



Hospitality Services Delivery, Perceived Price and Value Fairness and Its Influence on Ecotourism Sustainability in Southwestern, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The provision of basic needs of man are key requirements for a successful tourism experience. The concept of tourism which involves the movement of people from their usual places of residence to destinations can be challenging in the absence of adequate products and services. The tourism industry is competitive as more destinations are striving to put their names on the world map in the business of tourism. This study examines the impact of hospitality service delivery, perceived price and value fairness on ecotourism sustainability in Southwestern Nigeria, specifically highlighting tourist revisit intention as a catalyst for economic sustainability. Data were obtained from 900 visitors using a survey methodology at six ecotourism areas in Southwestern Nigeria. A structured questionnaire was used primarily for obtaining primary data from targeted respondents. Hospitality service quality, perceived price fairness, perceived value fairness, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intentions were measured using adapted items that were obtained from existing and validated scales that were used in previous studies in tourism and hospitality management. Results indicate substantial disparities in service quality, tourist satisfaction, and price-value equity across the studied destinations ($p < 0.01$). A substantial positive correlation was identified between service quality and visitors' intentions to revisit ($p < 0.01$), with the aspects of service quality accounting for 52% of the variance in revisit intentions. This research is useful in the fields of hospitality and tourism management research. It will be helpful for Destination Management Organizations (DMOs). This research extensively explored the intricate relationship between the performance of hospitality services, the perceived pricing and fairness of value, and the effect on the sustainability of ecotourism in Southwestern Nigeria. The results show conclusively that the quality of services plays a crucial role in the satisfaction of tourists, which in turn affects their willingness to revisit the destinations.

Keywords: *Ecotourism, hospitality, price and value fairness, sustainability, tourists*

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INTRODUCTION

The global tourism industry is characterized by a very competitive environment, whereby destinations that offer well-established service and amenities continue to enjoy a unique competitive advantage in attracting and retaining tourists (Boluwaji, 2025). This competitive environment has, in turn, given rise to a corresponding increase in strategic

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destination management, whereby destinations worldwide continue to strive to carve their names on the world tourism map (Morrison, 2013). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), about 300 million people worldwide are employed directly or indirectly by the tourism industry, which accounts for roughly 10% of the global GDP. This is a key factor in the push for economic development, particularly in developing nations, since it generates much-needed foreign exchange profits, supports local entrepreneurship, and promotes infrastructure advancements (World Bank, 2021). Both directly and indirectly, tourism contributes significantly to national economies. The business contributes over \$9 trillion to the global economy and sustains 319 million employments, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (2023). The performance of tourism business worldwide in 2023 witnessed 1.3 billion arrivals reaching 89% of pre-pandemic levels with a notable comeback in foreign travels. Additionally, the global tourism receipt reached USD 1.5 trillion, almost equal pre-pandemic totals (UNWTO, 2024). However, it is noteworthy that, even as destinations continue to evolve, so too has the modern-day tourist, who is increasingly becoming discerning, such that, in addition to quality and value for money, tourists are demanding unique, authentic, and, more pertinently, sustainable experiences (Rasoolimanesh, Ramakrishna, Hall, Esfandiar, & Seyfi, 2023). Modern-day travel decisions are influenced by a multitude of factors, including a perceived relationship that exists between price and quality, a green and sustainable footprint, collaborative consumption, and authentic and culturally resonant service experiences (Font & McCabe, 2017; Serra-Cantalops, Cardona, & Salvi, 2024). However, the crux of this process is the destination mix, the sum of the various tourist attractions, facilities such as hotels and restaurants, transportation systems, infrastructure, and hospitality resources that constitute the physical and non-physical heart of the tourist experience (Boluwaji, Adetola, & Oladeji, 2023; Morrison, 2013). The prevalence of customer-centric approaches in the management of tourism operations serves to reiterate the importance of realizing the direct impact of service and price perceptions on tourist conduct and, in turn, the destination experience (Hinson et al., 2024). Notwithstanding the intangible nature of service, an impressive academic framework has long been in existence for its thorough assessment. Service quality has generally been defined as an in-depth assessment of the level at which a service is being performed, which in most instances is measured by the gap between customer expectations and their corresponding perceptions (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988).

The commercial success of a destination is often gauged by its capacity to attract an influx of tourists, which in itself includes both new and repeat visitors, with particular emphasis on those who intend to revisit (Boluwaji, 2025). Tourism activities are incomplete without an inbuilt component of hospitality products and services, which serve as crucial pull factors for assessing tourist destinations (Boluwaji et al., 2023). The tourism industry is very competitive, and places with better-established tourist services and amenities have a distinct edge (Boluwaji, 2025). A significant evidence base exists that demonstrates the importance of satisfying the tourist experience in that dissatisfied tourists are unlikely to re-visit the destination and thus establish the primacy of satisfaction in the development of tourist loyalty and re-visit intentions, which are critical for long-term sustainability (Jani & Han, 2011; Uddin, Hassan, Ghosh, Sardar, & Alim, 2026).

In view of this fact that hospitality products and services represent an integral part of tourism activities, it is vital to comprehend how such perceived quality and related pricing influences tourist loyalty. Nonetheless, there is a notable gap in literature regarding how such basic drivers of tourist behavior operate as vital antecedents to the overarching and more intricate objective of sustainability. Sustainability is often conceptualized at a macro-level as a multifaceted construct that incorporates environmental sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability, and economic sustainability. In practice, and especially within the context of emerging economies, the economic dimension of sustainability is inevitably associated with the capacity to facilitate repeat patronage and secure long-term revenue flows (Streimikiene, Svagzdiene, Jasinskas, & Simanavicius, 2021). It is within this context that this study is positioned. This study does not aim to directly operationalized the full and multidimensional concept of sustainability.

