientiousness:

It is trait that reflects thorough hardworking, careful, organized, responsible and preserving people. High conscientiousness personalities are logical, reliable and risk averters. Conscientiousness individuals are among the best to lead to significant job performance because of their work participation and their characteristic of being able to take the opportunity to get formal and informal rewards (Organ & Lingl, 2016).

Conscientiousness measures how organized, thoughtful and forward-thinking an individual can be. Conscientious employees are cautious, orderly, dependable, graceful, show self-discipline, acts dutifully and responsible. People with conscientious personality are highly influenced by their career success in the organisation, tend to be very careful about their future plannings, cautious about their surroundings, compact and fully scheduled, tend to be self-managed, prefer to be predictable and try to be risk free (Judge, 2008). Such people also have the propensity to work without flaws, everything get done rightly as chaos are stressors for them, they are neat, clean and would like everything to be at the right place always (Ostendorf, 2014).

Earlier researchers found that conscientiousness do not relate to affective commitment since it is associated with emotional attachment and involvement with an organisation and they general tendency for work involvement and not on organisational involvement (Organ & Lingle, 2015). Thus, a generalised work-involvement tendency provides increased opportunity for employees to obtain formal reward (e.g. pay, promotion) and informal work rewards (e.g. recognition, respect/status) leads to increased costs associated with leaving the organisation-heightened level of continuance commitment (Erdheim, Wang & Zickar, 2016).

Conscientiousness person will enhance the performance of the organization by involving working hard principles persons for the organization and this will lead to achievement of organization goals in hotels.

Extraversion:

This includes trait such as sociable, outgoing, aggressive and full of energy. Extroverts can get their energy from interacting with others while introverts will get their energy from within themselves. Extroverts can help the growth of hotel depending on the ways the person carry out the information dissemination while introvert person can also help growth of hotel business. Extroverts can help in the growth the industry by engaging in marketing of hotel business to customers and increase return patronage in the industry. Employees exhibiting this character attract more customers to the establishment by the use of salesmanship ability; this is because they are willingly to convince a guest to make a purchase he/she did not plan for.

Agreeableness:

It is a tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonist towards others. It consists of traits such as polite, flexible, naïve, helpful, supportive, merciful, kind and open-minded while tending to be generous, calm, trusting, truthful, and sincere (Judge & Bono, 2012).

Neuroticism:

This signifies variances of individual tendency to experience suffering and it is defined as a tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression etc. Neurotics have no social expertise to handle the situations that claim to take control; such individuals cannot work in the front office of hotel (Judge, Locke & Durham, 2016).

Neuroticism personality is characterized by fearfulness, anxiety, worry, envy, frustration, emotionally-unstable, jealousy and loneliness. People high in neuroticism exhibit frustrations, anger, depression, stress and self-blame and such individuals are associated with pessimism, over react over mistakes and faults made by them. They are easily trapped by stress and tend to be emotional and anxious (Saucier & Goldberg, 1998). Almost always hopeless and frustrated when exhibiting feelings and behaviours (Ostendorf, 1992); they lack emotional intelligence, are easily caught by mental disorder and depression (Burch & Anderson, 2008) which may have a serious impact on their physical and psychological health. They often fail to achieve success in their careers including extrinsic and intrinsic success (Judge, 1999). Neurotic individuals have the tendency of experiencing negative emotions than others and often expose themselves to situations that foster negative effect.

These attitudes are unlikely to promote affective

commitment because it decreases their likelihood of developing a positive emotional response towards their work and the hotels. However, these feelings could foster continuance commitment due to their tendency to experience chronic negative effects and would be more worried of the costs associated with leaving the organisation and above all facing a new work environment (Erdhein, Wang & Zickar, 2016). Based on this, many researchers have found negative significant association between neuroticism and affective commitment. For example the work of Darbanyan, (2014) supported by the findings of Jazayeri, 2010) that found negative relationship between neuroticism and affective commitment.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is a critical part and back bone of organizations' success because it helps organizations to progress efficiently and effectively. Hakim (2016) "described employee performance as outcome of work completed by workers that are personalized to the workers responsibility inside a company at a specific time period, that is related with ordinary size or worth of the company within which the workers works.

According to Singh and Billingsley (2014) "employee performance is the end result of job performed by employees according to the organization's requirement to achieve the objectives But how to differentiate high and low performing employees is very hard to determine in organizations. This task may be solved by relating the performance of employees with different personality traits. Bola (2014) considered personality as a predictor of employee performance with considerable meta-analysis on impact of personality traits on employee performance. Testing of personality is greatly studied topic in hotel management. Nevertheless organizations today include personality testing in their recruitment processes but logical doubt still exists in the usefulness of the term, personality (Giles, Burch & Anderson, 2008). Human Resource Managers should look out for employees with Conscientiousness and Extraversion traits and assign them duties first before those with other character traits are considered. Again in recruitment and selection Human Resource Managers should not only consider the academic qualification of applicants, they should move a step further by exploring their personality through proper recruitment process, I.Q test, training, face-to-face contact, assessment etc. This will enhance the hiring process, boost up the performance of organization and bring about reduction in employee turnover.

Relationship between Personal traits and Productivity in Hotels Business

The impact of personality traits on employee performance is one of the most critical issues in the study of hotels management. However, the impact of personality trait has significant bearing on the employee performance. In today's era of global competition, human resource is considered as a major icon for getting the competitive edge over the rival hotels in the country (Organ & Lingle, 2015). The study of personality traits is therefore, a worthwhile area which needs attention of researchers. There is a general consensus among the theorists of human resource characteristic that organizations which get the most out of diversity are likely to have more advantages than other organizations who didn't give consideration to the said issue. When a hotel has a well-diversified work force it faces the issues related to gender, race, nationality, ethnicity, region, sexual orientation, income, marital status, work experience (Bola, 2014).

Individuals possess a stable set of characteristics which predispose them to react in certain ways in a variety of encounter, which also frequently take place in the hotel industry. Therefore, among many individual traits influencing the employee's performance, extraversion is particularly expected in the hotel setting, where numerous social skills are strongly required. The literature on the subject demonstrates that extroverts are individuals described as sociable, gregarious, assertive, talkative and active. Individuals high in extraversion seek out and also enjoy social interactions with others, display higher intensity and frequency of personal interactions, express positive emotions, and show a higher need for stimulation (Ade, 2015).

Challenges of personality trait to employees in hotels

Understanding an individual's personality trait is very consequential to hotel managers since this understanding will help assign people into jobs as well as give them clues about how employees are likely to behave in different situations. Morris and Maisto (2012) stated that personality is the unique pattern of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that seems to persist overtime and across various situations. The unique differences referred to above are aspects of distinguishing an individual from everyone else. Some researchers stated that the personality of the person has directly correlated with many work outcomes and attitudes.

According to Kumar and Bakhshi (2010), the dispositional factors are always referring to the five-factor model of personality namely agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, extraversion and neuroticism. Agreeableness is the degree to which a person is affable, tolerant, sensitive, trusting, kind and warm. According to them, people who are high in agreeableness are likeable people who get along with others. Judge *et al* (2012) posited that agreeable people help others at work consistently; a helping behaviour which does not depend on their good mood. The objectives of the study were to: determine the effect of personality traits on employee's performance in hotel industries, ascertain the relationship between personality traits and employee performance in hotel industry, and examine factors affecting employee performance in hotel industry.

Theoretical Framework

Theory X and Theory Y

Theory X and Theory Y were propounded by Douglas McGregor in 1960 (Adekunle, 2015). Theory Y has an opposite view of Theory X. Theory X assumes that individuals are lazy, dislike work, avoid the task given whenever possible, avoid the responsibility, and no ambition. This type of people needs to be coerced or controlled by manager to achieve the organizational objectives. In addition, working with negative perception of environment will result on lack of performances. Theory Y assumes that individual generally hard working, smart, trustful, reliable tend to be ambitious, self-motivated, work hard, learn to seek out, accept responsibility and enjoying the work duties

Eysenck's Three Traits Theory

Eysenck's three traits theory was propounded in 1991 by Eysenck. Eysenck's three traits theory states that the three dimension of personality are extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism. According to Eysenck, a person in high extraversion trait tend to be sociable, active and outgoing, while people with high introverted tend to be quiet, cautious and like to be alone to do task. Neuroticism is referred as worried feeling, moody, obsessive, low self-esteem or emotional unstable person. Neuroticism trait in Eysenck model is one of the Big Five personality traits. Psychoticism refers to a personality pattern characterized as aggressiveness and interpersonal hostility. Besides that, individuals with psychoticism behaviour tend to be tough-minded, willing to take risk and involve in antisocial

behaviours. Psychoticism behaviour can be related with psychoticism Eysenck trait when an individual is low in agreeableness and conscientiousness (Ade, 2015).

Personality Theory

According to Ukaegbu (2012) personality theory states that variances and similarities in employees that provide collective attribute of human nature, performance and behaviour. Since, these variances are used to describe human performances and behaviors experts in the field believe that individuals have stable and long term traits that affect work behaviours. Some scholars affirm that personality is an effective tool to predict employee job performance and technique adopted during personnel selection procedures. These factors are important in today's competitive organizational settings, because, if underestimated during selection process wrong kind of personality may prove disastrous and can cause undesirable tension, worries, and hinder organization's attainment of set goals and objectives.

Significance of the Study

The study focused on influence of personality traits on employee performance in the hotel industry. The study was conducted in selected hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The study would be of immense benefit to the following group

Hoteliars: It could also assist them in identifying their strengths and weaknesses as well as their intentions; it could provide a better choice for their career development.

Employees: The study could enlighten employees on the important of personality trait. This study will also enlighten employees on their role in enhancing organizational development. This will be done through organizing proper workshop and seminars for employees.

Policy Makers: The study could assist policy makers in making policies that will engage employee activities in the country that will also help to curb unemployment in Nigeria. Hence, the study will further enlighten policy makers on the problem faced by management in different hotels in the country. This will be achieved through seminars, conference and workshop.

Government: The study could assist them in implementing policies that will improve employee activities, and to know the problem faced by hotels in the country.

General Public: The general public will understand their roles in enhancing undergraduates about their intentions and providing social support.

The study could enlighten the general public on the important of hotel business.

To Students and Researchers: The study will go a long way in helping future researches and students who have interest in carrying out studies on personality traits in hotel industry.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on influence of personality traits on hotel industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The study was conducted in three selected hotels comprising of Egan, Pick Master, and Monty Suite Hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Uyo, Local Government area of Akwa Ibom State. Uyo Local Government occupies the South Central of Akwa Ibom State but spanning Northwards between Latitudes $4^{\circ}33'$ and $4^{\circ}45'$ and Eastwards between Longitudes $7^{\circ}52'$ and $5^{\circ}02'$. Uyo is bounded on the North by Nsit Ubium Local Government Area, on the East by Esit Eket Local Government Area on the West by Onna Local Government Area and on the South by Ibeno Local Government Area/Bight of Bonny.

Survey design was used for this study. The population of this study consists of 30 staff of Egan hotels, 30 staff of Pick master hotels and 40 staff of Monty suite hotel in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, given a total number of one hundred (100) respondents. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine a sample size of 80 from the population. Simple random sampling technique was used to select staff of the selected hotels for the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Researchers acquired primary data through the distribution of questionnaire to target respondents (staff of selected hotels in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State). A 5 - item structured Likert scaled questionnaire was used to obtain data from respondents. The secondary data were sourced from magazine, newspapers, textbooks, journals, and the internet. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics and regression.

Results

Table 1: Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20 - 30	24	30
31 - 40	40	50
41 - 50	12	15
Above 50	4	5
Total	80	100
Gender		
Female	30	37.5
Male	50	62.5
Total	80	100
Marital Status		
Married	25	31.3
Single	50	62.5
Divorced	5	6.3
Total	80	100
Designation		
Management	20	25
Staff	60	75
Visitor	-	-
Total	80	100
Monthly Income		
< ? 10,000	18	17.0
? 10,001 - ? 50,000	80	75.5
? 51,001 - ? 100,000	5	4.7
Above ? 100,000	2	1.9
Total	80	100
Residence Status		
Immigrant	-	-
Indigene	80	100
Tourist	-	-
Total	80	100
Employment Status		
Students	-	-
Employed	80	100
Unemployed	-	-
Total	106	100

As shown in the table 1 above, most of the respondents 50% fell into the 31 – 40 age brackets, followed by 30% of the respondents who fell within 21-30 years, the least were 5% of the respondents who fell into above 50 years of age. This implies that the staff of studied hotels was mostly young people. Majority of the respondents (62.5%) were male; as against 37.5% who were female. Majority of the respondents (62.5%) were single. The table above further explained that, majority (75.5%) of the respondents received monthly salary of between ?10,000 – ?50,000 while 17% of the respondents earn less than ?10,000. The table above also shows that all the respondents were residents.

Table 2: Individual characteristic and its effect on productivity

Individual Characteristic	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Openness	50.0	25.0	12.5	7.5	5.0
Conscientious	62.5	25.0	7.5	3.8	2.5
Agreeableness	56.3	31.3	7.5	3.8	2.5
Extraversion	50.0	25.0	12.5	8.8	3.8
Neuroticism	81.3	12.5	1.3	2.5	3.8

Source: Field Survey, 2020

As reflected in table 2; most of the respondents 50%, 25%, 12.5% 7.5% and 5% strongly agree that openness, conscientious, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism were the individual

characteristic respectively affecting productivity followed by those who agree that openness, conscientious, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism were the individual characteristic affecting productivity with 25%, 25%, 31.3%, 25% and 12.5% and the least were those who strongly disagree that openness, conscientious, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism were the individual characteristic affecting productivity with 5%, 2.5%, 2.5%, 3.8% and 3.8%

Table 3: Relationship between personality trait and employee performance in hotels in Uyo,

Akwa Ibom State Personality Trait	Yes (%)	No (%)	Undecided (%)
Openness	87.5	-	12.5
Conscientious	93.8	6.3	-
Agreeableness	81.3	-	18.8
Extraversion	93.8	6.3	-
Neuroticism	93.8	6.3	-

Source: Field Survey, 2020

As reflected in table 3: most of the respondents 87.5%, 93.8%, 81.3% and 93.8% agree that there is relationship between personality trait and employee performance in hotel followed by those who disagree that there is no relationship between personality trait and employee performance in hotel industry with 6.3%, 6.3% and 6.3%

Table 4: Factors affecting employee performance in hotel industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

Factors	SA (%)	A (%)	U (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Late payment of Salary	50.0	25.0	12.5	7.5	5.0
Lack of motivation	62.5	25.0	7.5	3.8	2.5
Poor work environment	56.3	31.3	7.5	3.8	2.5
Poor management	50.0	25.0	12.5	8.8	3.8

Source: Field Survey, 2020

As reflected in table 4; most of the respondents 50%, 62.5%, 56.3% and 50% strongly agree that late payment of salary, lack of motivation, poor work environment and poor management were the factors affecting employee performance in hotel industry followed by those who agree that late payment of salary, lack of motivation, poor work environment and poor management were the factors respectively affecting employee performance in hotel industry with 25%, 25%, 31.3% and 25%.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of effect of Personality traits on employee performance

Variable	Parameters	Coefficient	Std error	t – value
Constant	, 0	1.043	0.536	1.946*
Personality traits (X _i)	, 1	0.992	0.217	4.571***
R-Square		0.718		
Adjusted R – Square		0.673		
F – statistics		7.810***		

***, **, and * denotes significance of coefficient at 1%, 5%, and 10% level respectively

Source: Field Survey, 2020 (SPSS Vision 20)

Table 5 shows the effect of personality traits on employee performance in Uyo. The coefficient of multiple determination (R²) was 0.718 which implies that 72% of the variations in the dependent variables were explained by changes in the independent variables while 28% were unexplained by the stochastic variable indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model adopted in this study which is statistically significant at 1% probability level. The coefficient of personality traits was statistically significant and positively related to employee performance at 1 percent level (4.571***). This implies that personality traits had positive and significant implication on employee performance.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study in table 2 above shows that most of the respondents (50%, 25%, 12.5%, 7.5% and 5%) strongly agree that openness, conscientious, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism were the individual characteristic affecting productivity followed by those who agree that openness, conscientious, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism were the individual characteristic affecting productivity with 25%, 25%, 31.3%, 25% and 12.5% and the least were those who strongly disagree that openness, conscientious, agreeableness, extraversion and neuroticism were the individual characteristic affecting productivity with 5%, 2.5%, 2.5%, 3.8% and 3.8%.

Furthermore, table 4 shows that most of the respondents (50%, 62.5%, 56.3% and 50%) strongly agreed that late payment of salary, lack of motivation, poor work environment and poor management were the factors affecting employee performance in hotel industry followed by those who agreed that late payment of salary, lack of motivation, poor work environment and poor management were the factors affecting employee performance in hotel industry with 25%, 25%, 31.3% and 25% respectively. It also revealed that personality traits has positive and significant implication on employee performance. Furthermore it showed that there is

positive and strong relationship between personality traits and employees performance.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that personality traits have positive and significant implication on employee performance. There is a positive and strong relationship between personality traits and employee performance, Late payment, lack of motivation, work environment, poor management have negative and significant effect on employee performance in hotel industry in the state. The evaluation of personality traits is most specifically beneficial for human resources department in hotels for recruitment, selection, training and development of employees. It enhances the hiring process and as a result of it, the performance of organization will boost up and employee turnover will be reduced. Based on the findings of this study, we therefore recommend that: The management of hotel industry should ensure that there is a positive and strong relationship between personality traits and employee performance through prompt payment of salaries, motivation of workers, regular incentive packages, conducive work environment, good planning and proper management of employees in hotel industry in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

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VISITORS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AND PERCEPTION OF THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BOTANICAL GARDEN ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the relationship between the socio-demographic factors and visitors' perception, awareness and willingness to visit some selected botanical gardens in southwest Nigeria. Data were collected from University of Ibadan Botanical Garden, Oyo State, Ladoké Akintola University of Technology Botanical Garden, Oyo State and Lekki Urban Forest and Animal Sanctuary Initiative (LUFASI) Nature Park, Lekki, Lagos State. The population for the study was the visitors to the selected Botanical Gardens. The sample size was 385 respondents. Data were collected using structured questionnaire randomly administered to visitors at the sites. The study revealed that majority of the visitors were male (55%), mostly age group 15-24 years, single (79.6%), with 98.7% Nigerians and 54% practice Christianity. In addition, 51.6% were NCE/ND holders, 44.4% were employed in the private sector and earned between ₦61000 and ₦90,000 (51.6%). Majority of the visitors (66.4%) were aware of recreation and tourism. The main motivational factors for visiting the botanical gardens were recreation, playing games and social interaction with family and friend, interest in gardens, learning and discovery. The visitors agreed that botanical gardens are vital to the conservation of plant biodiversity. The majority of visitors (63.5%) stated that they would not return to the botanical gardens. Gender ($p < 0.01$), age ($p < 0.01$), religion ($p < 0.01$), education ($p < 0.01$), monthly income ($p < 0.01$), ethnic group ($p < 0.01$), and occupation ($p < 0.01$) had significant relationship with their perception and awareness about botanical gardens for recreation and tourism development. There is urgent need for an effective management plan for botanical gardens to ensure effective tourism development.

Keywords: Botanical gardens, tourism development, impact, tourist perception.

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INTRODUCTION

Botanical tourism is travelling for the purpose of viewing the varied flora of a region, district or in the case of some species even a single plant (Béréziat, 2003). Botanical tourism is travelling to see plants, either in their native environment or in managed botanical gardens and parks. Generally a greater variety of plants can be seen in one place by visiting a botanical garden without any special preparation. Parks and gardens have been created and managed over many centuries (Wikivoyage, 2018). Botanical tourism is, strictly speaking and traveling for the purpose of seeing plants in their native environment, observing an entirely new collection of plants has become one of the most exciting things about taking such a trip. Botanical tourism, therefore, improves plant identification skill (Burke and Emerick, 2016). Botanical gardens bring people into direct contact with the natural world and demonstrate how the natural world benefits man. Humans benefit from contact with the natural world in a variety of ways. Man relies on plants as an

important part of the world's natural heritage, a vital resource for the planet, and a critical component of global sustainability (Botanical Gardens Conservation International, 2000). Botanic gardens, along with zoos and natural history and ethnographic museum collections, offer an authentic experience of the world's natural heritage. They exhibit themselves, rather than the abstractions apparent in medicinal, taxonomic and economic collections, thus, become central to the visitor's experience. The role of botanic gardens in sifting the world's flora to present the exquisite, spectacular, bizarre and rare is a powerful one. The link between plant explorers and botanic gardens was particularly powerful in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. A second example of how botanic gardens changed the world is their role in establishing and promoting a scientific classification system for plants during the Enlightenment (Forbes, 2008). Botanical Gardens provide an opportunity to construct ecologically functional landscapes on a large scale while at the same time educating individuals, professionals and

organizations about sustainable green infrastructure. Because of their large scale and their role as educational facilities, they hold a unique potential to significantly influence the direction and pace of urban green space design and planning. In addition to the numerous ecological and informal educational opportunities available in large urban parks, like large public parks, botanical gardens provide healthy recreational opportunities and an escape from the urban infrastructure (American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta, 2021). Generally, tourism is facing serious challenges in Nigeria as a result of some underlying factor such as incomplete inventory, poorly served tourist locations, under development, poor management or underutilization and mismanagement of tourist's resources (Fajimi and Omonona, 2012).

The array and variety of plant resources are fast being depleted particularly in areas of high human growth as in the region of Southwestern Nigeria. Nature-based tourism accounts for about 80% of the world tourism volume and these are usually practiced in rural environment (Newsome *et al.*, 2005). While some valuable exemplars are already realized, there is still a real opportunity to exploit the potential of botanic gardens (and other cultural institutions) further. Perhaps much of this potential remains unrealized (Forbes, 2008). The extent of plant research conducted in a botanic garden is determined by the resources available (Krishnan and Novy, 2016). Botanical gardens can help to actively change people's attitudes and behaviours towards the natural world. They have the potential to communicate the importance of plants in human life, as well as the impact of human lifestyles on the natural world, to people from all walks of life (Botanical Gardens Conservation International, 2010). As a place of leisure and connection with nature, botanic gardens help visitors cope with stress (Kohlleppel, Bradley and Jacob, 2002). However, few studies have been conducted on the impact of botanical gardens on tourism development in southwest Nigeria. The study aims to determine the relationship between visitors' socio-economic characteristics and their perception of the impact of botanical gardens on tourism development in south west Nigeria. Specifically, the study assessed visitors' socio-economic factors in selected botanical gardens, their perception of the impact of botanical gardens on tourism development, determine the visitors' level of awareness and willingness to visit the

selected botanical gardens and constraints to visitation to botanical gardens.

METHODOLOGY

The Study Area

The study was carried out in three Botanical Gardens in Southwestern Nigeria. These are University of Ibadan Botanical Garden, Oyo State, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Botanical Garden, Oyo State and Lekki Urban Forest and Animal Sanctuary Initiative (LUFASI) Nature Park, Lekki, Lagos State.

University of Ibadan Botanical Garden is located within the University of Ibadan Campus which is situated about 6 kilometres to the North of Ibadan (7°26'N and 3°54'E) at a mean altitude of 277 meters above sea level. The Garden covers an area of 40 hectares (100 acres) with only about 70 acres fully developed in the northern side of the Campus (Alarape *et al.*, 2015). Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) Botanical Garden takes after University Ibadan (UI) Botanical Garden in layout and planning except that it is relatively very young. It depicted the woodland savanna of the region. Lekki Urban Forestry and Animal Shelter Initiative (LUFASI) covers an area of 20 hectares of land at the Majek area (KM 41) along the Lekki-Epe express way.

