

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES FOR REGENERATIVE TOURISM IN THE NIGERIAN TOURISM COMPASS

Abstract

Quest for economic gains and over-tourism has practically undermined the future of most tourism resources within a space; hence the need for regenerative tourism in the global tourism discourse. This study was aimed at examining the relationship between the choice of tourism resources/choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism among travellers/tourists in Nigeria. Taro Yamane Formula was used to determine the sample size (1000). While descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, inferential statistics of t-test was used for the Hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that while there is a significant relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria, there is no significant relationship between the choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. The implication is that there are opportunities for regenerative tourism in Nigeria, more especially as it concerns cultural heritage resources and the like. The study concluded by recommending that host communities and other relevant stakeholders need collaborative mechanisms to actualize the gains of regenerative tourism within the Nigeria tourism space.

Keywords: *Regenerative tourism; Sustainable tourism; Tourism resources; Tourist Destinations; Rural tourism; Cultural heritage resources; Natural heritage resources.*

Introduction

Tourism is a dynamic, complex and consumable industry that cannot be measured nor stored (Hussain, 2021). This understanding has been guiding operations in the tourism industry since the boom and subsequent motivations to invest largely in the industry by both public and private investors. Even before the insurgence of pandemics and/or other global uncertainties, this belief in packaging the tourism industry to attract more tourists and visitors, and generate more tourism receipts, has motivated tourism investors and destinations across the globe (Pollock, 2019; Hussain, 2021). This has also led to the development of more tourism resources into attractions to increase tourist influx to a space and motivate significant growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) through tourism receipts. Interestingly, most of these newly developed and developing tourism resources are natural and cultural heritage resources that form the identity of a people, mostly in Africa and some other developing nations where natural and cultural heritage resources form the bulk of their tourism resources (both developed and undeveloped). These

nations are motivated by the socio-economic and identity promotion gains of the tourism industry, to harness their tourism resources for community, regional and national development.

However, this study is by no means arguing that the tourism industry does not have potentialities for socio-economic development in a space, but that efforts should be made to consider the regenerative aspects of the heritage resources that are being harnessed for tourism development; more especially, the natural and cultural heritage resources. Regenerative tourism is concerned with the creation of opportunities for continuous life and existence despite the dynamism of human environment (Hutchins & Storm, 2019). From this understanding, regenerative tourism can briefly be defined as the aspect of tourism discourse that focuses on the continuous renewal of tourism resources to its original form, to serve both domestic and tourism purposes under a given space. It promotes the periodic renewal of tourism resources to their original form before use. Before now, many tourism concepts like sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, over tourism, among others, have been introduced in tourism discourse to address the problems of abuse, degradation, overuse, defacement and destruction of tourism resources, with a view to seeking ways of presenting the values of tourism resources for the future despite tourist activities and other uses. Apart from unnecessary hostilities from the host community or other owners as a result of the destruction and abuse of the tourism resources, the development of such tourism resources may not be sustainable and future investors in the tourism industry may be discouraged, including the negative impact on the life span of the heritage resources. More on these previous concepts will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

Regenerative tourism has been identified as the new focus in tourism discourse in the 21st century towards ensuring equitable and responsible tourism resources. Some studies have focused on revealing the need for the concept in the 21st-century tourism development without proffering solutions on how it can be achieved (Duxbury, Bakas, Castro, & Silva, 2021; Bradley, 2021; Hussain, 2021; Diquit & Palarca, 2021, etc). However, these studies have motivated the current study that seeks to understand the place of regenerative tourism and how it can be achieved within the Nigeria space. Tourism in Nigeria is motivated by two main factors, the choice of tourism resources and the choice of tourist destinations. Tourism activities revolve around these major choices of tourists which is a function of their tourism motivation. What are the opportunities for regenerative tourism in Nigeria through the choice of tourism resources and choice of tourist destinations in Nigeria? This unique research question motivated this study to examine the relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism, as well as the relationship between choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. In the end, the study is expected to establish these relationships and the implications of the choice of tourism resources and tourist destinations for regenerative tourism in Nigeria.

Conceptualization

This aspect of the study considers some of the notable concepts in tourism discourse that will guide the understanding of major propositions in this study. For instance, tourism as an industry is dependent on various variables that stimulate tourism activities in a given space. These variables are referred to as tourism resources (Hussain, 2021). They are the bedrock of tourism development. These resources motivate, stimulate and promote tourism development in a given

place. They are further classified into two broad categories of tourism potentialities and tourist/visitor attractions. Tourism potentialities are those tourism resources that are yet to be developed; They are left to lie fallow in some locations, anticipating possible discovery and imminent development. They include undeveloped caves, water bodies, cultural materials and attributes, among others. Their tourism values are stimulated by their developments. However, tourist attractions or visitor attractions are those tourism resources that have been developed to attract tourists and other visitors to a given space. The implication is that tourism products evolve through two critical stages of tourism resources (potentialities and attractions) to make a significant impact on the GDP of a given place (Nwankwo, 2017). In Africa and some other developing nations, many of their tourism resources are still undeveloped owing to factors like insufficient funding for tourism projects, poor access to remote locations, host community/owners' ignorance, poor road network, poor receptiveness to development, among others. This challenge is peculiar to both cultural and national tourism resources. Despite their rich tourism values, tourism potentialities do not attract visitors and tourists, until the owners begin to attach a different value to their existence (Kanimodu, 2022). However, the focus of this study is on the developed tourism resources (tourist attractions) that pull tourist traffic to their respective locations.