It does aim to operationalized the critical antecedents of economic sustainability by exploring the role of hospitality service quality, price fairness perceptions, and value fairness perceptions in shaping tourist satisfaction. It is worth noting that the focus on satisfaction is deliberate because it is the most proximate and strongest antecedent of revisit intention, which is an important behavioral indicator of a destination's ability to attract and maintain a loyal customer base and hence ensure economic sustainability (Boluwaji & Adetola, 2026). In the context of the Nigerian tourism sector, where the development of tourism infrastructure is in its nascent stages and the battle for tourist patronage is becoming more and more intense, the importance of micro-foundational antecedents such as the ones explored in the study cannot be overstated. A destination may have lofty ambitions and claims of sustainability; however, without a

firm grasp of the micro-foundational antecedents of hospitality service quality and pricing strategies that drive customer satisfaction and loyalty, such ambitions may remain unfulfilled.

Therefore, this study shifts the focus of the discussion on sustainability from the conceptual realm to the empirical realm in terms of the enabling conditions. In doing so, it offers some interesting and useful insights into the ways in which the economic sustainability of the destination can be promoted through the mechanisms of service delivery and price and value fairness. This is significant because the road to sustainability is not simply paved with green initiatives and socio-cultural undertakings but is, in fact, built on the foundations of the relentless pursuit of excellence in the hospitality experience that creates satisfaction and fosters loyalty among the customers. In other words, through the examination of the factors that drive tourist loyalty, this study sheds some light on the basic economic imperative that forms the foundation of the superstructure of comprehensive sustainability. Thus, this study provides relevant data to enhance and facilitate future planning and management of hospitality services at the ecotourism destinations in South West Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the difference in the quality of services rendered, tourists' satisfaction, and price and value fairness between the destinations.
2. To determine the relationship between service quality and tourists' revisit intentions.

Research Problem/Novel Contribution

The commercial success of a destination is often gauged by its capacity to attract an influx of tourists, which in itself includes both new and repeat tourists, with particular emphasis on those who intend to revisit. Tourism activities are incomplete without an inbuilt component of hospitality products and services, which serve as crucial pull factors for assessing tourist destinations. The impact of hospitality can be seen in the 4As of tourism components: Attraction, Amenities, Accessibility and Ancillary services. This study assessed the influence of hospitality services, perceived price and value fairness in enhancing ecotourism sustainability in southwestern Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Service Quality

Service quality remains a cornerstone in fostering positive customer experiences and loyalty. Service quality is a strategy that boosts the organization's efficiency, competitiveness, and flexibility. It is a strategy to satisfy each visitor (Abdullah & Abdul Rahman, 2015). According to Damit, Harun, Martin, Othman, and Ahmad (2019), the key to maintaining a competitive advantage is to deliver high-quality services that satisfy customer. The difference between predicted and actual service levels indicates the rank of service quality (Prabhu, Thangasamy, & Nawzad Abdullah, 2020). Anwar and Qadir (2017) affirm that service quality may be defined as evaluating how well a service meets customer expectations. Service quality is the difference between what guests expect and what they receive. According to (Abdullah & Abdul Rahman, 2015) perceived service quality is the service evaluation across episodes compared to an implicit or explicit standard. In the hotel or hospitality industry, service quality focuses on meeting the customer's needs. The level of service quality considers the customer's assessment of the creature's overall perfection and superiority (Abdullah, 2019). (Chan et al., 2022) affirm that service quality significantly and positively affect satisfaction which impact on influence revisit intentions. As theorized by Qiao, Song, Prideaux, and Huang (2023), the concept of service quality represents the common impression of a customer regarding the strengths and weaknesses of a service. In order to attain sustainable development in the tourism sector, it is crucial to concentrate on improving service quality to boost customer happiness and loyalty, which can result in favorable social, economic, and environmental results. By encouraging genuine experiences, protecting natural and cultural resources, and giving local populations chances to profit from tourism, sustainable tourism policies can also improve service quality and destination loyalty (Hussain et al., 2023). Tourists' satisfaction levels and their decision to return are strongly influenced by the quality of service, which includes personal attention, hospitality services, and the destination's overall perceived worth (Boluwaji & Adetola, 2026). Furthermore, technological advancements such as contactless services and digital check-ins have transformed service delivery, demanding continuous improvements in quality to meet evolving customer expectations (Prum, Sovang, & Bunteng, 2024).

Dimensions of SERVQUAL Model

Based on feedback from focus groups, a general instrument called SERVQUAL was created to assess service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The foundation of SERVQUAL is the idea that service quality may be calculated as the difference between what consumers perceive as performance and what they receive. Before rating the performance, they received from a particular firm, respondents assess their expectations of service from an exceptional organization. In the SERVQUAL model, the difference between customer perception and expectation is used to measure service quality, with more excellent service quality producing a minor difference. There are five dimensions of service quality in the SERVQUAL model as stated by (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021).

Observable physical components. Physical appearance, personnel, equipment, and communication tools. Berndt and Brink (2004), defines this dimension as the materials, equipment, and facilities that must reflect well on the organization. The capacity to accurately and consistently deliver the promised services. This element covers the commitments that must be kept about cost, delivery, and complaint resolution. Some businesses tend to oversell their offerings, leading them to make “fabulous” promises that misrepresent their true potential. The businesses must deliver the same service they advertise to the customer and express their promise to do so within the time range they specify in their advertising. The quality the consumer perceives will improve if service delivery is done correctly (Berndt & Brink, 2004).

The drive to assist customers quickly. This element promotes upbeat service perspectives and calls for personnel to address client inquiries and concerns. According to Dale, Van Der Wiele, and Van Iwaarden (2013), responsiveness is the constant readiness to help consumers and offer timely service. This dimension emphasizes being alert and ready to handle client requests, inquiries, and rapid complaint responses. The ability of staff to promptly address guests’ questions, concerns, and complaints will optimize service quality and increase visitor happiness. The staff’s alertness, civility, and ability to inspire trust and confidence. Customer perception of the actual performance compared to their expectations is a key factor in determining whether a service is considered high or low quality. Customer service and quality assurance are related because poor customer service results in consumer disappointment or dissatisfaction. Providing the best or ensuring quality results in increased customer retention. Service providers show their customers care and particular attention. It is the degree to which customized care is provided. Businesses might need help to go above and beyond what customers want.

