Assessment of Tourism Activities on the Local Cultural Values and Environment of Beach Communities of Lagos State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

The pressure of beach tourism activities on the natural environment and culture of the host community is increasingly enormous. Thus, the growth of tourism has jeopardised the preservation of local culture and protection of environment in many of the beach communities. The study examines the influence of beach tourists on the local cultural values, socio-economic, and environmental impacts with a view to investigating the practices and impacts of beach tourism within the selected communities of Lagos State, Southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The beaches were purposively selected due to their pronounced tourism activities, economic significance to local livelihood and proximity to urban Lagos, which include; Tarkwa Bay, Alpha Beach and Eleko Beach. In order to achieve the objective of the study, a survey research design was adopted. emphasizing on a descriptive detail of the beach communities, their culture, social life and the environment. Random sampling techniques was used and survey questionnaire was administered. The findings shows that tourism has contributed to cultural awareness and visibility of festivals, but it has also eroded traditional values, intensified environmental challenges such as pollution, congestion, and aesthetic decline, with weak enforcement of existing regulations and socio-economic benefits are unevenly distributed, with elites and formal operators capturing the bulk of revenues. It was therefore recommended that engaging local leaders and community-based organizations are key to creating inclusive planning and provide access that guarantees host communities to have a voice in tourism boards and decision-making processes, enforce environmental regulations more rigorously and support eco-friendly enterprises. Therefore, there is need to focus on the development of the host community in order to balance the economic benefits of the industry, with the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism on the communities.

Keywords: Beach resort, cultural values, Environment, Over-consumption and livelihood

INTRODUCTION

Across the globe, tourism has evolved as one of the most diverse and dynamic sectors in the global economy (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2017, Landry, 2018; Vedastus and Khamis, 2023). The beach tourism therefore, is one of the best types of tourism and a great resource for coastal tourism development. Over the decades, the beach tourism has experienced continued growth to become one of the fastest growing segments of global tourism with largest tourists visit mainly coming for leisure, recreation, relaxation, pleasure and holidays (Rutty and Scott, 2016; Rogerson, et al, 2018; Mafruhah, et al, 2020; Sumaithe & Shaike, 2020).

The experiences in Lagos beaches, located in South-western Nigeria, highlights significant socio-economic disparities, devastation of environment as a result of indiscriminate disposal of solid waste, loss of cultural values of the host communities. As tourism continues to grow, particularly in these selected beach communities, it becomes imperative to explore how cultural practices and environmental conservation efforts can be synergistically integrated to promote sustainable beach tourism of these selected coastal communities of Lagos State. The beach environment is not only recreational space, but also a living cultural landscape, deeply embedded in the social, economic, and spiritual lives of the host communities. However, attention has been

focused on the more obvious economic benefits, with comparatively little attention to the social, cultural and environmental losses of the beach communities.

Thus, the growth of tourism has jeopardised the preservation of local culture and protection of environment in many of the beach communities (Tasci, et al, 2013; Nagarjuna, 2015; Abdulfatah, 2023). The increased visit by the tourists to the beach communities have put much pressure on the quality of lives and that of the coastal ecosystems, disrupting the natural environment and impinge upon a well-ordered cultural setting of the rural and indigenous communities, gradually affecting the social habits, cultural values and lifestyles of the residents. Thus, the local culture is at risk as tourism activities increase on a daily basis (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2016; Alamineh, et al, 2023; Godovykh, et al, 2025;). The beach communities are therefore subjected to a host of environmental and socio-cultural impacts, and couple with the high rate of poverty, which is prevalent in the community, poses complex challenges and risks to the local people despite the endowed resources and existence of variety of tourism activities within the beach communities (Clark and Harley, 2020; Riyanto, et al, 2023;). Therefore, given the significance of coastal areas and the opportunities that they provide, their continuous use will hinge upon sustainability. (Rasoolimanesh and Jaafar, 2016; Roy, 2020; Esraa, 2022; Inkson and Minnaert, 2018; Nagarjuna, 2015). Thus, tourism development and the wellbeing of the local community must be viewed holistically in the destination areas (Kaur, et al, 2016).

Additionally, while existing research on beach tourism in Lagos State has primarily emphasized economic impacts, tourist satisfaction and destination marketing, there has been relatively limited empirical studies on how local culture and environmental factors interlace with beach tourism development from the perspective of the host communities. The concern of the research work therefore, is to examine the selected beach communities, with the aim to address the persistent neglect of local communities, decline in cultural values and the growing trends of environmental degradation associated with beach tourism activities. This investigation will specifically focus on the practices and impacts within the selected beach communities of Lagos State.

