

Analysis of Environmental Consequences of Recreational Activities in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria

OLOMI SAMUEL OLUSOLA¹, ADAMS, SESAN JOHN², ALIYU, OLORUNSHOLA SHERIFAT³

¹*Department of Geography and Planning Sciences, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko,
Ondo State, Nigeria*

²*Department of Geography and Planning Sciences, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko Ondo
State Nigeria*

³*Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Confluence University of Science and Technology,
Osara, Kogi State, Nigeria*

Abstract—This study examines the environmental consequences of recreational activities in Owo Local Government Area, Ondo State, Nigeria. Using a mixed-method sampling approach, 29 towns and villages were purposively selected and stratified by population. Five streets per settlement were randomly chosen, and houses were systematically sampled at three-building intervals. A total of 304 copies of questionnaire were administered and analysed using descriptive statistics. The results show that recreational activities contribute to several environmental challenges, including noise, land and air pollution, crime, and dirtiness. The calculated Grand Mean Weighted Value (GMWV) for environmental consequences was 2.98, with noise pollution and crime levels found to be statistically significant. These two factors emerged as the greatest environmental consequences of recreational activities in the study area, while dirtiness and smoke from industrial generators were identified as the least significant. The study concludes that noise and crime are the primary environmental impacts of recreational activities in Owo. To ease these effects, the study recommends that facility managers embrace soundproofed industrial plants and that security measures be strengthened to reduce crime. Overall, the research highlights the need for better environmental management and regulation of recreational spaces in sub-urban areas of developing countries like Nigeria to ensure sustainable and safe community living.

Keywords— Environmental, Consequences, Recreational activities, pollution.

I. INTRODUCTION

The recreation is as old as the world itself. In all forms, recreation is of critical importance to the socio-economic and environmental well-being of people, old and young, male and female in any society either rural or urban both in the developed and

in the developing countries of the world. Recreation according to Hornby (2008) Oxford Dictionary stems from the Latin word “re-create” meaning “restoration or recovering” i.e. restoration of ability to function. It also involves the concept of restoration of wholeness of mind, spirit and body, hence it is an activity executed by free choice with expectation of positive pleasurable rewards. In other words, it is an activity that human- beings found pleasurable and satisfying that is voluntary, stimulating and re-juvenating. However, the ideal behind these activities is to expand the mind and body in a positive and healthily way. All works without leisure time makes a person not only dull but a sick, unbalanced and unhappy.

Urban environments globally, function as places where human population are highly concentrated. However, it is also noted for its diverse cultural and socio-economic activities that provides series of opportunities ranging from production, that the teeming population engages in, as well as other services such as tourism, recreational activities and entertainment that provides succor for the inhabitants as well as their quality of life. As noted by Kohn (2012) opined that lately, considerable attention has been given to the promotion of a more active lifestyle since sedentary lifestyle is more prevalent globally and it is associated with numerous health challenges. According to Lee (2014). Much attention began to be seriously paid to the improvement of recreation by environmental planners from the mid-1950s. Public interest in recreational activities have heightened significantly around the world since the end of the nineteenth century UN-ECE/FAO, 2000; Merom (2006). Following this, Kara & Demirci (2009) attributed this hike in recreation to the increase in the

amount of free time and welfare in nations among all the other complex interrelated factors.

The amount of leisure time has increased with the spread of the 2-day weekend and reduction in working hours. Accompanying increases in income and living standard have provided many people with the opportunity to spend time on different outdoor activities. In the past, people devoted much of their time to earn a living and could not find enough time to socialise with other people in their community and family members through outdoor activities. Today, having more free time and income, more people are participating in a variety of outdoor recreational activities. From the western perspective, work, family, and leisure or recreation represent these three pillars of life, all of which demand a balanced portion of our time. Recreational facilities are spatially located and distributed in different land uses such as residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial, among others. Huhtala & Pouta ((2009) stated that the potential need and difficulty of public provision of recreation opportunities make it imperative to study how the distribution of recreational facilities would be of relevance to communities. According to Ries, Yan & Voorhees (2011), when recreational facilities are available in a particular area, there is a resultant increase in the participation level of residents in that area.