The UI Botanical Garden's vegetation is rich with diverse species comprising of a wide variety of woody trees, shrubs, collection of herbs, palms and climbers which are well represented (Alarape *et al.*, 2015). The natural forest of LUFASI is essentially composed of the coastal line forest vegetation. Some portion of the forest could be said to be at some stages of regeneration from Oil palm plantation that dominated the site before the establishment of the site as Biological/Botanical Garden.

Data Collection and Analysis

The population of the study was made of visitors and non-visitors to the sites. The sample size for the study was 378 for visitors. Visitors to the sites were randomly selected. The instruments for data collection was structured questionnaire and it covered the socio-economic characteristics of the visitors, perception of the impact of botanical gardens on tourism development, level of awareness and willingness to visit the selected botanical gardens, and constraints to visitation to botanical gardens. Data obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies,

percentage and mean. All responses to the questionnaire (raw data) were collated using Microsoft excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20).

RESULTS

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Visitors

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of visitors. It reveals that 55% were males and 45% were female. Majority of the visitors (65.1%) were in the age group of 15-24 years. Greater percentage of the visitors (79.6%) were single, 98.7% were Nigerians and 54% were Christians. Also, majority of the visitors (51.6%) were NCE/ND holders, 25.1% were HND/BSc holders, 2.4% were MSc PhD/holders, 9.0% were secondary school holders, 10.1% were primary school holders and 1.9% had no formal education. Furthermore, highest percentage of the visitors (32.0%) earned ₦61000 - -₦90,000, 55.8% were of Yoruba ethnic group. 44.4% were employed in the private sector and the majority of them (87.8%) were not members of NGO on environment..

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of visitors (n=387)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex		
Male	208	55.0
Female	170	45.0
Age		
15-24 years	246	65.1
25-54 years	77	20.4
55-64 years	36	9.5
65 years and above	19	5.0
Marital status		
Single	301	79.6
Married	62	16.4
Divorced	6	1.6
Separated	3	0.8
Widow/Widower	6	1.6
Nationality		
Nigerian	373	98.7
Non-Nigerian	5	1.3
Religion		
Christianity	204	54.0
Islam	137	36.2
Traditional worshipper	1	0.3
Others	36	9.5

Education		
No formal education	7	1.9
Primary school	38	10.1
Secondary school	34	9.0
ND/NCE	195	51.6
HND/BSc	95	25.1
MSc/PhD	9	2.4
Monthly income		
Less than 30,000	97	25.7
31,000-60,000	92	24.3
61,000-90,000	121	32.0
91,000-120,000	56	14.8
121,000-150,000	7	1.9
151,000 and above	5	1.3
Occupation		
Private employment	168	44.4
Self-employed	39	10.3
Government employment	58	15.3
NGO employment	90	23.8
Retired	23	6.1

Awareness of Recreation and Tourism Potential of Botanical Gardens

Table 2 presents the visitors' awareness of recreation and tourism potential of botanical gardens. It shows that majority of the visitors (66.4%) were aware of recreation and tourism potential of botanical gardens.

Table 2: Awareness of recreation and tourism potential of botanical gardens by visitors

Variables	Frequency (N=378)	Percentage (%)
Awareness of potentials of botanical garden for recreation and tourism development		
Yes	251	66.4
No	127	33.6
Level of awareness of recreation and tourism potential of botanical gardens		
Not aware at all	108	28.6
Slightly aware	48	12.7
Somewhat aware	72	19.0
Moderately aware	63	16.7
Extremely aware	87	23.0

Visitors' Motivation to Visit Botanical Gardens

Table 3 presents the motivation factors for visitors to visit botanical gardens. The mean ranged from 3.77 to 4.54. The visitors opined that recreation, playing

games and social interaction with family and friend, interest in gardens, learning and discovery among others were the major factors motivating them to visit botanical gardens. "To buy book, souvenirs' or plants" had the lowest mean of all the factors motivating visitors to visit botanical gardens.

Table 3: Visitors' motivating factors in visiting botanical gardens

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Appreciation of Plants	4.13	1.339
Interest in garden	4.40	0.704
Design a horticulture technique	4.26	0.607
Admiration of garden	4.38	0.823
Scenery and ambience	3.85	0.997
Pleasure in being outdoor	3.78	1.229
Relaxing mentally and physically	4.18	0.807
Recreation, playing games and social interaction with family and friend	4.54	0.798
Understanding or education about nature and environmental conservation	4.20	0.910
To exercise	3.78	0.803
To enjoy it's natural beauty	4.12	1.044
To set a breath of fresh air	3.98	0.973
To get away from the busy town	3.90	0.976
To buy book, souvenirs' or plants	3.77	0.966
To attend a concert/function	4.04	1.098
Enjoyment	3.99	0.964
Learning and discovery	4.34	0.904
Restoration	3.81	0.685
Social contact	3.94	0.973
Self-fulfillment	4.12	0.754
Learning about plants/gardens	3.88	0.875
Enjoyment of plants/gardens	3.89	0.894

Visitors' Perception of the Potential of Botanical Gardens for Recreation and Tourism Development

Table 4 presents results on visitors' perception of the potential of botanical garden for recreation and tourism development. The mean ranges from 2.98 to 4.31. The visitors agreed that botanical gardens are vital to conservation of plant biodiversity. They also claimed that tourism development in botanical gardens could showcase the inter relationships between plants, animals and humans while opining that the public could be educated on global environment change and conservation issues through botanical gardens.

Table 4: Visitors' perception of the potential of botanical gardens for recreation and tourism development.

Visitor' Perceptions	Mean	Standard Deviation
Botanical gardens are vital to conservation of plant biodiversity	4.31	0.831
It will enhance public reconnection with nature	3.75	0.780
It will create awareness on the dangers of extinction of native species of plants	4.16	0.821
Botanical gardens are exclusive and elite institution incapable of ordinary people	3.46	0.710
Botanical gardens are only good for education and research, not for tourism and recreation	3.82	1.081
Public could develop positive public attitudes and behaviours towards conservation of plants and environment	4.05	0.730
It would provide varied and new experience to tourists	3.94	0.775
Public could be educated on global environment change and conservation issues	4.13	0.717
Tourism development in botanical gardens could showcase the inter relationships between plants, animals and humans	4.19	1.034
Interpretation in botanical gardens could communicate the importance of conserving plants for future well -being of the planet	3.74	0.768
Tourism in botanical gardens may offer a sustainable form of tourism development	3.90	1.003
It could impact positively the economy in local region where they are located	3.81	1.038
Botanical gardens could erode peace in the community	3.51	1.012
Tourism in botanical gardens could engender security challenge in the locality of location such as kidnaping, rapping, armed robbery	3.29	1.094
It would encourage prostitution in the community	3.63	1.181
It could impart a sense of community pride and value in their natural environment	3.36	1.290
Tourism in botanical gardens would alter the pristine nature of the urban green areas	3.76	0.882
Urban wildlife would be negatively impacted by the activities of tourist in botanical gardens	3.94	1.021
Instead of botanical gardens to reduce noise and pollution, tourism would acerbate them	2.98	1.547
Psychological, health and aesthetic functions of botanical gardens will be impaired by tourism.	3.49	0.983

Table 5: Behavioural intention of visitors

Variables	Frequency (N=378)	Percentage (%)
I will revisit this botanical garden in the future		
Yes	138	36.5
No	240	63.5
I will recommend this botanical garden and others to other people to visit		
Yes	262	69.3
No	116	30.7

Constraints of Visitation to Botanical Garden by Visitors

Table 6 presents the visitors' constraints to visitation to botanical gardens. The visitors agreed that no clear policy on linkage between botanical gardens and tourism development unlike zoological gardens is a major constraint affecting visitation to botanical gardens.

Table 6: Visitors' constraints of visitation to botanical garden

Variable	Frequency (N=378)	Percentage (%)
Lack of publicity of botanical gardens as tourism attractions and destinations		
Yes	98	25.9
No	280	74.1
Lack of knowledge on the location of botanical gardens		
Yes	73	19.3
No	305	80.7
Fear of hoodlums using botanical gardens as hide out		
Yes	77	20.4
No	301	79.6
Inadequate knowledge on the diversity of plant species in the botanical gardens		
Yes	91	24.1
No	287	75.9
Over emphasis on scientific research and education function of botanical gardens		
Yes	74	19.6
No	304	80.4
Neighbourhood gardens and green spaces have been converted for urban development purposes		
Yes	170	45.0
No	208	55.0
No clear policy on linkage between botanical gardens and tourism development unlike zoological gardens		
Yes	301	79.6
No	77	20.4

Relationship between Visitors' demographic characteristics and perception of botanical gardens for the development of recreation and tourism

Chi square tests of relationship between socio-economic characteristics of visitors and their perception of botanical garden for recreation and tourism development revealed that sex ($p < 0.01$), religion ($p < 0.01$), education ($p < 0.01$), ethnic group ($p < 0.01$), and occupation ($p < 0.01$) had significant relationships with their perception of botanical gardens for recreation and tourism development (Table 7).

Table 7: Relationship between Visitors' demographic characteristics and perception of botanical garden for the development of recreation and tourism

Variables	Chi square (χ^2) value	Sig.	Decision
Sex	10.377	0.006	Significant
Marital status	7.275	0.507	NS
Nationality	4.097	0.129	NS
Religion	17.435	0.008	Significant
Education	38.463	0.000	Significant
Ethnic group	42.465	0.000	Significant
Occupation	39.401	0.000	Significant

** $P < 0.05$, NS-Not significant,

Relationship between Visitors demographic characteristics and their awareness of botanical garden for recreation and tourism development
 A binary logistic regression was performed to ascertain the effects of sex, age, marital status, nationality, religion, education, monthly income, ethnic group and occupation on the visitors' awareness of botanical gardens for recreation and tourism development (Table 8). The logistic regression model was statistically significant with chi square value of $\chi^2 = 62.441$, $p < 0.05$. The model explained 21.1 % (Nagelkerke R Square) of the variance in awareness of botanical gardens for recreation and tourism development. The final model fit at 74.1% showed that the demographic characteristics of the visitors had significant relationship with awareness of botanical gardens for recreation and tourism development.

Table 8: Relationship between Visitors' demographic characteristics and awareness of botanical garden for recreation and tourism development

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	Df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Sex	-.021	.275	.006	1	.938	.979
Age	.275	.169	2.658	1	.103	1.316
Marital status	.162	.188	.742	1	.389	1.175
Nationality	19.680	17752.885	.000	1	.999	3523579.09 .174
Religion	.422	.223	3.569	1	.059	1.525
Education	-.246	.170	2.095	1	.148	.782
Monthly income	.131	.158	.694	1	.405	1.140
Occupation	-.766	.135	32.204	1	.000	.465
Constant	18.223	17752.885	.000	1	.999	.000

Correct prediction: 74.1%
 Final Model fit
 -2log-Likelihood: 420.138
 Nagelkerke R Square: 0.211

Relationship between Visitors' Socio-Economic Characteristics and their Willingness to Revisit Botanical Gardens

A binary logistic regression was performed to ascertain the effects of sex, age, marital status, nationality, religion, education, monthly income, ethnic group and occupation on the visitors' willingness to revisit botanical gardens (Table 9). The logistic regression model was statistically significant with chi square value of $\chi^2=75.962$, $p<0.05$. The model explained 24.9% (Nagelkerke R Square) of the variance in willingness to revisit botanical gardens. The final model fit at 76.2% showed that the demographic characteristics of the visitors had significant relationship with willingness to revisit botanical gardens. Education ($p<0.05$), ethnic group ($p<0.01$), and occupation ($p<0.01$) had significant relationship with the visitors' willingness to revisit botanical gardens.

Table 9: Relationship between Visitors' demographic characteristics and their willingness to revisit botanical garden

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Sex	-.184	.270	.468	1	.494	.832
Age	.260	.158	2.723	1	.099	1.297
Marital status	.071	.180	.157	1	.692	1.074
Nationality	21.001	17845.548	.000	1	.999	1319569287.714
Religion	-.003	.219	.000	1	.989	.997
Education	.330	.153	4.631	1	.031	1.391
Monthly income	.236	.140	2.853	1	.091	1.266
Occupation	-.590	.129	20.864	1	.000	.555
Constant	-21.474	17845.548	.000	1	.999	.000

Correct prediction: 76.2%
 Final Model fit
 -2log-Likelihood: 420.189
 Nagelkerke R Square: 0.249

Discussion

This study revealed that majority of the respondents are males which is inconsistent with He and Jin (2012) who found majority of visitors to a botanical garden to be female. Majority of the respondents are within the age range of 15-24 years which is inconsistent with Sigit, Alin and Farha (2020) that found out that majority of visitors to a botanical garden are within the age range of 25-40 years. Greater percentage of the respondents are single. Also, the majority of the respondents are Christians. Higher percentage of the respondents are tertiary education holders which could enhance the importance they attach to a botanical garden as research has shown that perceived destination attractiveness is higher among travelers with tertiary education (well-educated) than those who are less-educated (Mohsin, 2008; Cheng, Huang and Cheng, 2009). Furthermore, majority of the respondents earn below ₦90,000 which is a relatively low income. This could be the reason most of them are Nigerians and engage on domestic trips as opined by Chen *et al.* (2009) that travelers with less income tend to take frequent domestic vacations rather than international trips. Also, the majority of visitors have private employment. This indicates that the majority of the respondents belong to the working class and is inconsistent with findings by Alarape, Yager and Salman (2015) who found the majority of their respondents to tourist attraction to be students and unemployed. Majority of the visitors are not involved with Non-Governmental Organizations. Their awareness about the tourism potential of the gardens could be as a result of the recent increased awareness and concerns about the human impact upon the environment as supported by Dodd and Jones (2010) that Botanical gardens arguably play an important role in reconnecting people with the world of plants, in educating them and in presenting models for sustainable living. Crilly *et al.* (2010) also opined that recently, botanical gardens are regarded as both sites for conservation and sites for recreation by locals as well as visitors. The respondents identified their main source of awareness of botanical gardens' potential for recreation and tourism development as through friends and relatives, television, brochures, conferences and workshops which agrees with Beerli and Martin (2004) that formal sources of information, like brochures, and informal sources, for example relatives and friends, have an influence on image formation in a tourist destination.

The visitors to the botanical gardens opined they were motivated to visit the gardens to appreciate the plants, to relax physically and mentally, to recreate, play games and interact with family and friends. They also claimed they also have interest and admiration for gardens while giving room for learning and discovery. This is consistent with Crilley *et al.* (2010) who found out that the first activity choice of botanic garden's visitors was to view plants, to exercise, or to take part in a family outing. Ward *et al.* (2010) also claimed that activities such as enjoyment of the garden's natural beauty, exercise and get a breath of fresh air were the primary reasons given for using the gardens.

The visitors agreed that botanical gardens are vital to the conservation of plant biodiversity as opined by Var (2013) that Botanical gardens are living plants museums where a combination of herbaceous and woody plants can be observed; endangered plant species are protected and promoted; with the help of research on plants, visitors can be trained directly or indirectly; recreational activities are offered for the public. The visitors opined that Botanical gardens will create awareness on the dangers of extinction of native species of plants and that the Public could develop positive public attitudes and behaviours towards conservation of plants and environment as supported by Donaldson (2009) that the range of scientific activities conducted by botanical gardens often includes conservation, propagation, horticulture, seed science, taxonomy, systematics, genetics, biotechnology, education, restoration ecology, public education, and much more. The visitors also claimed tourism development in botanical gardens could showcase the inter relationships between plants, animals and humans while opining that the public could be educated on global environmental change and conservation issues through botanical gardens. This is consistent with Gough and Accordino (2013) who summarized the future role of botanic gardens as: Educators of youth and the general public about the importance of greening initiatives; Gardens as Technical Experts including demonstrations or techniques of conservation; Gardens as Community Hosts for meetings and events that promote accessibility to public garden space and Gardens as Catalysts for community change and promotion of sustainable community development.

Findings revealed that the visitors claimed they would not revisit the gardens. This could be as a result of dissatisfaction with the parks' facilities

because satisfied visitors are more likely to stay longer on-site, as well as to revisit and promote the park to others (Tian-Cole and Crompton, 2003). They however claimed they would recommend the park to others.

Findings from the study revealed that the visitors agreed that no clear policy on the linkage between botanical gardens and tourism development unlike zoological gardens is a major constraint affecting visitation to botanical gardens. This is consistent with Benfield (2013) who reported that Botanical Garden is a segment of the tourism industry that is lesser known and understood, highlighting a considerable gap in the academic study despite the popularity and phenomenon of garden tourism.

CONCLUSION

It could be concluded that there was relatively high influx of visitors to Botanical Gardens due to visitors' growing interest and appetite to study more about plants and to relax where there is abundance of plant species. Visitors perceived that botanical gardens are instrumental in conserving endangered species plants which are valuable in conservation processes, and recreational purposes. However, most visitors are not willing to revisit the botanical gardens due to the level of infrastructural negligence which made the botanical gardens unsustainable and less attractive. No clear cut policy to link the importance of botanical gardens to the development of tourism in Nigeria could be seen as the major constraints inhibiting the development of botanical gardens in Nigeria. A proper management plan and policies in line with the objectives for establishing botanical gardens should be redrafted for the smooth running and administration of botanical gardens in Nigeria. Adequate infrastructure that would attract visitors and sustain visitation should be put in place for a more beneficial utilization of botanical gardens as facilities for conservation and education in Nigeria.

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SUSTAINABILITY OF EZZA LAND YAM FESTIVAL AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENTManagwu, Lilian C.¹
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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the celebration of Ezza Land Yam festival, which exhibits the rich traditional non material aspect of Ebonyi State cultural heritage. The festival is a means of transmitting cultural values, which sustained the community from generation to generation. The study uses ethnographic research design to elicit the required information to achieve the stated objectives. Ezza Land has many communities rich in cultural festivals and history, but with the many challenges in the path of effective cultural festivals development like unavoidable communal crisis and lack of basic amenities and accessible road leading to venues for festivals, the sustainability of the Ezza yam festival is becoming a concern to the indigenes and visitors of the land. The objectives of the study therefore were to assess the community perception of the festival, evaluate the benefits of the festival to the community and to identify the problems facing the celebration of the new yam festival. Findings showed that the major factors that accounted for the development and sustainability of Ezza Land yam festival is that the host communities derive benefits from the event, and provide attractions to visitors. For the host communities to derive maximum benefit from the festival on sustainable basis the study suggests that both the local and state governments should partner with private investors to provide visitor/tourist facilities, tour guides and funds amongst others for promoting the festival.

Keywords: Festival, community development, sustainability, tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

Ebonyi State is known for her rich culture and Ezza yam festival has been identified as a huge cultural heritage bequeathed to generations in Ezza land. The festival does not only reveal the uniqueness in Ezza land cultural values and tradition, but the momentary and memorable impacts the festival creates in the lives of the people culturally, socially, economically, and religiously transcends beyond mere ephemeral pleasures to the indigenes of the land (Obielum, 2017). In Nigeria, communities organize and celebrate different types of festivals-events based on their cultural beliefs. Traditional festivals are often an embodiment of knowledge through which cultures are expressed (Kuada, 2010). Okoli (2012) observed that with the centuries of old, traditions of the people of Africa and the diversity of the distinct ethnic groups have created a rich culture that has become a casting legacy in Africa. This legacy is its heritage which gives community a sense of identity and to visitors' access to information, experience and activities emanating from it, which can help the visitors feel attached to a place.

Festivals are communal celebrations involving carefully planned programs with outpouring respect, rejoicing or high revelry (amusement and pleasure) established by custom (Okoko, 2008). African life therefore is hedged with customs which invariably makes a festival, a manifestation of these customs an essential part of the African world view. Little wonder therefore that Ezenagu (2014) citing Nsofor and Mmaduakor (1999) noted that the importance of festivals cannot be over-emphasized and expressed the meaning of festivals in Igbo land thus: "Festivals are periods set apart by communities or groups of individuals for commemorating important events which may be connected with homage to God, gods, ancestors, and spirits or they can be connected with the transition from one season to the other"(Ugwu &Ugwueye, 2004). It is crystal clear therefore that festivities in Igbo land entails more than eating and drinking but it also involves moments of sober reflection on Man's spiritual life (Ezenagu, 2014) citing Nsofor and Mmaduakor (1999). It is in this light that Ezza Land like other communities in Igbo land celebrate new yam festival. The unique purpose is to thank God Almighty, other deities, Ezekuna (the Father of Ezza) and the ancestors for preserving the

community through another farming (yam cultivation) season to harvest time and also for blessing their labour (Nzubechi,2013). In Ezza land, yam is believed to be the king of crops and it is usually celebrated annually before its harvest. This celebration which is usually witnessed and celebrated by EzzaEzekuna indigenes and their friends in diaspora is always marked with pomp and pageantry.

To the Ezza's therefore, the day is symbolic of enjoyment after the cultivation and involves other cultural festivities and attractions which can attract tourists from different places and walks of life. With the ever-increasing demand to diversify Nigeria's economy, the gains of tourism quickly come to limelight. The states especially Ebonyi state needs no longer depend wholly on allocation from the federal government but take an introspective (a reflective look inwards) dimension on how to substantially increase her internally generated revenue (IGR), thus the need to harness the gains of tourism in the state. Ezza as one of the largest and most populated tribes in Ebonyi State has been noted to be richly endowed with huge cultural heritage (Afoke & Nworie, 2012; Achike, 2012). The impact of tourism is multidimensional, cutting across economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits. Taken from the perspective of socio-cultural benefits, tourism creates a bubbling environment that enables positive interaction and cultural understanding between the visitor and the visited. However, for tourism to be developed there must be visitor attractions. Attractions are the main motivating factors of tourist trips Visitor attractions are unique natural features. They are core components of the tourism product and growth inducers in the tourism system. Visitor attractions are either unique natural features or cultural activities like Ezza Yam Festival which provide recreational features that can be harnessed to encourage tourist flow in Ebonyi state. This paper brings to limelight the reasons and factors that sustain EzzaEzekuna new yam festival thereby encouraging a comprehensive look on harnessing the potentials of Ezza land new yam festival as a tourist attraction in Ebonyi state, Nigeria.

Specific objectives of this study are to:

- a.evaluate the activities involved in the celebration of Ezza New yam festival
- b.determine the perception of Ezza community concerning Ezza New yam festival
- c.evaluate the benefits of Ezza new yam festival to

the community
d.identify the problems facing Ezza yam festival.

