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Journal and scope

AJHTM is a peer-reviewed and open-access journal that seeks to;

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- promote scholarship and research collaboration among tourism and hospitality academics and professionals on the African continent and beyond.
- help bridge the gap between industry and academia by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas between the two entities.
- Provide an international forum for the discussion of a wide range of applied research relating to tourism and hospitality management in Africa.

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1 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY OF NEW JUABEN MUNICIPALITY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB SATISFACTION

Faisal Musah

Abstract

This study examines the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between HRM practices and organisational commitment in the hotel industry of Ghana. The study collected primary data from 21 hotels within the New Juaben North and South municipalities. The study population comprised 433 hotel employees within the municipalities. 208 respondents were sampled through a simple random sampling technique and structured questionnaires were administered to respondents. The study employed a quantitative approach and adopted the explanatory research design. The data gathered were analysed using Smart PLS-SEM 4. The findings indicate that the relationship between recruitment and organisational commitment is statistically insignificant. Furthermore, job satisfaction does not have a mediating effect on the relationship between recruitment and organisational commitment and training and organisational commitment among hotel employees. However, it is worth noting that the relationship between training and compensation on organization commitment is significant and job satisfaction has a mediation effect on the relationship between compensation and organisational commitment in the hotel industry of Ghana. The study concluded that merely attracting and selecting candidates through the recruitment process may not directly translate into higher levels of commitment within the hotel industry and recommends that management of hotels should utilize behavioural interviews that assess candidates not only for skills but also for their alignment with the hotel values and culture. This approach helps ensure that new hires are more likely to integrate well into the existing team and stay committed in the long term.

Keywords: compensation, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, recruitment, training

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are of paramount importance in the hotel industry, as they have a significant impact on both employee job satisfaction (JS) and organizational commitment (OC) (Anning-Dorson & Nyamekye, 2020). In Ghana, the hotel industry is a significant contributor to the country's economy (GSS, 2021), but it faces various challenges such as low customer service quality, high employee turnover rates, and low job satisfaction levels, all of which can adversely affect the overall performance of organizations

(Anning-Dorson & Nyamekye, 2020; Asimah, 2018; Nisar et al., 2021). To boost employee productivity, commitment, and job satisfaction, (Ashraf, 2020; Chong et al., 2020; Jawaad et al., 2019) indicated it is imperative to implement effective HRM practices. According to Otoo (2019), the competitive and dynamic nature of the hotel industry in Ghana necessitates a constant improvement in performance while reducing operational costs and HRM practices are instrumental in achieving this. They contribute to the generation of new knowledge, motivate employees, and enable hotels to maintain a



competitive edge. Effective HRM practices, including recruitment, training and compensation are indispensable for the success and growth of the hotel industry (Jawaad et al., 2019; Manzoor et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Otoo (2019) postulates that in the context of the Ghanaian hotel industry, training plays a pivotal role in ensuring that employees acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, and competencies to provide top-tier service. Ghana is known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse tourist attractions, training is crucial for instilling a deep understanding of the hotel industry, traditions, and hospitality values among employees (Cherif, 2020; Muma et al., 2014). Therefore, HRM practices are essential in the hotel industry, enhancing employee productivity, commitment, and JS. Through implementing effective HRM practices, hotels can maintain a competitive advantage in the global tourism market and contribute to economic development (Jawaad et al., 2019).

HRM practices are especially vital for attracting and retaining skilled employees (Nor et al., 2020). Jawaad et al. (2019) indicate that providing fair and competitive compensation is crucial for maintaining staff morale, JS, and guest satisfaction, all of which contribute to the success of organizations. HRM practices are multifaceted and can help hotels achieve both organizational and individual objectives (Hamadamin & Atan, 2019; Mahapatro, 2022). The social exchange theory (SET) and the person-environment (P-E) theory are crucial in understanding the dynamics of HRM practices, which directly impact employee JS and OC (Blau, 1968; Vleugels et al., 2023). The combination of social exchange theory and P-E theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding HRM practices, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction in the Ghanaian hotel industry (James, 2020).

Due to the constant change in the hotel environment, it is essential to examine how commitment to one's work develops among employees as highlighted by (van Rossenberg et al., 2018). Commitment is one of the bonds that employees can form at their place of employment (Storey & Wright, 2023). OC is the psychological attachment, loyalty, and dedication that employees feel towards their organisation (Farrukh et al., 2020). It reflects the extent to which employees identify with the goals, values, and mission of the hotel and are willing to invest their time, effort, and energy into contributing to its success. In the hotel industry, OC is crucial for creating a positive work environment, ensuring high levels of employee engagement, and delivering exceptional service to guests.

In light of these developments, the significance of OC as a subject of study continues to be significant in this study. In addition, the study of OC is particularly important in the context of the Ghanaian hotel industry, where there are currently thousands of hotels operating (Ampofo, 2021) and where faculty turnover intentions are extremely high (Coudounaris et al., 2020; Kingsley et al., 2019). To guarantee OC in Ghana, enhancing service quality through the use of prudent HRM practices has become an issue of utmost importance (Ahakwa et al., 2021).

Also, the relationship between HRM practices and OC is significantly influenced by JS (Jawaad et al., 2019). JS refers to individual positive or negative feelings about their job and is affected by various factors such as job characteristics, organisational culture, and social relationships (Mesfin et al., 2020). In the Ghanaian hotel industry, JS holds great importance and has an impact on different HRM practices (Ampofo, 2021). It serves as a motivation for employees to actively participate in



training programs, attracts high-quality candidates through positive word-of-mouth during recruitment, ensures fair rewards and increases overall employee satisfaction in compensation, creates a supportive work environment that encourages employee involvement, and contributes to commitment among hotel employees, ultimately leading to OC.

Additionally, HRM practices should prioritize challenging work assignments, recognize employee training, and provide opportunities for growth and autonomy in the hotel industry (Demir, 2020; Solnet et al., 2019). JS serves as a mediator between HRM practices that fulfil employees' needs and their subsequent commitment to the hotel (Aboramadan et al., 2020). By focusing on establishing a fair exchange relationship and providing training and compensation, hotels can enhance job satisfaction and ultimately increase organizational commitment among employees. The hotel industry in Ghana is a rapidly evolving sector, with HRM practices being crucial for creating an environment where employees feel valued, motivated, and committed to the hotel's goals and objectives (Ampofo, 2021; Otoo, 2019). This leads to a more engaged workforce, which in turn enhances organizational performance and success. The OC index, which measures HRM practices, confirms that strategic HRM should align with the hotel's strategies, and vice versa (Storey & Wright, 2023). JS, which refers to individual positive or negative feelings about their job, significantly influences the relationship between HRM practices and OC (Mesfin et al., 2020).

In the Ghanaian hotel industry, JS plays a significant role in HRM practices, motivating employees to actively participate in training programs, attracting high-quality candidates through positive word-of-mouth during recruitment, ensuring fair

rewards, increase overall employee satisfaction in compensation, create a supportive work environment, and contribute to commitment among hotel employees, ultimately leading to OC (Ampofo, 2021).

The hotel industry in Ghana has witnessed significant growth due to the rise in tourism and business activities (GSS, 2021). However, this growth has been accompanied by high employee turnover rates, which negatively impact organizational commitment (GTA, 2022). Effective HRM practices are crucial for attracting, developing, and retaining a skilled and motivated workforce. In particular, HRM practices related to recruitment, training, and compensation are vital for the industry's success. Recruitment software, for instance, offers a centralized solution that enables hotels to efficiently identify potential candidates, monitor their progress, and onboard qualified personnel, ensuring a better fit for the industry (Hight et al., 2019; Michael & Fotiadis, 2022; Otoo, 2019).

Despite these advancements, the Chartered Institute of Human Resource Management (2022) reports that HR managers in the Ghanaian hotel industry face challenges such as a lack of comprehensive training programs, low compensation, and the dynamic nature of the industry. Inadequate training leads to operational inefficiencies, guest dissatisfaction, and decreased employee organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Chehab et al., 2021). Moreover, low wages contribute to a shortage of skilled and committed workers, further exacerbating these issues (Michael & Fotiadis, 2022). The resulting dissatisfaction among employees disrupts workforce stability and leads to inconsistent service quality. Job satisfaction plays a critical mediating role between HRM practices and organizational commitment. When employees



experience dissatisfaction due to poor training, inadequate compensation, or ineffective recruitment, their commitment to the organization diminishes. Therefore, improving HR practices to enhance job satisfaction is essential for strengthening organizational commitment. While many HR practices influence organizational commitment, this study focuses on recruitment, training, and compensation because these areas are directly linked to the most pressing challenges in the Ghanaian hotel industry.

There is a pressing need for more empirical research to explore the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between HRM practices and organizational commitment (OC) within the Ghanaian hotel industry. While studies conducted in emerging economies like Pakistan, Thailand, and Ghana (Appaw-Agbola et al., 2021; Ashton, 2018; Coudounaris et al., 2020; Frempong et al., 2018; Jawaad et al., 2019; Otoo, 2019) have provided insights into factors influencing turnover intentions and organizational commitment in hotels, they have not specifically addressed the mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship.

Given that HRM practices in the hotel industry directly impact both OC and job satisfaction, it is essential to understand how job satisfaction mediates this relationship among hotel employees in Ghana. The study examines the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between HRM practices and organizational commitment in Ghana's hotel industry. It also analyses the influence of HRM practices on organizational commitment and the mediating role of job satisfaction in this relationship. The findings are intended to help hotel administrators and management improve HRM policies, strengthen the link between HR practices, employee commitment, and satisfaction, and assist the Ghana

Tourism Authority and the Ghana Hotels Association in formulating appropriate HR development policies. Additionally, the study contributes to existing literature and provides a foundation for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The Social Exchange theory (SET) and Person-Environment (P-E) theory offer complementary perspectives on employee behaviour and organizational commitment in this study. SET, developed by Homans (year) and further expanded by scholars like Blau and Emerson (year), explains social interactions as a series of exchanges where individuals weigh the costs and benefits of their actions (Blau, 1964). This theory posits that people engage in relationships expecting rewards in return for their efforts, leading to a "norm of reciprocity" (Sungu et al., 2019). In the context of the hotel industry, employees expect fair compensation and benefits in return for their work, which fosters a sense of commitment to the organization. When employers meet these expectations, a strong and committed relationship is formed.

However, SET also highlights the challenges in this dynamic, as not all exchanges are balanced, and predicting outcomes can be complex. For example, an employee might leave despite receiving benefits, or they might not be adequately rewarded for significant contributions. This theory is particularly useful for understanding how HRM practices, such as training and compensation, affect job satisfaction (JS) and organizational commitment (OC).

On the other hand, the P-E theory, which has contributions from researchers like Lewin and Holland as highlighted by (Ostroff, 2012), focuses on the



interaction between individuals and their environments. It emphasizes the importance of the fit between an employee's characteristics and their work environment. In the hotel industry, where cultural values and service excellence are crucial, Vleugels et al. (2023) postulate that a good fit between employees and their work environment is essential for job satisfaction and commitment.

P-E theory suggests that when employees perceive a strong alignment between their personal attributes and the hotel's culture, they are more likely to be satisfied and committed. This theory provides a framework for understanding how recruitment practices can influence this fit, thereby impacting job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Together, these theories offer a comprehensive approach to analyzing the relationship between HRM practices and organizational commitment. SET explains how training and compensation influence job satisfaction and commitment through the lens of exchange relationships, while P-E theory highlights the role of recruitment in achieving a good fit between employees and their work environment, which in turn affects job satisfaction and commitment. These theories are chosen for their relevance and applicability to the study's focus on HRM practices in the Ghanaian hotel industry.

Human Resource Management Practices

HRM practices as defined by (Froidevaux et al., 2020; Wujarso & Dameria, 2023) constitute a strategic approach to the management of human resources within an organization, with the primary goals of attracting, nurturing, motivating, and retaining employees. These practices encompass various activities, such as recruitment, selection, training, performance management, and

compensation. Their overarching aim is to build and maintain a high-performing workforce that contributes significantly to the organization's overall success Mahapatro (2022). In the specific context of the hotel industry, HRM practices should centre on the evaluation, enhancement, and cultivation of the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of the human resources involved (Pham et al., 2020).

Recruitment assumes a pivotal role within the realm of HRM. Pham et al. (2020) indicated that it is instrumental in ensuring that an organization assembles a workforce comprising individuals possessing the requisite skills, qualifications, and attributes to accomplish its objectives and align with its strategic goals. Effective recruitment strategies should encompass the attraction of a diverse pool of well-qualified candidates through a multitude of channels, including job advertisements, social media, recruitment agencies, career fairs, and employee referrals (Karim et al., 2021; Vardarlier & Zafer, 2020). Johansson and Herranen (2019) emphasize the critical nature of aligning recruitment endeavours with the broader strategic goals of the organization. Recruitment strategies should take into account long-term workforce planning, thus guaranteeing that the competencies and talents brought into the organization directly contribute to its competitive advantage and growth (Johansson & Herranen, 2019; Van Esch & Herranen, 2019).

Training stands as another vital facet of HRM practices, as it serves to cultivate and sustain a workforce that is skilled and motivated (Huang, 2019; Karim et al., 2019). Training plays an indispensable role in enhancing the effectiveness of an organization and fostering a high-performing workforce (Huang, 2019; Karim et al., 2019; Kuehnl et al., 2019). Training exerts a substantial influence on an



organization's reputation and brand image, thereby ensuring that it appeals to a high-quality workforce who are motivated by its values, culture, and reputation. Training constitutes a structured and planned process designed to enrich employees' knowledge, skills, competencies, and behaviours, ultimately enhancing their performance and effectiveness in their roles (Manzoor et al., 2019). It contributes to heightened productivity, elevated work quality, and, consequently, overall job satisfaction by equipping employees with the necessary knowledge and tools (Corradini & Corradini, 2020; Urbancová et al., 2021).

Corradini and Corradini (2020) postulate a variety of training methods are at the organization's disposal, including classroom training, on-the-job training, e-learning, workshops, simulations, mentoring, coaching, and more. According to Attri (2019), effective training entails continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms, with an emphasis on assessing the impact of training programs on employees' performance and the organization's overall success. Therefore, training initiatives should be driven by the organization's specific needs, ensuring that the skills cultivated through training directly contribute to the attainment of business objectives (Attri, 2019; Corradini & Corradini, 2020). Compensation encapsulates the comprehensive package of rewards and benefits that employees receive from their organization in exchange for their work, skills, contributions, and commitment. A well-rounded compensation package should address both the financial and non-financial needs and preferences of employees.

Competitive compensation practices are imperative for attracting top talent and retaining their motivation to consistently provide their best efforts

over an extended period (Chan et al., 2019). Several researchers advocate for pay-for-performance systems, where compensation is intrinsically linked to individual or team performance (Bucklin et al., 2022; Kang & Lee, 2021). Lee & Li (2021) indicate that transparent communication about compensation policies and practices is pivotal, and organizations should actively address issues concerning pay discrimination, equal pay for equivalent work, and the promotion of fairness and equality within compensation practices.

Organisational Commitment

OC holds a significant position in the domain of HRM and revolves around the degree to which employees are inclined to uphold their association with an organization, driven by their profound interest in and alignment with the organization's goals and principles (Guzeller & Celiker, 2020; Hendri, 2019; Kim et al., 2021; Meyer & Allen, 2001; Ridwan et al., 2020). OC is shaped by the attitudes and actions of employees, which mirror their emotional connection, sense of belonging, and allegiance to the organization (Ahad et al., 2021; Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Guzeller & Celiker, 2020). Affective commitment pertains to the emotional bond, sense of identification, and active involvement of employees with the organization, signifying their sincere desire to continue their affiliation with it (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Bouraoui et al., 2019).

Conversely, Nassar (2018) postulates that continuance commitment is typified by employees recognizing the costs and risks associated with departing from the organization, as well as the financial benefits of remaining. According to Al-Jabari and Ghazzawi (2019), this form of commitment tends to be less strong, especially when multiple other



employers are offering similar external rewards. On the other hand, normative commitment as described by Nassar (2018), refers to the feeling of duty and responsibility that compels individuals to maintain their existing employment. Employees remain devoted to the organization because they perceive it as the morally right course of action, even in the face of dissatisfaction (Ridwan et al., 2020). Both affective and normative commitments are closely intertwined (Herrera & De Las Heras-Rosas, 2021), underscoring the significance of comprehending and nurturing OC within the realm of HRM.

Job Satisfaction

Employee JS stands as a pivotal component of HRM practices, exerting an influence on how employees perceive and feel about their roles (Huang, 2019; Spector, 1985). It is shaped by both internal and external factors, encompassing elements like job security, recognition, skills, and self-esteem (Mardanov, 2020). Elevated levels of JS are linked to a reduction in the desire to leave one's job, decreased absenteeism, heightened employee efficiency, and enhanced financial outcomes (Al-Ali et al., 2019; Fukui et al., 2019; Labrague et al., 2020). HRM practices have undergone extensive scrutiny on a global scale, with numerous scholars characterizing job satisfaction as the fulfillment of employee needs regarding the work environment, assessments, management approaches, and job prospects (Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019; Pratama et al., 2022; Saridakis et al., 2020). In the hotel industry, HRM practices exhibit a positive correlation with job satisfaction and work contentment, with age emerging as a noteworthy factor. Furthermore, research has validated the connection between job satisfaction and

organizational commitment (Jawaad et al., 2019; Norbu & Wetprasit, 2021).

Recruitment and organisational commitment

Recruitment plays a significant role in shaping an organization's culture and its workforce, ultimately affecting employee commitment, often referred to as OC (Vardarlier & Zafer, 2020). OC comprises several dimensions, including affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Jaros, 2007). According to Karim et al. (2021), a well-executed recruitment process aligns potential candidates with the organization's values, mission, and culture, thereby enhancing affective commitment and fostering a sense of belonging. Providing accurate information about job roles and responsibilities during the recruitment phase can also result in higher OC (Aboramadan et al., 2020). Various recruitment sources, such as employee referrals and internal promotions, may attract candidates with differing levels of commitment (Karim et al., 2021; Schlachter & Pieper, 2019). Johansson and Herranen (2019) posit that a carefully structured and well-managed recruitment process, characterized by transparent communication, timely follow-ups, and respectful treatment of candidates, can positively influence candidates' perceptions of the organization. Furthermore, Johari et al. (2019) indicate the nature of a job, including factors like autonomy, variety in tasks, and the significance of the role, can impact OC. Recruitment processes that are perceived as equitable and impartial contribute to heightened levels of OC, as candidates view the organization as dependable and ethical (Karim et al., 2021). Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between recruitment practices and OC (Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Bisharat et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2019). Considering



the aforementioned literature, the objective of this study is to examine the following hypothesis:

H₁: Recruitment has a significant positive effect on organisational commitment in the hotel industry.

Training and organisational commitment

Training programs have a significant impact on OC, as they play a critical role in enhancing employee skills, knowledge, and job satisfaction (Rahayu et al., 2019). These programs contribute to an increased commitment across various dimensions, resulting in a more engaged and committed workforce. Training initiatives that provide opportunities for career advancement can influence employees' commitment levels, as they feel more proficient and confident in their respective roles (Kuehn et al., 2019).

Moreover, training programs that establish clear expectations and guidelines for job performance can lead to improved role clarity and reduced ambiguity, ultimately contributing to higher levels of OC (Wang, 2020). Effective training fosters a stronger connection between employees and their roles, further enhancing their commitment (Marescaux et al., 2019). Training that underscores the organization's values, mission, and culture can cultivate a sense of identification among employees, thereby boosting affective commitment (Akdere & Egan, 2020).

According to Ghasi et al. (2020), fair and equitable access to training opportunities can influence how employees perceive organizational justice, which, in turn, contributes to higher levels of OC. Ali et al. (2020) posit that training programs, administered by qualified managers, have the potential to increase and improve employee OC. Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated a positive

association between training and OC (Bisharat et al., 2017; Mansour et al., 2022; Rahayu et al., 2019). Based on the above discussion, the study will test the following hypothesis:

H₂: Training has a significant positive effect on organisational commitment in the hotel industry.

Compensation and Organisational Commitment

Compensation plays a vital role in shaping employee commitment and overall job satisfaction (JS). When compensation is perceived as fair, it tends to result in higher levels of OC, whereas feelings of inequity or being underpaid can diminish commitment (Adikoeswanto et al., 2020). Adil et al. (2020) postulate that offering a competitive salary and benefits packages can instil a sense of financial security among employees, which, in turn, reduces turnover rates. Merit-based pay systems have the potential to motivate employees to excel in their roles, thus enhancing their OC (Nigusie & Getachew, 2019).

According to Adil et al. (2020), non-financial incentives, such as recognition and flexible work arrangements, also contribute positively to OC. A well-designed compensation strategy can lead to increased OC among employees who view the organization as an appealing and gratifying place to work. Satisfied employees are more likely to develop stronger OC, as they find contentment in their work conditions and the rewards they receive (Nigusie & Getachew, 2019). Transparency in the compensation structure fosters trust and fairness, ultimately resulting in higher OC (Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Purwanto, 2020). Furthermore, long-term incentives like stock options or retirement benefits serve as motivators for employees to stay loyal to the organization (Kong et al., 2023). It is important to note that economic factors, including inflation and the cost of living, can influence how employees perceive their compensation



(Purwanto, 2020). Human resources practices, encompassing benefits, are closely tied to the levels of commitment and job satisfaction experienced by employees (Cherif, 2020; Lambert et al., 2020; Purwanto et al., 2021). Hence, this study aims to test the following hypothesis:

H₃: Compensation has a significant positive effect on organisational commitment in the hotel industry.