Recreational industries stimulate local economics, when a new recreation facility such as a cinema, or a sports stadium is situated in area, can lead to increased demand for nearby businesses, such as restaurants and retail shops, and thus contribute to the wealth creation for local residents. Both direct and indirect employments through recreational activities are enormous. Recreation is vital for many countries including Nigeria, Spain, USA, Germany, Abu Dubai, and France who have made a lot of income from recreational activities that had supported rapid development of these countries. People patronised recreational centres to relax themselves. However, the industries are faced with several challenges affecting the utilisation of recreational facilities in Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State, which contribute to the socio-economic of the people. Likewise recreational activities create environmental balance in an area, however open space activities lead to environmental pollution, and destruction of natural resources like vegetation, economic trees, and wildlife among others due to establishment of

recreational facility centres, which may affect people living in the surrounding areas.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Recreation.

Man has started recreation right from the day God created Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Many people actually carry out recreational activities without knowing what it is. Recreation dates back to the history of man. However organised recreation began when the industrial revolution hit Great Britain in the 1700s. There were different forms of recreation in then days. For instance the Romans had where they watch chariot races and other entertainment shows. After independence in 1960, the Nigerian government used domestic and international sporting events to foster a sense of national identity among the various ethnic groups and to recognition (Ibama 2015).

Recreation has been defined as a type of experience, as an area of rich and abundant living, as a specific form of activity, as an attitude or spirit, as off the job living, as an expression of inner nature of man, as a phase of the educational process, as a way of life, as a matter of the emotions, as an outlet for the creative urge and as a means for lifting the wings of the spirit. It has also been described as fun, as refreshment, as diversion or as the less serious and more passive type of playful activity. Recreation helps to promote total health-physical, mental, emotional and social, provides an antidote to the strains, and tensions of life provides an avenue to abundant personal and family living, and develops effective citizenship and vitalize democracy.

Recreation has been defined as a type of experience, as an area of rich and abundant living, as a specific form of activity, as an attitude or spirit, as off the job living, as an expression of inner nature of man, as a phase of the educational process, as a way of life, as a matter of the emotions, as an outlet for the creative urge and as a means for lifting the wings of the spirit. - Anonymous. Thomas (1929) saw recreation as a refreshing exercise of the organism, because it was in immediate danger of overindulging itself in the interrupted monotony of daily life and growing indifferent.

Problems of Recreation.

Recreation over the years had been faced with a lot of problems like inadequate financing, accessibility, security challenges, low patronage and religious facts. Igbojekwe (2009) identified the problems that affect recreational development in Nigeria to include unavailability of funds and access to recreational facilities, level of economic development, lack of awareness of the essence of recreation, value conflicts: work ethics versus recreation, personality and social class, occupational orientation, government policies and attitudes towards recreation.

First, unavailability of funds has been identified as one of the major problem militating against the development of recreation in Ondo. Surveys on the attitude of people towards participation in recreational activities reveal that, over 60 percent of Nigerians interviewed indicated that they are hardly meeting up with the provision of basic needs (food and shelter) (Igbojekwe, 2009). More so, basic economic principles tell us that most consumers have a limited income, they must therefore, balance their needs and the costs of various products and services. Recreation is regarded as one aspect of “good life”, hence, it is not on the priority list of most Nigerians.

Second, the poor national economy denies most Nigerians accessibility to recreational facilities. In Nigeria, the poor economic condition in which the citizen survives just at subsistence level does not augur well for recreational facilities development. Over 60 percent of Nigerians live below the poverty level of US\$1.00 per day (Okorafor, 2005). Furthermore, Okorafor (2005) in a paper presented at the National Seminar on “the Need for Statutory Holiday Calendar towards Development of Tourism in Nigeria” stated thus; “the major trammels to the development of domestic tourism in Nigeria include low purchasing power of the Nigerian worker arising from the weakness of the national economy and general lack of vacation culture in Nigeria”. A general improvement in the wealth and earning capacity of the people is relevant to tourism development. Individual income and basic expenditure must leave a sizeable disposable income for meeting travelling costs. Income level should be above subsistence level.

Third, lack of knowledge of the essence of recreation has also been identified as a factor contributing to low level of development of recreational facilities. A greater percentage of Nigerians are not really aware

that recreation can help someone improve the quality of his/her mental and physical well-being. As recreation provides payoffs for the individual, he is redeemed from routine and fatigue through his participation in recreational activities particularly those activities that assist the person exhibit creative ability and achieve self-fulfillment, thus, relieving the individual from day-to-day stress. This lack of knowledge of the essence of recreation is reflected in the general attitude of Nigerians with respect to the provision of recreational facilities. Urban planners hardly remember to incorporate recreational facilities in the urban development plans (Miller, 2008) said that, in the third world (the developing countries) such as Nigeria there is lack of awareness of the contribution that recreation-time activities can make to the quality of life of urban residents and visitors, hence, the issue of providing recreational facilities is not taken seriously by urban planners and public officials”.