Statement of the Problem

Tourism activities are increasingly flourishing and growing significantly, bringing huge economic benefit to the industry, but undermine the local culture and environment of the host communities (Mafruhah, et al, 2020). Despite the substantial growth of beach tourism in Lagos State, the surrounding coastal communities have not benefited respectively and continue to experience widespread poverty. (Metilelu, et al, 2022; Runyowa, 2017; Riyanto, et al, 2023; Hasan,2025). Besides, not hearing their voices in the issues that concern their environment, resources and cultural values have brought about the feeling of prevalent inferiority complex and powerlessness to control their assets and resources. Furthermore, the massive influx of tourists to relatively small areas have vast impacts, on the environment, indigenous beliefs and increasingly burdens the daily life of the host communities (Woosnam and Aleshinloye, 2018).

The beach communities have been trapped in the cycle of poverty and unless there is an outside intervention through holistic view and practice of community-based tourism, the beach communities could remain poor throughout their life time, in spite of the massive development of beach tourism activities in the community (Runyowa, 2017; Mayaka, et al, 2019 Giampiccoli and Mtapuri, 2022). The community-based tourism has long been proposed as more appropriate means of delivering economic, socio-cultural, infrastructural and environmental benefits to the host communities (Saayman and Giampiccoli, 2016; Agbebi and Adeogun, 2023). Although, the coastal zones represent a frontline in the battle for sustainability as coastal communities are often faced with unprecedented challenges and environmental hazard. Tourism is considered an alternative for development; however, the industry and the beach managers have not met the yearnings of the beach communities.

Despite these visible pressures observed in the selected beach communities of Lagos State, empirical evidence remains scarce regarding the dynamics through which tourism activities influence local cultural values, environmental integrity, and community development in coastal zones (Adebayo and Butcher, 2022). Therefore, it is against this backdrop that this study seeks to bridge this gap by critically examining the socio-cultural, environmental, and developmental impacts of beach tourism in selected communities of Lagos State,

Research Questions

1. To what degree do the beach tourists influence the local cultural practices and value system of the beach communities?

2. How do the beach tourism activities affect the socio-economic condition of the host communities?

3. What are the perceived environmental challenges faced by beach communities impacted by tourism activities?

The Aims and Objectives

The aim of this research work is to examine the local culture, environment and sustainable tourism development in selected beach communities of Lagos State. The specific objectives of the study are highlighted as follow;

i. Assess the influence of beach tourists on the local cultural practices and value system of the host communities.
ii. Examine the socio-economic impacts of beach tourism on the living condition of the host community.
iii. Evaluate the environmental impacts of beach tourism activities on the local communities.

METHODOLOGY

A survey research design was used emphasizing on a descriptive detail of the beach communities of Lagos state South-Western geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The beaches understudied include Tarkwa Bay Beach, Alpha Beach and Eleko Beach. The population of the study comprised the members of the host communities and the tourists who visited the beaches understudied. The participants for this study, include both men and women, either married or single of all ethnicities and irrespective of their cultures, religions and social classes and are 18years and above. Participants that are perceived, observed or indicate to be an under aged are excluded from the study and those that are found to be drunkard, depressed, psychologically unstable, mentally deranged or retarded at the time of administering the questionnaire among the tourists or residents are excluded from the study. Survey questionnaire are the research instruments used for data collection in order to capture quantitative information from the tourists and residents.

Three beaches were purposively selected namely; Tarkwa Bay, Alpha and Eleko. Convenience and purposive sampling techniques were employed. Structured questionnaires were administered to 137 residents and 113 tourists. Questionnaire was distributed to tourists and local residents using Likert-type scaling which contains a list of optional responses attached to each item which ranges from 1-5 on the rating scale where 1 is ranked as Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 is Disagree (D), 3 is Undecided (U), 4 is Agree (A), and 5 is Strongly Agree (SA). The respondents were asked to respond to each of the statements given by choosing answers based on the five-point Likert-type scale which measured the respondents' opinion and attitudes as felt significant on the study. A pilot study of 10% of the sample size was used to assess clarity, reliability, and internal consistency of the instrument used for the study. Feedback from the pilot led to few adjustments to avoid ambiguity. The instrument's reliability was established through Cronbach's Alpha, which satisfied the coefficient of 0.7, indicating high internal consistency. The validity was ensured through expert and supervisor review who assessed the instrument's alignment with the study's objectives and theoretical framework. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 23)**.**

Objective 1: Influence of Beach Tourists on the Local Cultural Value

The findings present the influence of beach tourists on local culture and values of the host communities. It was revealed that most of the respondents (67.1%) agree/strongly agreed that the tourists are aware of the custom, beliefs and taboo of the beach community. The majority of the respondents (86.3%) expressed agreement that the tourists' way of life is different from the beach community's lifestyle. It was found that 76.3% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the tourists' way of life does influences the local value and norms.

