

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Tourists in University of Ibadan Zoo, Ibadan, Nigeria

Adefalu, L.L, Aderinoye-Abdulwahab, S.A, Olabanji, O.P, and Tijani, A

Abstract—The study focused on socio-economic characteristics of tourist in Nigeria Zoos. A total of 120 respondents among the tourists at the University of Ibadan Zoological garden were selected. A well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. Descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentages and mean) and inferential statistics (Pearson product moment correlation) were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that the mean age of the respondents was 30.54 years with majority (67.5%) being male; 53.8% of the respondents were married with average household size of 4 persons. Most of them were literate with 63.2% having at least tertiary education. Majority were civil servants (35%). Pearson product moment correlation analysis showed a significant relationship between respondents' selected socio-economic characteristics such as age ($r=-0.885$ $p=0.000$), marital status ($r=0.570$ $p=0.000$), educational attainment ($r=0.363$ $p=0.000$) and main occupation ($r=0.658$ $p=0.000$) and the frequency of visiting zoos. The study concluded that younger people visit zoos more regularly to learn about the animals and wildlife conservation. The study therefore recommended that enlightenment programmes with emphasis on tourism potentials especially that of zoos be provided by NGOs and tourist business operators to elderly ones in the area. Finally, tourist sites could be used as platforms for talent-hunt among the youth by educational institutions.

Keywords—Socio-economics, Characteristics, Tourism, Zoo, Ibadan

I. INTRODUCTION

NIGERIA is blessed with several tourist sites. These include national parks, waterfalls, caves, hills, castles, botanical gardens, zoological gardens etc. Tourism contributes to the development of an economy through the provision of foreign exchange, employment, income, development of tourism communities and facilities, etc. The importance of Nigerian tourism industry lies in its tourism resources in generating foreign exchange (Adora 2010) Tourists who travel to Nigeria bring along their own value system and exchange their values with the way of life of Nigerians and vice versa. By so doing, socio-cultural and educational exchange occurs between the

host community and the visitors and thereby widens their horizons and also teaches them how to appreciate other people's culture and value system (Adora 2010). The income generated from the international tourists is an essential source of earnings in Nigeria and from the economic point of view; it encourages financial flow from other countries into Nigeria.

Tourism has grown faster than any other trade in the world (Agbu, 2002). Tourism is a short term movement of people to destinations outside their residential areas primarily for leisure, recreation, sports or business transactions. There is domestic and International Tourism. Domestic is the movement within one's state or country while International involves movement from one's country to another. Nigeria is a country with about a million square kilometres of land mass, blessed with untapped natural, human and tourism resources. It has been stated that the popularity of zoos has declined over the past 20 years partly as a result of a rise in competing attractions (Turley, 1999). Although tourism plays an important role in the economy of some countries, tourism in Africa continent is yet to reach its full economic maturity (Nwosu, 2002). It has been observed that tourism in Nigeria still suffers from neglect because the local, state and federal governments of Nigeria are still indifferent to tourism development despite the preferred status accorded the sector (Edun, 2009). Based on this, Nigeria as a country has several potentials that have not been given attention. Various reasons have been given by people for low turn outs at zoos. Among these reasons are economic conditions of the visitors.

Zoo, also known as zoological garden or zoological park, is an institution devoted to the exhibition, preservation, and study of animals. Although most people visit zoos for entertainment, zoos also educate the public about animal behaviour, natural habitats, and the plight of animals in danger of extinction (Stanley, 2005). It is clear that zoos commands consideration as it contributes significantly towards biological conservation, providing an attraction for the public, as well as being a source of income generation (Meliou, 2010). By visiting the zoos, people will become more aware of the importance of conserving nature, having lesser emissions, and saving the biomes which these creatures depend on. Undoubtedly, Nigeria is a highly blessed country not only with human resources but also with natural resources as well as vast agricultural land that can also be used for agro-tourism. For varied reasons, these potentials are neither fully exploited nor turned to good advantage. Considering the declining popularity of visits to zoos in spite of its numerous

Adefalu, L.L is with the Department of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development, University of Ilorin, Nigeria (+2348063468477; adefalulateef@yahoo.com).

Aderinoye-Abdulwahab, S.A is with the Department of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development, University of Ilorin, Nigeria (sidiav@yahoo.com).

Olabanji, O.P is with the Department of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Tijani, A is with the Department of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

benefits, it becomes imperative to conduct a scientific probe into the possible reasons. the study is aimed at considering the socioeconomic characteristics of tourists in Nigeria using university of Ibadan Zoo as a case study so as to ascertain the personal characteristics which could influence the respondents' decision to visit zoos. This study provided answers to the following questions. Specifically, the study identified the types of animals in the study area, determined Tourist's reasons for visiting zoos as well as identified the constraints militating against regular visit to zoos among the respondents.

