

## The Effects of Dwindling Participation on the Sustainability of New Yam Festival on Cultural Tourism in Igbo-land, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The new yam festival of the Igbos in the south-eastern Nigeria usually known as iwa ji, iri ji, ike ji in their diverse dialects is an annual event usually celebrated at the end of every rainy season in early August. The objective of this study highlighted the negative effects of dwindling participation of some Igbos in this important event on their history and culture / cultural tourism development. The study adopted descriptive survey method for collection of relevant data and the exercise involved the use of interviews, observation and questionnaires. Thus, a total of 150 questionnaires were administered to some randomly sampled Igbo youths and middle aged who were currently residing in different towns and cities different from their states / communities of origin. Meanwhile, 120 questionnaires were duly filled and returned. Hypothesis was formulated and chi-square statistical method was used in testing the hypothesis. Using the Chi-square( $X^2$ ) analysis, findings revealed that, increased participation in the new yam festival can help serve as a tool for sustainability in development and growth of cultural tourism in south-eastern Nigeria. Based on the findings; the study recommended among others that a repackaging concept of the festival will be beneficial to various communities, the organizing and management of the festivals should be taken to another level for easy data access, and also, government can support in the ease and free flow of movement through roads infrastructure.

**Keywords:** New Yam, Dwindling, Participation, Sustainable, Cultural Tourism.

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