Study Area

Ezza is located on latitude 620°N and longitude 806'E (Onueke2018). Ezza is one of the largest local governments in Ebonyi state and comprises of both the Ezza South local government with its headquarter at Onueke and Ezza North with its head quarter in Ebiaji. These local governments are made up of different communities believed to be from the same ancestral origin. It has an estimated population of about 1,000,000 people (2018 projection)

History of Ezza Land

Ezza is an Igbo sub-group in Ebonyi State, Southeastern Nigeria. As a people, Ezzas are collectively referred to by the singular name Ezza/ Ezaa or Ezza-Ezekuna reference to their progenitor. They are predominantly found in Ebonyi state. The history of Ezza has been traced to have divergent accounts and it is also believed that Ezza is divided into those residents at home and those in diaspora. Afoke and Nworie (2012) averred that there is the Ezza version and Afikpo version of the story. According to the Ezza version, Ezza, Ikwo and Izzi have the same legendary ancestor, which is 'Ekumenyi'. This therefore implies that Ekumenyi is the grandfather of Ezza, Izzi and Ikwo people. Ekumenyi married two wives- NworieEnyi and Una Enyi. NworieEnyi begot Ezekuna while the second wife Una Enyi had two sons NoyoEnyi and OlodoEnyi. Ezekuna who was the first son of Ekumenyi gave birth to Ezza and Noyo gave birth to Ikwo while OlodoEkuma gave birth to Izzi, so it is on this backdrop that it is perceived that Ezekuna, Ikwo and Izzi are brothers though from different mothers but have same father. To prove the above link, the Ezzas, the Ikwos and the Izzis had one shrine called Nchonu the playground founded by Ekumenyi where they usually gather to hold sacrifices until a dispute issued between the house of Ezekuna and the houses of Noyo and Olodo which made the Ezzas stopped using the shrine for sacrifices. Ezekuna married the sister of Noyo and Olodo named Anyigor and together they had two children viz: OrokeOnuoha and Ezechinkpuru. OrokeOnuoha begot Imoha who begot Oriuzor and Ekka while Ezechinkpuru, the second son of Ezekuna begot Amaezekwe, Amagu, Idembia and Ezzama (Afoke &Nworie, 2010). It is against this background that the twelve Ezza communities exist, namely:

Umuezeoka, Umuogharu, Umuezeoka, Orizor, Ekka, Ezzama, Amuzu, Amaeka, Amana, Amaezekwe, Amagu and Idembia (Achike, 2012). The above communities make up the Ezza South Local Government Area. The second group of Ezza communities includes Okoffia, Echara, Amudo and Nsokara, all in Izzikoro. Others are Amuda, Nkomoro, Amaewula, Ogboji and Inyere communities of Ezza North Local Government Area (Achike, 2012).

There is yet another group usually regarded as 'Ezza in diaspora'. They include Nkomoro, Amaewula and EzzaEfium. These are the areas that Ezzas migrated to because of one factor or another but mostly because of war conquest (Achike, 2012). All these Ezza communities celebrate this great new yam festival which they tribally call 'Okeaku', 'OrijiOwhuu' or 'Nneswioha'.

The Ezza Land Yam Festival

Ezza land new yam festival is one of the most popular Ezza cultural activities that are usually celebrated in Ezekuna land. In the Land of Ezza, the new yam festival is known as 'OkeAku', 'OrijiOwhuu' or 'Nneswioha' which literary means 'Great Wealth' as yam is believed to be the king of the farmland. This festival can be described as a 'festival of festivals' in EzzaEzekuna. It is an umbrella festival in which the rich culture of Ezza people is displayed and usually takes place in the seventh month of the year in the Ezza calendar. The festival is celebrated to thank God, Ezekuna (Ezza's progenitor) and other deities for a successful cultivation and good health and to ask God's blessing upon them, their children at home and in diaspora.

In the words of Elder Godwin, Oke-aku festival of EzzaEzekuna people is significant in many ways. It marks the transition from the period of scarcity of food symbolized by nsa-aku and old yams withered by long period of preservation to a period of prosperity represented by the mature and ready to be harvested new yam. Oke-aku is also a period of stock taking and re-direction. It is a festival of love and peace, a period of reconciliation and amendment of broken relationships. Above all, the Ezza new yam festival (Oke-aku) is a time of thanksgiving to God for his graces to the people of Ezekuna as it marks the end of the year in Ezza customary calendar and ushers in a period of harvest for all indigenous farmers and people of Ezekuna clan. A typical Oke-aku festival begins in the morning of Orié day with the pleasantry exchange of greetings 'Anyiabo'

(meaning 'we have seen a new year') and the response of 'Awhaalaburuanyiawhaa Oma' (which means 'this year will be a good year for us'). This colourful festival is specified by the exhibition of joy, thanks, and community displays. The activities during the festival include mainly the display of the new yam, preparation and consumption of the yam, cultural dances, traditional wrestling, exhibition of artifacts, cultural performances by young maidens of the clan, masquerade parade, ethnic music and cultural performances by local soloist, addresses and good will messages by sons and daughters of Ezza Land (Afoke & Nworie, 2012). Furthermore, prominent people especially politicians who are aspiring for different appointments in government come to the square with gifts such as cows, goats and kola nuts for the various communities and elders and will be prayed for and blessed by the 'Igwe' (the King). The most significant activity of the day is to preserve the culture and traditions that had to do with the ancient practices and to offer the next generation an insight into such practices to ensure that the culture lives on from generation to generation.

Suffice to say here that, in the passage of time, this colourful entertainment has continued as an annual cultural festival in the clan with the objectives of:

- i. Strengthening the historical relationship between the many Ezza communities living within and outside Ezza.
- ii. Promoting peace, unity, and social life of the people, thus instilling the sense of oneness and encouraging communal and individual self-help efforts.
- iii. Preservation of Ezza culture for posterity.
- iv. Creating awareness to foster cultural identity among Ezza people.
- v. To mark the predominant occupation and significance of new yam to the people of Ezza.

Since its inception, the Ezza new yam festival is usually celebrated in the seventh month of every year in Ezza calendar. It is therefore, a celebration of men, women, young and old, all Ezza indigenes from within and outside as well as non Ezzas to include foreigners. The festival also attracts visitors from neighbouring villages and distant towns within and outside the state.

METHODOLOGY

The data collection instruments for this research are focus groups and observation. These methods were used to generate firsthand information on; the origin

of Ezza new yam festival, community perception of Ezza Land new yam festival, the benefits, and problems of the Ezza land new yam festival. Purposive sampling method was used to select knowledgeable elders and youths who served as key informants. Three focus group discussions were held: (1) cabinet members from the ten Ezza communities (2) elders of the communities and (3) the youths. This according to Guijt and Vendhuizen (1998) creates opportunities for as many as possible to get involve in their own ways and on their own terms. It also helps in determining a framework for local ownership of resources and for the roles and responsibilities that the local people expect government agency to play in resources management. Qualitative description analysis was used to analyze data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ezza Land yam festival is a cultural festival celebrated in EzzaEzekuna land. It involves men and women of Ezza particularly those of Ezekuna clan. During the festival, the youths learn cultural skills from their parents, exchange ideas, foods and create new relationships. The celebration involves the display of the new yam and other cultural exhibitions as shown in the pictures below:



Plate 3: Elders of the communities praying and thanking God for a bountiful harvest



Plate 4: Wrestling competition as part of the Oke-aku festival



Plate 1. Display of new yams during the festival



Plate 5: Prominent elders and politicians of Ebonyi State presenting gifts and goodwill messages during the festival



Plate 2: Masquerades entertaining visitors/tourists



Plate 6: Cultural performances by young maidens of the clan

Touristic value of Ezza land yam festival

Table 1: Number of Tourists/visitors that attended the Ezza Land yam festival between 2014 and 2018 from the thirty-six (36) states of the federation including FCT and abroad.

Place/Location	No. of T/V in 2014	No of T/V in 2015	No of T/V in 2016	No of T/V in 2017	No of T/V in 2018
FCT	8	15	22	35	44
Abia	7	10	18	22	24
Adamawa	----	----	----	----	----
Anambra	4	8	12	14	21
Akwa Ibom	----	4	4	8	15
Bayelsa	4	----	----	----	4
Benue	7	12	18	21	16
Borno	----	----	----	----	----
Bauchi	----	----	----	----	----
Cross River	10	26	32	43	48
Delta	2	2	4	----	4
Ebonyi	615	603	745	1086	1676
Enugu	32	35	44	68	86
Ekiti	----	----	----	----	----
Edo	6	10	5	8	10
Gombe	----	----	----	----	----
Imo	12	8	15	22	32
Jigawa	----	----	----	----	----
Kogi	6	3	4	8	10
Kebbi	----	----	----	----	----
Kaduna	2	2	2	----	2
Kano	----	----	----	----	----
Katsina	----	----	----	----	----
Kwara	----	----	----	----	----
Lagos	10	13	16	21	28
Niger	----	----	----	----	2
Nassarawa	----	----	----	----	----
Ondo	----	----	----	----	----
Oyo	----	----	----	----	----
Ogun	----	----	----	----	----
Osun	----	----	----	----	----
Plateau	----	----	----	----	----
Rivers	10	23	33	44	48
Sokoto	----	----	----	----	----
Taraba	----	----	----	----	----
Yobe	----	----	----	----	----
Zamfara	----	----	----	----	----
Abroad	2	3	3	2	3
TOTAL	737	777	977	1402	2073

Source: Adapted from Ebonyi state Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2018)

The table shows that 737 visitors were received in 2014, 777 in 2015, 977 in 2016, 1402 in 2017 and 2073 in 2018 during the Ezza Land yam festival. It also revealed that only four states outside Ebonyi State – Enugu, Cross River, Imo and FCT had between 30-86 visitors/tourists in attendance from 2010 to 2018.

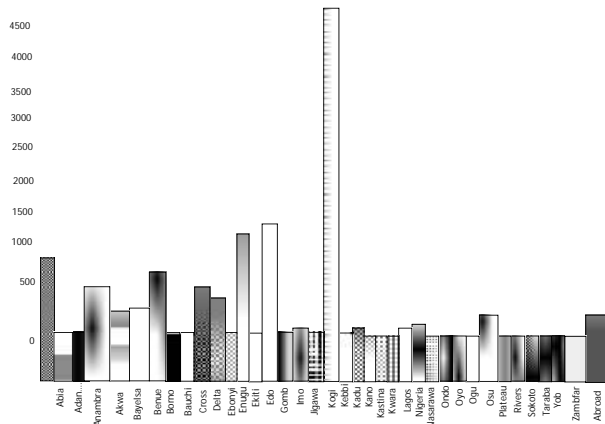
Lagos, Abia, Anambra, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Edo and Kogi had less than thirty (30) visitors in attendance. Bayelsa, Delta, Kaduna, Niger and Abroad on the other hand had less than 10 visitors in attendance while Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi, Ekiti, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kwara, Nassarawa, Ondo, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe and Zamfara states had no visitors at all. The decline in the number of visitors/tourists from most states of the federation to Ezza new yam festival indicates that the level of awareness is incredibly low. Again, tourism requires vast infrastructural base in terms of facilities and utilities. Inadequate and poor-quality hotels, lack of good roads, water and sporadic nature of electricity supply also constitute the problem of low patronage on this festival.

However, since the above table also show an increase in the number of visitors from 737 in 2014 to 2073 in 2018, it is conjectured that if this festival together with other tourism attractions are properly harnessed and promoted, EzzaEzekuna can become a viable tourists' destination capable of generating job opportunities for the residents. As tourism is a cultural phenomenon that promotes varied cultures and lifestyles, its development will help to strengthen the understanding, cooperation and social education among EzzaEzekuna indigenes and their neighbouring communities. Lagos, Abia, Anambra, Akwa-Ibom, Benue, Edo and Kogi had less than thirty (30) visitors in attendance. Bayelsa, Delta, Kaduna, Niger and Abroad on the other hand had less than 10 visitors in attendance while Adamawa, Borno, Bauchi, Ekiti, Gombe, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kwara, Nassarawa, Ondo, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe and Zamfara states had no visitors at all. The decline in the number of visitors/tourists from most states of the federation to Ezza new yam festival indicates that the level of awareness is incredibly low. Again, tourism requires vast infrastructural base in terms of facilities and utilities. Inadequate and poor-quality hotels, lack of good roads, water and sporadic nature of electricity supply also constitute the problem of low patronage on this festival.

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As tourism is a cultural phenomenon that promotes varied cultures and lifestyles, its development will help to strengthen the understanding, cooperation and social education among EzzaEzekuna indigenes and their neighbouring communities.

FCT and abroad



Community Perception of Ezza Land Yam Festival

The three focus groups discussions held with the communities' members to seek their view and perceptions of the festival revealed that the festival play a major role in the communities and hold great promise for tourism development in the state.

The local economy of EzzaEzekuna people is usually stimulated during this festival that is usually marked by spectacular artistic displays, variety of music, assorted local dishes and wine, and exchange of gifts. The festival is an expression of the people's heritage which provides opportunities for visitors within and outside Ezza Land to enjoy and appreciate the host community's cultural values and worldviews. Our interviews revealed the communities' efforts towards sustaining their festival. Appreciative participatory and action development plan known as the 4Ds Discovery, Dream, Design and Delivery has been adapted to achieve their vision. This plan will empower them with skills and strategies to actualize their objectives.

According to them, the discovery method was used to identify the characteristics of Ezza Land Yam Festival that attract or may attract tourists and recognize strength that contribute to cultural tourism development. This provides a strong and positive foundation for their dream of developing cultural tourism in the region, while building a sense of shared responsibility for the conservation of cultural resources upon which development and sustainable cultural tourism depends.

In the dream phase, they visualize how their communities will develop and benefit from cultural tourism in the future as well as how they can achieve that dream by building upon the tourism assets and strength of Ezza Land Yam festival to make the absolute best cultural tourism possible. Interactive sessions with host communities unraveled the picture of what they dream if their attractions are developed and managed for cultural tourism. They think of their cultural attractions generating revenues, creating job opportunities, and attracting visitors from far and wide to their communities.

In design phase, of action development plan, the communities thought of partnering with the government and the private sector to build comfortable accommodation in line with the local structures within the area, provide adequate power supply, communication facilities, good road network, good water, security, catering services, rental services etc. to cater for tourists' comfort and provide job opportunities for residents. It is assumed that for the period of plan implementation, government will continue to provide funds and invest in infrastructural projects and rehabilitations supportive of the action development plan. While the main focus of the private sector will be on the rehabilitation and upgrading of existing accommodation facilities and to a larger extent, on the provision of new accommodation capacity as well as in market development initiatives. Since sustainable cultural tourism lies on building host community's skills among other things, the delivery stage of the action plan also focuses on building community initiative, confidence and commitment to action. The communities seek government and private sector support in planning towards achieving their dream for harnessing, development and sustaining the Ezza Land yam festival. Findings also revealed that the communities extend their plan towards developing coastal tourism by harnessing the Slave Market Route located in Ezza South (this market route was where slaves were traded before being moved to places for trade during the slave and intertribal war years), Abakaliki Golf Course and the beautiful Abakaliki green Lake to supplement their festivals. The introduction of facilities, such as landscaping of the Slave market route and golf courses in conjunction with other recreational facilities before and during the celebration will provide all year product for visitors/tourists. The communities believed that partnering with government and private sector will help them actualize this plan overtime,

monitor the impacts and benefits, reflect upon lessons learnt, and develop management and marketing strategies that build upon new successes, strengths and opportunities. If the host is part and parcel of the implementation, cultural tourism can therefore be built on the principle of sustainability.

Benefits of Ezza Land Yam Festival to the Host Communities

The study revealed that Ezza Land Yam festival provides employment to members of the local communities. The local food vendors and cuisines in the community made brisk business during the festival. The sales of local crafts and donations from visitors/tourists also yield income to them. It is the community's opinions that the centre help in poverty alleviation. Another benefit is the transmission of traditional heritage from the old to the young ones as well as the opening of the Ezza clan to the world. These findings agree with Oluwole (2001), who opined that those interested in promoting tourism in Nigeria or Africa must see beyond a mere economic venture. She believed that tourism is one of the best ways of correcting the poor image of Africans. It is a new opportunity of promoting our cultural heritage. Problems Besetting the Development of Ezza Land Yam Festival

Ezza Land Yam festival is facing the following problems that presently militate against its development, these problems are:

Inadequate funding

Tourism requires vast infrastructural base in terms of facilities and utilities. With adequate funding to upgrade the current state of Ezza land yam festival, development and continuity of this festival will remain a mirage. Provision of good hotels, good road network, water and regular electricity supply at the host community is a major besetting problem.

Lack of institutional framework for developing tourism in the state

The primary issue of concern is for the state ministry concerned with tourism development to delineate responsibilities for the development of tourists' attractions. States are the custodians of these tourism endowments and assets and are therefore in better position to take up the challenge.

Lack of government focus to develop tourism in the state

Low perception of the financial, recreational and cultural values of tourism in the state, Ezza North and Ezza South Local Government Areas in particular constitute a big menace to the development of EzzaEzekuna yam festival in Ezza Clan.

CONCLUSION

The study builds a case which recognized that tourism must be developed and managed in a controlled, integrated and sustainable manner based on sound planning. With this tourism can generate substantial socio-economic benefits to the local community. It is evident that Ezza Land yam festival is sustainable. The major factors that accounted for the development and sustainability of the festival is that the local community is benefiting from the festival and it provides a product to visitors/tourists. It is suggested that Ezza North and Ezza South Local Governments and Ebonyi State Ministry of Culture and Tourism should collaborate with the local people of EzzaEzekuna to mitigate the problems threatening the development and sustainability of Ezza Land yam festival.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ezza New Yam Festival does not last long. This festival should be packaged to prolong their celebration days by adding football matches and some more glamour by inducting age-grades to display their various dance groups within the periods of the occasion. By adding more days to the usual periods, prospective visitors will be allowed time to interact with the local communities in their village squares, markets and other places such as religious centers, shrines, deities and so on.

Government should take a survey of various attractions in the local government area which will involve the locales thereby giving the natives a sense of belonging. This will allow the smooth running of tourism affairs in the area.

Government should also create credit facilities for both individual and corporate bodies that may have the intention to invest in tourism. However, care should be taken in doing this as such funds may be diverted. Thus, it is advised that before such grants are made, proposals of the intended development should be made available and a representative of the government that will be reporting on the developmental stages should be incorporated and terms of grants should include conditions such as the afore-mentioned and that breach in terms will warrant immediate return of fund with interest.

The host community should be enlightened on the benefits of tourism and conduct on how to handle tourist; conducts such as being peaceful and friendly at all times. More hotels and recreational facilities should be provided in the area.

MANAGEMENT OF ZOOS IN SELECTED DESTINATIONS IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS ON WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Zoos are established to provide environmental and conservation education to the public but the effectiveness of their operations is yet to be ascertained in Nigeria. Management of zoos in selected destinations in Nigeria was therefore carried out using University of Ibadan zoo (UI zoo) and Makurdi zoological garden (Mkd zoo) as case studies, with the aim of assessing management implications on wildlife conservation and ecotourism development. Data for the study were collected through in-depth interview, field observation, administration of structured questionnaires and administrative records. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi square and ANOVA. Majority of UI zoo visitors were first timers (60%) while majority of Mkd zoo visitors were return visitors (72%). UI zoo has more diversity and abundance of animals, tourism facilities and supportive attractions than Mkd zoo. The use of tour guide is the most (78%) preferred conservation education strategy by visitors in UI zoo especially during periods of high visitor influx, also the second most preferred even in Mkd zoo where it not exist. The study destinations were poor in keeping conservation records and this has adverse effect on conservation and ecotourism. UI zoo is more effectively managed for conservation and tourism than Mkd zoo. Majority of the UI zoo visitors (76%) were satisfied with their experience while majority of Mkd zoo visitors (68%) were not satisfied. Chi square tests showed significant association ($p < 0.05$) between visitors' level of income and willingness to pay ($\chi^2 = 13.321$), and motivation to visit ($\chi^2 = 46.667$); level of education and perceived effectiveness of strategies used for environmental education ($\chi^2 = 41.806$); income level and number of zoo visits per year ($\chi^2 = 70.915$); visitors' residence and perceived satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 1.175$); age and purpose of visit ($\chi^2 = 34.925$); family size and source of zoo awareness ($\chi^2 = 47.529$); and repeat visitation and conservation awareness ($\chi^2 = 3.681$) respectively in UI zoo. In the case of Mkd zoo there were respectively significant association ($p < 0.05$) between visitors' gender and nature of visit ($\chi^2 = 4.153$); marital status and purpose of visit ($\chi^2 = 12.944$), visitors' zoo awareness ($\chi^2 = 11.092$); age and conservation influence of visits ($\chi^2 = 14.059$). Proper training of staff, proper documentation, provision of more ecotourism and supportive facilities should be seriously embarked upon for effective conservation awareness and ecotourism development in the zoos especially Mkd zoo.

Keywords: ecotourism development, wildlife conservation, zoo management, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Zoos are meant to provide opportunities for humans, especially those who cannot visit wildlife parks because of some constraints, see different species of wild animals. Zoos are therefore humans' closest, independent and constant link to nature (Conway, 1995; Adetola and Oluleye, 2017). Suitable management practices are adopted in zoos to ensure wellbeing of the inmates and safety of visitors. The wellbeing of the inmates makes the animals live out their life span, sustainably attract visitors who are satisfied by the sight of the species, and also serve as a living laboratory for environmental education. The safety management practices guarantees safety of visitors, thus encourages visitation because of assured high level of human protection. In national parks the management practices for safety include tour guiding, use of armed guard, synergy with local

communities and other security agencies, air surveillance, water patrol, seasonal or total restriction, communication of safety information, rules, use of safety guard and life jackets, use of personal protection equipments, clearing of paths and trails, and consistent awareness of hazardous activities and areas in the park to tourists. Some of the safety management practices in zoos partly differ from the practices in *in situ* conservation areas as the animals are confined under zoos or *ex situ* management. However, human – wildlife contact of any form is seriously discouraged in both zoos or protected areas.

Zoos are facilities for both environmental education and ecotourism. Wildlife resources in zoos attract many persons who visit to enjoy unique experiences, thus promotes ecotourism (Jordaan and du Plessis, 2014). Ecotourism promotes conservation of natural resources as it provides economic benefits for host

communities who then support conservation of wildlife resources to sustain economic benefits (Ijeomah, 2007; Odunlami and Edet, 2017). The popularity of zoos in Nigeria has declined over the past 20 years (Ijeomah and Emelue, 2009; PM News, 2014). Many zoos in Nigeria have stopped functioning, some existing ones are in minimal operation or have been converted to other structures, many are either in a dilapidated state or are poorly managed. Zoological gardens in Nigeria have the potentials to attract different types of visitors especially nature lovers but their level of development, patronage and baseline data documentation combined with insufficient funding make its growth stunted (Uloko and Iwar, 2011; Omonona and Kayode, 2011).

The growth of tourism industry in Nigeria depends on the ability of the existing tourism resources to attract patronage (Adora, 2010), which depends to a large extent on management of zoos. How zoos are managed affects survival of inmates, visitation of tourists, ease of environmental information access to the public and public attitude towards wildlife resources conservation. A detailed survey of resources zoo in zoos and their respective impacts on visitors are paramount in achieving both conservation and ecotourism development in Nigeria. The objectives of this study therefore are to:

1. Evaluate the strategies for attracting visitors in the zoos
2. Assess the impacts of zoo animals on visitors and
3. Evaluate the patterns and trends of visitation in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

Study areas

The Makurdi zoological garden (now named Riverville Resort) is situated in the eastern part of Makurdi in Benue State. It is situated within the Guinea savannah zone between latitudes 7°E and 75°N and longitudes 80°E and 80°N. The zoo is situated on the southern bank of River Benue which is half a kilometre off Makurdi-Gboko express road and consists about 25 hectares of land (Alarape, Yagar and Salman, 2015). The University of Ibadan has a zoological garden situated in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. The zoo is located between Latitude 7°26'48" N and Longitude 3°53'46" E (Adetola and Adedire, 2018).

Data collection

Data for the study is collected through Personal interview of zoo visitors who are first timers to the zoos and senior staff of the zoos that have worked for a minimum of 3 years in the zoo, Field observation, Administration of questionnaires and review of administrative record. Two sets of questionnaires were used for data collection. The first set was administered to all senior staff members of each zoo, as was done by Ijeomah, Ogogo and Ogbara, 2013. The second set of questionnaire was administered to five percent of the average annual visitor influx for 3 years in each zoo with a ratio of 2:1 for UI zoo and Mkd zoo as was used by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Based on this 112 and 79 respondents were sampled in UI zoo and Mkd zoo respectively. However, 106 and 53 questionnaires were respectively retrieved for UI zoo and Mkd zoo .