Findings revealed that 65.7% agreed/strongly agreed that the beach tourism is a major constraint to the development of socio-culture and traditions of the beach community. A significant number of the respondents (82.3%) agreed/strongly agreed that the most vulnerable at the beach community are the teenagers and young ladies. A substantial proportion of respondents (59%) agreed that the level of tourists' observance and regards to local values and norms is high. While majority of respondents (74.9%) supported the view that the beach community do strive to protect local culture.

Table 1: Influence of Beach Tourists on the Local Cultural Practices and Value System of the Host Communities

Variables	SDF (%)	DF (%)	UF (%)	AF (%)	SAF (%)
The tourists are aware of the custom, beliefs and taboo of the beach community	33 (11.7)	53 (18.7)	7 (2.5)	94(33.2)	96 (33.9)
The tourists' way of life is different from the beach community's lifestyle	2 (7)	8 (2.8)	29(10.2)	108(38.2)	136(48.1)
he tourists' way of life do influences the local value and norms?	21 (7.4)	16 (5.7)	30 (10.6)	100(35.3)	116 (41)
The beach tourism is a major constraint to the development of socio-culture and traditions of the beach community	34 (12)	35 (12.4)	28 (9.9)	85 (30)	101(35.7)
The most vulnerable at the beach community are the teenagers and young ladies	16 (5.7)	11 (3.9)	23 (8.1)	81(28.6)	152(53.7)
The level of tourists' observance and regards to local values and norms is high	24 (8.5)	51 (18)	41(14.5)	86(30.4)	81 (28.6)
The beach community do strive to protect local culture	29 (10.2)	14 (4.9)	28 (9.9)	102 (36)	110(38.9)

Key: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

Table 2 shows Duncan's Multiple Range Test conducted to determine the communities that differed in their level of cultural engagement. The results show that residents of Alpha (Mean = 3.73), Takwabay (Mean = 3.78), Eleko (Mean = 4.12) belonged exclusively to the second homogeneous subset and recorded the highest level of cultural engagement. Since Eleko does not share a homogeneous subset with the other communities, residents of Eleko demonstrated a significantly higher level of cultural engagement than residents of Alpha and Takwabay. Overall, the findings indicate that Eleko residents participated more actively in tourism-related cultural activities than residents of the other host communities.

Table 2: Post-hoc test for Community

Duncan[a,b]			
Community	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Alpha	48	3.7262	
Takwabay	38	3.7782	
Eleko	51		4.1204
Sig.		0.233	1

Objective II: Socio-Economic Impact of Beach Tourism

Beach tourism is viewed as economically beneficial. A large majority of the respondents (88%) strongly agreed that tourism improved economic conditions of the local residents. Only 49.5% felt beach activities have enhanced the financial status of every home in the beach community. While, 59% of the respondents agreed that the beach community at large have benefited from the beach revenue generated. However, 67.4% strongly agreed that only those operating recreational centres, business enterprises and beach managers that gain access

to the economic benefits. Most participants (60.1%) expressed agreement that indigenes are the major beneficiary of the beach tourism. Besides, 60.1% agreed that revenue is properly channelled into development of the beach community. A majority of participants (62.6%) agreed that there is a great improvement in the social amenity and infrastructure of the beach community.

Table 3: Socio-Economic Impact of Beach Tourism

Variables	SD F (%)	DF (%)	U F (%)	A F (%)	SAF (%)
The beach tourism has contributed to economic condition of the local residents	12 (4.2)	9 (3.2)	13 (4.6)	91(32.2)	158 (55.8)
Beach activities have enhanced the financial status of every home in the beach community	40(14.1)	46(16.3)	57(20.1)	75 (26.5)	65 (23)
The beach community at large have benefited from the beach revenue generated	39(13.8)	45(15.9)	32(11.3)	88 (31.1)	79 (27.9)
Only those operating recreational centers, business enterprises and beach management that gain access to the economic benefits	32(11.3)	42(14.8)	21 (7.4)	90 (31.8)	98 (34.6)
The indigenes are the major beneficiary of the beach tourism	46(16.3)	34 (12)	33(11.7)	94 (33.2)	76 (26.9)
The beach revenue has been channelled appropriately for the development of the beach community	40(14.1)	48 (17)	25 (8.8)	124(43.8)	46 (16.3)
There is a great improvement in the social amenity and infrastructure of the beach community	31 (11)	55(19.4)	20 (7.1)	114(40.3)	63 (22.3)

Key: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

Socio Economic benefits and Community

Communities benefit unequally. Socio-Economic score shows significant differences across communities with p-value of 0.000. Eleko residents experience strong economic benefits, while Takwabay residents report limited benefits.