This situation is diametrically opposed to what is obtainable in more developed countries such as the U.S.A., and Britain where the provision of recreational facilities have long been made a routine component of plans for urban cities and the society at large.

Community Health Benefits of Recreational Centres Herbert, & Prukop (2017) opined that both the young and old generations are increasingly aware of the benefits of the physical activity, because it makes them feel healthier, relaxed and stronger when facing everyday challenges. Based on the foregoing, numerous sports and recreation facilities have become destinations not only for business people and managers but just about anybody looking to improve one’s fitness and health, including students, elderly and the unemployed.

Recreational facilities centre is an attraction for visitors to undertake physical activities and relieve stress after a hard day's work. Several researchers agreed that recreational facilities center contribute not only to physical activities, but also in terms of the social well-being of their community, enhance property value, and improve public health (Kaczynski & Henderson, 2008; Sakip, 2015). Apart from that, facility centres give valuable significance to the image of the city, wherein urban green spaces create and strengthen the positive image of the community and the entire city (Jerke, Poter, &

Lassar, 2008; Schwab, Dustin, & Bricker 2009; Balch (2011); Chan, Peters, & Marafa, (2015). Sakip (2015) claimed that accessible facilities can improve social cohesion and interaction as more people patronise them. According to Wolf et al., (2015), facilities centre needs to supply experiences and facilities consistent with the demand to satisfy visitors' expectations and to protect natural resources from oversupply. Availability of facilities is determined by the existence of equipment within the defined recreational facility areas.

Study Area;

Owo Local Government is one of the eighteen Local Government areas in Ondo State. It is situated in Northern part of Ondo State and as one of the six Local Governments that constitutes the Northern Senatorial District of Ondo State. It lies between latitude $7^{\circ} 11'$ and $7^{\circ} 15'N$ of the Equator and Longitude $5^{\circ} 33'$ and $5^{\circ} 35'E$ of the Greenwich

meridian. The study area has its administrative headquarter in Owo, one of the prominent historical town in Ondo State. It is bounded in the North by Akoko South-West Local Government while to the South by Ogbese in Akure – North local Government. In the same vein, the study area is bounded by Emure and Ise-Orun Local Government Areas to the West both in Ekiti State respectively while to the East it shares border with Benin-city in Edo State.

The study area has a total land area of 1,024sqkm. It includes not only the towns but the villages as well. The major towns that made up the study area includes Owo, Ipele, Iyere, Uso, Emure-ile, Isuada, Ijebu and Upemen, while the villages in the Area includes Omolenge, Alao, Uwese, Amaka camp, Kajola camp, Aralepo, Ago panu, Owadogbon, Oke Odo, Isijogun, Oliyere camp, Obasooto camp, Amurin camp and Araromi camp to mention a few. Map of the study area has been shown in Figure 1.

