
Recreational Tourism Activities in Advancing the Development of Social Inclusion in North West States, Nigeria

Lawal Yazid Ibrahim Ph.D.

Department of Human Kinetics & Health Education

Faculty of Education

Bayero University, Kano

ilyazid65@gmail.com

0803555896

ORCID: 0009-0007-2669-3000

Abstract

The central goal of recreational tourism activities is to provide a fun and rewarding experience that helps people to relax, recharge and explore new environments. Social inclusion refers to the process of ensuring that every individual in a society has equal access to resources, opportunities and rights, regardless of their background, identity, or status. The finding of this study indicates that recreation tourism activities have the role of motivating travel, it is a very important tourist resource and the prospects of inclusion are positive, promising and provide the opportunity for people to learn about different cultures and lifestyles. Therefore the paper conclude that social inclusion in recreational tourism activities are those activities and destinations that should cater to all members of the society, regardless of their social and economic background. Recreational tourism activities should create opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to come together, engage in activities and build relationships and with the prevailing situation in North West States where banditry, kidnapping and other social vices are on the increase, the need to use recreational tourism activities to foster social inclusion is paramount, so as to mitigate the effects is very much needed. It is on this premise that this study recommends that local communities should develop community-based recreational tourism initiatives that should foster partnerships between them.

Keywords: Advancing, development, recreation & social inclusion

Introduction

Recreational tourism activities is a popular form of activities that refers to the act of taking a trip for leisure for the purpose of relaxation, recreation, or enjoyment and it involves participating in activities typically done during one's free time, such as sightseeing, shopping, dining out, and engaging in cultural events, while leisure tourism can take many forms, it is often associated with vacations and getaways, allowing individuals to escape the stress of everyday life and explore new places (Weaver, Lawton, & Stabler, 2015). Recreational tourism activities are travel refers to activities for pleasure rather than business or work-related purposes and it is a type of travel that involves exploring new destinations, engaging in recreational activities, and relaxing and unwinding (Bailey, & Hyoung-Kil Kang, 2015). Whether traveling alone or with friends and family, recreational tourism travel provides a much-needed break from the daily routine and allows individuals to experience new cultures, environments, and experiences (Bailey, et al 2015).

For the person traveling, recreational tourism travel can provide a wide range of benefits, including learning about different cultures, making new friends, and creating lasting memories and it can also provide a sense of adventure, challenge, and excitement that can be hard to find in everyday life (Coghlan, & Prideaux, 2016). Additionally, recreational tourism travel can help reduce stress levels and improve mental health by providing a break from the daily routine and as a tourist, recreational tourism travel can also significantly impact the environment and local communities (Coghlan, & Prideaux, 2016). Responsible recreational tourism practices, such as supporting local businesses, using eco-friendly transportation, and being mindful of waste, can help minimize negative impacts and promote sustainable tourism (Coghlan, & Prideaux, 2016). Recreational tourism is about enjoying the free time and engaging in activities that provide relaxation, entertainment, and personal enrichment of which the primary purpose of the trip may be: business, visiting relatives and friends, and other private affairs and of course pleasure, enjoyment and recreation (Hall, Williams, Lew, & Macionis, 2017). Tourists who travel for recreational tourism which is the primary tourist activity, while with tourists traveling for business, recreation occurs as a secondary tourist activity (Hall, Williams, Lew, & Macionis, 2017). It is an important aspect of creating a just and equitable society that benefits all its members. Social inclusion refers to the process of ensuring that all individuals or groups feel valued and respected in their communities and have equal access to social and economic opportunities (Kamal, & Sharifuddin, 2018). Social inclusion involves recognizing the diversity of people and their needs and creating an environment that is inclusive, respectful, and supportive of all individuals (Kamal, & Sharifuddin, 2018).

Recreational tourism has the potential to develop social inclusion of locals in the North West states of Nigeria, by attracting tourists to the region, stimulate economic and social activity, which in turn can create job opportunities, foster entrepreneurship, and improve infrastructure, such as roads, electricity and sanitation (Aitchison, 2015). So also improve the living conditions of the local communities, fostering social inclusion and reducing poverty and additionally, recreational tourism can promote cultural exchange between tourists and locals, facilitating mutual understanding, respecting diversity, and promoting peace (Aitchison, 2015). Thus, recreational tourism can develop social inclusion in the North West states of Nigeria by encouraging economic development, cultural exchange, and poverty reduction. According to Raisch, & Backman, (2015) recreational tourism can be important tools for the development of social inclusion through the following ways:

- Provision of a variety and affordable leisure and recreation opportunities that are accessible to everyone, regardless of their age, abilities, or socioeconomic background.
- Development of tourism programs that showcase the diversity of local culture and encourage interaction between visitors and local communities.
- Ensure that tourist facilities and attractions are accessible to people with disabilities and provide accommodations for those who need them.