The population for the study were zoo visitors and senior staff members of the selected zoos.

Data analysis

Data collected were presented using descriptive statistics analysis in the form of frequencies, percentages, tables, pie charts and bar charts to show the differences in the demographic characteristics of the zoo visitors, strategies for attracting zoo visitors and the conservation impacts of the selected zoos. Chi-square was used to test for association between visitors' socio demographic characteristics and their level of conservation perception (i.e. the impacts of the zoo animals on the zoo visitors) from the two zoos. Data on patterns of visitation collected from the administrative record from one zoo were analyzed using Analysis of Variance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Strategies for Attracting Visitors in the Zoos

Results on strategies for attracting zoo visitors are presented in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5 and Figure 2.

Table 2 shows that majority of UI zoo visitors (92%) and Mkd zoo visitors (92%) are attracted by their friends and family.

Table 3 shows that the management of UI zoo has 8 tourism facilities, while Mkd zoo has 3 tourism facilities.

Table 4 shows that UI zoo has 7 supportive attractions, while Mkd zoo has 5 supportive attractions.

Table 5 shows that majority of the UI (60%) and few of Mkd zoo visitors (28%) are first timers Majority of Mkd return zoo visitors has visited atleast once (77.78%) while UI zoo return visitors who have visited twice (28%) ranks highest. UI zoo return visitors (45%) visited last more than 5 years ago while Mkd zoo return visitors (30.56%) visited last in the year 2018. Majority of Mkd zoo visitors (86%) thinks that the gate fee is affordable while majority of UI zoo visitors (60%) thinks the entrance fee is not affordable (Figure 2).

Table 2: Media of zoo awareness as indicated by visitors

Study Sites	Awareness medium	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo	Friends	56	56
	Family	36	36
	School	6	6
	Television	2	2
	Radio	0	0
	Fliers	0	0
	Total	100	100
Mkd zoo	Friends	31	62
	Family	15	30
	Radio	3	6
	Television	1	2
	Fliers	0	0
	Total	50	100

Table 3: Tourism facilities present in the zoos

Study sites	Tourism facilities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo	Children Playground	2	18.18
	Museum	2	18.18
	Exotic Animals	2	18.18
	Gazebo hall (for parties)	2	18.18
	Animal Diversity	1	9.09
	Structure	1	9.09
	Horse Riding	1	9.09
	Total	11	100
Mkd zoo	Children park	3	37.5
	Rental Hall	3	37.5
	Bar	2	25.00
	Total	8	100

Table 4: Supportive attractions present in selected zoos

Study sites	Supportive attractions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo	Horse riding	5	31.25
	Dam	4	25.00
	Museum	2	12.50
	Wildlife clinic	1	6.25
	Quarantine section	1	6.25
	Swimming pool	1	6.25
	Educational Unit	1	6.25
	Snackshop	1	6.25
	Total	16	100
	Mkd zoo	Rental hall	2
Children Park		2	25.00
Riverside		2	25.00
Beach		1	12.5
Two vehicles		1	12.5
Total		8	100

Table 5: Nature, trend and categories of visits in selected zoo visitors

Study Sites	Parameter	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)		
UI zoo	Nature of Visit	First time visitors	60	60.0		
		Return visitors	40	40.0		
		Total	100	100		
Mkd zoo	Nature of Visit	First time visitors	14	28.0		
		Return visitors	36	72.0		
		Total	50	100		
UI zoo	No of times Visited	Once	17	42.5		
		Twice	14	35.0		
		Trice	5	12.5		
		>Trice	4	10.0		
		Total	40	100		
	Mkd zoo	No of times Visited	Once	28	77.7	
			Twice	4	11.1	
			Trice	2	5.6	
			>Trice	2	5.6	
			Total	36	100	
UI zoo	Last v isit	Early 2019	5	12.5		
		2018	6	15.0		
		2017	3	7.5		
		2016	3	7.5		
		2015	5	12.5		
		More than 5 years ago	18	45.0		
		Total	40	100		
Mkd zoo	Last v isit	Early 2019	4	11.11		
		2018	11	30.56		
		2017	5	13.89		
		2016	2	5.56		
		2015	4	11.11		
		More than 5 years ago	10	27.78		
		Total	36	100		
UI zoo	Motivation of Visit	Love for animals	21	21		
		Friends	21	21		
		My kids	17	17		
		Family	15	15		
		Love for nature	12	12		
		Seminar/w orkshop	12	12		
		Fun	2	2		
		Total	100	100		
		Mkd zoo	Motivation of Visit	Friends	18	36
				Love for animals/adventure	14	28
Quiet Time	13			26		
Quest for knowledge	3			6		
son's birthday	2			4		
Total	50	100				

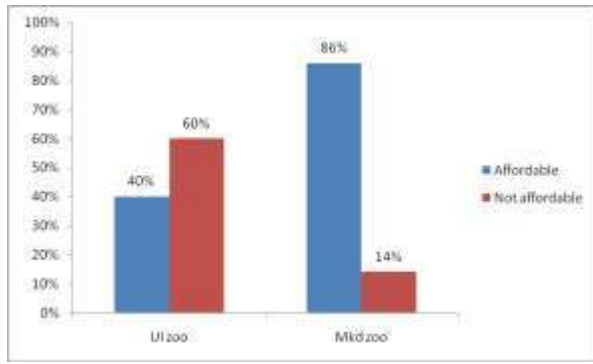


Figure 2: Affordability of entrance fee in selected zoos

Impacts of Zoo animals on Visitors

Results on Impacts of zoo animals on visitors are presented in tables 6,7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and figures 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Animals that rated high as seen for the first time in UI zoo visitors includes Lion (10.85%), Giraffe (10.47%) and Hyena (8.14%) while Lion (22.06%), Hyena (19.85%) and Monkeys (18.38%) was rated high as being seen for the first time by Mkd zoo visitors (Table 6). Table 7 shows that apart from game viewing, many UI zoo visitors (38.5%) and Mkd zoo visitors (32.58%) engaged in discussion. Other activities which zoo visitors engaged in while in the zoo includes family time out, photo shooting, relaxing and nothing. Table 8 shows that all the sections fascinated half of UI zoo visitors (50%) while River side fascinated many of Mkd zoo visitors (46%). Majority of UI zoo visitors are satisfied about their zoo experience in the zoo (figure 3) while 68% of Mkd zoo visitors are unsatisfied about their zoo experience (figure 4). Minority of UI zoo visitors (Figure 5) and Mkd zoo visitors (Figure 6) are extremely satisfied about their zoo experience. Table 9 shows that many of the UI zoo visitors (32.11%) indicated that animal diversity facilitated satisfaction, while many of Mkd zoo visitors (37.63%) indicated that serenity of the environment facilitated satisfaction. Table 10 shows that empty cages (18.22%), sighting malnourished animals (17%) and untidy environment (16.19%) causes dissatisfaction to UI zoovisitors, while sight of malnourished animals (33.33%), untidy environment (20.64%) and dilapidated structures (31.75%) causes dissatisfaction to Mkd zoo visitors.

Table 11 shows that majority of UI zoo visitors (78%) and many of Mkd zoo visitors (46%) prefer the use of tour guide strategy during environmental education. Figure 7 shows that majority of Mkd zoo visitors (62%) indicated inadequacy in creating environmental awareness in the zoo while 54% of UI zoo visitors considered environmental awareness adequate. Table 12 presents results of Chi square tests of associations. Chi square tests showed significant association ($p < 0.05$) between Visitors' level of income and willingness to pay (13.321), and motivation to visit ($\chi^2 = 46.667$); level of education and perceived effectiveness of strategies used for environmental education ($\chi^2 = 41.806$); income level and number of zoo visits per year ($\chi^2 = 70.915$); visitors' residence and perceived satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 1.175$); age and purpose of visit ($\chi^2 = 34.925$); family size and source of zoo awareness ($\chi^2 = 47.529$); and repeat visitation and conservation awareness ($\chi^2 = 3.681$) respectively in UI zoo. In the case of Mkd zoo there were significant association ($p < 0.05$) between visitors' gender and nature of visit ($\chi^2 = 4.153$); age and Conservation influence of visits ($\chi^2 = 14.059$); Marital status and purpose of visit (12.944); visitors' zoo awareness ($\chi^2 = 11.092$).

Table 6: Animals sighted for the first time by zoo visitors

Study sites	Seen for the first time	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo	Lion (<i>Panthera leo</i>)	28	10.85
	Giraffe (<i>Giraffa camelopardalis</i>)	27	10.47
	Spotted Hyena (<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>)	21	8.14
	African Grey Parrot (<i>Psittacus erithacus</i>)	20	7.75
	Monkeys	20	7.75
	Ostrich (<i>Struthio camelus</i>)	17	6.59
	Baboons	15	5.81
	Emu (<i>Dromaius novaehollandiae</i>)	15	5.81
	Civet cat (<i>Civettictis civetta</i>)	14	5.43
	Nile Crocodile (<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>)	10	3.88
	Other birds	9	3.49
	Common Warthog (<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>)	8	3.10
	None	7	2.71
	Almost all	7	2.71
	Royal Python (<i>Python regius</i>)	6	2.33
	Other snakes	6	2.33
	Chimpanzee (<i>Pan troglodyte</i>)	6	2.33
	Honey badger (<i>Mellivora capensis</i>)	6	2.33
	Marabou stork (<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>)	5	1.94
	Donkey (<i>Equus asinus</i>)	3	1.16
White Goose (<i>Chen caerulescens</i>)	2	0.78	
Turtle (<i>Trionyx triunguis</i>)	2	0.78	
Hooded vulture (<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>)	2	0.78	
Marabou Stork (<i>Leptoptilos crumenifer</i>)	1	0.39	
Bush hog (<i>Tragelaphus sylvaticus</i>)	1	0.39	
Total	258	100	
Mkd zoo	Lion (<i>Panthera leo</i>)	30	22.06
	Spotted Hyena (<i>Crocuta crocuta</i>)	27	19.85
	Monkeys	25	18.38
	Nile Crocodile (<i>Crocodylus niloticus</i>)	17	12.50
	Ostrich (<i>Struthio camelus</i>)	16	11.76
	Chimpanzee (<i>Pan troglodyte</i>)	14	10.29
	Antelope (<i>Aepyceros melampus</i>)	5	3.68
	None	2	1.47
	Total	136	100

Table 7: Other activities visitors participated in the zoos outside game viewing

Study Sites	Other activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo			
	Discussion	62	38.75
	None (thinking)	37	23.13
	Family time out	21	13.13
	Photo shooting	20	12.50
	Relaxing	17	10.63
	Long walk	3	1.88
	Total	160	100
Mkd zoo			
	Discussion	29	32.58
	None (thinking)	20	22.47
	Prayers/picnic	18	20.22
	Photo shooting	10	11.24
	Relaxing	10	11.24
	Long walk	2	2.25
	Total	89	100

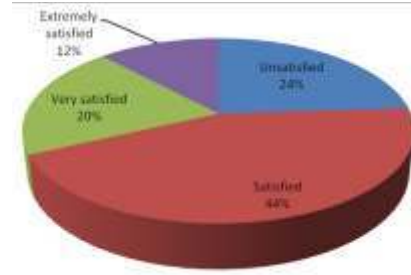


Figure 5: Assessment of visitors' level of satisfaction in UI Zoo

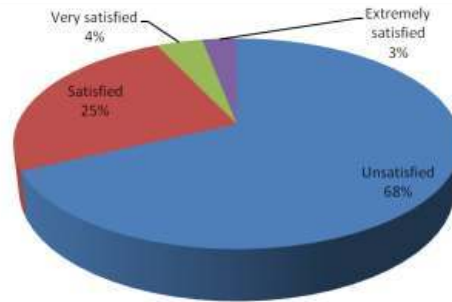


Figure 6: Assessment of visitors' level of satisfaction in Mkd Zoo

Table 8: Facilities that fascinated zoo visitors in the Zoos

Study Sites	Fascinating facilities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo			
	All sections	50	50
	Dam	15	15
	Serpentium	15	15
	Ape house	14	14
	Carnivores section	6	6
	Total	100	100
Mkd zoo			
	Riverside	23	46
	None	22	44
	Bar	3	6
	Children playground	2	4
	Total	50	100

Table 9: Factors that facilitated satisfaction of zoo visitors

Study Sites	Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo			
	Animal diversity in the zoo	61	32.11
	Animals' arrangement	43	22.63
	Number of animals in the zoo	28	14.74
	Quiet environment	26	13.68
	Lion Roar	20	10.53
	The convenience	7	3.68
	None	3	1.58
	Affordable Gatefee	2	1.05
		Total	190
Mkd zoo			
	Serenity of the environment	35	37.63
	Affordable Gatefee	30	32.26
	Love for nature	20	21.51
	Enough land space to cool off	5	5.38
	Good staff	3	3.23
	Total	93	100

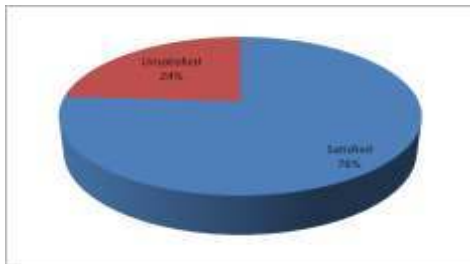


Figure 3: Assessment of visitors' satisfaction in UI Zoo

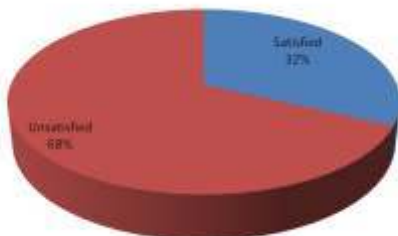


Figure 4: Assessment of visitors' satisfaction in Mkd Zoo

Table 10: Complains/Dislikes of zoo visitors in selected zoos

Study sites	Complains	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo			
	Empty cages	45	18.22
	Sighting unhealthy animals	42	17.00
	Untidy environment	40	16.19
	Expensive Gate fee	30	12.15
	Expensive tour guide	30	12.15
	Smelly Ape house	22	8.91
	Dilapidated structures	15	6.07
	Couldn't touch the animals	10	4.05
	Children's play things rusting and not child-friendly	7	2.83
	Thick wire guts blocking view	4	1.62
	Nothing	2	0.81
	Total	247	100
Mkd zoo			
	Sighting unhealthy animals	21	33.33
	Untidy environment	13	20.64
	Dilapidated structures	20	31.75
	Empty cages	9	14.29
	Total	63	100

Table 11: Environmental education strategies preferred by zoo visitors

Zoo	Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UI zoo	Tour Guide	78	78
	Sign post	9	9
	Pictures	8	8
	Fliers and stickers	5	5
	Total	100	100
Mkd zoo	Sign post	24	48
	Tour Guide	23	46
	Pictures	1	2
	Fliers and stickers	2	4
	Total	50	100

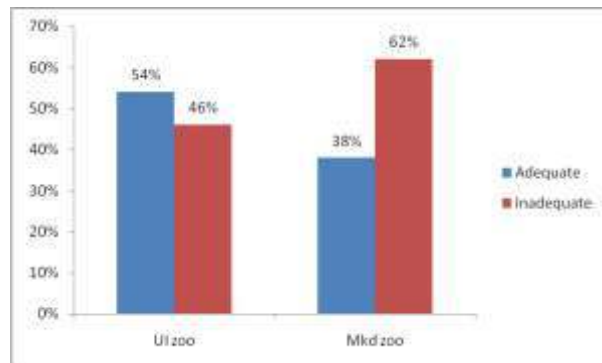


Figure 7: Zoos' adequacy in creating environmental awareness as indicated by visitors

Patterns and Trend of Visitation

It was observed the majority of UI zoo visitors and Mkd zoo visitors visited in a group which comprises mainly friends and family. Table 13 shows that the year 2009 had the highest average visitor influx in UI while year 2002 has the lowest. ANOVA test of the years and months are significant in UI zoo. The year, 2009 is significantly different from other years.

Table 13: Average Annual Visitor Influx of UI Zoo

Month	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	3475	9231	1332	16398	15000	15279	15279	17411	13777	25455	13163
February	4744	7082	8488	17092	12659	3752	10008	13218	19970	6018	7583
March	8863	5747	8250	14798	10764	10738	23927	15298	23213	13441	14661
April	9218	9002	14127	6300	5987	14890	11369	22730	17943	12367	19042
May	4563	4234	7083	5780	4765	5559	10228	12403	7031	10195	10486
June	6067	5715	6320	4869	5678	7276	8098	9677	10528	8628	8345
July	7282	5387	6931	5655	6301	7695	9645	9513	8575	8344	8318
August	8138	7180	8498	6574	7804	9524	11168	11525	11512	13765	19823
September	5599	5025	6439	5459	6386	8013	10861	27937	12666	8244	8423
October	4261	3529	3882	4155	8857	9530	8850	6144	7071	4883	12649
November	6330	8119	6780	8604	7021	7405	9439	9400	12034	17511	7990
December	20230	28251	13556	16457	19317	30043	35062	23944	18881	31201	28355
TOTAL	90770	98402	93696	112141	110539	131705	163934	181200	163201	159852	158836
AVERAGE	7564.17 ^a	8200.17 ^a	7808.00 ^a	9345.08 ^a	9211.58 ^a	10975.42 ^{ab}	13661.17 ^b	15100.00 ^c	13600.08 ^{bc}	13321.00 ^{bc}	13236.33 ^{bc}

DISCUSSION

Friends and family ranked first and second respectively (in the two zoos) as the media of zoo awareness. This can be attributed to the fact that families are made of individuals who have friends. Every individual visitor tries to share experience with close relations or people around him who could be either friends or family members. In essence, one

zoo visit leads to chains of visits from the social cycle of a particular visitor. This agrees with the report of Alarape *et al.*, 2017. In the case of electronic media, awareness is regularly being created through radio and television about zoos and environmental education especially during festive periods. Fliers are not used as a medium for creating environmental education in the two zoos. It may have been considered ineffective by management of the zoos. Electronic media and schools play a significant role in creating awareness about the existence of the zoos. This cannot be unconnected with the fact that environmental education is taught in many schools and that many educational institutions embark on excursion to zoos. In Plateau state, yearly visitation to zoos and wildlife parks has become part of the educational culture of schools in the state (Ijeomah, Ayodele, Alarape and Edet, 2005).

UI zoo has more tourism facilities and supportive attractions than Mkd zoo. Some facilities in UI zoo includes the children playground, an open space with swings, toys, swimming pool (although empty) and sit-out where parents can sit and observe their children play. The facility is cherished by children. Another facility is the Gazebo hall, a picnic centre constructed with thatch roof and concrete floor. The presence of horses also fascinates many young visitors who ride these horses and have photo shots while on the horses. Another fascinating attraction is the museum with taxidermised animals, different types of eggs and animal parts. Spreading information about the presence of these facilities among families, friends and in schools is an effective strategy for attracting visitors. The presence of wildlife clinic and quarantine section also fascinates some UI zoo visitors. Mkd zoo has children park (where visitors pay 200 naira/per child to be able to assess), the bar section which consists of different drinks for sale and the rental hall used for hosting events, and the riverside where visitors have picnics under tree shades while they are viewing the Benue River. The attractiveness of a zoo in terms of facilities, abundance and rarity of animals influences visitors' willingness to pay for captive tourism facilities and to repeat visits with close relations that could be friends, family or colleagues. This agrees with the findings of Adetola, Adenuga and Morenikeji (2016).

Majority of the UI zoo visitors (60%) are first timers while majority of Mkd zoo visitors (72%) are return visitors. This implies that UI zoo has more conservation reputation than Mkd zoo. Visitors to UI

zoo are from over 21 states in Nigeria. Majority of Mkd zoo visitors (72%) return to the zoo because there is no other zoo close to them. These return zoo visitors who are already aware of the zoo existence continue to visit out of necessity and zoo scarcity around them. Repeated visits in UI zoo can only be out of leisure to recreate again in the zoo and not out of zoo scarcity as experienced in Benue state where the close surrounding states like Nasarawa has no zoo. Many of Mkd return zoo visitors (77.78%) have visited at least once for over 5 years ago and have influenced many return visits (30.56%) in 2018. Once information is obtained, the desire for conservation education minimizes with repeat visits to the zoos (Tomas, Crompton and Scott, 2003). Thus, repeat visits can be to relax and enjoy time with family and friends (Ryan and Saward, 2004; Anderson, Kelling, Pressley-Keough, Bloomsmith and Maple, 2003) - Friends and love for animals are the major motivation of visits in the selected zoos. However, whether first time or return visits all forms of visitation to the zoo enables the visitor acquires a significant level of conservation education. Information on the motives of visits can be applied by zoo policy makers to make informed decisions when developing a marketing and satisfaction strategy to ensure the success and continuous relevance of the zoo as agreed by Jordaan and du Plessis (2014). The fact that zoo visitation is motivated by various factors (especially friends and love for animals) indicate that zoos still remain one of the closest means to nature and a place that encourages togetherness among friends and family.

Majority of Mkd zoo visitors (86%) agrees that a gate fee of 200 naira per visitor is affordable while majority of UI zoo visitors (60%) agrees that a gate fee of 500 naira per visitor is not affordable. This implies that visitors are willing to pay for the limited eco-destination services in Mkd and are willing to pay more if there is any attempt to improve the facilities. Personal interviews show that majority of UI zoo visitors who complained about expensive gate fee are first timers who are from different ecological backgrounds, visited many eco-destinations and have assessed different ecotourism facilities, thus, are not experiencing scarcity of ecotourism sites unlike majority of Mkd zoo visitors who are residents of Benue state, and are return visitors already familiar with the gate fee.

Lion (*Panthera leo*) and Spotted Hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*) have the greatest conservation impact on zoo visitors as many visitors of the two zoos

experienced their first live encounter with these species in the zoos. Ijeomah *et al.* (2019) similarly reported great excitement derived from viewing Lion (*P. leo*), Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*) and Spotted Hyena (*C. crocuta*) in Origin Garden and zoo. Other animals like Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*), African Grey Parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*), Nile Crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*), Ostriches (*S. camelus*), Baboon (*Papio papio*) and monkeys among others contributed greatly to excitement and conservation impacts on zoo visitors. UI zoo visitors have more first encounters with live animals than Mkd zoo visitors because of the richer animal diversity in UI zoo. More so, many of the UI zoo visitors were first timers and from distances outside the host state. In the case of Mkd zoo, the visitors have repeated many times. Viewing live animals in captivity sensitizes satisfaction in zoo visitors' experience.

Apart from game viewing, quite a number of UI zoo visitors (38.75%) and Mkd zoo visitors (32.58%) engaged in discussion activities while in the zoo. Discussion of the animals, survival, conservation impact and life style of animals by visitors especially in group visits arouses more conservation interests of the visitors concerning biodiversity conservation. Also, zoo visitors who have not met before, connect, share and discuss about their diverse zoo experiences within the zoo premises. These interactions create and spread conservation awareness. After moving round to view animals, some UI zoo visitors (23.13%) and Mkd zoo visitors (22.47%) stayed alone to critically think and meditate about their zoo experience and nature while in the zoo with so much concentration. This gives more understanding of the resources in the zoo. When these visitors leave the zoo, they interact and share their experiences within their community, thus creating more conservation awareness. Other recreational activities zoo visitors carry out include relaxation, photo-shoots, family time out, prayers and picnics. These experiences are shared in social media, hence facilitating growth in conservation awareness. This implies that every zoo visit facilitates conservation awareness which agrees with the findings of Ryan and Saward (2004) that many zoo visitors experience conservation education via recreation even when the educational aspect is not the major motive of zoo visits. All the sections of UI zoo fascinated half of the visitors. The structures of UI zoo are comparatively better planned, organized and arranged more than the Mkd zoo.