Perceived Price and Value Fairness

The concept of perceived price and value fairness plays a pivotal role in shaping tourists’ attitudes and behaviours within ecotourism contexts. Price fairness is commonly understood as the degree to which tourists believe that the price they pay reflects the quality or value of services received (Malik, Gangwani, & Kaur, 2022). Price fairness is defined as consumers’ perception that pricing is justifiable relative to service quality and value received (Xia, Monroe, & Cox, 2004). In the ecotourism context, perceived value includes not only tangible elements such as lodging and food but also intangible aspects such as environmental stewardship, cultural authenticity, and ethical business practices (Chan et al., 2022). This was recently supported by research indicating that perceived price fairness acts as a mediator in the service quality-revisit intention relationship, implying that service quality alone may not be enough to ensure revisits to the destination if perceptions of price are negative (Xia et al., 2004). Service quality, price fairness, and perceived value are key determinants in ensuring satisfaction with the destination, with these variables being increasingly emphasized by scholars like (Duong et al., 2022) and (Rady, Abdelaziz, & Touni, 2023), in ensuring the long-term viability of ecotourism destinations.

However, high prices, even if they are intended to finance sustainability, might be perceived as exclusive, especially for local or low-income tourists. This can lead to equity issues, undermining social sustainability in ecotourism development (Mowforth & Munt, 2016). The link between service provision, pricing, and value fairness in relation to ecotourism sustainability is complex. Ecotourism sustainability is generally defined in terms of three components: environmental integrity, economic viability, and socio-cultural well-being. Quality hospitality services with ecotourism values can increase environmental consciousness among tourists and lead to environmentally friendly actions (Chan & Saikim, 2022).

The Integration of Hospitality Service Quality, Perceived Price and Value Fairness, and Ecotourism Sustainability
The relationship between hospitality service quality, perceived price, and value fairness, and ecotourism sustainability is a complex issue that demands a comprehensive understanding of a number of interrelated components. Service

quality in the hospitality industry is increasingly being related to sustainability, given that organizations in this sector are realizing that it is crucial to ensure that service quality is aligned with sustainability in order for organizations to be successful in the long term (Oliveras-Villanueva, Llach, & Perramon, 2020). The concept of ecotourism, which is a type of tourism that is focused on sustainability, is increasingly being embraced as a concept that integrates service quality, price, and value fairness. By embracing a circular economy, sustainability in the tourism sector is likely to be improved, thus creating a situation where service quality is aligned to ecotourism sustainability (Rady et al., 2023). Additionally, good tourism practices such as energy and water conservation, reduction of waste, and engagement with local communities are necessary for ensuring balanced growth with nature conservation (Raveendran, 2024). These not only enhance service quality but also ensure fairness in perceived value by promoting sustainability, which is now being appreciated by customers. The move towards green tourism and hospitality services also underlines the need for incorporating green practices such as reduction in carbon footprint and engaging with local communities, which is essential for ensuring service quality and fairness in perceived value (Daneshwar & Revaty, 2024).

Conceptual Framework

The term “hospitality services” or “tourism” has been defined in a variety of ways. The hospitality business is essential to the success of the tourism sector, which involves the relocation of residents to new locations for the purposes of leisure, sightseeing, and rest. Hospitality businesses fulfill some of humanity’s most fundamental requirements by providing things like food, drink, and lodging. The primary goals of this sector are to provide travelers with food and drink and a place to sleep while they are away from home. The preceding is what led to the development of the model used in this investigation. The colors used in the model also conveyed messages.

According to (Cerrato, 2012), blue is the most universally favored color of all. It relates to trust, honesty and dependability, therefore helping to build customer loyalty. Blue indicates confidence, reliability and responsibility. It relates to one-to-one communication rather than mass communication. Yellow is the color of sunshine. It’s associated with joy, happiness, intellect, and energy. Green is the color of nature. It symbolizes growth, harmony, freshness, and fertility. The independent variables were indicated with blue which signifies reliability, responsiveness and helps to build tourists loyalty. Tourists’ satisfaction was indicated with color yellow which is an indication of joy and happiness. Lastly, presenting the dependent variables (revisit intentions representing economy sustainability) in green color is an indication of growth. Figure 1 is a conceptualized model showing how providing hospitality services at the locations might boost tourism.

