WWW.IJRPR.COM

International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews

Journal homepage: www.ijrpr.com ISSN 2582-7421

Assessment of Tourists' Awareness, Perception and Acceptability of Locally Produced Beverages in Selected Eco-destinations in South West Nigeria

[1]OLAWALE-OLAKUNLE,O. E., [2]ADEYEMO, A.I. AND [2]AROWOSAFE, F.C.

[1]DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY, RUFUS GIWA POLYTECHNIC, OWO, ONDO STATE
[2]DEPARTMENT OF ECOTOURISM AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT, FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, AKURE, ONDO STATE
olajumokeelizabeth@gmail.com
DOI: https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.234.4.37323

ABSTRACT

The present study has provided insights on tourists' awareness, perception and acceptability of locally produced beverages in selected eco-destinations in south west Nigeria. The primary data collected were analysed using the relevant statistical packages and the results presented using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study revealed a high level of awareness among the tourists regarding the availability and importance of the selected local beverages as indicated by 100% of the respondents. In terms of acceptability, it was found out that the local drinks are widely accepted by the tourists that participated in the study. The study also discovered that the tourists had good and positive perception towards the consumption of the selected local beverages in view of the fact that the tourists scored them high based on their organoleptic properties (colour, taste, flavour and texture) with the grand mean value of 6.19, 6.20, 5.76 and 6.33 for Zobo,Kunu, Coconut and Tigernut drinks respectively on a 7-point scale rating. The socio-economic characteristics that influence the consumption of local beverages by the tourists include age, occupation, income and religion. This finding is substantiated by the chi-square test with p-values less than 5% ($p < 5\%$). The study concludes that there is a high level of awareness among the tourists regarding the availability and importance of the selected local beverages and they are widely accepted by the tourists that participated in the study. The tourists were found to have good and positive perception towards the consumption of the selected local beverages. The socio-economic characteristics that influence the consumption of local beverages by the tourists include age, occupation, income and religion. In order to further exploit the socio-economic potentials of the selected beverages, the study recommends amongst others that the unemployed people especially those in the community where the tourism sites are located should take up the job opportunities offered by the production and marketing of these local drinks for economic gains and that the management of tourism destinations in Nigeria should adopt them to form part of the services provided to the tourists in order to promote the consumption of these drinks,.

Key words: Eco-destinations, Tourists, Local beverages, Awareness, Perception, Acceptability

Introduction

The Oxford Learner dictionary defines beverage as a liquid that is meant for human consumption and to add to their basic function of satisfying thirst. Beverage is a drink other than water, an explanation on commercial context. Beverages are further divided into 'alcoholic beverages' and 'non-alcoholic' beverages. Non-alcoholic beverages refers to non-intoxication drinks or sweet carbonated drinks, which doesnot have any liquor percentage or in other words yeast is not introduced to convert sugar into alcohol during the fermentation process. It has been stated that drinks form part of the culture of human society and the types of beverages consumed affect the composition of modern diet (Stubbs and Whybrow, 2004; Pushpangadan*et al*., 2012). Despite the fact that all beverages contain water; however water itself is not classified as a beverage (Wikipedia, 2022). Furthermore, it has been reported that beverages are in the top ten contributing foods for several nutrients. Many scholars includingPushpangadan*et a*l. (2012) have reported that for so many decades, beverages have been used by humans in order to get vitality, longevity and have a good flow of digestion. Platania*et al* (2018) pointed out that there are numerous beverages and local ones in particular which give the body a good water balance and medicinal benefits. According to Pieroni*et al* (2021), many of the local beverages which include kunu, zobo, dates, tigernuts, coconut, soybean, etc. have been produced and are very nourishing with the addition of other natural and local product to spice them instead of using sweetener such as sugar to improve on the taste. Platania*et al* (2018) also highlighted that some of these beverages including the local ones have high energy content and are very rich in antioxidants among other compositions.

While these beverages are domestically produced and mostly consumed locally, yet they can be acceptable by tourists from far and near when they are prepared and presented in a way that appeal to their minds. It is on records that a number of studies have been conducted on these local beverages and these include areas such as proximate evaluation (Adedokun*et al*., 2014; Ezekiel et al., 2016 and *Mohammed* et al., 2018),phyto-chemical and sensory evaluation (Belewu*et al*., 2014; Akujobi*et al*., 2018); microbial assessment (Ekanem*et al*., 2018) and mineral evaluation (Hassan and Emifoniye, 2018).

It is however noted that none of these studies have attempted to examine the level of awareness, perception and acceptability of these drinks among the tourists in our different eco-destinations. As against the general notion that local beverages are meant for the poor or low-keyed in the society, Atebol (2018) maintained that many people from different cultures will want to sample food and drink associated with the destination they visit. This therefore underscores the possibility for locally made beverages to be accepted by tourists. Rather than having water and the conventional soft drinks as the only available drinks at these tourist destinations, these local beverages which are believed to be rich in vitamins and other essential body nutrients can readily be used as better alternatives in view of their nutritional and health benefits. This research gap therefore deserves some research attention and thus constitutes the focus of this present study.