Animals are more aesthetically arranged in UI zoo to show their behavioural nature and habitat condition. Carnivores are displayed in enclosures with strong bars and wire guard to protect zoo visitors, herbivores are displayed in spaced grassland to mimic their natural habitat, aves and apes are displayed with climbing and perching enrichments, Nile Crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*), West African mud Turtle (*Pelusios castaneus*) and Muscovy ducks (*Carina moschata*) are placed with pond-like enrichments, snakes are carefully displayed in large glass cases, barricaded in a small-hole wire gauze to allow air and sunlight for the animals and to ensure clear view and safety of the zoo visitors. These forms of arrangements give visitors an insight of the natural home of the species and therefore a good understanding why the natural environment should not be destroyed for the sake of protecting the habitat of games. Some other animals like the donkeys and horses are allowed to range freely in the ranches. Visitors are permitted to ride horses for enhancement of "see and touch" experience. This aids satisfaction. The selected zoos are consciously mapped out and located close to water. Many of Mkd zoo visitors (46%) and some UI zoo visitors (15%) are attracted and fascinated by this natural embodiment of the River Benue and mini dam respectively. The sight of water bodies and water shed trees around it brings about relaxation in a relatively cooler environment. Similarly, Ijeomah *et al.* (2019) reported that the major tourist attractions of Elegushi tourist beach and Origin garden/zoo are the view of the Atlantic Ocean and that cool breeze from the water bodies has a healing effect of easing stress. Some other animals like the African Civet cat (*Civettictis civetta*), Tortoise (*Testudo graeca*), Grey Crowncrane (*Balearica regulorum*) in UI zoo were deliberately scattered far from their behavioural-related animals to fascinate zoo visitors. The museum which displayed taxidermies of animals in their make-believe live nature is always locked but opened only on request. Many UI zoo visitors do not use this facility because they are not aware of its existence as it is located in the administrative block. Even though there is mapped out section called "zoovenir" for displaying and selling souvenirs to UI zoo visitors, it is closed and not functioning. The zoo sells animal-related books as souvenirs at the entrance of the zoo instead. Mkd zoo is yet to have both the Museum and the zoovenir. Inaccessibility of this facility limits the conservation impact of the zoo on visitors. Mkd zoo is devoid of these many facilities.

Majority of the UI zoo visitors (76%) are satisfied with their experience while majority of Mkd zoo visitors (68%) are not satisfied. This implies that the ecotourism resources of UI zoo facilitated satisfaction of its visitors. Mkd zoo can satisfy their visitors when the animal diversity and abundance increases with more facility provided. This agrees with the report of Adetola, *et al.* (2016). Only a few of the UI zoo visitors (12%) and very few Mkd zoo visitors (3%) are very satisfied with their experiences, the remaining greater proportion of the zoo visitors are yet to reach their maximum satisfaction level as a result of the lapses in maintaining high sanitation and animal care required in the two zoos. The use of these ecotourism facilities and resources in the zoo improves visitors' conservation education level and enhances ecotourism growth. In order to continuously ensure optimum satisfaction and standard/updated conservation education for the attracted zoo visitors, the management of UI zoo embark on staff training and empowerment on two years basis. Training on "Best Practice in zoo keeping" was held for 40 UI zoo staff on the 6-8th November, 2012. Another International training workshop on "Wildlife and zoo management in the 21st century" was held on 4 -7th November, 2014. These staff trainings were organized by the University of Ibadan zoological garden for every zoo member of the Nigerian Association of Zoological Gardens and Wildlife Parks (NAZAP). Selected staff members are sent for advance trainings abroad atleast every 5 years depending on available fund. The trained UI zoo staff in return empowers atleast 20 Industrial Training (IT) students of Zoology and Wildlife Management on yearly basis. The management of Mkd zoo does not engage in any form of staff or student trainings and are yet to identify with NAZAP.

Animal diversity, arrangement (22.63%) and the number of animals (14.74%) facilitated satisfaction of the UI zoo visitors while serenity of the environment (37.63%), affordable gate fee (32.26%) and love for nature (21.51%) aided satisfaction of Mkd zoo visitors. UI zoo visitors derive satisfaction as they tour round the zoo and study the numerous animals' names and features which are interestingly detailed in the explanatory tags while Mkd zoo has poor facilities for detailed information about displayed animals as some animals are displayed with no explanatory texts or with a rusted/unclear name tags in the zoo.

Mkd zoo visitors are therefore only satisfied with the serene and natural environment and gate fee which can also be prized down depending on the number of group visitors. Similarly Ijeomah *et al.* (2019) reported that tourists draw excitement from the serenity of the family park in Lekki conservation center. The study also agrees with the findings of Jordaan and du Plessis (2014) that zoological gardens exist to continuously satisfy visitors

The sight of unhealthy animals and empty cage causes dissatisfaction in the selected zoos. This implies that improved veterinary services and more animals are highly needed in both zoos. Oral interview revealed that the absence of the dead Mountain male and female Gorillas (*Gorilla beringa beringa*) which are yet to be replaced is causing dissatisfaction to many UI zoo visitors. UI return zoo visitors complained of degraded general maintenance of the zoo and are still hoping for replacement of the Mountain Gorillas (*Gorilla beringa beringa*) and acquisition of new attractive animals preferably the big five animals like the African Elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), Hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), Black Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros diceros*) and Mountain zebra (*Equus zebra*). Karanikola *et al* (2014) and Ward, Mosberger, Kisler and Fishcher (1998) similarly reported that large animals are great interests to zoo visitors although they are not cheap to maintain.

Sight of dilapidated structures and untidy environment dissatisfied half of Mkd zoo visitors (52.39%). Personal observation revealed encroachment for farming in significant proportion of the Mkd zoo. Visitors of Mkd zoos complained of poor management of the eco-destination. Few UI visitors complained of their inability to touch the animals. This can be attributed to poor understanding of the ethics of zoo management. Despite the numerous unpleasant factors in both zoos, they still attract visitors on daily basis.

The use of tour guide was the conservation education strategy preferred by most visitors (78%) in UI zoo. This can be attributed to the fact that tour guiding is interactive, it offers visitors the opportunity to get many explanations concerning the behavioural lifestyle of animal species. Moreover the tour guide can provide answers to numerous questions asked by the visitors. The use of tour guide brings about effective conservation impact of zoos on visitors. Notwithstanding the fact that it costs N1000 to use tour guide in UI zoo, it remained the most preferred because visitors may have had insight of the

potential effects in conservation information dissemination. The use of signpost was the most preferred in Mkd zoo because of the absence of tour guide. Signpost is not interactive for effective environmental education impact in cases of students' excursion. Notwithstanding the absence of tour guiding in Mkd zoo, it still ranked second in the order of preference among visitors. This is because of the potential effectiveness as perceived by both those who have used it in other zoos and those who have not. This agrees with the report of Uloko and Iwar (2011). Similarly Ijeomah and Abazi (2014) stated that excursion and industrial attachments (interactive tools) were among the most effective environmental education strategies to visitors in the zoo section of College of wildlife, New Bussa. Without the financial payment, the impact of using tour guide would have been more from UI zoo but it would have required many staff to satisfy the visitors as there are limited number of tour guide. Some zoo visitors especially couples on a family outing prefer signposts as this strategy encourages privacy during the long walk round the zoo. More so, some visitors prefer using tour guide only once and move around privately during repeat visits.

More than half of UI zoo visitors (54%) perceived that strategies used for creating environmental awareness in the zoo was adequate while in Mkd zoo visitors, majority (62%) rated the awareness strategies inadequate. This implies that Mkd zoo needs more services of tour guides and improved signposts to enhance quality conservation education. Zoos need to continuously maintain standard to ensure that visitors enjoy their visits, this increases chances of repeat visits as visitors' motivations and support remain intact if zoos continue to reach their expectations (Jordaan and du Plessis, 2014). Majority of UI zoo visitors (69%) and Mkd zoo visitors (72%) were willing to make repeat visits to the zoos. This implies that people will continue to visit the zoos as long as they exist. Mkd zoo visitors visit majorly out of necessity to recreate coupled with scarcity of zoos around. If there is a better zoo around, many of Mkd zoo visitors will not hesitate to tour there. The expected repeat of UI zoo visitors is influenced by the business activity and conference tourism which may demand their presence in close proximity with the zoo in the nearest future. Some zoo visitors do not intend to visit the selected zoos again until there is improvement in the management of the zoos.

Chi square analysis showed significant association ($p < 0.05$) between visitors' gender and conservation perception in Mkd zoo. This implies that female visitors patronize the zoo in groups than males. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between UI zoo visitors' level of education and perception on conservation education. This implies that educated people showed more interest in conservation education in UI zoo than none formally educated or less educated visitors. This agrees with the report of Federica (2015) that those who participate in nature-based tourism are usually educated people. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between UI zoo visitors' income level and perception on conservation education. This implies that the higher the visitors' income the higher the chances for more zoo visits. This agrees with the report of Adetola, *et al.*, 2017 that the willingness to pay for game viewing in zoos is influenced by the level of income. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between UI zoo visitors' residence and perception on conservation education. This implies that zoo visitors might have acquired conservation education from various locations in Nigeria, as their place of residence spread over 21 states unlike that of Mkd zoo visitors. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between UI zoo visitors' age and perception of conservation education. Age differences bring about different experiences and encounters with nature. Adult zoo visitors who have more life experiences and parental responsibilities visit the zoo mainly to educate their children while younger people visit as a result of curiosity over what they have read or learnt in school. This agrees with the findings of Ryan and Glendon (1998) that tourists who desired active interactive experiences in tourist destinations are young people. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between UI zoo visitors' family size and perception on conservation education. People from smaller family size have more privilege to visit zoo because of less challenges while visitors from larger family sizes may not be able to afford the luxury of zoo trips. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between Mkd zoo visitors' marital status and perception on conservation education. Many singles persons have more chances to travel far and wide and become equipped with vast knowledge including on conservation education. Family responsibility which comes with marriage influences the motive of visit and the satisfaction derived. A zoo visitor whose children want to see zoo animals on family event will automatically patronize zoo visits even though the

visit is not satisfying. There is significant association ($p < 0.05$) between UI zoo visitors who have visited before and their level of conservation awareness. Many repeat visits by zoo visitors are done to have fun or have time out with friends and family. Satisfaction is not derived when there is no change in the conservation education previously acquired. However, every zoo visit has a conservation impact on the zoo visitors (Adetola and Oluleye, 2017).

It was observed that the selected zoos attract different groups, families, social and religious groups. UI zoo and Mkd zoo respectively attracted 83 and 43 groups in two days during none festive period. The different groups which comprise individuals ranging from 5 to 30 persons visit the zoos more during the weekends. UI zoo clearly attracts more people on conference tourism due to its location in the the western part of Nigeria and inside the pioneer university. Ijeomah *et al.* (2019) stated that there is high development of the different types of ecotourism in the western part of Nigeria as a result of high level of economic and infrastructural development. Although Mkd zoo is located inside the city of Benue state, it has more number of family group visits than other social group visits. This can be attributed to the necessity of recreational activities in a zoo. Many Mkd zoo visitors revisit out of necessity to recreate and learn even though the zoo has dilapidated structures in the premises. This implies that renovated structures with high aesthetic value will encourage more visits.

The year 2002 had the lowest monthly average visitors' influx in UI zoo. During this year, diversification of Nigerian non-oil economy was newly introduced. The tourism and ecotourism sector was yet to gain attention of the growing economy (ThisDay, 2002), hence attributing to the low visitor influx to UI zoo.

The year 2009 had the highest monthly average visitor influx of 15,100 in UI zoo. The diversification of Nigerian economy increased ecotourism trips by Nigerians, along with the growth of the country's other non-oil industries, thus, increased Gross Domestic Product of Nigeria to 8.4% in the fourth quarter of 2009 (Nigerian Curiosity, 2010: Country Economy, 2009).

The year 2009 is significantly different from other years as all the strategies used to create awareness in the zoo was consistent more than other years. The month of December, 2018 had the highest visitor influx for the period of 10 years, which ascertains that

zoos have high visitor influx during festive periods. Many visitors/tourists prefer visitation of eco-destinations during the festive periods as reported by many studies (Ijeomah and Alao 2007; Ijeomah *et al.*, 2007; Ijeomah Eniang, Halidu and Onyejekwe, 2015 and Ijeomah, Abere and Ugwu, 2018). The end of the year vacations in the month of December encourages visits to recreational areas such as zoo. Mkd zoo had no record on visitation trend.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The selected zoos attract visitors of all groups of ages, educational levels, economic and cultural backgrounds using radio and good reputation as media of awareness. In addition, friends and family motivated many zoo visits in the selected zoos while zoo location, relative animal diversity, trained staff, availability of ecotourism facilities and supportive attractions contributed to more visits in UI zoo than Mkd zoo. Mkd zoo is very deficient in conservation and facilities. The zoo is more focused on revenue generation and therefore compromises conservation sustainable tourism objectives for economic reasons. However, it serves as a site where group of persons meet for recreation.

The zoos experience the highest influx of visitors during festive and holiday periods. Visitors' level of conservation awareness is influenced by their place of residence and level of education while willingness to pay for captive ecotourism facilities is influenced by visitors' level of income. The use of tour guides and signposts are the most preferred and effective methods of impacting conservation education. Dilapidated structures, insufficient and poor maintenance of the major ecotourism resources (zoo animals), untidy environment, poor funding and insufficient trained staff contributes to dissatisfaction of visitor in the selected zoos. The study destinations were poor in keeping conservation records and this hinders the growth of conservation and ecotourism effective zoo management cannot be completely achieved without effective record keeping.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made from the study.

1. Government should provide more financial support to the selected zoo to facilitate effective animal welfare management in the zoo.
2. Recruitment of more professional staff members in the zoos is recommended to enhance effective administration of conservation education to zoo.

visitors and the public in general.

3. Provision of more ecotourism facilities and supportive attractions is highly recommended in the selected zoos (especially Mkd zoo) to improve the zoos' aesthetic value and ensure that visitors experience maximum recreation satisfaction.
4. The management of UI zoo and Mkd zoo should make more efforts for proper documentation of visitors' activities/influx, logistics, animal welfare report, animal death rates and birthrates, staff trainings, financial records, all resources input and output in the selected zoos to enhance effective management of zoos.
5. More conservation awareness should be created by the selected zoos to educate the general public of the importance of biodiversity conservation.
6. There should be an active organization connecting all zoos to enhance effective flow of conservation knowledge and techniques.
7. Provision of consistent and standard staff trainings on zoo management is highly recommended to ensure growth of conservation education impacts

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CHALLENGES OF RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT IN ADO-AWAYE SUSPENDED
TOURIST CENTRE, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated the challenges of Restaurant management in Ado Awaye Suspended Lake Centre, Iseyin Local Government Area of Oyo state. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 120 respondents in the study area. The instrument used for data collection was a well structured questionnaire administered to staff, and the respondents that patronized the tourist center. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Result shows that a larger proportion of the respondents were male 63% and they were married and educated while 4% were poorly educated. About 42% of the respondents suggested that there should be a set restaurant at the tourist centre. According to the religion it was evident that 42% were Christian while 46% were Muslim respondents. More so, majority of the respondent fell between ages 20-29 and there categories were engaged single and newly wedded 63% of the respondents said they had visited restaurant here before and next time they will visited the tourist centre, they would want something better to offered 40% of the respondents said the overall quality of the restaurant service was poor while 33% said it was good. Up to 71% of the respondents suggested a tourist centre is not complete without restaurant service. The study recommends that there should be a set of better restaurants and regular health education on the dangers of dirt.

Key words: Ado-awaye, restaurant, suspended lake, tourism, tourist attraction

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INTRODUCTION

A restaurant or an eatery is a business which prepares and serves food and drinks to customers in exchange for money. Meals are generally served and eaten on the premises but many restaurants also offer take away and food delivery services. Restaurants vary greatly in appearance and offering, including a wide variety of cuisines and service models ranging from inexpensive fast food restaurant and cafeteria, to mid-priced family restaurant, to high-priced luxury establishments (Okoli, 2002). In European countries, most mid-to high-range restaurants serve alcoholic beverage such as beer and wine. Some restaurants serve all the major meals, such as breakfast, lunch and dinner (e.g.; major fast food chains, dinners, hostel restaurants and airport restaurants). Other restaurants may only serve a single meal (for example, a pan cake house may only serve breakfast) or they may serve two meals (e.g.; lunch and dinner) (e.g. tapes bar, a sushi train, a taste restaurant, a buffet restaurant or a this, restaurant may differentiate themselves on factors including speed (see fast food), formality, location, cost service or novelty themes (such as automated restaurants).

Restaurant range from inexpensive and informal lunching or dining places catering to people working nearby, with modest food served in sample setting at low prices, to expensive establishment serving refried food and fire wines in a formal setting. In the former case, customers usually wear casual clothing. In the latter case, depending on culture and local traditions, customer might wear semi-casual, semi-formal wear. Typically, at mid-to high priced restaurants, customers sit at tables, their orders are taken by a waiter, who brings the food when it is ready. After eating, the customers pay the bill. In some restaurants, such as workplace cafeterias, there are no waiter's the customers use trays, on which they place cold items that they select from a refrigerated container and hot items which they requested from cooks, and they pay a cashier before they sit down. Another restaurant approach which uses few waiters is the buffet restaurant. Customers serve food onto their own plates and then pay at the end of the meal. The travelling public has long been catered for with ship's messes and railway restaurant cars which are in effect, travelling restaurant-many railways, the world over, also cater for the needs of travelers by provoking railway refreshment rooms, a

form of restaurant, at railway stations. In the (2000s,) a number of travelling restaurants, specifically defined for tourists, have been created. These can be found in trains, and boats, buses. Effective restaurant management is balancing many different groups and processes in a seamless operation food costs, inventory tracking, staff scheduling, food production, customer service and marketing are paid of restaurant management (Lewis, 1988).

Restaurant management

Effective restaurant management is balancing many different groups and processes in a seamless operation food costs, inventory tracking, staff scheduling food production, customer service and marketing are paid of restaurant management. (Lewis, 1988). Restaurant industry is a booming sector nowadays that has established itself as brand. Restaurant service are getting more advanced with their culinary skills and techniques. They are aware of the facts that markets does not deal with only serving food but it also takes care of all customer for hesitance preparing menu, select the theme, arranging tables, napkin folds.

Statement of problem

Restaurant play a very key role in any tourism Centre which relief the tourists from whatever stress they might have gone through during the tour experience by providing cool environs for relaxation, nice cuisine and good music. Thereby it was observed that most tourism centre lack such experience like poor working condition due to a number of factors including lack of equipment and facilities to accommodate tourists.

Research questions

- 1.What is the importance of restaurant management in tourism centres?
- 2.Do the food restaurant provided meet up the expectations of the tourists?
- 3.Do the tourist accept the Ado Awaye delicacy
- 4.Do the tourists satisfy feel home away from home?

Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to determine the impact of restaurant management service in tourism
The specific objectives are to:
1.determine the effect of standard restaurant management on tourism Centre
2.identify the role of restaurant management service on tourist patronage.

3. known the acceptability of Ado Awaye special delicacy among the tourists
4. Access tourists' satisfaction to feel home away from home with conducive environment.

Scope of the study

The scope of the study is to known the important role restaurant management plays in tourism and to educate and guide tourists on how and where to spend their vacation trips with special delicacy experience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

The study was carried out in Ado-Awaye suspended lake in Oyo state. It is about 20km off Iseyin, Iseyin Local Government Area (L.G.A) of Oyo state.

Population of the study

The target population of the study are staff and tourist that patronize Ado-Awaye suspended lake in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Sampling

The study adopted the simple random sampling technique to select individuals who patronized the selected tourist centre. The sample size of one hundred and twenty (120) from fifty household heads, was used base on their age and level of education.

Data collection

Primary data was sourced from the respondents through the aid of well structured questionnaires and secondary data was sourced from the administrative records. Respondents were tourists and staff. Questionnaire was structured to cover the evaluation of the challenges of restaurant management in tourism Centre in the study area.

Data analysis

Data was edited and analyzed using simple descriptive statistics frequency tools, like table, distribution and percentage

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents according to their age

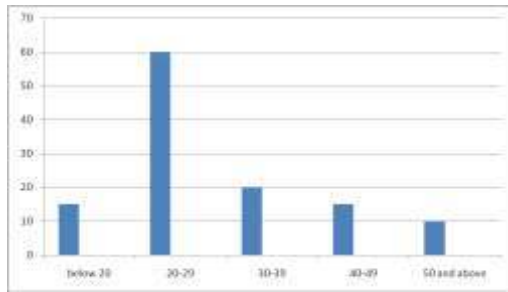


Table 1 shows the total numbers of 120 respondents in a questionnaire. The table shows that 15 of the respondents are below 20 years of age, this category falls among the children who came with their parent and those that come on excursion from school.

Moreover, majority of the respondent fall between age 20 to 29 this categories are the engaged single and newly wedded furthermore 20 of the respondent are of age between 30-39, this categories are young couple. Also, 15 of the respondent are between the ages of 40-49, while the remaining 10 respondents are 50 years and above.

Table 2: Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents according to their religion

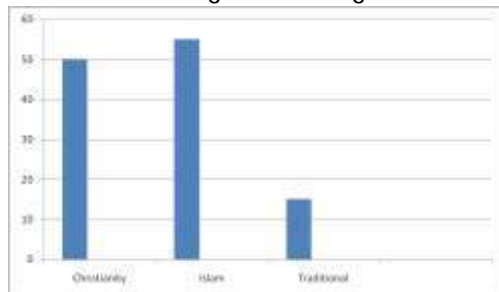


Table 2 show that 42.0% of the respondents are Christianity; also 46% of the respondents are Islam while the remaining 12% are of the Traditional. Islam has the highest percentage of the religion.

Table 3: Bar Chart showing the distribution of respondents according to their marital status

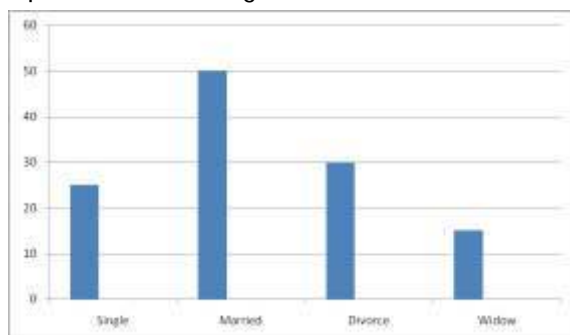


Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents according to the status, it shows that 21% of respondents are single, also 42% of respondents are married while 25% of respondents are divorce and the remaining 12% respondents are widows. From the result of the study it was evident that tourist in the study area, Ado Awaye Suspended Lake is daily patronized by 63% married and educated people with figure value of 42% bring food from their when coming to the tourist centered. According to the religion, it was evident that 46% are Islam while 42% are Christianity of the respondent Moreover, majority of the respondent falls to Age of 20 – 29 and this categories are the newly engaged 50% of the respondent here before 83% said next time they will want something better to be offered 4% of the respondent said the overall quality of the catering service is poor while 33% said is good About 71% of the respondent suggested a tourist centre is not complete without catering service. Furthermore 4% of the respondents said the behaviors of the staff is poor 8% said it is average while 50% said it is good 12% the staff is very good while the remaining 26% said it is excellent, 12% of the respondents said the tourist rated restaurant management in Ado Awaye suspended lake poor, 4% said it is average while 33% said it is good 42%, while the reaming 8% said is excellent.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Tourism in most Africa countries in and beyond has risen to become one of the main sectors for income generating, job creation and poverty eradication. It is very possible that this can also be done in Nigeria, especially Oyo state with great potential of tourist attraction. But these can only be achieved if necessary tourist can be put in other to encourage the patronage. As much as adventure lies at the heart of tourists, safety will always be top priority hence solutions that ensure safety and serenity should be well taken care of.

