

## Evaluation of Tourist Souvenirs and Attitude Towards Sustainable Tourism Practices in Eco-Lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The study evaluated tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study comprised of tourists in Eco-lodge facilities with a sample size of 384 respondents using a structured questionnaire in which a total of 225 were used for the analysis. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square analysis. The finding of the study  $X^2=41.765$ ,  $p=0.000$  revealed that there is a significant relationship between the types of tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodges. Also, the result  $X^2=10.851$ ,  $p=0.001$  indicated that the demand for tourist souvenirs does influence tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. The study concluded that the availability of tourist souvenirs encourages positive attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. The study recommended that Eco-lodge operators should consistently improve on the provision of diverse tourist souvenirs.

**Keywords:** Eco-lodge, Tourist, Souvenirs, Sustainable tourism practices

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## **Background to the Study**

Tourist souvenirs play a significant role in promoting sustainable tourism by preserving the environment, reducing waste and supporting local communities' economy ((Wilkins, 2011; Xie *et al.*, 2012; Lin, 2017)). Tourist souvenirs are artifacts of tourism which have not only encapsulate memories but also contribute to sustainable planet (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Prideaux, 2015; Li, 2023). Tourists pay a premium for souvenirs that are environmentally friendly and ethically produced (Baek & Park, 2022). There are economic benefits of promoting tourist souvenirs in the tourism industry (Wilkins, 2011; Li & Ryan, 2018). Tourist souvenirs can be locally-produced, often times souvenirs are mass-produced in factories away from the main tourist destination. Tourist can make a positive contribution to the destinations through their use of various souvenirs (Fu *et al.*, 2018; Anastasiadou, & Vettese, 2021). From reusable bags crafted from recycled materials to bamboo utensils replacing disposable plastics, these souvenirs serve as tangible reminders of conscious choices and sustainable tourism practices (Xu & McGehee, 2012). Handcrafted items, like organic cotton clothing or locally sourced goods, support both the environment and local economies (Hasan *et al.*, 2022). Tourist souvenirs play a pivotal role in shaping tourist attitude towards sustainable tourism practices (Xie *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, this study evaluated tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodge facilities in the study area.

## **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to evaluate tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives include to;

1. Identify the types of tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.
2. Determine the impact of tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.

## **Hypotheses of the Study**

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between the types of tourist souvenirs and tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.
- H<sub>02</sub>: The impact of tourist souvenirs does not influence tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.

## **Literature Review**

### **Tourist Souvenirs**

Tourist souvenir is regarded as any tangible item purchased by tourist or traveller to remember a place visited or an occasion. Tourist souvenirs function as symbolic reminders, commodities linked through shopping and retail, and objects in the commodification of material culture. Research has shown that the demand for sustainable and ethically sourced souvenirs is increasing among tourists who are becoming more conscious of their environmental footprint (Jin *et al.*, 2017; Sthapit *et al.*, 2019; Li, 2023).

Tourist souvenirs have gained popularity in recent years as tourists become more conscious of their environmental impact (Li *et al.*, 2018). These souvenirs are typically made from sustainable materials, recycled or upcycled products, or ethically sourced materials. The types of tourist souvenirs include handmade or manufactured items crafted by using traditional or modern techniques and sustainable materials. These souvenirs not only showcase the cultural heritage of the destination but also provide economic opportunities for local communities (Sthapit *et al.*, 2019). Tourist souvenirs can also be made of products from recycled materials, such as bags, jewelries, or home decor items. These souvenirs help reduce waste and promote a circular economy by giving new life to discarded materials. By choosing these souvenirs, travelers can minimize their environmental footprint and support sustainable practices (Fu *et al.*, 2018).

Furthermore, souvenirs made from ethically sourced materials, such as organic cotton or fair-trade products, are also considered to be Eco-lodge tourist friendly (Hasan *et al.*, 2022). These souvenirs ensure that workers are paid fair wages and work in the supply chain. Research has shown that there is a growing demand for tourist souvenirs among tourists who are seeking meaningful and sustainable moments of their travels (Wilkins, 2011).

While souvenirs can be locally-produced, often times souvenirs are mass-produced in factories away from the main tourist destination. They are then sold through middlemen until they reach the local vendors at the destination who sell them to the tourists. With respect to economic impacts, questions arise about the degree to which higher quality, non-local souvenirs increase the demand for handicrafts (Lin, 2017).