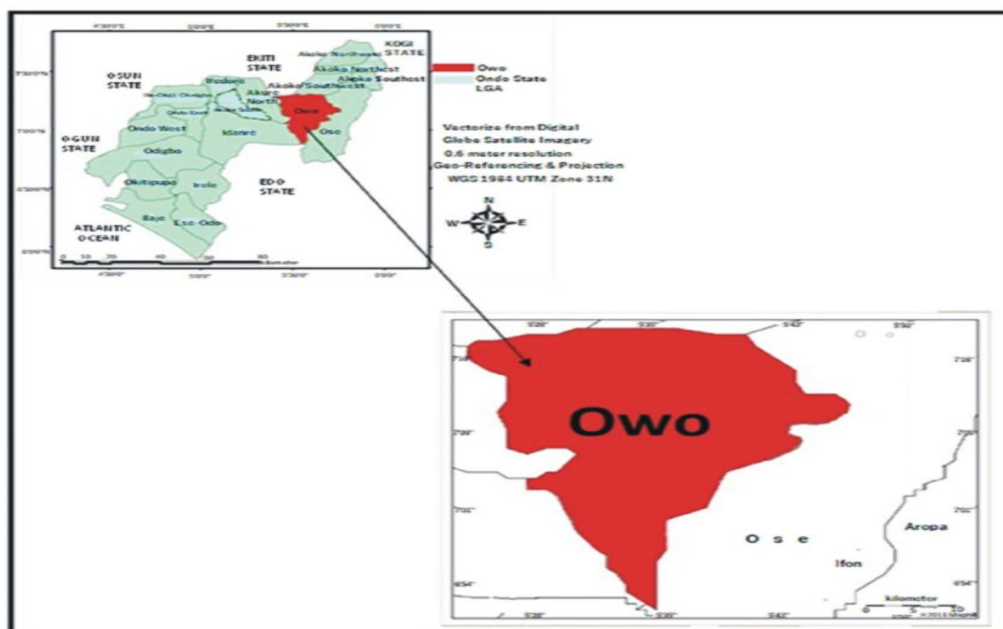


Figure 1: Map of Owo LGA in Ondo State

Source: Adapted from Salau (2021).

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study obtained required data through primary and secondary sources. A mixed method of sampling techniques was used for this study. First, twenty-nine (29) towns and villages were purposively selected. Second, stratified sampling method was used to group the selected settlement based on their population, while sample random sampling technique was used to select five (5) streets in each of the

settlements. Thereafter, systematic sampling method was adopted to select houses at an interval of three (3) buildings where the sampled population was drawn.

In all, a total of three hundred and four (304) copies of questionnaire were administered, data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used for the socio-economic variables of the respondents and

inferential statistic in form of analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the stated hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the pattern of distribution and the characteristics of recreational facilities in the study area.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

The socio-economic characteristics of recreational facilities users in Owo Local Government in Ondo State included in the questionnaire are age, sex, marital status, level of education, employment status, duration of residence and lastly annual income. The responses to each of the variable were presented as follows;

Age of the Respondents.

The data collected on the age of the respondents were analysed and summarised as shown in Figure 2, it was revealed that 32.9% of the respondents were below the age of 20 years. The categories of people

in this age were students/ apprentices that engaged in playing football or visiting viewing centres. Also, 44.4% of the respondents were between age 21 – 30 years, which shows that this age group are the highest users of recreational facilities in the study area, which may be connected to educational purpose, relaxation and business purpose. In the same vein 9.9% of the respondents are between age 31 – 40 years and 7.6% are between age 41 – 50 years while the remaining 5.3% of the respondents are 50 years old and above respectively. This group had the least patronage of using the recreational facilities. This age group is partly dominated by people without much strength to visit recreational centres often.

Consequently, the facilities users that falls within age 30 – 50 years implies that they were within active working age groups where production level is expected to be high and these middle aged group constitute the most benefited of the recreational facilities and have more access than those aged who are vulnerable.