Based on the finding of the study recommendation were made:

- (i) Government should help to build a better set of restaurant equipped with modern facilities
- (ii) Intensified health education on the dangers of dirty surrounding should be under taken by the health department.
- (iii) Government should put more effort on tourism centre in Oyo state so as to meet up with others in outside the country.
- (iv) Student also take a cognitive advantages of tourism as a course of study in our institution of learning

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FOOD TOURISM IN REGIONAL BRANDING AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH-EAST NIGERIAE. N. Ukabuilu¹
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ABSTRACT

The rise of the experience economy has ushered in a growing role of food culture in tourism. This review of recent developments in the field of food and tourism experiences underlines the ways in which food culture can be adopted to meet tourist needs, how culinary tourism can play a role in local development, create new tourism products, stimulate innovation and support marketing and branding. Food is a key part of all cultures, a major element of global intangible heritage and an increasingly important attraction for tourists. The linkages between food and tourism also provide a platform for local economic development, which can be strengthened by the use of food experiences for branding and destination marketing. This paper provides an understanding of the role of food tourism in local economic development and its potential for regional branding. A conceptual analysis and review of relevant literature is undertaken for the paper based on review of referred articles and discussion papers in key academic hospitality and tourism management journals. The paper seeks to assist budding entrepreneurs to make informed decisions in the food tourism sector and the experience industry, with recommendations that minimize the constraints of food tourism development.

Keywords: Destination marketing, economic development, food entrepreneurs, tourist destination, food tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

The increase in the culinary travel goes along with a rise in emphasis on food throughout the world. Today's tourist is better informed, more cultured, well traveled and looking for new experiences and adventures. They are interested in leading a healthy lifestyle and want to experience the local culture when they go on holiday (Walker and Evans, 2012). Food is a key part of all cultures, a major element of global intangible heritage and an increasingly important attraction for tourists (Nwokorie and Adeniyi, 2021). The linkages between food and tourism also provide a platform for local economic development (Geng-qing Chi, AbKarim and Gursoy, 2010), which can be strengthened by the use of food experiences for branding and marketing destinations.

One of the major challenges in the experience is dealing with the shift towards intangible culture and heritage (OECD, 2012). The focus of many tourists has changed from the classic 'must see' physical sights such as museums and monuments towards a 'must-experience' imperative to consume intangible expressions of culture such as atmosphere, creativity and lifestyle (Geng-qing Chi *et al*, 2010; Nwokorie and Adeniyi, 2020). This change in focus provides new opportunities for tourist destinations as

well as new challenges, particularly in the area of experience development, marketing and branding. Food is of course a physical necessity, but it embodies cultural identity and individuality, giving the tourist an insight into a new experience, the exotic, the unusual and a deeper insight into the place they are visiting. Food tourism could be commercial or domestic, festive or ordinary, involving restaurants, festivals, cookbooks, specialty food stores, food events, cookery classes, films, brochures, food and wine tours and other similar ways of physically experiencing the product (Walker and Evans, 2012). But there are also the tangible aspects of food and drink that provide a knowledge base into the religion, traditions, customs and history of other places, in which food entrepreneurs can explore for business and wealth creation. This paper therefore provides an understanding of the role of food tourism in local economic development and its potential for regional and country branding.

LITERATURE REVIEW**Understanding Food Tourism**

Food and wine are vital components of the tourism experience and are increasingly being seen as prime travel motivators in their own right. In defining food tourism, there is a need to differentiate tourists who

consume food as a part of the travel experience and those tourists whose activities, behaviours and, even, destination selection is influenced by an interest in food. Still, it does not mean that any trip to a restaurant is food tourism; the definition is more complex. Culinary tourism or food tourism is experiencing the food of the country, region or area, and is now considered a vital component of the tourism experience (McKercher, Okumus and Okumus; 2008). Dining out is common among tourists and food is believed to rank alongside climate, accommodation, and scenery in importance to tourists.

Culinary tourism can rightly be defined as the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences. Culinary tourism differs from agritourism in that culinary tourism is considered a subset of cultural tourism (cuisine is a manifestation of culture), whereas agritourism is considered a subset of rural tourism, but culinary tourism and agritourism, according to Wolf (2006), are inextricably linked, as the seeds of cuisine can be found in agriculture. Ellis, Park, Kim and Yeoman (2018) referred culinary tourism to food related activities in terms of cultural consumption, and food tourism to those as physical experiences, motivated by adventure and learning new culture along the way. Yeoman (2008) wrote that food is a significant aspect of the tourist's experience of a destination, driven by the growing trends of authenticity and the need to have a high-quality experience. Food tourism shapes gastro destinations such as France, Italy and California (OECD, 2012). Emerging destinations like Nigeria should take a cue from these exotic destinations and ensure that food plays an important role in the overall tourists' experience.

Type of Experience Required

Food tourism includes all unique and memorable food experiences, not just 'four star' or critically acclaimed restaurants. Price is not necessarily indicative of quality in food tourism themes (Ellis *et al.*, 2018). According to a research by Tourism Queensland (TQ) in 2003, true food tourists are perfectly happy at a roadside café in the middle of nowhere, as long as there is something memorable about their visit. Tourist consumers (in Australia) were asked to list aspects that make a place a good food destination and results of the research revealed that regional food got 36% of the responses, variety in the cuisine got 73%, tradition 9% and the reputation of the food service destination got 18% of

the responses (TQ, 2003).

In addition to sampling local food and dishes, food tourists are also likely to engage in some other activities (visit museums and zoological gardens, go shopping, attend music and/or film festivals, participate in general outdoor recreation) during their holiday (Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis and Cambourne, 2003), and this can have a positive multiplier effect on the economy of the immediate environment (Wolf, 2006).

Importance of Food Tourism to the Local Economy

Food is very important to the tourism industry. Food, wine and alcohol are key elements of anyone's vacation. Most day trips begin and end with a local food treat of food and/or drink. Visitors may have become a lot choosier on what they spend their money on, but they are also highly experimental and open to new ideas and tastes. A location can now become a tourist hotspot purely because of its local food and drink.

Food and wine play a significant role in the tourism strategy for many destinations, whether they are large or small. Hall (2012) wrote that in Scotland Whisky tourism is estimated to add £30.4 million to the economy in 2013, with 86% of all distillery visitors coming from outside of Scotland. Food tourism's primary role is to package visitor experiences that already exist and market them to the different tourism markets. However, a major difficulty in measuring food tourism impact in Southeast Nigeria tourism outlook is that actual statistics of inbound visitations or tourism revenue from existing food festivals and related food tourism events is neither articulate nor supported by data.

Boosting Food and Tourism-related Regional Economic Development

Intangible assets are fast becoming the basis for regional economic competitiveness through tourism strategies (OECD, 2012). The question of who benefits should be fundamental in assessing regional economic development policies and strategies. In order to utilize food tourism as an economic development driver, it is important to encourage visitors to stop, spend and stay longer (Hall, 2012). Food producers require the enabling environment for their business to thrive, and a wider publicity for their product and service to be identified in the tourism market. Retaining visitor expenditure,

developing networks with a host of regional stakeholders and the development of intellectual capital are important if food tourism is to be integrated within wider regional development strategies. However, the extent to which food producers become part of the business mix in tourism development initiatives depends on overall business goals, policies, location and target market.

Harnessing Sub-regional Food Products for Sustainable Tourism

Tourism does not grow in isolation in a given geographical location. Granted that the food products of a destination are keys to the culinary attractiveness of the area, other sub-regional food products can equally play a significant role in destination marketing. Notably, the abundant sub regional Nigerian delicacies (Table 1) could be harnessed for rebranding the Southeast as a tourism hub that caters for the cuisine needs of all strata of local and foreign tourists craving for any form of local Nigerian cuisine. Consequently, inbound (international) tourists to Southeast Nigeria would be able to get all necessary culinary attractions of the Nigerian nation in the region. Therefore, finding major or diverse Nigerian cuisine in Southeastern Nigeria would significantly place the Southeast on a higher pedestal, thus branding the region as the nucleus of the Nigerian tourism market. Interestingly, it would improve tourists' stay and increase tourists' expenditure and consequently enhancing the wellbeing of the local people who are involved in the production of the various cuisines overtime.

Products and Resources of Food Tourism

Food Trails: A great tourism product is the food trail. Hall (2012) wrote that a trail is a collection of individual experiences, provided by businesses whose primary function is not necessarily tourism. Culinary trails combining agriculture and food produced from a cultural background with tourism can help in creating a variety of tourist products based on cultural heritage (Niedbała, Jíczmyk, Steppa and Uglis, 2020). Faversham in the UK has successfully utilized food trails to promote local food and drink businesses (Walker and Evans, 2012).

Food trail is seen as a narrow linear route primarily intended for food related recreational travel (Marsh, 2004), though the food manufacture primary function is to produce food. However tourism may be a small element of direct sales but a very important part of

their national and international marketing strategy (Kivela and Crotts, 2006). Tourists, whether local, national or international are customers for their products, so each business needs to decide for themselves how important tourism is for their business and the value they invest in the tourism activities. In addition, community food suppliers will benefit from increased sales through increase usage by local café, restaurants and hotels who are all gaining more trade from tourists.

Food Festivals: Hall (2012) observed that Wales is one country that has recognized the important contribution that food festivals can make to strengthen and further build a vibrant food economy. In 2011, over 30 food festivals were held in Wales with financial and practical support provided through 'Wales the True Taste'. These include the international 'Abvergavenny Food Festival' and the 'Cardigan Bay Seafood Festival' in Aberaeron (Hall). Food festivals can assist the tourism industry in Nigeria's branding and destination marketing in line with various cultural events like the Argungu Fishing Festival as well as the Abuja, Calabar and Lagos Carnivals. It is worthy of note that Southeast Nigeria has numerous regional cuisines of interest with valuable nutritional contents (Table 1). Food festivals will surely go a long way to harness these regional cuisines to promote the identity of the cultural diversity of Southeast Nigeria internationally, as well as create opportunities for local food manufacturers at tourist destinations to boost their businesses. The branding and marketing of Southeast Nigeria food festivals like *Iri Ji*, *ka Awaka*, *kazi Emii* and related festivals with local food content like *Oru Owerri*, *Mbomzo*, *Ikeji*, and *Mmanw* could be synergized to create a niche for the Southeastern Nigeria tourism hub.

Restaurant Week: A Restaurant Week is a town or city wide event where as many restaurants as possible offer special menus and fixed prices (Hall, 2012). The idea is to get as many new customers through the door at an introductory price level who would not normally come to the restaurant. For existing customers, it rewards them for their loyalty. A successful Restaurant Week will go way beyond simply offering discounted meals (Walker and Evans, 2012). It is a powerful way to reach new interested customers as well as create new businesses for budding entrepreneurs in the food (restaurant) segment. They are an excellent way to start building

customer loyalty by engaging with the customer in a personal way. People need to eat. They also like to eat, but not just when they are playful. So as well as being a physical necessity of life, eating is done for social and pleasurable reasons. Since the pleasure of eating is so important, tourism organizations have acknowledged that marketing a broad range of restaurants in their location, is beneficial in attracting tourists (OECD, 2012). By getting new customers to try a restaurant a loyalty programme may be introduced to keep them coming back time after time.

Table 1: Various Nigerian Cuisines of Interest

Name of Cuisine	Nutritional Value	Ethnic Origin	Availability
Ugba (African Salad)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Igbo	Year round
Coconut Rice	Carbohydrate/ Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	General	Year round
Pate	Carbohydrate/Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Tuwo Masara	Carbohydrate	Hausa	Year round
Tuwo Shinkafa	Carbohydrate/Protein/Vitamins	Hausa	Year round
Akara	Protein	General	Year round
Gbegiri	Protein	Yoruba	Year round
Moi moi	Protein	General	Year round
Ewa Aganyin	Protein	Yoruba	Year round
Suya	Protein	Hausa	Year round
Banga Soup (with Rice)	Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Edo/Efik/Ibibio	Year round
Miyam Kuka	Vitamins/Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Miyam Yakuwa	Vitamins /Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Pepper Soup	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	General	Year round
Afang Soup (with Akpu)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Efik	Year round
Omi Ukpoka (Corn Soup)	Carbohydrate/Protein/Minerals	Edo	Year round
Efo riro (Tabot Stew) (with Amala/Fufu)	Protein/Minerals/Vitamins (Carbohydrate)	Yoruba	Year round
Ofe Egusi (with Akpu/Eba)	Protein/Minerals/Vitamins (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Year round
Ofe Okro/Ofe Ogbono (with Akpu/Eba)	Protein/Minerals/Vitamins (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Year round
Groundnut Stew (with Fufu/Eba)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Edo	Year round
Ofe Ona (with Akpu/Eba)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Seasonal
Ofe Owerri (with Akpu/Eba)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Year round
Ofe Okazi (with Akpu/Eba)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Year round
Dodo (Roast Plantain)	Carbohydrate/Minerals	General	Year round
Funkaso (Millet Pancake)	Vitamins/Minerals/Dietary Fiber	Hausa	Year round
Mosa (Fermented Corn)	Carbohydrate/Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Akamu/Ogi (Pap)	Carbohydrate/Vitamins/Minerals	General	Year round
Masa (Yam/Egg)	Carbohydrate/Protein	General	Year round
Alkaki	Minerals/Dietary Fiber	Hausa	Year round
Kuli-kuli	Vitamins/Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Kokoro	Carbohydrate	Yoruba	Year round
Wara	Protein/Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Dundun	Carbohydrate	General	Year round
Kunu	Carbohydrate/Minerals/Vitamins	Hausa	Year round
Palm Wine	Yeast	General	Year round
Zobo	Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Asaro (Yam Pottage)	Carbohydrate/Minerals/Vitamins	General	Year round
Jogi (Steamed Cowpea with Melon)	Protein/Minerals	Yoruba	Year round
Gbegiri (Cowpea Stew) (with Fufu)	Protein/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Yoruba	Year round
Ew? (Cooked Beans)	Protein/Minerals	General	Year round
Ofe Ede (Cocoyam Soup)	Carbohydrate/Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Igbo	Year round
Fura du Nunu	Protein/Minerals	Hausa	Year round
Abacha	Carbohydrate	Igbo	Year round
Ofe Nsala (with Akpu)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Year round
Ofe Akwu (with Akpu)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals (Carbohydrate)	Igbo	Year round
Amala/Ewedu	Carbohydrate/Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Yoruba	Year round
Edikaeakong (with Eba)	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals/Dietary Fiber (Carbohydrate)	Efik/Ibibio	Year round
Breadfruit (Ukwa)	Protein/Minerals	Igbo	Seasonal
Aku Mkpu (Termite)	Protein/Minerals	Igbo	Seasonal
Ofada Rice	Carbohydrate/Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Yoruba	Year round
Ishi Ewu	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Igbo	Year round
Nkwobi	Protein/Vitamins/Minerals	Igbo	Year round
Odudu	Protein	Igbo	Year round

Source: Anegbu (2012), WIKIPEDIA (2012).

Every economic region cannot ignore the fact that people really do 'put their money where their mouth is' when it comes to food. The food industry is therefore a vital part of the tourism industry.

Other Economic Opportunities Created Through Food Tourism

The food tourism niche market presents a new aspect of destination marketing, which can enhance the attractiveness of a destination without necessarily involving extensive new product development. Food tourism can essentially be viewed as a subset of cultural tourism, with the local cuisine being a product of the local culture and the natural environment (TQ, 2003). Therefore, regions that possess unique dishes and food products as a result of their culture and environment may be transformed into food tourism destinations with minimum marketing and product development.

In terms of regional aspects, food tourism can be divided into a rural and an urban/city experience (McKercher *et al*, 2008). The urban/city experience usually presents travelers with a wide variety of food tourism products, and convenience in the form of restaurant precincts and culturally distinct cuisine. Rural food tourism, on the other hand, is not usually considered as a developed tourism product (Hall *et al*, 2003). Activities such as visits to farms and farmers' markets, fruit picking and agricultural farm accommodation may provide important supplemental activities to struggling rural areas. Research suggests that in many instances, consumers attribute their lack of satisfaction with food on their holiday to the reason their trip did not become an overall memorable holiday (TQ, 2003; Hall *et al*, 2003; (McKercher *et al*, 2008). Destinations could develop higher consumer satisfaction levels (and hence higher return and recommendation rates) if they could guide tourists to food products that provide memorable experiences (whether it is service, quality, value for money, or uniqueness). The guidance may be achieved through either consumer marketing (like a tourist restaurant/food tourism brochure) or cooperative product development.

No state or local 'food tourism association' currently exist in Southeast Nigeria. The marketing and development of new food tourism products could be assisted and facilitated by the formation of food tourism organization. Membership could also act as a strong indicator to consumers of 'quality tourism food product' in the destination.

Constraints on Food Tourism Development
 Food Safety and Quality Constraints: Safety and quality problems are related to inadequate food collection infrastructure, poor handling during production, collection, processing and distribution.

There is little effort to integrate good practices in local food production and collection. Most processing facilities in Nigeria have not established modern food safety/quality management systems, unlike similar establishments in East Africa, which have full-fledged Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) based food safety/quality management systems in local food supply chains (Offiong, 2011).

Poor Linkages Between Producers and Processors: The major constraint faced by medium scale processing establishments is the weak linkage between producers and processors. An example is drawn from the local dairy sector in Northern Nigeria, where milk (Fura du Nunu) production is largely by disorganized small scale producers, who have no formal relationship with the processors, resulting in unreliability of supply in terms of quantity and quality. **Poor Market Analysis:** Small scale food business operators often do not carry out market studies prior to the establishment of the enterprise and think they can produce and sell as they wish. There is generally little effort to analyze market requirements and tourists expectations (Hall, 2012). As a result, production is not market oriented and products do not meet consumer expectations.

Religious Issues: Tourists are often restricted from culinary experiences intended by them due to religious issues and certain religious beliefs of the region visited. In strict Islamic regions (in Nigeria) for instance, restrictions are applied on cuisines such as pork, as well as alcohol due to the existing Sharia (Islamic) Law; hence both local and foreign visitors are faced with these religious restriction/challenges on their cuisine of choice. Most religious beliefs in Southeast Nigeria are not favourably disposed to traditional festivals hence, forcing many cultural practices to extinction.

Lack of Innovativeness and Product Diversification: There is lack of innovation and product development in the food processing sector due to inadequate artisan skills. Local food processing establishments (at tourist centres, roadside cafeteria and eateries) have not been able to diversify product range because of lack of technical know how and expertise in new product development (Offiong, 2011). For instance, the *Iri Ji* festival should transcend from mere eating of boiled/roasted yam to production of yam flour for yam flakes and other innovative yam products.

CONCLUSION

For food tourism to actually impact on the economy of the host community, a linkage has to exist between tourist attraction managers and stakeholders (food entrepreneurs) in the food industry especially at the local level in order to create a synergy in providing adequate food requirements of food tourists, in terms of quality and quantity, and to ultimately enhance their travel experience. If destinations encourage visitors to spend longer periods within the environment, the local economy will benefit from the multiplier effect as a result of businesses generated by the network of entrepreneurial activities of local stakeholders.

Recommendations

Food festival: The idea of a Nigerian Food Festival will provide a huge platform for the appreciation of Nigerian cuisine. In this case, the need to explore indigenous knowledge regarding local food production is necessary. Export variation is a major challenge facing Nigerian foods. Packaging and presentation is therefore essential as packaging makes food attractive before the taste, first and foremost. With the global food packaging industry raking in huge capital annually, Nigeria needs to tap into this trend, hence the need to showcase the richness and nutritional value of Southeast Nigerian dishes beyond our borders.

Food safety and quality management in internal markets: Food and water borne diseases are major public health challenges worldwide and an important cause of malnutrition, in infants and young children. Food safety and quality management systems should control food safety hazards and ensure safe food supplies for a well nourished and healthy nation. In addition, food safety and quality management often reduce post harvest losses and increase food availability to enhance food security. Integrating food safety and quality in food supply chains increases and sustains the supply of quality and safe foods in internal markets.

Opportunities created by improved food safety and quality management in internal markets; creating niche markets for local food products in major hotels and restaurants: The growing tourism industry in Nigeria has opened new markets for local food products, both fresh and processed. However, small scale producers often fail to compete against high quality imported foods because they lack skills and information about market requirements. Supporting producers and local food entrepreneurs

with market studies and relevant training and technical assistance in food safety and quality would enable them to exploit the existing market opportunities in the food tourism sector.

Orientation and training: Adequate periodic training should be organized for stakeholders in the local food industry so that they would meet contemporary challenges in the food tourism sector as they frequently arise. In similar vein, it is imperative for certificate courses to be introduced in the tertiary education sector to assist in the skills development of budding food entrepreneurs and local intermediate tourist personnel to further equip them to appreciate the necessity of sustainable tourism development.

Food tourism associations: Formation of food tourism networks would go a long way in providing and promoting food travel trade education and networking opportunities to everyone who values and wants to develop food and beverage tourism products and services. This could be advocated through restaurant associations while also using the medium to provide comprehensive market research reports for the food and beverage tourism segment.

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ASSESSING THE FUNCTIONALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF SAFETY MEASURES IN HOTELS WITHIN BAUCHI METROPOLIS OF BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Safety is important in delivering quality hospitality services since the industry is vulnerable to safety incidences. This research investigated the functionality and efficiency of safety measures in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis. Four hundred respondents comprising two hundred each from the hotel management staff and the hotel guests were randomly sampled using two self-completing questionnaires and a checklist. Descriptive analysis established the availability and functionality of safety measures across the hotels while correlation analysis established the relationship between guests' perception and the functional safety measures provided by the hotels. The Analysis of variance and regression coefficient were used to determine the efficiency of the functional safety measures on guest's perception of safety. Findings revealed that hotels across Bauchi Metropolis have some functional safety measures. The most available and functional safety measures were the public area lights (90%) and the guest instruction leaflet (95%) respectively. However, most fire safety and lighting systems were less functional. A positive but weak correlation exists between the functional safety measures and the guests' perceived safety ($r=.023, p=.393 > .05$) without a significant association or effect ($r=0.035, p=0.787$). This study recommends that hotels within Bauchi Metropolis should investigate factors that determine their guest's safety and establish policies that would improve the functionality of safety measures including adequate maintenance culture.

