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# WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR CAPTIVE WILDLIFE TOURISM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN ZOOLOGICAL GARDEN, NIGERIA

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Zoo visits represent a unique opportunity for large numbers of people to be engaged on wildlife conservation issues and given opportunity to support it. The University of Ibadan Zoo is one of the major sites with animals of high intrinsic value and attractions to tourists and other visitors. Copies of structured questionnaire were administered to 165 visitors to the zoo to elicit information on their socio-demography in relation to their paying characteristics, their willingness to pay (WTP) for the services offered by the Zoo, and the factors influencing their WTP. The Result showed that majority (51.5%) of the visitors were males and 48.5% were females. 61% of the visitors had repeated visits while 39% were first time visitors. Although, 76% of them were often willing to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the Zoo, 52% of the visitors were not satisfied with the current charges by the Zoo. Income, marital status and place of residence of the visitors were significantly related to visitors willingness to pay (p<0.05). Five factors significantly influence visitors' WTP, out of which, the level of satisfaction of the visitors had the highest weighted mean of 4.39, and hence the highest influence on visitors' WTP. Zoo visitors will be willing to pay more for captive wildlife tourism at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden, if the facilities, services and conservation strategies are improved to provide more satisfaction to visitors.

**Keywords:** University of Ibadan Zoo, wildlife, visitors, willingness to pay, level of satisfaction

# **INTRODUCTION**

Wildlife tourism deals with visitation of tourists to wildlife protected areas such as national parks, game reserves, forest reserves and Zoological gardens among others. It is a type of tourism that is based on attractive and interesting interaction between visitors with wild animals.

Captive wildlife tourism is a form of viewing wild animals in a man-made confinement such as Zoos. wildlife parks, animal aquaria (Higginbottom, sanctuaries and 2004). It has been associated with nature tourism where visitors' experience the wildlife confinement in a natural setting (Boyd et al., 2014).

People travel to various tourism destinations with different motives, depending on the type of tourism they are engaged in. The main focus of the visitors to come to the Zoo is because of their interest in wildlife, they want to satisfy their curiosity to observe wild animals at close range (sight-seeing); and their encounter with wild animals is partly of wildlife experience (Boyd et al. 2014). Visit to Zoo is a unique opportunity for large numbers of people to be engaged with conservation issues and be given opportunity to act in support of wildlife (Smithet al., 2012). Zoos are mainly created for conservation, education and research. According to Tribe (2001), recreation is the major quandary for today's Zoos - how to attract and entertain their visitors, without comprising the basic reasons for the Zoo's existence - education, conservation and research. As more natural environments are affected by development, Zoos represent one type of urban open space that is increasingly recognized as a place for visitors to reconnect with nature (Rigway et al., 2005).

The Zoo generates fund from revenue sources associated with visitation, which include entrance fees, admission fees, rental fees, sales revenue, licenses and permits and special service fees (Lindberg, 2001). The common type of these income generating fees is "entry", which has been known to generate enough revenue to cover operating costs, although allocating revenue funds from tourism fees into conservation and protection can greatly improve management efficiency and conservation effectiveness (Spergel and Moye, 2004), the organisations designed to manage and maintain a protected area are often faced with limited financial resources to maintain and monitor the site to their fullest potential. Willingness to Pay (WTP) studies are used to assess visitors' views and opinions towards fee systems and the potential of paying more in order to sustain an organisation's role in nature management and conservation of natural and other valuable resources (Elsie et al., 2006). Although the Zoo has several values which draw peoples to visiting it, the economic climate for instance, people living below the

World Bank benchmark of USD \$1.25 per day (Alexander, 2012), affects the paying characteristics of most visitors. It may even restrict some from visiting the Zoo. Some are forced by their family members usually their children to visit the Zoo especially during special events, they do this just to perform their civic duties not because they are really willing to pay for captive wildlife tourism offered by the Zoo. Zoos must make money to survive but this is an increasingly difficult task. Admission prices have to be kept low enough to encourage repeat visits by a wide spectrum of the society (Tribe, 2001). Due to this, the quality, captive propagation programmes and the maintenance of the Zoo could be affected resulting to inadequate management of the Zoo animals and staff. This in turn affects the willingness to pay (WTP) of visitors and also discourage revisits. This study therefore seeks to unearth visitors' WTP for captive wildlife tourism at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden.