Mediating role of JS in the nexus between HRM practices and OC

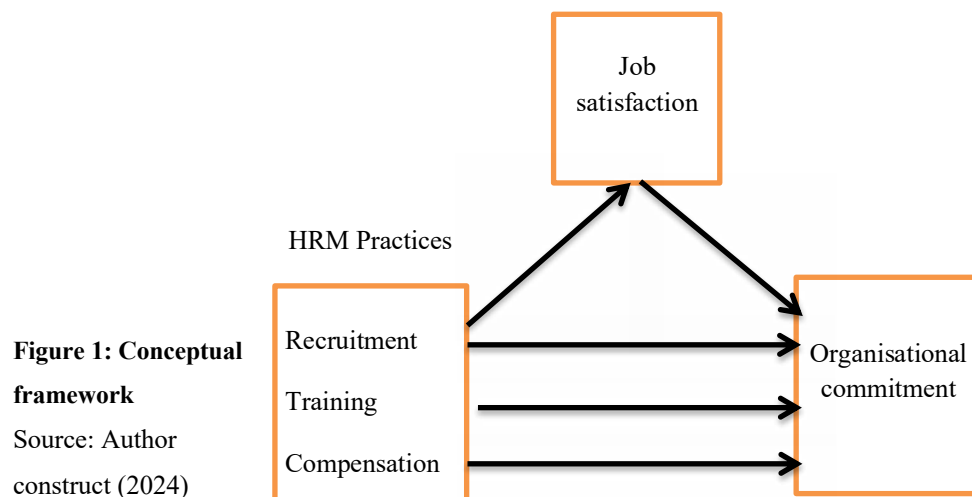
Hassan et al. (2022) posit that organisations, including those in the hotel industry, place significant reliance on the performance of their workforce, and HRM practices are indispensable for improving employees' skills, motivation, and dedication. These practices are instrumental in cultivating high levels of commitment among employees, who actively strive to achieve the organization's goals (Elrehail et al., 2019). Employee commitment signifies the readiness of employees to wholeheartedly contribute to the organization's mission (Dahmardeh & Nastiezaie, 2019). HRM practices yield positive effects on OC, resulting in improved job performance and heightened job satisfaction (Al-Asadi et al., 2019; Faizah & Chablullah Wibisono, 2022). Employee commitment and job satisfaction hold pivotal importance for the

overall performance of an organization (Singh et al., 2019). To foster OC and JS, organizations should implement incentives that not only motivate employees but also enhance their commitment (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Gao & Liu, 2021). HRM practices serve as significant indicators of employee commitment, and they play a partial mediating role in the relationship between HRM practices and employee engagement (Aboramadan et al., 2020). A mutually dependent cycle exists between HRM practices, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, where HRM policies and practices are prone to elevate employees' satisfaction levels, ultimately strengthening their commitment to the organization (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Cherif, 2020; Saridakis et al., 2020). These HRM practices exert a considerable influence on employee attitudes and behaviours, ultimately shaping the outcomes and performance of the organization. Therefore, as a result of the above discussion, this study tests the following hypothesis:

H₄: Job satisfaction has a mediating effect on the relationship between HRM practices and organisational commitment in the hotel industry.

Conceptual Framework

The Figure 1 is the conceptual framework illustrating the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between HRM practices and OC





RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

According to Bell et al. (2022), the concept of research design refers to an overall plan and strategy for carrying out a research study. Also, Pandey and Pandey (2021) postulate that the selection of an appropriate research design should consider the nature, purpose, and characteristics of the study. In this case, since the objective is to investigate the relationship between HRM practices and OC, the chosen research design is explanatory. While both descriptive and explanatory research designs have their merits, an explanatory research design was the best choice for this study because the primary goal of an explanatory research design is to establish causal relationships between variables. In the context of this study, the research aimed to investigate the mediating role of JS in the relationship between HRM practices and OC. An explanatory research design enables the researcher to systematically manipulate and control variables, allowing for the identification of causal links between HRM practices, JS, and OC. This is crucial for understanding the mechanisms through which HRM practices influence employee commitment and the role of JS in this process.

Moreover, explanatory research design involves the testing and validation of existing theories. In the study of HRM practices and OC, the researcher would build upon existing theoretical frameworks related to HRM, JS, and OC. In addition, explanatory research design often requires sophisticated data analysis techniques, such as regression analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), or mediation analysis. These analytical methods allow the researcher to quantitatively assess the strength and direction of relationships, test hypotheses, and establish the mediation effect of job satisfaction.

Rigorous data analysis enhances the robustness and validity of the study's findings. Furthermore, while explanatory research design focuses on establishing causality, it also has practical implications. The insights gained from identifying causal relationships can inform HRM strategies and interventions aimed at enhancing OC through targeted improvements in JS and HRM practices. An explanatory research design often involves the collection of data from diverse sources and contexts, enabling researchers to generalize findings beyond the specific sample or setting. In the case hotel industry in the New Juaben Municipal, establishing causal relationships between HRM practices, JS, and OC can provide insights applicable to similar industries and contexts, contributing to broader knowledge.

Additionally, explanatory research design is particularly useful when addressing gaps in existing literature. If there is a lack of empirical evidence on the mediating role of JS in the relationship between HRM practices and OC in the G hotel industry, an explanatory design can provide much-needed insights to fill this gap. Therefore, an explanatory research design was the most appropriate choice for this study because it aligns with the research objectives of establishing causal relationships, testing hypotheses, conducting rigorous data analysis, offering practical implications, and addressing research gaps.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The study includes 208 employees working in the hotel industry, selected for their ability to provide valuable insights into the study. The participants consisted of both male and female employees within the hotel industry. Most participants hold educational qualifications ranging from WASSCE to higher degrees such as a Master's degree.



The participants' work experience varied, with the majority having between two to ten years in the hotel industry. The age range of respondents was mainly between less than 20 to 49 years, reflecting the active working-age population in the industry. The study included respondents from various levels, including managers, senior staff, and junior staff, to capture a comprehensive view of HRM practices across the organizational hierarchy.

The focus of the study is on HRM practices and OC within the hotel industry. However, guesthouses and budget hotels were excluded due to staffing limitations, and the study concentrated solely on one- to three-star hotels based on the classifications provided by the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA, 2021) for hotels in the study area. Preliminary research conducted by the researcher suggests that most guesthouses and budget hotels in the municipalities are operated by their owners with a staff of fewer than two employees. This limited staffing situation hinders their ability to participate in the questionnaire because there were no proper HRM structures and policies.

According to the Ghana Hotel Association (GHA, 2021), there are a total of 21 licensed one- to three-star hotels in the New Juaben municipalities. For this study, the population involved all employees working in these hotels. Therefore, the target population comprised 433 hotel employees according to HR managers of the various hotel establishments. The choice to focus on the hotel industry in the New Juaben municipalities was due to the significant role that hotels play in the economic development of these areas. Hotels contribute significantly to job creation, attract tourists, and generate revenue for the local economy. Understanding the factors that impact OC among hotel employees, such as HRM practices and

JS, can have a substantial influence on the success and competitiveness of hotels in these municipalities.

The simple random sampling technique was employed to select 208 employees from a targeted population of 433. The sample size at each level was determined using a census sampling, proportional sampling, and lottery sampling. Firstly, for the selection of hotel establishments, the census sampling technique was employed to include all 21 hotels classified by the GTA in the study area. This technique involves encompassing all subjects within a population and is particularly suitable for smaller populations (Stratton, 2021). Regarding the employees, a proportional sampling approach was used.

To determine the specific sample size of employees for each hotel, the size of the hotel within the population was divided by the total population and then multiplied by the expected sample size. This calculation was performed using the equation $n/N \times S$, where n represents the size of the hotel, N represents the population size, and S represents the sample size. Finally, within each hotel, the sample unit was selected using the simple random technique, specifically the lottery method. The researcher obtained the employees list from the HR records unit of each hotel establishment. Each employee in the sampling frame was assigned a unique identity number randomly. These identity numbers were placed in a box and thoroughly mixed. The researcher then randomly selected respondents until the desired sample size of 208 was achieved. The simple random sampling technique ensures that every element in the sampling frame has an equal chance of being chosen.

To determine the sample size, the Slovin (1973) formula, commonly used in social science research, was applied.



$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n = sample, N = population, e = margin of error (5%)

$$n = \frac{433}{1 + 433(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 433 \div 2.0825$$

$$n = 207.92$$

$$n = 208$$

Therefore, the sample size for the study was 208 respondents.

The distribution of the population and sample size is represented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Population and Sample Size Distribution

No	Name of establishment	Grade	Target population	Sample size
1	Capital View Hotel	3 star	70	34
2	Eastern Premier Hotel	3 star	56	27
3	Mac-Dic Royal Plaza Hotel	3 star	45	22
4	Bedtime Hotel	2 star	42	20
5	Canadian Dreams Hotel	2 star	19	9
6	Capital View Hotel - Annex	2 star	25	12
7	Dear Home Hotel	2 star	14	7
8	Empire Court Hotel	2 star	8	4
9	Freden Hotel	2 star	15	7
10	Koforidua Guest Hotel	2 star	16	8
11	Nasco Hotel	2 star	9	4
12	Tonyx Hotel, Suites and Spa	2 star	9	4
13	Filifaf Hotel	1 star	10	5
14	Kof - Royal Touch Hotel	1 star	12	5
15	Oyinka Hotel	1 star	10	5
16	Partners May Hotel	1 star	18	9
17	Safegold Hotel	1 star	12	6
18	Translinks Hotel	1 star	9	4
19	Marshals Lodge	1 star	10	5
20	Kingsville Guesthouse	1 star	9	4
21	Baca Guesthouse & Events Centre	1 star	15	7
Total			433	208

GTA (2021)

Instrument for Data Collection

To gather data from respondents, a structured questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire consists of five-point Likert scale questions, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The structured questionnaire was considered the most suitable data collection instrument for this study because, it allows for efficient data collection from a

large number of respondents (Sileyew, 2019). Furthermore, in the hotel industry, employees often have busy schedules, and it may be challenging to coordinate and conduct in-person interviews. The questionnaire allows respondents to independently read, comprehend, and respond to the questions at their convenience, eliminating the need for direct interaction. The structured questionnaire provides



standardized questions and response options for all respondents. This ensures consistency in data collection, making it easier to compare and analyse responses across participants. It also minimizes the potential for interviewer bias that could arise in interviews, where the interviewer's influence may affect responses. Respondents may feel more comfortable providing honest and unbiased responses when using a structured questionnaire, as it offers a level of anonymity. Participants are more likely to express their true opinions and experiences without fear of judgment or reprisal. This can lead to more accurate and reliable data regarding HRM practices, OC, and JS. The structured questionnaire simplifies the process of data coding and analysis. With standardized response options, data can be easily categorized, quantified, and entered into statistical software for further analysis. It facilitates the application of appropriate statistical techniques to examine relationships between variables and test hypotheses.

Measurement of Variables

The study used various scales to measure different aspects of the hotel industry. For recruitment, a 6-item scale created by Edgar et al. (2005) was used, with questions like "In my hotel, interviews were used during the recruitment process." The training section utilized a five-item scale from the same source, with a sample item such as "In my hotel, employees are trained and oriented properly once they join the hotel." Compensation was measured using a five-item scale originally developed by Malhotra et al. (2007) and validated by Newman et al. (2012), with an example item being "In my hotel, I am satisfied with the compensation I received for the work I do." Organisational commitment was assessed using a 9-

item scale developed by Allen et al. (1990), and job satisfaction was measured using an 8-item scale developed by Hanaysha et al. (2016).

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher was granted ethical clearance by the UCCIRB (University Cape Coast Institutional Review Board). This document was presented to the hotel managers to allow the researcher to conduct the study. This served as a legal method of introduction to the sample respondents. The primary goal of the research was conveyed to the respondents while ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality. The questionnaires were self-administered by the researcher through the help of HR managers of their respective hotels. The respondents received the questionnaires in their departments and offices. This approach facilitated effective communication with all sampled respondents and enabled the researcher to provide further clarification where necessary.

Data Processing and Analysis

The analysis of the participants involved the application of both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The data was coded before entering it into statistical software for analysis. To minimize data entry errors, the researcher employed the double entry technique, which is a highly effective method, despite its potentially time-consuming nature. Structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed in the study. The decision to employ structural equation modelling was because the study aimed to examine the relationships between multiple variables of HRM practices and OC with, JS as the mediating variable. SEM allows for the examination of complex relationships by simultaneously assessing



direct and indirect effects, providing a comprehensive understanding of the interconnections among these variables. Also, SEM is well-suited for investigating mediating effects, as job satisfaction is hypothesized to mediate the relationship between HRM practices and OC. Furthermore, SEM enables the researcher to

test the indirect effects and determine the extent to which job satisfaction mediates the relationship between HRM practices and OC. Hence, utilizing SEM in this research enhanced the understanding of the interplay between these variables.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

From Table 2, more than half of the respondents were females (58.2%). In terms of education, 31.7% and 20.2% respectively had completed senior high school and first degree respectively. Half of the respondents (50%) were between the ages of 20-29 years with most of them (79.3%) haven worked for up to five years.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	87	41.8
	Female	121	58.2
	Total	208	100.0
Highest qualification	PhD	00	0.0
	Masters	13	6.3
	First degree	42	20.2
	HND	30	14.4
	Diploma	29	13.9
	WASSCE	66	31.7
	Professional certificate	16	7.7
	Basic	10	4.8
	None	2	1.0
	Total	208	100.0
Working experience	Less than 2 years	87	41.8
	2- 5 years	78	37.5
	6 – 10 years	33	15.9
	Over 10 years	10	4.8
	Total	208	100.0



Age	Less than 20 years	17	8.2
	20 – 29 years	104	50.0
	30 – 39 years	64	30.8
	40 – 49 years	19	9.1
	Above 50 years	4	1.9
	Total	208	100.0
Position	Manager	18	8.7
	Senior staff	100	48.1
	Junior staff	90	43.3
	Total	208	100.0

Source: Author construct (2024)

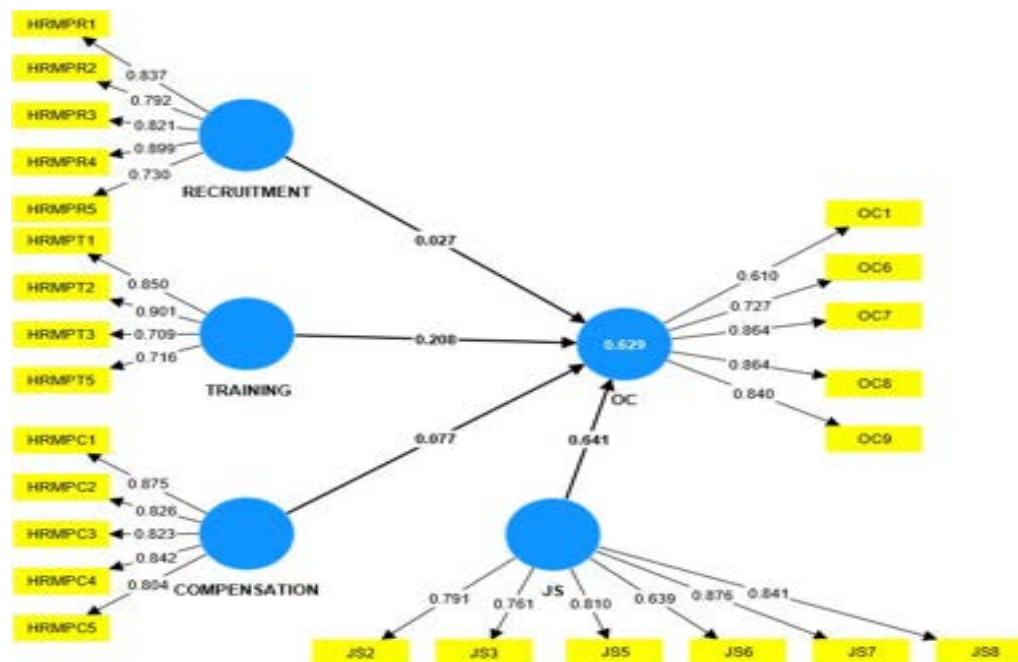


Figure 2: The Measurement Model

The results of the study in Table 3 demonstrate that the constructs used have high internal consistency and reliability, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.7 and good composite reliability. The AVE values are also relatively high (>0.5), indicating good validity. The study confirms the robustness of both convergent and discriminant validity of its constructs, with no issues found in Table 4.

**Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity**

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho a)	Composite reliability (rho c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Compensation	0.892	0.908	0.920	0.696
JS	0.878	0.891	0.908	0.624
OC	0.842	0.845	0.889	0.620
Recruitment	0.885	0.987	0.909	0.669
Training	0.805	0.819	0.874	0.637

Table 4: HTMT Ratio Result: Discriminant Validity

	Compensation	JS	OC	Recruitment	Training
Compensation					
JS	0.699				
OC	0.655	0.845			
Recruitment	0.077	0.109	0.082		
Training	0.589	0.387	0.557	0.080	

Table 5: Inner VIF Values

	VIF
Compensation -> OC	1.960
JS-> OC	1.653
Recruitment -> OC	1.024
Training -> OC	1.348

Table 6: Path Coefficient

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Compensation -> OC	0.479	0.474	0.055	8.729	0.000
Recruitment -> OC	0.062	0.077	0.064	0.971	0.332
Training -> OC	0.246	0.252	0.061	4.034	0.000

According to the results displayed in Table 6 of this study, it is evident that compensation plays a crucial role as a positive predictor of employee OC (T-

statistic >8.729 and $p < 0.000$). In other words, an increase of one unit in compensation scores results in a 0.474 increase in the OC levels of hotel employees.



Furthermore, Table 6 revealed that training also significantly contributes to the positive variation in employee OC among hotel employees (T-stat > 4.034 and $p < 0.000$). It means that a one-unit increase in training scores leads to a 0.252 increase in employee OC among hotel employees. However, the results in Table 6 indicate that recruitment has no significant effect on employee OC. This suggests that recruitment does not contribute positively to significant variations

in employee OC among hotel employees. The path coefficient is visually represented in Table 6.

Hypothesis Testing

The study examines the relationship between HRM practices (recruitment, training, and compensation) and organisational commitment within the hotel industry in the New Juaben Municipal.

Table 7: path coefficient (direct effect)

Path	Beta	STDEV	T statistics	P values	Hypothesis testing
Compensation -> OC	0.479	0.055	8.729	0.000	Supported
Recruitment -> OC	0.062	0.064	0.971	0.332	Not supported
Training -> OC	0.246	0.061	4.034	0.000	Supported

Effect of Recruitment on Organisational Commitment

The results in Table 7 indicate that, in the context of the hotel industry in Ghana, the relationship between recruitment and Organisational Commitment does not appear to be statistically significant. The p-value (0.332) is relatively high, indicating that there is no strong evidence to suggest a meaningful relationship between recruitment and OC among hotel employees.

Effect of Training on Organisational Commitment

Also, the result in Table 7 shows a statistically significant relationship between training and Organisational Commitment in the Ghanaian hotel industry. Employees who receive effective training

tend to exhibit higher levels of commitment to their hotel. The low p-value (0.000) indicates that there is a significant positive effect of training on employee organisational commitment in the hotel industry.

Effect of Compensation on Organisational Commitment

Furthermore, the result in Table 8 above indicates a significant relationship between compensation and organisational commitment in the hotel industry of Ghana. Specifically, employees who perceive favourable compensation practices tend to have higher levels of organisational commitment. This significant relationship is justified with t-statistics greater than 8.729 and a p-value less than 0.05 (0.000).