Moreover, tourist destination is another major concept in the study that needs clarification. Some authors have viewed this concept from different dimensions but ended with the same conclusion. A summary of the views of most of these authors portrays a tourism destination as a place of visit or stay for tourists while on their respective tourist experiences (Page & Connell 2006; Nwankwo, 2017; Eshiett & Eshiett, 2022; Okim, 2022). It has to do with the geographical location of tourism resources, whether cultural, natural or built tourism resources. The extent of value attached to a given tourist destination is a function of the size of developed tourism resources that are domiciled within the destination. A particular location is not classified as a tourist destination pending the development of various tourism resources within its space. More so, the location should be accessible, make provision for accommodation and feeding for visitors, and have other social amenities as well as quality security architecture, to attract tourists. Hence it may not be classified as a tourist destination by just having developed tourism resources without the presence of the above-mentioned facilities that add to the comfort of tourists and visitors.

Regenerative tourism is among the current debates in the global tourism discourse. It is one of the critical aspects of tourism that is anchored on sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism is a concept in tourism development that measures the extent and nature of development for tourism resources, to guarantee the present and future of the tourism resources and the environment. It also tries to ensure coexistence among tourism stakeholders that pertain to a given tourism resource. Such as host communities, developers, investors, visitors, tourists, public agencies and other interested parties. Sustainable tourism concepts also try to predict possible hostilities or damage that may hamper the present and future use of a given tourism resources, and proffers solutions to either avert the predicted challenge or reduce the possibility to the barest minimum (Okhim, 2022; Nwankwo, 2017). Since its arrival into the tourism discourse in the 1980s, sustainable tourism has focused on maintaining a balance between local use, tourism use and preservation of tourism resources. In recent times, some other concepts have emanated to contribute to the actualization of the ideals of sustainable tourism. One of these notable concepts

is responsible tourism which surfaced in the sustainable tourism discourse. Responsible tourism is focused on making respective stakeholders of a given tourism project responsive to the preservation and sustainability of the tourism project. It is believed that making these stakeholders responsible for the sustainability and preservation of tourism resources, will make them play their respective roles and take responsibility for actions that will promote responsible and sustainable tourism. Responsible tourism involves these stakeholders in the various developmental phases of the project, respecting their opinions and assigning them respective roles towards eliminating possible hostilities and other uprisings that may endanger the sustainability of the project.

In addition, another concept surfaced in the global discourses on sustainable tourism. This is referred to as regenerative tourism. Regenerative tourism is another sustainable tourism concept that focuses on the nature-renewal of tourism resources to give more guarantees for future use. It focuses on the regeneration of tourism resources after use to make more room for future use. This became necessary when various developers have been paying more attention to the gains of tourism development to the various stakeholders with insignificant concern on the survival of the tourism resources. The concept argues that the main concern of tourism development should not rest solely on the socio-economic gains of the investment, but also on the natural state and sustenance of the targeted tourism resources after use. It further presupposes that development should factor in plans or strategies that will encourage regeneration of the tourism resources, hence the regeneration will guarantee more use in the future, and this implies more socio-economic gains in the long run. Hence, more of these tourism resources, especially cultural and natural resources, will not be able to regain their original state after use as a result of tourism activities. Their destruction, decimation and abuse may not be able to be reversed.

Literature Review

Regenerative Tourism (RT) is among the new concepts that have generated a lot of debates in the tourism discourse in the 21st Century tourism development and sustainability. The concept is positioned to check the activities of over-tourism towards achieving the long-awaited sustainability within the tourism space. However, this aspect of the study considers the brief review of some of the relevant works that have dominated this current debate in the 21st-century tourism discourse. For instance, Fuste-Forne and Hussain (2022) understated the recovery opportunities of tourism in the long run after the COVID. Their study was able to identify RT as the centre of tourism reformation in the Post-COVID era, through the promotion of local cultures, identities and visitor experiences at destinations. They concluded by noting that such RT efforts should be concentrated on cultural and natural heritage resources which are classified as endangered tourism resources (Fuste-Forne & Hussain, 2022). However, despite its contribution to the current debate, the study was not able to establish the relationship between tourism resources, tourist destinations and RT.

Moreso, Owen (2007) examined two impacts of ecotourism on the Yulara Town in Central Australia. It noted that despite the positive socio-economic impacts of ecotourism development in the area, efforts have not been made to consider the preservation of nature and culture within the community space. The study further argues that ecotourism facilities and development in

Yulara town of Australia should be situated within the RT context to accommodate these development, facilities, nature and culture. In conclusion, Owen noted that the gains of ecotourism in Yulara will be more sustainable with the consideration of the RT concept in these ecotourism facilities in the community. It also noted the need for further research to establish other engagements between RT and other concepts within tourism discourse. This supports the aim of the current study in engaging the relationship between RT and tourism resources and tourist destinations.

Duxbury, Bakas, Castro and Silva (2021) in their study investigated the relevance of RT to culture and nature conservation. Having observed the supportive position of RT to culture and nature preservation, they positioned creative tourism (CREATOR) as an instrument towards the actualization of the ideals of RT through distinctive creative tourism models like standalone offers repeated series of creature activities and other initiatives under the same theme, localized networks for creative tourism activities and creative accommodations. They further note that “creative tourism initiatives tend to focus on emphasizing local cultural specificities and identities, distinctive characteristics of a place, and providing an impulse towards enhancing local cultural vitality and contributing to cultural sustainability” (Duxbury et al., 2021, p.13). This implies that despite the over-emphasised gains of tourism development, sustainability of culture and nature preservation within a space is of paramount importance, hence the positions of creature tourism as a channel to actualising RT in the rural areas and other semi-urban areas where nature and culture have formed the bulk of tourism resources. The study concluded by noting the need for further studies on RT possibilities in tourist destinations in developing nations.