### METHODOLOGY

# **Description of Study Area**

University of Ibadan Zoological Garden was established in 1948 primarily as menagerie to support teaching and research in Department of Zoology. In 1974, as the number and diversity of animals collected in the menagerie increased, it was gradually elevated to a full-fledged Zoo. The Zoo now welcomes a large number of visitors from far and near every year. Apart from displaying animals for teaching, research and the entertainment of visitors, the U.I Zoo is also for the conservation of endangered species. The garden is home to a wide array of animals comprising mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. The UI Zoological garden is located at the University of Ibadan campus 7<sup>0</sup>26'37.1"N Latitude and Longitude 3<sup>0</sup>53'43.8"E. Ibadan has a typical tropical climate with distinct rainy and dry seasons. Temperatures range from 21.4°C and 26.7°C and a rainfall of 1420.1mm spread over 109 days.

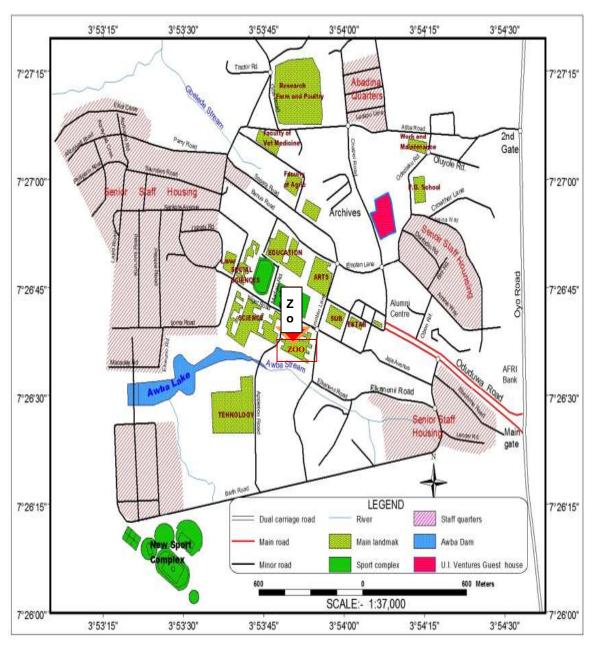


Figure 1: Map of University of Ibadan Showing the Location of Zoological Garden

# Population, Sampling, Data Collection and Analysis

The statistical population for this study were the visitors to the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden. Systematic random sampling approach was used to sample one hundred and sixty-five (165) visitors that are willing to participate in the study. A Multiple

choice closed ended questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire focused among others on the socio-demography, visit and paying characteristics of the visitors, visitors' willingness to pay and the factors influencing willingness of visitors to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the U.I. Zoological garden. The five (5) point Likert Scale was

used and options such as strongly agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (U), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) and with a weighted scale of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. variable highlighting the affecting visitors' willingness to pay was used to calculate the Weighted Mean (X) or mean of a group data. The Group Arithmetic Mean (GAM) was applied to the entire calculated mean under each of the factors. The GAM result was used as baseline for determining the cut-off mark to accept or reject the variable statement and also rank the factors affecting WTP as described by Ogunbodede, (2012).

# **Data Analysis**

Data obtained was analysed with descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistical tools present the data obtained inform of frequencies, percentage, mean, charts and tables, while discriminant analytical tool was used as inferential statistics.

## **RESULTS**

# Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Visitors to the University of Ibadan Zoo

The result in Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the visitors to University of Ibadan Zoological garden. More than half (51.5%) of the visitors were male and 48.5% were female. Majority (78.2%) of the visitors were single, only 22.1% were married. Higher percentages (63.7%) of the visitor were between ages of 21 – 40 years and 97.5% are educated. In addition, 52.1% of the visitors were students, 17.6% were civil servants and 13.9% were self-employed. The study also showed that majority (63.6%) of the visitors +20,000 - +100,000 and 13.9% earn above +100,000, monthly. Domestic visitors were 98.8% and majority reside within Ibadan metropolis (66.7), while 1.2% were foreigners from Mali and Ghana. Visitors' frequency of visits shows that 39% were first time visitors. while 61% of the visitors have had repeated visits to the UI Zoo (Figure 2).