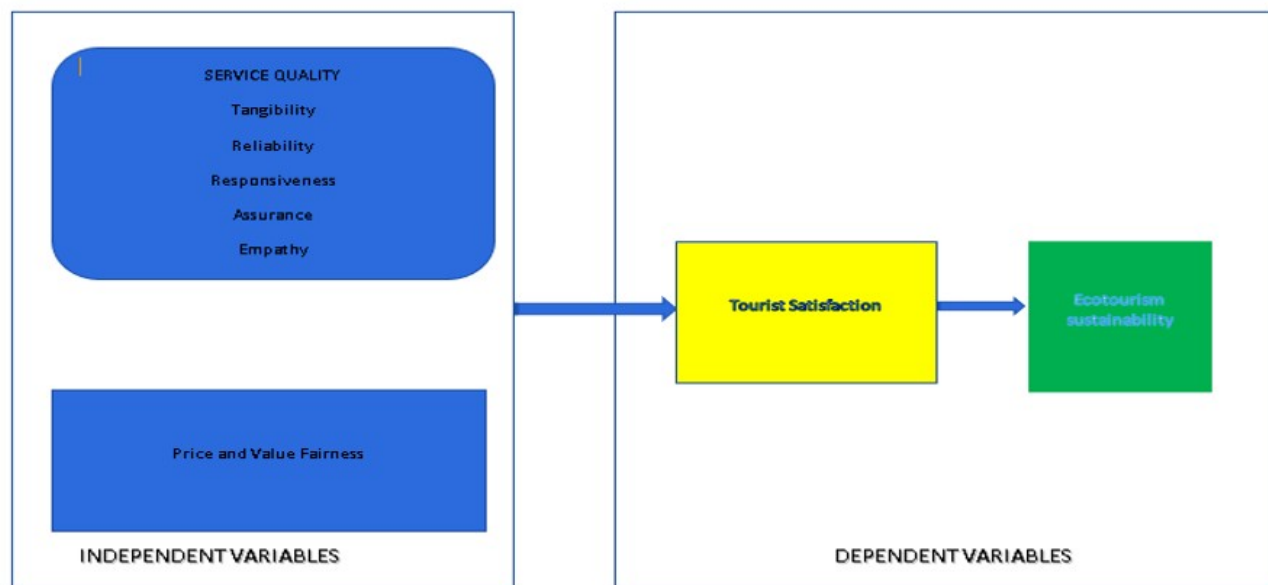


Figure 1 *The Conceptual Framework*
Source: Author's Concept, 2021.

The study formulated and tested the following hypotheses:

- There is no significant difference in the quality of services rendered, tourists' satisfaction, and price and value fairness between the destinations.
- There is no significant relationship between service quality and tourists revisit intentions.

METHODOLOGY

A survey research design was adopted for this study. This methodological approach was considered appropriate given the study's aim to examine the influence of hospitality service quality, perceived price fairness, and value fairness on tourist satisfaction and revisit intention within ecotourism destinations. The survey design is particularly well-suited for studies seeking to capture the attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral intentions of individuals across a geographically dispersed population, as it allows for the systematic collection of standardized data from a large sample (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Moreover, the survey design allows for the quantification of intangible factors like service quality, fairness, and satisfaction that can be subject to statistical analysis and testing of relationships between variables (Hair Jr, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of this research design, in which data is collected at a single time point, offers a basis for comparative analysis since it surveys perceptions across a range of destinations.

Data collection activities were conducted using a structured questionnaire that primarily formed the basis for obtaining primary data from the targeted respondents. A structured questionnaire was used primarily for obtaining primary data from targeted respondents. Hospitality service quality, perceived price fairness, perceived value fairness, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intentions were measured using adapted items that were obtained from existing and validated scales that were used in previous studies in tourism and hospitality management (Parasuraman et al., 1988). A structured questionnaire is used primarily to ensure that consistency is maintained in terms of obtaining primary data from targeted respondents. This is because using a structured questionnaire ensures that interviewer bias is avoided in the data collection process (De Vaus, 2013). Before administering the questionnaires to targeted respondents, a pilot study involving a few tourists was conducted.

The research was carried out in the southwest region of Nigeria, which is a geopolitical zone in Nigeria known for its rich cultural heritage, diversity in natural attractions, and tourism potential. The southwest region is predominantly inhabited by the Yoruba ethnic group, who are one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria with a rich cultural heritage. The Yoruba ethnic group has a long history in Nigeria, with trade, urbanization, and cultural heritage being inextricably linked (Boluwaji et al., 2023). The southwest region has an economy based on agriculture, with crops such as cocoa, cassava, yams, and palm products being major cash crops. In recent times, however, the southwest region has become one of the major hubs for commerce, industry, and tourism. The southwest region comprises six states: Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti. Each of these states has its own unique tourist attractions, ranging from resources found in the sea to monuments and natural resources.

One ecotourist destination was purposively selected in each of the six states in the southwest region, making a total of six study sites. These ecotourist destinations include Agodi Gardens in Ibadan, Oyo State; Idanre Hills in Idanre, Ondo State; Ikogosi Warm Spring in Ikogosi Ekiti, Ekiti State; Lekki Conservation Centre in Lagos State; Olumirin Waterfalls in Erin Ijesha, Osun State; and Olumo Rock in Abeokuta, Ogun State. These ecotourist destinations were selected based on two major criteria. First, the towns and cities where the selected ecotourist destinations are located were classified as urban areas, thereby ensuring that the selected ecotourist destinations were located in areas characterized by the presence of established infrastructure and a high concentration of hospitality and tourism services.

Second, the ecotourist destinations were selected on the basis of their popularity and recognition as the most visited tourism sites in their respective states. This purposive sampling approach was considered appropriate in order to ensure that the research would focus on destinations with sufficient tourist footfall for the collection of sufficient data and would also be relevant for the context of high-traffic ecotourism destinations in the region (Patton, 2015). In addition, the selection of multiple destinations in six different states has helped in incorporating some level of diversity in terms of the different categories of ecotourism destinations that are represented in the selected places of interest. The selected destinations include different categories of places of interest such as urban recreational parks like Agodi Gardens, natural heritage sites like Idanre Hills and Olumirin Waterfalls, unique geological formations like Ikogosi Warm Spring, nature conservation sites like Lekki Conservation Centre, and cultural-historical sites like Olumo Rock.

For every selected destination, a systematic sampling method was used to collect the samples. Tourists who were 18

years old and above and had completed at least a significant portion of their trip were considered eligible for the study. The number of samples was determined by the recommendations for structural equation modeling and multivariate analysis, which suggest that the minimum number of samples should be at least 200 to 400 samples, depending on the complexity of the structural equation modeling and the number of parameters to be estimated (Hair Jr et al., 2010; Kline, 1998). However, to ensure that the samples collected would be sufficient in case of non-response or incomplete responses, an oversampling technique was used, where 150 samples were distributed for every destination, making the total number of samples 900 for the six different destinations.