Objective I11: Environmental Impacts of Beach Tourism on The Local Communities

The findings revealed that most respondents agreed that beach tourism creates environmental problems. An over whelming majority (88.7%) of the participants strongly agreed that pollution exists at the beaches. In addition, 61.8% agreed that it causes congestion and overconsumption of power. Moreover, responses showed a high level of agreement (84.1%) that aesthetic quality of the beach is negatively affected if not well maintained. Majority of the respondents (66.8%) agreed that tourists dispose waste indiscriminately. While, 60.8% agreed that there is a sign of daily clean up at the beach attraction. Responses showed a high level of agreement (72.8%) that tourists dispose waste and garbage indiscriminately at the beach attraction. However, 54.8% agreed that waste bins are well distributed at the beach environment for tourists' use. In addition, 67.5% believed there are local initiatives/regulations to address environmental concerns related to beach tourism. Most participants (76%) expressed agreement that beach tourism for the community is socio-economically beneficial.

Table 4: Environmental Impacts of Beach Tourism on The Local Communities

Variables	SDF (%)	DF (%)	UF (%)	AF (%)	SAF (%)
There are different forms of pollution at the beach attraction; such as land, water, air and noise	14 (4.9)	10 (3.5)	8 (2.8)	86 (30.4)	165 (58.3)
Beach tourism activities create congestion,	28 (9.9)	42 (14.8)	38 (13.4)	83 (29.3)	92 (32.5)

traffic and over consumption of power of the local community					
The aesthetic quality of the beach is usually affected if not maintain by the pollution	13 (4.6)	5 (1.8)	27 (9.5)	129 (45.6)	109 (38.5)
The influx of tourists to the beach do affect the daily life and activities of the beach community	24 (8.5)	38 (13.4)	32 (11.3)	120 (42.4)	69 (24.4)
There is a sign of daily clean up at the beach attraction	18(6.4)	42 (14.8)	51 (18)	105 (37.1)	67 (23.7)
Tourists dispose waste and garbage indiscriminately at the beach attraction	18 (6.4)	23 (8.1)	36 (12.7)	114 (40.3)	92 (32.5)
Waste bins are well distributed at the beach environment for tourists used	17 (6)	65 (23)	46 (16.3)	92 (32.5)	63 (22.3)
There are local initiatives or regulations to address environmental concerns related to beach tourism	17 (6)	42 (14.8)	33 (11.7)	108 (38.2)	83 (29.3)
Beach tourism for your community is socioeconomically beneficial	23 (8.1)	22 (7.8)	23 (8.1)	106 (37.5)	109 (38.5)

Key: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agre

Environmental impacts and Community

Communities experience environmental impacts differently with a significant p-value of 0.000. Eleko reports better environmental outcomes, while Takwabay and Alpha perceive less environmental effects.

Table 5: Environmental impacts on selected beach Communities

Environmental_Score			
Duncan[a,b]			
Community	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Takwabay	38	3.7281	
Alpha	48	3.7431	
Eleko	51		4.0654
Sig.		0.122	1

Table 6: Environmental impacts on selected beach Communities

	Environmental Score					
Variables		**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Community	Between Groups	5.707	4	1.427	6.174	0.000
	Within Groups	64.249	278	0.231		
	Total	69.956	282			

DISCUSSION

Influence of Beach Tourists on Local Cultural Values of Host Communities

A majority of respondents agreed that tourists are aware of the customs, beliefs, and taboos of beach communities. At the same time, more respondents recognized that tourists' lifestyles differ significantly from

their own. This suggests that while cultural awareness exists, it does not necessarily translate into conformity or respect for local practices. Studies shows that cultural awareness among tourists often reflects superficial knowledge rather than deep intercultural competence, leading to situations where traditions are acknowledged but not necessarily respected (Godovykh *et al*., 2025). For Lagos beach communities, this means that awareness campaigns alone may not suffice. Rather, mechanisms that foster active respect such as visitor codes of conduct, cultural briefings, and community-led interpretation are necessary. As Alamineh *et al*. (2023) explained in his studies; even when tourists are informed of local traditions, cultural friction arises if their lifestyles, leisure practices, and expectations conflict with community norms.

Majority of respondents believe tourists' lifestyles influence local values and norms, and they perceive beach tourism as a constraint to socio-cultural development. These findings reflect the cultural commodification thesis, which posits that tourism habitually reshapes local traditions to suit tourists' expectations, resulting in modified meanings and sometimes weakened authenticity (Elshaer *et al.*, 2024). Adebayo and Butcher (2022) found similar concerns in community-based tourism initiatives, where residents felt pressured to adjust traditions for tourist consumption. This resonates with social exchange theory, where communities balance perceived cultural loss with potential economic and social gains. The implication is that unmanaged tourism risks diluting sacred practices and replacing traditional values with hybridized or commercialized forms.

