

## Recreation participation and conservation attitudes of tourists and residents of Lagos Mainland, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study assessed the contribution of tourism to the development of Lagos State mainland and its community through the creation of recreational centers. Data was collected using two methods, viz: oral interview and administration of structured questionnaires, which was randomly selected at the various recreational centers of the study sites. Analysis was done using descriptive statistics and chi-square. Results obtained from the various respondent revealed that 90.8% of the visitors are of the opinion that their expectation were met based on their reasons for visiting the tourist centres and 77.5% visitors/tourists agrees that tourism provides job (75%) opportunity for the people and revenue to the government. Differences in outdoor recreation participation were generally small for wildlife- related activities, and were greater among non-wildlife-related outdoor recreation activities. Also, 70% are of the opinion that tourism creates new market for local products and 55% of the respondents (staffs) were of the opinion that tourism has a positive impact on the development of Lagos state mainland. Problems faced at the recreational centers include poor infrastructures, lack of in-service training and inadequate public awareness. Therefore, regular in-service training of staff and increased awareness level is recommended

**Keywords:** Recreational Center, Management, Tourism Development, Lagos Mainland



Source:[http://www.lagosdirectoryonline.com/Lagos\\_Mainland/Images/Lagos-Mainland.jpg](http://www.lagosdirectoryonline.com/Lagos_Mainland/Images/Lagos-Mainland.jpg)

## Introduction

The importance of tourism cannot be underemphasized as tourism stands out to be among the first three major and rapid growing industries in the world. Other two are technology, and telecommunication. Apart from oil, tourism is the next world leading export commodity (Ajayi, 2012). Nigeria is a lower middle income country with a GDP of \$262.6 billion USD as at 2012 (World Bank, 2014). She has an emerging market and a mixed economy. She has an expanding financial service, communication and entertainment sectors (Mmaduabuchukwu, 2013). Oil dominates the economy of Nigeria (Okezie and Amir, 2006). The country had undergone major political and economic changes since her independence in 1960. Evolving from a poor agricultural economy to a relatively rich, oil - dominated one with a GDP of US \$370 million in export and a per capita income of US \$130 as at 1969 to a per capita income of US \$1, 100 in 1980 (Okezie and Amir, 2006). Ayeni (2013) declared that Nigeria's total revenue in June 2008 was N3, 915.56 billion. From the total amount the sum of N3, 133.00 billion was derived from oil.

Nigeria had a population of 168.8 million in 2012 (World Bank, 2014) and is comprised of three major ethnic languages i.e. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The country has over 250 ethnic groups. Other major ethnic nationalities that sum up to the total population includes tribes such as the Ijaw, Ibibio, Kanuri, Nupe, Tiv, Gwari, Igala, Idoma, Edo, and Fulani among others. The image identifiable to the country called Nigeria is one of multicultural and multi-ethnicity and so represents or betrays different things to different people that are culminated in a multiple image. This multiple image transcends to a lack of uniformity and differences among the personality and character that make up the country (Obeta and Onah, 2013). It is shameful to the Nigerian economy that the Nigeria's tourism

sector contributes a meager of 2% to Nigeria's GDP (Obeta and Onah, 2013), even though they did not indicate the statistics of what year they were referring to. Again, Mmaduabuchukwu (2013) showcases tourism and hospitality (Hotel and Restaurant in particular) contribution in the country at a bad quality of 0.5% of Nigeria's GDP in 2010. On the other hand, the increase in tourist arrivals in Nigeria according to Eja, Ukwuanyi and Ojong (2012) is commendable as the tourism industry of Nigeria is said to upgrading and has however contributed about 8.1% to the Nigeria's GDP.

The contribution of tourism to Nigeria's GDP from government revenues generated via levies on the hospitality sector (which includes registration and other charges) is put at N1.149m in 2004, while in 2009 N100 million was generated. The tourism industry contributed the sum of N1, 232.2 billion in 2011. The WTTC also predicted that the figures will increase by 6.5% in the 10 years (Tunde, 2012). Tourism is the number one employer of labor in the world and jobs created by tourism spreads across the economy in areas of construction, telecommunications, retail and manufacturing, thus, creating jobs in large number for young people, women, and minorities whether in small or medium size companies (Akpan and Obang, 2012). It has been estimated that tourism is the sector with the biggest employer of labor in Nigeria as it is generating employment for millions of people and its effect rubs on every aspect of people from taxi drivers to Bank managers (Ezenagu, 2013)