Research Methodology

Study Area

This study was carried out in Idanre Hills and Ikogosi Warm Spring Resorts in Ondo and Ekiti States respectively.

Ikogosi Warm Spring Resort

In the heart of Ikogosi, a small, quiet town with rich, local customs, in the Western part of Ekiti State (Ekiti Tourism Corridor), lies a warm spring which has now catapulted Ikogosi-Ekiti to national and international limelight. The Ikogosi Warm Springs is situated at the latitude of 7° 35' 38.9" and the longitude of 4° 58' 52.6"; with an average elevation of 479m above sea level and underlain by a group of slightly migmatized to non-migmatizedparaschists and meta-igneous rocks (Caby and Boesse, 2001; Ikudayisi*et al.*, 2015; Olaniyi and Atalor, 2018). What is mysterious about the Ikogosi Warm Spring is the fact that, flowing side by side the warm spring, is another spring, a cold one. According to experts, it is a geological wonder to have such occurrence out of the same rock formation and this Ekiti flagship tourist destination is said to be the only one of its kind discovered anywhere in the world. The warm and cold springs of Ikogosi originate from a close proximity, come to a meeting point, and flow onward together with each spring retaining its thermal identity. It represents uniqueness and is the first of such occurrence in the world. The warm spring has a temperature of up to 70^{o}C at the source and 37^{o}C after meeting the cold spring. The meeting point of the warm and cold springs is a unique attraction to tourists, (Tin Magazine, 2014).The springs sprout out and flow with a constant temperature and volume up to 150 litres/seconds from morning till night, at all seasons, all-year round. The whole environment of the spring has been deliberately left un-tampered with, for eco-tourism appeal while the source of the warm spring has been provided with a viewing structure for easy spotting by tourists. Strangely also, there is a tree and a palm growing from the same source at the meeting point area of the warm and cold springs.

Idanre Hills

Idanre Hills consists of spectacular valleys with a high plain and the valleys are interspersed with magnificent inselberlgs that is about 3,000 feet above the sea level. It was listed in 2007 on the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage sites. There are attributes such as the old court, Owa's Palace, Agbooogun foot print, shrines, burial grounds and mounds and the Omi Aopara which is the thunder water. It is a tourist attraction center that brings thousands of visitors all through the year(Arowosafe. and Omopariola, 2016).Idanre Town is about 24 kilometres southwest of Akure, Ondo State capital and situated along the *Coordinates of*N7 06 13.8 E5 06 05.4. The ancient Idanre Hills had been a home for the Idanre community for almost 100 years. As a natural and cultural landscape, Idanre hills stands out well among all other places that have been listed in UNESCO World Heritage Sites. It is a cluster of intimidating and imposing hills housing some wonderful things which confound the senses. The hills surround the town, envelope it and dominate life in the town. From any angle, one sees the hills and virtually every activity revolves round this collection of hills.

Data Collection and Analysis

The present study employed descriptive survey designs for the actualization of the set objectives. Krejcie and Morgan method of sample size determination was used to determine the sample size for the tourists and a total of three hundred and forty-two (342) tourists were selected; while purposive sampling technique was employed to administer questionnaire on the respondents based on the their' readiness to participate in the study. The questionnaire was both structured and unstructured in nature so as to capture all relevant information necessary for the study. In addition, interview and personal observation were also employed

Results and Discussions

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Tourists

The socio-demographic characteristics results revealed that 55.9% and 70.9% of respondents were within the age of 21-40 years in Ekiti State (Ikogosi warm spring) and Ondo State (Idanre hills) respectively, while those who fell within 41-50 years constituted 44.1% and 29.1% as indicated in both locations respectively. On the aggregate, 63.5% of the respondents were within 21-40 years while 36.5% were within 41-50 years. The results of analysis on gender distribution shows that the females constituted the majority 64.1% and 61.6% in Ikogosi warm spring and Idanre hills respectively while the males formed 35.9% and 38.4% as indicated in both locations respectively. In all, the female constituted 62.9% while the males shared 37.1%. With respect to the nationality of the respondents the result reveals that all the respondents (100%) in both study locations are Nigerian nationals. The distribution of respondents according to gender reveals that the single formed the majority in the two study areas; 62.4% and 53.5% in Ikogosi warm spring and Idanre hills respectively. On the aggregate, the single shared a fairly higher percentage (57.9%) compared with the married (42.1%).

The distribution of respondents by educational status reveals that those who had Secondary education formed the majority; 60.6% and 59.3% in Ikogosi warm spring and Idanre hills respectively. Those that have acquired Tertiary education constituted 37.6% and 39.5% as indicated in both locations

respectively; while 1.8% and 1.2% of respondent were found to have acquired only Primary education. On the aggregate, those with Secondary education formed 59.9% while those with Tertiary education shared 38.6%. The distribution of respondents on the basis of occupation reveals that the students and civil servants shared the majority; the students formed 50% and 55.8% in Ikogosi warm spring and Idanre hills respectively while the civil servants accounted for 45.9% and 36.6% in Ikogosi warm spring and Idanre hills respectively. Other categories of respondents were the Traditionalists and Traders who are very few in number. On the aggregate the civil servants and students shared the highest which accounted for 41.2% and 52.9% respectively. The distribution of respondents by monthly income reveals that the majority of respondents earned at least ₦50, 000 and above, with about 67.6% and 71.5% that were within this category in Ikogosi warm spring and Idanre hills respectively. On the aggregate, 69.6% of respondents earned ₦50, 000 and above while others earned ₦40, 000 and below.