- Offer training programs to local residents that provide them with the skills necessary to participate in tourism activities, such as language courses or tourism guide training.
- Foster partnerships between local businesses, community organizations, and government agencies to promote social inclusion through leisure, recreation, and tourism initiatives

The development of social inclusion through recreational tourism requires a thoughtful and intentional approach that prioritizes accessibility, diversity, and community participation Coghlan, & Prideaux, (2016). Recreational tourism can play an important role in developing social inclusion in local communities. According to Lynch, (2017) some of the ways in which this can happen are:

- i. Recreational tourism activities can provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together and participate in activities that are enjoyable and engaging. This can help to break down barriers and promote social inclusion.
- ii. Recreation tourism is a creator of economic opportunities for local communities, which help to reduce poverty and promote social inclusion.
- iii. Recreation Tourism is a facilitator of cultural exchange between different communities, promoting social inclusion, break down barriers between different groups increasing understanding and reducing prejudice
- iv. Access to nature and outdoor spaces can have therapeutic benefits and improve mental health, which can help to promote social inclusion.
- v. Leisure recreation and tourism activities will support community development by providing a range of services and amenities that benefit local residents. This can help to create more cohesive and connected communities, which can be more inclusive of everyone.

Methodology

Community services carried out were social and recreational activities that aimed to address social issues that are barriers to inclusion, foster a sense of civic responsibility and enhance social cohesion, community well-being among North West states local communities which include community events, clubs, and recreational programs that facilitate social interaction and help build connections among residents, with about 1200, residents, community leaders, youths, tourism and recreational. Workers. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study to collect relevant data. The population of this study comprised of community leaders, youths, and tourism/community recreation workers in North-West States- Nigeria. All the available respondents, present at time of questionnaire distributions in the senatorial zones were used as the sample for this study and population with a total of (420) respondents. Multi stage sampling technique was used for this study and stratified sampling technique was used to stratify the seven (7) states that made up the North-West States.

All the seven States that made up the North West States have three (3) senatorial zones: North, South and Central. The instrument for data collection was the researcher's self - developed questionnaire, named: Recreational tourism activities in advancing the development of social inclusion in North West States-Nigeria; a modified Likert type scale was used and to determine the face and content validity of the research instrument, the draft copies of the questionnaire were submitted to three (3) Jurors who vetted the questionnaires. In order to ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was

A Publication of Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

conducted. A Split-half reliability test was used to determine the reliability of the research instrument using Spearman Brown Prophecy, a reliability index of 0.76 was obtained which confirmed the reliability of the instrument. The data generated from the 420 questionnaires was analyzed using inferential statistics of one way sample t-test to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

Table 1.

Senatorial Zones and Sample size Selected

S/N	State	Senatorial zone selected	Local Govt. selected	Community numbers	Youth	Tourism workers	Rec. workers
1	Kano	Kano Central	Nassarawa	10	07	09	10
		Kano North	Kunchi	05	06	10	03
2	Kaduna	Kaduna South	Chikun	05	06	04	07
		Kaduna North	Sabon Gari	09	11	10	08
3	Kebbi	Kebbi Central	Birnin Kebbi	10	12	05	10
		Kebbi South	Argungu	05	06	07	05
4	Katsina	Katsina South	Daura	07	10	10	09
		Katsina South	Malunfashi	06	05	07	06
5	Jigawa	North East	Guri	05	06	06	05
		North west	Gumel	10	10	07	11
6	Sokoto	Sokoto Centra	Jega	11	09	07	03
		Sokoto North	Tambuwal	07	07	09	07
7	Zamfara	Zamfara North	Kauran Nmoda	12	07	11	08
		Zamfara West	Talatan Mafara	08	08	04	10
Total				108	106	104	102
Grand Total				420			

Table 2.

T-test summary on Impacts of recreational Tourism on the development of social inclusion

Variables	N	Mean	Sd	SE	t
Recreational Tourism social Inclusion	419	3.21	0.431	0.021	34.01
Fixed Mean	419	2.50			

t=34.01, df 418(p<0.05).

