



SOCIO-ECONOMIC, TRIP CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATIONS OF PRIVATE OWNED ZOO VISITORS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the socioeconomic, trip characteristics and motivations of Zoo visitors in Lagos State, Nigeria. The population for the study was the visitors to the selected zoos. The respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study. Two hundred (200) respondents participated in the study. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire which was self-administered by the visitors. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Analysis of variance and regression analysis). The study showed that male and female visitors visit the zoos and majority of the visitors were youth, indicating the vigour and love these age group has for adventures. Most of the visitors to the zoos were single (Origin zoo = 60%; Shodex zoo = 90%; Omu resort zoo = 72%; Qbrat zoo = 86%), were highly educated by attaining to tertiary level of education (Origin zoo = 76%; Shodex zoo = 90%; Omu resort zoo = 78%) and were Christians (Origin zoo = 68%; Shodex zoo = 76%; Omu resort zoo = 86%; Qbrat zoo = 62%). Most of the visitors were gainfully employed; 46% and 28% of visitors to Shodex zoo had professional jobs and self-employed respectively; 40% and 28% of visitors to Origin zoos were students and self-employed respectively; (50%) of visitors to Omu resort zoo had professional jobs while 62% of visitors to Qbrat zoo were civil servants. Half of the visitors were low income earners (Origin zoo=56%; Shodex zoo =50%; Qbrat zoo =62%). The visitors reside within Lagos State (Origin zoo = 98%; Shodex zoo = 94%; Omu resort zoo = 78%; Qbrat zoo = 62%). Most of the visitors were Nigerians (Origin zoo = 100%; Shodex zoo = 98%; Omu resort zoo = 98%; Qbrat zoo = 100%). The main travel motivations of the visitors were to “enjoyment of serene environment” (Origin zoo = 94%; Shodex zoo = 90%; Qbrat zoo = 94%), “to spend time with people cared about deeply” (Origin zoo = 94%) and “to see wild animals in captivity(Origin zoo = 92%; Omu resort zoo = 94%; Qbrat zoo = 94%)

Keyword: Socio-economic, Characteristics, Tourism, Motivation, Zoo.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Agbu (2002), tourism has grown faster than any other trade in the world. 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. Tourists are the backbone of tourism industry. However, the study of functional and behavioural aspect of the tourist has been important for the development of tourism and planning of a tourist region. Tourist information regarding their origin, demographic

characteristics, purpose of visit, frequency of visit, modes of transportation, opinion about the local people, sources of information, tourists' expenditure and tourist's view about facilities etc. indicates the standard of the tourists and their behavioural characteristics (Turley, 1999).

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).

Zoo 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. When tourists plan a holiday, a number of decisions must be made about different components of the trip, e.g. the choice of destination, type of accommodation,

means of transport etc. Although decisions about different aspects of the trip can be considered sequentially, their main characteristic is their interdependence (Dellaert *et al.*, 1998). One of the most important holiday characteristics to be decided is the length of stay. Nonetheless, this variable has received little attention in literature, particularly if we bear in mind its effect on the income generated in tourist destinations (Cannon and Ford, 2002). The study determined the socioeconomic, trip characteristics and motivations of zoo visitors in Lagos State.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Study Areas

The study was conducted in four (4) privately owned zoological parks within Lagos State Nigeria. The selected zoos are Qbrat Zoo in Badagry, Omu Zoo in Ibeju-Lekki, Origin Zoo in Ikorodu and Shodex Zoo in Ilupeju. Q-Brat Zoo is located at Araromi Ale near OkoAfo, Badagry. It is a recreational and educational centre based in Lagos with eco-tourism and wildlife preservation as its core mandate. Omu Zoo is a world of conservation, education and entertainment located at Bogije in Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos which has a land area of approximately 22 hectares is set up in a rainforest environment which allow guests experience and be inspired by the wonders of nature. The resort boasts of different attractions ranging from the zoo, seaworld, kayaking, antique museum, boat cruise etc. Origin Zoo is located at Ogolonto in Ikorodu, Lagos with coordinates 6.606689N 3.481961E. The garden offers zoo and museum services. Shodex Zoo located at Anthony in Lagos. It is a well landscaped park with perfect ambience and lush environment for events, fun and hangouts. The garden offers amazing landscapes, zoological garden and conservation