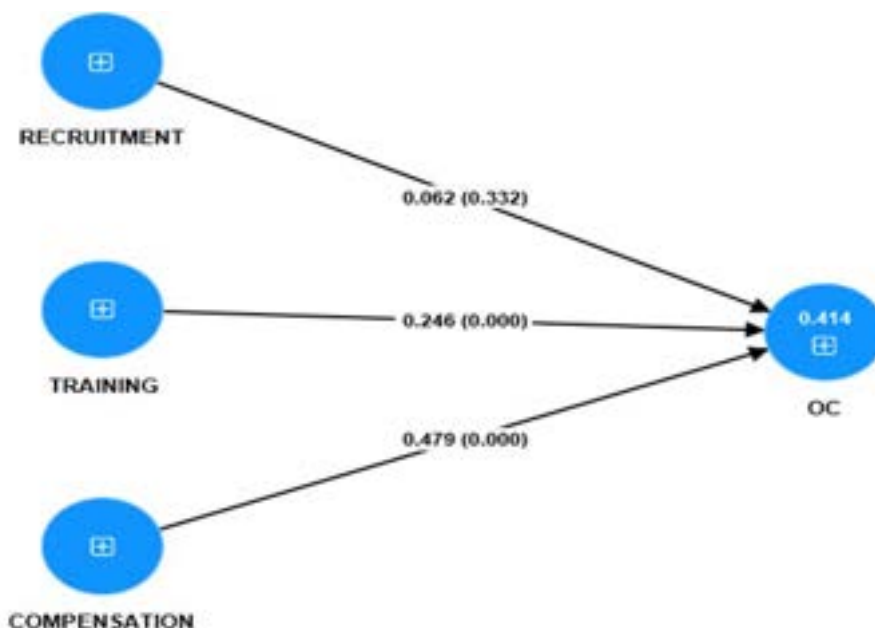


Figure 3: Structural model showing the effect of HRM practices on OC of hotel employees

Table 8: Mediation Analysis

Hypothesis	Indirect effect	P values Bootstrapping	LCI (2.5%)	UCI (97.5%)	Mediation
Training -> JS->OC	0.020	0.582	-0.052	0.089	Not supported
Compensation -> JS -> OC	0.383	0.000	0.286	0.486	supported
Recruitment -> JS -> OC	0.042	0.279	-0.050	0.111	Not supported

Mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between recruitment and organisational commitment

In Table 8, the researcher hypothesized that recruitment would affect OC through its influence on JS. However, the analysis suggests that the indirect effect is not statistically significant, as the confidence interval includes zero. This implies that recruitment does not significantly affect OC through JS in the study as indicated by Preacher et al., (2004) method. This method was employed in this study for its robustness and accuracy, particularly due to its use of the bootstrap method for estimating confidence

intervals. This approach offers greater statistical power and does not assume normality in the sampling distribution, making it more reliable, especially in studies with smaller sample sizes like this. Unlike traditional methods like the Sobel test, which can be limited by low statistical power and assumptions of normality, Preacher et al.'s method provides more precise estimations of indirect effects. The widespread use and empirical validation in various research fields further underscore its reliability. This result is consistent with the idea that while the recruitment process can contribute to initial JS, its long-term impact on OC may be less pronounced (Aboramadan



et al., 2020). Other organisational factors and job experiences can play a more substantial role in shaping commitment over time as emphasized by (Elrehail et al., (2019).

Mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between training and organisational commitment

In this hypothesis, the study expected that training would influence OC through its effect on JS. However, the analysis shows that the indirect effect (the influence of training on OC through JS) is not statistically significant. The confidence interval includes zero, suggesting that training does not affect OC through its effect on JS according to Preacher et al., (2004) method. This finding is in line with the literature that suggests that the relationship between training and OC is often more complex (Albrecht & Marty, 2020). While training can enhance JS by improving employees' skills and confidence, it may not be the sole determinant of OC. Other factors, such as workplace culture, leadership, and job roles, can

also play significant roles in influencing OC (Akdere & Egan, 2020; Baruch et al., 2019).

Mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between compensation and organisational commitment

In hypothesis 6, the researcher posited that compensation would influence organisational commitment through its effect on job satisfaction. The analysis in Table 9 indicates a statistically significant indirect effect, with a substantial p-value (0.000). The 95% confidence interval does not include zero, affirming that compensation has an effect on OC through the mediation of JS. This finding aligns with extensive research highlighting the significance of compensation as a motivator that affects employee JS and subsequently OC (Adikoeswanto et al., 2020). Competitive compensation packages can enhance job satisfaction by meeting employees' financial needs and expectations, which, in turn, fosters their commitment to the organisation (Adil et al., 2020).

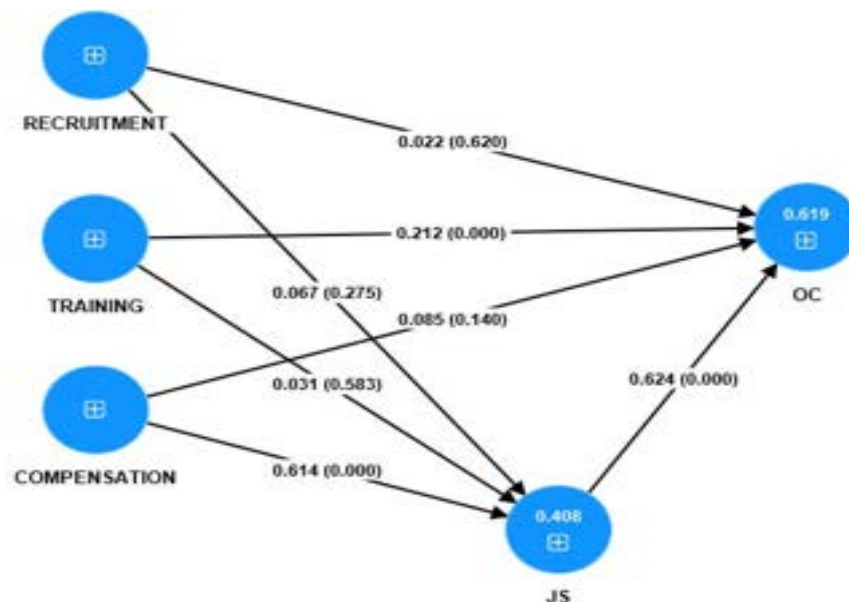


Figure 4: the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between HRM practices and OC

**Table 9: Confirmatory Factor Loading**

	Compensation	JS	OC	Recruitment	Training
HRMPC1	0.876				
HRMPC2	0.826				
HRMPC3	0.823				
HRMPC4	0.842				
HRMPC5	0.804				
HRMPR1				0.838	
HRMPR2				0.789	
HRMPR3				0.824	
HRMPR4				0.899	
HRMPR5				0.734	
HRMPT1					0.848
HRMPT2					0.900
HRMPT3					0.713
HRMPT5					0.716
JS2		0.792			
JS3		0.762			
JS5		0.809			
JS6		0.638			
JS7		0.876			
JS8		0.840			
OC1			0.637		
OC6			0.709		
OC7			0.862		
OC8			0.861		
OC9			0.839		

The assessment of the measurement model involved performing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and eliminating items with loadings below 0.7. The findings presented in Table 5 demonstrate that the majority of indicators surpassed the recommended 0.7 threshold for factor loadings, with the exceptions being JS6 and OC1. As a result, items with loadings below 0.7 (HRMPR6, HRMPT4, JS1, JS4, OC2, OC3, OC4, and OC5) were excluded to improve the

reliability and validity of the constructs. This indicates that the factors successfully measure the intended constructs. A summary of the CFA results can be found in Table 9.

DISCUSSION

This research investigated HRM practices and OC in the hotel industry of Ghana: The mediating role of job satisfaction. The study was guided by three



main objectives, which were further broken down into six hypotheses. This section of the study delves into the hypotheses derived from the study objectives. Based on the results presented above, this section discusses the findings and implications derived from the study.

The findings which pertain to the relationship between recruitment and OC in the hotel industry of New Juaben Municipality, indicate that this relationship is not statistically significant. The p-value associated with this relationship is relatively high at 0.332, suggesting that there is insufficient evidence to support a meaningful relationship between recruitment and OC among hotel employees. This finding can be contextualized and linked to the existing literature on the recruitment process and its effect on OC. Recruitment, as described by Pham et al. (2020); Karim et al. (2021), and other HRM scholars, involves the systematic process of identifying, attracting, and hiring suitable individuals from the external labour market to fill vacant positions within an organisation. Therefore, the lack of HR managers within the hotel industry to identify, attract, and hire suitable individuals to fill vacant positions may lead to an insufficient relationship between recruitment and OC. Recruitment is a crucial HRM function and it should aim at ensuring that HR managers hire individuals who best fit the hotel setting with the requisite skills, qualifications, and attributes to achieve its objectives and ensure OC.

Also, effective recruitment strategies should aim to attract a diverse pool of qualified candidates through various channels such as job advertisements, social media, recruitment agencies, career fairs, and employee referrals to ensure a sufficient relationship between recruitment and OC. The goal is to create awareness among potential candidates who understand

the hotel environment to apply for available positions. However, the finding that the relationship between recruitment and OC is not statistically significant suggests that merely hiring candidates through the recruitment process may not directly translate into higher levels of OC among hotel employees. This result highlights the importance of not only recruiting candidates with the right skills but also ensuring that they align with the hotel's values and culture.

The results indicate a statistically significant relationship between training and OC within the New Juaben Municipality hotel industry (p-value = 0.000). This finding supports Rahayu et al., (2019) assertion that training programs play a critical role in enhancing employee skills, knowledge, and overall OC. Such programs are shown to contribute to increased commitment across various dimensions, ultimately leading to a more engaged and loyal workforce. Training programs that emphasize skill enhancement, tend to result in higher job satisfaction leading to OC. When employees feel more competent in their roles, it is likely to lead to higher levels of affective commitment, with employees becoming more attached to their jobs and the hotel due to a sense of achievement and personal growth. Additionally, training initiatives that offer opportunities for career advancement and progression can significantly influence employees' commitment levels. Employees who have a clear path for experience within the hotel through training may develop stronger continuance commitment, as leaving the hotel might entail the loss of these advancement opportunities.

The results revealed a statistically significant relationship between compensation and OC in the New Juaben Municipality hotel industry (p-value = 0.000). Compensation, encompassing both financial and non-financial rewards, holds a complex and



multifaceted relationship with OC. Employees' perceptions of the fairness and adequacy of their compensation significantly impact their commitment to the hotel. When employees believe they are fairly compensated, they are more likely to develop higher levels of OC. Conversely, perceived inequity or underpayment can lead to reduced commitment and feelings of resentment, underscoring the importance of fair compensation practices. In the Ghanaian hotel industry, economic factors, such as inflation and cost of living, also influence how employees perceive their compensation. In challenging economic conditions, employees feel less committed if they perceive that their compensation is not keeping up with their needs. Moreover, hotel managers must involve employees in the allocation of compensation and rewards to create a strong sense of satisfaction, leading to increased OC at work. When employees are allowed to provide input on rewards and recognition, it further strengthens the positive relationship between compensation and OC.

The mediation analysis using Preacher et al., (2004) method examined the specific relationship between recruitment and OC within the hotel industry of the New Juaben Municipality. The study aimed to determine whether JS played a mediating role in this relationship. The results indicated that the indirect effect of recruitment on OC through JS was not statistically significant, as the confidence interval included zero (Preacher et al., 2004). This implies that in the Ghanaian hotel industry, recruitment does not significantly influence OC through JS. This finding suggests that while recruitment may contribute to initial JS among employees, it does not have a substantial long-term impact on employees' commitment to the hotel. The lack of significant mediation between recruitment, JS, and OC underscores the complexity of these relationships

within the hotel industry of Ghana. It implies that factors beyond the recruitment process play a more significant role in shaping employees' long-term commitment to their hotels. These findings emphasize the need for the hotel industry to adopt a more comprehensive approach to employee management beyond the recruitment phase. While recruitment is a crucial initial step, long-term OC is influenced by various other factors, such as leadership, values, hotel culture, career development, and work experiences. Therefore, hotels should consider these factors to maintain and enhance employee commitment over time.

In the hotel industry of the New Juaben Municipality, the study aimed to explore the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between training and OC. The study tested the hypothesis that training would impact OC through its influence on JS. However, the results indicated that the indirect effect, representing the influence of training on OC through JS, was not statistically significant. This means that training does not significantly affect organisational commitment through its impact on JS as indicated by Preacher et al., (2004) method for determining mediation. This finding can speculate the absence or ineffective implementation of Herzberg's Two-Factor theory within the study area which centres on elements that impact JS and dissatisfaction within the workplace may cause JS insignificant relationship between training and OC. The theory posits the existence of two distinct sets of factors that influence employee motivation and job satisfaction: hygiene factors and motivators. Hygiene factors pertain to the work environment and involve elements like salary, benefits, working conditions, and organisational policies while motivators are inherent to the work itself and include aspects like recognition,



accomplishment, growth prospects, and responsibility suggesting that the relationship between training and OC is multifaceted and influenced by various factors beyond JS.

Hypothesis 6 posited that compensation would influence OC through its impact on JS. The analysis revealed that there is indeed a statistically significant indirect effect, supported by a low p-value of 0.000 and a confidence interval (CI) that does not include zero (0.286 to 0.486). This finding suggests that compensation plays a significant role in influencing OC through the mediation role of JS. This result aligns with existing research in the field of HRM and organisational commitment. Compensation, including competitive salary and benefits packages, has long been recognized as a crucial factor that affects employee JS. When employees perceive that they are fairly compensated for their efforts and contributions, it positively impacts their JS. This, in turn, fosters a stronger commitment to the hotel.

The implications of this mediation analysis are profound for the hotel industry in the New Juaben Municipality. It emphasizes the importance of offering competitive and equitable compensation packages to employees in the sector. A well-structured compensation strategy that ensures fairness and minimizes pay disparities can positively influence job satisfaction. Moreover, this finding emphasizes the interconnected nature of HRM practices, JS, and OC. In the context of the hotel industry in the New Juaben Municipality, where employee turnover and JS are critical concerns, hotels should focus on not only providing competitive compensation but also ensuring that their compensation policies are transparent and aligned with employee expectations.

In this study, the result analysis indicates that compensation significantly influences OC through the

mediating role of JS in the hotel industry of the New Juaben Municipality. This finding highlights the importance of adopting effective compensation strategies and policies to enhance JS, ultimately leading to higher levels of OC. This aligns with the broader literature on HRM practices, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment, emphasizing the critical role compensation plays in fostering a committed and satisfied workforce within the hotel industry.

CONCLUSIONS

Regarding hypothesis 1 which answers research objective one, the study finding indicated that there is no statistically significant relationship between recruitment and OC in the Ghanaian hotel industry. This study concludes that while recruitment is undoubtedly a vital aspect of HRM practice, it may not be the primary driver of OC among hotel employees in the New Juaben Municipality. In essence, merely attracting and hiring candidates through the recruitment process may not directly translate into higher levels of commitment within the hotel industry. This emphasizes the need for a more holistic approach to HRM strategies, where other factors beyond recruitment play a significant role in shaping long-term commitment. Also, the study strongly supports the hypothesis that training programs have a substantial positive impact on OC in the Ghanaian hotel industry. The study concludes that effective training initiatives contribute to higher OC levels among employees. Therefore, training enhances skills, knowledge, and confidence, leading to increased JS and career advancement opportunities. Additionally, the study concluded that when employees perceive that their hotel invests in their professional growth through training, it fosters a sense



of loyalty and commitment. Therefore, the findings emphasize the pivotal role of training programs in creating a more engaged and committed hotel workforce. Furthermore, the study unequivocally supports the hypothesis that compensation practices significantly influence OC in the New Juaben Municipality hotel industry. This study concludes that compensation, which includes financial and non-financial rewards, plays a multifaceted role in shaping employees' commitment levels. When employees perceive that they are fairly compensated and provided with competitive salary and benefits packages, it positively impacts their JS. This, in turn, fosters higher levels of OC. Therefore, the finding highlighted the importance of fair compensation practices, transparent compensation structures, and non-financial rewards in creating a sense of financial security, value, and satisfaction among hotel employees, all contributing to OC.

Practical Implications

The study proposes several implications for hotel management and owners to enhance employee commitment and job satisfaction. Firstly, the study suggests using behavioural interviews to evaluate candidates for their alignment with the hotel's values and culture, as well as their skills, to ensure long-term commitment. Additionally, it recommends developing a comprehensive onboarding process that introduces new employees to the hotel's values, mission, and culture to create a sense of belonging from the beginning. Secondly, the study advises tailoring training programs to align with individual career goals and organizational objectives, providing opportunities for skill acquisition and advancement within the hotel. It also suggests establishing feedback mechanisms within training programs and investing in leadership

development programs for managers and supervisors to foster a positive workplace culture and enhance employee organizational commitment.

Furthermore, the study suggests implementing a total rewards approach to compensation, including competitive salaries, benefits such as health coverage and retirement plans, and performance-based bonuses. It emphasizes clear communication of rewards and transparency in compensation policies to contribute to perceived fairness and job satisfaction among employees. Finally, the study recommends regularly soliciting feedback from employees through surveys or one-on-one discussions to gauge job satisfaction, address concerns, and implement recognition and rewards programs to celebrate employee achievements. These actions are seen as significant contributors to enhancing job satisfaction and reinforcing a sense of commitment among employees.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This study focused on three HRM practices namely: recruitment, training, and compensation. While many HRM practices influence organizational commitment, this study focuses on recruitment, training, and compensation because these areas are directly linked to the most pressing challenges in the New Juaben Municipality hotel industry. Hence, the study recommends that further research could investigate the effect of other HRM practices, such as performance appraisal, employee engagement initiatives, and talent management, on OC within the New Juaben Municipality hotel industry. Also, the study adopted the quantitative research approach to examine the relationship between variables, the study recommends future researchers complement quantitative research with qualitative studies to gain



deeper insights into employees' perceptions and experiences related to HRM practices and their influence on OC and if possible, conduct longitudinal studies to track changes in OC over time in response to various HRM practices. This could involve assessing how employees' commitment levels change as they progress through their careers within the hotel industry to enhance the degree of generalizability.

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2 TOURISTS' PERCEPTION OF THEME PARK AS A DRIVER OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF SHOPRITE THEME PARK IN IBADAN

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Abstract

Sustainable development involves responsible and judicious utilization of resources by the present generation, while, ensuring that the future generations will also be able to meet and use such resources. The economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are examined in this study. This study aimed to examine theme parks as drivers of sustainable development using Shoprite Theme Park in Ibadan. A structured survey instrument was used to collect data from 270 respondents for this study. The collected data were analysed using frequency, percentage, standard deviation and mean. Based on the research findings, it is evident that the theme park generally has negative impacts on the environment, while on the contrary, the theme park has positive impacts on the economy of the study area.

Keywords: Theme park, sustainable development, environment, waste management.

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Tourism Organization (2001), tourism involves the actions of individuals travelling to and staying in destinations that are not their normal places of residence for not over one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. It is pertinent for people to disengage from work at certain periods, to unwind and relax. A relaxed mind is capable of getting individuals better prepped up for work subsequently. Tourism destinations generally serve as a pull to tourists. Tourism destinations can have natural or cultural affinities. Meanwhile, there are other tourism sectors like hotels, theme parks, and casinos, that can also attract people from different quarters. Krase (2013) noted that the theme park concept depicts a destination that captures it all, the place that embodies it all, the surveillance and control, and the imitation that does not have an end. Theme and amusement parks are essentially destinations with manual and electronic-

driven toys, swings and facilities. Gupta & Sharma (2017) noted that amusement parks and theme parks are concepts for various leisure-based attractions, rides, and other events in a destination that people in their numbers can enjoy. It is an enclosed area with fun facilities capable of attracting people. Liang & Li (2021) stated that the definition in terms of enclosed areas with well-managed access implies that theme parks have solid boundaries and portray physical, economic and cultural separation from the surroundings. Although it attracts people from different areas, access to it is restricted, controlled and well-managed. It is essentially always open for fun seekers. Theme parks are very big recreational parks, inclusive of attractions, eateries and shopping marts (Levochkina, 2018). The facilities in amusement parks are usually expensive, hence, it must be ensured that visitors engage with and operationalize the facilities responsibly. Based on the fact that theme parks are

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composed of expensive facilities scattered in a themed area, many tourists get enthused by these facilities and are thus compelled to take a lot of pictures while at the park. Heo et al. (2023) noted that the tourists at theme parks take many pictures, as a result of different facilities and decorations at the park. These facilities are usually painted with attractive colours, to attract people easily.

Milman (2009) opined that a theme park is a business entity for commercial gains with offerings such as rides, shows, merchandise, meals and different entertainment in themed environments. These attractions are essentially made of electric motors, swings and facilities capable of fascinating visitors cum tourists. It is a composition of different forms of gadgets/facilities that are well arranged in a themed environment. The facilities at theme parks can be fully explored, such that unlimited satisfaction and joy can be derived from their exploration.

There have been various efforts at defining sustainable development/sustainability, but most of the definitions have been vague (Feitelson & Stern, 2023). It essentially means responsible utilization of assets/facilities, in a way that the incoming generation will be able to also meet and utilize such assets/facilities. Salas-Zapata & Ortiz-Munoz (2019) noted that the meaning of sustainability can be examined from three perspectives namely, a compilation of conditions that can guide human actions; humanity's aim; and objects or dimensions of concern. Bidhya (2023) stated that The dimensions of sustainable development are intertwined as well as mutual. Nugraheni et al. (2019) stated the sections of sustainable development are employment, hygiene and social cohesiveness, as well as inclusivity and coherence. Habimana et al. (2023) noted that in specific terms sustainable development depicts ways

to organize societies for them to continue existing on a sustainable basis. Tourism attractions are essentially facilities or assets that must be cherished and responsibly engaged so that they can also meet the tourism desires of the incoming generation. Thus, sustainable tourism is responsible engagement of tourism attractions and their environments in a way that ensures that they will also be able to meet the desires of the incoming generation and their longevity. Without sustainable tourism, it is not certain that the incoming generation will meet the tourism facilities and attractions used or explored by the present generation. Though there have been a plethora of studies on sustainable development (Change et al., 2016; Cho, 2020; Doncheva, 2019; Feitelson & Stern, 2023; Silva & Cândido, 2016; Wei & Lujun 2014 amongst others), and on theme parks (Dong & Sui, 2013; Milman; 2010; Milman et al., 2010; Wei et al., 2020 among others), there has been a paucity of studies examining theme park as a driver of sustainable development. This study was therefore aimed at examining tourists' perception of theme parks as a driver of sustainable development in Ibadan. Specifically, the study examines tourists' perceived impact of the park on social infrastructure, the economy and the environment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Triple Bottom Line Theory

The triple bottom line (TBL) of people, planet and profit is a concept that was coined by Elkington in 1997 and it has been well adopted and engaged globally (Chabowski et al., 2011; Svensson & Wagner, 2015). Sustainable development is essentially underpinned by the triple bottom line theory. Santosh & Nirmala (2023) noted that the practices of Triple



Bottom Line is underscored by the report of the performance of a business entity based on three pillars: economy, environment and social. Tseng et al. (2018) noted that each of the three domains of triple bottom line theory aligns with the sustainable development dimensions: being prosperous economically implies quality of life attained via productive capacities of the firms; integrity of the environment is connected with the limited capacity of ecological systems to be regenerative; as well as social equity borders around the right of stakeholders to access resources.