The process of data collection took three months, which enabled the researchers to account for seasonal fluctuations in the number of tourists visiting the destinations. Additionally, research assistants were deployed at strategic points in the destinations, including entrance/exit points, resting areas, and tourist centers, to approach potential respondents. Once the respondents gave their consent, the researchers gave the questionnaires to the respondents to answer by themselves or asked the respondents to answer the questionnaires if they needed assistance due to literacy barriers or time constraints. The use of both modes of administration enabled the researchers to achieve the highest response rate by considering the various demographics of the respondents (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). Ethical considerations were adhered to at all stages of the research. Ethical clearance was obtained from the relevant research ethics committee before conducting the study. The study was purely voluntary, with participants being made aware that the information they provided would be kept confidential and anonymous. No personal details were collected, with the information being stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. Participants were also made aware of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage.

After the completion of the data collection, the questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency. Then the collected data was coded, entered into a software package for statistical analysis, and analyzed by descriptive and inferential analysis. Inferential analysis was used to examine the hypothesized relationship between hospitality service quality, perceived price fairness, perceived value fairness, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention by applying structural equation modeling techniques. The level of statistical significance was set at the conventional 0.05 level.

Reliability of Data

As presented in Table 1, the internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. The values ranged from 0.826 to 0.902. These exceeds the minimum recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Specifically, the dimensions of service quality recorded high reliability coefficients: tangibility ($\alpha = 0.872$), responsiveness ($\alpha = 0.891$), reliability ($\alpha = 0.865$), assurance ($\alpha = 0.883$), and empathy ($\alpha = 0.857$). Likewise, perceived price fairness ($\alpha = 0.834$), perceived value fairness ($\alpha = 0.826$), tourist satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.902$), and revisit intention ($\alpha = 0.879$) all demonstrated strong internal consistency. The results indicates that the items of the questionnaire measured their respective latent constructs showing reliability for subsequent statistical analyses.

Table 1 *RELIABILITY ANALYSIS OF MEASUREMENT CONSTRUCTS*

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Tangibility	4	0.872	Excellent
Responsiveness	4	0.891	Excellent
Reliability	4	0.865	Excellent
Assurance	4	0.883	Excellent
Empathy	4	0.857	Excellent
Perceived Price Fairness	3	0.834	Good
Perceived Value Fairness	3	0.826	Good
Tourist Satisfaction	5	0.902	Excellent
Revisit Intention	4	0.879	Excellent

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Validity of Data

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) To the evaluate the validity of the research instrument, EFA was conducted. The suitability of the research data for factor analysis was confirmed by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The KMO value of 0.912 exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.60 as proposed by Kaiser (1974), indicating excellent sampling adequacy. Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 4,876.32$, $df = 378$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor extraction. Five factors with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted, jointly explaining 77.68% of the total variance. Factor 1 (service quality) accounted for 25.36% of the variance, followed by tourist satisfaction (15.69%), price fairness (14.41%), value fairness (11.57%), and revisit intention (10.65%). The cumulative variance explained exceeds the commonly accepted benchmark of 60%, indicating that the extracted factors adequately represent the underlying data structure. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 *EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS*

Factor	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained (%)	Cumulative Variance (%)
Service Quality	6.847	25.36	25.36
Tourist Satisfaction	4.236	15.69	41.05
Price Fairness	3.891	14.41	55.46
Value Fairness	3.124	11.57	67.03
Revisit Intention	2.876	10.65	77.68

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) The results of EFA indicates that the proposed measurement model fits the observed data properly. The chi-square divided by degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) was 2.34, which falls below the recommended threshold of 3.0. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.948) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI = 0.941) both exceeded the acceptable criterion of 0.90, demonstrating excellent incremental model fit. Similarly, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.056) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR = 0.048) were below the recommended cutoff value of 0.08, indicating low approximation and residual errors. The Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI = 0.923) and Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI = 0.915) also exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.90. These fit statistics confirm that the hypothesized measurement model provides an adequate representation of the observed data and supports the construct validity of the measurement scales. Overall, the reliability and validity analyses demonstrate that the measurement instrument possesses excellent internal consistency, strong construct validity, and satisfactory model fit. These findings indicate that the scales are appropriate for testing the proposed structural relationships among service quality, perceived fairness, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention.

Table 3 *CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS*

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Threshold	Interpretation
χ^2/df	2.34	< 3.00	Good Fit
CFI	0.948	> 0.90	Good Fit
TLI	0.941	> 0.90	Good Fit
RMSEA	0.056	< 0.08	Good Fit
SRMR	0.048	< 0.08	Good Fit
GFI	0.923	> 0.90	Good Fit
AGFI	0.915	> 0.90	Good Fit

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Descriptive Analysis

Description of the survey variables is captured in the descriptive statistics shown in Table 4. Generally, it can be noted that the findings show positive responses of tourists towards the study variables such as service quality, perception of fairness, satisfaction, and intention to revisit. The mean value ranges from 3.69 to 4.01 on a five-point Likert scale, indicating moderate to high level of agreement among the tourists on the questions measuring the constructs. Amongst the variables studied, tourist satisfaction recorded the highest mean value ($\bar{x} = 4.01$, $SD = 0.84$). This indicated that tourists experienced satisfaction with regards to their visit to the ecotourism destinations. This is followed by the variable assurance ($\bar{x} = 3.95$, $SD = 0.87$) and revisit intention ($\bar{x} = 3.94$, $SD = 0.86$), implying that tourists had confidence in the knowledge, competence, and courtesy of service providers and demonstrated a strong willingness to revisit the destinations. In regard to the dimensions of SERVQUAL, there was a relatively high mean for the responsiveness aspect ($\bar{x} = 3.92$, $SD = 0.89$). This is an indication that the respondents felt that the employees were ready to offer services to the customers at all times. There was also a relatively favorable mean score for tangibility ($\bar{x} = 3.87$, $SD = 0.92$). This is an indication that the respondents had a positive perception on the facilities, equipment, and appearance of the personnel. The reliability aspect registered a mean of 3.78 ($SD = 0.95$). This is an indication that tourists viewed the services being offered with accuracy and reliability. On fairness perceptions, perceived value fairness had an average rating of 3.85 ($SD = 0.88$) while the perception of price fairness received an average of 3.82 ($SD = 0.91$). These findings show that the tourists perceived the prices being asked for to be fair and that the value that was derived was equal to the cost paid. The standard deviation that ranges between 0.84 to 0.98 shows low variability in the perceptions of the respondents. There is therefore no indication of any conflict in responses to the constructs.

