



Recreational Activities and Tourism Promotion in Abeokuta, Nigeria: The Case of Green Legacy Resort

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Abstract

The study examined the role of recreational program in tourism promotion. The type of recreational program that tourists enjoys more was analyzed, to know which recreational program determines their choice of tourist center. Data for the study was collected from personal survey (for a period of 2 weeks) with the random administration of questionnaires to 400 tourists in Green Legacy Resort, a major recreational center in Abeokuta. Only 105 was considered valid for this research. Tables and charts were used for data representation. Up to 98% of the respondents specifies recreational facilities as a major attraction to visits the destination, indicating that recreational program influence destination preference (Aicher et al., 2015). Also, self-confidence and social interaction are additional benefits provided by recreational program, this increase destinations' appeal and foster positive travel experience (Temblay et al., 2020; Adebayo et al., 2021). Additionally, the respondents enjoyed basketball, boat-ride, park visiting and agreed that comfort, good atmosphere, recreational facilities and flexible hours of operation facilitate their patronage and determines their choice of tourist centers. The study recommends that owners, tourism managers and tour agents in the study area should prioritized recreation activities as a marketing tool to increase tourism demands to the study area.

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Introduction

Recreation is an act of involving oneself in leisure activities voluntarily. It is an essential element of man's biology and psychological development (Yener et al., 2017). Recreational activities are often done during one's leisure time for enjoyment, amusement or pleasure; these are considered fun. Recreational activities may take place anywhere, from an individual's garage/garden to a local park or a distant location, which is engaging in tourism. Examples are but not limited to hiking, boat ride, mountain climbing, tennis, golf playing and swimming (UNWTO, 2010). Within this context, recreational activities form the area where activities are majorly organized for fun and participants get involved either by the immediate satisfaction derived from it or its perceives as some personal or social values. It is possible for tour agency to create activities that are appealing using different methods

and models to attract tourists in all walks of life to recreational activities; (Yener et al., 2017) mentioned that recreational activities are created to deliberately provide people pleasure and reward them with recreational, fun activities.

Tourism is traveling out of your immediate vicinity for either pleasure or work within a speculated period (Christopher et al., 2022). People travel for various reasons, and leisure is one of them. People takes some time away from their busy lives to engage in leisure activities. Tourists engage in various activities and usually the host arranges for fun-filled activities to make their stay memorable. Tourists engage in recreational activities depending on their age and health fitness. Tourism promotion is adopting activities that will create awareness for the host community and recreational activities is a

sure way to do that and also generating money for host community (Adebayo et al., 2021).

Takon & Amalu (2013) mentioned in their research that most of the existing recreation centers have been developed and renovated through the foundation of NTDC (Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation), this was intended to promote and enhance tourism growth. Nevertheless, some tourism and recreational centres such as Obudu mountain resorts, Ezeagu recreation center, Eko tourist resort, Yakari game reserves amongst others experience low patronage (Eja et al., 2011; Amalu et al., 2012; Amalu et al., 2015; Iwara et al., 2017). Ogun state economy will be further improved if other tourism potentials within the state is developed. These potentials include the Abeokuta Museum, the Ebute Oni Tourist Beach, the Osuru Water Spring, among others, all of which strive to offer relaxation and recreation opportunities to residents of various class and travelers visiting the state.

Tourism Development and Recreation Centres

Recreation is a prerequisite to tourism, therefore, both are inseparable. A tourist who left his immediate environment to pursue leisure will look out for places that have a lot of leisure activities package for tourists. Recreational activities are the recipes that makes tourism fun and enjoyable. High quality provision for local recreation will regularly boost tourist interest in the area and spawn demands for tourism product and services. It is imperative to mention that recreation represents a vital involvement of individual investors in the tourism sector, as most of its outlets are owned privately and oftentimes in partnership with the host communities (Amalu et al., 2018).

Recreational activities are very important for everyone. Tsige Anberbir (2014) explained, “recreation consists of an activity or experience that is typically selected willingly by the participant, either for the immediate satisfaction it will provide or because they believe it will advance certain personal or social values. It doesn't have any relation to the workplace and is done in leisure time. Recreational activities are part of what tourist

considers determining a choice of place to spend time outside work.

M. Adli Mohd Sidi (2017) defines it as any activity that is engaged in that brings satisfaction to the people. To improve quality of life, which includes their functional competence, social well-being, subjective well-being, and physical and emotional vigour, all of which are related to their happiness and contentment with life; it is crucial to create a conducive environment and have highly skilled and motivated personnel who understand the value of social activities Yener Aksoy et al (2017). According to T. E. Amalu et al (2018) and Barnett et al (2018) in their research, recreation centers and parks offer chances for physical activity, enabling individuals of all ages to lead active lives. Everyone requires one form of recreational activities, and as such, recreation can be a source of passive or active enjoyment Sava (2015).