The study revealed that the general lifestyles of the tourists on the host of the community are so forceful and influencing the local culture to a very large extent. Therefore, the impact of tourists' lifestyles on the selected beach communities is so definite and enormous (Inkson, and Minnaert, 2018). Hence, this gradual loss of the cultures and traditions of these selected beach communities over time is a disaster of monumental proportion. Thus, majority of the respondents posit that the tourists have a greater influence on the beach communities over time. Significantly, the constant influx of tourists on the coast of these beach communities for pleasure, relaxation and recreational purposes over the years have a greater impact on their local culture, traditions, norms, customs, values and social lives.

The study also revealed that the dresses and outfits of the tourists which was extended to the beach community is offensive, indecent and immodest. Such outfits to the host community are regarded as disrespectful to the religious beliefs held by the community members and can be interpreted as a lack of respect for host culture and way of life. This finding aligns with the report made by Inkson, and Minnaert, (2018) that such outfits conflict with local cultural standard and generate social tension within the host community. The study reveals that the tourists depict so many lifestyles which are detrimental to the values, traditions and norms of the indigenous beach communities. However, the study revealed that the beach communities' culture and traditions have been influenced and weakening over time.

A striking number of respondents identified teenagers and young women as the most vulnerable to cultural influences from tourists. This aligns with literature highlighting youth and women as disproportionately affected groups in cultural contact zones (Banso *et al*., 2023). Young people are particularly susceptible to adopting foreign lifestyles due to their social mobility and digital exposure. Similarly, young women often face gender-specific vulnerabilities which exclude them from decision-making in tourism governance (Adebayo and Butcher, 2022). The impact of tourists' lifestyles especially on the teenagers calls for a responsible form of tourism.

Thus, there is need for tourism activities at the beach to be carefully managed in a way that it will promote and protect the socio-cultural lives of the beach communities. This indeed supported the view of Beeton (2006) who said the young locals at the beach communities are must vulnerable to the behavioural patterns of the tourists and tourism activities have a way of initiating social change on the host community. Therefore, this incompatible behaviour of the tourists perpetuated at the beach destination is detrimental to the morality and cultural values of the beach communities (Inkson, and Minnaert, 2018). It was further noted that the lifestyles of the tourists on the beach and its environment depict such lose and frivolity which has a way of influencing the norms, local culture and traditions of the community.

In spite of the challenges, most of the respondents agreed that the community actively strives to protect local culture. Although, many reported concerns about cultural change or loss. This duality reflects cultural resilience; the ability of communities to adapt while maintaining cultural integrity (Godovykh *et al.,* 2025). It is worth mentioning however, that cultural values and traditions are actively sustained and expressed through regularly celebrated annual festivals and well-observed traditional ceremonies, which serve as important mechanisms for preserving their cultural heritage. Eleko beach community engages in cultural practices, including the observance of festivals and traditional ceremonies aimed at sustaining local cultural identity. Nonetheless, these cultural activities are observed to occur frequently when compared to those of the Tarkwa bay and Okun Alfa communities, indicating varying levels of cultural expression and continuity among the understudied beach communities of Lagos State.

In addition, the traditional leaders of the selected beach communities also ensure that traditions and cultural festivals are carried out without affecting the satisfaction and experiences of the tourists, during their visit. Majority of Respondents indicated that, a lot of religious activities do take place at the restricted sites of the beach, in which many religious groups and different people do visit time to time to offer prayers. Besides, it was also observed that during any cultural festival the indigene and the members of the community usually boycotts the beach site, where tourists are gathered. This was also done to ensure that the tourists' experience and satisfaction at the beach is not affected negatively. Thus, an alternative route is taken back to the main community, where the festival will be brought to an end at the community's square.

Moreover, findings revealed that observance of cultural festival within the Okun Alfa is also very rare and does not involve the tourists or visitors in the traditions of the community. This shows that in the attempt of protecting the community's culture and traditions as strategy, some aspects of the culture become 'insider only' (Inkson, and Minnaert, 2018). This was adopted by Okun Alfa community to foster the strength of the community's norms, values and traditions only within the members of the community and boost community's bond. Therefore, resilience requires institutional support, as Alamineh *et al*. (2023) argue, communities that lack legal or organizational mechanisms to regulate cultural use often struggle to balance protection with tourism's economic pressures. In Lagos, local efforts such as setting boundaries for sacred spaces, restricting inappropriate tourist behaviour, and integrating elders into decision-making could bolster cultural resilience. Certainly, the local communities have been trying to protect their culture, through enactment of rules and regulations, providing tour guides to provide guidance and counseling to the tourists, whenever the need arises.