The theory connects the planet with its people, especially in the light of generating economic gains (profits). The theory reiterates responsible usage or exploration of the environment while generating profits.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development essentially implies development rooted in sustainable practices. It implies activities and practices capable of ensuring the longevity of amenities, facilities and resources. Tomislav (2018) opined that there is dynamism and regular evolution associated with sustainable development, thus, it depicts attending to the aspirations of the present generation bearing in mind that the future of the incoming generation must not be jeopardized. It rests on a tripod of economy, environment and society. Practices of sustainable development ensure that the components of the tripods are judiciously utilized to ascertain that they will be preserved for future generations. Hopwood et al. (2005) noted that sustainable development is a consequence of burgeoning knowledge of the world's connection amidst growing problems associated with the environment, social and economic concerns that

deal with poverty and inequality as well as it pertains to a hygienic future for mankind.

Judicious utilization of these components could be done by engaging approaches such as preservation, conservation, reconstruction, consolidation and so on. Olawuyi & Posun (2021) opined that sustainable development revolves around activities that could maintain the structure as well as constituents of resources via protection from self-destruction, arrest from damage and reconstruction. Sustainable development ensures that the future is guaranteed to be bequeathed with valuable resources embellished with historical depths from the present. Habimana et al. (2023) noted this implies that there is consideration of contemporary as well as future imperative, for instance, environmental preservations and nature or societal/financial equities.

Olawuyi (2023) noted that sustainable development is underscored by the practise of preservation and successful passing down of cultural value, attribute, belief systems as well as ethical codes from one generation to another. It implies present activities to ascertain a good and memorable future. Sustainability could be generally referred to as government-informed decisions that depict continual life conditions for future generations; while sustainable development is essentially a process and is connected with controlled change which brings enhanced conditions for the individual(s) involved in such developments (Habimana et al., 2023). Bidhya (2023) stated that sustainable development implies systematical plans as well as procedures to achieve development goals for contemporary times and the future to different extents via significant usage of available resources in the ecosystem for addressing societal welfare and financial development. It



facilitates conscious efforts vis-à-vis the preservation of valuable assets so that they live for a very long time. This conscious effort is expected from the Government and other stakeholders in the Country or State. Habimana et al., (2023) noted that in specific terms sustainable development depicts ways to organize societies for them to continue existing on a sustainable basis. It helps in the organization and management of societal units/components in a bid to ensure the longevity of these units/components. Amoiradis (2023) stated that sustainable development gives the assurance of ecology not being negatively affected. It ensures that Indigenous areas have financial gains from the natural resource at the same time leading to the prevention of the spread of aliens from non-sustainable enhanceent of tourism.

One of the main aims of sustainable development is to establish quality life for human beings without destroying the environment. Nugraheni et al., (2019) stated that various phases of sustainable development are connected to the essential requirements as well as life's quality and impressive governance for achieving the ideals of societal class as well as the necessity to participate in the communities. It ensures that the carrying capacity of an environment is not exceeded to ensure that such an environment could yield better produce in the future. Amoiradis (2023) stated that sustainable development gives the assurance of ecology not being negatively affected, hence, rather than going after the commercialization of exploiting sites, there is a concentration on carrying capacities of controlling the deterioration of the environment as well as ensuring long-run sustainable development.

It preserves the oral tradition of a group so that it does not get lost or disjointed at any point in time. Devi (2021) noted that the concept of sustainable

development is engaged in ensuring that development is being operationalized via a means that the conservation of natural assets is guaranteed, as well as assurance of passing the assets or resources to the incoming generation. The definition of sustainable development by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 is that it is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations (UN, 1987). This is in reference to its capability to preserve/conserv three concepts, namely, economy, environment and social. Boström (2012) opined that the connections that exist amongst the three dimensions of sustainable development are believed to exhibit compatibility as well as mutuality in terms of supporting one another.

Dragouni (2017) noted that sustainable development leads to the provision of a robust perception of the economic, societal as well as heritage-based tourism influence on destinations, consequent upon the fact that it envisaged unhindered small-scale as well as different perspectives. There is a holistic examination and engagement of the economy, societal ethics cum values and the environment in the discussion of sustainable development. Although, some authors argue that one of the pillars has more prominence or importance than others. Dempsey et al. (2011) noted that amidst the trio of pillars of sustainable development, socially sustainable development has the lowest development as well frequently gets suggested to be part of economic/environmental sustainable development. Nugraheni et al. (2019) stated that the sustainable development's social pillar is regarded as having less importance when compared with the other pillars, while economic pillars are the second generally instituted section of the social pillar. Amoiradis (2023) stated that the economic dimension concentrates on



the costs-benefits of financial engagements, socio-cultural dimension gives the assurance of systematic development privileges for the Indigenous areas, the dimension of the environment focuses on conservations as well as long-run control of resources, while transversal dimension creates supports via policies as well as infrastructural development.

The efficient utilization of a tourism asset/resource, vis-à-vis its financial gains and protection of its environment, can also be underscored by the concept of sustainable development. Notably, sustainable development is the concept that underpins and drives sustainable tourism. Olawuyi & Posun (2021) noted that sustainable tourism emanates from sustainable development. Sustainable tourism essentially operationalizes the paradigms of sustainable development for tourism. Nugraheni et al. (2020) submitted that three trajectories of sustainable development focus on the environment, economy and society, therefore, sustainable tourism is a derivative of sustainable development, hence, the three trajectories of sustainable development apply to sustainable tourism development. Sustainable tourism implies appropriate use and engagement of different components of tourism, so that irrespective of their engagement and usage they can be preserved for the incoming generation.

Theme Parks and Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is a topical issue in both academic and professional discourses. The dimensions of sustainable development can either have an effect on theme parks or theme parks could have an effect on these dimensions. A theme park can enhance an environment or deplete an environment. Elghonaimy & AlSaeed (2021) opined that the consideration of the environment in all theme park

buildings is a germane point for all green designs. Therefore, it must be ensured that environmentally friendly materials are engaged in designing and building a theme park. Ma et al. (2023) argued that there are bound to be either negative or positive environmental impacts where theme park project is executed. Three measures were considered while examining the impacts of the theme park on the environment and they are the fragility of each space that there may be destruction or demolition of existing natural habitats, physical as well as ecological loads in the area as a result of the intensity of people at various times of the year, and the tourists' pressure as a result of their activities that could result into a strain on indigenous infrastructures.

Although building construction usually result in the breaking of land and disruption of the natural habitat of some fauna and flora components it must be ensured that endangered species are not involved. Meanwhile, a theme park should be able to facilitate the environmental aesthetics of a community. Zhang et al. (2016) noted that theme parks were usually engaged for reflecting how healthy a Chinese city tourism image is. This simply implies that the environmentally conscious development of a theme park could also result in social upliftment of the area, especially, in the light of infrastructural development and maintenance. According to Swarbrooke (2002), it is expected that there will be many social gains for a theme park to engage in sustainable development. Theme park as a business entity is established for profit making, therefore it would be connected with other business entities in the community. Elghonaimy & AlSaeed (2021) argued that the gains from theme parks should revolve around the creation and increment in employment opportunities,



encouragement of tourists to visit and allowing foreign currencies to be used in the country, while, encouraging local communities to preserve their resources. Hence, theme parks are essentially foreign exchange earners for different communities and Nations. Wang & Zhou (2008) concluded that Chinese theme parks should implement a sustainable development strategy premised on the idea of an experience economy to be able to have the significance of development introduced via the economy.

In light of the fact that theme parks can impact the economy and the environment, then theme parks can be considered to impact sustainable development. Elghonaimy & AlSaeed (2021) opined that a theme park and attraction substantively add to the sustainable development of sites in different regions that could be inclusive of infrastructural investment, creation of jobs, tax revenue, tourism revenue, contribution as well as sustenance of communities. Gupta & Sharma (2017) opined that theme parks and amusement parks are not restricted to attracting an impressive number of visitors, but, they do likewise make available thousands of employment opportunities. Irrespective of the fact that a theme park is a capital-intensive business, it has experienced significant growth, as a lot of people are investing in it. Based on the fact that it is indeed a capital-intensive project, it has received Government intervention and subvention in various parts of the world. Milman et al. (2010) noted that theme parks have gotten different levels of Government support, premised on the fact that it is capable of providing leisure and recreational assets for community dwellers and visitors. Even though the cost of investment in a theme park is huge,

it can churn up good returns on investment for its owner. Wang et al. (2023) noted that for various foreign theme parks 30% of generated income is from entrance fees, 30% from retail as well as 40% from meals and lodging. Just like all business engagement theme parks have experienced financial downturns at some points, but it is presently a booming business that generates a lot of revenue. Sasaki et al. (1997) noted that in the 1980s various big leisure and themed parks inclusive of Disneyland were established in Japan with the intent of impressive financial gains, however, in the 1990s the business boom regressed. Milman (2010) noted that there has been a rapid growth of the theme park sector on a global basis over the past three decades, concerning theme park sizes, capacity products as well as entertainment. Liang & Li (2023) noted that with respect to the recent growth trajectory, the theme park sector in China is experiencing a boom.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

Shoprite, a shopping mall is in the Challenge area, Ibadan southwest local government area, Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. The headquarters of the Local Government Areas LGA is in the Oluyole estate district of Ibadan with the LGA made up of districts such as Ring Road, Oke Ado, Isale-osi, Oke-bola gege and Oluyole estate. Ibadan Southwest LGA shares borders with Ibadan Northwest, Ido, Ibadan North, and Ibadan Southeast LGAs. The Shoprite is located right in the reserved and serene environment of the LGA. There are other offices and a High Court close to the Shoprite building.



Figure 1: Map of Ibadan South West Local Government

Source: Taiwo (2016)

Research Design

Bostley (2019) noted that a research design is a plan of study providing the connection between the problem statement to relevant as well as attainable empirical framework. Descriptive research design is a creation of data gathering, analysis and presentation evident in research write-ups (Khanday & Khanam, 2019). Descriptive research design is essentially a form of quantitative research design, but it could also be used for qualitative research (McCombes, 2022). The study also employs the quantitative approach for data collection and analysis based on the descriptive research design.

Sample Size

There is no established data on the precise number of tourists who visit the theme park. Based on the fact that the population is unknown, the modified Cochran's formula for determining sample size for an unknown population was used. The sample size is therefore 270 based on the following formula;

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{e^2} \quad n = \frac{(1.645)^2 (0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 270$$

n is the sample size

z is the value found in Cochran's table

p is the (estimated) proportion of the population

q is 1-p

e is the desired level of precision



Sampling Technique

Because there is no record or register for the total number of people visiting the park, a convenient sampling technique was adopted. Respondents were chosen based on their availability and willingness to take part in the study. Some tourists were indeed engrossed in their leisure activities and they made it clear that they could not spare time to fill out the research instrument. Thus, the research instrument was only administered to those who were willing to spare time to fill it out.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used for this study is a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contains demographic sections and other sections structured with the aid of a LIKERT scale. Section A comprises of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B consist of questions on the impact of the park on the environment. Section C consist of questions on the impact of the park on the economy. Section D consist of questions on the impact of the park on infrastructural development of the community. Section E comprises of questions on the theme park generally. While section A consists of nominally scaled questions, section B to E consists of ordinally scaled questions, ranked on a 4 Likert scale of Strongly disagree equating to 1, to Strongly agree equating to 4. The questions were gotten from instruments used in topical publications (Chang et al., 2021 & Elghonaimy & AlSaeed, 2021).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected from the respondents with the use of a structured questionnaire. The managers at the park were intimated with the intent of the researcher vis-a-vis collecting data from respondents with the aid of questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents at the park. The questionnaires were directly administered to each of the respondents physically. Completed questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents on the spot. It was however ensured that tourists in the adult demography were the only set of people at the park that the questionnaires were administered to. The collected data were analysed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were analysed descriptively with frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic distribution for this research revealed that a little more than half of the respondents are male (50.7%). Likewise, more than half of the respondents are within the age range of 18 to 24 (54.8%). This analysis further shows that more than half of the respondents are single (54.8%). Similarly, half of the respondents are undergraduates (50.0%). Thus the target population for the study could be described as youthful and single.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	137	50.7
Female	133	49.3
Total	270	100
Age		
Less than 18	10	3.7
18 to 24	148	54.8
25 to 31	94	34.8
Others	18	6.7
Total	270	100
Marital status		
Married	62	23.0
Single	202	74.8
Others	6	2.2
Total	270	100
Educational Qualification		
SSCE	13	4.8
Undergraduate	135	50.0
Graduate	85	31.5
Others	37	13.7
Total	270	100.0

Source: Author's Survey (2022)

The Impact of the Park on the Environment

The analysis revealed that 53% and 37.4% respectively of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the park has led to the beautification of the environment. 25.9% and 50.7% of the respondents respectively strongly agreed and agreed that the park has made the environment cleaner. More than half of the respondents (24.1% strongly agreed and 42.6% agreed) that the pollution of the environment has been reduced as a result of the presence of the park. 23.3% and 47.8% of the respondents respectively strongly agreed and agreed submitted that as a result of the presence of visitors at the park, there is an increased deposit of waste in the environment. 25.9% and 50% of the respondents agreed and 50% disagreed that the theme park has led to the increase in gas emissions.

14.1% and 48.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the park has led to the loss of biological diversity. The respondents however expressed indifference and disagreement to indicators for the negative impact of the park on the environment. These include the park has led to increased gas emission ($\bar{X} = 2.64 \pm 0.85$), the park has led to the loss of biological diversity ($\bar{X} = 2.34 \pm 0.85$), the pollution of the environment has reduced as a result of the presence of the park ($\bar{X} = 2.16 \pm 0.86$), as a result of the presence of the visitors at the park there is increased deposit of waste in the environment ($\bar{X} = 2.13 \pm 0.87$). They also disagreed that as a result of the park the environment is cleaner ($\bar{X} = -1.99 \pm 0.75$) and that the park has led to the beautification of the environment ($\bar{X} = 1.59 \pm 0.74$).

**Table 2: The Impact of the Park on the Environment**

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean±SD
The park has led to the beautification of the environment.	143(53%)	101(37.4%)	18(6.7%)	8(3.0%)	1.59±0.74
As a result of the park, the environment is cleaner	70(25.9%)	137(50.7%)	57(21.1%)	6(2.2%)	1.99±0.75
The pollution of the environment has been reduced as a result of the presence of the park	65(24.1%)	115(42.6%)	74(27.4%)	16(5.9%)	2.16±0.86
As a result of the presence of visitors at the park, there is an increased deposit of waste in the environment	63(23.3%)	129(37.8%)	57(21.1%)	21(7.8%)	2.13±0.97
The park has led to an increase in gas emission	31(11.5%)	70(25.9%)	135(50%)	34(12.6%)	2.64±0.85
The park has led to the loss of biological diversity	38(14.1%)	131(48.5%)	73(27.0%)	28(10.4%)	2.34±0.85

Source: Author's Survey (2022)

Table 3: The Impact of the Park on the Economy

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean±SD
The park has led to the growth and multiplication of businesses	136(50.4%)	88(32.6%)	22(9.6%)	20(7.4%)	1.74±0.91
The Park has led to an increase in job creation	62(23.0%)	135(50.0%)	55(20.4%)	18(6.7%)	2.11±0.83
The Park has attracted complementary businesses	62(23.0%)	135(50.0%)	55(20.4%)	18(6.7%)	2.11±0.83
The park has enhanced foreign exchange earning	39(14.4%)	88(32.6%)	109(40.4%)	34(12.6%)	2.51±0.89
The Park has led to an increase in wealth distribution	53(19.6%)	118(43.7%)	69(25.6%)	30(11.1%)	2.28±0.91
The Park has caused inflation in the area	51(18.9%)	22(5.2%)	73(27.0%)	24(8.9%)	2.26±0.87

Source: Author's Survey (2022)

The Impact of the Park on the Economy

It is evident from the analysis that 50.4% and 32.6% of the respondents respectively strongly agreed and agreed that the park has led to the growth and

multiplication of businesses. 23% strongly agreed and 50% agreed that the theme park has led to increased job creation in the community. More than half of the respondents posited that the park has attracted complementary businesses (23% strongly agreed and



50% agreed). 32.6% of the respondents agreed and 40.4% disagreed that the park has enhanced foreign exchange earnings. 19.6% and 43.7% of the respondents respectively agreed that the park has led to increased wealth distribution in the community.

Nearly 19% and 45.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the park has caused inflation in the area. The respondents however largely expressed agreement to the indicators of the impact of the park on the economy. This include, the park has enhanced

foreign exchange earnings ($\bar{X} = 2.51 \pm 0.89$), the park has led to increased wealth distribution ($\bar{X} = 2.28 \pm 0.91$), the park has caused inflation ($\bar{X} = 2.26 \pm 0.87$), the park has led to increased job creation ($\bar{X} = 2.11 \pm 0.83$), the park has led to the growth and multiplication of businesses ($\bar{X} = 1.74 \pm 0.91$), the park has enhanced foreign exchange earnings ($\bar{X} = 2.51 \pm 0.89$) and the park has attracted complimentary businesses ($\bar{X} = 1.88 \pm 0.79$).

Table 4: The Impact of the Park on Social Infrastructure

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean \pm SD
There is a steady distribution of power supply	129(47.8%)	81(30.0%)	32(11.9%)	28(10.4%)	1.85 \pm 1.00
There is enhanced transport system	81(30.0%)	129(47.8%)	52(19.3%)	8(3.0%)	1.95 \pm 0.78
There is an enhancement of telecommunication facilities in the community	56(20.7%)	128(47.4%)	67(24.8%)	19(7.0%)	2.18 \pm 0.84
The park has led to a better drainage system	45(16.7%)	112(41.5%)	75(27.8%)	38(14.1%)	2.39 \pm 0.93
There is provision of pipe-borne water in the community	44(16.3%)	72(26.7%)	108(40.0%)	46(17.0%)	2.58 \pm 0.96
There are available medical outlets in the community	38(14.1%)	102(37.9%)	82(30.4%)	48(17.8%)	2.52 \pm 0.94
The park has led to the preservation of Government facilities	46(17.0%)	103(38.1%)	82(30.4%)	39(14.4%)	2.42 \pm 0.94

Source: Author's Survey (2022)

The Impact of the Park on Social Infrastructure

47.8% and 30.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that there is steady distribution of power supply. Over half of the respondents (30.0% strongly agreed and 47.8% agreed) that there is enhanced transport system. 20.7% and 47.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that there is enhancement of

telecommunication facilities in the community. 41.5% and 27.8% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the park has led to a better drainage system. 40% and 17% of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that there is provision of pipe-borne water. 37.8% of the respondents agreed, while, 30.4% disagreed that there are available medical outlets in the community. 17.0%



and 38.1% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the park has led to the preservation of government facilities. The respondents largely expressed agreement to the indicators of the impact of the park on social infrastructure. This include, there is a steady distribution of power supply ($\bar{X}=1.85\pm1.00$), there is enhanced transport system ($\bar{X}=1.95\pm0.78$), there is an enhancement of

telecommunication facilities in the community ($\bar{X}=2.18\pm0.84$), the park has led to a better drainage system ($\bar{X}=2.39\pm0.93$), there is provision of pipe-borne water in the community ($\bar{X}=2.68\pm0.96$), there are available medical outlets in the community ($\bar{X}=2.52\pm0.94$) and the park has led to the preservation of Government facilities ($\bar{X}=2.42\pm0.94$).