The Lagos State economy is without exception. The tourism sector has been recognized at the highest possible level for its significant impact on the Lagos State economy, enabling government to meet expectations created for the sector in terms of the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for Lagos State. The role of

coordinating sport, leisure, recreation and tourism development and growth in order to maximize free time activities, foreign exchange earnings, job creation, and continually expand visitor numbers at destinations and recreation attractions, rests on the public sector (government). In Lagos State, sport, recreation, and tourism are government -led, private sector driven and community based. In recent times, governments at both federal and state tiers have made significant impact on tourism development, by solely or in certain cases partnering with the private sector in special resorts of international standard for tourist attractions. Some major factors that tend to inhibit tourism development efforts of the country include poor electricity supply, deplorable condition of roads, religious intolerance, militancy, incessant bombings, and kidnappings. Not only are foreign tourists traveling to Nigeria, after the awareness created by the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation, Nigerians has also started taking more domestic vacations, as well. The country's gradual economic growth has increased in its middle class population. This group is contributing the most to domestic travel.

This study assessed the rising development, impact and upsurge in the number of recreational centers in relation to tourism development in the state and how it provides satisfaction for the tourist or visitor, communities and the economy as a whole.

#### **Description of Study Area:**

Lagos State was created on May 27th 1967 by virtue of the state (Creation and Transitional Provisions) Decree 14 of 1967, which restructured Nigeria into a Federation of twelve States then. The state, which was formerly the capital of Nigeria before being moved to Abuja in 1976, is tagged the "Centre Of Excellence" as the state is the commercial nerve center of the country which hosts over half of the total industrial

investment in Nigeria and the commercial activities. Lagos state mainland is located in the Western region of Nigeria, has four major divisions which includes; Badagry, Ikeja, Ikorodu and Lagos. Recreational centers among this major division were selected randomly each for this study. The metropolitan area, including Ikeja and Agege, now reaches more than 25 miles (40 km) northwest of Lagos Island. The city is the commercial and industrial hub of Nigeria, and has greatly benefited from the nation's natural resources in oil, natural gas, coal, fuel-wood, water and tourism. Lagos Mainland is more developed with various recreational centers blessed with various touristic sites.

#### **People & Culture**

Lagos is part of the Yoruba speaking South western of Nigeria but the population is made up of every tribe in the country and different nationalities of the world. The original inhabitants are the Aworis in Ikeja, the Eguns (Ogu) in Badagry area, the Ijebus in Ikorodu and Epe while Lagos Island consists of a mixture of Benin, Eko Aworis as well as repatriated Yoruba and other immigrants from Brazil and Sierra Leone after the abolition of slave trade.

#### **Weather/Climate**

Annual rainfall ranges from 2031mm in the western half of the state to 2032mm The rivers, creeks and lagoons in the state is about 2540mm in the eastern half. From the west, the Badagry creek enters from the volumes of 1270mm to 1524mm only. Lagos has two rainy seasons, with the heaviest rains falling from April to July, and a weaker rainy season in October and November. There is a brief relatively dry spell in August and September and a longer dry season from December to March. The hottest month is March, with a mean temperature of 84°F (29°C), while July is the coolest month, when it is 77°F (25°C).

Harmattan winds from the Sahara Desert blow between December and early February. Monthly rainfall between May and July averages over 12 inches (300 mm), while in January as low as 1.5 inches (35 mm). Annual precipitation totals 59.33 inches (1507 mm).

Lagos constitutes two major regions: the Island, which is the original city and the Mainland, which is made up by rapidly growing settlements. The climate in Lagos is tropical, hot and wet. The environment is characteristic as coastal with wetlands, sandy barrier islands, beaches, low-lying tidal flats and estuaries. The average temperature in Lagos is 27 °C and the annual average rainfall 1532 mm.

The city of Lagos lies in southwestern Nigeria, on the Atlantic coast in the Gulf of Guinea, West of the Niger River delta. On this stretch of the high-rainfall West African coast, rivers flowing to the sea form swampy lagoons, like Lagos Lagoon, behind long coastal sand spits or sand bars.

Some rivers, like Badagry Creek, flow parallel to the coast for some distance before finding an exit through the sand bars to the sea.

The two major urban islands in Lagos Lagoon are Lagos Island and Victoria Island, which are separated from the mainland by the main channel draining the lagoon into the Atlantic, which forms Lagos Harbour. The islands are connected to Lagos Island by bridges. The smaller sections of some creeks between the islands have been sand filled and built over. Lagos has a total of 1380.7 square miles (3577 square kilometers), of which 303.8 square miles (787 square kilometers) is made up of lagoons and creeks.