Awareness and Importance of Local Beverages

On the awareness of production and sales of local beverages, the results (Table 1) show that all the respondents (100%) were aware. The list of local beverages found in the communities of selected eco-tourism destinations according to the tourists show that kunu, Zobo and Tigernut drinks were the most common ones around Ikogosi warm spring as attested to by 35.9%, 33.2% and 32.4% of respondents respectively while in Idanre Hills; Kunu, Soyamilk and Zobo drinks were the most common as indicated by 44.8%, 32.6% and 30.8% of respondents respectively. On whether the respondents purchased available local beverages in the study areas, the majority (69.6%) indicated that they did so while 30.4% indicated otherwise.

With respect to the opinions of respondents on local beverages, majority (86.5%) indicated very important while only 13.5% of respondents indicated not so important. Analysis on the frequency of taking local beverages by respondents shows that majority (58.5%) indicated drinking it 3-5times a week followed by 27.5% once a week, 5.8% (only on weekends), 2.6% (on special occasions) while 5.6% indicted taking it every day. The results from the respondents indicated 72.9% and 80.2% prepared local beverages in Ekiti and Ondo states respectively while 27.1% and 19.8% did not do so. The results from the respondents also indicated that Zobodrink,Soyamilk and Kunu were the top three local beverages that were being prepared domestically by 61.1%, 12.9% and 9.6% of respondents in Ekiti state and 55.2%, 29.1% and 23.3% in Ondo state respectively.

Table 1: Awareness and Importance of Local Beverages to the Tourists

	Eco-Destinations		
Variables	**Ikogosi Warm Springs (Ekiti State)**	**Idanre Hills (Ondo State)**	**Total**
Awareness of production and sales of local beverages			
Yes	170 (100)	172 (100)	342 (100)
Local Beverages found around the destinations			
Kunu drink	61 (35.9)	77 (44.8)	138 (40.4)
Zobo drink	57 (33.2)	53 (30.8)	110 (32.2)
Soyamilk	50 (29.4)	56 (32.6)	106 (31.0)
Tiger nut drink	55 (32.4)	25 (14.5)	80 (23.4)
Date drink	40 (23.5)	45 (26.2)	85 (24.9)
Coconut drink	29 (17.1)	50 (29.1)	79 (23.1)
Pineapple	40 (23.5)	46 (26.7)	86 (25.1)
Purchase of Local Beverages			
No	56 (32.9)	48 (27.9)	104 (30.4)
Yes	114 (67.1)	124 (72.1)	238 (69.6)
Opinion on the importance of local beverages			
Very important	145 (85.3)	151 (87.8)	296 (86.5)
Not so important	25 (14.7)	21 (12.2)	46 (13.5)
Frequency of drinking local beverages			
every day	8 (4.7)	11 (6.4)	19 (5.6)
3-5 times a week	98 (57.6)	102 (59.3)	200 (58.5)
once a week	47 (27.6)	47 (27.3)	94 (27.5)
only on weekends	12 (7.1)	8 (4.7)	20 (5.8)

on special occasions	5 (2.9)	4 (2.3)	9 (2.6)
Domestic Preparation of Beverages			
No	46 (27.1)	34 (19.8)	80 (23.4)
Yes	124 (72.9)	138(80.2)	262 (76.6)
Local Beverages prepared locally by tourists			
Soyamilk	44 (12.9)	50 (29.1)	94 (27.5)
Zobo	104 (61.1)	95 (55.2)	199 (58.2)
Tigernut	33 (9.6)	20 (11.6)	53 (15.5)
Coconut	11(3.2)	33 (19.2)	44 (12.9)
Kunu	33 (9.6)	40 (23.3)	73 (21.3)

Tourists' Acceptability of Local Beverages in the Selected Ecotourism Destinations

Tourists' preference and acceptability of predominant local beverages in the study locations are presented as follow:

ZOBO DRINK

The results show that 56.7% of the respondents liked Zobo very much due to its colour while 31.6% liked it moderately and 7.0% slightly liked it. On the average, respondents moderately liked Zobo drink due to its Colour as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 6.36. In terms of Taste, 44.4% liked it very much, 48.5% liked it moderately and 2.3% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 6.30 revealed that on the average, they liked it moderately. For its Texture, 40.6% liked it very much, 11.7% liked it moderately and 2.3% slightly liked it. On the average, they slightly liked the drink due to its texture as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 5.48. In terms of flavour, 63.7% liked it very much, 33.9% liked it moderately while 2.3% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 6.61 showed that on the average, respondents liked Zobo drink moderately due to its flavour. On the overall, they moderately liked Zobo drink as indicated by the grand mean response score of 6.19. The results are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Acceptability of Local Beverages (Zobo drink)