In addition, only few respondents reported daily interactions with tourists, yet a substantial proportion of respondents (65.7%) agreed that tourism has increased appreciation and preservation of local culture. Studies confirm that tourism can foster broad appreciation of culture without strengthening specific cultural forms, unless deliberate programming is put in place (Banso *et al*., 2023). Festivals emerged as the most appealing cultural attraction for tourists. However, respondents cited loss of traditional values, and noted conflicts between tourists and traditions. Nonetheless, the majority of respondents found that the cultural beliefs, norms and values of the selected beach community under studied have significantly declined, with the annual festival being the only notable cultural tradition still observed.

Socio-Economic Impact of Beach Tourism

These findings from socio-economic impact of beach tourism show that tourism activities have brought massive improvement to homes and individuals who operate businesses at the selected beaches. Small and medium enterprises have also helped in boosting the economic capacity of the communities, thereby creating a geographical and regional recognition for each beach community in terms of relaxation, recreation, fun and pleasure. This finding is in agreement with Adam, *et al*, (2025) who noted that tourism activities boost small business revenues and affect local economic dynamics. Thus, beach tourism is therefore popular for its coastal recreational activities, fascinating and dramatic in nature, as influx of tourists' increases on a daily basis creating wealth for the members of the beach communities, specifically those involved in businesses within the beach arena.

Significantly, the socio-economic of the selected beach communities are quite impressive and there are several companies, industries and institutions that have added massive values to the communities which have heightened the economics system of the beach communities. It was observed that the beaches have played an important role and the revenue generated respectively have been used to cater for infrastructural development and to enhance living standard. The beaches are economically busy with large number of people engaging in different businesses to meet the needs of the tourists and this has continued to attract the influx of tourists.

On the contrary, majority of the respondents indicated that, the business at the beach a time is very dull and not impressive when the influx of tourists is very low. This shows that when the influx of tourists is high, its boost the local business and operators of enterprises, but when the influx is low it affects local businesses. It was also observed that most tourists do come with their food and drinks, this may lead to challenges for those in food and beverages in exhausting their products, before the close of the day. The study observed that not every member of the beach communities is involved in beach businesses and such may not have direct impact of beach benefits. The study also revealed that, there are number of unemployed members of the selected communities who have not tapped into the advantage of tourism as leverage for economic empowerment. Thus, the data indicates that the majority of the respondents supported the view that the beach has many opportunities of creating wealth for those who are diligent, hardworking, resilient and entrepreneurial.

Moreover, the findings from socio-economic impact of beach tourism also show a dual narrative; while beach tourism contributes positively to livelihoods and infrastructure, benefit distribution is uneven, reinforcing socio-economic inequalities. This is consistent with the research carried out by Kutir (2023), he found that although coastal tourism in Nigeria generates employment and stimulates local businesses, benefits are often skewed towards elites and entrepreneurs with capital, leaving marginalized groups with fewer gains. Similarly, Metilelu (2022) reported that Lagos coastal communities experience infrastructure upgrades due to tourism, but the benefits remain unequally distributed, particularly among informal workers, women, and low-income households. The finding aligns with the Culture of Poverty Theory which posit that, when large external investors and elites dominate beach tourism, while communities are sideline, the local residents may receive limited benefits and have relatively low participation in decision-making and planning process. Thereby increasing their poverty and feeling of powerlessness in the issues that concern their community, natural resources and assets which made them not to have a share in the benefits. Besides, Caparrós-Martínez *et al.,* (2022) noted that while tourism enhances municipal revenue and amenities, inequities in benefit sharing persist. Furthermore, Altınok. (2024) found that, economic benefits of coastal tourism often favor private sector operators, with limited trickle-down effects to households not directly engaged in tourism businesses. This informs the need inclusive economic policies to ensure more equitable distribution of tourism revenue.

The result further reveals that communities experience socio-economic benefits from beach tourism unevenly, with a statistically significant difference. Specifically, Eleko residents report stronger economic benefits, while Takwabay residents experience limited benefits. This suggests that geographical location, tourism infrastructure, ownership structures, and management models determine how benefits are distributed across Lagos' beach communities. This aligns with the argument that the socio-economic impact of tourism is rarely uniform, as communities differ in their degree of integration into tourism markets, access to employment, and ability to leverage entrepreneurial opportunities (Caparrós-Martínez *et al.*, 2022). Communities where beach tourism is more organized and infrastructure is better developed often attract more tourists, resulting in higher revenues for residents through employment, vending, and service provision. By contrast, communities with more challenges and weaker formal tourism infrastructure, captures fewer direct benefits from tourism activity.