### Cities & Towns

Other important cities and towns include Ikeja, Victoria Island, Ikorodu, Ikoyi, Epe, Apapa, Badagry, Agege, Isolo, Ikotun Yaba, Surulere, Iju, Ipaja.



Figure 1: Map showing major cities and towns in Lagos

Source: <http://en/Wikipedia.org/wiki/Lagos>

## Methodology

This study employed quantitative method of data collection. This included the use of Oral interview, administration of Questionnaires to tourist / visitors, staffs of the various recreational centers, and residents of the communities around the recreational centers on Lagos state mainland.

The questionnaire for this project work is structured into three different types, so as to obtain information from different respondent or group of people ranging from Eighteen (18) years and above. Tourist and residents were administered questionnaires in each division which includes Ikeja ( Ikeja City mall), Yaba ( Ozone E- Centre), Badagry (Whispering Palm Beach Resort), Ikorodu ( Funfactory).

A total of 200 questionnaires were designed to obtain this information.

The first questionnaire (60%) was administered to the tourist/visitors at each division of the recreational centers in Lagos state mainland. It contains relevant information like what motivates them to go for recreation, what attracts them to a particular recreational centre with suggestions such as: is it for research, leisure, game viewing, events, relaxation etc. Staff of recreational centres were administered a brief interview with selected questions from the larger survey. Also another 40% of the questionnaire was administered to neighboring communities at each division where this recreational centers are situated, to obtain information on awareness and patronage level in the recreational centers, government intervention and how the recreational centers has helped in the economic development of Lagos state mainland. Responses from the questionnaire and

interview were appropriately collated and subjected to descriptive statistics.

## Results and Discussion

The result of the demographic ratings of respondents based on sex, marital status, age group, education, location, profession and level of income are represented in Table 1. The result shows that the higher percentage of tourist that visit the various recreational centers are female (75%) students that are single. The age distributions with the higher percentages are < 44 years 45.6% and closely followed by 44 – 62 years with 41.8%. Those with tertiary education have the highest representation (58.3%), followed by those with secondary education (35.9%).

At the various recreational centers, 57.5% and 42.5% of staffs interviewed are male and female respectively. The single has the highest representation of about 42.5% followed by married people (37.5%). 50% of the respondents have tertiary education while 47.5% have secondary education followed by those with primary education with 2.5%. Staffs at the various recreational centers are within the age distribution groups of less than 44 years (51.2%) and 44 – 62 years (43.2%).

The majority of the respondents in the communities are females (75%) while the remaining 25% are males. The married makes up 43.5% and singles 34.0%. Respondents at the various neighboring communities have secondary education which is 45.0% and those with tertiary education (42.5%) and primary education with 12.5%. Age groups 44 – 62 years are mostly represented with a percentage of 46.0% closely followed by those between age group of less than 44 years making 44.4%. Higher percentages of the respondent at the communities are self-employed (30.2%) while the private employees are 27.2%.

**Table 1: Demographic ratings of Respondents at Lagos mainland**

Status	Tourist(%)	Staff(%)	Neighboring Community (%)
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	25.0	57.5	25.00
Female	75.0	42.5	75.00
<b>Age group</b>			
< 44	45.6	51.2	44.4
44 – 62	41.8	43.2	46.0
>62	12.6	5.6	9.6
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	78.3	42.5	34.0
Married	15.0	37.5	43.5
Divorced	3.3	15.0	14.6
Widowed	3.3	5.0	7.9
<b>Education</b>			
Primary	5.8	2.5	12.5
Secondary	35.9	47.5	45.0
Tertiary	58.3	50.0	42.5
<b>Profession</b>			
Student	61.7	-	19.8
Civil servant	4.2	-	22.3
Private employee	15.0	-	27.2
Self-employed	16.7	-	30.2
Retired	2.5	-	0.5
<b>Income</b>			
10000-20000	36.7	-	45.0
21000-30000	9.2	-	35.0
31000-40000	10.0	-	10.0
Above 40000	24.2	-	10.0

Source : Field Survey ( 2014)

Respondent's perceptions on whether the recreational centres they visited meet their expectations revealed that they were satisfied (91%) with what the centres offered while 9% did not agree that the centres meet their expectations. Respondents (78%) admitted that the centres provide jobs for Lagos State residents while 22% did not agree because

most of the centres they visited employed foreigners to do the jobs that they believed Nigerians can do. Seventy one percent of the respondents revealed that they have visited many recreational centres at Lagos mainland and 29% did not. Also, majority (73%) of the respondents revealed that government promote and support recreational activities and recreation centres

in Lagos mainland while 28% are of the opinion that government can do more in the areas of infrastructures such as good roads, electricity, security and incentives to private

owners to reduce overhead cost in order to make it affordable to average Nigerians that desire to participate in recreational activities.