Parameters	**7**	**6**	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**	**Rm**
Color	194(56.7)	108(31.6)	24(7.0)	8(2.3)	-	8(2.3)		6.36	0.99	**6**
Taste	152(44.4)	166(48.5)	8(2.3)	8(2.3)	8(2.3)	-		6.30	0.83	**6**
Texture	139(40.6)	40(11.7)	8(2.3)	155(45.3)	-	-		5.48	1.41	**5**
Flavour	216(63.7)	116(33.9)	8(2.3)		-	-		6.61	0.53	**7**
Overall Acceptability								6.19	0.15	**6**

Key: 7 = I like it very much, **6** = I like it moderately, **5** = I like it slightly, **4** = I neither like nor dislike it, **3** = I dislike it slightly, **2** = I dislike it moderately, **1** = I dislike it very much, Rm = Remark

KUNU DRINK

The results show that 38.3% of the respondents liked Kunu very much due to its colour while 55.8% liked it moderately and 3.5% slightly liked it. On the average, respondents moderately liked Kunu drink due to its Colour as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 6.30. In terms of Taste, 16.1% liked it very much, 32.7% liked it moderately and 8.2% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 5.22 revealed that on the average, they slightly liked it. For its Texture, 59.1% liked it very much, 35.1% liked it moderately and 5.8% slightly liked it. On the average, they liked the drink very much due to its texture as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 6.53. In terms of flavour, 85.1% liked it very much, 4.4% liked it moderately while 10.5% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 6.75 showed that on the average, respondents liked Kunu drink very much due to its flavour. On the overall, they moderately liked Kunu drink as indicated by the grand mean response score of 6.20. The results are presented in table 3.

Table 3: Acceptability of Local Beverages (Kunu drink)

Parameters	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Std.Dev	Rm
Color	131(38.3)	191(55.8)	12(3.5)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	6.30	0.65	**6**
Taste	55(16.1)	112(32.7)	28(8.2)	147(43.0)	-	-	-	5.22	1.16	**5**
Texture	202(59.1)	120(35.1)	20(5.8)	-	-	-	-	6.53	0.61	**7**
Flavor	291(85.1)	15(4.4)	36(10.5)	-	-	-	-	6.75	0.63	**7**
Overall Acceptability								6.20	0.97	**6**

Key: 7 = I like it very much, **6** = I like it moderately, **5** = I like it slightly, **4** = I neither like nor dislike it, **3** = I dislike it slightly, **2** = I dislike it moderately, **1** = I dislike it very much, Rm = Remark

COCONUT DRINK

The results show that 37.1% of the respondents liked Coconut very much due to its colour while 10.5% liked it moderately and 50.0% slightly liked it. On the average, respondents moderately liked Coconut drink due to its Colour as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 5.83. In terms of Taste, 10.2% liked it very much, 53.3% liked it moderately and 33.9% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 5.72 revealed that on the average, they moderately liked it. For its Texture, 7.9% liked it very much, 82.7% liked it moderately and 7.0% slightly liked it. On the average, they liked the drink moderately due to its texture as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 5.96. In terms of flavour, 7.9% liked it very much, 37.4% liked it moderately while 52.3% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 5.51 showed that on the average, respondents liked Coconut drink moderately due to its flavour. On the overall, they moderately liked Coconut drink as indicated by the grand mean response score of 5.76. The results are presented in table 4.

Table 4: Acceptability of Local Beverages (Coconut drink)

Parameters	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Std. Dev	Rm
Colour	127(37.1)	36(10.5)	171(50.0)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	5.83	0.97	**6**
Taste	35(10.2)	183(53.3)	116(33.9)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	5.72	0.68	**6**
Texture	27(7.9)	283(82.7)	24(7.0)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	5.96	0.49	**6**
Flavour	27(7.9)	128(37.4)	179(52.3)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	5.51	0.68	**6**
Overall Acceptability								5.76	0.73	**6**

Key: 7 = I like it very much, **6** = I like it moderately, **5** = I like it slightly, **4** = I neither like nor dislike it, **3** = I dislike it slightly, **2** = I dislike it moderately, **1** = I dislike it very much, Rm = Remark

TIGERNUT DRINK

The results show that 41.8% of the respondents liked Tiger nut very much due to its colour while 50.0% liked it moderately and 5.8% slightly liked it. On the average, respondents moderately liked Tiger nut drink due to its Colour as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 6.31. In terms of Taste, 37.1% liked it very much, 9.4% liked it moderately and 51.2% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 5.81 revealed that on the average, they moderately liked it. For its Texture, 57.9% liked it very much, 33.9% liked it moderately and 5.8% slightly liked it. On the average, they liked the drink moderately due to its texture as indicated by the estimated mean response score of 6.47. In terms of flavour, 84.8% liked it very much, 4.7% liked it moderately while 8.2% slightly liked it. The estimated mean response score of 6.72 showed that on the average, respondents liked Tiger nut drink very much due to its flavour. On the overall, they moderately liked Tiger nut drink as indicated by the grand mean response score of 6.33. The results are presented in table 5.