More so, Disquit and Palarca (2021) identified permaculture which is designed to replicate the original state of natural and cultural heritage resources, as a solution to actualising RT and sustainability, and further healing the wounded planet for future generations in ecotourism development. The study also argues that permaculture has the tendency to create a sustainable and more regenerative design for ecotourism development through the preservation of bio-resources and the like (Disquit & Palarca, 2021). In this study, permaculture, just like the creator, was seen as a channel of actualising RT for sustainable ecotourism development through replication of the original state of ecotourism facilities. This is possible hence it will reduce pressure on the angered ecotourism facilities and give the facilities the opportunity to regenerate and serve more future ecotourism development initiatives, with less impact on the host’s perception of these development actions on their heritage resources. The study added that future studies should focus more on extending the RT opportunities to some other tourism resources including ecotourism resources (Disquit & Palarca, 2021).

Moreover, Major and Clerk (2021) recommended regenerative tourism solution to the post-COVID Aotearoa community in New Zealand. They suggested a paradigm shift from the original conventions to models, to regenerate ecotourism and other tourism resources for more responsiveness through innovative economic models like social entrepreneurship, local tourism solutions that give precedence to the host instead of the visitor, and collaborative solutions within tourism and with other sectors. The study concluded by noting that regenerative tourism solutions for host communities place communities and their needs above the needs of the tourists and other visitors within a tourist destination; hence setting precedence for these tourists and

visitors to create such scene in the tourism generating regions when they return from their tourism trips (major & Clark, 2021). This study x-rays the tripartite effect of RT on tourism resources, tourist destinations and tourism-generating regions, and also involves tourists and visitors in the actualization of RT. This has exposed further studies to establish the impact of tourists and visitors' choice of tourist destination and tourism resources on RT.

In addition, Stronza and Hunt (2012) considered the negative effects of tourism on biodiversity and stressed on the urgent need to address the negative effects of tourism towards ensuring sustainability in the long run. The study further suggested some measures like changing the roles of stakeholders, stipulating emerging guidelines in tourism activities, internalisation of tourism externalities among others, towards a sustainable impact of tourism on a given space. They concluded by noting that in as much as tourism is seen as a reward, developmental escape and serial benefits to society and its excesses need to be checked to guarantee sustainability. The implication of the study is that, despite the huge benefits of tourism on the socio-economic and cultured sphere, developers should be mindful of its negative impacts on tourism resources and the environment, hence its sustainability should be a function of efforts to preserve and regenerate these tourism resources that generate tourism development in a given locality.

The last but not the least is Pollock, Reed and Leventhat (2021). This study was positioned on the need to advance from sustainability to regeneration to ensure a sustainable existence of the biodiversity and other natural and cultural heritage resources that have contributed to human existence within a geographical space. It noted that these resources need to be regenerated to avert possibilities of hostilities arising from the owners on the wrong perception of use via development activities, hence their (host) attachment of these resources through generations. The study made a significant contribution to the existing literature on RT debates by designing five regenerative tourism principles. These include whole systems thinking, honouring the sense of a place, community inclusion and partnership, aspiration in native and continual co-evolution. These principles are designed to guide discussion on RT debates (Pollock, Reed & Leventhat, 2021).

Finally, these studies have been able to identify the need to safeguard tourism resources in many parts of the world. They also identified RT as a solution to the activities of over-tourism which have adversely affected the irreplaceable, natural and cultural-heritage resources of a place. The current study is, however, situated within the established lacuna on RT discourse, to establish the relationship between RT and tourism resources and tourist destinations in Nigeria, where a similar study has not been carried out before now.

Research Method

This is a survey research design with quantitative research method. The focus of the study was on adults in Nigeria who engage in domestic travelers within Nigeria. The population of the study is little above 20 million going by projected world bank demographic statics for nations (see Okim, 2022). However, Taro Yameni Formula was used to downsize the huge population size to 1000 at 0.5 error limit. After validation, 1000 questionnaires were produced and distributed among the sampled size. Six states were sampled from six geopolitical zones in

Nigeria ie Northeast (Bauchi State), Northwest (Kaduna), Northcentral (Benue), Southwest (Lagos), Southsouth (Cross River) and Southeast (Enugu). Apart from Enugu State that got 250 questionnaires, other states got 150 questionnaires. More so, focus was on male and female civil servants from the sampled states working in federal and state institutions higher learning. For instance, University of Nigeria Nsukka was sampled in Enugu State, Benue State University was sampled in Benue State, Cross River State University of Technology was sampled from Cross River State, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria was sampled from Kaduna State, Abubakar Tafawa Bewa University was sampled in Bauchi State, and Lagos State University was sampled from Lagos State. The 1000 questionnaires were distributed using convenient and purposive sampling techniques. The questionnaires involved four clusters with two clusters addressing each of the two research questions. The opinions of male and female travelers were sampled for the study. This is to determine the actual travel behavior of travelers in Nigeria. While 570 questionnaires were distributed to male travelers, 430 questionnaires were distributed to female travelers. Incidentally, 989 questionnaires (562 from male travelers and 427 from female travelers) were returned and used for the analysis. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. Also real limit of numbers was used in making decisions for the research questions. Inferential statistics of t-test was used for the Hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Frequency Table of the Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	562	56.8
Female	427	43.2
Total	989	100.0

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Table 1 above indicated that 562(56.8%) of the respondents were male, while 427(43.2%) were female. Thus, the majority of the respondents were female

Table 2: Frequency Table of the Age Distribution of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
20-40	639	64.6
41-69	248	25.1
70-90	102	10.3
Total	989	100.0

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The above table (Table 2) indicated that 639(56.8%) of the respondents were between the age of 20-40 years, 248