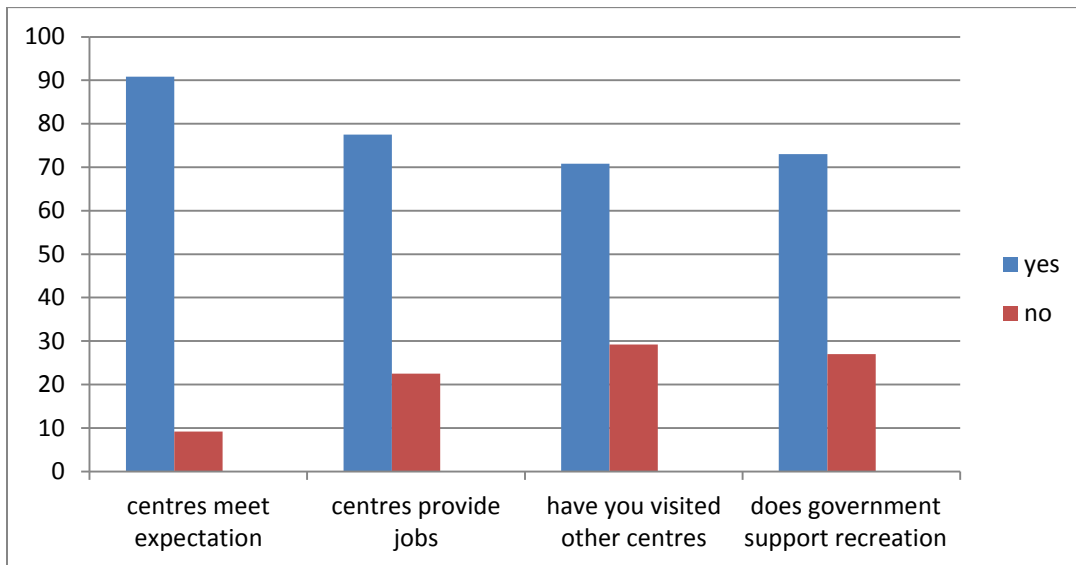


Figure 2: Respondents perception of recreational centres



Plate 1: Ikeja Shopping Mall

Source: Field Survey (2014)

Rates of participation were compared between respondents for several wildlife-related and non-wildlife related activities (Table 2). The activities examined included a variety of land and water based recreational

pursuits, ranging from relatively common activities like wildlife viewing and window shopping to less common like bird watching activities. The differences were generally small and non-significant for the wildlife-



related activities. Only bird watching differed significantly, with structured questionnaire interviewed respondents are slightly more likely to participate (9.2%) than oral interviewed respondents (4.4%). Among the non-wildlife-related activities, the differences were greater and showed a consistent pattern. Respondents through questionnaire reported higher rates of participation. This pattern held true for relatively popular activities like visiting amusement parks and swimming as well as less common activities

like dog walking, biking and guided tours of monuments. One notable exception was the ethnic tourism - Activities destination would include visits to native homes and attending ceremonies (48.8% from oral interviewed respondents and 49.7% from structured questionnaire interviewed) which were far more common among older individuals who generally prefer more reflexive or low impact activities.

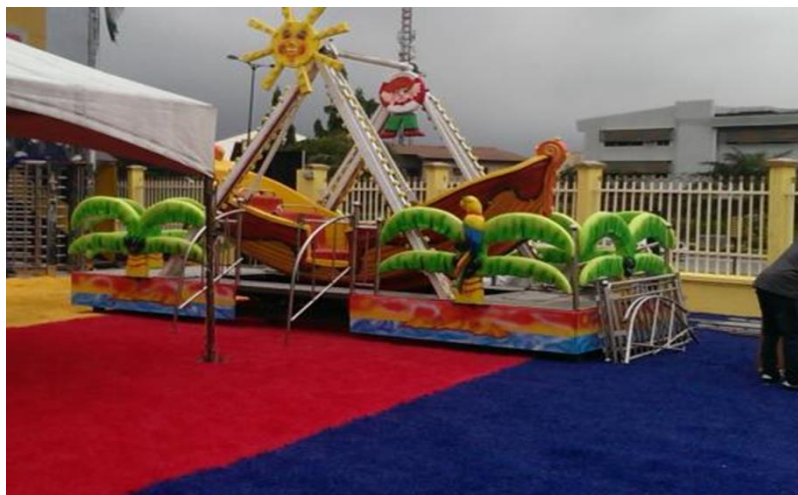


Plate 2: Play house for kids at Funfactory Ikorodu

Source : Field Survey (2014)