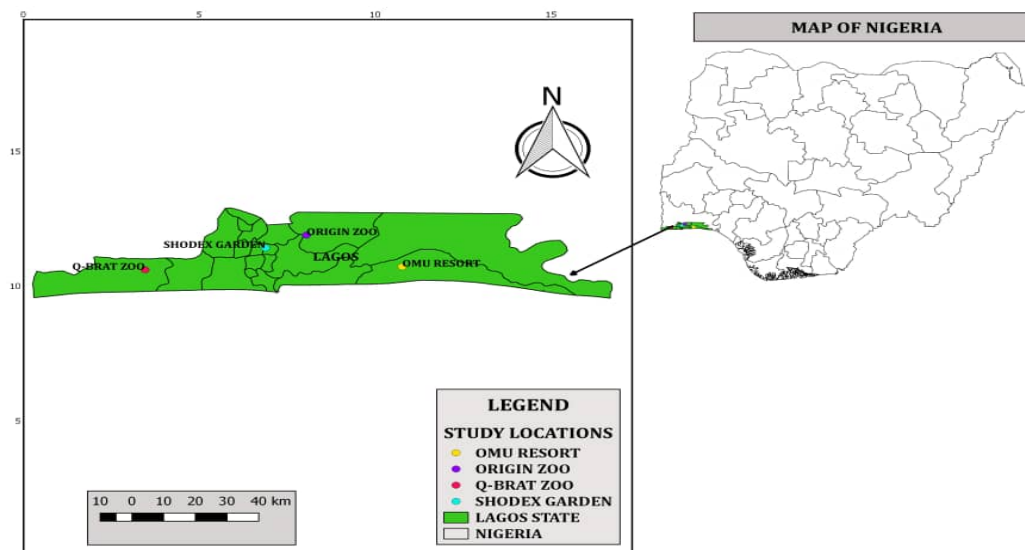


Figure 1: Location of the study sites on map of Nigeria

Methods for Data Collection

Population, Sample, Analysis and Measurement

The statistical population was the visitors to selected zoological gardens in Lagos State, Nigeria. The respondents were selected based on their willingness to participate in the study. Thus, selection was purposive. A total of two hundred (200) respondents were randomly selected from the selected zoos; fifty (50) respondents were selected in each of the zoos. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire which was self-administered by the visitors. The questionnaire was made up of the socioeconomic, trip characteristics of the visitors and motivations of the visitors. Data were analysed using descriptive (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (Analysis of variance and Regression analysis).

RESULTS

Socio-economic Characteristics of Visitors

Table 1 presents the socioeconomic characteristics of the visitors to all the selected zoos. The study shows that most of the visitors to Origin zoo (58%) and Shodex zoo (54%) were female while large percentages of visitors to Omu resort zoo (66%) and Qbrat zoo (60%) were male. The study further shows that majority of the visitors to the respective zoos were in their youthful age. Half (50%) of visitors to Origin zoo were within the age group of 31-

40 years, while 64% and 62% of visitors to Shodex zoo and Omu resort zoo were within the age group of 31-40 years respectively. However, 46% and 38% of visitors to Qbrat zoo were within the age group of 21-30 years and 31 – 40 years respectively (Figure 3). The study also shows that large percentages of the respondents (Origin zoo = 60%; Shodex zoo = 90%; Omu resort zoo = 72%; Qbrat zoo = 86%) were single (Figure 4). As shown in Figure 5, majority of the visitors to the selected zoos were highly educated attaining to tertiary level of education (Origin zoo = 76%; Shodex zoo = 90%; Omu resort zoo = 78%).

Majority of the visitors to the selected zoos were Christians (Origin zoo = 68%; Shodex zoo = 76%; Omu resort zoo = 86%; Qbrat zoo = 62%). The study also shows that most of the visitors to the zoos were gainfully employed; 40% and 28% of visitors to Origin zoos were students and self-employed respectively; 46% and 28% of visitors to Shodex zoo had professional jobs and self-employed respectively; half (50%) of visitors to Omu resort zoo had professional jobs while 62% of visitors to Qbrat zoo were civil servants. Going by the monthly income of the respondents, 56% of the visitors to Origin zoo were low income earners, earning between ₦21,000 and ₦50,000 monthly, also half (50%) of the visitors to Shodex zoo earned between ₦21,000 and ₦50,000 monthly, while 62% of

visitors to Qbrat zoo earned between ₦21, 000 and ₦50, 000 monthly (Figure 8). Majority of

the respondents resides within Lagos State and were Nigerians.