Table 1. Above shows that one sample t-test was conducted were the mean of the respondents was 3.21 SD: 0.431. This statistical computation reveals that t=34.01 df 418, (p< 0.05). This indicates that recreational Tourism developed social inclusion of local communities of North West States and therefore, null hypothesis is rejected. Participation is a fundamental principle of social inclusion and fitting in and joining in with everyday activities and activities and expectations of peers is a driving force in people's lives

Discussion

The finding of this study indicates that recreational tourism play significantly in the development of social inclusion of local communities. This study is in agreement with the research studies of Liu (2009) and Hodgkinson and Hughes (2012) as reported in their

A Publication of Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

research that focused on the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups in recreational tourism activities in the UK, while Pitts and Shapiro (2017) explored the inclusion of people with disabilities in the recreational tourism industry of the United States. Frisby (2011) and Forde et al (2015) investigated the role of recreational tourism in the settlement of immigrants in Canada, while Shaw (2016) examined the potential of anti-homophobia policy to develop social inclusion through recreational tourism in New Zealand. The findings of these studies highlighted the access and the utilization of recreational tourism facilities and the participation in recreational tourism activities as important performance indicators, measuring the achievement of social inclusion through recreation tourism. They also suggested that recreation tourism activities has been regarded as an effective tool to increase social inclusion in the developed world. Social inclusion enables all members of the community to acquire vital skills, develop a sense of belonging, and gain independence Kiuppis (2018). It is a process of improving the conditions for participation in society, especially for people who are disadvantaged (Simplican, Leader, Kosciulek & Leahy 2015) by improving opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights. This study is also in consonance with the studies of Hartmann and Depro (2006) who conducted and reported that recreation tourism activities for social inclusion have been studied in a variety of ways, for example, community based recreation tourism activities interventions may contribute to social inclusion of young people. for example Beutler, 2008; Haudenhuyse, Theeboom and Coalter, 2012) on their research on recreation tourism activities-based interventions reported that recreational tourism activities is a tool for social inclusion, personal development, and crime prevention for youth living under problematic conditions have been highlighted in terms of challenges and benefits; but that participation in recreational tourism activities is not only positive for individual social inclusiveness but also beneficial for community-level public health by enhancing the individual's social well-being and facilitating social inclusion. Nunkoo, (2016) and Lynch, (2017) outlined some of the challenges of social inclusion as:

- i. People may be excluded due to their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socio-economic status, or disability, among other factors.
- ii. Social exclusion of marginalized groups will be excluded from participating in social, cultural, and economic activities.
- iii. Inadequate infrastructure and public services can create barriers for marginalized groups and limit their ability to participate in society.
- iv. People who are socially excluded may face stigma and negative attitudes from others, which can result in further exclusion.
- v. Poverty and inequality are often the underlying causes of social exclusion and can perpetuate marginalization.

Recreation tourism can have positive and negative impacts on local communities and it is vital to manage recreation tourism activities in a way that maximizes the positive impacts while minimizing the negative ones (Aitchison, 2015) and can generate positive or negative impacts on economic, social, and environmental sectors. UNWTO (2019) reported that economically, international tourist arrivals reached 1.4 billion, a 5% increase in 2018, furthermore that the sheer growth of the industry was driven by a strong global economy, surge of the travel-ready middle class from emerging economies, technological advances, and more affordable travel costs among others, also reported that

A Publication of Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

export earnings from recreation tourism, on receipts and passenger transport, reached a staggering USD 1.7 trillion, this demonstrates that the industry is a major economic engine of growth and development. Social Impacts, in tourism are related to guest-to-host or host-to-guest this involve human interaction and experiences that influences changes. Peoples and community pride, when developed conscientiously, recreational tourism activities, contribute to a positive quality of life for residents and a deeper learning and appreciation for tourists (Darcy, & Law, 2011). The Environmental Impacts, tourism relies on, and greatly impacts, the natural environment in which it operates and in many cases, the environment is an essential resource that outdoor recreation and ecotourism cannot exist without, even though many areas of the world are conserved in the form of parks and protected areas, tourism development can still have severe negative impacts from misuse, overuse, and neglect. The environmental impacts of tourism knows no boundaries and can reach outside local areas and is a force for change capable of transforming the environment from micro- to macro-scales at a staggering rate (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2003a).