(25.1%) of the respondents were between the age of 41-69 years, and 102(10.3%) of the respondents were within the age of 61-90 years. Thus, the majority of the respondents fall within the age of 20-40 years

Table 3: Mean Responses of Respondents on Choice of Tourism Resources

		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	STD	R	De
1	I enjoy travelling to visit caves and rock shelters	358(36.2%)	70(5.1%)	172(17.4%)	255(25.8%)	154(15.6%)	2.79	1.53	15 th	D
2	I like travelling to see interesting traditional festivals	42(4.2%)	64(6.5%)	164(16.6%)	321(32.5%)	398(40.2%)	3.98	1.10	4 th	A
3	I like visiting to enjoy traditional masquerade displays	24(2.4%)	45(4.6%)	220(22.2%)	(31331.6%)	387(39.1%)	4.01	1.01	2 nd	A
4	I enjoy travelling to see urban tourism facilities	23(2.4%)	70(7.1%)	280(26.3%)	351(35.5%)	384(28.7%)	3.81	1.01	6 th	A
5	I delight in travelling to participate in tourism carnivals	26(2.6%)	51(5.2%)	203(20.5%)	335(33.9%)	374(37.8%)	3.99	1.01	3 rd	A
6	I like visiting lakes	38(3.8%)	94(9.5%)	191(19.3%)	254(25.7%)	412(41.7%)	3.92	1.15	5 th	A
7	I like visits to shrines and sacred places	28(2.8%)	80(8.1%)	242(24.5%)	342(34.6%)	297(30%)	3.81	1.04	7 th	A
8	I travel for domestic religious pilgrimages in Nigeria	32(3.2%)	80(8.1%)	277(28%)	356(36%)	244(24.7%)	3.71	1.03	8 th	A
9	I like visiting recreation and leisure centers in Nigeria	78(7.9%)	112(11.3%)	230(23.3%)	263(26.6%)	306(30.9%)	3.61	1.25	9 th	A
10	I like travelling to see beaches and their attractions	48(4.9%)	97(9.8%)	297(30%)	299(30.2%)	248(25.1%)	3.61	1.11	10 th	A
11	I like visiting to see waterfalls	94(9.5%)	181(18.3%)	284(28.7%)	411(41.6%)	19(1.9%)	3.08	1.02	14 th	A
12	I like travelling to see rivers and streams	29(2.9%)	61(6.2%)	164(16.6%)	296(29.9%)	439(44.4%)	4.07	1.06	1 st	A
13	I like visits to museums to see their attractions	96(9.7%)	144(14.6%)	166(16.8%)	301(30.4%)	282(28.5%)	3.53	1.30	12 th	A
14	I enjoy travelling to isolated places for relaxation and recreation	212(21.4%)	119(12%)	153(15.5%)	303(30.6%)	202(20.4%)	3.17	1.44	13 th	A
15	I like travelling to enjoy urban tourism facilities	50(5.1%)	142(14.4%)	281(28.4%)	186(18.8%)	330(33.4%)	3.61	1.22	11 th	A

Keys: SA- Strongly Agreed; A-Agreed; N-Neutral; D-Disagreed; SD-Strongly Disagreed; STD-standard Deviation; R-Rank; De-Decision

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The respondents were asked to indicate the choice of choice of tourism resources. Using the criterion mean of 3.00 on a 5 points scale, responses as presented in Table 3 indicated that the respondents accepted all the items except “I enjoy travelling to visit caves and rock shelters” (\bar{X} =2.79, SD=1.57). Also, the overall mean showed that “I like travelling to see rivers and streams” (\bar{X} = 4.07, SD=1.06) is ranked highest, while “I enjoy travelling to visit caves and rock shelters” (\bar{X} =2.79, SD=1.57) is ranked lowest as regards to the choice of tourism resources

Table 4: Mean Responses of Respondents on Choice of Tourist Destinations

		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD	R	De
1	I travel to tourist destinations with multiple attractions	120(12.1%)	130(13.1%)	164(16.6%)	201(20.3%)	374(37.8%)	3.59	1.41	4 th	A
2	I travel to tourist destinations with specific attractions	188(19%)	255(25.8%)	150(15.2%)	222(22.4%)	174(17.6%)	2.94	1.39	14 th	D
3	I prefer travelling to developed tourist destinations	51(5.2%)	106(10.7%)	162(16.4%)	328(33.2%)	342(34.6%)	3.81	1.17	1 st	A
4	I enjoy travelling to rural tourist destinations	183(18.5%)	170(17.2%)	182(18.4%)	221(22.3%)	233(23.6%)	3.15	1.43	10 th	A
5	I enjoy travelling to distant tourist destinations	167(16.9%)	163(16.5%)	162(16.4%)	233(23.6%)	264(26.7%)	3.27	1.44	9 th	A
6	I travel to tourist destinations with adequate safety guarantee	115(11.6%)	99(10.0%)	126(12.7%)	289(29.2%)	360(36.4%)	3.69	1.36	2 nd	A
7	I prefer visiting tourist destinations in southeast Nigeria	104(10.5%)	199(20.1%)	172(17.4%)	227(23%)	287(29%)	3.40	1.36	8 th	A
8	I prefer visiting tourist destinations in south-south Nigeria	242(24.5%)	256(25.9%)	108(10.9%)	239(24.2%)	144(14.6%)	2.78	1.42	15 th	D
9	I prefer visiting tourist destinations in south-west Nigeria	123(12.4%)	122(12.3%)	142(14.4%)	238(24.1%)	364(36.8%)	3.60	1.40	3 rd	A
10	I prefer visiting tourist destinations in north-east Nigeria	298(30.1%)	93(9.4%)	226(22.9%)	105(10.6%)	267(27%)	2.95	1.58	13 th	D
11	I prefer visiting tourist destinations in north-west Nigeria	326(33%)	194(19.6%)	90(9.1%)	144(14.6%)	235(23.8%)	2.77	1.60	16	D
12	I prefer visiting tourist destinations in north-central Nigeria	(18.5%)	100(10.1%)	170(17.2%)	166(16.8%)	370(37.4%)	3.44	1.52	6 th	A
13	I only visit tourist	169(17.1%)	206(20.8%)	206(20.8%)	186(18.8%)	222(22.4%)	3.09	1.40	11 th	A