A study by Metilelu (2022) emphasizes that inequities in socio-economic benefits from coastal tourism are strongly shaped by the presence of private sector partnerships, accessibility by road, and degree of state investment in tourism facilities. The findings confirm why beaches like Eleko generate more tangible economic outcomes for residents, compared to Takwabay, where informal tourism dominates and regulatory oversight is weaker. Mtapuri *et al.,* (2024) note that in South Africa, coastal communities with better integration into formal tourism value chains benefit disproportionately compared to marginalized communities. Similarly, Altınok (2024) found that, socio-economic gains from beach tourism are concentrated in

communities with better infrastructure and private investment, while less-developed communities face exclusion from direct benefits.

Moreover, the findings of this study demonstrate that although beach tourism generates substantial revenue across the selected coastal communities, the extent to which this income contributes to community development depends largely on the effectiveness of revenue management and reinvestment strategies. Respondents from Eleko, Okun Alfa, and Tarkwa Bay expressed dissatisfaction with the limited developmental impact of tourism revenue despite continuous tourist patronage. These findings suggest that tourism can only contribute meaningfully to community development when financial resources are deliberately reinvested in projects that benefit local residents. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism, 2022), tourism should generate inclusive economic growth by creating employment, improving infrastructure, and enhancing the quality of life of local populations.

Similarly, the findings corroborate the work of Geoffrey *et al*. (2021), who argued that tourism contributes most effectively to poverty reduction when tourism income is reinvested in community infrastructure, education, health services, and local enterprises. It was mentioned that tourism should create benefits that extend beyond individual businesses to improve the overall living conditions of host communities. The findings further align with Mathew (2022), who maintained that responsible tourism requires local communities to receive visible and equitable benefits from tourism activities. He argued that investments in roads, sanitation, water supply, and other public services not only improve residents' quality of life but also enhance visitor satisfaction and destination competitiveness. The findings also corroborate World Bank (2018), which reported that infrastructure development is one of the most important channels through which tourism contributes to sustainable economic growth. The World Bank noted that investments in roads, electricity, water supply, sanitation, and public facilities improve accessibility, encourage private investment, and enhance destination competitiveness.

Environmental Impacts of Beach Tourism

The finding shows that most respondents identified pollution as a major issue reflects widespread recognition of the ecological footprint of beach tourism. The study revealed that, the major spot where tourists usually gathered in large number either for pleasure and recreational activities was noted as the dirtiest site within the beach attractions. Pollutions are the major effect of tourism activities on the beach communities and the environment, especially during the peak period and cultural festival of the understudied beach communities; which includes noise pollution, air pollution, solid waste and all kinds of littering. It was observed that tourists came into the beach community with various forms of disposable packaged and stuff which are not well disposed, thereby contributing to the filthiness of the environment.

Observations have been made in a study in Kenya’s coastal destinations which showed that increased beach visitation directly correlated with higher solid waste accumulation, marine debris, and coastal water contamination (Gunduz *et al*., 2021). Likewise, DANSO (2024) reported that unregulated beach tourism activities contribute significantly to marine plastic pollution, threatening biodiversity and local fisheries. This environmental pollution could reduce the attractiveness of Lagos beaches to both domestic and international tourists, potentially undermining long-term tourism revenue. Nonetheless, according to the management of the beaches various efforts have been made to maintain the cleanliness of the beach.

Moreover, it was observed that the residential houses of Okun Alpha, Tarkwa bay and Eleko communities are very close to the beach attraction. Therefore, as a result of the proximity of the beach attractions to the residential building of these three communities, it has further contributed to the high level of disposed waste on the entire residential quarters. Thus, the influx of tourists converging at the beach attractions and daily activities of the residents has increased the burden on the entire environment and the pollutions of the communities. The study further revealed that the members of the understudied beach communities are also an agent of pollutions, contributing to the littering of the whole environments with different kinds of garbage from their residential buildings. This implied that both tourists and members of the community pollute the

environment and contribute to the uncleanliness and filthiness around the beaches and the environments at large.

It is worth mentioning however, that all forms of solid waste and littering have a way of degrading the beach environment and the physical appearance of the water, shoreline and can affect marine animals (Mafruhah, *et al*.,2020). With most of the respondents highlighting congestion and power overconsumption, the results align with evidence that rapid tourist inflows stress limited infrastructure in coastal destinations. Congestion on beaches not only reduces visitor experience quality but also accelerates environmental wear and tear. A study on urban coastal destinations in Spain found that seasonal congestion strained local energy and water systems, requiring adaptive energy-saving and crowd-management policies (Alsharif *et al*., 2025). In addition, majority of the respondents believe poor maintenance negatively affects aesthetic quality of the beach environment. Tourists are attracted to beaches partly for their natural beauty, and environmental neglect undermines this. Research on Mediterranean coastal resorts shows that loss of visual appeal due to litter and poor landscape maintenance leads to repeat-visit decline (Wen *et al*., 2024). In Lagos, where competition exists between private and public beaches, maintaining aesthetic quality could determine which beaches thrive. Regular clean-up programs and community-driven beach beautification projects can safeguard aesthetics.