Conclusion

The research study conclude by observing the following that there is:

- i. No community Engagement that emphasized the importance of community involvement in recreation and tourism initiatives that will foster a sense of ownership and encouraging active participation in local governance and decision-making.
- ii. No integrated approaches that combine social, economic, and health services to comprehensively address the challenges faced by various community groups.
- iii. No collaboration among government, NGOs, and community-based organizations to enhance service delivery and achieve collective goals for social inclusion.
- iv. No recreation and tourism services tailored to the cultural context of North West states -Nigeria, ensuring respect and understanding of local customs, beliefs, and needs.
- v. Inadequacies in the present recreation and tourism initiatives services, in areas such as women and persons with disabilities are still facing barriers to inclusion.

Recommendations

The study offer the following recommendations that:

- i. Social inclusion involve working with local communities to develop and promote sustainable tourism experiences that showcase the area's unique cultural and natural resources.
- ii. Encourage recreation tourism participation in turn will increase revenue generation to support local businesses and entrepreneurs to create jobs and economic opportunities in the community.
- iii. Building partnerships between the recreation tourism industry and local communities can help to build trust and ensure that social inclusiveness and benefits of recreation tourism are spread throughout the community
- iv. Encourage sustainable tourism practices, such as responsible resource management, waste reduction and conservation efforts, to support the long-term health and prosperity of the local community and its environment.
- v. Promotion of social inclusion through recreation tourism can help bring together diverse groups within the community, encourage community cohesion, and foster a sense of pride and ownership in the local area.

A Publication of Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin, Nigeria

References

- Aitchison, C. (2015). *Social inclusion through tourism: An Australian case study*. Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change, 13(3), 230-247.
- Bailey, A. W., & Hyoungh-Kil Kang (2015). *Modeling the impact of wilderness orientation programs on first-year academic success and life purpose*. Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning; Volume, 15, Issue 3. Pages 209-223. Routledge.
- Beautler, I., (2008). *Sport serving development and peace: Achieving the goals of the United Nations through Sport*. Sport in Society. 11(4): 359-369.
Doi:10.1080/17430430802019227.
- Bloom, M., Grant, M., & Watt, D. (2015). *Strengthening Canada: The socio-economic, benefits of sport participation in Canada*; Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada.
- Coalter, F. Allison, M. and Taylor, J. (2010). *The role of sport in regenerating deprived urban areas*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, Central Research
- Coghlan, A., & Prideaux, B. (2016). The challenges of social tourism: Understanding the barriers to participation for disadvantaged groups. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 14(4), 317-331.
- Darcy, S., & Law, A. (2011). *Inclusive tourism: A strategic approach*. Oxfordshire, UK: CAB International.
- Frisby, W., & Millar, S. (2012). *The actualities of doing community development to promote the inclusion of low income populations in local sport and recreation*. European Sport Management Quarterly, 2, 209-233.
- Forde S.D. et al. (2015) *Moving towards social inclusion: Manager and staff perspectives on an award winning community sport and recreation program for immigrants*. Sport Management Review
- Hall, C. M., Williams, A. M., Lew, A. A., & Macionis, N. (2017). *Tourism and social policy*. Routledge.
- Hartmann, D., and Depro, B., (2006) *Rethinking Sports-Based Community Crime Prevention; A Preliminary Analysis of the Relationship between Midnight Basketball and Urban Crime*. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*. 30(2):180-196.
Doi: 10.1177/0193723506286863.
- Haudenhuyse, R., Theeboom, M., and Nols Z., (2013) *Sports-based interventions for socially vulnerable youth: Towards well-defined interventions with easy-to-follow outcomes*. *International Review for Sociology of Sport*, 48(4), 471-484.
Doi: 10.1177/1012690212448002.
- Hodgkinson, I. R., Hughes P. A (2012). *Level playing field: Social inclusion in public leisure*. *International Journal. Public Sect. Management*; 25:48-63.
doi: 10.1108/09513551211200 285.
- Kemperman, A., & Timmermans, H. J. (2013). *Tourism experiences and sustainable local development in rural areas: Challenges for the tourism industry*. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 21(5), 607-625.
- Kamal, M. M., & Sharifuddin, J. (2018). *Tourism's role in reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion in developing countries*. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 118-129.