In addition, skewness and kurtosis statistics were used to describe the distribution of the data. Skewness statistics showed a negative skew ranging between -0.38 to -0.56. This indicates that responses tended to be concentrated towards the high end of the scale. This is an indication of a positive evaluation of the constructs. In addition, the kurtosis statistics showed that the distribution of the data was platykurtic since the statistics range from -0.31 to -0.12. This is an indication of a flat distribution. All skewness statistics have been found to range within ± 1.0 while kurtosis ranges within ± 2.0 . This shows that the data do not significantly deviate from normality. Therefore, the normality assumption is met and as such parametric tests can be employed including correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and structural equation modeling. The results of descriptive statistics show that respondents exhibited positive perception about service quality dimensions, perceived fairness, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intentions. The high mean scores, low variability in scores, and normality indices show that the data is appropriate for further inferential analysis to establish relationships between the variables under investigation.

Table 4 *DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PEARSON CORRELATIONS*

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Tangibility	3.87	0.92	-0.45	-0.23
Responsiveness	3.92	0.89	-0.52	-0.18
Reliability	3.78	0.95	-0.38	-0.31
Assurance	3.95	0.87	-0.48	-0.15
Empathy	3.69	0.98	-0.41	-0.27
Perceived Price Fairness	3.82	0.91	-0.43	-0.21
Perceived Value Fairness	3.85	0.88	-0.46	-0.19
Tourist Satisfaction	4.01	0.84	-0.56	-0.12
Revisit Intention	3.94	0.86	-0.50	-0.14

Mean scores range from 3.69 to 4.01 on a 5-point Likert scale, indicating moderate to high levels of agreement across all constructs. Skewness and kurtosis values fall within acceptable ranges (± 1.0 and ± 2.0 , respectively), suggesting that the data approximate a normal distribution.

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Interpretation of Pearson Correlation Matrix

Pearson correlation was used in order to determine the strength and nature of the relationships between the study variables prior to the testing of the hypotheses. According to the obtained results, all correlations have been found to be positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level ($p < 0.01$) which means that an increase in one construct is linked to the increase in the other constructs. Concerning the SERVQUAL constructs, the correlations turned out to be moderate. Positive correlation between responsiveness and reliability ($r = 0.436$, $p < 0.01$) was found to be the highest relationship in terms of service quality constructs. The next strong relationships were those between responsiveness and assurance ($r = 0.428$, $p < 0.01$), tangibility and responsiveness ($r = 0.412$, $p < 0.01$), and tangibility and assurance ($r = 0.401$, $p < 0.01$).

Fairness constructs have been found to have significant positive relationships with the SERVQUAL constructs. The perceived price fairness construct has been found to have positive significant correlations with all the service quality constructs with correlation coefficients varying from $r = 0.254$ with empathy to $r = 0.312$ with assurance (all $p < 0.01$). Similarly, perceived value fairness construct has also been found to be positively related with all the service quality constructs with correlation coefficients ranging from $r = 0.267$ (Empathy) to $r = 0.324$ (Assurance) (all $p < 0.01$). This suggests that those tourists who received high service quality have perceived price and the value received as fair. There is a stronger relationship between perceived price fairness and perceived value fairness constructs with $r = 0.456$ ($p < 0.01$). Though these two constructs are distinct in nature, these constructs have a close relation with each other. The tourists who have perceived that prices are fair have also perceived that they have received good value for their money.

In connection with tourist satisfaction, there were found statistically significant positive correlations among all dimensions of SERVQUAL. The highest positive correlation was found between assurance and tourist satisfaction ($r = 0.467$, $p < 0.01$), followed by responsiveness ($r = 0.456$, $p < 0.01$), reliability ($r = 0.438$, $p < 0.01$), tangibility ($r = 0.423$, $p < 0.01$) and empathy ($r = 0.398$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, perceived price fairness ($r = 0.389$, $p < 0.01$) and perceived value fairness ($r = 0.412$, $p < 0.01$) positively correlated with tourists' satisfaction level as well. It can be concluded that service quality and fairness perceptions affect positively on tourists' satisfaction. Concerning revisit intention, all SERVQUAL dimensions and fairness variables positively correlated with the dependent variable. The highest correlation was found between responsiveness and revisit intention ($r = 0.462$, $p < 0.01$) and, at the same time, followed closely by the relationship between reliability ($r = 0.456$, $p < 0.01$), assurance ($r = 0.438$, $p < 0.01$) and tangibility ($r = 0.421$, $p < 0.01$). Moreover, empathy ($r = 0.392$, $p < 0.01$) and perceived price fairness ($r = 0.367$, $p < 0.01$) were also positively.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Following validation of the measurement model, the proposed structural model was tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The model demonstrated acceptable fit to the data, permitting a meaningful assessment of the hypothesized structural relationships; standardized path coefficients and hypothesis-testing outcomes are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 *PEARSON CORRELATION MATRIX*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Tangibility	1.000								
2. Responsiveness	0.412**	1.000							
3. Reliability	0.389**	0.436**	1.000						
4. Assurance	0.401**	0.428**	0.397**	1.000					
5. Empathy	0.356**	0.392**	0.365**	0.384**	1.000				
6. Price Fairness	0.287**	0.301**	0.276**	0.312**	0.254**	1.000			
7. Value Fairness	0.298**	0.315**	0.289**	0.324**	0.267**	0.456**	1.000		
8. Tourist Satisfaction	0.423**	0.456**	0.438**	0.467**	0.398**	0.389**	0.412**	1.000	
9. Revisit Intention	0.421**	0.462**	0.456**	0.438**	0.392**	0.367**			1.000

Regression Analysis and R^2 Values

A multiple regression analysis was done to determine how the quality of service affects the tourists' intention to revisit. The regression model as a whole is significant, $F = 87.34$, $p < .001$, accounting for 53.0% of the variance in revisit intention ($R = .728$, $R^2 = .530$, Adjusted $R^2 = .524$). This means that the quality of services collectively has a strong and significant effect on the intention of the tourists to revisit the destinations.