### **Tourist Attitude Towards Sustainable Tourism Practices**

Sustainable tourism aims to promote responsible travel that conserves natural resources, respects local cultures, and supports the well-being of host communities (Prideaux, 2015; Jin *et al.*, 2017). Some of the key aspects of sustainable tourism practices include:

**Environmental Conservation:** Sustainable tourism focuses on protecting natural ecosystems, wildlife, and biodiversity. This includes reducing carbon emissions, conserving water resources, minimizing waste generation, and preserving fragile habitats. Sustainable tourism initiatives such as Eco-lodge tourist accommodation, tourist souvenirs, wildlife conservation projects, and responsible wildlife viewing help minimize the environmental impact of tourism activities (Bulatović, 2017).

**Community Engagement:** Attitude towards sustainable tourism practices prioritize the involvement of local communities in tourism development and decision-making processes. This includes empowering local residents through job creation, skills development, and income generation opportunities through the design and production of souvenirs as means to support local economies ((Prideaux, 2015; Hassan, 2022).

**Cultural Preservation:** Sustainable tourism respects and preserves the cultural heritage of destination communities. This involves promoting authentic cultural experiences,

supporting traditional crafts and practices, and respecting local customs and traditions. Cultural heritage sites, artifacts, museums, and cultural festivals play a vital role in promoting cultural preservation and appreciation among tourists (Prideaux, 2015).

**Economic Benefits:** Attitude towards sustainable tourism practices aim to maximize the economic benefits of tourism for local communities and businesses. These include promoting fair wages, equitable distribution of tourism revenues, and supporting small-scale enterprises. Sustainable tourism initiatives such as community-based tourism, fair trade practices, souvenirs and responsible tourism helps ensure that tourism benefits are shared equitably among all stakeholders (Fu *et al.*, 2018; Sthapit and Björk, 2019).

**Education and Awareness:** Sustainable tourism promotes environmental education, cultural awareness, and responsible travel attitude among tourists, industry stakeholders, and local communities (Baek & Park, 2022). This involves raising awareness about attitude towards sustainable tourism practices, promoting responsible travel choices, and encouraging environmental conservation efforts. Sustainable tourism education programs, interpretive tours, and visitor centres help educate tourists about the importance of sustainable travel (Jafar, 2014)

### **Eco-lodge**

The word Eco-lodge refers to earth-friendly accommodation (Bulatović, 2017). Protected areas all around the world offer tourists high quality ecolodge facilities, which are fully submerged into nature. Ecolodge facilities should be designed and built in accordance with traditional architecture and surrounding materials, to influence as little as possible on the environment and to use alternative energy sources. In other words, it is necessary to provide sustainability of eco-lodge facilities (Bulatović, 2017). Adopting sustainable tourism practices in eco-lodge facilities can create a more resilient tourism industry. Therefore, this study evaluates tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

For the purpose of this study a survey research design using quantitative approach was used to collect data from the respondents and the research design facilitates effective collection of quantitative data from the population under study. The study was conducted in Abeokuta, Ogun State being the state capital and a metropolitan city with some distinct Eco-lodge facilities. A structured close ended questionnaire was used and respondents were provided with the questionnaire to fill in Eco-lodges. The population of the study comprised of tourists in the Eco-lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State. In determining the sample size of the study, the estimated sample size was determined with 384 respondents using the Cochran formula and a total of 225 copies of the questionnaire was retrieved as valid and were considered useful for the analysis. The data collected were analyzed using appropriate software and descriptive statistics was used to determine variable characteristics of the study while chi-square was used to establish the pattern of significance of the variables to test the hypotheses of the study.

## **Data Analysis and Findings**

### **Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The result of the demographic characteristics of the respondents in Table 1 shows that (47.1%) of the respondents were between the age group of 18-29years, (28.4%) were between the age group of 30-39years, (17.3%) were between the age group of 40-49years, (5.3%) were between the age group of 50-59years and (1.8%) were between the age group of 60years and above. The findings indicate that (52%) of the respondents were male and (48%) were female. From the findings, it was revealing that majority (50.7%) of the respondents were single and (41.3%) were married.