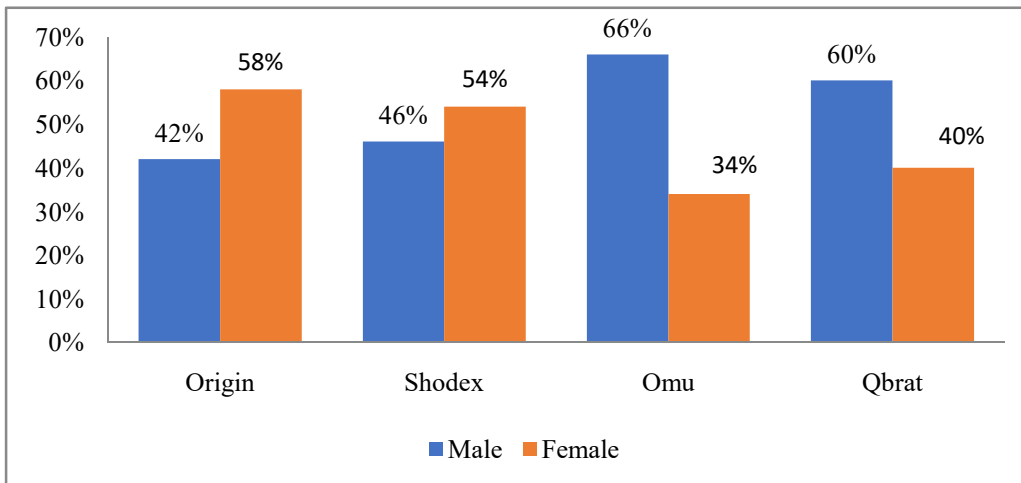


Figure 2: Gender of Visitors to the zoos

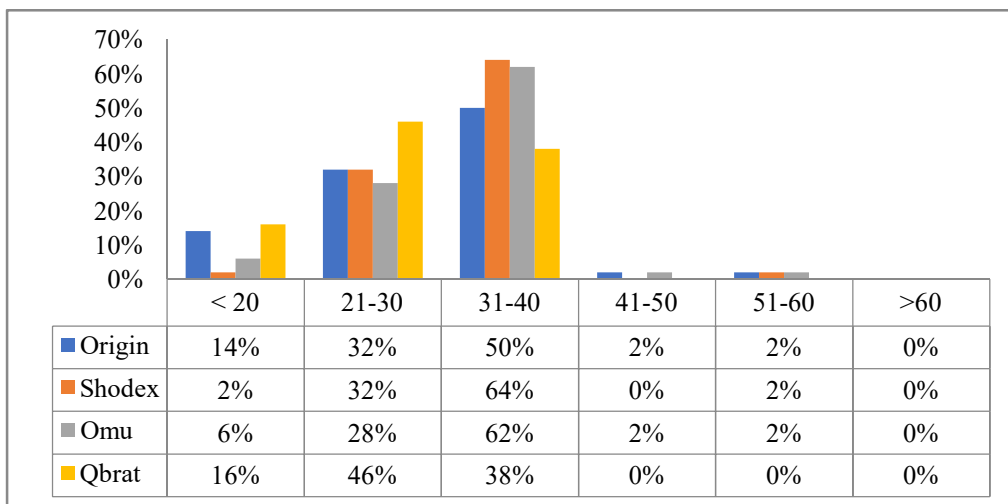


Figure 3: Age of Visitors to the zoos (in years)