Table 5: Acceptability of Local Beverages (Tigernut drink)

Parameters	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Std. Dev	Rm
Color	143(41.8)	171(50.0)	20(5.8)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	6.31	0.69	**6**
Taste	127(37.1)	32(9.4)	175(51.2)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	5.81	0.97	**6**
Texture	198(57.9)	116(33.9)	20(5.8)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	6.47	0.71	**6**
Flavor	290(84.8)	16(4.7)	28(8.2)	8(2.3)	-	-	-	6.72	0.71	**7**
Overall Acceptability								6.33	0.67	**6**

Key: 7 = I like it very much, **6** = I like it moderately, **5** = I like it slightly, **4** = I neither like nor dislike it, **3** = I dislike it slightly, **2** = I dislike it moderately, **1** = I dislike it very much, Rm = Remark

Tourists' Perception on Consumption of Local Beverages

The result of analysis carried out on tourists' perception on consumption of local beverages in the selected eco-tourism destinations (Table 6) is presented in this section. The result shows that respondents strongly agreed that "Locally produced beverages may contribute to sustainable development ", Locally produced beverages may contribute to environmental sustainability", "Locally produced beverages support agricultural diversification", "Locally produced beverages enhance visitors' experiences", " Locally produced beverages promote local culture", "Overall local beverages are safe and healthy to drink", "I frequently consume locally produced beverages" , "Locally/naturally produced beverages are better than carbonated drinks", and ' Local beverages have medicinal values" as established by the weighted mean score of 4.91, 4.58, 4.68, 4.72, 4.57, 4.75, 4.56, and 4.50 respectively.

The result further shows that the respondents agreed that "Locally produced beverages may contribute to poverty alleviation", "Locally produced beverages contribute to sustainable tourism"," Locally produced beverages serve as tourist attraction", "Locally produced beverages shape the image of the destination", "Locally produced beverages increase revenue retention to the local community", "Locally produced beverages increase level of local community involvement in tourism", "Fear of illness deterred me from taking local beverages", and " I do use some local/natural spices to prepare local drink at home" as reflected by the estimated weighted mean response score of 4.35, 4.34, 4.28, 4.14, 4.34, 4.13, 3.91 respectively. They however disagreed that "they do not like consuming locally produced beverages" with the weighted mean response score of 1.97.

Table 6: Tourists' Perception on Consumption of Local Beverages

S/N	Variables	S A	A	U	D	S D	Mean	Std. Dev	Rm
1	Locally produced beverages may contribute to sustainable development	318 (93.0)	16 (4.7)	8 (2.3)			4.91	0.36	SA
2	Locally produced beverages may contribute to poverty alleviation	127 (37.1)	211 (61.7)		4 (1.2)		4.35	0.55	A
3	Locally produced beverages may contribute to environmental sustainability	279 (81.6)	23 (6.7)	8 (2.3)	24 (7.0)	8 (2.3)	4.58	0.99	SA
4	Locally produced beverages contribute to sustainable tourism	155 (45.3)	171 (50.0)		8(2.3)	8(2.3)	4.34	0.80	A
5	Locally produced beverages serve as tourist attraction	151 (44.2)	167 (48.8)	8 (2.3)		16 (4.7)	4.28	0.90	A
6	Locally produced beverages shape the image of the destination	63 (18.4)	263 (76.9)	16 (4.7)			4.14	0.46	A
7	Locally produced beverages support agricultural diversification	271 (79.2)	39 (11.4)	24 (7.0)	8(2.3)		4.68	0.71	SA
8	Locally produced beverages enhance visitors' experiences	287 (83.9)	23 (6.7)	24 (7.0)	8(2.3)		4.72	0.69	SA
9	Locally produced beverages promote local culture	194 (56.7)	148 (43.3)				4.57	0.50	SA
10	Locally produced beverages increase revenue retention to the local community	131 (38.3)	195 (57.0)	16 (4.7)			4.34	0.56	A
11	Locally produced beverages increase level of local community involvement in	60 (17.5)	274 (80.1)		8 (2.3)		4.13	0.50	A

	tourism								
12	Overall local beverages are safe and healthy to drink	318 (93.0)	24 (7.0)				4.93	0.26	SA
13	Fear of illness deterred me from taking local beverages	100 (29.2)	190 (55.6)	16 (4.7)		36 (10.5	3.93	1.13	A
14	I frequently consume locally produced beverages	274 (80.0)	60 (17.5)		8 (2.3)		4.75	0.57	SA
15	I do use some local/natural spices to prepare local drink at home	36 (10.5)	274 (80.1)	12 (3.5)	4 (1.2)	16 (4.7)	3.91	0.78	A
16	Locally/naturally produced beverages are better than carbonated drinks	206 (60.2)	128 (37.4)		8 (2.3)		4.56	0.62	SA
17	Local beverages have medicinal values	194 (56.7)	140 (40.9)			8(2.3)	4.50	0.73	SA
18	I do not like consuming locally produced beverages	64 (18.7)	8 (2.3)	8 (2.3)	35 (10.2)	227 (66.4)	1.97	1.57	D