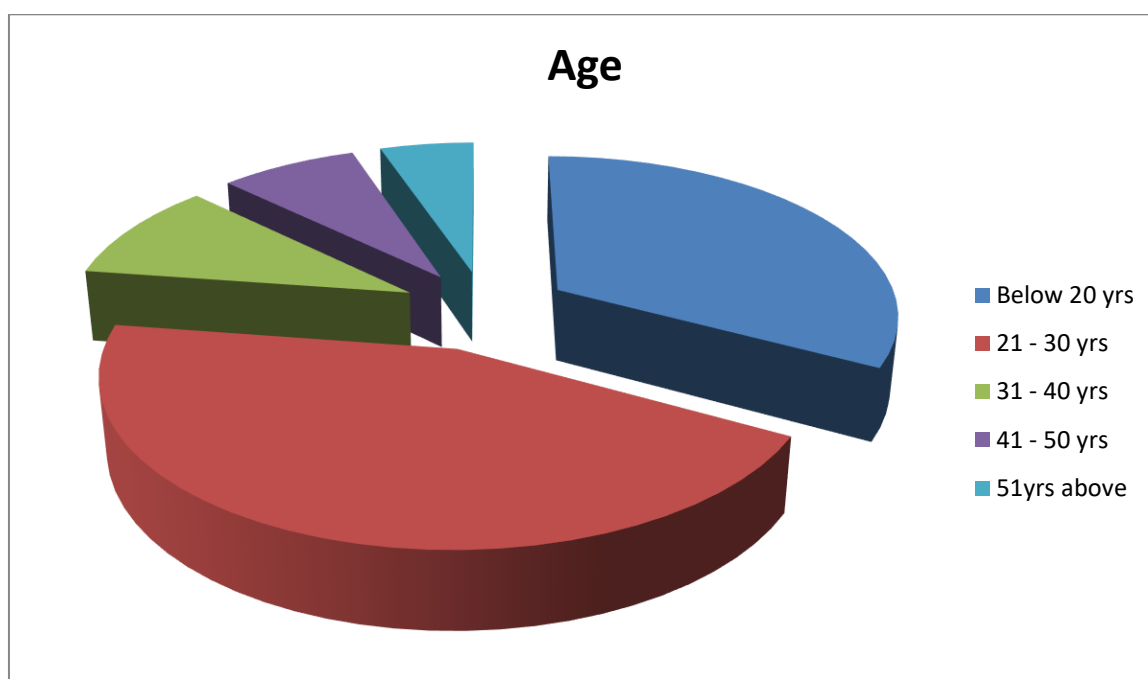


Figure 2: Age Status of Respondents

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2025

Sex Structure of the Respondents.

The data collected on the sex structure of the respondents showed that 51.6% were males while the remaining 48.4% were females. The study revealed

that more males involved in recreational activities than their female counterparts. This shows that male generally have interest in recreational activities than their female counterpart. See Figure 3.2 below

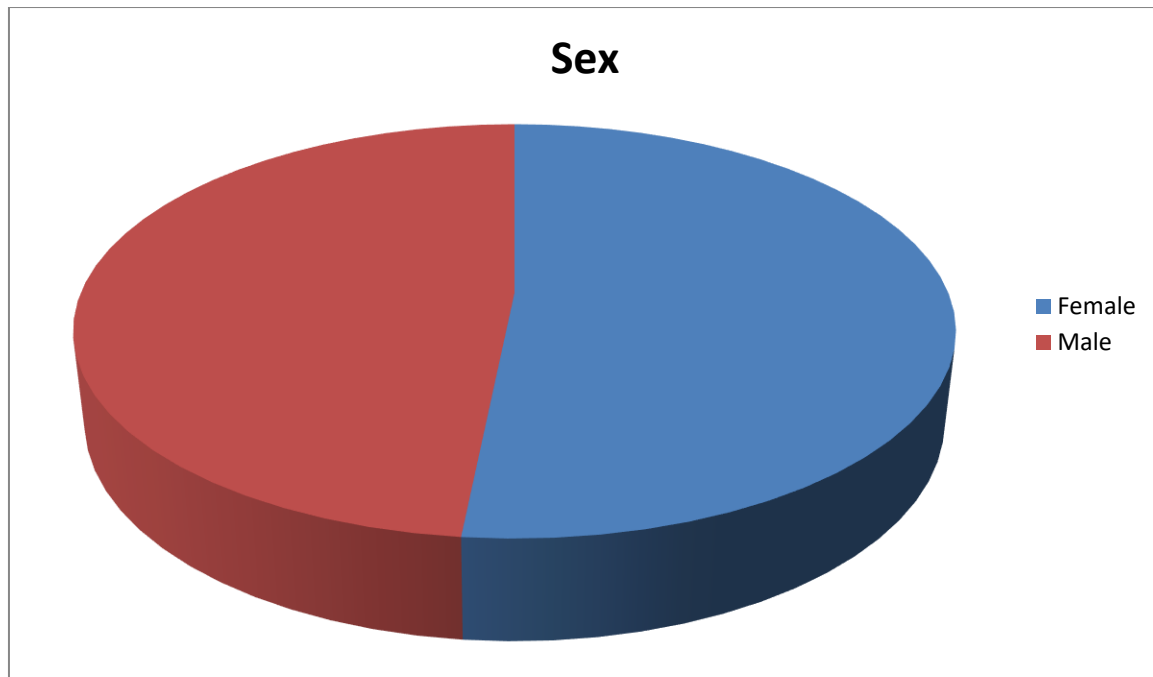


Figure 3: Sex Structure of Respondents

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2025.

Marital Status of the respondents

Marital status of the respondents was shown in Table 3. It is revealed that 28.3% of the respondents were married, 8.2% were divorced, and 5.9% of the respondents were separated while large percentage

57.6% of the respondents were still single. The reason for this is that majority of the respondents who falls within this group were students/applicants who were still in school.