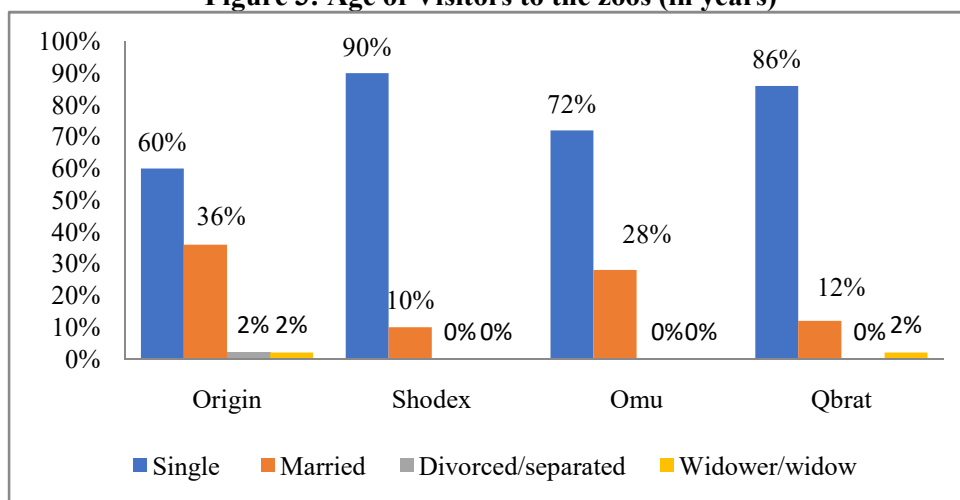


Figure 4: Marital Status of Visitors to the zoos

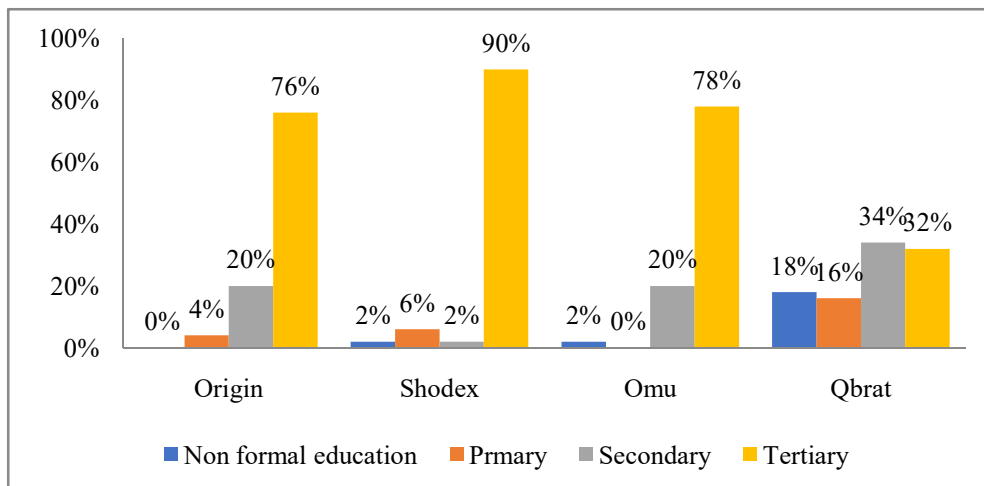


Figure 5: Level of Education of Visitors to the zoos

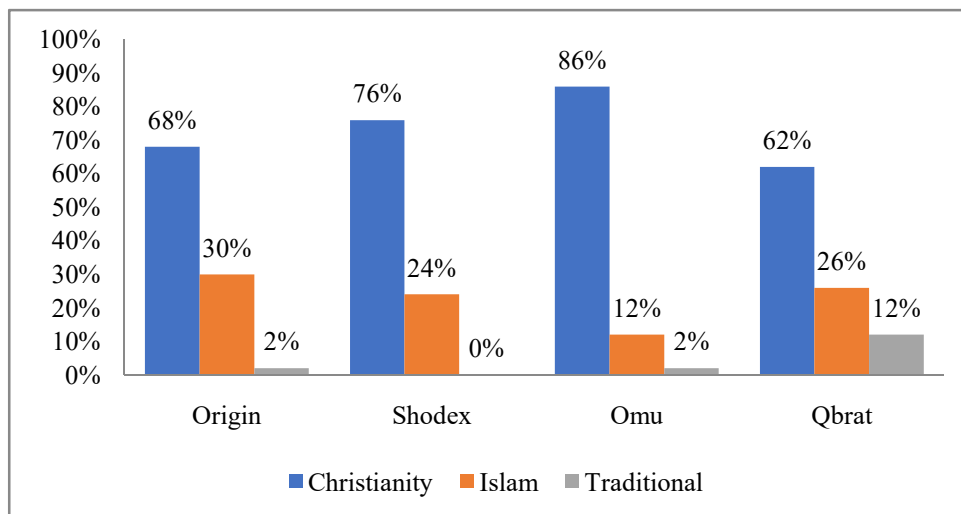


Figure 6: Religion of Visitors to the zoos

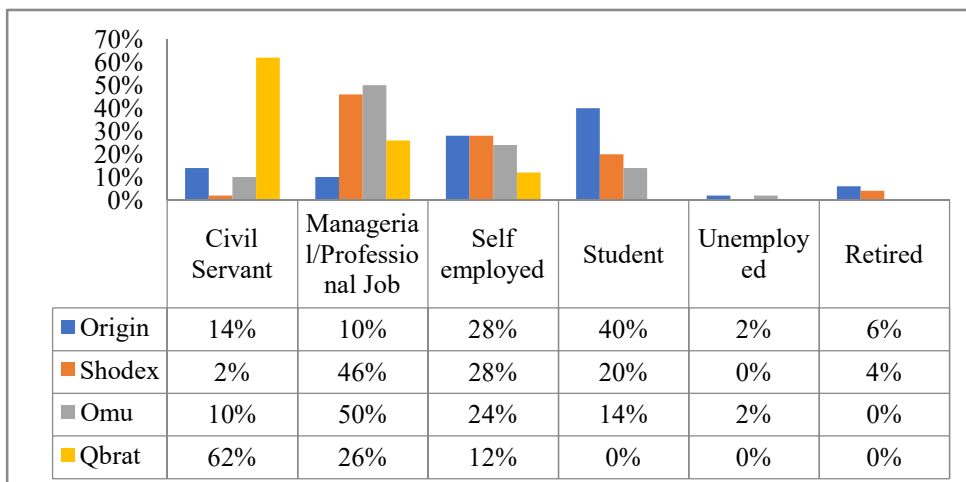


Figure 7: Occupation of Visitors to the zoos

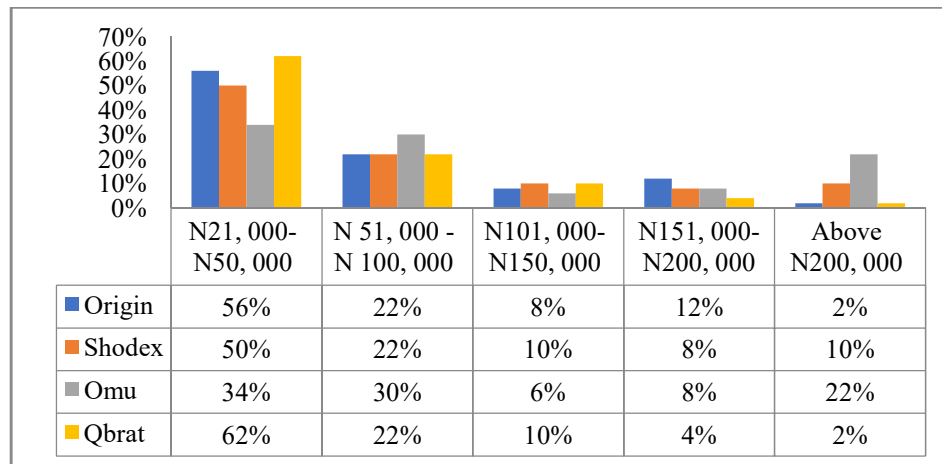


Figure 8: Monthly Income of Visitors to the zoos

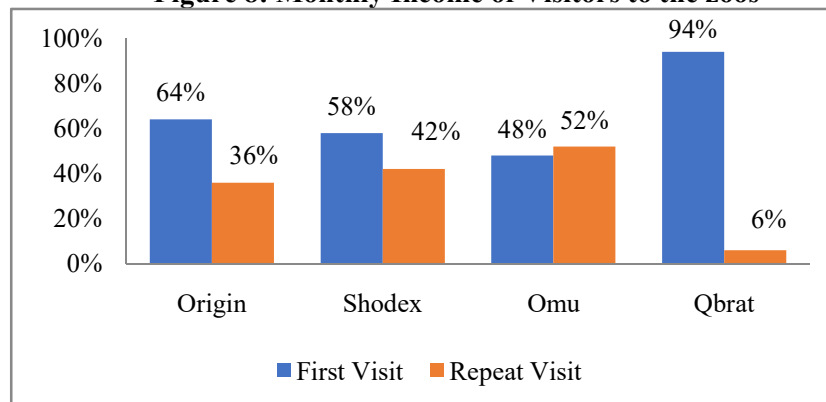