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Unsure, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

Hypothesis 1: Tourists' socio-demographic characteristics have no effect on the acceptability of local beverages in the study area

The Chi-square tests carried out to determine if there is a significant relationship between certain tourists' socio-demographic characteristics and acceptability of local beverages (Zobo, Kunu, Coconut drink and Tigernut drink) in the selected eco-tourism destination is displayed in Table 7. The results show that age, gender, occupation, income and religion showed highly significant relationship with the acceptability of local beverages in the study areas. The relationship is significant at 1% level ($p<0.01$). Marital status however only displayed significant relationship with Kunu and Tigernut drinks at 1% but exhibited non-significant relationship with Zobo and Coconut drinks event at the conventional 5% probability level. Worthy of note is the fact that educational status did not show significant relationship with none of the four selected local beverages.

Table 7: The Result of Chi-square Test

Parameters	Chi-square (value)	Df	p-value
Age and Zobo	134.743[a]	3	0.000*
Age and Kunu	142.173[a]	2	0.000*
Age and Coconut	21.794[a]	3	0.000*
Age and Tigernut	161.984[a]	3	0.000*
Gender and Zobo	32.037[a]	3	0.000*
Gender and Kunu	24.577[a]	2	0.000*
Gender and Coconut	27.238[a]	3	0.000*
Gender and Tigernut	30.124[a]	3	0.000*
Marital_Status and Zobo	2.466[a]	3	0.481
Marital_Status and Kunu	11.625[a]	2	0.003*
Marital_Status and Coconut	6.031[a]	3	0.110
Marital_Status and Tigernut	18.484[a]	3	0.000*
Education and Zobo	7.586[a]	6	0.270
Education and Kunu	5.767[a]	4	0.217
Education and Coconut	10.152[a]	6	0.118
Education and Tigernut	9.833[a]	6	0.132
Occupation and Zobo	163.096[a]	9	0.000*
Occupation and Kunu	206.632[a]	6	0.000*

Occupation and Coconut	39.588[a]	9	0.000*
Occupation and Tigernut	159.415[a]	9	0.000*
Monthly_Income and Zobo	108.873[a]	9	0.000*
Monthly_income and Kunu	21.606[a]	6	0.001*
Monthly_income and Coconut	154.417[a]	9	0.000*
Monthly_income and Tigernut	58.824[a]	9	0.000*
Religion and Zobo	45.177[a]	6	0.000*
Religion and Kunu	39.798[a]	4	0.000*
Religion and Coconut	68.673[a]	6	0.000*
Religion and Tigernut	41.363[a]	6	0.000*

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the tourists' acceptability of different local beverages in the study area.

The results in Table 8 and 9 show that there is significant difference in the acceptability of local beverages in the study area as reflected by the F-statistics of 31.605 which is statistically significant at 1%. The Post-Hoc test carried out shows that Kunu, Tigernut and Zobo drinks had significantly higher level of acceptance among the tourists when compared to Coconut drink.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Acceptability of Local Drinks	**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F-Statistics**	**p-value**
Between Groups	35.965	3	11.988	31.605	0.000
Within Groups	517.392	1364	0.379		
Total	553.357	1367			

Table 9: Results of Post-Hoc Test

Variables	**N**	**Subset for alpha = 0.05**	
		1	2
Coconut drink	342	5.962	
Zobo drink	342		6.3129
Tigernut drink	342		6.3129
Kunu drink	342		6.3713
Sig.		1	0.244

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 342.000.

Discussions of Findings

The socio-demographic characteristics of the tourists show that majority of them were within the age bracket for the youths and younger adults which suggests that the younger adults are more likely to visit eco-tourism destinations than the older adults. This may be attributed to their strong quest for adventures. Worthy of note is the fact that all the tourists that participated in the study are Nigeria nationals. This may be attributed to the prevailing outbreak of COVID 19 pandemics which imposed travelling restrictions around the world hence foreigners could not travel for tourism. Furthermore, the study established it that majority of the tourists were students who were also singles and had secondary school certificate as at the time of the data collections. It could therefore be inferred from these findings that most of the tourists were students from higher institution of learning who visited the destinations primarily for academic purposes. It is however possible that some of them might have visited the destinations for leisure and recreational

purposes. It was also found out in the study that people of different religion background visit the destinations. This is a good factor for the potential benefits of eco-destinations to the stakeholders in the tourism sector.

It is interesting to note that all the tourists that participated in this study indicated that they were aware of the local beverages in the study areas. This finding corroborated the remark made by Platania*et al* (2018) that there are numerous beverages and local ones in particular which give the body a good water balance and medicinal benefits. For so many decades, local beverages have been used by humans in order to get vitality, longevity and have a good flow of digestion (Pushpangadan*et al*., 2012). Stubbs and Whybrow (2004) stated that drinks form part of the culture of human society and that types of beverages consumed affect the composition of modern diet. It was also discovered that Zobo drink, Tigernut drink and Kunu, Date and Soyamilk were the most popular local beverages identified by the tourists. Worthy of note also is the fact that majority of the tourists indicated that they purchased these local beverages; an indication that they enjoyed patronages from the tourists. This is expected to boost the economy of the community people who are into the production and the sales of these beverages. The findings in the present study concurred with that of Ogundari (2013) that beverages are very important and tied to the socio-economic lives of many people. A good number of families rely on home-made beverages and sell them in the streets to provide an additional source of income.