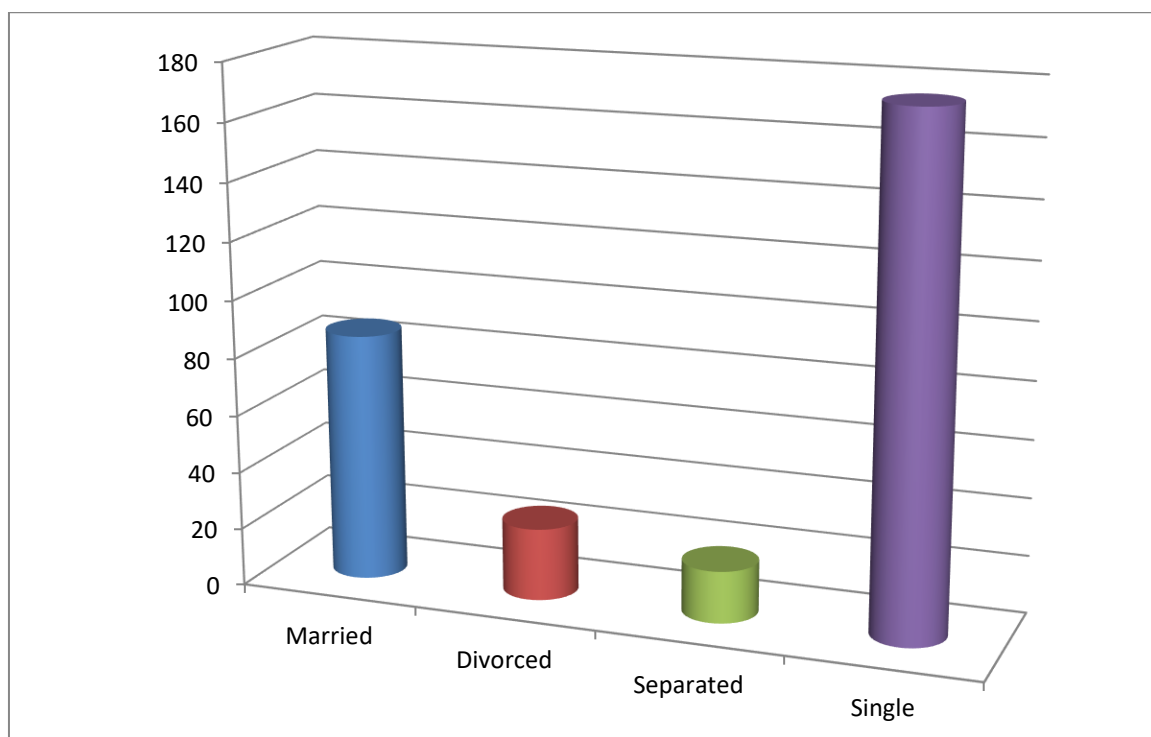


Figure 4: Marital status of respondents

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2025.

Educational Qualifications of the respondents

The levels of education of the respondents were presented in Figure 5 and it was revealed that larger percentage of respondents were educated. Twenty-eight point nine percent (28.9%) of the respondents were holders of HND/B. Sc. and above, while 25.9% had OND/NCE. Also, 20.1% of the respondents were SSCE holders, while below and 15.1% of the respondents did not have formal education. This shows that the levels of illiteracy in the study was very low.

However, the reason for having more OND/NCE is due to the existence of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic and a lot of NCE affiliated centres in Owo Local Government, the study area. The implication of this is that majority that hold OND/NCE, HND and B.SC and above were the groups users that knows the benefits of visiting recreational facilities centers compared to those with no formal education who may see going to recreational centers as wasting of resources and time. Most of the respondents are single and hold OND/NCE certificates or higher educational qualifications.