Figure 9: Place of Residence of Visitors to the zoos

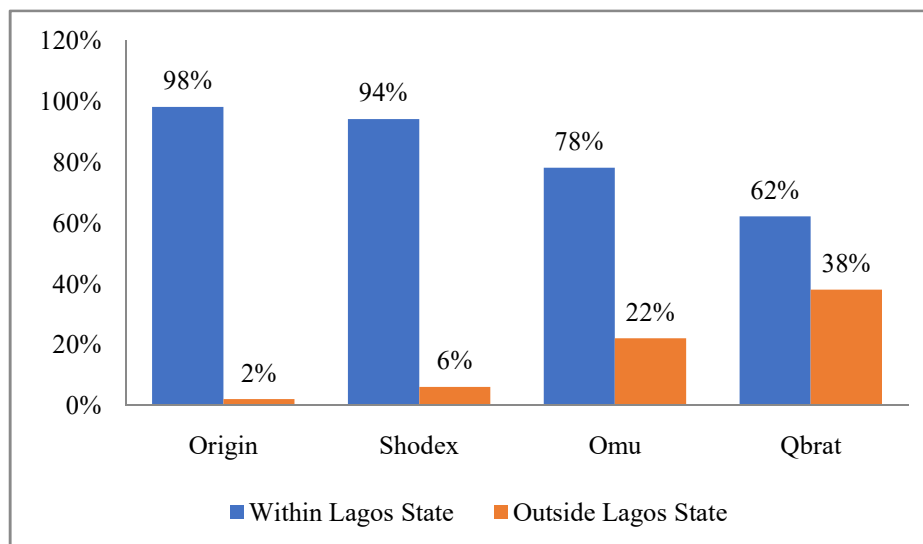


Figure 10: Nationality of Visitors to the zoos

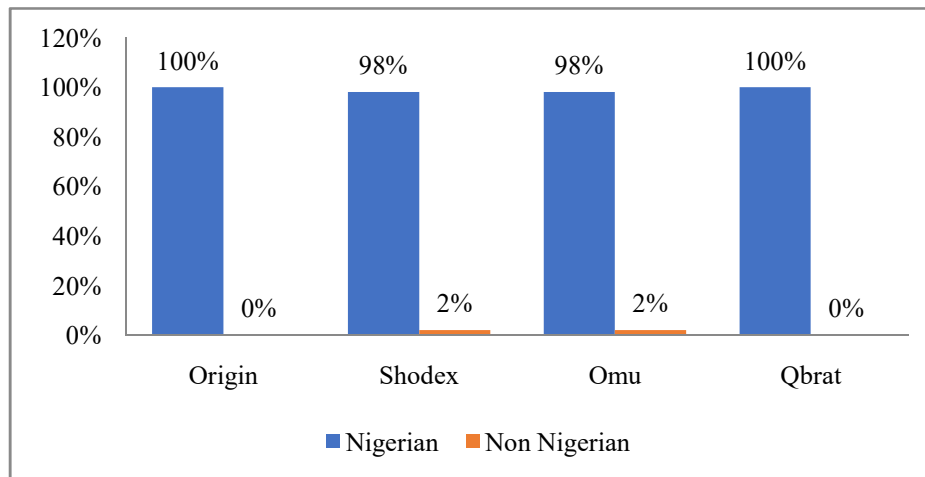


Figure 11: Visitors' Nature of Visit to the zoos

Trip

Characteristics of Visitors

The study shows that 94%, 64% and 58% of visitors to Qbrat zoo; Origin zoo and Shodex zoo respectively were first time visitors, while 52% of the visitors to the Omu resort zoo were repeat visitors (Figure 2). Figure 3 shows the frequency of visitation by the visitors to the zoos, it was observed that 94%, 64%, 64%, 58% and

50% of the visitors to Qbrat zoo, Origin zoo, Shodex zoo and Omu zoo respectively visited the zoos once. The visitors' group characteristics shows varying percentages of the visitors came to the zoos with their relatives and family members, their friends and some came alone; while some came to the zoos with their spouse and as an organized group (Figure 4).