	destinations I am familiar with									
14	I pay more attention to tourist destinations with internet visibility	212(21.4%)	224(22.6%)	133(13.4%)	164(16.6%)	256(25.9%)	3.03	1.51	12 th	A
15	I prefer visiting tourist destinations that have services of tour guides	149(15.1%)	123(12.4%)	180(18.2%)	249(25.2%)	288(29.1%)	3.41	1.41	7 th	A
16	I visit tourist destinations with adequate tourism infrastructure	90(9.1%)	138(14%)	170(17.2%)	301(30.4%)	290(29.3%)	3.57	1.29	5 th	A

Keys: SA- Strongly Agreed; A-Agreed; N-Neutral; D-Disagreed; SD-Strongly Disagreed; STD-standard Deviation; R-Rank; De-Decision

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The respondents were asked to indicate their choice of tourist destinations. Using the criterion mean of 3.00 on a 5 points scale, responses as presented in Table 4 indicated that the respondents indicated that items 1,3,4,5,6,7, 9,12,13,15, and 16 were the choice of tourist destinations. Also, the overall mean showed that “I prefer travelling to developed tourist destinations” (\bar{X} = 3.81, SD=1.17) is ranked highest, while “I prefer visiting tourist destinations in Northwest Nigeria” (\bar{X} =2.77, SD=1.60) is ranked lowest as regards choice of tourist destinations.

Table 5: Mean Responses of Respondents on Choice of Tourism Resources and Regenerative Tourism

		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD	R	De
1	I like visiting popular tourist sites	173(17.5%)	114(11.5%)	185(18.7%)	225(22.8%)	292(29.5%)	3.35	1.45	10 th	A
2	I like attending popular traditional festivals	84(8.5%)	123(12.4%)	224(22.6%)	260(26.3%)	298(30.1%)	3.57	1.27	2 nd	A
3	I do participate in cultural celebrations as a visitor	20(2%)	128(12.9%)	136(13.8%)	400(40.4%)	305(30.8%)	3.85	1.06	1 st	a
4	I like rarely celebrated traditional festivals	134(13.5%)	95(9.6%)	107(10.8%)	287(39.1%)	266(26.9%)	3.56	1.34	3 rd	A
5	I respect the value system of the host community	123(12.4%)	100(10.1%)	157(15.9%)	357(36.1%)	252(25.5%)	3.52	1.31	4 th	A
6	I often visit natural tourist attractions	132(13.3%)	(14114.3%)	212(21.4%)	298(30.1%)	206(20.8%)	3.31	1.31	12 th	A
7	I help to preserve the natural tourism resources	137(13.9%)	122(12.3%)	259(26.2%)	225(22.8%)	(24.9%)	3.32	1.34	11 th	A
8	I help to preserve the cultural tourism resources	133(13.4%)	107(10.8%)	219(22.1%)	270(27.3%)	260(26.3%)	3.42	1.34	7 th	A
9	I enjoy visiting regulated tourism resources	133(13.4%)	137(13.9%)	140(14.2%)	239(24.2%)	340(34.4%)	3.52	1.42	5 th	A
10	I like tourism	220(22.2%)	140(14.2%)	128(12.9%)	165(16.7%)	336(34%)	3.26	1.58	13 th	A

	resources that are easily accessible to visitors									
11	Host communities are better managers of their tourism resources	150(15.2%)	138(14%)	178(18.0%)	245(24.8%)	278(28.1%)	3.37	1.41	9 th	A
12	I enjoy visiting undeveloped tourism resources	100(10.1%)	172(17.4%)	183(18.5%)	208(21%)	326(33%)	3.49	1.37	6 th	A
13	I enjoy visiting urban tourism resources in the cities	266(26.9%)	216(21.8%)	139(14.1%)	152(15.4%)	216(21.8%)	2.83	1.52	14 th	D
14	I prefer visiting tourism resources with restriction	357(36.1%)	223(22.5%)	122(12.3%)	116(11.7%)	171(17.3%)	2.52	1.50	15 th	D
15	I enjoy visiting undisturbed tourism resources	177(17.9%)	130(13.1%)	131(13.2%)	247(25%)	304(30.7%)	3.38	1.48	8 th	A

Keys: SA- Strongly Agreed; A-Agreed; N-Neutral; D-Disagreed; SD-Strongly Disagreed; STD-standard Deviation; R-Rank; De-Decision

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The respondents were asked to indicate the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism. Using the criterion mean of 3.00 on a 5 points scale, responses as presented in Table 5 revealed that the respondents indicated that items 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9,10,11,12 and 15 were their choice of tourist destinations and regenerative tourism. Also, the overall mean showed that “I do participate in cultural celebrations as a visitor” (\bar{X} = 3.85, SD=1.06) is ranked highest, while “I prefer visiting tourism resources with restriction” (\bar{X} =2.52, SD=1.50) is ranked lowest as regards to the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism.