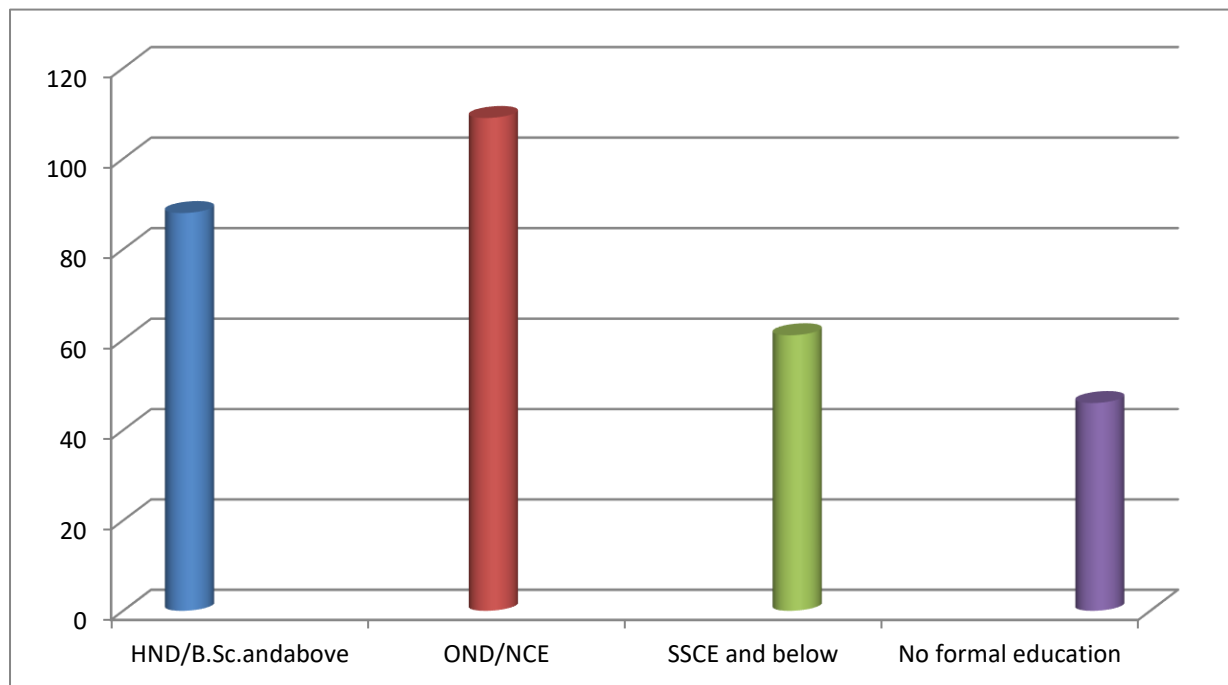


Figure 5: Educational Status of Respondents

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2025.

Level of Income of the Respondents

The analysis of the survey conducted on average monthly income of the respondents presented in Table 1 shows that 27.6% of the respondents earns less than ₦25,000, 28.9% claimed to earn between ₦25,000 - ₦50,000 monthly, 22.0% earns between ₦50,000 - ₦100,000, 13.2% earns between ₦100,000 - ₦150,000, 5.9% of the respondents earn between ₦150,000 - ₦200,000 while 1.6% earn above ₦200,000 and 0.7% claimed to have nothing monthly respectively.

The classification of respondents into income categories was based on the estimate of the Nigeria

Bureau of Statistics (2012) as cited by Ogundare (2019) where workers with monthly income below ₦25,000 were categorized as low income earners. The study revealed that 50.9% of the respondents earn below ₦150,000 monthly, an indication that living condition is low and poverty rate in the country is high. It also points to reason for agitation in salary increase and minimum wage to ₦70,000. However for this purpose of research respondents that earn above ₦150,000 to ₦200,000 are classified as middle income earners, while respondents that earn above ₦200,000 are classified as high income earners.

Table 1: Average Income of Respondents

S/N	Average income	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Less than #25,000	84	27.6
2.	#25,000 - #50,000	88	28.9
3.	#50,000 - #100,000	67	22.1
4.	#100,000 - #150,000	40	13.2
5.	#150,000 - #200,000	18	5.9
6.	#200,000 above	5	1.6
7.	No income/Wages	2	0.7
	Total	304	100.0

Source: Authors' Field survey, 2025.

Environmental Consequences of Recreational Activities

Environmental consequences of recreational activities in the study area were also analysed using Grand Mean Weight Value analysis. The results are vividly revealed in Table 2. It was revealed that recreational activities contribute to noise pollution in the environment including football playing ground, viewing/cinema house, hotel and bar, palm wine joint, and beer parlor with MWV of 3.34 seen as the highest environmental problem created by recreational activities, as it was higher than the GMWV.

Additionally, the respondents agreed that crimes are rampant around recreational facilities areas with MWV of 3.00 greater than 2.96, thereby creating a serious environmental imbalance for the dwellers. However, the respondents disagreed that surroundings of recreational facilities are usually dirty, having scored MWV of 2.81 lower than the

GMWV of 2.96, indicating that environmental sanitation is not taken seriously. Furthermore, the respondents disagreed that recreational facilities produce air pollution from their generators into the environments with MWV of 2.68, which is lower than the GMWV as one of the environmental consequences created by recreational activities in the study area. This indicates that smoke from the generators was being adequately controlled.

Therefore, noise and crime are seen as the greatest environmental consequences of recreational activities while dirtiness and smoke from industrial generators are seen as insignificant consequences from recreational activity in the surrounding environments in the study area. However, recreational activities have a lot of benefits to the people of Owo Local Government like physical fitness, increase in the LG revenue generation, development, relaxation of mental health, among others.