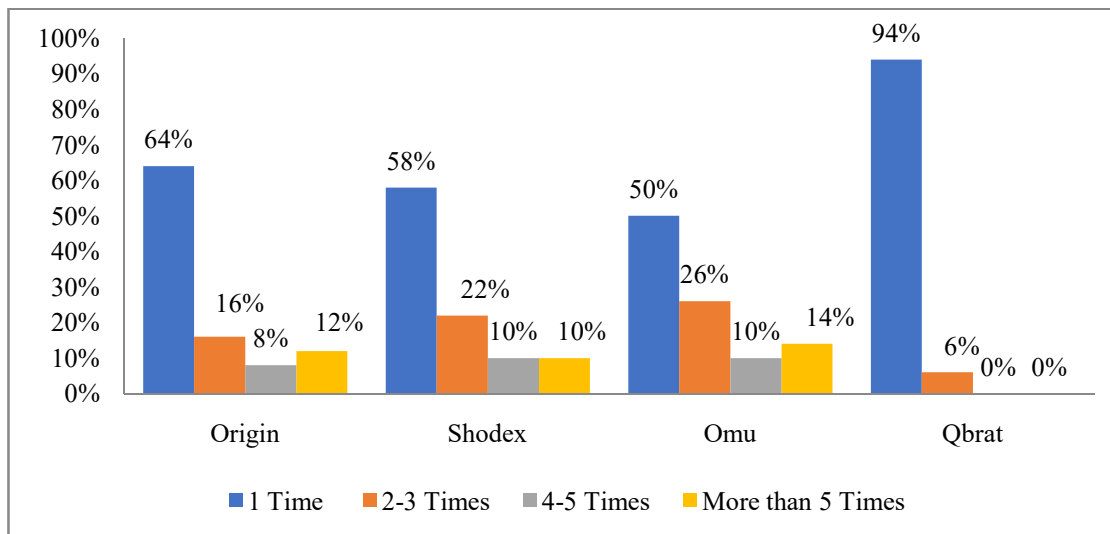


Figure 12: Frequency of Visit of Visitors to the zoos

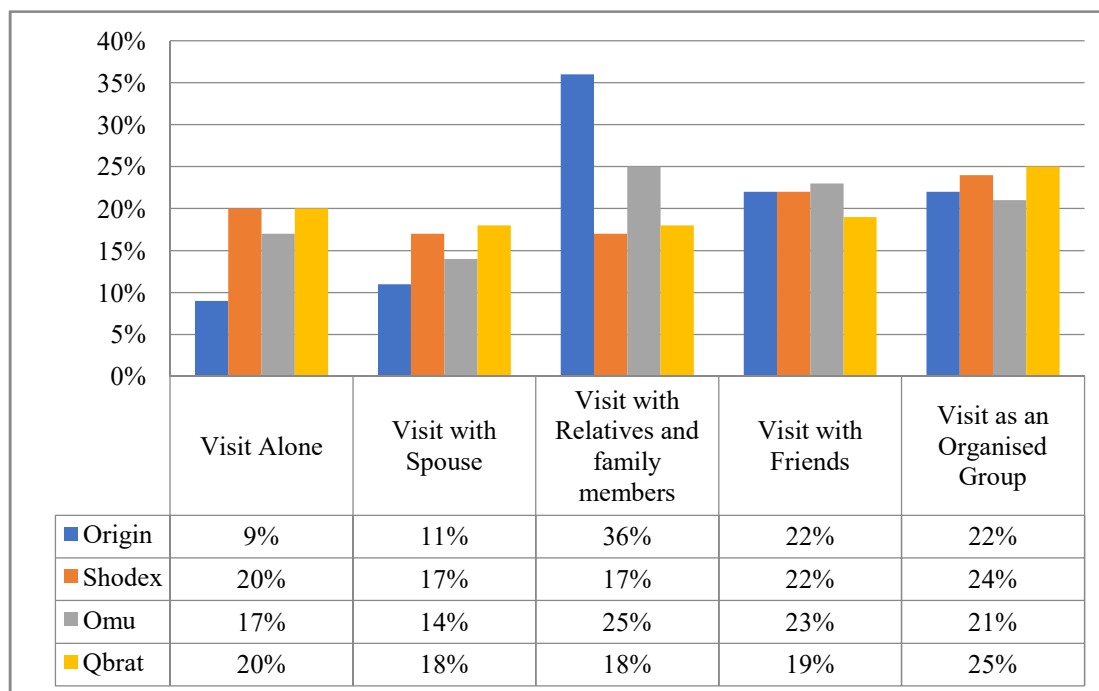


Figure 13: Group Characteristics of Visitors to the zoos

Visitors’ Visit Motivations

Table 1 presents the motivation of visitors to visit the zoos. The highest motivation of the visitors to Origin zoo include “enjoyment of serene environment” (94%), “to spend time with people cared about deeply (94%), “to see wild animals in captivity” (92%). Also, the highest motivation of visitors to Shodex zoo include “enjoyment of serene environment” (90%), “to

be emotionally and physically refreshed” (90%); whereas 94% of visitor to Omu resorts were motivated to see wild animals in captivity. However, 100% of visitors to Qbrat zoo came to learn about the natural history of wild animals, 94% came to see wild animals in captivity and to enjoy serene environment as their main motivation to visit the zoos.