Table 5: Tourists' Perception of the Park

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean \pm SD
The park is of a global standard	118(43.7%)	107(39.6%)	28(10.4%)	17(6.3%)	1.79 \pm 0.87
There are enough amenities in the park	75(27.8%)	125(46.3%)	51(18.7%)	19(7.0%)	2.05 \pm 0.87
Amenities in the park are in very good condition	80(29.6%)	140(51.9%)	31(11.5%)	19(7.0%)	1.96 \pm 0.83
The park essentially has modern facilities	77(28.5%)	150(55.6%)	26(9.6%)	17(6.3%)	1.94 \pm 0.79
It is easy to locate the park	102(37.8%)	135(50.0%)	24(8.9%)	9(3.3%)	1.78 \pm 2.00

Source: Author's Survey (2022)

Tourists' Perception of the Park

Table 5 shows that 43.7% and 39.6% of the respondents respectively strongly agreed and agreed that the park is of a global standard. More than half of the respondents (43.7% strongly agreed and 39.6% agreed) noted that the park has enough amenities. 29.6% and 51.9% of the respondents respectively strongly agreed and agreed that the amenities of the park are in good condition. 28.5% and 55.6% of the respondents also strongly agreed and agreed respectively that the park essentially has modern facilities. Over half of the respondents (37.8% strongly agreed and 50% agreed) noted that it is easy to locate the park. The respondents perception of of the park includes, the park is of a global standard (\bar{X}

$=1.79\pm0.87$), there are enough amenities in the park ($\bar{X}=2.05\pm0.87$), amenities in the park are in very good condition ($\bar{X}=1.96\pm0.83$), the park essentially has modern facilities ($\bar{X}=1.94\pm0.79$) and it is easy to locate the park ($\bar{X}=1.78\pm2.00$).

DISCUSSION

The fact that a significant proportion of the respondents (53% strongly agreed and 37.4% agreed) submitted that the park can lead to environmental beautification aligns with the submission of William et al. (2019) that while these acts of cleaning and greening are essential to placemaking, they are motivated by the achievement of broader aesthetic and social goals. The submission that the environment is



cleaner as a result of the park is contrary to the submission of Dusanka & Zarko (2016) that since hygiene and cleaning products may contain toxicological and eco-toxicological properties, they can negatively affect human and environmental health. The position that pollution of the environment has reduced is contrary to the submission of Shuang-Hau & Jian-meng (2022) that tourism destinations have caused tremendous pressure on the surrounding and regional environment. The submission that the park has led to the loss of biological diversity aligns with the submission of Jeffrey et al. (2016) that the tourism industry can negatively affect wildlife, plants and natural ecosystems through habitat destruction, pollution, over-exploitation of natural resources and visitor impacts to sensitive ecosystems. The analysis revealed that the park was perceived to have more negative impacts on the environment. These are the fact that the park has led to the increase in gas emission, the park has led to the loss of biological diversity, and as a result of the presence of visitors at the park, there is increased deposit of waste in the environment. Ghobadi & Verdian (2016) noted that part of the irreparable negative impacts of tourism on cities is waste pollution, polluted water from seashores and rivers, as well as variations in the landscape and scenery of the hinterlands and cities. The negative impacts of the park on the environment are usually precipitated by the actions and behaviors of tourists at the park. Olawuyi (2024) noted that different forms of tourists behavioral tendencies at a tourism site can be tracked and analysed using data analytics. It is evident that theme parks are known to result in or escalate the beautification of any area where it is sited. Levochkina (2018) asserts that a major example of a theme park contributing to the enhancement of a territory is Walt

Disney World, because, Orlando ab-initio was essentially an agrarian area, known for citrus fruits, but Walt Disney has significantly led to its development and attractiveness.

The essence of drawing out the negative impacts of the theme park on the environment is to ensure that they will subsequently be ameliorated or controlled, to have environmental sustainability. Baloch et al. (2023) opined that sustainability of the environment is an intentional effort for the future targeted at the conservation of social and cultural heritage as well as the preservation of nature-based assets in protecting the ecosystem via the support of individuals' health as well as financial capacities. There must be intentional efforts by the owners of various tourism destinations, inclusive of theme parks and government agencies to reduce and control environmental degradation and air pollution as a result of tourism patronage. Zhang et al. (2020) submitted that tourism locations in China are advocating for instant policies to mitigate air pollution as well as improve the sustainable development of the environment. Notably, standard deviation and mean values were used to rank the indicators as follows; the park has led to an increase in gas emission, the park has led to the loss of biological diversity, the pollution of the environment has reduced as a result of the presence of the park, as a result of the presence of the visitors at the park, there is increased deposit of waste in the environment, as a result of the park, the environment is cleaner, the park has led to the beautification of the environment.

Theme park resulting in the growth and multiplication of businesses aligns with the submission of Ady et al. (2010) that it is evident that theme parks and attractions contribute greatly to the



sustainability of destinations in many areas. The theme park has enhanced wealth distribution in the community, which is corroborated by David (2013) who submitted that economic wealth is increasingly concentrated in areas where parks are cited. The study revealed that the park has a positive influence on the economy of the park's community. Hence, the general perception of the tourists with respect to the impact of the park on the economy is positive and satisfactorily. It is evident that good tourists patronage at the resort is consequent of the positive perception of the tourists about the resort (Olawuyi et al., 2024). The positive impacts of the park on the economy are in the following order; the park has enhanced foreign exchange earnings, the park has led to an increase in wealth distribution, the park has led to an increase in job creation, the park has led to the growth and multiplication of businesses, the park has attracted complementary businesses. Sasaki et al. (1997) asserted that theme parks in Japan have raised employment to 1711 persons with regards to the direct impact on the park, and 573 persons in indirect impact. At least, the theme park will employ some people who live in the park's community, city and state. Milman et al. (2010) opined that a theme park contributes to the sustainable development of a destination via the provision of jobs for different sections of the labour market. Theme parks have significantly added to the improvement of the financial register of tourism (Dong & Siu, 2013). The rank score for the indicators of the impact of the park on the economy (12.78 ± 5.2) were rated critically based on their mean and standard deviation as follows, the park has enhanced foreign exchange earnings, the park has led to the increase in wealth distribution, the park has caused inflation, the park has led to the increase in job creation, the park has led to the growth and multiplication of businesses,

the park has enhanced foreign exchange earnings and the park has attracted complimentary businesses. It is also notable that there is a significant relationship between the economy of the park and the infrastructural development of the community. In the same vein, there is a significant relationship between the economy of the park and the park's environment.

The presence of tourists at a tourism destination can negatively impact the environment of the tourism destination, most time as a result of the naivety of the tourists about the waste management practises of such tourism destination. Edmundo & Navia (2015) opined that additionally, tourists are usually not informed about the management of waste in a particular area, as a result of the fact that the tourists are temporarily present in such area, so they might not take time to comprehend waste management practises peculiar to such area. Conscious or unconscious illicit littering of the ground of tourism destinations with wastes by tourists will have a resultant negative impact on the tourism destination's environment. Seifi & Ghobadi (2017) noted that tourism activities are capable of damaging the environment as well as causing several societal challenges. A Tourism destination can either quickly intimate tourists of the waste management procedures of the tourism destination or ensure that waste bins are placed at close range in the tourism destination. Aziz & Jefri (2019) stated that tourism management could inform tourists to be environmentally aware of waste-reduction-reuse-recycling activities. It is therefore notable that in the light of the transformative learning theory adopted for this study, it is expected of the owners cum managers of a theme park to continually study the different dimensions of the impact of the theme park on the environment; and also ensure that there are established procedures to inform tourists



about waste management procedures and regulations of the park. This can enhance tourists' and prospective tourists' perceptions about theme parks) submitted that It is trite that specific indicators can influence people's perception of tourism destinations negatively or positively (Ogundare et al., 2022; Olawuyi et al., 2017).

CONCLUSION

With respect to the mean values of the indicators of environmental impacts of the park, the impact of the park is highest with regards to its capacity to contribute to increased gaseous emissions, while, the least impact of the park is regarding the capacity of the park to lead to the beautification of the environment. On the contrary, the park has positive impacts on the economy of the study area. Concerning the mean values of the indicators of economic impact of the park, the impact of the park is highest in regards to its capacity to enhance foreign exchange earnings and the least impact of the park is in regards to its capacity to attract complimentary business. In light of the triple bottom theory adopted, it implies that the theme park gives preference to profit generation with less importance to the destruction of the environment (planet). The destruction or crass disregard of the environment equates to gradual destruction of human beings because human beings heavily depend on the environment for sustenance. As much as possible, a balance should therefore be struck between profit generation and preservation of the environment.

Recommendations

To ensure the sustainable development of the park, management of should switch to ecofriendly energy source so as to reduce emission of harmful gases.

Also, they should encourage planting of trees, so as to reduce the depletion of wildlife and intensify efforts at reducing environmental degradation and pollution.

Suggestions for Future Research

Scholars may study tourists satisfaction with respect to service quality at shoprite's theme park. In the same vein the engagement of information systems for advertising the theme park may be examined in the future by scholars.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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3 IMPACT OF SEA EROSION ON SUSTAINABLE COASTAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN GHANA. THE CASE OF SALTPOND BEACH RESORTS

Eric Kojo Wu Aikins

Abstract

Sea erosion forms one of the major negative impacts of climate change on sustainable coastal tourism development worldwide. Generally, this negative impact is more pronounced in developing countries where available beach resorts are struggling to persist. Principally, the challenge of operating a successful coastal beach resort in Ghana is aggravated by unexpected destruction of beach resort facilities by sea erosion that leave some affected facilities unsafe for public use (e.g. Saltpond @ the Beach resort along Saltpond coast). Based on the experiences of Saltpond beach resorts, the study analysed the impact of sea erosion on sustainable urban coastal tourism development in Ghana. Mainly, the study found that climate change and human induced factors contribute to the persistent sea erosion along the coast of Saltpond. Finally, the study recommended the implementation of three principal sea erosion mitigation strategies; integrated coastal development planning, building of sea defence wall, and combined mitigation measures.

Keywords: climate change; sea erosion, sustainable coastal tourism development; urban beach resort; integrated coastal development planning.

INTRODUCTION

Climate Change, Global Warming, Sea Level Rise and Sea Erosion Nexus

Generally, the climate of the earth has changed. Currently, the earth is warmer than it was in the late 19th century (Aikins, 2012; Aikins, 2011; IPCC, 2023; IPCC, 2022; IPCC, 2022*; Nicholls, 2003; Neumann et al., 2000; World Meteorological Organization, 2023). For instance, global surface temperatures have risen from 1.5°C to about 4 °C between 1850 and 1900 resulting in a higher incidence of global warming (IPCC, 2023; IPCC, 2022; IPCC, 2022*; World Meteorological Organization, 2023). Specifically, the current annual mean global near-surface temperature for the period 2023-2027 is predicted to be 1.1°C and 1.8°C (98% confidence). Which is higher than that of the pre-industrial levels of 1850-1900 (IPCC, 2023; IPCC, 2022; World Meteorological Organization, 2023).

This predictable increase in global surface temperature is expected to worsen the current negative impacts of global warming including rising sea levels, increasing thawing of Arctic/Antarctic ice, increase mean sea temperatures that are associated with increased sea erosion in coastal areas of the world (Aikins, 2012; Aikins, 2011; Mentaschi et al., 2018; Nicholls, 2003; Neumann et al., 2000).

Globally, sea levels are estimated to increase by between 0.26-0.63 metres in low emission scenario and 0.33-0.82 metres in high emission scenario by the end of 2100 (IPCC, 2013). Specifically, climate change is expected to be associated with substantial sea level rise along the coast of the United States where current estimates indicate that over the past century sea levels have risen from 10cm to 20cm.



With global warming accelerating at an unprecedented rate in recent years, mean sea levels of the United States are expected to increase from 1.0-2.5mm per annum to about 5mm per annum corresponding to about 50cm rise in mean sea level per century (Cai et al., 2009; IPPC, 2013; IPPC, 2007). Practically, this rate could be higher when recent greenhouse scenarios are applied. The cost of the 50cm sea level rise is estimated to be between US\$20-150 billion (Neumann et al., 2000). Also, by 2100 global mean sea level is expected to rise between 28 and 98cm higher than the average between 1986-2005 (Dean and Dalrymple, 2001; Toimil et al., 2020;).

According to Moore and McInnes (2020), in England one of the major predicted impacts of climate change on sea erosion is the rising sea levels that are over 1 metre. The authors intimated that this level is expected to increase to about 2.5 metres in the nearest future. Similarly, Masselink and Russell (2013) reported that coastal areas of Ireland, England and Wales are experiencing coastal erosion more than 10cm per annum due mainly to sea level rise and could increase in the future. Also, they reported that damages due to coastal erosion in the United Kingdom is estimated to be about £15 million per annum and may rise to £126 million per annum by 2080.

Coastal Zone and Sea Erosion Interrelationship

Traditionally, costal zones form one of the key climate change hot spots that are undergoing faster and dramatic negative social and environmental changes, primarily due to the negative impact of sea erosion (Dean & Dalrymple, 2001; Torresan et al., 2012). According to Cai et al. (2009) about 60% (two-third) of major cities in the world that house about 60% of the world's urban population have more socio-economic developments located in costal zones. For example,

in Australia about 85% of the population live in coastal zones within 50km of the coastline, which could be costly (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001-02). Specifically, Moore and McInnes (2020) noted that the economic cost of living in coastal areas within 500 metres away from the sea could be estimated to be about €1,000 million in Europe.

Additionally, coastal areas serve as protective buffer zone between the land and the sea that house about 40% of the world's population (Mentaschi et al., 2018). Within this zone exist important natural and spatio-economic resources (coastal forest, beaches and coastal in-land water bodies) that are often harnessed to cater for the needs of the growing coastal population in the world including Ghana. For instance, global loss of coastal land between 1984 and 2015 was measured to be about 28,000km², almost equivalent to the surface area of Haiti (Mentaschi et al., 2018). Also, Mentaschi et al. (2018) found that loss of coastal land due mainly to coastal erosion was more than the accreted land during the period of their study on the long-term observations of coastal erosion and accretion.

Ghana's coastal zone lies in the southern part of the country. It extends from Aplao (East) to Half Assini [West)] (see the insert map in Figure 2). It covers about 6.5% of the country's land area of 238,535km² spanning between the southern parts of four administrative regions; Volta, Greater Accra, Central and Western (Aikins, 2018; World Bank Group, 1998). It is a home to about 25% of the country's coastal population and contributes to 80% of fish production along a 550km coastline (World Bank Group, 2018). Additionally, this zone contains Ghana's mangrove vegetation that is estimated to cover about 72.4km² of land composing of over 18 million trees distributed from the east coast to the west coast of Ghana with the highest distribution in



the Volta Region and the lowest in the Central Region (Nunoo & Agyekumhene, 2022).

Spatio-economic-wise, the coastal zone of Ghana supports a wide range of activities including agricultural, fishing, commerce and tourism development (Aikins, 2018; Appeaning Addo & Appeaning Addo, 2016; World Bank Group, 1998).

The Problem

The problem of sea erosion is global in nature (Cai et al., 2009; Lyane, 2017). For instance, about 70% of the beaches in the world are receding at an accelerated rate that calls for global effort to mitigate the risk associated with sea erosion (Cai et al., 2009; Lyane, 2017). Specifically, climate change is associated with over 75% of the world's shoreline erosion problems with coastal erosion expected to have greater negative impact on coastal shoreline, particularly in urban coastal regions where some communities risk being removed completely from the urban coastal landscape due to the negative impact of climate change induced sea erosion (Coelho et al., 2023). For instance, in the United Kingdom out of the total 17,381km long coastline about 3,008km (17.3%) is currently under erosion (Masselink & Russell, 2013).

Obviously, coastal erosion has become an environmental problem in the coastal zone of Ghana (Appeaning Addo & Appeaning Addo, 2016; EPA, 2003). Coastal erosion both natural and human induced results in the destruction of coastal infrastructure and properties (Moore & McInnes, 2020; World Bank Group, 2018; World Bank

Group, 2016). For instance, Appeaning Addo et al. (2008) reported that Ghana's urban coastal areas are expanding with increasing utilization of coastal zone resources, particularly beach sand through uncontrolled and unsustainable beach sand winning activities in most affected coastal communities (Appeaning Addo et al., 2008).

The coast of Saltpond has experienced frequent sea erosion impacts over the past decades. During these past periods, a sizeable extent of the coconut trees and other coastal vegetation that beautifully decorated the coast of Saltpond making it a suitable place for relaxation and recreation were removed through sea erosion. In recent times (after the year 2000), due to the negative impacts of climate change that is mainly manifested through increasing sea erosion has resulted in a further reduction in the extent of the beach vegetation cover along the coast of Saltpond.

Further, the increased sea erosion activities along the coast of Saltpond is threatening the long term survival and operation of beaches and resorts in Saltpond. Specifically, some beach resort facilities have been destroyed while others have closed down due to the negative impact of sea erosion. For instance, in 2023 Saltpond @ the Beach Resort, a major beach resort along the coast was closed down mainly due to the destructive impact of sea erosion that has left the facility half broken and unsafe for public use (Figure 1). This study therefore analyses the impact of sea erosion on sustainable urban coastal tourism development in Ghana based on the experiences of Saltpond beach resorts.



Figure 1: Photographic Evidence of the Destructive Impact of Sea Erosion along the Coast of Saltpond.

Source: Author, 2023.

The Study Area

Saltpond, the ancient capital of the Central Region of Ghana is located along the coast of Mfantseman Municipality of Ghana. Currently, it is the capital town and the most populous urban coastal community in the Mfantseman Municipality (Figure 2).

It is located 18 miles away from Cape Coast, the ancient capital of Ghana (currently the capital town of Central Regional of Ghana).

By absolute location Saltpond lies on the geographic coordinates: 5.2023°N and 1.0514°W.

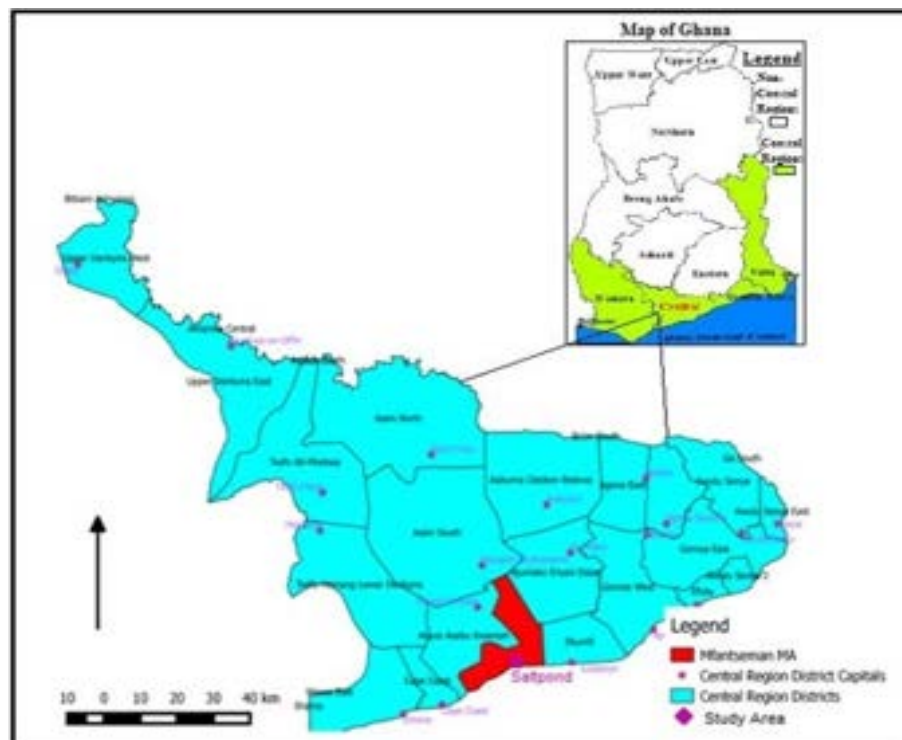


Figure 2: A Map of Central Region in Ghana Showing the Study Area: Saltpond

Source: Mfantseman Municipal Assembly, 2020 (modified by Author, 2023).



The population of Saltpond was 20,114 in 2010 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Currently, Saltpond's population is estimated to be about 24,689 in 2023 (World Population Review, 2023).

The coastline of Saltpond (i.e. only the upper town of Saltpond) covers about 2.2km (from the Atofa lagoon located between Saltpond Upper and Lower towns in the east to Nana Zema lagoon in Kormantse in the west) of the 21km coastline of the Mfantseman Municipality's stretch of the most

beautiful beaches in Ghana, which are about 60 metres above sea level (Figures 2 and 3; Mfantseman Municipal Assembly, 2021; Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). A total of six beach resorts mark the beautiful sandy beach of Saltpond. This makes the town one of the most attractive tourist and recreational destinations for both domestic and foreign tourists that travel to Saltpond to enjoy the sunny, clean and beautiful beach that the town offers.



Figure 3: The Coastline of Saltpond.

Source: Author, 2023 (Map based on Google Earth, 2021 Satellite Image).

METHODOLOGY

The study employed the case study research design to assess the negative impact of sea erosion on coastal tourism development at the beach resorts in Saltpond. In practice, the study involved all available stakeholders; beach resorts operators, the Directors of NADMO and Physical/Spatial Planning Unit of Mfantseman Municipality and a representative of the Regional Director of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Cape Coast. The involvement of the relevant stakeholders helped to collect representative data about sea erosion and sustainable urban coastal tourism development along the Saltpond coast. The analyses of the study data helped the study achieve its set

objectives and answered the research questions it posed.