Table 2: Environmental Consequences of Recreational Activities in the Study Area

S/N	LEVEL	SA	A	SD	D	TOTAL	4	3	2	1	TOTAL	MWV	DECISION
1.	Noisy	153	119	15	17	304	612	357	30	17	1016	3.34	Accept
2.	Crimes	94	133	60	17	304	376	399	120	17	912	3.00	Accept
3.	Dirty	80	123	63	38	304	320	369	126	38	853	2.81	Reject
4.	Smoke	83	104	55	62	304	332	312	110	62	816	2.68	Reject
	GMWV	2.96											

Source: Authors' Field survey 2025.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it vividly showed that aged 21–30 years are the highest percentage of people using recreational facilities centres and these are the age that are involved in crime and night parties that could cause noise pollution for the residents. Therefore, people tend to move away from areas that are prone to crime and pollution. Facilities managers

or owners should seek the help of security personnel in order for their facilities area to be crime free. From the findings of the study the following are therefore recommended for policy makers. It is pertinent that facilities owners ensure facilities are adequately equipped, including proper illumination, and security measure is adequately in place, the implementation of energy – efficient lighting, incorporation of

technology by implementing surveillance cameras around recreational facilities to checkmate crimes.

The study recommended that the recreational facilities managers or owners should partner with waste management board (WMB) in disposing their waste rather than littering them around the recreational facilities areas. This will make the facilities area to be neat and attractive for patronage. By addressing these areas, the community can enhance the overall well-being and satisfaction of its members through improved recreational opportunities.

REFERENCES

- [1] Balch, C. H. (2011). Great cities don't just happen: They are made Amsterdam, Barcelona and Berlin. In B. Evans, F. McDonald and D. Rudlin (Eds.). *Urban identity*, 12–35.
- [2] Chan, C.S., Peters, M., & Marafa, L.M. (2015). Public parks in city branding: Perceptions of visitors and residents in Hong Kong. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening*, 14, 57–65.
- [3] Herbert, J., & Prukop, B. (2017). Sports and recreation facilities, their role and impact on physical activity based on examples selected in Rzeszow and its surrounding. *Journal of Science Review Physical Cult.* 7(3), 72-79.
- [4] Hornby, A.S. (2008). Oxford English dictionary, published by Oxford University press, New York. Seventh edition,
- [5] Ibama, B. (2015). Development of waterways for effective transportation system and recreation enhancement in selected navigable creeks and waterways in Rivers State. *International Journal of Scientific and Engineering Research*, 6(9), 1016–1026.
- [6] Igbojekwe, H. (2009). Regular Exercise and Individual's Health. *Nigerian Journal of Physical Health Education and Recreation (NIJPHER)*, 2, 5-10.
- [7] Jerke, D., Porter, D. R., & Lassar, T. J. (2008). Urban design and the bottom line: *Optimizing*
- [8] Huhtala, A., & Pouta, E. (2009). Benefit incidence of public recreation areas – Have the winners taken almost all. *Environmental and Resource Economics*, 43(1), 63–77.
- [9] Kaczynski, A. T., & Henderson, K. A. (2008). Parks and recreation settings and active living: A review of associations with physical activity function and intensity. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 5(4), 619–632.
- [10] Miller, D. (2008). Essentials of recreational activities to an individuals. *Laytal communication, Nigeria Ltd.*
- [11] Okorafor, J. C. (2005). The costs of urbanization in developing countries. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 30(3), 625-648.
- [12] Ries, A.V., Yan, A.F., & Voorhees, S.C. (2011). The neighborhood recreational environment and Physical activity among urban youth: An examination of public and private recreational facilities. *Journal of Community health*. 36 (4), 640-649.
- [13] Sakip, S, R, M., Akhir, N, M., & Omar, S, S. (2015). Determinant factors of successful public parks in Malaysia. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 170, 422–432.
- [14] Schwab, K., Dustin, D. L., & Bricker, K. S. (2009). Parks, recreation, and tourism's contributions to Utah's health: An ecologic perspective. *UTAH Leisure Insights*, 29(1), 12–14.
- [15] Thomas, M. (1929). *The Magic Mountain (J. E. Wood, Trans.)*. (4th Ed.). New York: Vintage International.
- [16] Wolf, I, D., Stricker, H. K., and Hagenloh, G. (2015). Outcome focused national park experience management; transforming participants, promoting social well-being, and fostering place attachment. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(3), 358–381.