Keywords: Guest, guest security, hotel, safety measures

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INTRODUCTION

The nature of the hospitality industry has increased its vulnerability to issues that border on safety. The hotel is considered a substantial risk in terms of safety incidences (Chen and Lam, 2013; Enz, 2009; Mansfeld and Pizam, 2011; Hua *et al.*, 2020; George, 2003). Ghaderi *et al.* (2017) noted that safety is a critical element of the hospitality and tourism industry and an essential factor in the return visit decision. However, safety remains an unattended aspect of the industry's product until visitors become victims of safety incidences which can lead to injury or death (Singh, 2007). The vulnerability of tourists increases due to the subjective and experiential way tourists consume hospitality products which require the availability of the consumer at the point of production (Richardson, 2009; Parsons *et al.*, 2020). Visitors and their possessions may be protected from harm within the hotel, from other visitors with ulterior motives, miscreants within the host community, and dishonest staff, and as well staff need to be protected (Talow, 2014; Enz, 2009). Anichiti *et al.* (2021) defined safety as shielding against indeliberate occurrences. Line *et al.*

(2006) opined that safety measures tend to reduce risk by either reducing the probability of a hazard occurring or reducing the magnitude of its consequences. They further noted that safety focuses on protecting life, health, and the natural environment from unintentional internal danger. It measures make intentional or unintentional dangerous act impossible or reduce the probability of a threat and mitigate or lessen its consequences. Several studies have investigated the use of different measures (see table 1) in preventing safety incidence within the hospitality and tourism industry (Chen and Lam, 2013; Kannan (2013; Feickert *et al.* 2006; Anichiti *et al.* 2021; Enz, 2009; Bradley, 2019; Short and Ruys, 1994; Singh, 2015; Donaldson, 2013; Raghubalan and Raghubalan, 2007). However, proper maintenance of these measures confirms their functionality and efficiency. Regular and periodic testing and expertise services provide quality assurance (Line *et al.*, 2006) with high durability and functionality. More so, tourists associate regular testing and checks of the safety systems with the hotel's standards (Chen and Lam, 2013). Some of the common safety measures used in hotels are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Common safety measures used in hotels

Safety/security measure	Source
Fire prevention system	Chen and Lam (2013) Kannan (2013)
Emergency lightening system	Chen and Lam (2013)
Security operatives on constant surveillance	Feickert <i>et al.</i> (2006), Chen and Lam (2013), Chan and Lam (2013) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Regular maintenance of safety and security system	Chen and Lam (2013)
Guests' safety instructions	Enz (2009)
Alarms	Chen and Lam (2013) Nwokori <i>et al.</i> (2014)
Guest room and elevator key cards/ mobile keys	Chen and Lam (2013), Bradley (2019) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Door chain on guest room doors	Short and Ruys (1994); Singh (2015)
Metal detectors	Feickert <i>et al.</i> (2006) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Closed-circuit television/surveillance camera	Donaldson (2013), Bradley (2019) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Networks and cyber security	Donaldson (2013) Bradley (2019) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
VLAN (virtual network)	Donaldson (2013)
Sprinklers	Enz (2009) Kannan (2013)
Electronic lock	Enz (2009) Kannan (2013), Chiang (2000), Raghubalan and Raghubalan (2007)
In-room safe	Enz (2009), Kannan (2013), Bradley (2019) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Scanner	
Smoke detectors	Kannan (2013)
Danger/safety/caution signs	Kannan (2013)
Regular staff training	Bradley (2019) Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
First aid kit	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Spy holes on doors	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Flashlight in hotel rooms	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Visitors pass card	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Passports and photo ID checks	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Adequate lighting	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Software antivirus protection	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Defibrillators	Anichiti <i>et al.</i> (2021)
Dead bolt locks	Singh (2015)

Having a good understanding of guest's expectations and perception of safety is important (Cham and Lam, 2013) in handling incidence prevention (Milman and Bach, 1999). The presence of physical and electronic safety and security devices give tourists a positive perception of safety standards (Terrah *et al.*, 2020), and may cause their willingness to pay higher. Guests may attach diverse levels of importance to different safety measures at different destinations which are likely to depend on the guest's age, gender, the purpose of visit, and nationality (Chan and Lam, 2013; Hua *et al.*, 2020; Becker, 2000). Furthermore, De Jonge *et al.*'s (2008) dimensions of confidence suggest that the optimistic guest would consume a product or service based on the trust that it is safe. However, a pessimistic guest worries about the safety of a product or service he perceives as risky and suspicious and may not patronise such services. This suggests that tourists will patronise a hotel with standard safety measures being optimistic of the availability, functionality, and efficiency of these measures. A tourist may as well perceive inadequate and non-functional safety measures as a "substantial risk" in a hotel. Both situations can occur concurrently (Poku, 2016). Besides, a balance between optimism and pessimism in life is necessary (Hecht, 2013). In all, visitor protection is paramount, and identifying and improving areas with Safety and security gaps is imperative (Terrah *et al.*, 2020). Nigeria is one of the countries that has faced security upheaval in recent times resulting in the downward trajectory of the hospitality and tourism industry,

mostly in the North-eastern part (Okpanku, 2014).

The activities of the "Boko Haram" insurgents; kidnapping, banditry, ethnic/political/religious crisis are some evidences of insecurity that has affected all facets of the Nation and the Bauchi Metropolis is not an exception.

The important questions are, what safety measures are put in place by the hotels within the Bauchi metropolis to protect guests? And how functional and efficient are they? To address these questions, this research aims to assess the functionality and efficiency of safety measures in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis. This was achieved through the following objectives.

- i. To assess the availability and functionality of the safety measures put in place by the hotels in Bauchi Metropolis.
- ii. To evaluate the relationship between hotels' functional safety measures and guests' perceived safety.
- iii. To evaluate the efficiency of hotels' safety measures on guests' perceived safety

Research hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the functionalsafety measures in the hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guests' perceived safety.

H₀₂: The safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi metropolis do not significantly result in guest's perceived safety

Study significance - Gap in knowledge and the literature

Many deals of research have investigated safety in hotels, but the functionality and efficiency of these measures are under-researched. Currently, knowledge and literature gap exist in the functionality and efficiency of safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi Metropolis; this research seeks to fill these gaps. This project is timely as Nigeria, especially, the North-East is still in the battle against insecurity and warrants that hotel guests are kept safe. It assessed the availability, functionality, and efficiency of safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi metropolis, and provides recommendations accordingly. It has added to the existing body of knowledge on safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi metropolis that could be beneficial to hoteliers, policymakers, and researchers.

METHODOLOGY

This research was carried out in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis, located in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria; it lies between altitude 9.3 and 12.3 North of the Equator and longitude 8.50 and 11.0 East of the Greenwich Meridian. The city has a landmass of 3,687km² and a population of 316,173 (Bisu et al. 2016).

Research design

The study employed a cross-sectional survey (Owens, 2002) to collect quantitative data from the hotel management staff and guests using two self-completion questionnaires and a checklist. These were administered and retrieved manually by trained research assistants. The first questionnaire was developed for the hotel respondents investigating the availability and the functionality of safety measures in their establishments. The questionnaire had five basic questions on the establishment's safety measures and a checklist of fifty items that are key and important safety measures used within the hotel establishment. The respondents were to indicate if the measures were available or unavailable and ascertain their functionality on a five-point Likert scale - functional, somewhat functional, non-functional but under repair or non-functional. The checklist was adapted from the American Hotel and Lodging Association (2014) of the United State security department. This checklist was used as a standard to assess the existing safety measures in the hotels within the Bauchi metropolis. The second questionnaire was developed for the hotel guests/tourists and investigated their perception of safety in the hotels. The guest questionnaire established guests' perceptions of the safety standards in the sampled establishments. It had thirty-five statements on the safety measures they identified or experienced during their visits to the hotel and their perceived level of functionality. A five-point Likert scale was produced on which the sampled guests selected the most appropriate point that corresponds to the degree of their agreement with the safety statements. The points were coded with 'strongly agree' and 'strongly disagree' denoting two extreme ends (Veal, 2011). A pilot study was conducted before the distribution of the questionnaire to assess the ability of the survey instrument in capturing the required data. The test was carried out to check the validity of the instrument and to ensure that the questions asked were not ambiguous.

Target Population, sample, and sampling procedure

The target population consists of all registered hotels within the Bauchi Metropolis. According to the National Tourism Development Corporation Bauchi (2020), there are Forty (40) registered hotels within Bauchi Metropolis. These are classified as National hotels, Urban, Sub-urban hotels, and rural hotels. All forty hotels were sampled in this study. Five staff were targeted from each hotel's management staff and randomly selected from the manager/deputy manager, unit heads, heads of departments, security officers, and supervisors (to give a total of 200 staff). These groups were targeted because they are involved with safety issues at different levels and units in the hotel and could give information on the safety standards of the hotel. Owens (2002) held that the population of interest is represented through this method of probability sampling which gives unbiased results. Anita et al (2013) pointed out that probability sampling could be used to draw valid inferences and make a generalisation. From each of the forty (40) hotels, five (5) guests/tourists/visitors were randomly approached with the questionnaire making a total of two hundred (200) guests. For this research, a total of four hundred (400) respondents were surveyed as summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Classification of facilities (hotels) investigated and number of respondents

S/N	Classification of Facility (hotel)	Number of facilities	Number sampled	Number of responding staff	Number of guest respondents	Total number of respondents
1	National	1	1	5 (1x5)	5 (1x5)	10
2	Urban	25	25	125 (25x5)	125 (25x5)	250
3	Sub-urban	7	7	35 (7x5)	35 (7x5)	70
4	Rural	7	7	35 (7x5)	35 (7x5)	70
	Total	40	40	200	200	400

Source: research field work, 2021

Data analysis

A multi-method design was adopted to analyse the quantitative data collected through the questionnaires, this included both inferential and descriptive methods. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software (Veal, 2011; Bailey, 2008) was used for data analysis. The dependent variable was "guests' perceived safety" while the independent variable was "functional safety measures". Pearson's Moment-Correlation (Gogtay and Thatt, 2017; Pallant, 2001) was used to test the first hypothesis and establish the significance and the nature of the relationship between the functional safety measures and guests' perceived safety. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and the regression coefficient (Pallant, 2001) were used to test the

second hypothesis which determined the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The results were considered significant at a confidence level of 95%, where the *p*-value is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$). Descriptive statistics were carried out to analyse the availability and functionality of safety measures and the results were interpreted in percentages and presented in tables. Safety measures that scored an average of fifty percent (50%) and above were considered satisfactory in both the availability and functionality domain, indicating that a particular safety measure was available or functional. However, below the average performance was unsatisfactory suggesting that a measure was barely used or non-functional in the facility. Findings were discussed alongside the results.

Performance Analysis Grid

To present the performance of the investigated hotels on the availability and functionality of safety measures, Importance-performance Analysis (IPA) framework was adopted. The IPA framework was developed by Martilla and James in (1977) as a customer's satisfaction appraisal tool, it measured attributes of performance and importance of a product from a consumer's perspective. Oh (2001) observed that the IPA has increased popularity among researchers in hospitality and tourism due to its flexibility in application and simplicity. It has been revisited and reinvented to gain a wider scope (Geng and Chu, 2012). A four-dimensional approach was used to categorise the findings. The domain of high availability and high functionality indicates the area of high performance by the hotels in providing functional safety measures (keep up the good work). The domain of high availability and low functionality shows that most hotels performed high in providing the safety measure but performed low in functionality (concentrate on good maintenance/servicing culture). The low availability but high functionality shows a lack of essential safety measures, however, the available measures were functional (concentrate on providing more safety measures). The low availability and low functionality indicate that most of the safety measures were not available and the available ones were less functional (concentrate on providing/ maintaining safety measures).

Reliability of instrument

Internal consistency technique was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaires. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient in table 3 was used to calculate the result to establish the extent to which the contents of the questionnaires were consistent in eliciting the right responses.

Table 3: Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics for staff	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.934	53
Reliability Statistics for guest	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.727	36

The Cronbach's Alpha generated a coefficient of 0.934 and 0.727 for the staff and guest questionnaire, respectively. Where alpha was greater than 0.7, it was considered suitable and reliable (Pallant, 2001).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Availability and functionality of safety measure in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis
 The first objective was to assess the availability and functionality of safety measure in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis. This was achieved in the following paragraphs. Table 4 presents the result of the availability and functionality of the safety and security department. It was found that 77% of the hotels had a safety and security department with a functionality rate of 87.9%.

Table 4: Availability and functionality of safety and security department

	Available %	Not available %	Functional %	Somewhat functional %	Non-functional, under repair %	Non-functional %	Not sure %
Safety/security department/unit	71.5	28.5	87.9	7.5	4.6	0	0

The availability and functionality of safety measures were assessed, result on table 5 shows that out of the twenty-two (22) safety measures investigated, eighteen (18) were available in most of the hotels investigated, four (4) were not available. Thirteen (13) were functional, and nine (9) were less functional.

Table 5: Availability and functionality of hotels' safety measures

		Functionality level of safety measures (%)					
		Available %	Not available %	Functional	Somewhat functional	Non-functional, under repair	Non-functional Not sure
1	Fire emergency plan (including evacuation and assembly areas)	66.4	33.6	30.5	66.1	3.4	
2	Fire emergency exit doors	76.6	23.4	90.2	6.3	0.6	2.9
3	Installed fire doors	70.8	29.2	28.2	70.7	1.1	
4	Fire extinguisher	46.7	53.3	82.2	8.6	6.3	2.9
5	Fire exit signs	65.7	34.3	20.1	78.2	1.1	0.6
6	Fire alarm	51.1	48.9	86.8	9.8		3.4
7	Fire emergency public address system for emergency announcements	51.1	48.9	87.4	5.2	1.1	6.3
8	Fire system maintenance inspection record	45.3	54.7	83.9	9.8	3.4	2.9
9	Sprinklers	41.6	58.4	21.3	72.4	2.9	3.4
10	Smoke detectors	56.2	43.8	32.8	64.4	2.9	
11	Heat extractors	39.4	60.6	86.8	4.6	2.9	2.9
12	Defibrillation unit	58.4	41.6	78.7	9.8	2.9	5.7
13	Corridor lights	64.2	35.8	8.0	88.5	3.4	
14	Public area lights	89.8	10.2	86.2	10.3	3.4	
15	Lights around premises	83.9	16.1	64.4	29.9	5.7	
16	Emergency lights	60.6	39.4	28.7	67.8	2.9	0.6
17	Signposts within the facility	83.9	16.1	50.6	36.2	8.6	2.9
18	Signposts around premises	81	19	4.6	92		3.4
19	Information translated into several languages	54	46	85.6	14.4		
20	First aid box	67	33	1.1	98.9		
21	First aider	69.3	30.7	67.2	29.3	3.4	
22	Guest safety instruction leaflet	76	24	95.4	4.6		

Summary of the hotels' performance in the four domains of availability and functionality of safety measures

High availability High functionality domain (keep up the good work): in this domain are safety measures that were available and functional in most of the hotels (more than half of the hotels within Bauchi metropolis). Their scores for availability and functionality were presented together. It revealed that ten safety measures were high in availability and functionality. These include fire emergency exit doors (77% and 90%), fire alarm (51% and 87%), fire emergency public address system for an emergency announcement (51% and 87%), defibrillation unit (58% and 79%), public area lights (90% and 86%), lights around the premises (84% and 64%), signposts within the facilities (84% and 51%), first aider (69% and 67%), guest safety instruction leaflet (76% and 95%), and information translated into other languages (54% and 86%). High availability and functionality of safety measures could increase a hotel's productivity. A high level of productivity will increase customer experience, loyalty in re-visit intentions, and word-of-mouth testimony; it will in turn boost the hotel's business; this conforms with (Hebert et al., 2015). Hotels should continue to provide and maintain safety measures for greater efficiency and since it gives tourists a sense of safety and they view them as preventive measures (Rittichainuwat, 2013; Enz, 2009; Milman, 1999). The presence of these physical measures provides the

tourists with some feeling of safety and security (Milman et al., 1999). However, stringent safety and security measures could raise unnecessary concerns among tourists (Rittichainuwat, 2013). *High availability Low functionality: (good maintenance culture is needed).* Safety measures in this domain were available but less functional in most of the hotels. They are fire emergency plan (66% and 31%), fire doors (71% and 28%), fire exit signs (66% and 20%), smoke detectors (56% and 33%), corridor lights (64% and 8%), emergency lights (61% and 29%), signposts around premises (81% and 5%), and first aid box (67% and 1%). Hotels should concentrate on imbuing good maintenance culture to keep these measures functional. For instance, with a non-functional first aid box, a fire outbreak could jeopardise safety resulting in a situation that may lead to a severe loss. Proper maintenance of safety equipment and procedures should be paramount to keep lives and properties safe. Due to the multi-tasking nature of the hotel services and the high level of guest traffic, the hotel guests and staff are highly prone to safety incidences such as fire, falls, cuts, burns, crashes, etc. Therefore, safety measures are important requirements in hotels (Emir and Kus, 2015). Lestari and Saputra (2018) found that first aid is an important service quality tangible factor in guest preference.

Low availability High functionality (more provisions needed): these are safety measures that were less available, but the available ones were functional. In this domain includes Fire extinguisher (47% and 82%), fire system maintenance record (45% and 84%), and heat extractors (37% and 87%) that were not adequately provided in most of the hotels but were functional in few hotels that provided them. More of these measures should be provided to improve safety in the hotels.

Low availability Low functionality (Concentrate on both provision and maintenance culture): the sprinkler (42% and 21%) was the only measure that was low in availability and functionality rate, again this is important in the case of a fire outbreak and hotels should concentrate on both provision and maintenance of the sprinklers.

Evaluating the relationship between the functionality of safety measures and guest's perceived safety.

This objective was achieved by testing the first research hypothesis. Hence, the null hypothesis stated that "there is no significant relationship

between the functional safety measures in the hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guests perceived safety". This hypothesis was tested through the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to establish the strength and the direction of their relationship as presented in table 6. Preliminary analysis was conducted to ensure that the normality, homoscedasticity, and linearity assumptions were not violated. The correlation result showed a positive but weak correlation between the functional safety measures in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guest's perceived safety ($r=.023$, $n=146$, $p=.393$). The positive correlation indicates that, as the functional safety measures provided by the hotels improve, guests' perceived safety would likely increase. However, the overlap in their relationship is weak ($r =.023$) indicating that the extent to which improvement in the provision of functional safety measures increases may not adequately explain the extent to which guests' perceived safety increases. Also, the functional safety measures provided by the hotels do not significantly correlate with guests' perceived safety ($p>0.05$). Therefore, there could be other factors that contribute more to guests' perceived safety such as the location of the hotel, "word of mouth" testimony on the hotel's safety situation, online reviews, etc.

Table 6: Correlations

		Guest perceived Safety	Functional Safety Measures
Pearson Correlation	Guest perceived Safety	1.000	.023
	Functional Safety Measures	.023	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Guest perceived Safety		.393
	Functional Safety Measures	.393	
N	Guest perceived Safety	146	146
	Functional Safety Measures	146	146

Coefficient of determination (r^2)

Furthermore, the Model Summary in table 7 presents the coefficient of determination which is represented as R squared (r^2) and is calculated as a square of the value of "r". The result shows that the functional safety measures were found not to be a satisfactory variable in performance. This is supported by the coefficient of determination of 0.001%. This means that the functional safety measures available in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis explains .01% of the variations in guests' perceived safety.

Table 7 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.023 ^a	.001	-.006	.33828	.001	.073	1	144	.787

a. Predictors: (Constant), Functional Safety Measures

Evaluating the efficiency of safety measures on guest safety

To achieve this objective the second research hypothesis was tested using ANOVA and regression coefficients, it states that "the safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi metropolis do not significantly result to guest safety".

The result of the ANOVA analysis presented in table 8 indicated that the overall model was not statistically significant. This implies that the functional safety measures provided by the hotels are not good predictors of guest's perceived safety. This was supported by an "F" statistic of 0.073 and a reported p-value of 0.787 which is greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05 ($p>0.05$).

Table 8: ANOVA^a

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.008	1	.008	.073	.787 ^b
	Residual	16.478	144	.114		
	Total	16.487	145			

a. Dependent Variable: Guest's perceived Safety

b. Predictors: (Constant), Functional Safety Measures

The Regression of coefficients results in table 9 illustrated that the functional safety measures had a positive and no significant effect on the guest perceived safety ($r=0.035$, $p=0.787$).

Table 9: coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.434	.212		16.172	.000
	Functional Safety Measures	.035	.128	.023	.271	.787

a. Dependent Variable: Guest perceived Safety

It was found that the functional safety measures in the hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guests' perceived safety have a positive but weak correlation $r=.02$ and are not significantly associated $p>0.05$ ($p=0.393$). Also, the functional safety measures explain only .01% of the variations in guests' perceived safety. There is no sufficient evidence to conclude that a significant relationship exists between the functional safety measures put in place by the hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guests' perceived safety. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, there is no significant relationship between the functional safety measures in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guests' perceived safety.

Furthermore, the regression of coefficients illustrates that the functional safety measures had a positive and no significant effect on the guests' perceived safety ($r=0.035$, $p=0.787$). Moreover, the ANOVA result explains that the functional safety measures are not good predictors of guest's perceived safety. This was supported by an "F" statistic of 0.073 and a p-value of 0.787. This means that the functional safety measures do not necessarily affect guests' perceived safety; almost half of the assessed safety measures were less functional. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was not rejected, hence the safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi metropolis do not significantly result in guest safety. Consequently, a gap exists which presents an opportunity for hotels to improve on the functionality of their safety. A similar gap was found by Ghazi (2016) between hotel guest perception and the usage of safety and security measures. Contrarily, Milman and Bach (1999) found that certain safety and security measures such as CCTV, deadbolt locks, etc. impacted greatly on guests' perception of safety and security in Florida.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research assessed the functionality and efficiency of safety measures in the hotels within Bauchi Metropolis. Based on the results and findings drawn, this study concludes that most Hotels within Bauchi Metropolis have functional safety and security department. To some extent, hotels have safety measures put in place to ensure the safety of guests/tourists especially, fire safety devices and fire emergency plans. However, most fire safety and lighting systems were less functional. Furthermore, that there is no significant relationship between the functional safety measures in hotels within Bauchi Metropolis and guests' perceived safety ($r=.023$, $p=.393$). Equally, the safety measures in hotels within the Bauchi metropolis do not significantly result in guest's safety ($r=0.035$, $p=0.787$); almost half of the assessed safety measures were less functional. This study recommends that hotels within Bauchi Metropolis should investigate factors that determine their guest's safety and establish policies that would improve the functionality of safety measures including adequate maintenance culture. This research avails the opportunity for further studies on factors that impact guest safety within the hotels in Bauchi metropolis and Bauchi State at large.

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EVALUATION OF GUEST RETENTION AND ITS EFFECTS ON HOTEL PERFORMANCE IN PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Guest retention has become increasingly difficult for hotels to achieve organization goals and sustained business operations. Many hotels have gone out of business while many others are operating at a marginal profit due to their inability to retain existing guests. Some hotel managers are unaware that it costs more to acquire new clients than to retain existing ones. The study examined the management of guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The objectives of the study were to identify various factors influencing guest retention in hotels in Port Harcourt metropolis; examine the effects of guest retention on hotels; and determine different measures of managing guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, River State. Three research questions were formulated for the study. The study adopted a survey research design. The sample size of 179 was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Structured questionnaire was used to generate data while descriptive Statistics were used to analyze research questions. A Cronbach Coefficient value of 0.82 was determined using one test administration to ascertain the reliability of the instrument which indicates that the instrument was consistent. The findings showed that the perceived factors influencing guest retention in a competitive market among hotels in Port Harcourt were information quality, security and privacy policy, personalization level, brand image, and prices offered. The findings revealed that improving knowledge of the market among hotel employees, increasing guests' loyalty, promoting advertisement of the business, increasing complaint handling process, making consumers feel appreciated, and creating better communication with guests were the effects of guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt. The study further revealed that guest retention in a competitive market can be managed through guest satisfaction, ethical behaviour, relationship marketing, service quality, and enabling service features. Based on the findings, it was recommended that hotel management should make adequate policies geared towards achieving effective guest retention; adequate measures should also be directed towards promoting business, increasing complaint handling process, and improving communication with guests to improve their guest retention.