Table 6 *MODEL SUMMARY (SERVICE QUALITY $\rightarrow$ REVISIT INTENTION)*

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std. Error of Estimate	F-Change	Sig. F-Change
1	0.728	0.530	0.524	0.624	87.34	0.000**

The model explains 52.4% (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.524$) of the variance in revisit intention, indicating a strong predictive power of service quality dimensions on tourists' intentions to revisit.

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression was carried out to test the effects of all five SERVQUAL dimensions on tourists' revisit intention. It was found out that tangibility ($\beta = .103$, $t = 2.940$, $p = .003$), responsiveness ($\beta = .189$, $t = 2.381$, $p = .018$), reliability ($\beta = .318$, $t = 4.928$, $p < .001$), and assurance ($\beta = .104$, $t = 2.033$, $p = .043$) significantly predict tourists' revisit intention in a positive way. Reliability predicts revisit intention the best among these four variables which means that reliability of service delivery plays the role of the key determinant of tourists' intentions to come back again. Nevertheless, empathy ($\beta = .031$, $t = 0.401$, $p = .689$) does not significantly predict revisit intention. This is contained in Table 7.

Table 7 *FULL REGRESSION MODEL (ALL PREDICTORS)*

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized β	Std. Error	Standardized β	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	3.504	0.575		6.091	0.000**
Tangibility	0.087	0.030	0.103	2.940	0.003**
Responsiveness	0.167	0.070	0.189	2.381	0.018*
Reliability	0.289	0.059	0.318	4.928	0.000**
Assurance	0.089	0.044	0.104	2.033	0.043*
Empathy	0.026	0.065	0.031	0.401	0.689

*Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$*

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Hypothesis 1: There is no Significant Difference in the Quality of Services Rendered, Tourists' Satisfaction, and Price and Value Fairness Between the Destinations.

Findings in table 8 show that there is significant difference in quality of services rendered at the destinations in terms of tangibility ($p < 0.01$), responsiveness ($p < 0.01$), reliability ($p < 0.01$), assurance ($p < 0.01$), and empathy ($p < 0.01$). In addition, there is significant difference in tourists' satisfaction at the destinations ($p < 0.01$), and also price and value fairness ($p < 0.01$).

Table 8 *TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE QUALITY OF SERVICES RENDERED, TOURISTS' SATISFACTION AND PRICE AND VALUE FAIRNESS AT THE DESTINATIONS.*

Variables	F	Sig.
Quality of services rendered		
Tangibility	9.79	0.00
Responsiveness	14.58	0.00
Reliability	10.19	0.00

Table 8 *TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE QUALITY OF SERVICES RENDERED, TOURISTS' SATISFACTION AND PRICE AND VALUE FAIRNESS AT THE DESTINATIONS. (CONTINUED)*

Variables	F	Sig.
Assurance	17.57	0.00
Empathy	14.90	0.00
Tourist satisfaction	15.41	0.00
Price and value fairness	7.49	0.00

***P<0.01*

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Hypothesis 2: There is no Significant Relationship Between Service Quality and Tourists Revisit Intentions.

Regression analysis shows that there is significant relationship between service quality and tourists' revisit intentions ($p < 0.01$). It indicates that 52% of the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.52$), tangibility ($\beta = 0.10$, $t = 2.94$), responsiveness ($\beta = 0.19$, $t = 2.38$), reliability ($\beta = 0.32$, $t = 4.93$), assurance ($\beta = 0.10$, $t = 2.03$), and empathy ($\beta = 0.03$, $t = 0.40$) have significant relationships with tourists' revisit intentions. This is contained in Table 9.

Table 9 *RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE QUALITY AND TOURISTS REVISIT INTENTIONS*

Independent Variables	β	t	Decision
Tangibility	0.10	2.94**	Significant
Responsiveness	0.19	2.38*	Significant
Reliability	0.32	4.93**	Significant
Assurance	0.10	2.03*	Significant
Empathy	0.03	0.40*	Significant
Constant	3.50	6.09**	Significant
R = 0.73			
$R^2 = 0.53$			
Adj. $R^2 = 0.52$			

**p<0.05 **p<0.01*

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The findings on the quality of services rendered and tourists' satisfaction across the selected ecotourism destinations revealed that tourists were generally satisfied with the services received. This suggests that the destinations were able to provide service experiences that met or exceeded visitors' expectations, thereby enhancing their overall satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the study of [Omar, Ariffin, and Ahmad \(2016\)](#), who reported that customers expressed satisfaction with the levels of tangibility, assurance, and empathy provided by Arabic restaurants. The similarity

between the present study and previous findings reinforces the argument that high-quality service delivery remains a critical determinant of customer satisfaction irrespective of the tourism or hospitality setting.