In recent years, tourism has gradually established itself as a powerful tool for local and regional development. This breakthrough may be in the areas of economic, society, health, and the environment T. E. Amalu et al (2018). Examining the sustainability of tourism growth will be made easier by sustainable development. Hence, this study seek to examine the recreation program available for tourists in Green Legacy Resorts, determines the impression of the tourists' involvement in recreational activities and hindrances to participate, analyses the type of recreational program that tourists enjoys more and also to know if recreational program determines their choice of tourist center.

Methodology

Study Area

Green Legacy Resorts is located at the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library, Abeokuta, Ogun State. It is the perfect location for both work and leisure because it offers breath-taking scenery and top-notch amenities throughout a vast area of land. Some of which are grand outdoor pools, restaurants with a choice of exotic cuisines, first-rate fitness centers and a well-equipped standard gym, event hosting facilities, and a stylishly decorated

conference room. The Resorts also offers a ton of fantastic services to its visitors, like spa and sauna services, a beauty salon, luggage storage, a business center, and tennis courts.

Data Collection

Randomly administered structured questionnaire were distributed to tourists at various recreation outlets within the Green Legacy Resort to help collect information for the study. The first section of the questionnaire consists of the demographic data of respondents, follow by questions that are related to the study area and lastly recreational activities questions.

Two (2) different sources of data were used in collecting the data, which are primary source and secondary source. Primary source consist of data gotten through the administration of questionnaire to 100 respondents. 5-point Likert scale was employed with number that ranges from 1 which indicate strongly disagree to 5 which indicate strongly agree. The Likert scaling model gives an opportunity of assigning a smaller value, which signifies a divergent opinion, and a larger value, which signifies expressions of concurrent opinion. Secondary sources employed the usage of internet information, journals, textbooks etc. and the data gotten were presented through tables, graphs and charts.

Results

Table 1: Respondents’ age.

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	49 years and above	7	6.7	6.7
	31-48 years	52	49.5	56.2
	20-30 years	46	43.8	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	

Table 1 above shows the average age of the respondents. The result shows that a total of 7 or 6.7% of the respondents were 49 years and above while 52 respondents or 49.5% of the respondents

were 31 until 48 years old. The remaining 46 respondents (43.8%) were 20 years until 30 years old.

Table 2: “Gender”

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	73	69.5	69.5
	Female	32	30.5	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	

Table 2 above showed that 73 respondents (69.5%) were male while, 32 (30.5%) were female. This

implies that, majority of the respondents were male.

Table 3: “Marital Status”

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	21	20.0	20.0
	Married	70	66.7	86.7
	Separated	14	13.3	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	

Table 3 above showed that 21 respondents representing 20% were single, 70 respondents representing 67% were married while, 14

representing 13% of the respondents were divorced. This implies that majority of the respondents were married.

Table 4: “Educational Level”

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	O’Level	20	19.0	19.0
	OND/NCE	23	22.0	41.0
	HND/BSC	41	39.0	80.0
	Above	21	20.0	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	

Table 4 showed that 20 respondents (25%) have O’Level, 23 respondents (22%) have ND/NCE certification, 41 respondents (39%) have

HND/BSC, 21 respondents (20%) have above. This implies that, majority of the respondents have HND/BSC educational level.

Table 5: “Employment Status”

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed	61	58.1	58.1
	Business owner	31	29.5	87.6
	Student	13	12.4	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	

The table above showed that 61 respondents representing 58.1% were employed, 31 respondents representing 29.5% were business owner, while 13

respondents representing 12.4% were students. This implies that, majority of the respondents were employed.

Table 6: “Proximity of residence to the resort?”

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very close	1	1.0	1.0
	Slightly close	17	16.2	17.1
	Not close	87	82.9	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	

The above table shows that only 1 respondent representing 1% live very close to the resort, 17 respondents representing 16.2% of the respondents live slightly close, while 87 respondents

representing 82.9% do not close. This implies that, majority of the respondents went on tour to the resort.