Table 6: Mean Responses of Respondents on Choice of Tourist Destinations and Regenerative Tourism

		SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	SD		De
1	I do visit grossly populated tourist destinations	112(11.3%)	113(11.4%)	167(16.9%)	271(27.4%)	326(33%)	3.59	1.35	4 th	A
2	I enjoy visiting overcrowded destinations	155(15.7%)	112(11.3%)	157(15.9%)	219(22.1%)	346(35%)	3.49	1.46	9 th	A
3	I delight in visiting regulated tourist destinations	108(10.9%)	137(13.9%)	178(18%)	236(23.9%)	330(33.4%)	3.55	1.36	7 th	A
4	I prefer visiting tourist destinations with the services of local tour guides	123(12.4%)	112(11.3%)	169(17.1%)	246(24.9%)	339(34.3%)	3.57	1.38	5 th	A
5	I like visits to destinations that are organised by tour operating firms	211(21.3%)	246(24.9%)	90(9.1%)	156(15.8%)	286(28.9%)	3.06	1.55	14 th	A
6	It is convenient to use personal	38(3.8%)	137(13.9%)	163(16.5%)	244(24.7%)	(41.2%)	3.85	1.21	2 nd	A

	vehicles within tourist destinations									
7	I like visiting tourist destinations that are managed by the host	108(10.9%)	156(15.8%)	140(14.2%)	246(24.9%)	339(34.3%)	3.56	1.38	6 th	A
8	I like visiting remote tourist destinations	8(.8%)	20(2%)	135(13.7%)	371(37.5%)	455(46%)	4.26	.83	1 st	A
9	I give utmost regard to regulations at tourist destinations	134(13.5%)	145(14.7%)	128(12.9%)	300(30.3%)	282(28.5%)	3.46	1.39	10 th	A
10	I like visiting destinations without possible hostilities from the host community	158(16%)	179(18.1%)	99(10%)	180(18.2%)	373(37.7%)	3.44	1.52	11 th	A
11	I like visiting destinations with regular and easy access	156(15.8%)	175(17.7%)	150(15.2%)	234(23.7%)	274(27.7%)	3.30	1.44	13 th	A
12	Tourist destinations should be closed sometimes to give room for regeneration	149(15.1%)	222(22.4%)	120(12.1%)	160(16.2%)	338(34.2%)	3.32	1.50	12 th	A
13	I support the gradual development of tourist destinations in a place	133(13.4%)	214(14.4%)	128(12.9%)	271(27.4%)	315(31.9%)	3.50	1.41	8 th	A
14	Access to popular tourist destinations should be periodic and regular	89(9%)	98(9.9%)	127(12.8%)	251(25.4%)	424(42.9%)	3.83	1.32	3 rd	A

Keys: SA- Strongly Agreed; A-Agreed; N-Neutral; D-Disagreed; SD-Strongly Disagreed; STD-standard Deviation; R-Rank; De-Decision.

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The respondents were asked to indicate the choice of tourist destinations and regenerative tourism. Using the criterion mean of 3.00 on a 5-point scale, responses as presented in Table 6 indicated that the respondents accepted all the items in choice of tourist destinations and regenerative tourism. Also, the overall mean showed that “I like visiting remote tourism destinations” (\bar{X} = 4.26, SD=.83) is ranked highest, while “I like visits to destinations that is organized by tour operating firms” (\bar{X} =3.06, SD=1.55) is ranked lowest as regards to Choice of tourist destinations and regenerative tourism.

Test of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at .05 level of significance:

- a. *There is no significant relationship between males and female between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria*

Table 7: t-test analysis on choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism by the male and female tourists in Nigeria

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	T	Sign	Decision
Male	562	3.85	.38	987	.737	.461	NS
Female	427	3.83	.40				

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The t-test analysis presented in Table 7 reveals that t (.737) is significant at .461 level of probability which is greater than .05 level of significance set for the testing of the hypotheses. This indicates that the results were not significant, thus there is no significant male-female relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

b. There is no significant relationship between the choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria

Table 8: t-test analysis on choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism by the male and female tourists in Nigeria

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	Df	t	Sign	Decision
Male	562	4.02	.42	987	.342	.732	NS
Female	427	4.01	.41				

(Source: Field Survey, 2022)

The t-test analysis presented in Table 8 reveals that t (.342) is significant at .732 level of probability which is greater than .05 level of significance set for the testing of the hypotheses. This indicates that the results were not significant, thus there is no significant male-female relationship between the choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is accepted.

Discussion

The first aspect of the study was to determine the choice of tourism resources among civil servants in Nigeria. From the careful interpretation of data in Table I, the majority of the respondents were male (56.8%). This implies that males travel more in Nigeria than females. This may be as a result of more work schedules and social engagements. This conclusion is also affirmed by some studies (i.e. Ugbaja, 2022; Nwankwo & Osinem, 2022; Kanimodu, 2022)

when they note that men make more domestic travels in Nigeria than women. More so, in Table 2, data presented showed that among the age brackets of all the respondents, those of them who are within the active working age (20-40) travel more frequently than other age brackets. They are closely followed by those that are within the age bracket of 41-69 years of age. The implication is that more travels and engagements are most likely to occur between the age bracket of 20-60; hence this has been identified as the active working age of most Nigerians and in some other sub-Saharan countries and Asia (i.e. Eze & Aja, 2014; Mejabi, 2019; Mejabi, 2022). So, it may not be surprising that most of the respondents were within that age bracket. Having seen a brief discussion from the preliminary tables, further discussion will now be focused on the main data that was generated for the study.