The focus of the study was on the beach resorts in Saltpond. The negative impacts of sea erosion are observable in these beach resorts. Traditionally, beach resorts represent coastal tourism facilities (beach residential and recreational facilities) that provide accommodation, recreation, entertainment (spots/bars) and rest spots (lounges) services to the general public and tourist (Gonzales, 2021; Mazlina & Khairil 2018). Similarly, in this study beach resorts are considered to be tourism facilities located along the coast of Saltpond that provide accommodation or entertainment (spot/bar/lounge) or recreational services to the general public and tourist. Thus, beach spots, bars



and lounges along the coast of Saltpond formed part of the beach resorts that the study surveyed. In all, six beach resorts (three traditional beach resorts with accommodation services and three beach spots/bar/lounge) can be found along the coast of Saltpond (Figure 4). The three traditional beach resorts are:

- i. Manna Beach Resort: The only active and functional traditional beach resort.
- ii. African Vibration Beach Resort (formerly known as Mfansteman Beach Resort):

Temporary closed down mainly due to management problems.

- iii. Saltpond @ the Beach Resort: Currently closed down mainly due to sea erosion impact.

The remaining three beach resorts are Ocean Side Beach Spot/lounge, Victoria Beach Spot, and Saltpond City Beach Spot (Figure 4). However, the study surveyed four out of the six beach resorts due to the closure of the African Beach Resort and Saltpond @ the Beach Resort.

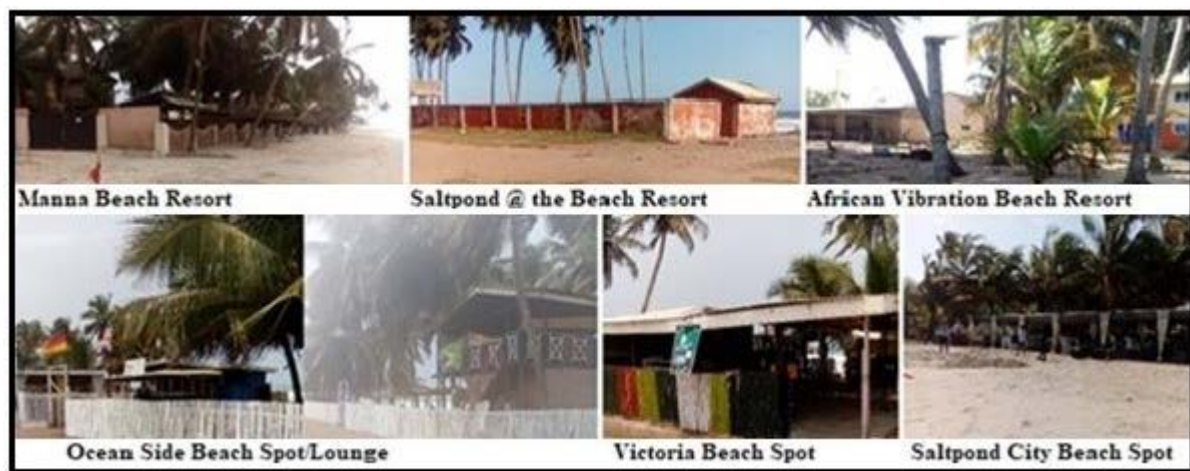


Figure 4: Saltpond Beach Resorts.

Source: Author, 2023.

In terms of data collection the study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques that helped the study to collect the needed primary data. The field survey data were statistically analysed (based on percent distributions) to help the study address the research problem and achieve the study objectives. Additionally, using the Google Earth Distance Measuring tool and Google Earth Data (2021 satellite image of the earth and recent 2023 photographs of Saltpond beach) spatial/photogrammetric analyses were performed to identify the extent of shoreline change mainly due to sea erosion along the coast of Saltpond (refer to

the discussion on Figure 5). Further, field observations (sensory observations with the help of a camera) were conducted where photographs were taken to provide evidence of the state of the sea erosion and its associated negative impacts on Saltpond beach resorts.

Finally, the results of the study data analyses were presented in tables, figures, and maps and were discussed thematically.

RESULTS

Generally, the analyses of the study data (statistical-wise) revealed that Climate change and



human induced factors form the major factors that explain the persistent occurrence of sea erosion along Saltpond coast (Table 1). Additionally, based on the qualitative data analysis (summarized views of respondents) the building of sea defence as a measure for controlling the negative impact of sea erosion on beach resorts was recommended to be the most effective and popular sea erosion mitigation technique. Further, the analysis of the spatial data (Photogrammetric Analysis) revealed a reduction in the size of the beach extent (about 18 metres) in the study area between 2001 and 2023 (Figure 5).

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Background Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 indicates that all beach resort managers/caretakers who were interviewed were males (100%) aged between 27 and 38 years with a mean age of 31 years. The presence of all male beach resort Managers in this study is coincidental since it is common to find females that manage beach resorts and other tourist facilities in Saltpond and in other

parts of Ghana. Also, Table 1 reveals that out of the four Managers interviewed two (50%) had attained tertiary level of education with the remaining two had completed Junior High School (25%) and Senior High School (25%) respectively. Generally, the higher level of skills needed to manage traditional beach resorts and lounges explains why 50% of the resort operators had attained tertiary level of education.

In all, the results revealed that all the four beach resort facilities were registered with the Mfantseman Municipal Assembly (MMA) and were operating legally in compliance with the by-laws of the MMA. Comparatively, the study finds this result to be in contrast with the finding of a study by Boafo et al. (2014) that asserted that some of the beach tourism facilities along Bortianor and Kokrobite coast of Accra were unplanned and lacked request permit that could negatively affect the ecological stability of the coastal communities that the resorts operate in.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Background of Respondents (Beach Resort Operators).

Coastal Tourism Facility	Gender	Age in Years	Highest Educational Level	Registration of Facility with MMA*	Years of Operation of Facility by Respondent
Manna Beach Resort	Male	27	Tertiary	Yes	0.25 (4 Months)
Ocean Side Beach Spot/Lounge	Male	29	Tertiary	Yes	1
Saltpond City Beach Spot	Male	31	Secondary/Vocational	Yes	1
Victoria Beach	Male	38	Junior High	Yes	13
All Beach Resorts	4 (100%)	Mean Age: 31		4 (100%)	

*MMA: Mfantseman Municipal Assembly.

Source: Author, 2023.

Causes and Mitigation of Sea Erosion along Saltpond Beach

In terms of climate change (natural) related causes of sea erosion two main factors; Extreme



High Sea Tide and Frequency of Sea Wave Impact, which mainly occurs three or more times in a year along the coast of Saltpond were identified and examined (Table 2). Specifically, all the respondents (Yes: 100 %) attributed the natural cause of sea

erosion along the coast of Saltpond to Extreme High Sea Tide that could be attributed to high sea rise and increasing thawing of Arctic/Antarctic ice (Aikins, 2012; Aikins, 2011; Mentaschi et al., 2018; Nicholls, 2003; Toimil et al., 2020).

Table 2: Causes and Mitigation of Sea Erosion

Coastal Tourism Facility	Climate Change Related (Natural) Factors		Human Induced (Anthropogenic) Factors	Major Mitigation Measure	Damage Caused By Sea Wave Impact
	Extreme High Sea Tide	Frequency of Sea Wave Impact Per Year			
Manna Beach Resort	Yes	Two times	a. Increasing sand winning activities for urban infrastructural development	a.Protect (Sea Defence Wall)	No
Ocean Side Beach Spot/Lounge			b. Creation of sea defence along the coast (Elmina/Cape Coast/Anomabo)	a.Protect: (Sea Defence Wall)	
Saltpond City Beach Spot	Yes	One time	a. Increasing sand winning activities for urban infrastructural development	a.Protect: (Sea Defence Wall)	Yes
Victoria Beach-Spot	Yes	Three or more times	a. Increasing sand winning activities for urban infrastructural development	a.Protect: (Sea Defence Wall)	No
			a. Increasing sand winning activities for urban infrastructural development	a. Protect: (Sea Defence Wall)	
Total (All Beach Resorts)	4 (100%)		a = 75% b = 25%	a = 100%	No: 75% Yes: 25%

Source: Field Survey, 2023.



Overall, this result is consistent with the results of the photogrammetric analyses in Figure 5 that shows that a sizeable proportion (about 18 metres) of the coastal vegetation (coconut trees in front of Saltpond @ the Beach Resort) has been removed by sea erosion between 2021 and 2023.



Figure 5: Removal of Coastal Vegetation along Saltpond Beach between 2021 and 2023.

Source: Author, 2023.

Concerning human induced (anthropogenic) causes of sea erosion along the coast of Saltpond, 75% of the respondents confirmed that Increasing Sand Winning activities for urban infrastructural development forms the major causal factor. Generally, beach sand winning forms one of the major human induced (anthropogenic) activities that hastens the onset and recurrence of sea erosion in coastal communities in Ghana.

In the study area, sand winning activities were found to be prevalent. For instance, Figure 6 shows areas where sand winning activities had taken place during the period that the study's survey data collection and field observations were conducted. Also, Figure 6 shows the presence of shovels and spades that had been used to win sand a moment before the arrival of the researcher at the affected location in the western end of Saltpond coast.

Similarly, some bags of beach sand were found packed close to the Manna Beach Resort that signifies the activities of sand winners along the coast close to the beach resort.

In principle, beach sand winning facilitates the lowering of affected shoreline that pave way for an increased inflow of sea water inland-ward that could cause or intensify the rate of sea erosion in affected coastal areas. Practically, this observation supports the result of the present study that principally attributed the cause of human induced sea erosion to beach sand winning along the coast of Saltpond. The photographic evidence provided in Figure 6 supports this result. However, 25 % of the respondents attributed the cause of erosion along the coast of Saltpond to the creation of sea defence walls along the coast of neighbouring coastal



communities, particularly Cape Coast, Elmina and Anomabo (Table 2).



Figure 6: Photographic Evidence of Sea Shore Sand Winning.

Source: Author, 2023.

Similarly, this result coincides with the view expressed in a study by Gbedemah (2023), which asserts that increased construction of sea defence in Ghana could have negative impact on the population of neighbouring coastal communities. For instance, a World Bank Group (2018) study noted that the construction of the Keta defence wall (a hard engineering technique that combined the use of groynes and revetments) led to a down-drift coastal erosion along the Ghana-Togo boarder by 50% (Addo et al. 2008; Appeaning Addo & Appeaning Addo, 2016).

Further, Table 2 reveals that only Ocean Side Beach Spot/Lounge suffered some damages (loss of bottles and destruction of washroom facilities) due to the recurrent sea erosion along Saltpond beach. In all, the cost of the damage was estimated to amount to US\$ 1,000.00.

In finding out the most effective (major) sea erosion mitigation measure that could be employed in the study area to help protect lives and properties of vulnerable areas along the coast of Saltpond, the Protect Mitigation Measure through the construction of coastal sea defence wall was mentioned by all beach resorts Managers (100 %)

that the study interviewed. This result is expected because the use of sea defence wall in controlling the negative effects of sea/coastal erosion has become popular in recent times although it is not a relatively cheaper mitigation measure (Addo et al. 2008; Appeaning Addo & Appeaning Addo, 2016; Masselink & Russell, 2013).

Impact of Sea Erosion on Saltpond Coastal Tourism Development

In all, four main negative impacts of sea erosion on the available coastal tourism facilities and the general coastal environment were identified and discussed as follows:

Destruction of coastal beach resort

One of the important evidences of the negative impact of sea erosion on sustainable urban coastal tourism development in Ghana is the destruction of some beach resort facilities in the study area. Currently, Saltpond @ the Beach Resort has closed down due to the negative impact of sea erosion that resulted in the breakdown of the front wall and some parts of the bar of the beach resort in 2023 (Figure 1). This has rendered the beach resort



unsafe for public use. Similarly, Figure 1 shows additional damaging effect of sea erosion in the front part of Ocean Side Beach Spot/Lounge where sea erosion has broken down part of the spot's washroom facility and the frontage of the spot. Also, Figure 1 shows the effect of sea erosion along certain parts of the coast of the study area where coconut trees along the beach have been removed or are almost removed from their stable ecological settings.

Destruction of coastal vegetation (Coconuts)

Not only has the recurrent sea erosion in the study area caused physical damage to beach resort facilities but also, it has contributed to the removal of coconut trees that form the most important coastal

vegetation along the coast of Saltpond. Figure 7 provides evidence of both natural (removal of coconut trees by sea erosion) and human induced destruction of beach coconut trees (cutting of coconut trees to make way for the construction of beach resort and beach housing facilities). Traditionally, the presence of coconut trees and other coastal vegetation including mangroves are found to help provide vital ecosystem support and services that help sustain coastal ecologies and environments (Jarungrattanapong & Manasboonphempool, 2009). For instance, the roots of beach coconut trees help bind the loose beach sand together and prevent the sand in coconut trees covered areas from being easily washed away by the sea water.



Figure 7: Photographic Evidence of Coconut Trees Destroyed by the Sea Erosion.

Source: Author, 2023.



Figure 8: Photographic Evidence of Re-littering of Saltpond Coast through Sea Erosion.

Source: Author, 2023.



Re-littering of beaches

Figure 8 portrays the distribution of litter and refuse that has been deposited, accumulated and buried along the coast of the study area. Although on the surface Saltpond beach could be considered to be among the cleanest beaches in Ghana some portions of the beach below the surface are filled with litter. Through beach resort operators' watchfulness cleanliness and sanitation of Saltpond beach has improved considerably. For instance, some beach resort operators have managed to stop the public from dumping refuse along the coast. Nevertheless, the coast of Saltpond could be re-littered overnight through incessant sea erosion that remove the top beach sand cover including coconut trees that allow the accumulated buried refuse to be unearthed and redistributed along the coast of the study area. This phenomenon could be attributed mainly to the removal of coconut trees along the coast due to sea erosion.

Practically, the fibrous roots of beach coconuts bind the buried refuse and the sea shore sand together, which prevents the refuse buried beneath the beach sand to be easily washed away into the sea. However, through increased cutting down and removal of beach coconut trees by sea erosion some of the refuse buried under the beach sand get exposed, washed into the sea and get returned to the beach to re-litter the coast of the study area as secondary litter/refuse. In practice, this phenomenon could limit the effective use and patronage of beach resorts along the coast of Saltpond in particular and sustainable coastal tourism development in Ghana in general. This is because, generally tourist (particularly foreign tourist) would want to enjoy clean and healthy

tourism goods (Eshun & Tichaawa, 2019; Mensah, 2006).

Sustainable Urban Coastal Tourism Development along Saltpond Coast: The Role of Policy Regulating Agencies

Table 3 presents information on the major causes of sea erosion, major mitigation measures, and effective sustainable development measures that were identified to be capable of helping to address the devastating impact of sea erosion on sustainable coastal tourism development in the study area. Specifically, Table 3 indicates that all the study regulating agencies respondents (Physical/Spatial Planning Unit of MMA, NADMO and EPA) agreed that Beach Sand Winning and Cutting-down of Beach Coconut Trees form the main causes of sea erosion in the study areas and in Ghana as a whole. Also, climate change related factors (ice melt due to global warming/climate change and sea level rise) were confirmed to be among the major causes of sea erosion along the coast of Saltpond and in Ghana in general (Table 3).

Regarding the quest for major mitigation measures, Table 3 reveals that the Building of Sea Defence Wall was identified to be the most preferred mitigation measure. This result coincides with the result portrayed in Table 1 in which all the managers of beach resorts identified that the building of sea defence wall along the coast of Saltpond could help control and prevent sea erosion in the study area. This result is expected since the building of sea defence wall has been used to control and prevent the devastating impact of sea erosion in other relatively nearby coastal communities of Anomabo, Cape Coast and Elmina.

**Table 3: The Role of Policy Regulators in Sustainable Urban Coastal Tourism Development.**

Regulatory Agencies	Major Causes of Sea Erosion Along Saltpond Beach	Major Mitigation Measures	Sustainable Tourism Development Measures
Physical Planning Unit (MMA*)	i. Cutting of trees (coconut trees) along the coast ii. Sand winning iii. Climate change related issues	i. Planting of coconut trees along the beach ii. Prevent the cutting down of coconut trees along the beach iii. Sea defence engineering	i. Preparation of physical development plans (building plans) and strict adherence to the implementation of the plans
National Disaster Management Organization (MMA)	i. Sand winning ii. Sea defence in other places iii. Ice melt due to Global Warming/Climate Change	i. Sea defence in coastal areas affected by sea erosion including Saltpond ii. Complete stoppage of beach sand winning activities	i. Improved road network to coastal tourism facilities to allow for easy access of facilities ii. Clean coastal environment and improved sanitation iii. Improved security in coastal tourism facilities and towns
Environmental Protection Agency, Cape Coast	i. Sea level rise ii. Sand winning iii. Population growth iv. Degradation of coastal vegetation (coconuts/wetland/mangroves)	i. Sea defence ii. Education to bring about positive attitudinal change towards the use of coastal resources iii. Enforcement of bylaws that regulate the use of coastal resources	i. Annual prize to beach resorts/spots/lounges that promotes coastal greening and environmental cleanliness ii. Publish the names of safe and clean beach resorts/spots/lounges in the newspapers and reputable magazines iii. Colour codes could be assigned and displayed on signboards of beach resorts/spots/lounges to alert prospective tourist about the level of quality of tourism good they may patronize iv. Collaboration between all coastal tourism development stakeholders including local chiefs, chief fishermen and land property owners to help encourage sustainable use of urban coastal resources

*MMA: Mfantseman Municipal Assembly.

Source: Field Interview, 2023.



Finally, Table 3 reveals that responses on the identification of major sustainable tourism development measure varied widely. In effect, there is no one single measure identified to be the preferred major sustainable tourism development measure common to the study area. Instead the representatives of the three regulating agencies interviewed stated measures that are complementary in nature that could be employed and implemented together to help improve and sustain urban coastal tourism development in the study area and in Ghana in general. For instance, Preparation of Physical Development Plans (beach resort facilities plans) and Strict Adherence to the Implementation of Development Plans by the responsible regulatory agencies could help provide well organised beach resorts that have clean coastal environments and improved beach sanitation (Table 3).

Further, to sustain the level of improved coastal environmental cleanliness and sanitation attained by urban beach resorts annual prizes and award ceremonies could be organized to honour the cleanest beach resorts. The names of award winning urban beach resorts could be published in reputable tourism marketing magazines and newspapers that could provide a form of advertisement for award winning resorts. Furthermore, this initiative could provide both local and foreign tourist an important information that could help them choose the best clean urban beach resort that they wish to patronise (Table 3).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Overall, the study found that major causes of sea erosion along the coast of Saltpond could be attributed to the interplay of two main forces; climate change related factors (Extreme High Sea Tide and High Frequency of Sea Wave Impact) and

anthropogenic/human induced factors (Increasing Beach Sand Winning for Urban Infrastructure Development).

Additionally, the study found that the negative impacts of sea erosion along the coast of the study area were visible and could be easily be identified through an observable physical destruction of beach resort facilities (broken walls of Saltpond @ the Beach Resort and the destruction of the toilet facility of the Ocean Side Beach Spot/Lounge), removal of coconut trees, and re-littering of affected beaches.

Also, the study established that Sea Defence Wall construction (a hard engineering techniques) was adjudged the most effective mitigation measure that could be used to control the recurrent sea erosion and its associated negative impacts on sustainable tourism development along the coast of Saltpond.

Finally, the study suggests the application of effective regulatory measures that involve all coastal tourism development stakeholders. This initiative could help improve coastal environmental cleanliness and sanitation with commensurable motivation and awards that are capable of motivating coastal tourism service providers to maintain clean coastal environment and improved sanitation in Ghana, particularly in the study area.

Recommendations for Controlling the Impact of Sea Erosion for Sustainable Urban Coastal Tourism Development

For a sustainable urban coastal tourism development to be achieved in Ghana, particularly in the study community the following strategies are outlined and discussed:

Integrated Coastal Development Planning.

Generally, Ghana needs a comprehensive plan/guidelines on erosion control for development projects in the country's



coastal zones that foster effective development of coastal zone resources just as in Malaysia (Department of Irrigation and Drainage, 1997).

Integrated coastal development planning forms one of the key strategies that could be employed to help control the negative impact of sea erosion on sustainable urban coastal tourism development in Ghana. Primarily, this could be achieved through effective planning and management of coastal resources by all urban coastal tourism development stakeholders including the MMDAs, Ghana Tourist Board and other government agencies, landowners/chiefs and the people of Ghana (Masselink & Russell, 2013). This participatory approach in planning and development of coastal resources for tourism purposes would ensure that the needs and requirements of all tourism development stakeholders are met before a particular urban coastal tourism development is sanctioned and allowed to operate.

This planning approach could be likened to the comprehensive planning approach in urban planning where planning is done comprehensively enough taking into consideration the needs and concerns of all stakeholders that ensures that the tenets (codes) of an approved comprehensive plan are respected and implemented by all stakeholders. In the end, comprehensive plans that are sanctioned by the laws of respective spatial jurisdictions and countries do not allow no one party/stakeholder to break any code or tenet outlined in the plan. If tourism planning is done similarly, no one stakeholder could take the planning and use of coastal resources for granted that could jeopardise the sustainable use of coastal resources for urban coastal tourism development purposes.

Building of Sea Defence Wall.