**Table 1:** Demographic information of visitors to U.I Zoological Garden

Demographic Information	Frequency (N=165)	Percentage		
Gender				
Male	85	51.5		
Female	80	48.5		
Marital Status				
Single	129	78.2		
Married	35	21.2		
Divorced	1	0.6		
Age				
Below 20	51	30.9		
21 - 30	78	47.3		
31 - 40	27	16.4		
41 - 50	5	3.0		
Above 50	4	2.4		
Level of Education				
Primary	5	3.0		
Secondary	23	13.9		
Tertiary	133	80.6		
No formal education	4	2.5		
Employment status				
Unemployed	25	15.2		
Self employed	23	13.9		
Civil servant	29	17.6		
Student	86	52.1		
Retired	2	1.2		
Monthly Estimated Income (N)				
Less than 20,000	105	63.6		
20,000 - 50,000	21	12.7		
51,000 - 100,000	16	9.7		
Above 100,000	23	13.9		
Nationality				
Nigeria	163	98.8		
Ghana	1	0.6		
Mali	1	0.6		
Residence				
Ibadan	110	66.7		
Outside Ibadan	55	33.3		

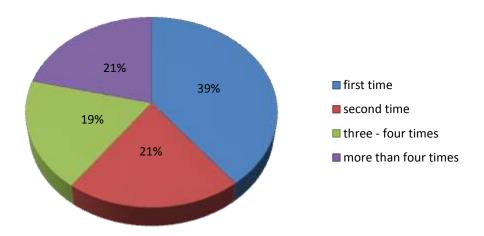


Figure 2: Percentage distribution of visitors' frequency of visits to the U.I. Zoo.

# Relationship between Socio-demographic attributes of Visitors and their WTP for Captive Wildlife Tourism at the UI Zoo

Visitors' socio-demographic attribute in relation to how often they are willing to pay

to visit the U.I Zoo in Table 2 revealed that income, marital status and place of residence of visitors had significant relationship with their willingness to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the Zoo (P<0.05).

**Table 2:** Relationship between Socio-demographic Characteristics of Visitors and Willingness to pay for captive wildlife tourism at the UI Zoological Garden

Variables	P-value	Remark
Sex	.846	Ns
Marital Status	.040	*
Age	.111	Ns
Education	.447	Ns
Employment Status	.759	Ns
Monthly estimated income	.019	*
Religion	.128	Ns
Nationality	.582	Ns
State of Origin	.683	Ns
Place of Residence	.045	*
Household Size	.385	Ns
Frequency of visit	.444	Ns

p<0.05, \* - Significant, Ns - Not significant

# Visitors WTP for Services offered at the UI Zoological Garden.

Results in Table 3 further showed that majority (89%) of the visitors were of the opinion that people should pay entrance fee to visit the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden. Although, 76% of them were often willing to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the Zoo (Figure 3), 52% of the visitors were

not satisfied with the current charges by the Zoo since there are extra charges on the use of camera, children swimming pool and tour guide fee (Table 4). 56% agreed to a fair-fee of N200-N500 (children -adult) for entrance per day while 70% of the respondents are willing to pay more if the funds raised are spent on improving the Zoo facilities and conservation strategies.

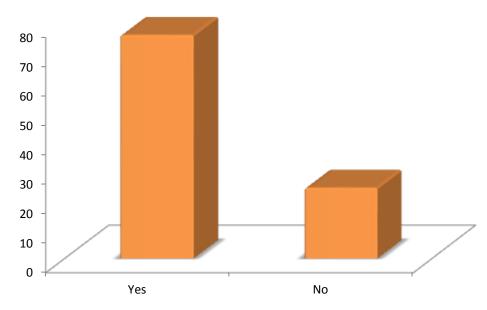


Figure 3: Are you often willing to pay for captive wildlife tourism in U. I Zoo

**Table 3:** Visitors' Willingness to pay for services provided at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden.