II. METHODOLOGY

The University of Ibadan Botanical Gardens is situated some 3km to the north of the city of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria at latitude $7^{\circ} 26'$ North and longitude $3^{\circ} 54'$ East and at a mean altitude of 227m above sea level. The Botanical Gardens of the University is being developed to over 100 acres on the North of the site. Only about 70 acres have been developed (www.u.i.edu.ng/zoologicalgarden). The University of Ibadan Zoological Garden was established in 1948 primarily as Menagerie to support teaching and research in the Department of Zoology. With time the animal collection grew in number and diversity and the Menagerie gradually became a full-fledged Zoo in 1974. It welcomes a large number of visitors from far and near every year. The Zoo is open 7 days a week, 365 days a year from 8:00am to 6:30pm daily. The population of the study comprised of all the people who visited the zoological garden within the period of this study. University of Ibadan zoo was purposively selected for this study since it was well stocked with various animals. A total of one hundred and twenty (120) well-structured questionnaires were administered randomly to the visitors of the zoo (i.e. ten questionnaires per day for 12days). A total of 120 respondents were finally selected for the study. Secondary data, Administration of Questionnaires was used for data collection for this study. Secondary data were obtained from the the internet, journals and textbooks. 120 questionnaires were administered but only 117 were retrieved. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentage and mean were used for data analysis and Pearson product moments correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypothesis.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 showed the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents. From the data generated from the field survey, majority were males 67.5% while females were 32.5%. This indicates that males participate more in zoo tourism than females in the study area. This is in consonance with the findings of Arul et al., (2013) that male were more eager to travel than females. Also, the table revealed the mean age of the respondents as 30.54 years, the age ranging between 17years and 50years. This implies that majority of tourists who visit zoos were youth; they were strong, energetic, dynamic and adventure loving. Again, the information collected showed that majority of the tourist were married

53.8% and 42.7% were single. Most of the tourist were educated to secondary school level 63.2% this accounted for the amount of enlightenment they can have that enhances their participation in tourism in support of a statement by (Ritche, 2003), that people of high level of education are likely to be more aware of the relevance of tourism in social development. Majority of the respondents were Christians 60.7% while 39.3% were Muslims. This indicates that majority of the zoo tourist in the study area were Christians. The mean household size is 4 persons and the mean monthly income is N31,290.60, 66.7% of the total respondents earn between the range 5000-30000 per month, 18.8% of the respondents earn between 30001-55000 per month, 11.1% of the respondents earn 55001-80000 per month and 3.4% of the respondents earn 80001 and above. According to Arul et al., (2013), income plays an important role in promotion of tourism. The higher the income of the people, the higher the level of their willingness to spend on tour and recreational activities. This indicates that income determines their participation in tourism. The respondents in the civil service were 35.0% in the study area.

Table 2 showed that a little above half (53.8%) of the respondents indicated that they visited zoos once in a month, more than 1/3rd (34.2%) of them visited zoos only once in a fortnight while the rest 9.4% and 2.6% of the respondents indicated visit to zoos once in a year and once in a week respectively.

From table 3, most of the respondents 82.9% visited the zoo for leisure reasons, 46.2% does so for the purpose of meeting with other visitors, 37.6% on education course and 10.3% for research purpose all in multiple response. According to Raj (2010), if one wants to really invest the holidays in having fun while getting many value-added benefits, then visit to the nearby zoo should be on top of the list.

Table 4 showed the animal preferences of the respondents. According to the table, majority (82.9%) of the respondents indicated Lion, 80.3% of them indicated Ostrich, 73.9% indicated African python, 70.1% was indicated for Monkey and camel, 51.3% was indicated for Crocodile and Hyena while 52.9% of them indicated Giraffe as the animal they love most. Except for camel, most of the animals in this category are wild animals. This shows that the respondents in the study area have more preference for wild animal.

According to table 5, distance was identified as the major constraint to visiting zoo, 60.7% indicated lack of fund, 54.7% sited transportation reasons, 51.3% claimed not having enough time for visiting zoo, 18.8% gave believe and cultural reasons while 12.8% indicated interest to a specific animal as the only reason why they can visit the zoo. McIntosh, R.W. and Goeldner, C.R. (1990) his study revealed tourists take into account the various factors in terms of facilities, local attractions etc, before choosing their destination.