Sea defence wall forms one of the major sea erosion mitigation measures that is common to most developing countries including Ghana. It is a hard engineering technique that combines the use of construction materials such as rocks to develop groynes and revetments to help control sea wave impact and its associated erosive damaging consequences on affected coasts. Other hard engineering sea defence construction techniques include concrete sea walls, tetrapods, gabions, and offshore reefs (Amos & Akib, 2023; FAO, 2007).

Combined Mitigation Measures

In response to the limitations of sea defence wall construction already outlined in the preceding sections of the paper, the present study proposes a third strategy that considers the combination of both hard and soft engineering techniques and other relevant mitigation measures (FAO, 2007; Gbedemah, 2023; Masselink & Russell, 2013; Oteng-Ababio et al., 2011). Specifically, soft engineering sea erosion control techniques involves the use of the provisions of the natural coastal environment to prevent and control sea erosion. Common examples include beach nourishment, reprofiling, dune nourishment, managed retreat and coastal revegetation (replanting of beach coconuts/mangrove forest) (FAO, 2012). Although the techniques considered under the soft engineering approach present a natural and environmental friendlier means of fighting sea erosion some of the techniques are relatively expensive (for example beach nourishment) than most hard engineering techniques (Amos & Akib, 2023; FAO, 2012).



Regarding the evidence of the impact of sea erosion on Saltpond beach resorts the study propose the application of the combined sea erosion mitigation measure that combines the positive aspects of both the hard and soft engineering techniques and other relevant mitigation measures to help control the observed sea erosion along the coast

of Saltpond. For instance, Figure 9 demonstrates the possible use of both hard (sea defence wall) and soft (re-planting of coconut trees) engineering techniques to controlling sea erosion along the coast of selected beach resorts (e.g. Ocean Side Beach Spot/Lounge and Saltpond @ the Beach Resort) in the study area.

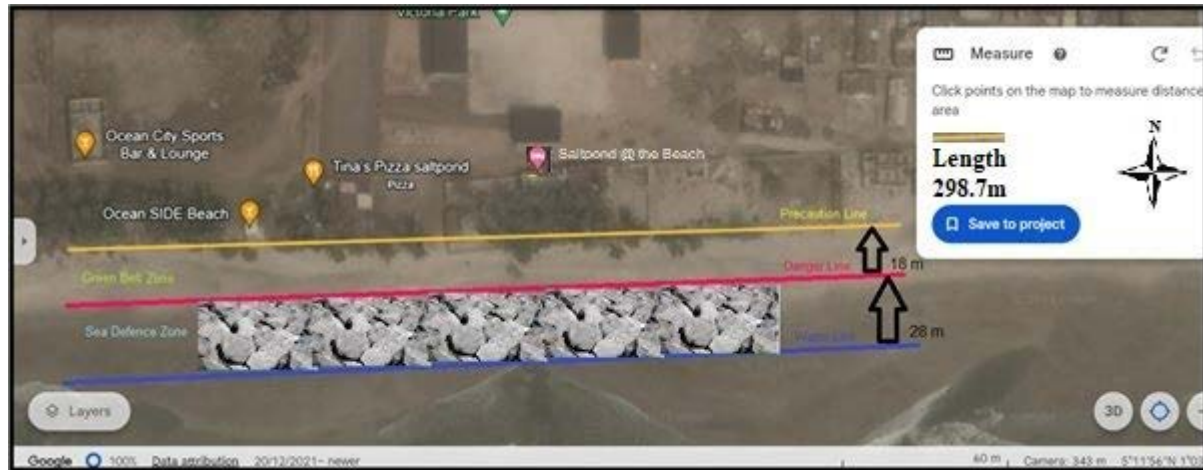


Figure 9: Photogrammetric Analysis of Sea Erosion Impact

Source: Author, 2023 (Map based on Google Earth, 2021 Satellite Image).

Particularly, Figure 9 shows the presence of some coastal vegetation (coconut trees) within the 18 metre Green Belt zone in 2021. This zone is located between the Precaution Line (current extent where green vegetation can be found) and the Danger Line (current extent where no vegetation can be found). However, the Green Vegetation Zone was found to be non-existent in 2023 (Figure 5).

To provide ample and natural protection for the coast of Saltpond would require the revegetation of the coast through re-planting of beach coconut trees that form part of the soft engineering technique (FAO, 2012). Although this approach could provide complete erosion protection for the affected coast, the feasibility of this option is weak unless it could be supported with other techniques that would protect the coconut seedlings from being removed by the sea

before they mature to offer the needed sea erosion protection.

In order to overcome this challenge the study propose the construction of a sea defence wall within the 28 metre Sea Defence Zone that could block the sea and prevent it from having direct contact with the coconut seedlings planted in the Green Vegetation Zone (Figure 9). By this means coconuts seedlings planted within the Green Vegetation Zone could grow up well to provide the need natural sea erosion protection to the affected beaches and beach resorts in the study area.

As an additional measure to help protect the coastal areas and beach resorts in Ghana from the devastating and destructive impact of sea erosion the study suggests the institution of a Ten Metre Compulsory Green Vegetation Zone, especially in areas that have not yet been developed



or affected by sea erosion. First, the study warns that any other development that will occur within this ten metre buffer zone except for the greening of the beaches should not be permitted. Second, offending developers should be made to demolish or relocate their development projects and revegetate any disturbed coastal area at their own cost.

In addition to the preceding measures, the study suggests the setting up of Environmentally Appropriate Designated Sand Winning Zones (EADSWZ) in all coastal communities in Ghana. This suggestion is made because the study considers the winning of beach sand a necessity for urban infrastructure development that needs to be exploited systematically and sustainably to help save the coast of Ghana from the dangers associated with sea erosion. Practically, a community survey could be conducted to identify sea shore sand dunes and sea shore sand deposit areas located in front of coastal cliffs and at the mouth of lagoons that could be exploited over a longer period of time with minimal environmental negative consequences. The EPA and the Environmental Units of MMDAs could be tasked with this responsibility.

Further, beach sand winners could be asked to pay appropriate fees for the sand they win in these designated areas. Part of the sand winning fees could be used to rehabilitate affected coast where necessary. This initiative when properly implemented could help in the sustainable and systematic winning and provision of beach sand for urban and rural infrastructural development in and around coastal communities in Ghana.

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Finally, the study suggests the setting of Coast Guard Units in coastal communities where environmentally damaging beach sand winning activities are prevalent. Although beach sand winning is prohibited in most coastal communities in Ghana the practice is prevalent because of lack of enforcement of the by-laws that regulate the exploitation and use of beach sand in affected coastal communities. As it stands, the beach sand winning by-laws of MMDAs in Ghana rely on voluntary reporting of suspected illegal beach sand winning activities. Although the law allows for some reasonable quantity of beach sand to be taken for domestic purposes only, what constitutes domestic use of beach sand is relative.

Since the law relies on voluntary reporting of beach sand winning offenders the public in most cases do not report offenders because strictly they are not under any obligation to do so, especially when the offenders are their own kinsfolk. It is about time that this 'Self-help Model' of protecting Ghana's coastal natural resources be changed to employ a more 'Spatio-economic Institutionalised Pragmatic Model' that relies on the use of institutionalised coast guard units. The coast guard units upon their establishment could be mandated by law to prevent, arrest and prosecute beach sand winning offenders. This would help stop the persistent illegal and environmentally damaging beach sand winning activities occurring along the coast of Saltpond and Ghana in general.

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4 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION OF WATER-BASED ECOTOURISM: PERSPECTIVES OF MANAGEMENT OF THE PAGA CROCODILES POND IN NORTHERN GHANA

Lydia Kwoyiga

Abstract

Ghana boasts of several ecotourist sites such as the Paga crocodile ponds which are contributing to the development of local communities. However, ecotourism is climate sensitive thus any change in climate consequently affects it. It is, therefore, not surprising that climate change is affecting ecotourism. Noteworthy, in Ghana evidence abounds of an increase in temperature and a decrease in mean annual rainfall in all the country's ecological zones with this having an impact on ecotourism attractions. To promote ecotourism under this changing climate, management, operators, and local communities in the country have put some adaptation measures in place. Therefore, this article, assesses management perceptions of climate change manifestations, climate change impacts and the nature of institutional arrangements adopted to promote climate change adaptation at one of the Paga crocodiles' ponds. An exploratory design involving the use of in-depth interviews, observation and desk reviews was applied to generate primary and secondary data for the analyses. Members of the Community Tourism Committee and tour guides were contacted. The results revealed that climate change manifestations in the form of an increase in temperature and a decrease in temperature have significant impacts on the pond and tourist activities. Water levels in the dam decreased while water temperature increased forcing the crocodiles out of their habitats which sometimes resulted in their death. The pond has also been invaded by alien crocodile species that sometimes attack the local reptiles. To enable the pond to adapt to climate change impacts, management recombines informal practices and institutions with formal institutions resulting in what is called institutional bricolage.

Keywords: climate change, ecotourism, bricolage, institutions, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is gaining currency in the world and contributing enormously to the development of local communities and national economies. According to Ouma et al. (2014), water-based ecotourism, for instance, has received a lot of attention in the Caribbean Islands, the USA and the Middle East as it is contributing significantly to economic development and nature conservation. In Ghana, ecotourism contributes to revenue generation, community development and natural resources conservation (Eshun, 2011; Eshun & Tagoe-Darko 2015).

Noteworthy, however, ecotourism is climate dependent as Tanrisever, Pamukçu. and Baydeniz (2024) noted, that rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and the increasing frequency

and severity of extreme weather events affect tourist sites and tourism supply and demand. According to Shaaban and Ramzy (2010, p. 243), "climate defines the length and quality of tourism seasons and plays a major role in destination choice and tourist spending. Climate affects a wide range of the environmental resources that are critical attractions for tourism, such as snow conditions, wildlife productivity and biodiversity, water levels and quality. Climate also has an important influence on environmental conditions that can deter tourists, including infectious disease, wildfires, insect or water-borne pests, and extreme events such as tropical cyclones". Marshall et al. (2011) thus, concluded that climate change affects the value and attraction of tourist destinations. According to Ijeomah and Aiyeloja (2009, p. 170), climate change



manifestations affect ecotourism. For instance, “drought affects ecotourism, disperses water birds which are core attractions for bird watchers; flooding destroys beach tourism, landslides adversely affect ecotourism, change in rainfall pattern has adverse effects on both mountaineering and cultural tourism. Intense heat and cold increase pest and disease outbreak, leads to death of animals, hinder germination, and cause crop failures which increases the cost of running tourism”

Analysis of future climate scenarios revealed that an increase in temperature will affect ecotourism that is ecosystem-dependent as there will be an invasion by alien species, over-exploitation, land use change, and habitat fragmentation among others (Devisscher, 2010). Citing the existing climate impacts on tourism in Brazil, Grimm et al. (2018) documented that climate change impacted tourism through the destruction of tourism infrastructure, reduction of periods of sun exposure and incidence of skin cancers.

This notwithstanding, it is noted that the management of tourist sites could play a significant role in navigating these places through any natural challenges such as climate impacts. As Barišić, and Marić (2012, p. 429) asserted “management of tourist organisations is about planning, leading, organising, controlling and managing resources. That process is seen in all kinds of tourism organisations. How successful their organisations will be run depends on tourism managers”. Therefore, management understanding of climate change, its impacts and adaptation is seen as critical in sustaining tourist sites and for the continuous promotion of tourism in local communities. Also, since management makes decisions that recognise the existing institutions and practices, it is expected that adaptation will be achieved. As noted, institutions shape the impact of climate change on communities, shape the way

communities respond to climate change and serve as the intermediaries for external support to adaptation (Agrawal et al., 2008). Gupta et al. (2010) added institutions enable societies to respond to the damages or benefits of climate by guiding that society to choose the best adaptation option. Furthermore, Mubaya and Mafongoya (2017) noted that institutional arrangements which may be informal sometimes encourage collective actions as a way of supporting vulnerable communities to adapt.

Ghana boasts of several ecotourist sites that serve as the top destinations for tourists. Northern Ghana in particular has notable natural water-based tourist sites; the Wachieu Hippopotamus Sanctuary and the Paga Crocodiles’ Ponds. The Paga crocodiles’ Ponds (two are noted for ecotourism) are not only contributing to community development through revenue generation from tourism but also significantly meeting the spiritual, cultural and social needs of the people. Furthermore, students visit the pond to have more practical knowledge and information on the history and culture of the people. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (2013) indicated in the Ghana National Climate Change Policy that climate change and its impacts are already evident in the form of an increase in temperature and a decrease in mean annual rainfall in all the country’s ecological zones. The average rate of increase in temperature has been 0.21°C per decade, with a more rapid increase in the northern regions of the country. On the part of rainfall, the policy states that rainfall in the country has decreased from the south to north over the past 40 years with rainfall patterns becoming more erratic in all the ecological zones in Ghana. Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (2015) using historical rainfall data, to predict future scenarios of climate change revealed that rainfall across the



country will decrease by 2.9% by 2040, with a slight increase of 1.1% in the mid future (2060) and later decrease in the far future (2080) by 1.7%. Throughout the country projected mean temperatures will increase in the near future by 3.8% by 2040, 5.6% by 2060 and further increase by 6.9%. Already, climate change manifestations are evident as “the three northern regions of Ghana have experienced extreme climate change pressures such as droughts, floods and heavy storms” (Alhassan and Hadwen, 2017, p. 2). In 2006 the northern part of the country experienced drought while in 2007 and 2010 there were floods (Martin, 2006). This significantly affected both human and animal lives. Regarding water resource availability in the country, Kankam-Yeboah et al. (2009) noted that the country is likely to experience water stress by 2025 even without the impacts of climate change even though climate change will exacerbate the situation. Since the ponds are mostly naturally recharged, this implies that the water supply in them will be consequently affected.

Noteworthy, a corpus of literature exists in Ghana that focuses on the socioeconomic contributions of tourism to local development (see Kwoyiga and Apusigah 2017) but little has been documented on climate change impacts on ecotourism, especially from the perspective of management in the country. One of the Paga crocodiles’ ponds which is the focus of this study was one of the cases studied by Yahaya et al. (2022), however, the study only examined the economic and environmental impacts of ecotourism, ignoring the impacts of climate change and adaptive measures of each study area. Furthermore, existing studies in the country about ecotourism and climate change adaptation (such as Abdul-Kadri et al. 2022; Ofori et al., 2021) largely ignored the place of institutions and water resources. Though Shaibu et al. (2018) studied climate change and institutions in northern Ghana, the focus was on farming. Kwoyiga (2019)

studied climate change and institutional roles, but the study explored groundwater resources for dry-season farming. Though Agyeman’s (2019) study focused on climate change adaptation in protected areas in Ghana, it rather identified ecotourism as an adaptation strategy.

Therefore, to contribute to the existing literature about climate change and ecotourism in the country, this article aims to assess management perceptions of climate change manifestations, climate change impacts and the nature of institutional arrangements adopted to promote climate change adaptation of one of the Paga Crocodiles Ponds commonly called the *Chief’s Pond*.

This research is significant because it provides insights into how ecotourism can be sustained under climate change impacts in Ghana. For instance, the results of the analyses of local management perceptions of climate manifestations contribute to creating local knowledge and awareness of climate change occurrences. The analysis sheds light on the myriad of challenges and costs that are associated with domestic tourism promotion in the face of climate change. The analysis of adaptation measures provides local climate data for the Ghanaian tourist industry in general. The study illuminates the often overlooked but significant contributions of community-level institutions, traditions and practices in addressing climate impacts. Methodologically, it contributes to advancing knowledge on the important application of institutional bricolage of Critical Institutionalism particularly to water resources issues in Africa (Mayaux, et al. 2023; Nunes & Fielmua, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ecotourism Development in Ghana

Ecotourism in Ghana, according to Eshun (2011) can be categorised into three levels: state-led



ecotourism; community-based ecotourism; and privately owned ecotourism. He explained that while state-led ecotourism initiatives focus on protected areas in the country and are managed solely by the Wildlife Division, community-based ecotourism that draws from local community natural resources is completely controlled by local communities. On the other hand, Zeppel (2006) categorized ecotourism activities in Ghana into three (3) geographic circuits. The first is the Savannah Circuit comprising the Wechiau Hippo Sanctuary, Paga Crocodile Pond, Nania Slave Camp, Widnaba Slave Camp, Tongo Hills, Tengzug Shrines and Sirigu Pottery and Art. The second is the Volta Circuit which is made up of Amedzofe, Tagbo Falls, Tafi-Atome Monkey Sanctuary and Xavi Bird Watching. The third is the Forest Circuit encompassing Bunso, Arboretum, Bobiri, Boabeng Fiema and Tano. Recent community-based ecotourism sites such as the monkey sanctuary at Kokrobite and the Amanzuri wetlands at Nzulezu have also been mapped out. Zeppel (2006) further noted that the industry since the mid-1990s has been receiving support from the Ghana Tourism Authority, local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the Nature Conservation Research Centre and the Ghana Wildlife Society with the aim of improving income levels of rural communities and conserving the few local ecosystems remaining.

More so, the Ministry of Tourism and Diasporan Relations (2012) came up with some principles which guide the activities of government ministries, departments and agencies with the aim of promoting and enhancing tourism development in the country. These include: diversification and expansion of the sector to increase revenue generation; promotion of domestic tourism as a way of fostering national cohesion and redistributing income; preservation of historical, cultural and natural heritage through sustainable and responsible

tourism; and deepening existing tourism institutions with policy formulation, planning, monitoring and evaluation at all levels.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinning of this paper is the concept of Institutional Bricolage, nested within a wider body of critical institutionalism. Institutions connote different things to different people depending on the researcher's background or school of thought. While Ostrom (2010) explained that institutions are the rules, norms and strategies which guide the activities and behaviour of individuals in an organization, Helmke and Levitsky (2004) stated that they are the rules and procedures (both formal and informal) that structure social interaction by constraining and enabling actors' behaviour. Considering their nature, institutions are seen to be "both formal and informal; they are often multi-purposed, intermittent and semi-opaque in operation. These include designed arrangements of varying degrees of publicness and formality, institutionalized interactions as embodied in kinship and social networks, relations to reciprocity and patronage and in sets of norms and practices deeply embedded in the habits and routines of everyday life" (Cleaver, 2017, p. 13-14).

Regarding the concept of Institutional Bricolage de Koning and Cleaver (2012) explained that it represents the conscious and unconscious piecing together of different institutions, styles of thinking and social relationships by various actors to produce new responses to changing circumstances, in this case, climate change. It critiques formal institutions (as espoused by Elinor Ostrom of Mainstream Institutionalism) that can be crafted deliberately for a particular purpose. Therefore, "rather than seeing people as rational and essentially economic-resource appropriators, we can reconceptualise them as conscious and unconscious social agents, deeply embedded in their cultural



milieu but capable of analysing and acting upon the circumstances that confront them and recognize social relations as important in shaping behaviour in the use of environmental resources (Clever, 2001, p.29). It thus argues that local communities guided by their local knowledge of resources, environmental conditions, local practices and cooperation can facilitate good resource management (de Koning and Clever, 2012).

Regarding the formation of institutions through bricolage, Cleaver, (2012) identified five key characteristics: (i) everyday practice (ii) multi-purpose institutions (iii) naturalization, leakage of meaning, the invention of tradition (iv) conscious and non-conscious action, moral rationalities and (v) authoritative processes and unequal outcomes. To determine how local actors practice institutions formed out of bricolage, de Koning (2011) presented that such is done through (i) aggregation that is when culture, and routines. Traditions, social norms, needs and experiences are recombined with formal institutions (regulations and standards) and imposed on the community with this recombination both types of institutions correspond or are in harmony.

The second form of practice of institutional bricolage is alteration which refers to modification of both imposed institutions and locally embedded institutions such as cultural beliefs or social norms. It involves the adaption of well-worn practices to new circumstances. Articulation is the last practice which denotes the situation where formal institutions are in conflict with local identities thus resulting in their rejection by the local actors. The local people may distance themselves from or revolt against such.

The application of this concept will thus first of all help unpack the evolution and nature of the pre-existing institutional arrangement that the management and the Paga community apply in regulating tourism activities of the pond. Secondly,

the concept is about the “adaptive processes by which people incorporate configurations of rules, traditions, norms and relations of meaning and authority. In doing so, people modify old arrangements and invent new ones, where innovations are always linked to freedom to create acceptable ways of doing things” (Cleaver 2012, p. 34). Viewing the study through an institutional lens will allow for the analysis of how norms evolve with time and get adopted for adaptation (Gebara, 2019). The concept will also help analyse the key elements of the current institutions and how these are being practised or applied for adaptation to climate impacts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Geographically, Paga is located in the Upper East Region of Ghana. It is a border town between Ghana and Burkina Faso in the northeastern part of the country. Paga is also the administrative capital of the Kassena/Nankana West District Assembly. It is a home to the Kassena people. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2014), the climate of the entire district including Paga is characterized by two seasons which are influenced by two air masses. The first season takes the form of a warm, dusty and dry Harmattan air mass which blows in the north easterly direction across the whole district from the Sahara Desert (commonly called the North East Trade Winds). These winds usually blow from November to March. At this time, there is no rainfall, vapour pressure is very low (less than 10mb) with relative humidity at about 20.0% during the day. Temperatures during the day are recorded up to 42 degrees Celsius (especially from February to March) and as low as 18 degrees Celsius in the night. The second season is the rainy season which runs from May to October. At this time, the area comes under the influence of the Tropical Maritime air mass (South-Westerlies). The total



rainfall average is about 950mm per annum. The vegetation cover is Savannah grassland, with short drought-resistant and deciduous trees. One only finds dense vegetation along river basins.