Table 7: Characteristics of the Resort Attraction

Variables	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Unsatisfied
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1.	Serene environment	51.7%	48.3%	0
2.	Cleanliness	66.7%	33.3%	0
3.	Security	65%	22.4%	23.1%
4.	Equity in price	19.0%	38.1%	29.8%
5.	Good location	48.3%	51.7%	0
6.	Variety of foods	14.2%	28.5%	57.1%
7.	Quality of services	55.23%	34.28%	10.5%
9.	Variety of games	21.9%	66.66%	24.76%
10.	Availability of public transport	18.9%	20%	61.9%

The responses of the respondents on characteristics of the resort attraction are as presented in Table 7 above. The result indicates that 51.7% and 48.3% of the respondents are very satisfied and averagely satisfied with the serene environment respectively. A greater percentage of 66.7% was very satisfied with the resort cleanliness while 33.3% are satisfied. 65% of the respondents are very satisfied with the resort security, while 22.4% and 23.1% are satisfied and averagely satisfied respectively. Moreover, 38.1% of the respondents are satisfied with price equity, 29.8% are unsatisfied while 19%

are very satisfied. 51.7% are satisfied with the resort location and 48.3% very satisfied. Additionally, 57.1% are unsatisfied with the food varieties, with 28.5% and 14.2% of the respondents satisfied and very satisfied respectively. Larger part of the respondents indicates their satisfaction with service quality 55.23% as very satisfied, 34.28% satisfied and 10.5% unsatisfied. 66.6% are satisfied with the variety of games, 24.7% indicates their unsatisfied and 21.9% very satisfied. Lastly, 61.9% unsatisfied with public transport within the resort, 20% satisfied and 18.9% very satisfied.

Table 8: Availability of patronage indicator

Availability of patronage indicator	Yes (%)	No (%)
Comfort	90	10
Atmosphere of the place	83	17
Recreational facilities	98	2
Flexible hours of operation	100	0
Amenities	100	0

The responses of the respondents on availability of patronage indicator are as presented in table 8 above. The result shows that 90% of the respondents affirmed that comfort is a patronage indicator, only 10% indicate 'No'. 83% affirmed that the resort atmosphere can be used as patronage indicator while 17% indicate 'No'. 98% of the

respondents said agreed that recreational facilities contributed to their reason for patronage and only 2% indicates that it was not part of their reason. More so, all (100%) the respondents affirmed flexible hours of operations and amenities as patronage indicator.

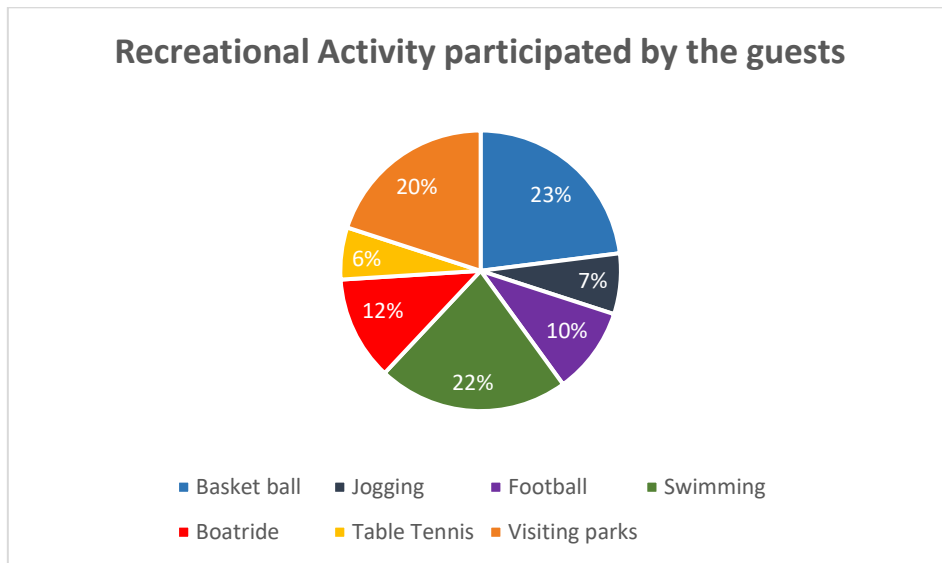


Figure 1: Recreational Activity participated by the guests

The respondents were asked the outdoor recreational activity participated in. The results in fig.1 indicate that majority of the respondents 23% participated in basketball, followed by swimming

22%, visiting park 20%. 12% of the respondents participates in boat ride, 10% football, 7% jogging and 6% table tennis.