Furthermore, the result reveals that (48%) of the respondents were HND/BSc degree holders, (22.7%) have ND/NCE certificate, (17.3%) of the respondents were MSc degree holders, (8.4%) were Primary/SSCE certificate holders and (3.6%) were PhD degree holders. Majority of the respondents (52.2%) were self-employed, (29.5%) were employed and (17.4%) of the respondents were unemployed. The result showed that (22.8%) of the respondents earn between #51,000-100,000, (21%) earn below #50,000, (20.1%) earn between #151,000-200,000, (18.3%) earn between #101,000-150,000 and (17.9%) earn above #201,000 and above. Lastly, (26.5%) of the respondents last purchased various tourist souvenirs between 10-12months ago, (23.8%) between 1-3months ago, (21.1%) between 5-6months ago, (16.6%) between 7-9months ago and (12.1%) between 4-6months ago.

**Table 1:** Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents (n=225)

Demographic Characteristics	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>	18-29yrs	106	47.1%
	30-39yrs	64	28.4%
	40-49yrs	39	17.3%
	50-59yrs	12	5.3%
	60yrs and above	4	1.8%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	117	52%
	Female	108	48%
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	114	50.7%
	Married	93	41.3%
	Divorced	9	4%
	Widowed	9	4%
<b>Educational qualifications</b>	Primary/SSCE	19	8.4%
	ND/NCE	51	22.7%
	HND/BSc	108	48%
	MSc	39	17.3%
	PhD	8	3.6%
<b>Occupation</b>	Self employed	117	52.2%
	Employed	66	29.5%
	Unemployed	39	17.4%
<b>Income level</b>	Below #50,000	47	21%
	#51,000-100,000	51	22.8%
	#101,000-150,000	41	18.3%
	#151,000-200,000	45	20.1%
	201,000-above	40	17.9%
<b>Last purchase period</b>	1-3months	53	23.8%
	4-6months	27	12.1%
	5-6months	47	21.1%
	7-9months	37	16.6%
	10-12months	59	26.5%

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024).

### **Types of Tourist Souvenirs**

The results in Table 2 shows the average mean score across all the variables is 3.18, indicating a strong level of agreement on average among respondents regarding the types of tourist souvenirs. The standard deviation (S.D) of 0.69 suggests relatively consistent agreement among respondents.

The results suggest a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the various types of tourist souvenirs. There is a general consensus among the respondents, with the majority either agreeing or strongly agreeing with each variable. The overall mean score of 3.18 along with low standard deviation of 0.69, further confirms the consistent agreement among respondents, suggesting the availability of tourist souvenirs in eco-lodge facilities in the study area.

**Table 2:** The Types of Tourist Souvenirs (n=225)

Variables	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D	Remark
Cultural souvenirs	5(2.2%)	12(5.3%)	143(63.6%)	65(28.9%)	3.19	0.63	A
Bamboo souvenirs	6(2.7%)	22(9.8%)	138(61.3%)	59(26.2%)	3.11	0.68	A
Outdoor souvenirs	7(3.1%)	17(7.6%)	134(59.6%)	67(29.8%)	3.16	0.69	A
Fashion souvenirs	5(2.2%)	14(6.3%)	119(53.4%)	85(38.1%)	3.27	0.68	A
Food souvenirs	5(2.3%)	15(6.8%)	125(56.3%)	77(34.7%)	3.23	0.67	A
Organic cotton souvenirs	7(3.2%)	21(9.5%)	121(54.5%)	73(32.9%)	3.17	0.72	A
Home décor souvenirs	7(3.2%)	28(12.6%)	116(52.3%)	71(32%)	3.13	0.75	A
Average					3.18	0.69	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

### **Economic Impacts of Tourist Souvenirs on Attitude Towards Sustainable Tourism Practices**

The results in Table 3 reveals the average mean score across all variables is 2.36, indicating a strong level of disagreement on average among respondents regarding these variables related to the economic impacts of tourist souvenirs on attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. The standard deviation (S.D.) of 1.09 suggests relatively consistent disagreement among respondents.

The results demonstrate that respondents generally hold a strong level of disagreement when it comes to variables related to the economic impacts of tourist souvenirs. The overall mean score of 2.36, along with the relatively high standard deviation of 1.09, indicates consistent disagreement among respondents regarding economic impacts of tourist souvenirs. The result implies that most respondents will likely spend more annually on purchasing tourist souvenirs.