**Table 2: Recreation activity participation by respondents at Lagos mainland**

Activity	Oral interview (%)	Structured Questionnaire
<b>Wildlife-related activities</b>		
Bird watching	4.4	9.2
Wildlife viewing	24.1	26.7
Fish viewing	6.4	7.2
Fishing	35.5	38.3
Hunting	31.0	33.5
<b>Non-wildlife-related activities</b>		
Dog walking	1.4	0.4
Trekking	19.4	22.1
Window shopping	43.6	38.2
Biking	34.7	24.1
Amusement parks	38.4	49.0
Swimming	40.3	32.9
Tours of monuments	12.1	9.8
Visit to native homes and attending ceremonies	48.8	49.7

Source: Field survey (2014)



A similar analysis was conducted (Figure 3) to examine the effects of survey mode on conservation-related attitudes amongst respondents. Most of the respondents revealed that they do their part to conserve natural resources but felt that the general environmental quality of public recreation

areas where they live is not good. Also, they revealed that the streams and rivers where they live are in poor condition due to dumping of refuse and sewage by residents and industries.

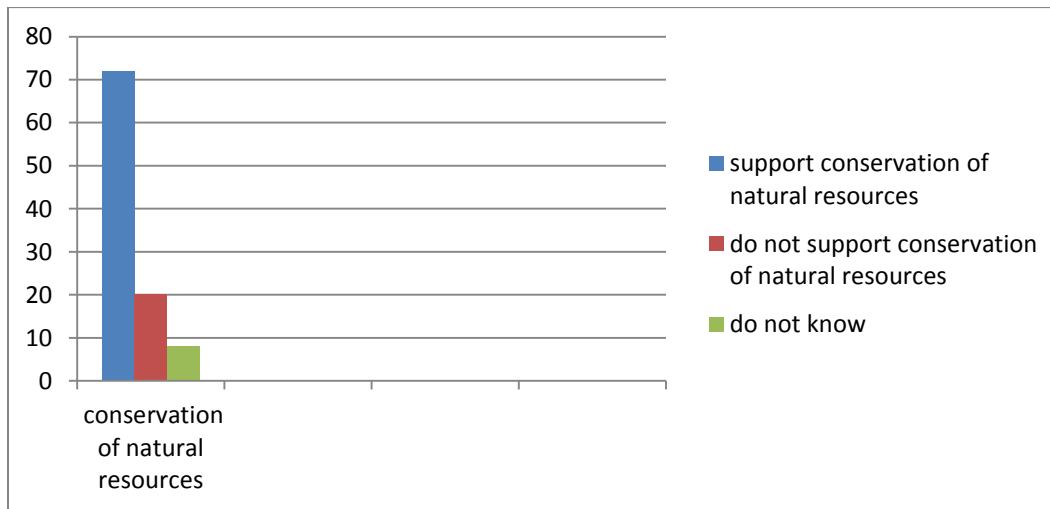


Figure 3: Conservation of natural resources by respondents at Lagos mainland

## Conclusion

Although all respondents were members of the same survey sample (Lagos mainland residents), differences were reflected in the recreation activity participation of survey respondents which has a great influence on their conservation related attitudes. Age was the strongest demographic factor distinguishing their preference for a particular recreational activity closely followed by other variables such as gender, education; income and place of residence. For instance, along with age, education and income were related to participation in visit to native homes and attending ceremonies, amusement parks and swimming while people's knowledge of natural wildlife conservation contributed strongly to understanding participation in wildlife-related activities. Rates of participation in most outdoor recreation activities declines with age as a result of passive lifestyle

observed in ages above 45years. However, a higher level of education and income increases participation in outdoor wildlife recreation activities. The study confirms Graefe et. al. (2011) report that age was a less powerful predictor of participation in wildlife-related activities and actually showed a positive relationship with bird watching. Gender showed an unusually large effect on hunting participation, while place of residence showed relatively strong effects on participation in hunting, wildlife viewing, and bird watching.

Conclusively, this study agreed with the Graefe et. al. (2011) report that the results of wildlife-related activities differed from those obtained for the non-wildlife-related outdoor recreation activities. While the patterns of relationships between variables

were consistent across many non-wildlife-related activities, the findings for different wildlife-related activities were more unique and specific.

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