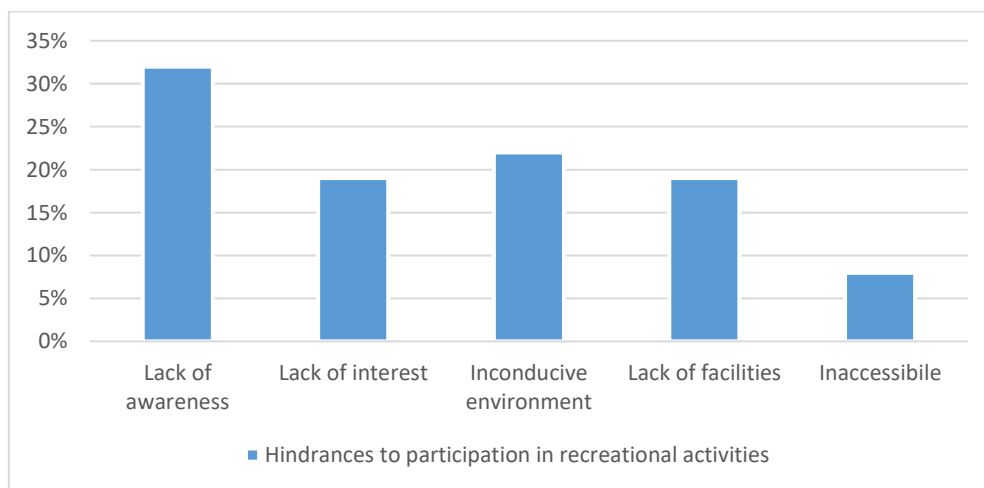


Figure 2: Hindrances to participation in recreational activities

Figures 2 shows that the respondents indicates that there are hindrance to participation in recreational program. Lack of awareness has the highest

percentage 32%, follow by unconducive environment 22%, lack of interest and facilities has 19% and lastly inaccessibility 8%.

Table 9: The general benefit/Effects of participating in recreational activities

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure
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Refresh minds	15 (14.3%)	58 (55.2%)	7 (6.7%)	5 (4.8%)	20 (19.04)
Develop physical health	63 (60%)	30 (28.6%)	0	0	12 (11.4%)
Create positive interaction with others	65(61.9%)	21 (20%)	4(3.8%)	10 (9.5%)	5 (4.8%)
Build self confidence	39 (37.1%)	42 (40%)	24 (22.9%)	0	0

The responses of the respondents on general benefit of participating in recreational activities are as presented in table 9 above. The result shows that 14.3% strongly agree that recreational activities refreshes minds, 55.2% agree, 6.7% strongly disagreed and 19.04% are not sure. Majority of the respondents 60% strongly agree that physical fitness is part of recreational activities benefits while 28.6% agree and 11.4% are not sure. 61.9% strongly agree it create positive interaction with others, 20% agree, 3.8% strongly disagree, 9.5% disagree and 4.8% indicates not sure. 40% of the respondents agree that recreational activities build self-confidence, 37.1% strongly agree and only 22.9% strongly disagree.

Results and Discussion

Similar to (Aicher et al., 2015) study that recreational program influence destination preference, as people may be compelled to travel longer distances in order to participate in new or regular leisure activities. It was discovered that recreational activities are the major attraction to tourists who visits the Green Legacy Resorts. The study asserted amongst the patronage indicators such as comfort, amenities, flexibility of operations and serene environment; recreational facilities represent 98%. Furthermore, cleanliness, serene environment, security, good location has encouraged most tourists to continue their patronage. Tourists will always return to a place where they feel welcome and valued; and where their social needs are most likely met.

Also, the study indicates that recreational activities improve self-esteem and provide opportunities for social interaction with others which enhances respondents’ satisfaction with the destination facilities. This is in support of (Tremblay et al., 2020; Adebayo et al., 2021). There is a positive connection between

recreational activities and self-confidence, which improve visitor satisfaction, increasing the destination’s appeal and fostering a positive travel experience. Additionally, the study supports (Dwyer et al., 2019) assertion that recreational amenities are assets and vital factor in promoting destination image.

Conclusion

Understanding why tourists choose to re-visits a travel destination is beneficial to tourism promotion. One common method used to comprehend degree of patronage is customers level of satisfaction. A visitor will be motivated to visit places where they expect their needs to be satisfied. Visitors are more inclined to make repeat purchase of a product or service and most likely recommend to others when they are satisfied. This study amongst other patronage indicators reveals recreational program as a determinant in Green Legacy Resort. These recreational activities include basketball, football, swimming, boat ride, table tennis and visiting parks. Finally, targeting marketing efforts towards specific travel motivations, in this case recreational activities will increase demand for tourism products and services in the host destination.

Recommendation

The study recommended that owners and tourism managers in Abeokuta tourist destinations should prioritize local recreational activities that is particular to the host destination. Tour agents should use recreational program as a form of marketing tool in their tour package promo. This will motivate tourist interest and spawn demands for tourism products and services.

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