To this end, Table 3, was aimed at determining the respondent's choice of tourism resources in Nigeria. Fifteen-item statements were used as the paradigms to make this determination. While the majority of the respondents agreed to enjoy travelling to many tourist resources like interesting traditional festivals, masquerade displays, urban tourism facilities, tourism carnivals, lakes, shrines and sacred places, domestic religious pilgrimages, recreation and leisure centres, beaches, waterfalls, rivers and streams, museums, and isolated places, for relaxation, the majority of them revealed that they have never visited caves and rock shelters. However, visits to rivers and streams were ranked highest from the findings of the study. The implication of this result is that many tourists and travellers in Nigeria have more interest in cultural tourism resources than natural tourism resources. Eshiette and Eshiette (2022) assert that destination branding in tourism development in Nigeria should have more concentration on cultural tourism facilities and some developed natural tourism facilities. Also, Okim (2022) opines that one of the challenges of tourism development in Nigeria is that many of the natural tourism resources have not been harnessed. This is unlike the cultural tourism resources that have been harnessed by the host for their enjoyment, culture sustainability and identity promotion, without support from the government in most African states (see Itanyi, Okonkwo & Eyisi, 2013; Oguamanam & Okonkwo, 2018). From the discussions above, this study has deduced that many Nigerians enjoy visits to see cultural tourism resources like traditional festivals, Masquerade displays, carnivals and traditional sacred places. Less visits are paid to natural tourism resources; hence many of these resources are yet to be harnessed and do not have the pull factor. Also, some of the natural tourism resources are located in remote areas with limited access (Eshiette & Eshiette, 2022; Okim, 2022). This circumstance has not motivated visits to most of the natural tourism resources that are within Nigeria and other sub-Saharan African nations.

Moreover, another purpose of the study was to ascertain the respondents' choice of tourist destination within Nigeria. From the sixteen (16) item statements in Table 4 that were designed to elicit information on this objective, more discussion would be focused on the two extremes of their responses. For instance, "I prefer travelling to developed destinations" recorded highest on the positive, while "I prefer travelling to tourist destination in Northwest Nigeria" has the highest record on the negative. The implication is that many travellers in Nigeria would prefer to travel to developed tourist destinations in Nigeria if the said destination has a safety guarantee to visitors. Nigeria as a nation has a limited number of developed tourist destinations due to governments' poor attitude towards funding in the tourism sector (Eshiette & Eshiette, 2022; Nwankwo, Ejikeme & Ngonadi, 2022; Daniel, Anyanwu, Oji & Itanyi, 2022). The private sector has not done much in investing in the tourism sector due to poor motivation from the public

sector. Hence the few developed tourist destinations in Nigeria with reasonable safety guarantee record huge influx of tourists/travellers. Also, the poor response to travelling to some parts of the country does not necessarily mean that those locations do not have some tourist attractions, rather safety and security issues have deterred people from choosing such locations as tourist destinations by tourists and other travellers. This has indirectly limited visits to such locations in Nigeria within the last ten years. Hussain (2021) inferred that destinations that have issues that pose threats to tourism resources, host communities and visitors, have limited chances of becoming enviable tourist destinations, not minding the wealth of tourism resources in such destinations. However, from the discussion, most travellers in Nigeria including tourists, make more choices of travelling to developed destinations with reasonable safety and security guarantees for tourists/travellers, hosts and tourism resources.

Moreover, the second aspect of the study focused on determining the relationship between the choice of tourism resources/tourist destinations, and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. The central aim of this study has been to ascertain the opportunities of regenerative tourism in Nigeria; hence regenerative tourism has to do with the natural renewal of tourism resources for future use. To this end, the fifteen (15) item statements in Table 5, were designed to determine the relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. The discussion will be based on the responses at two extremes. For instance “I do participate in cultural celebrations as a visitor” is ranked highest on the positive, while “I prefer visiting tourism resources with restrictions” is ranked highest on the negative. The implication of this result is that many of the respondents visit a place to enjoy cultural events not minding the location of such events. These include festivals, masquerade displays, carnivals and other cultural events. Some studies have noted that cultural resources form the bulk of tourism resources in most parts of Africa where cultural heritage is cherished not minding the distractions of Westernization (Nwankwo et al., 2022; Okim, 2023; Daniel et al., 2022). These cultural heritage resources have repositioned Africa for a better comparative advantage in the world tourism market and also promoted the unique cultural identities of various African communities. This explains the huge attendance to cultural events in Nigeria and some other African nations. However, the other extreme (negative) shows that many of the respondents do not visit tourism resources that have restrictions to visitors, not minding the location or the intensity of tourism resources in such places. The implication is that tourism resources that have restrictions in Nigeria command less tourism/visitor traffic. This explains why some managements of tourism resources have used some restrictions like huge gate fees, day schedules, time schedules, among others to control tourist/visitor influx, manage the carrying capacity of the site and ensure quality visitor impact management at the sites. The implication of these two results from positive and negative extremes is that, not minding the huge desire of the respondents to visit tourism resources (cultural and natural tourism resources), there is always a drastic drop in visitor statistics, when there are organized restrictions at such destinations. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria.