In Paga, there are two community-based ecotourism sites namely the *Zenga Crocodile Pond* and the *Chief's Pond* locally called *Pe Dambuga* (located close to the Ghana/Burkina Faso border). Both ponds are about 5 kilometres apart and are easy to access due to their strategic locations. The *Zenga Pond* is located behind the Paga market while the *Chief's Pond* is located a few meters away from the main road which connects Ghana with Burkina Faso at the Border. For this study, the *Chief's Pond* is chosen.

The choice of this pond is based on its unique characteristics and tourist activities, which make it incredibly interesting. For instance, it is believed that the chief/leader of all the crocodiles in Paga is found in this pond and it is recognised by a red head. Generally, the Paga Crocodiles' ponds are historic and traditional in nature. The ponds are mainly recharged by rainfall. Also, they have not been desilted or drained before even though the population of the mammals is believed to be increasing. The ponds are located in the northern part of the country, a zone that is considered the most vulnerable to climate impacts. All these have implications for tourism sustainability in the country.

The mystery behind these ponds is traced to the founder of the place called 'Nave' who it is believed, was a hunter. Feeling thirsty while hunting, he searched for water but his search yielded no positive results until he came across a crocodile which then directed him to the source of water. The crocodile, as widely held by the people followed the legend home and lived with him in the community. Appreciative of what the crocodile did for him, *Nave* decreed to his descendants that none of them should

eat the crocodile's meat. This crocodile and its offspring which are believed to be in the present-day ponds in the town, have since been revered by the people. These animals are tamed, and friendly and interact with all manner of persons who visit the ponds. With the help of the tour guides and a fowl in hand, a whistle is blown and the crocodiles come out of the water. Tourists can then touch them or watch them. The animals up to date live in their original natural ponds.

Regarding the *Chief's Pond* which is the focus of this study, its general activities are being handled by its management. The management comprises largely of people who are from the nearby local communities where the pond is located. The management takes the form of; (i) Community Tourism Committee made up of a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, the Assembly Member of the Electoral Area and some elders. This Committee monitors the activities of the pond, conducts meetings with the local people and informs them about the benefits accrued from the tourist activities. It handles all formal issues pertinent to the tourist and tourist-related agencies in the community supervises the tour guides and recommends them for capacity-building programmes. (ii) tour guides who handle the day-to-day activities of all tourists are part of the management. (iii) The spiritual leader or Earth priest commonly called *Tiga-tu* who makes sacrifices and serves as the leader between the people and the gods of the land an important member of the management of the pond. (iv) The *Paga Pe* (Paramount Chief of Paga) who is the traditional political leader of Paga also plays a key role in the management of these sites. He is updated weekly about the activities at these sites. When it comes to daily visits by tourists, the tour guides are in charge.

The study was conducted based on fieldwork undertaken by the writer from January to May 2022, a period that is suitable for tourist



activities at the sites. The study employed an exploratory approach as a way of obtaining detailed firsthand information about the study topic. To generate primary data for the analysis, the study used in-depth interviews. These interviews were conducted with the members of the Community Tourism Committee and tour guides. Ten (10) people from the Community Tourism Committee (5 elders, the Assembly Member, and the 4 executives) were individually interviewed at their homes. Two (2) tour guides were also individually interviewed at the sites of the pond.

Thus, a total of 12 informants participated in the study. These informants were purposively sampled considering the focus of the study. The interviews were semi-structured with the questions being open-ended. Each interview session lasted about 30 minutes. Apart from the in-depth interviews, the researcher used other communication tools such as conversations and informal discussions to interact with and learn from the knowledge holders mentioned above to promote a better understanding of the topic. The interviews and other informal discussions were conducted in the local language (*Kasem*). Apart from the study applying the UDS Research Ethics Policy, it also ensured that the purpose of the study was explained to informants and sought their voluntary participation which they consented to.

The interviews were recorded with the permission of the informants. To augment the primary data, desk reviews of secondary data were undertaken. Also, records from the tourists were reviewed to provide a better understanding and information on the nature of tourists and tourist activities that visit the place. Visits to the crocodile pond allowed for observations of the physical nature of the pond, and tourist interactions and also contributed to first-hand information for the paper.

The data were analysed and presented in themes espoused by Braun and Clarke (2006).

RESULTS

Climate Change Manifestations and Impacts

Rainfall Impacts, Consequences and Challenges

From the responses of the informants, it is realised that rainfall in the communities has changed. That is, rainfall currently, is highly unpredictable and associated with extreme events such as droughts and floods in recent times. The responses further revealed that the rainy season has become protracted as rainfall is now experienced from June to October instead of from April to October as it was in the past. The informants recalled that 2006 and 2007 were years of severe drought and floods respectively with these years having a significant impact on ecotourism.

Regarding how these climate change manifestations affect the pond, crocodiles and tourist activities, a tour guide said this.

When floods occur, and considering the shallow nature of the pond, the living conditions especially the habitats of the reptiles are affected. This forces the crocodiles to move to drier places beyond the banks. As a pond located in an urban setting, this exposes the crocodiles to danger, especially of being attacked and killed at night by passers-by and moving vehicles. Also, in their search for drier grounds during floods, some of the crocodiles stray into people's homes and being scared by the presence of these mammals, some people sometimes become hostile towards them.

In addition, the flooded surroundings of the pond affect tourist activities. For instance, physical accessibility to the pond becomes difficult while



tour guides find it difficult to get the crocodiles out of the water for visitors to interact with. This negatively affects revenue generation. Floods also affect roads connecting these sites and tourist infrastructure. Visitors' sheds, usually made of local materials get submerged when the pond gets flooded. Some of these sheds collapsed completely rendering visitors without places to rest before or after the tour. Walkways that facilitate the movement of visitors closer to the pond get submerged also.

Explaining how climate change has also influenced the duration of both the dry and rainy seasons thus posing some challenges for tourist activities of the pond, the president of the Community Tourism Committee explained that:

While the rainy season is seen in recent times to be short, the dry season is perceived to be prolonged and considering the fact that, the pond is recharged by rainwater, a prolonged dry season often affects the availability of water in them. The water level in the pond in such a season usually decreases drastically almost to the point of the pond drying up. The size of the pond thus, shrinks further due to the decrease in water. This does not only affect the living conditions of the crocodiles but also the availability of food for them. For instance, since crocodiles crave moist conditions, they tend to scramble for moist habitats.

Also, weeds, fish and toads that serve as feed for these reptiles become less available. These situations cause the mammals to scramble for habitats and food. Narrating the consequences of this a tour guide said this:

When the crocodiles scramble for food, some crocodiles end up being injured in the

process, and others especially hatchlings even get killed.

Noteworthy also, in the midst of all these impacts of climate change, other activities such as fishing also go on in the pond. The people also draw water from the pond for building and construction activities in the community. These activities contribute to increasing pressure on the pond.

Temperature Impacts, Consequences and Challenges

Generally, temperatures in the northern part of Ghana are high, particularly in the dry season. Climate change has exacerbated this situation. From the interviews, informants perceived that high temperatures that used to be recorded in March are now recorded as early as January. Regarding how high temperatures impact tourism, an elder who is a member of the Community Tourism Committee said this:

Higher temperatures obviously heat the water in the pond to the level that the crocodiles find it difficult to stay in their natural habitats. This is compounded by the absence of vegetation cover near the pond to provide shade or serve as a shield to prevent the water from directly being hit by sun rays. This explains why during the peak of the dry season, the crocodiles find it difficult to stay in the water, particularly during the day. Some are, therefore, compelled to wander during the day in search of much better and cooler areas. As a result, some stray into abandoned wells (previously used for farming purposes) and other water bodies. This leads to the death of the mammals.

Associated with the higher temperatures is a higher rate of evaporation of the water in the pond



which influences the availability of water in the pond. The water level consequently reduces faster and this causes the size of the pond to shrink. Eventually, the habitats of these animals are affected and this again pushes some of the animals to migrate in search of other water bodies as their number far exceeds the size of the pond and the water available. The limited water available in the pond, coupled with extremely high temperatures in the dry season results in the migration of these animals to other places. Not only do these animals fail to return to the pond, but some end up being killed by moving vehicles or by human beings. This affects the population of the animals in the pond which also affects the quality of tourist activities.

Institutions and the Crocodiles' Pond as a Tourist Site Under Climate Change Impacts

Knowledge, Practices and Institutional Arrangements of the Pond

The study revealed that the activities of the pond continue to be carried out largely through the application of local knowledge and informal institutions (taboos and rules). The local knowledge regarding the pond emanates from the people's tradition and culture, beliefs, rituals and sacrifices, and the spiritual consultations between the gods in the pond and the people through the soothsayer. The people of Paga strongly believe that the crocodiles are their totems and each crocodile represents the soul of an individual in the community. Their spiritual importance is thus, paramount as this has led to the creation of beliefs around these crocodiles. Regarding how local knowledge helps in understanding and interpreting events that involve the crocodiles and the pond, an elder said this:

When we hear the cry of a crocodile at night, it means an old man is about to die in the community.

Another elder explained that taboos are being used to help manage the pond and control the behaviour of the people towards the pond and the crocodiles. He said:

It is a taboo to visit the dams at night unless there is an attack on the crocodiles as the people believe that a loud cry of the animals in the night means a stranger has come to harm them. Furthermore, it is forbidden for people to unnecessarily visit the pond at night as it is believed that the gods in the pond only come out in the night to rest and no person is supposed to meet these gods. These crocodiles usually lay their eggs in the refuse dumps of the local people, it is therefore forbidden for people to harm them when the animals are found in their homes. People should not also threaten the lives of these crocodiles when they are seen roaming. Also, when a crocodile is lying down outside the water with its eyes closed, it is forbidden to walk in front of it. The people are also forbidden from eating the meat of crocodiles.

Regarding communication with these mammals in the spiritual realm, the most important way is through the soothsayer and this has been the practice as explained already. When there is the need for sacrifices and rituals to be performed, the *Tiga tu* (earth priest) officiates the process and that is after consultations have been made with the soothsayer. When tourists want to interact with the crocodiles, they get closer to them by approaching them from their backs and not their heads. Tourists are only allowed to sit on or touch the tail of the crocodiles.

While appreciating the role of people's local knowledge, institutions and management in contributing to the protection of ponds, some challenges exist. For instance, strangers and



poachers sometimes attack the animals, especially at night. Also, people with different belief systems sometimes break some taboos, traditions and practices while scientific knowledge together with technology makes some people to also question some of the beliefs. Urbanisation and environmental degradation are also threatening the pond and its tourist prowess.

Notably, in recent times, climate change and its impacts are exacerbating the challenges that these ponds face. It is against this background that management of the pond saw the need to innovate, improvise and consciously and unconsciously adopt some strategies and measures to promote adaptation and ecotourism sustainability. This has culminated in a new form of institutions; from the recombination of the pre-existing ones with formal institutions, thus creating a situation that depicts the concept of institutional bricolage as explored further by the study.

Institutional Bricolage and Climate Change Adaptation

Institutional bricolage is seen to be taking place as part of management efforts to promote the sustainability of the pond and its tourist activities. From the interviews, institutional bricolage is seen in the composition of the management of the pond which includes a Community Tourist Committee (depicting a formal structure even though with a community outlook). These changes reflect the measures of the central government to promote tourism in the country. To protect and promote vegetation cover, by-laws to augment the existing taboos, norms and practices have been passed by the chief of Paga, Paga Pe Charles Awiah Awampagah. These by-laws forbid not only the indiscriminate cutting down of trees near these water ponds but in the Paga area. The Chairperson of the Community Tourism Committee said this.

One can see that the by-laws made by our Paramount Chief are similar to those formulated by the country's Environmental Protection Agency regulations and Ghana Tourism Regulations aim at fighting desertification and degradation and preserving and protecting tourists' sites respectively in the country. I think having such bylaws formulated by our local leaders will help protect our natural resources.

Furthermore, historically, the pond was open in nature but fencing of the pond has become a necessary local strategy adopted by the people even though there still exist some security challenges. A tour guide said this:

The pond because of its location (close to the Ghana Burkina Faso highway) has now been fenced with modern wires. Initially, this pond was open. We managed to get some materials to fence it but such did not last until we decided to buy better materials that are more secure and sustainable.

Capacity-building programmes for tour guides are another way by which the management is boosting tourism and promoting adaptation. While recognising the community-chosen tour guides, as part of measures to boost tourism in the face of climate change, the Ghana Tourism Authority representing the Ministry of Tourism periodically organises capacity-building programmes for these tour guides as a way of equipping them with up-to-date skills and knowledge, especially in handling foreign visitors. This again provides evidence of institutional bricolage where formal tourist agencies collaborate with local tourist management to promote ecotourism adaptation to climate impacts.

Record keeping has become a necessary information tool to help promote adaptation and boost ecotourism. Though initially, the management



of the pond had a way of keeping records about the tourist activities that go on at the sites, this was informal and limited to the Paga Community (information not shared with other persons/agencies). As part of measures to adapt in recent times and the Community Tourist Committee now having a formal leadership structure, record keeping has become imperative. This has been boosted by the Ministry of Tourism which has been providing training to the management on better record keeping. The importance of proper record keeping is to monitor the performance and progress of the pond. It is also to identify the pressing needs, threats and challenges that the pond faces. The Regional Tourist Board periodically reviews these records to ensure their compliance with national tourism regulations.

A tour guide said this:

Madam, these are books that document information about the visitors and the charges that they pay. We have been trained on how to enter such information in

these books. The books are checked and audited regularly.

The responses further revealed that the management of the pond has agreed to make the pond part of Ghana's designed programmes to promote tourism by the Ministry of Tourism. For instance, the pond has been classified under the Northern Circuit as a way of formally regulating and supporting them as noted already in the literature. Through the Ghana Tourist Board, the pond receives support such as promotion and marketing locally and globally of the pond through the production of promotional materials and conducting research in all the country's tourist sites including the pond, facilitating the development of the site and human resource development. For instance, at the arrival hall of Kotoka International Airport in Ghana, is a giant billboard with a picture of one of these crocodiles outside the pond with a tourist guard squatting beside it. Several tourists outside Ghana have toured the pond already (Figures 1)



Figure 1: A tourist with one of the crocodiles

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

The management of the pond has further adopted and applied formal tourist regulations of Ghana. Recognised formally as a tourist site in the

country, the pond regularly pays the Tourism Levy of 1% and the pond in turn enjoys financial support where necessary from the Tourism Development



Fund. The Tourism Development Fund was established by the Tourism Act 2011 (ACT 817) to provide funding for tourism and tourism-related projects and programmes. (Section 21). According to Tourism Act 2011, ACT 817, Section 22, the Board shall apply the Fund to relevant tourism activities particularly; (a) marketing and promotion of tourism; (b) capacity building, market research and development of tourism infrastructure; (c) development and promotion of other entrepreneurial activities; (d) tourism export trade-oriented activities of institutions; and (e) tourism education and training.

Situating the responses above within the context of Institutional Bricolage, one sees the key elements of the concept (Cleaver, 2011) manifesting. The results showed that the current institutions by nature depict a recombination of both informal traditions, practices, norms and taboos and formal regulations, agencies and rules. For instance, the element of multi-purpose is seen in the community bylaws (drawn from Ghana's Environmental Protection Agency regulations) made by the Chief of Paga which are meant not only to protect and conserve trees near the pond but applied to the entire Paga enclave. Regarding the naturalisation/invention of traditional elements, this is typified by the locally appointed tour guides who in order to be updated with tourist handling skills have been formally trained by the Ghana Tourist Board Authority. In terms of their conscious and non-conscious action and moral rationalities, the responses showed the discontinuation of fishing, swimming and fetching of water for construction purposes in the dry season as a way of retaining more water in the pond.

With respect to the practice of institutional bricolage, the study context depicts aggregation and alteration. For instance, regarding aggregation, a formal way of documentation and record keeping

capturing tourist visits and revenue generated has been practised. In terms of alteration, the study revealed the innovation and improvisation made by the management to protect the lives of the animals in the pond. Traditionally, the ponds are supposed to be open, and unfenced but considering the myriad of climate impacts and human-related threats, they have been fenced. Alteration is also seen within the context of the Tour Guides who though locally appointed are being trained by the Ghana Tourist Board. Articulation represents the desilting of the pond with modern technology and equipment. This, the people are unwilling to accept as they rather prefer drilling boreholes nearby whose water would be channelled to the pond. The study findings thus support the broader contention that at least in the case of adaption, different types of existing institutions can be crafted (not necessarily deliberately creating new institutions) to regulate any environmental change.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed the occurrence of climate change and its manifestations in the form of an increase in temperature and a decrease in rainfall. These manifestations are having a significant impact on tourist activities at the site as hot temperatures sometimes restrict the animals to the pond. Also, the search for moist conditions which sometimes result in the death of the animals reduces their population. These results are consistent with Shaaban and Ramzy's (2010) study which documented the negative impact of climate change on tourism in Egypt and Martin et al. (2017) study of climate and tourism in Catalonia. Similar to studies elsewhere (Grimm, Alcântara & Sampaio, 2018). this study further highlighted that climate manifestations consequently affect ecotourism in the form of destruction of tourism infrastructure, destruction of habitats, invasion of crocodile habitats by alien



species, loss of food for crocodiles, shrinkage of habitats and loss of crocodile species through attacks by alien crocodile species and human beings. The results further resonate and confirm the projected scenarios of climate impacts by Devisscher (2010) of how climate impacts can contribute to habitat fragmentation and their invasion by alien species.

However, the study of Martin et al. (2017) contradicts this result as their study indicated that although tourist operators in Catalonia though are conscious of climate impacts on the appeal of tourist sites, they are less concerned because they feel that all landscapes of whatever kind in Catalonia are potentially attractive to tourist. The Management of tourist activities at the Paga Crocodiles are not only concerned about the impacts of climate change on the pond and their tourist activities but also taking measures to ameliorate the impacts. A possible explanation for this action of the management of the Paga Crocodile Pond could be that unlike most tourist sites whose benefits are largely socio-economic, the Paga Crocodiles' Pond by its historic nature offers more value as they meet also the cultural and spiritual needs of the people which the management think supersedes the socio-economic benefits of the pond.

The study revealed a wide application of both formal and informal institutions as tools for climate change adaptation. The results are thus consistent with the findings of Kwoyiga (2019) and Mubaya and Mafongoya (2017). The study results further support the broader notion of Cleaver (2017) and de Koning and Cleaver (2012) that in places such as Africa, no single institution can be deliberately crafted (as noted by Ostrom and others of Mainstream Institutionalism) for a particular purpose but that institutions are multi-purpose and deeply rooted in habits and routines of everyday life.

Conscious of the inadequacies of the pre-existing informal institutions particularly for climate

adaptation, the study again brought to the fore that institutional modifications, innovation and improvisation could be a possible adaptation strategy as evident here. This largely highlighted the point that the recombination of both formal and informal institutions offers a better opportunity to manage natural resources to sustain ecotourism under climate change impacts. It further highlighted that rather than being considered weak as criticised of pre-existing/ local knowledge, practices and informal institutions, these are strong as they can accommodate, coexist or be altered to promote adaptation to the impacts of climate change as happening now. In fact, it shows that these community-level practices and arrangements usually constitute the foundation upon which other institutions rest upon and for adaptation.

Therefore, considering the current nature of the institutional arrangements, it can be said that such depict the concept of institutional bricolage espoused by Cleaver (2012), de Koning and Cleaver (2012) as evident in the diversity in these elements and practices of the concept. Therefore, in terms of practice, the new institutions promoting adaptation embody both alteration and aggregation.

CONCLUSION

The study set out to assess the manifestations and impact of climate change on ecotourism and the adaptation measures adopted by the management of the Paga crocodiles' Pond. The study highlighted that climate change is manifesting in the form of a decline in rainfall and an increase in temperature. This implies that climate change occurrences are being observed and understood also by domestic tourist operators in Ghana hence the need to recognise their knowledge of climate change adaptation efforts in the country.

The study further brought to the fore the significant impact that climate change is having on



ecotourism as floods and droughts affect the physical conditions of the ponds making life unfavourable for the crocodiles sometimes. It forms an important example of the increasing negative impacts of climate change on tourism in general and on ecotourism in particular, especially that which hinges on natural (water) resources and their ecosystems in Ghana. It is therefore important to consider designing measures that are geared towards creating resilience of natural resources that drive ecotourism in the country.

Furthermore, the activities of the pond which are mostly driven by the application of local knowledge and informal institutions are facing some environmental challenges such as the impacts of climate change. Therefore, to promote adaptation, it became necessary for the modification, reconstitution or alteration of the pre-existing institutions and practices. This, management has done hence resulting in a situation where the current institutions being applied could be described as intuitional bricolage. The study therefore reinforces the notion that for community-based ecotourism to adapt to climate impacts, existing institutions can be pieced together through innovation, improvisation, everyday practice and routines as evident in Paga.

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