Keywords: Hotel performance, guest retention, guest satisfaction

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INTRODUCTION

In recent times, hotel industry in Nigeria is growing at a very fast pace as new hotels are springing up on a regular basis leading to the competitive nature of the business environment. Hotel is an establishment that provides accommodation to the travelling public; has a reception area and offers at least a breakfast room or communal eating area. Hotel industry is a highly flourishing, lucrative and competitive market (King, Sasmita and MohdSuki, 2015). According to Poon and Long (2005), success in the hotel and tourism industry depends on the understanding of the key factors of guest satisfaction. Guest satisfaction leads to purchase repetition and intention to revisit; and this potential increases future patronage of the hotel. Satisfying guests during their first visit and prolonging their stay can help develop guest loyalty and thereby encourage the desire to revisit the destination. Boris (2012) found that the relationship between guest satisfaction and repeat purchase was bolstered

when the guest has found value in the product.

Hence, consumption emotions are important components of guest response and therefore influence guest satisfaction and repeat patronage. Guest retention explains the percentage rate at the start of the time period and the guest who still remain guest in the end of the time period (Marcus, 2011). Hotel business has become a competitive one and a survival of the fittest because of the vast increase in the number of hotels in circulation. Though many hotels are in operation making the business very competitive, it has been observed that few of them are doing very well, majority of them are operating at a very marginal profit; a number of the hotels have gone out of business operation while others are struggling to be in operation because of high rate of guest turnover. Some hotel managers do not understand that it is more cost-intensive to acquire new hotel guests than to maintain the existing ones.

Conceptual Framework

Guest retention is an act of keeping business going and maintaining current guests that have already been acquired which helps to increase the profitability of the business and advertise the hotel goods and services through referral. Retention is a commitment to continue to do business or exchange with a particular organisation on an ongoing basis. Retention can be defined as the guests' liking, identification, commitment, trust, willingness to recommend, and repurchase intentions, with the first four being emotional-cognitive retention constructs, and the last two being behavioural intention (Philip, Gary, Prafulla, and Agni, 2012). Guest retention is the collection of activities a business uses to increase the number of repeat guests and to increase the profitability of each existing guest (Mehta, Steinman and Murphy, 2016).

From the aforementioned point, hotels have been left with the problems of developing various measures on how to retain as many guests as possible within the industry. Most hotel industries are yet to adopt adequate guest retention measures in order to retain existing guests and also attract prospective guests. This has informed the researcher's decision to carry out a study on guest retention and its effects on hotel performance in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Guest retention is the capability of a business organization to hold on to its consumers to keep on buying an organization's goods and services for a given period of time. Selling organizations usually endeavour to minimize guests switching over to other organisations. Guest retention strategies enable firms to both provide and extract more value from their existing guest base.

According to Prabhu (2003), guest retention is a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour. Later, Chatura (2003) defines guest retention is the propensity of the guest to stay with their service provider. Many organization today have difficulty to attract new guests so they restructure their marketing department and appoint managers to give attention to their existing guest (Ahmad and Buttle, 2002). Guest retention is very important for the hotel in order to ensure hotel sustainability and growth. Therefore, it is the hotel's duty to ensure that every hotel is able to fulfill all the guests' needs and wants from time to time.

Guest retention occurs when guests continue to purchase a product or service over an extended period of time. According to Boris (2012), guest retention starts with the first contact an organization has with a guest and continues throughout the entire lifetime of a relationship; and successful retention efforts take this entire lifecycle into account. Barber and Scarcelli (2010), stated that a company's ability to attract and retain new guests depends not only on its goods or services, but also on the way it services its existing guests, and the reputation it creates within and across the market. Successful guest retention involves more than giving the guest what they expect.

Guest retention is now regarded as important because it has become increasingly difficult for firms to assume that there exists an unlimited guest base. According to Reichheld and Sasser (2010), it costs five times more to gain a new guest than to retain an existing guest as the acquisition costs are lowered in the long run which means that guest retention is related to the profitability of a firm. Measuring the guest retention rate is seen as the initial step in improving loyalty to, and the profitability of a service organization (Boris, 2012), yet many organizations do not understand the importance of improving guest retention rates, and the impact of these on profitability. Guest retention management encompasses the actions you take to encourage your guests to remain loyal to your brand over a long period of time (Abdul and Basri-bin, 2012). Retained guests represent an opportunity to increase profitability as well as loyalty. Managing guest retention in a competitive market is important as it brings about better conversion rates, less marketing room for improvement, higher profits, and lower costs (Petri, 2004). A satisfied guest creates a strong relationship with the particular organization; this leads to relationship durability and guest loyalty and retention.

Guest retention in hotels is a major factor to be considered in a competitive market because lack of guests in the hotels will lead to lower sales thus closing up of the establishment (Wong, 2011). Retaining loyal guests for hoteliers is essential and a core factor in keeping the hospitality (hotels) in shape and competitive enough to level up the changing trends that has impacted such business and economic activities of the hotel markets. According to King *et al.* (2015), to retain guests in the hotels there should be guest recognition for example recalling the guest name; this makes the guests feel recognized

and respected. Other aspects of a business image that enhances guest retention in the hotels include giving guests flexibility of the products and services; offering standardized services using trained personnel, using loyalty programs, discounts and guest membership cards.

Hotel performance refers to hotel business output while hotel simply means a home away from home. Hotels offer much more than basic accommodation; they are dynamic operating business composed of several profit centres. The purpose of the hotel is to offer services to its guests (King, Sasmita and MohdSuki, 2015). These services extend beyond an overnight stay to include meals, events, spa treatments and entertainment to name a few. According to Sainaghi and Canali, (2011) measuring the performance of hotel operations focuses on both financial performance indicators and non-financial performance indicators. Business performance is a multidimensional concept that requires consideration of financial and non-financial indicators (Onyango *et al.* 2012). According to Onyango *et al.* (2012) the important business performance indicators of hotel in research are revenue per available room, average room rates, price stability, business efficiency, length of business season, occupancy rate of accommodation capacities, business stability expressed by rate of occupancy and customer satisfaction, as parameters that occupy an increasingly important role in the research of business performance. Getz and Nielson (2004) emphasize that the interest on hotel performance should be focused on the elements of the business that will provide companies greater performance and allow year-round business. There has been a revolution in performance measurement (Neely and Bourne, 2000). Measurement approaches that relied only on financial results are now being replaced by more integrated systems that combine financial and non-financial indicators (Bergin-Seers and Jago, 2007). Hotel industry performance can be measured using occupancy performance, such as average occupancy rate: a practical alternative approach, in view of the reluctance of hotel managers to provide details on financial performance (Sun and Lu, 2005).

Empirical Review

Thomas and Thnga (2016) carried out a study on customer retention strategies in hotel industries in Trivandrum. The objectives of the study were to examine the customer relationship management

practices in hotel industry, and also to examine the roles of the customer retention strategies in hotel industries in Trivandrum. The design of the study was survey design. A sample of 10 hotels was selected from the list obtained from Restaurant and Hotel Association of Ludhiana on random basis. Questionnaire was distributed to the managers and staff of the selected hotels. Findings of the work revealed that most of the managers had a positive attitude towards customer relationship management practices and the most common activities undertaken were studying the existing database of the customers and personal counseling. The study also revealed that the role of customer relationship management include increased customer satisfaction and increased customer loyalty. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommended that hotels in the Trivandrum should adopt customer retention strategies in their operations. This study is related to the present study because it is centered on customer retention strategies in hotel industry though differs as this study focuses on management of customer retention among hotels in a competitive markets. The difference is also on geographic scope, as the former study is on Trivandrum, while the present study is on Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Shahzad (2013) examined the determinants of customer retention in hotel industry in Peshawar, Pakistan. The main objective of the research was to find out which factor plays important role in the customers retention. The design of the study was survey design. The primary data were collected through questionnaire, which was distributed among the customers of these hotels. Furthermore, the secondary data were collected from different journal articles, textbooks, magazines etc. The sample size was 140, out of which 70 were filled up by customers of the Grand hotel, and 70 were filled up from the customers of the Park Inn hotel. The finding of the study revealed that customer retention is very important for the hotel to maintain the old customer and attract the new customer. Based on the findings, the study recommended that hoteliers should adopt customer retention strategies as it is a major determinant of customer patronage. This study is related to the present study because it deals with determinants of customer retention in hotel industry though differs as this study focuses on management of customer retention among hotels in a competitive markets. The difference is also on geographic scope, as the former study is on Peshawar, Pakistan, while

the present study is on Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Petzer¹, Steyn, and Mostert, (2009) investigated customer retention practices of small, medium and large hotels in South Africa. The aim of this study was to examine the perceptions of hotel management of all sizes of hotel regarding the importance of customer retention practices. An interview administered in office survey was used to collect data from a representative sample of 56 hotels in Gauteng province, South Africa. Probability, stratified, sampling was used to separate hotels according to ownership type and size. The findings indicated that no significant associations exist between the research variables and hotel size. The study further revealed that with the increasing competitive environment organizations are continually looking for innovative ways to not only acquire but also to retain their customers. Based on the findings, the study recommended that small, medium and large hotels in South Africa should adopt customer retention practices. This study is related to the present study because it deals with customer retention practices of small, medium and large hotels though differs as this study focuses on management of customer retention among hotels in a competitive markets. The difference is also on geographic scope, as the former study is on South Africa, while the present study is on Rivers State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Berry (1983) propounded the Relationship marketing theory which proposes that as company delivers value to customer, strength of its relationship with the customer will improve and increasing the customer retention. Relationship marketing looks at creating an approach and strategy that will generate customer retention. Therefore, to sustain a loyal customer base relationship marketing along with other marketing mix forms the basis of the new marketing world.

Today's companies want to use relationship marketing to improve customer loyalty, and generate profits. Relationship marketing is a form of marketing developed from direct response marketing campaigns that emphasizes customer retention and satisfaction rather than sales transactions. It differentiates from other forms of marketing in that it recognizes the long-term value of customer relationships and extends communication beyond intrusive advertising and sales promotional messages

Ravesteyn (2005) propounded the customer loyalty theory based on the consideration of some variable demographics. This was developed over years of research studying the habits of consumers. The theory attempts to define what drives loyalty in customers and can represent an effective tool for gaining and retaining hard-won patrons. Business owners who witness repeat customers know on an intuitive level that customer loyalty is an invaluable commodity. Incorporating the precepts of the customer loyalty theory into daily dealings can influence the creation of more business.

Customer satisfaction may occur when expectations are met and exceeded; however, expectations vary among different people. For example, a product may be highly appealing to one customer and not impress another at all, so each person's degree of satisfaction is not congruous. Rather than attempting to effect customer loyalty solely through the products carried, businesses might more effectively garner consumer loyalty by learning more about what their own customers appreciate and value and working to meet those expectations. This theory is related to the present study because it explains customer loyalty which is fundamental in customer retention in a competitive market.

In view of the above theories, this study anchored primarily on Relationship marketing theory because it focuses on improving relationship that looks at creating an approach and strategy that will generate guest retention in hotel. Hotel industry in Nigeria is growing at a very fast pace in recent years and as a result led to the competitive nature of the business. The hotel business has become a competitive one and a survival of the fittest because of the vast increase in the number of hotels in circulation. This has left hotels with the problems of developing various measures on how to retain as many guests as possible within the industry. It is on this backdrop that the study was focused.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the effects of guest retention on hotel performance in a competitive market among hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Identify various factors influencing guest retention in hotel operation in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- ii. Examine the effects of guest retention on hotel performance in a competitive market in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- ii. Determine different measures of managing guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, River State.

Research Questions

1. What are the various factors influencing guest retention among hotels Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
2. What are the effects of guest retention on hotel operation in a competitive market?
3. What are the different measures of managing guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, River State?

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was a survey design which involves the systematic gathering of information from respondents for the purpose of predicting some aspects of the behaviour or perception of the population of interest. Port Harcourt metropolis is bounded to the east by Elemo, to the west by Degema, to the north by Obio-Akpor and to the south by Okrika, It has a total size of 109 km². The total population of Port Harcourt according to the estimated population growth rate (2.58%) of Nigeria (2020) is 3,020,000.

Given the number of the staff in the hotels under study in Port Harcourt, Rivers state, a sample size of 179 hotel employees was used. In determining the study sample size from the population, the Taro Yamane's (1967) Formula for sample size determination was adopted where a tolerable error of 0.05 was used. Taro Yamane's Formula is stated below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = sample size

N = Population of study = 325

e² = Tolerable error or level of significance chosen was 5% or 0.05.

1 = constant

In calculating the sample size the following result was obtained

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{325}{1 + 325(0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{325}{1 + 325(0.0025)} \\ &= \frac{325}{1 + 0.8125} \\ &= \frac{325}{1.8125} = 179.3103 \\ n &= 179 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the sample size for this study is 179.

Questionnaire was the main data collection instrument used in the study. The questions was close-ended and in major part contain 4-point rating scale such as Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2 and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1. For the purpose of the study, the instrument for data collection was subjected to face and content validation where seven experts in Hospitality Management and tourism were used to evaluate, criticize and produce the final copy of the instrument that was used for data collection.

An assessment of the research instrument's reliability was carried out. This was done to ascertain the degree of dependability or consistency of an instrument. Cronbach's alpha reliability test was conducted through one test administration to determine the internal consistency of the instrument to ascertain if the instrument was reliable or not. A Cronbach coefficient value of 0.82 was determined which indicates that the instrument was consistent.

The data collected through the use of questionnaire were presented in tables and analysed using mean (X) and standard deviation (SD). Specifically, all the questionnaire items were designed with a view to pursuing the achievement of the research objectives. The average mean of the perception of 2.5 was adopted as a bench mark. Any response with a mean of 2.5 and above was accepted while response below 2.5 was rejected. Also, research question was analyzed using frequency and mean distributions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the mean rating of the various factors influence guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The result shows that information quality, quality services, security and privacy policy, personalization level, brand image, prices offered were among other factors influencing guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State with a grand mean greater than the criterion benchmark of 2.50 set for the study.

Table 1: Various factors influencing guest retention among hotels in Port Harcourt, Rivers State

Factors	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Total Weight	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
Information quality influences guest retention in hotel.	(276) 69	(195) 65	(80) 40	(5) 5	179	556	3.11	0.8446	Accept
Quality services influences guest retention in hotel.	(196) 49	(366) 122	(12) 6	(2) 2	179	576	3.22	0.553	Accept
Consumer service efficiency influences guest retention in hotel.	(344) 86	(201) 67	(46) 23	(3) 3	179	594	3.32	0.760	Accept
Payment options influences guest retention in hotel.	(204) 51	(366) 122	(12) 6	(0) 0	179	582	3.25	0.507	Accept
Security and privacy policy influences guest retention in hotel.	(264) 66	(186) 62	(86) 43	(8) 8	179	544	3.04	0.889	Accept
Personalization level influences guest retention in hotel.	(208) 52	(351) 117	(10) 5	(5) 5	179	574	3.21	0.624	Accept
Rewards influences guest retention in hotel.	(208) 52	(348) 116	(14) 7	(4) 4	179	574	3.21	0.615	Accept
Fulfillment of service influences guest retention in hotel.	(332) 83	(186) 62	(40) 30	(4) 4	179	582	3.25	0.813	Accept
Brand image influences guest retention in hotel.	(204) 51	(264) 88	(60) 30	(10) 10	179	538	3.01	0.824	Accept
Guest recognition influences guest retention in hotel.	(184) 46	(189) 63	(12) 6	(10) 10	179	503	2.81	1.050	Accept
Reception influences guest retention in hotel.	(212) 53	(249) 85	(60) 30	(11) 11	179	532	3.11	0.844	Accept
Prices offer influences on guest retention in hotel.	(244) 61	(147) 49	(90) 45	(24) 24	179	505	2.82	1.048	Accept
GRAND MEAN							3.12		ACCEPT

Source: Field survey, 2020 Criterion Mean=2.50

Therefore table 1 revealed that the factors influencing guest retention among hotels in a competitive market in Port Harcourt, Rivers State were information quality (3.11), quality services (3.22), customer service (3.22), payment option (3.25), security and privacy policy (3.04), personalization level (3.21), rewards (3.21), Fulfillment (3.25), brand image (3.01), Guest recognition (2.81), reception (3.11) and prices offered (2.82). This accounts for the rapid growth of hotel businesses in Port Harcourt. This finding is in line with that of Shahzad (2013) who examined the determinants of guest retention in hotel industry in Peshawar, Pakistan. He found that guest retention was influenced by factors which include security and privacy policy, personalization level, and brand image. The findings also correspond to the work of Szymanski and Henard (2001) that carried out a study on guest retention of dissatisfied business services guests, found that guest retention are influenced by several factors among which are quality services, security and privacy policy, personalization level. Furthermore, Hill and Alexander (2006) in their work on the handbook of guest satisfaction and loyalty measurement accepted that quality services, brand image, price offers influence the retention of guests in a competitive market.

Table 2 presents the mean rating of the effect of guest retention on hotel operation in a competitive market in Port Harcourt. This shows that the mean values on the effects of guest retention on hotel operation in a competitive market in Port Harcourt, Rivers State were greater than the acceptable level of 2.5.

Table 2: Effects of guest retention on hotel operation in a competitive market.

Influences	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Total Weight	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
Improving knowledge of the market	(204) 51	(318) 106	(32) 16	(6) 6	179	560	3.13	0.703	Accept
Increasing guests loyalty	(220) 55	(240) 80	(82) 41	(3) 3	179	545	3.04	0.778	Accept
Increasing competitive advantage	(252) 63	(141) 47	(110) 55	(14) 14	179	517	2.88	0.982	Accept
Promoting Advertisement of the business	(204) 51	(253) 86	(66) 33	(9) 9	179	532	2.97	0.821	Accept
Increasing complaint handling process	(232) 58	(258) 86	(62) 31	(4) 4	179	556	3.11	0.760	Accept
Make consumers feel appreciated	(292) 73	(180) 60	(76) 38	(7) 7	179	555	3.10	0.889	Accept
Creating better communication with guests	(216) 54	(234) 78	(74) 37	(10) 10	179	534	2.98	0.857	Accept
GRAND MEAN							3.03		ACCEPT

Source: Field survey, 2020 Criterion Mean=2.50

The table revealed that the effect of guest retention on hotel operation in a competitive market in Port Harcourt to include improving knowledge of the market (3.13), increasing guests loyalty (3.04), increasing competitive advantage (2.88), promoting advertisement of the business (2.97), increasing complaint handling process (3.11), make consumers feel appreciated (3.10), and creating better communication with guests (2.98) indicating grand mean score of 3.03.

The finding is in agreement with the study conducted by Stauss, Chojnacki, Decker, and Hoffman (2001) on retention effects of a guest club. They found that guest retention plays a vital role in the overall survival and growth of the hotel industries, and as such hotels should adopt guest retention strategies in their operations. Thomas and Thnga (2016) in their work on guest retention strategies in hotel industries in Trivandrum, found out that guest retention increases competitive advantage, make consumers feel valued, creates better communication with guests and promotes advertisement of the business. This implies that guest retention is very important for the hotel to maintain the old guest and attract the new guests.

Table 3 discloses the mean rating of the measures of managing guest retention among hotels in a competitive market in Port Harcourt, River State. The result shows that all the items on the measures of managing guest retention among hotels in a competitive market in Port Harcourt, River State were above the mean cut off of 2.50, with a grand mean of 2.98. This indicates that guest retention among hotels in a competitive market can be managed through various measures as the table has shown.

Table 3: Measures of managing guest retention among hotels in a competitive market in Port Harcourt, River State.

Measures	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total Score	Total Weight	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
Guest Satisfaction	(274) 69	(189) 63	(64) 32	(15) 15	179	542	3.03	0.950	Accept
Perceived Value	(264) 66	(183) 61	(72) 38	(14) 14	179	533	2.98	0.948	Accept
Perceived Corporate Image	(144) 36	(267) 89	(98) 49	(5) 5	179	514	2.87	0.757	Accept
Perceived Competitive Advantage	(220) 55	(192) 64	(94) 47	(13) 13	179	519	2.89	0.924	Accept
Perceived Switching Barriers	(188) 47	(246) 82	(74) 37	(13) 13	179	521	2.91	0.847	Accept
Effective communication between guests and service providers	(252) 63	(231) 77	(60) 30	(9) 9	179	552	3.08	0.755	Accept
Knowledgeable Employees	(200) 50	(276) 92	(64) 32	(5) 5	179	545	3.04	0.714	Accept
Empowerment	(232) 58	(264) 88	(64) 32	(1) 1	179	560	3.13	0.783	Accept
Aesthetic quality	(120) 30	(249) 83	(116) 58	(8) 8	179	493	2.75	0.714	Accept
Ethical Behaviour	(176) 44	(261) 87	(78) 39	(9) 9	179	524	2.93	0.814	Accept
Fees	(208) 52	(204) 68	(80) 40	(19) 19	179	511	2.85	0.837	Accept
Relationship Marketing	(280) 70	(222) 74	(54) 27	(8) 8	179	564	3.15	0.735	Accept
Service Quality	(120) 30	(300) 100	(84) 42	(7) 7	179	511	2.85	0.811	Accept
Enabling Service Features	(328) 82	(189) 63	(60) 30	(4) 4	179	581	3.25	0.889	Accept
GRAND MEAN							2.97		ACCEPT

Source: Field survey, 2020 Criterion Mean=2.50

Such measures include guest satisfaction (3.03), perceived value (2.98), perceived corporate image (2.87), perceived competitive advantage (2.89), perceived switching barriers (2.91), effective communication between guests and service providers (3.08), knowledgeable employees (3.04), empowerment (3.13), aesthetic quality (2.75), ethical behavior (2.93), fees (2.85), relationship marketing (3.15), service quality (2.85), and enabling service features (3.25). The result is in agreement with the finding of Thomas and Thnga (2016) who carried out a study on guest retention strategies in hotel industries in Trivandrum. They found out that guest retention issues can be managed through guest satisfaction and perceived switching barriers communication. When there is guest satisfaction and smooth communication between an organization and its guests, it produces guest loyalty which leads to guest retention in a competitive market. Furthermore, the finding is in collaboration with the work of Petzer¹, Steyn, and Mostert, (2009) on guest retention practices of small, medium and large hotels in South Africa. They found out that knowledgeable employees and service quality are crucial in effective management of guest retention. Quality service offered to guests by knowledgeable employees in an organization will create an image in the mind of guests which creates guest retention.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Guest retention in hotels focuses on the efforts of hotel employees to hold on to their consumers to keep on buying the hotel goods and services for a given period of time in order to ensure hotel growth

and performance, profitability, loyalty and sustainability. However, because of the competitive nature of the industry, many hotels are losing their guests due to poor guest satisfaction while others are going out of business. This has made it imperative for some of the hotels that are still in business to take proactive measures and strategies to retain their guests to be sustained. The study revealed that the perceived factors influencing guest retention among hotels in a competitive market in Port Harcourt metropolis are quality services, security and privacy policy, personalization level, brand image, and prices offered. The study has disclosed among others that the effect of guest retention on hotel operation in a competitive market in Port Harcourt includes increasing guest loyalty, competitive advantage and complaint handling processes, and creating better communication with guests. Based on the findings it has been recommended that hotel management should continue to adopt and implement strategies and make adequate policies geared towards promoting business, increasing complaint handling processes, and improving communication with guests among others to improve their guest retention.

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