It was also found out in the present study that majority of the tourists attached high value to these beverages as they considered them very important as some of them took it 3-5 times in a week. The study also found out that majority of them prepared one or more of these beverages domestically. These findings further show that these local beverages have gained popularity among tourists. Common local beverages prepared by the tourists domestically in the other of popularity include Zobo, Soyamilk, Kunu and Tigernut drinks. There are many factors that could have contributed to the popularity and consumption of these local beverages among the tourists. Some of these may be attributed to the medicinal, nutritional and refreshing attributes. According to Platania*et al* (2018), there are various local beverages with different benefits ranging from maintenance of body metabolism to proper digestion in the body.

Pofahl*et al* (2005) stated that some non-alcoholic beverages are rich in essential amino acids, minerals and vitamins, and are therefore commonly supplied in many programmes targeting nutritional enhancement of households. Fruit and vegetable based juices are important contributors of vitamin C (foliate), minerals (potassium, magnesium) and dietary fibre (European Food Safety Authority, 2006). It was gathered by World Cancer Research Fund, (2007) that increased consumption of these non-alcoholic beverages is recommended as parts of a balanced diet as well as to lower the risk of some chronic diseases.

For Kunu drink, over the years, people of different ages have enjoyed the refreshing taste of kunu (Ikpoh*et al*, 2013). This taste is admired not only by the resource poor populace but also the well to do. It is cheap since it is produced from local sourced materials which are readily available (Elmahmood and Doughari, 2007). Consequently, the drink serves as alternative to carbonated drinks in social gatherings and during religious festivities (Ayo, 2004). In addition, Adejuyitan (2013) revealed that Kunu is more nutritious when compared to carbonated drinks. Ikpoh*et al*, (2013) maintained that it is also taken as remedy by alcoholic addict.

With respects to acceptability of these local beverages vis-à-vis their organoleptic properties. The study established that all the listed properties i.e. colour, taste, texture, and flavour scored very high as majority of the tourists indicated liking them moderately to liking them very much. This finding further shows the high preference and acceptability enjoyed by these local beverages among the tourists.

On the perception of the tourists with respect to the consumption of local beverages, the study established that all of them have good perception towards it. This is reflected in their views that locally produced beverages may contribute to sustainable development and environmental sustainability, support agricultural diversification, enhance visitors' experiences, promote local culture. Furthermore, they held the opinion that local beverages are safe and healthy to drink, and that they are better than carbonated drinks and have medicinal values. They also opined that locally produced beverages may contribute to poverty alleviation, contribute to sustainable tourism, serve as tourist attraction, shape the image of the destination, increase revenue retention to the local community and also increase level of local community involvement in tourism.

The study also established significant relationship between socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, occupation, monthly income and religion, and the acceptability of local beveragesas established by the results of chi-square test ($p < 5\%$). These findings agreed with that of Abdulahi and Yakubu (2013) who reported that gender and location significantly affected the respective consumption of juice and soda in a study carried out to determine the role played by socioeconomic characteristics in driving consumption of some selected non-alcoholic beverages (NABs) particularly juice and carbonated soda in Sokoto metropolis of Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that there is a high level of awareness among the tourists regarding the availability and importance of the selected local beverages and the local drinks are widely accepted by the tourists that participated in the study. The tourists had good and positive perception towards the consumption of the selected local beverages and the socio-economic characteristics that influence the consumption of local beverages by the tourists include age, occupation, income and religion. In order to further exploit the socio-economic potentials of the selected beverages, the study recommends amongst others that the unemployed people especially those in the community where the tourism sites are located should take up the job opportunities offered by the production and marketing of these local drinks for economic gains and that the management of tourism destinations in Nigeria should adopt them to form part of the services provided to the tourists in order to promote the consumption of these drinks,.

REFERENCES

Abdullahi, M.K. andYakubu, A.A. (2013): Determinants of Non Alcoholic Beverages (NAB) Consumption in North-Western Nigeria: A study of Sokoto Metropolis. *Nigerian Journal of Basic and Applied Science (December, 2013),*

21(4): 273-281

Adedokun, I.I., Okorie, S. U and Batu, B (2014).Evaluation of Proximate, Fiber Qualities and Consumer Acceptability of Bambaranut –Tigernut – Coconut Milk Beverage Blends.*International Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences. 3(5) 430-437.*

Adejuyitan, J.A., Adelakun O.E, Olaniyan S.A and Popoola F.I, (2008): Evaluating the. Quality characteristics of kunu produced by dry-milled sorghum.*African Journal of Biotechnology, 7(13): 22442247.*

Akujobi.I.C, Obicheozo.G and. Nwokorie C. U (2018). Nutrient Composition, Phytochemical and Sensory Properties of Zobo (Hibiscus Sabdariffa) Drinks Substituted With Pineapple (AnanasComosus) And Orange (Citrus Sinensis) JUICES. *Journal of Agriculture and Food Sciences 16(2)1- 13*