Visitors' Willingness to pay	Frequency	Percentage
Do you think visitors should pay to visit the University of Ibadan		
Zoological garden		
Yes	147	89
No	18	11
How much do you think is a fair-fee for entrance per day $(\frac{\mathbb{N}}{})$		
Less than 200 (children)	63	38
200-500 (children – adult)	92	56
Above 500 (adults)	10	6
Would you be willing to pay more if the money collected is		
increased and spent to improve the Zoo facilities as well as		
conservation strategy		
Yes	115	70
No	50	30
Are you willing to pay for permits/licenses such as use of camera,		
reptile house entrance fee, children playground fee, etc. after		
paying the entrance fee		
Yes	65	39
No	100	61
Are you willing to pay for service charges such as tour guide, etc.		
Yes	74	45
No	91	55
Are you satisfied with the current charges by the Zoo		
Yes	79	48
No	86	52

**Table 4:** Service Charges at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden

Official Charges	Amount (N)	
Entrance fee		
Individual (Both children and adult)	500	
Registered Group (Children of Nursery and		
Primary School Only)	300	
Swimming Pool at the children playground	100	
Camera		
Video camera/Ipad	1,000	
Small camera	200	
Tour guide	1,000	
Eigld Current 2015		

Field Survey 2015

# Factors influencing Visitors WTP for captive wildlife tourism at the UI Zoological Garden

Five factors significantly influence visitors' WTP, out of which, the level of satisfaction of the visitors had the highest weighted mean of 4.39, and hence the highest influence on visitors' WTP; next to it was increased knowledge of wildlife (4.16), which was

followed by stocking of varieties of wild animals in the Zoo (4.15), recreational value of the Zoo (4.11) and income of visitor (4.05). These factors had their weighted mean greater than the Gross Arithmetic Mean (3.98) for determining the cut-off mark to accept or reject the factor statement as being accepted or rejected by the majority (Table 5).

**Table 5**: Factors influencing willingness for people to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden.

Variables	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total number of respondent	Total sum of score	Weighted mean (X)	Rank	Remark
Level of satisfaction	81	73	5	6	0	165	724.35	4.39	1	Accept
Increased knowledge of		74								A
wildlife	68	/4	7	14	2	165	686.40	4.16	2	Accept
Conservation interest	50	76	21	15	3	165	650.10	3.94	6	Reject
Income of visitor Stocking of varieties of	55	75	24	10	1	165	668.25	4.05	5	Accept
wildlanimals in the Zoo Management technical	76	56	20	7	6	165	684.75	4.15	3	Accept
knowhow	40	74	38	11	2	165	633.60	3.84	7	Reject
Travel cost	45	60	38	18	4	165	618.75	3.75	9	Reject
Recreational value of the Zoo Services such as guided tour, interpretative	55	82	20	7	1	165	678.15	4.11	4	Accept
trail, signage	44	53	33	27	8	165	592.35	3.59	10	Reject
Environmental conservation awareness provided by the Zoo	45	76	20	16	8	165	628.65	3.81	8	Reject
Gross Arithmetic Mean (GAM)	3.98									

Field Survey, 2015

# **DISCUSSION**

Mahat (2004) and Nuva and Mad (2009) in their respective studies on tourists' inflow at the Central Zoo of Nepal and the Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park (GGPNP) recorded more male visitors than females. The current study at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden also shows that more male tourists' participate in captive wildlife tourism at the UI zoo than females. The foregoing implies that the male folks love participating in captive wildlife tourism than their female counterparts. This supports the findings of Cohen et al., (2007) that more males are seen