**Table 3:** Economic impact of tourist souvenirs on attitude towards sustainable tourism practices (n=225)

Variables	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D	REMARK
I spend between ₦10,000-₦50,000 daily on purchasing tourist souvenirs	28(12.4%)	142(63.1%)	40(17.8%)	15(6.7%)	2.19	0.73	D
I spend between ₦100,000-₦150,000 weekly on purchasing tourist souvenirs	30(13.3%)	148(65.8%)	36(16%)	11(4.9%)	2.12	2.32	D
I spend between ₦150,000-₦200,000 monthly on purchasing tourist souvenirs	24(10.7%)	124(55.1%)	58(25.8%)	19(8.4%)	2.32	0.78	D
I spend between ₦250,000-₦300,000 quarterly on purchasing tourist souvenirs	34(15.1%)	78(34.7%)	89(39.6%)	24(10.7%)	2.46	0.88	A
I spend between ₦350,000-₦400,000 half-yearly on purchasing tourist souvenirs	38(16.9%)	68(30.2%)	87(38.7%)	32(14.2%)	2.50	0.94	A
I spend above ₦500,000 annually on purchasing tourist souvenirs	41(18.2%)	65(28.9%)	69(30.7%)	50(22.2%)	2.57	0.94	A
Average					2.36	1.09	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

**Social impact of tourist souvenirs on Sustainable Practices**

The results in Table 4 shows the average mean score across all variables is 2.89, indicating a strong level of agreement of respondents relating to social impact of tourist souvenirs. The standard deviation (S.D.) of 0.81 suggests relatively consistent agreement among respondents. The majority of respondent's agreement indicates positive attitude towards social impact of tourist souvenirs. The average mean scores of 2.89, along with the relatively low standard deviation of 0.81, indicates consistent agreement among respondents. The result



shows that most respondents feel that social responsibility motivates their positive attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in the study area.

**Table 4:** Social Impact of tourist souvenirs on Sustainable Practices (n=225)

Variables	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D	REMARK
The available tourist souvenirs are socially Eco-friendly	19(8.4%)	58(25.8%)	116(51.6%)	32(14.2%)	2.72	0.81	A
The tourist souvenirs promote cultural heritage	7(3.1%)	23(10.2%)	138(61.3%)	57(25.3%)	3.01	0.69	A
The tourist souvenirs use was influenced through the social media	36(16%)	65(28.9%)	79(35.1%)	45(20%)	2.59	0.98	A
Social responsibility motivates my decision to engage in attitude towards sustainable tourism practices	10(4.4%)	21(9.3%)	131(58.2%)	63(28%)	3.10	0.74	A
Average					2.89	0.81	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

#### **The Environmental impact of tourist souvenirs on attitude towards sustainable tourism practices**

The results in Table 5 reveals the average mean score across all variables is 3.15, indicating a strong level of agreement among respondents regarding these variables related to the environmental impact of tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. The standard deviation (S.D.) of 0.71 suggests relatively consistent agreement among respondents. Majority of the respondents agreed with each statement, indicating the positive environmental impacts. The average mean scores of 3.15, along with the standard deviation of 0.71, indicates consistent agreement among respondents. The result shows that most respondent agreed that use of tourist souvenirs help reduce waste and pollution.

**Table 5:** Environmental impact of tourist souvenirs on tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices (n=225)

Variables	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	S.D	Remark
The available types of tourist souvenirs are environmentally friendly	11(4.9)	18(8)	125(55.6)	71(31.6)	3.14	0.76	A
I engage in reduction of plastic use through the use of tourist souvenirs	10(4.4)	22(9.8)	143(63.6)	50(22.2)	3.04	0.71	A
I often use tourist souvenirs made from sustainable materials or recycled products	8(3.6)	15(6.7)	127(56.4)	75(33.3)	3.19	0.71	A
I believe that tourist souvenirs help reduce waste and pollution	4(1.8)	19(8.4)	121(53.8)	81(36)	3.24	0.68	A
The use of tourist souvenirs conserves the natural resources	5(2.2)	21(9.3)	132(58.7)	67(29.8)	3.16	0.68	A
Average					3.15	0.71	

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

**Hypotheses Test**

**Hypothesis One**

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant relationship between the types of tourist souvenirs and tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.