The findings reveal a paradox; while respondents agreed that tourists dispose waste indiscriminately, they also observed daily clean-ups, and some noted the presence of distributed waste bins. The study revealed that the beach environment is always polluted with refuse and disposable materials, because tourists visit the beach community with various forms of disposable packaged and stuff which are not well disposed, thereby contributing to the filthiness of the environment, despite various efforts to maintain the cleanliness of the beach. This suggests that while infrastructure exists, behavioural compliance remains low. This finding resonates with research in Asian and African coastal communities where tourists often ignore environmental etiquette despite visible waste infrastructure (Hasan, 2025).

A significant number of respondents acknowledged local initiatives/regulations addressing environmental concerns. Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA) and Lagos Waste Management Authority (LAWMA) have launched waste-control programs at beaches, including recycling hubs and awareness drives (LAWMA, 2024). However, effectiveness often depends on enforcement. Studies on African coastal tourism stress that local bylaws exist but weak implementation undermines their impact (Nkosi *et al*., 2021). Respondents acknowledged socio-economic benefits from beach tourism, even while recognizing environmental harm. This reflects the tourism–environment trade-off. Tourism provides employment, income, and investment in host communities but at ecological costs if unregulated (Godovykh *et al*., 2025). Social Exchange Theory (SET) explains why communities tolerate environmental harm as long as economic benefits outweigh costs (Qin *et al*., 2025).

In addition, the result shows that environmental impacts are not uniformly experienced across communities, with a highly significant p-value. Communities like Eleko report better environmental outcomes, while others such as Takwabay and Alpha perceive less environmental effects. This suggests that local ecological management practices, beach governance structures, and tourism intensity levels vary widely among Lagos beach communities. This pattern aligns with findings from Amaeze and Otabor (2024), who observed that Nigerian coastal communities exhibit heterogeneous environmental experiences due to differences in local government engagement, private sector investment, and community-driven conservation efforts. Beaches with structured waste management systems and community monitoring tend to report fewer environmental problems compared to more commercialized beaches, which often suffer from overcrowding, litter, and ecosystem degradation (Amaeze and Otabor, 2024).

Shampa *et al*. (2023) found that community-level differences in environmental outcomes along coastal zones are strongly associated with governance effectiveness and the scale of tourism commercialization. Likewise, Aziz and Niazi (2023) highlighted those beaches with participatory local initiatives such as routine clean-ups, eco-tourism programs, and environmental education report reduced ecological stress compared to heavily privatized or congested sites.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that tourism strongly affects local cultural values and has become a source of both appreciation and disruption of culture. Despite being seen as a major cultural asset, local festivals remain the most attractive cultural aspect and were increasingly considered to be commercialized and had the potential to lose their authenticity.

The findings indicated that travel through tourism not only generates employment opportunities, improved infrastructure, and amenities, but also promote small entrepreneurship for the middle class, who found it to be an avenue for cultural entrepreneur to enhance their livelihood. However, these benefits were unevenly distributed, often concentrated among private concessionaires, elites, indigenes and formal business operators. Meanwhile, only a few households experience direct impacts, leaving marginalized groups, such as women and informal workers at a disadvantage.

The environmental aspect of the beach tourism is apparent. Tourism activities are a major contributor to pollution in different forms, which the study found to contribute to both congestion and resource overuse. Despite some beaches being clean, having waste disposal facilities, daily clean-ups exercise and local regulations exist, but remain inadequate. Respondents pointed out the lack of maintenance leading to a decline in aesthetic quality, while environmental regulations were not enforced as effectively by relevant state agencies like LASEPA and LAWMA, despite their regulatory mandates.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study concludes that beach tourism in Lagos State is not only a productive source of development but also carries considerable social, cultural, and environmental burdens for its host communities. Despite tourism providing new opportunities for cultural visibility, entrepreneurship, and community livelihoods, the evidence suggests that these gains are often overshadowed by cultural dilution, ecological degradation, or unequal distribution of benefits. The research indicates that Lagos' tourism development model is currently promoting economic benefits and private investment, often at the expense of cultural sustainability, environmental responsibility, and local empowerment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to promote sustainable and inclusive beach tourism development in Lagos State:

1. Provide an avenue for host communities to have a voice in tourism boards, decision-making processes and engaging local leaders and community-based organizations
2. Support community-driven cultural events and avoid the over-marketing of festivals and incorporate cultural preservation into tourism policies.
3. Institutionalize regular monitoring of beach environments and enforce environmental regulations

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