in public parks than female. Boas et al. (2004) reported that majority of ecotourists of Parque Florestal Quedas do Rio Bonito, Lavras (Mg), Brazil were male. Alarape (2015) also reported more male visitors in Markurdi Zoological Garden. This might be attributed to gender differences in recreational activities, interests willingness and to pay. Overwhelming majority of the visitors were within the ages of 20-40 years; an indication that they are within their active ages. The prime ages of these visitors who were primarily students with moderate income level suggests that they are economically viable to spend money on leisure and recreation as opined by Ogunbodede, (2012). proportion The relatively higher respondents with degrees and education is not unexpected; the Zoological garden is sited on a University Campus, and this prompted may have this high involvement of the enlightened community to the zoo. The overwhelming majority of the unmarried visitors patronizing Ш Zoological garden further suggest that they are perhaps still pursuing education and

during leisure, they spend their time on tourism at the zoo. This is consistent with the study carried out by Adetola and Oluleye (2014) at the University of Ibadan and Obafemi Awolowo University Zoological gardens where majority of the visitors to the Zoos were students and youths.

Considerable number of Patrons to the zoo, which includes domestic and international tourists, resides within Ibadan metropolis. This corroborates the earlier research by Ridgway *et al.*, (2005) on zoo visitor behaviour where majority of visitor groups lived in the same city as the zoo they were visiting.

Visitors to U.I Zoo have great interest in captive wildlife tourism and they are willing to pay for it, they added that they would be willing to pay more if the charges are used to improve the Zoo facilities as well as conservation strategies. The result agreed with the study carried out by Nuva and Mad (2009) at GGPNP, where 61% out of 423 respondents were willing to pay for the given bid, and 39% were not willing.

Income of the visitors had the highest significant effect on willingness to pay. This implies that the higher the income earned by the visitors the higher their willingness to pay. This compliments the studies at Palangan Forest Park and Hurulu Forest Reserve in Sri Lanka by Narges et al. (2013) and Weerakoon et al. (2010). In the above studies, average monthly income was a common factor, which influenced the Willingness-To-Pay of both local and foreign visitors at Palangan Forest Park and Hurulu Forest Reserve. This implies that visitors that earn more are likely to be willing to pay more for captive wildlife tourism in the U.I Zoo. Marital status of the visitors also has significant effect on their willingness to pay, followed by their place of residence. This implies that singles with fewer responsibilities to cater for are more willing to pay compared to others who are married with family responsibilities. Place of residence also has significance influence on visitors willingness to pay. This is an indication that, the closer the residence of visitors to the U.I Zoo, the more their patronage and willingness to pay for the attractions and services offered

by the Zoo. This contradicts the findings of Ijeomah and Herbert (2012) at the ecotourism destinations Plateau in State. where significant relationship between visitors' age, sex and their willingness to pay was observed. Among the factors influencing willingness for people to pay for captive wildlife tourism at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden, the level of satisfaction of visitors has the highest influence. This finding supports Reichel and Urieli (2008) that viability of ecotourism is attributed to high level of tourist satisfaction. Increased level of wildlife knowledge in terms of wildlife habitat, distribution, food feeding habit, and conservation status and threats to their existence is also a predictor of willingness to pay. The more the Zoo management stocks the Zoo with diverse species of wild animals of high intrinsic value, the more visitors willingness increases. Thus, to pay recreational values of Zoos also influence willingness to pay (Zaiton, 2008). Therefore, right stocking backed up with upgraded management technical knowhow with increased strategies for conservation will increase the rate at which visitors would be willing to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the U.I Zoo.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This study provides a summary of willingness to pay for captive wildlife tourism at the University of Ibadan Zoological Garden. It is thus established that male and youths visit the U.I Zoo the most. The willingness of visitors to pay for captive wildlife tourism in the U.I Zoo is greatly influenced by their level of satisfaction. and visitors paying characteristics is affected the most by the monthly estimated income of the visitors. Although the U.I Zoo visitors are willing to pay for the captive wildlife tourism in the Zoo, they are not satisfied with the current charges offered by the Zoo, the entrance fee is not only considered here, the Zoo visitors are

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not satisfied with other user charges especially charges on the use of cameras and tour guard service. However, the visitors will be willing to pay more if the Zoo facilities, services as well as its conservation strategies improved through development of programmes such production educational materials souvenirs, as introduction of Zoo week or day as well as animal talk session to increase the level of satisfaction of these visitors.

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