Atebol (2018).Food and Drink. An online article, accessed at https://www.achievingintourism. cymru/home/main-menu/do-well-in-developing-uk-tourist-destinations/ac-4-1/resources/food-and-drink/

Ayo, J.A., Umianze, H. and Gaffa, T. (2004): Microbiological evaluation of "kununzaki" and''zoborodo" drink (beverage) locally produced and sold in a polytechnic community in Nigeria. *Niger Food J 22: 119126.*

Belewu. M A, Muhammed-Lawal, A., Abdulsalam, K., Belewu, K.Y, and Belewu N.O (2014). Date-Coconut Drink: Physico-Chemical and Sensory Qualities. Daffodil *International University Journal of Science and Technology vol 9 (2): 1-6*

Caby, R. and Boesse, J. (2001). Pan-African Nappe system in south west Nigeria: the Ife-Ileshaschist belt, *Journal of African Earth Sciences*, 33: 211 - 225.

Ekanem, J.O., Daniel, U.J., Akpan, B.C and Akpan, E.A. (2018). Microbiological assessment and proximate composition of sorrel (Zobo) drinks sold in IkotEkpene metropolis, AkwaIbom State, Nigeria. *Journal of Research in Forestry, Wildlife & Environment10 (4):92-99*

Elmahmood, A.M and Doughari, J.H. (2007): Microbial quality assessment of Kunuzakibevereages sold in griei town of Adamawa State, Nigeria. *African Journal of food Science, pp: 011-015.*

European Food Safety Authority [EFSA]. (2006): The setting of nutrient profiles for foods electrolytes. In: Kaplan LA, Pesce AJ, Kazmierczak SC (Eds.), Clinical chemistry: theory, analysis, correlation. Mosby, Inc, Missouri, USA, pp. 452-453.

European Food Safety Authority [EFSA] (2010). Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies Scientific opinion on dietary reference values for water. *EFSA Journal.Vol8:1459.*

Ezekiel, T., Solomon, L., Oforibika, A.G. and Daminabo, V. (2016).Nutritional, Sensory and Bacteriological Quality of Two Varieties of Locally Prepared Zobo (Hibiscus sabdariffa) Drink. *World Rural Observations 8(3):99-104*

Hassan. A, and Emifoniye. E.U(2018). Evaluation of Mineral Element and Sugar Contents of Soft Drinks in Nigeria.*J. Appl. Sci. Environ. Manage. 22 (11) 1769–1775*

Ikudayisi, A., Adeyemo, F. and Adeyemo, J. (2015). Chemical and Hydro-Geologic Analysis of Ikogosi Warm Spring Water in Nigeria.*International Journal of Environmental, Chemical,Ecological, Geological and Geophysical Engineering, 9 (9): 1126-1130.*

Ikpoh, I.S., Lennox, J. A., Ekpo, I.A., Agbo, B. E., Henshaw E. E. and Udoekong, N.S. (2013): Microbial Quality Assessment of Kunu Beverage Locally Prepared and Hawked In Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Glob. J. Biodivers. Sci. Manag., 3(1): 58-61.*

*Mohammed, S. S., Olajide, .J.E, Omale, .J.A, Abbah, O.C and Ejembi, D.O (2018).*Proximate composition, mineral and some vitamin contents of tigernut (Cyperusesculentus). Research Article - Clinical Investigation 8(4)

Olaniyi, O.E. And Atalor, N.O (2018). Land Use/Land Cover Dynamics Around Ecotourism Attractions And Support Facilities In Ikogosi Warm Spring Resorts, Nigeria**.***Journal of Forestry Research and Management. 15(1).196-220; ISSN 0189-8418*

Ogundari.K (2013). A Note on Socio-Economic Characteristics and Demand for Beverages in Nigeria. Does Income matter? Economic Analysis and Policy, Vol 43 (3): 293-301

Platania, A., Castiglione, D., Sinatra, D., Urso, M.D and Marina M.M (2018).Fluid Intake and Beverage Consumption Description and Their Association with Dietary Vitamins and Antioxidant Compounds in Italian Adults from the Mediterranean Healthy Eating, Aging and Lifestyles (MEAL) Study.*Antioxidants (Basel).Vol: 7(4): 56. doi: 10.3390/antiox7040056*

Pieroni, A., Fontefrancesco, M. F., Vandebroek, I., eds. (2021). Traditional Food Knowledge: New Wine Into Old Wineskins? Lausanne: Frontiers Media SA. doi: 10.3389/978-2-88971-831-3

Pushpangadan, P., Dan,V.M., Ijinu, T.P and George, V (2012). Food, Nutrition and Beverage. *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge, Vol. 11(1), pp.26-34*

Stubbs R. J and Whybrow, S. (2004). Energy density, diet composition and palatability: influences on overall food energy intake in humans. *A Review, Vol: 81(5):755-64.*PMID: 15234181, DOI: 10.1016/j.physbeh.2004.04.027

Wikipedia (2022). Drink. An online article, available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drink