Hence, it has been revealed that organized restrictions can serve as a tool to enhance the opportunities of regenerative tourism in Nigeria for better use and sustainability of tourism resources. These restrictions will minimize impacts and give these resources the opportunities for regeneration. Notwithstanding the fact that such practice will likely drop tourism receipts from these tourism resources and affect the economic impacts of tourism within a given space, the

position of the regenerative tourism concept is that tourism resources should be given opportunities to regenerate to be able to serve today and tomorrow towards ensuring tourism sustainability; it also advocates that less emphasis should be placed on economic impacts of tourism at the detriment of tourism sustainability (Major & Clerk, 2021; Fuste-forne & Hussain, 2022; Matunga et al, 2020; Hussain, 2021). Also, the result from the first Hypothesis in Table 7 reveals that there is a significant relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism. Therefore, the first research question of this study has been answered and the first research objective is achieved; hence there is a significant relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. This implies that there are opportunities for regenerative tourism in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the second research objective was to determine the relationship between regenerative tourism and the choice of tourist destination among domestic travellers/tourists in Nigeria. In Table 6, fourteen-item statements were designed to elicit relevant information from the respondents. From the interpretation in Table 6, “I like visiting remote tourist destinations” was ranked highest by the informants. This is unconnected with the fact that cultural heritage resources have formed the bulk of tourism resources in most parts of Africa, Nigeria inclusive. There is high motivation for visits to rural areas for tourism experience on the rich heritage resources of Africans. Most rural tourism destinations entertain huge tourism traffic during peak periods. The implication is that many of these rural tourist destinations and their respective resources suffer during the various event periods. These events are seasonal in most cases, and hence, can give opportunities for the regeneration of the resources before the next events. In such cases, opportunities for regenerative tourism may be created by the host community through systematic visitors/tourist activities within the destination (Disquit & Palarca, 2021; Clerk & Major, 2021; Matunga, et al., 2020). Furthermore, despite the fact that a greater number of respondents agreed that “I like visits to destinations that are organized by tour operating firms”, the statement recorded the highest negative among all the item statements, with 21.3% SD. The implication is that many tourist destinations in Nigeria do not have organised tourism activities by certified tour operating firms. These destinations are often visited by individuals or group of tourists without certified tour guides. This explains why Okim (2022) advised that visits to rural destinations need to be regulated to ensure sustainable rural tourism development in some parts of Nigeria. Visits to tourist sites with certified tour guides enhance opportunities for regenerative tourism; hence their activities during the tour will be regulated to give the resources the opportunities for survival in a given tourist destination (Hussain, 2021; Bradley, 2021; Hutching & Storm, 2019). However, the current scenario shows that the choice of tourist destinations among tourists/travellers in Nigeria does not support the opportunities for regenerative tourism in Nigeria. Also, the result of the hypothesis in Table 8 shows that there is no significant relationship between the choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. The implication is that the current choice of tourist destination in Nigeria among travelers and tourist will give no opportunity for regeneration of various tourism resources in Nigeria. With this, the second research question of the study has been answered and the objective achieved.

Conclusion

Since the turn of the new millennium and in response to the demands of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), debates in tourism development have been deemphasising economic gains of tourism development at the expense of the survival of tourism resources for future use (Disquit & Palarca, 2021; Stronza & Hunt, 2012; Fuste-forne & Hussain, 2022; Matunga et al, 2020; Duxbury et al, 2021, etc). Regenerative tourism was identified as an aspect of the sustainable tourism concept that is aimed at giving tourism resources the opportunity to regenerate and survive for future use. This was the major motivation for this study: to understand the relationship between choices of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria, and the choice of tourist destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria using survey research design. The result from the first research objective reveals that there is a significant relationship between the choice of tourism resources and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. This is because cultural heritage resources form bulk of tourism resources in Nigeria (Okim, 2022, Nwankwo et al., 2022); and most of these cultural heritage resources have seasonality in their uses. This indirectly supports the opportunities for regenerative tourism in Nigeria. The theoretical implication of this result is that regenerative tourism as a tourism concept has opportunities to thrive in Nigeria and some other African communities where cultural heritage resources have formed bulk of tourism resources. The result also has managerial implications for seasonality in the management of tourism resources. Hence, opportunities for feedback mechanisms will be explored during off-seasons, for the actualization of regenerative tourism concepts for various cultural heritage tourism resources in Nigeria. The tourism development experts and other public tourism agencies in Nigeria like the Nigerian Tourism Development Commission (NTDC), State Tourism Boards (STBs) and Local Government Tourism Committees (LGTCs), including other stakeholders and members of the host communities where these resources are domicile, need to leverage on this opportunity to develop tourism policies for tourism resources in Nigeria. Collaborative efforts from the above-listed stakeholders will not only promote regenerative tourism mechanism in Nigeria but will also preserve the cultural heritage values of Africans which have given African communities a relatively comparative advantage in the global tourism space.

More so, the second objective of the study was to determine the relationship between choices of tourism destination and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. Incidentally, the result of the study shows there is no significant relationship between choices of tourist destinations and regenerative tourism in Nigeria. The implication is that tourist destinations in Nigeria do not have opportunities for regenerative tourism. This is one of the facts that apart from security challenges, and level of income, visits to tourist destinations in Nigeria are not regulated, hence many of these destinations may not leverage on the opportunities of regenerative tourism to serve future use. The theoretical implication of this result is that the postulations of Push and Pull Factor theory at tourist destinations is not totally accepted as it may have negative consequences on the ideals of regenerative tourism at most tourism destinations in Nigeria. Also this second result from the study has huge managerial implications in the sense that relevant management policies need to be designed and implemented at these tourist destinations in Nigeria, if the opportunities of regenerative tourism are to be maximized at tourist destinations in Nigeria. Relevant tourism agencies and stakeholders as mentioned earlier, have a lot of work to ensure that various tourist destinations in Nigeria leverage on the opportunities of regenerative tourism to survive, and make tourism development in Nigeria more sustainable. For instance, there is a

need to formulate policies to regulate visits to developed tourist destinations including those with the opportunities for future tourism development. These regulations will reduce traffic to these destinations and give them the opportunity to recover to face future visits from tourists and other visitors. Finally, despite the fact that the objectives of the research were achieved, there is a need for future research on regenerative tourism in Nigeria which should focus on specific tourism resources and tourist destinations in Nigeria, to give a more attention to the opportunities of regenerative tourism in Nigeria through the lens of various tourism resources and tourist destinations in Nigeria.

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