Table 6 showed the tourists' reasons for attraction to some animals. 80.3% of the respondents are attracted to beautiful animals, 52.9% love colorful animals, while 51.3% prefer

friendly animals; some few 29.9%, 4.1% and 5.9% indicated brevity of animals, aggressiveness and historical importance respectively as reasons for attraction to the animals.

Table 7 shows that there is a significant relationship between the age, marital status and education attainment and the respondents' frequency of visiting the zoological garden while age, household size and monthly income has no significant relationship with the respondents' frequency of visiting zoological gardens. The implication of this result is that marital status, educational attainment and monthly income were positively and significantly related to the respondents' frequency visiting zoos. However, respondents' age was inversely and significantly related to their frequency of visiting zoos. The younger a typical respondent is the more frequent the visit to the zoos.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study showed that more males visit the zoo than the female counterparts and majority of the tourists in the area were youth indicating the vigor and love these age group has for adventures. Most of the tourists were educated to secondary school level, these accounts for the amount of awareness they had to enhance participation in tourism. Leisure, research purpose, education, meeting with other visitors was the most important reasons for visiting zoos in the study area. The study therefore recommended that enlightenment programmes with emphasis on tourism potentials especially that of zoos be provided by NGOs and tourist business operator to elderly ones in the area. Finally, tourist sites could be used as platforms for talent-hunt among the youth by educational institutions.

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TABLE I
SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Variables	Frequency (n=120)	Percentage (%)	Mean
Age			
17-27	52	44.0	30.54
28-38	33	28.2	
39-49	26	22.2	
50 and above	6	5.1	
Total	117	100.0	
Gender			
Male	79	67.5	
Female	38	32.5	
Total	117	100.0	
Marital Status			
Single	50	42.0	
Married	63	53.8	
Divorced	3	2.6	
Widowed	1	0.9	
Total	117	100.0	
Educational Attainment			
Quranic education	3	2.6	
Adult education	5	4.3	
Primary education	1	0.9	
Secondary education	34	29.1	
Tertiary education	74	63.2	
Total	117	100.0	
Religion			
Christianity	71	60.7	
Islam	46	39.3	
Total	117	100.0	
Household Size			
1-3	41	35.0	4 persons
4-6	70	59.8	
7-9	6	5.1	
Total	117	100.0	
Monthly income (N)			
5000 – 30000	78	66.7	N31,29 0.60
30001 – 55000	22	18.8	
55001 – 80000	13	11.1	
80001 and above	04	3.4	
Total	117	100.0	
Main occupation			
Driving	12	10.3	
Artesian	16	13.7	
Civil servant	41	35.0	
Student	37	31.6	
Trading	11	9.4	
Total	117	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2013

TABLE II
RESPONDENTS' FREQUENCY OF VISITING ZOOS

Visit to zoos	Frequency	Percentage
Weekly	3	2.6
Fortnightly	40	34.2
Monthly	63	53.8
Yearly	11	9.4

Source: Field Survey 2013

TABLE III
TOURIST'S REASONS FOR VISITING ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN

Variables	frequency	percentage
Leisure	97	82.9
Education	44	37.6
Research	12	10.3
Interaction	54	46.2

Source: Field Survey 2013 (MR)

TABLE IV
ANIMALS LOVE MOST IN THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN BY RESPONDENTS

Variable	frequency	percentage
Crocodile	60	51.3
Monkey	82	70.1
African pyton	86	73.9
Lion	97	82.9
Hyena	60	51.3
Ostrich	94	80.3
Giraffe	62	52.9
Camel	82	70.1

Source: Field Survey 2013 (MR)

TABLE V
CONSTRAINT AGAINST REGULAR VISIT TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN

Variable	frequency	percentage
Lack of fund	71	60.7
Distance	84	71.8
Believe & Culture	22	18.8
Transportation	64	54.7
Time constraint	60	51.3
Interest	15	12.8

Source: Field Survey 2013 (MR)

TABLE VI
REASONS FOR ATTRACTION TO THE ANIMAL LOVED MOST BY RESPONDENTS

Variable	frequency	percentage
Colour	62	52.9
Bravity	35	29.9
Friendliness	60	51.3
Aggresiveness	5	4.3
Historical importance	7	5.9
Beauty	94	80.3
Human traits	40	34.2

Source: Field Survey 2013 (MR)

TABLE VII
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOME SELECTED SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS AND FREQUENCY OF VISITING ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN

Variable	Coeff. r	P-value	Remarks
Age	-0.885	0.000	S
Marital status	0.570	0.000	S
Education	0.363	0.000	S
Household size	0.054	0.563	NS
Monthly income	0.173	0.063	NS

Source: Field Survey 2013