**Table 6:** Hypothesis One

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.765	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	31.900	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.967	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	225		

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

Table 6 Chi-Square test results reject the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>1) that there is no significant relationship between the types of tourist souvenirs and the adoption of attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. The Pearson Chi-Square value is 41.765 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant relationship. Similarly, the Likelihood Ratio value of 31.900 with a p-value of 0.000 confirms this finding. The Linear-by-Linear Association value

of 12.967 with a p-value of 0.000 further supports the existence of a significant linear relationship between the variables. These results strongly suggest that the type of tourist souvenirs significantly influences the tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. Since the p-value= 0.000 is less than the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant between the types of tourist souvenirs and tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.

**Hypothesis Two**

H<sub>0</sub>2: The demand for tourist souvenirs does not influence tourists' behaviour towards sustainable tourism practices.

**Table 4:** Hypothesis Two

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.851 <sup>a</sup>	9	.001
Likelihood Ratio	10.900	9	.283
Linear-by-Linear Association	7.046	1	.008
N of Valid Cases	225		

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024.

The Chi-Square test results indicate a statistically significant relationship between the demand for tourist souvenirs and tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices, as evidenced by the Pearson Chi-Square value of 10.851 with a p-value of .001. This suggests that the demand for tourist souvenirs does have an influence on tourists' behaviour towards sustainable practices. The Linear-by-Linear Association value of 7.046 and its p-value of .008 further support this relationship, indicating a significant linear association between these variables. promoting tourist souvenirs could positively influence tourist attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. Since the p-value= 0.001 is lesser than the level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that the demand for tourist souvenirs influences tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings on the types of tourists souvenirs available reveal a broad acceptance and availability of various Eco-lodge tourist products among the respondents. Tourist souvenirs such as handicraft artworks, ceramics, and paintings are highly recognized and appreciated, reflecting a strong inclination towards preserving cultural heritage through sustainable means. Also, tourist souvenirs include renewable and biodegradable materials. Outdoor souvenirs, such as solar chargers and reusable water bottles, are also well-regarded, indicating a practical approach to sustainability among tourists. These findings are in tandem with Sthapit, and Björk, (2019) study on relative contributions of souvenirs on memorability of a trip experience and revisit intention.

Tourist souvenirs made from eco-lodge tourist materials like bags, wallets, and jewelry are popular, reflecting an integration of sustainability into daily lifestyle choices. The finding is related to Bulatović (2017) which revealed the use of eco-lodge tourist friendly facilities for accommodation. Food souvenirs such as spices, honey, and olive oil are widely accepted, indicating a preference for natural and locally sourced products. The finding is in line with Lin (2017) study on food souvenirs purchased as gifts by tourists. The high levels of agreement on the availability and desirability of these products suggest a well-rounded acceptance of tourist souvenirs among the respondents. The demand for tourist souvenirs shows variability in frequency, with a majority of respondents indicating less frequent purchases. Daily and weekly demands are relatively low, which might be attributed to the higher costs or the perception that such products are not daily necessities. However, the demand increases on a quarterly and half-yearly basis, reflecting a more considered and planned approach to purchasing tourist souvenirs.

Environmental impacts show a high level of consideration for the environmental effects of souvenirs. The majority of respondents recognize the importance of reducing plastic use and prefer products made from sustainable or recycled materials. This indicates a proactive approach to reducing environmental footprints through conscious purchasing decisions. The belief that tourist souvenirs help reduce waste and pollution is prevalent, showing a strong alignment with attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. Additionally, there is a noticeable recognition of the conservation of natural resources due to sustainable souvenir production, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the positive environmental impacts of Eco-lodge tourist products. These findings are in agreement with Hassan *et al.*, (2022) study which identifies significance nexus between environmentally sustainable practices, green satisfaction, and customer behavior in eco-friendly hotels. The result of the hypotheses shows a significant relationship between the types of tourist souvenirs and tourists' attitude towards sustainable tourism practices.

## **Conclusion**

This study explores the impact of tourist souvenirs and attitude towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The study concluded that the availability of tourist souvenirs encourages positive attitude towards sustainable tourism practices. Also, the overall trend suggests a positive behaviour towards tourist souvenirs which reflects a significant behaviour towards sustainable tourism practices in Eco-lodges in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations should be given consideration;

1. The range of tourist souvenirs should be expanded to include more innovative and appealing souvenirs to cater for different tastes and preferences of tourists.
2. Eco-lodge operators should constantly make tourist souvenirs more readily available to further encourage and facilitate tourist's sustainable tourism practices.

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