- Kiuppis, F., (2018). Inclusion in sport: disability and participation. *Sport in Society*, 21:1, 4-21, DOI: [10.1080/17430437.2016.122588](https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2016.122588).
- Liu, Z., Obeaunaf, A., Speicher, M. R., and Kofan, R., (2009). *Rapid identification of homologous recombinants and determination of gene copy number with reference/query pyrosequencing (RQPS)*. *Genome Research*, 19(11): 2081-9. Doi: [10.1101/gr093856](https://doi.org/10.1101/gr093856).
- Lynch, R. (2017). *Communities, leisure and social inclusion: An introduction*. In R. Lynch & K. Veal (Eds.), *Communities, Leisure and Social Inclusion: Working with Diversity* (pp. 1-9). Bristol, UK: Channel View Publications.
- Mehdipanah, R., Malmusi, D., Muntaner, C & Borrell, C.; (2014). An evaluation of an urban renewal program and its effects on neighborhood resident's overall wellbeing using concept mapping. *Health & Place*, 23, 9-17.
- Nunkoo, R. (2016). *Toward a More Comprehensive Use of Social Exchange Theory to Study Residents' Attitudes to Tourism*. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39, 588-596.
- Pitts, B., and Shapiro, D., (2017). People with Disabilities and Sport: An exploration of topic inclusion in Sport Management. *Journal of Hospitality Leisure Sport & Tourism Education*.
- Raisch, J., & Backman, K. (2015). Leisure and social inclusion: A review of the literature. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 47(2), 115-141.
- Rose, D.; (2016). *The Role of Physical Activity in the Prevention of falls in Older Age*. Fullerton: California State University.
- Rosewater, A.; (2014). *Learning to Play and Playing to Learn: Organized Sports and Educational Outcomes*. Oakland: Team-Up for Youth
- Shaw, S., (2016). The chaos of inclusion? Examining anti-homophobia policy development in New Zealand sport. *Sport Management Review*, April 2019, Pages 247-262. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2018.04.001>.
- Sharpley, R. (2014). *Tourism and sustainable community development*. Routledge.
- Simplican, S. C., Leader G., Kosciulek, J. & Leahy, M. (2015). Defining social inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities: An ecological model of social networks and community participation. *Research in developmental Disabilities*. 38C (3):18-29. DOI: [10.1016/i.ridd.2014.10.008](https://doi.org/10.1016/i.ridd.2014.10.008).
- Sigala, M. (2015). *Tourism and social media: A paradigm shift in destination marketing*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.
- Tkaczynski, A., Rundle-Thiele, S., & Beaumont, N. (2014). Destination social responsibility: Exploring residents' perspectives. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(5), 755-775.
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2003a). *Negatives Socio-cultural impacts from tourism*. <http://www.unep.org/resourceefficiency/Business/SectoralActivities/Tourism/FactsandfiguresaboutTourism/ImpactsofTourism/Socio-CulturalImpacts/NegativeSocio-CulturalImpactsfromTourism/tabid/78781/Default.aspx>
- United Nations Environment Programme. (2003b). *Tourism's three main impact areas*. <http://www.unep.org/resourceefficiency/Business/SectoralActivities/Tourism/TheTourismandEnvironmentProgramme/FactsandFiguresaboutTourism/ImpactsofTourism>

-
- fTourism/EnvironmentalImpacts/TourismsThreeMainImpactAreas/tabid/78776/Default.aspx
- United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2014a). UNWTO *world tourism barometer*, 12 [PDF] (1).
http://dtxtq4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_barom14_04_august_excerpt_0.pdf
- United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2014b). Who we are. Retrieved from <http://www2.unwto.org/content/who-we-are-0>
- United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2019). International Tourism Highlights, 2019 Edition.
- UNWTO. United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2020a). Glossary of Tourism Terms. <https://www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms>
- United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2020b). International Tourist Numbers Could Fall 60-80% in 2020, UNWTO Reports. <https://www.unwto.org/news/covid-19-international-tourist-numbers-could-fall-60-80-in-2020>
- Weaver, D., Lawton, L., & Stabler, M. (2015). *Tourism management*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Wood, E. H. (2005). Leisure as a tool for social inclusion. In E. Sharpe et al. (Eds.), *Social Inclusion: Possibilities and Tensions* (pp. 75-83). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Williams, A. M., & Hall, C. M. (2016). *Tourism and migration: New relationships between production and consumption*. Routledge.
- Zhang, H. Q., Lu, L., & Cai, L. A. (2016). *Tourism, innovation and regional development: New paths in tourism analysis*. Routledge.
-