The study further revealed that tourists perceived the prices charged for services at the selected destinations as fair and commensurate with the value received. Most respondents indicated that the services provided justified the prices paid, reflecting positive perceptions of both price fairness and value fairness. This finding implies that tourists evaluated not only the monetary cost of the services but also the quality of the experiences obtained in relation to the amount spent. The result corroborates the findings of [Piyawan \(2017\)](#), who reported that customers of Doi Chaang Caffè in Thailand considered the prices charged to be reasonable and appropriate, resulting in higher customer satisfaction. Similarly, [Ratasuk and Gajesanand \(2020\)](#) found that perceived price fairness significantly influenced customers' repurchase intentions in gas service stations in Bangkok. These findings suggest that when tourists perceive prices as equitable and reflective of service quality, they are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward the destination.

The findings on tourists' revisit intentions demonstrated that satisfied tourists were more willing to revisit the selected destinations. This underscores the strategic importance of delivering high-quality services in fostering destination loyalty and encouraging repeat visitation. Tourist satisfaction serves as a crucial antecedent of behavioral intentions, particularly revisit intention, which is essential for the long-term sustainability of tourism destinations. The present finding agrees with [Chan et al. \(2022\)](#), who investigated the relationships among service quality, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention at an ecotourism destination in Sarawak. Their study established that service quality had a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction, which subsequently enhanced revisit intentions. Likewise, [\(Anabila, Ameyibor, Allan, & Alomenu, 2022\)](#), in their study of Ghana's hotel industry, reported that service quality significantly influenced customer satisfaction and customer delight, both of which contributed to customer loyalty. Collectively, these studies support the notion that superior service quality enhances tourists' perceptions of value, strengthens satisfaction, and increases their likelihood of returning to the destination.

The first hypothesis examined whether significant differences existed in service quality, tourist satisfaction, and perceived price and value fairness among the selected ecotourism destinations. The findings confirmed that significant differences existed across the destinations, indicating variations in tourists' evaluations of the services and experiences provided. This suggests that some destinations performed better than others in meeting tourists' expectations regarding service delivery and perceived value. The finding is consistent with [Ali, Alam, and Bilal \(2021\)](#), who reported that service quality, pricing, and the physical environment significantly influenced customer satisfaction and loyalty within the restaurant industry. Similarly, [Nneoma and Uwabor \(2021\)](#) found significant relationships between the tangibility, reliability, and responsiveness dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. The observed differences among destinations may therefore be attributed to disparities in service management practices, infrastructure quality, staff competence, and destination-specific attractions.

The second hypothesis established that service quality significantly influenced tourists' revisit intentions. This finding highlights service quality as a critical determinant of destination loyalty and repeat patronage. Tourists who perceive service delivery as reliable, responsive, empathetic, assuring, and supported by quality physical facilities are more likely to return to the destination in the future. The finding supports the study of [Hussain et al. \(2023\)](#), who employed Structural Equation Modeling to examine the effects of tourism satisfaction and service quality on destination loyalty among resort hotel visitors in China. Their findings demonstrated that tourist satisfaction directly influenced destination loyalty and that service quality played a fundamental role in enhancing satisfaction. Furthermore, the authors argued that sustainable tourism development depends largely on the consistent provision of high-quality services capable of increasing customer satisfaction, fostering loyalty, and generating positive economic, social, and environmental outcomes. The present study therefore confirms that improving service quality should remain a strategic priority for managers of ecotourism destinations seeking to encourage repeat visitation and sustain their competitive advantage.

CONCLUSION

This research extensively explored the intricate relationship between the performance of hospitality services, the perceived pricing and fairness of value, and their joint effect on the sustainability of ecotourism in Southwestern Nigeria. The results show conclusively that the quality of services plays a crucial role in the satisfaction of tourists, which in turn affects their willingness to revisit the sites. The tourists expressed their satisfaction with the services rendered to them at most sites, which is in line with the studies stressing the importance of the quality of services in building

customer loyalty. Perceptions of price fairness in ecotourism sites have a significant impact on tourists' long-term behavioural intentions as well as their current experience.

The significant differences in the quality of services and perceived fairness across the various sites underscore the need for customized interventions. The strong positive correlation between service quality and the intention to revisit further emphasizes the importance of a superior visitor experience as the basis for repeated patronage and hence the sustainability of ecotourism enterprises. The current research provides a robust basis for ecotourism stakeholders in Nigeria to understand the importance of investing in quality services and fair pricing as the basis for sustainability.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This research presents the following theoretical and practical implications to improve ecotourism sustainability in Southwestern Nigeria:

- Considering that there are notable differences in service quality among various tourist destinations, it is recommended that tourist boards and managers offer service quality training programs for all service personnel within a given hospitality industry. Emphasis should be given to all five aspects of service quality. In regions where certain tourist sites had relatively low average mean values, such as empathy in Agodi Gardens and Olumo Rock, and tangibility in Olumirin Waterfalls, service audits should be conducted to ensure that service is always of top-notch quality.
- Although overall perceptions of price and fairness of value were positive, perceptions of affordability of the service and whether it met expectations for money spent were not entirely positive. In terms of improving price transparency for ecotourism sites, it is important that they explain costs incurred and highlight the value that is being delivered, especially regarding how money is being used to support conservation and community development. Offering various price options to accommodate different budgets, as can be inferred from various comments made by visitors, could also improve fairness.
- In light of this, it is important to note that satisfaction among tourists is a crucial predictor of repeat behavior. Therefore, it is crucial for locations to seek feedback from tourists. This can be achieved by creating feedback systems that may be helpful in boosting satisfaction. Developing memorable and affirmative experiences is a crucial goal for all service providers.

LIMITATIONS AND STUDY FORWARD

The researcher was limited by financial and time constraints.

Suggestions for Further Studies

The researcher suggests further studies in the following areas: Assessment of satisfaction of the hospitality services employees at the destinations. Effective management of the waste generated by the hospitality outlets at the destinations. Research on hospitality services rendered ecotourism destinations in other regions. Factors that may also influence tourists' revisit intentions, such as the entrance fees, policies on corkage fees of the destinations and the availability of different modes of transportation, such as flights.

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