Table 1: Visitors’ Motivation to Visit the zoos

Visitation Motivation	Origin zoo		Shodex zoo		Omu Resorts		Qbrat zoo	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
	To see wild animals in captivity	46	92.0	39	78.0	47	94.0	47
To learn about the natural history of wild animals	43	86.0	38	76.0	36	72.0	50	100.0
To learn about the need to protect wildlife	38	76.0	39	78.0	30	60.0	38	76.0
To get close to nature	40	80.0	34	68.0	38	76.0	35	70.0
To take photos of wild animals	41	82.0	33	66.0	43	86.0	40	80.0
Enjoyment of serene environment	47	94.0	45	90.0	44	88.0	47	94.0
Education and research	38	76.0	24	48.0	29	58.0	35	70.0
To seek adventure	42	84.0	41	82.0	44	88.0	38	76.0
To get away from home	36	72.0	39	78.0	39	78.0	27	54.0
To be emotionally and physically refreshed	35	70.0	45	90.0	44	88.0	25	50.0
To spend time with people cared about deeply	47	94.0	36	72.0	40	80.0	40	80.0

Difference in Socioeconomic Characteristics of Zoo Visitors

Table 3 presents the differences in the socioeconomic characteristics of the Zoo visitors. There is significant difference in the marital status ($f = 7.46$, $p = 0.01$), occupation ($f = 20.11$, $p = 0.0$), income ($f = 5.20$, $p = 0.01$) and residence ($f = 5.14$, $p = 0.01$) of the zoo visitors. Statistically, there was no significant difference in the gender, age, level of education, religion and nationality of the zoo visitors.

Table 3: Difference in Socioeconomic Characteristics of Zoo Visitors

Variables	F	*Sig
Gender	0.20	0.82
Age	0.79	0.37
Marital Status	7.46	0.01**
Education	0.68	0.51
Religion	0.39	0.68
Occupation	20.11	0.00**
Income	5.20	0.01**
Residence	5.14	0.01**
Nationality	13.03	0.87

* $P < 0.05$ and ** $P < 0.01$

Relationship between Socioeconomic Characteristics of Visitors and their Trip Characteristics and Motivations

Table 5 presents relationship between socioeconomic characteristics of visitors and their trip characteristics and motivations.

Difference in Trip Characteristics of Beach Visitors

Table 4 presents the differences in the trip characteristics of the Zoo visitors. There is significant difference in the nature of visit ($f = 4.36$, $p = 0.04$) of the Zoo visitors. Significant difference also exists among the visitors that visited the zoos in company of relatives and family members ($f = 9.16$, $p = 0.00$).

Table 4: Difference in Trip Characteristics of Zoo Visitors

Variables	F	*Sig
Nature of visit	4.36	0.04*
Number of times visited	0.78	0.51
Visit alone	2.34	0.22
Visit with spouse	0.98	0.38
Visit with relatives and family members	9.16	0.00**
Visit with friends	1.30	0.27
Visit as an organised group	3.54	0.37

* $P < 0.05$ and ** $P < 0.01$

Significant relationship existed between visitors' nature of visit and their age ($\beta = 0.10$, $t = 3.13$), number of times the visitors visited the zoos and their income ($\beta = 0.19$, $t = 3.62$), visitors' group characteristics and their age ($\beta = 0.23$, $t = 2.25$).

Table 5: Relationship between Socioeconomic Characteristics of Visitors and their Trip Characteristics and Motivations

Variables	Nature of visit		No of Times visited		Group characteristics		Visit motivation	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	T
Gender	-0.09	-1.82	-0.14	-0.67	-0.13	0.89	0.01	0.19
Age	0.10	3.13*	0.10	1.78	0.23	2.25**	0.05	0.89
Marital Status	0.02	0.42	0.03	0.54	0.02	0.39	0.10	1.87
Education	-0.02	-0.34	-0.01	-0.12	0.45	0.21	0.02	0.44
Religion	-0.03	-0.60	0.02	0.43	-0.02	0.66	0.10	1.91
Occupation	-0.06	-1.09	-0.03	-0.59	0.45	0.47	0.04	0.69
Income	0.15	0.75	0.19	1.62**	0.78	-0.26	0.07	1.34
Nationality	0.03	0.61	0.10	1.95	-0.23	0.99	0.02	0.40
R		0.22		0.32		0.26		0.24
R ²		0.06		0.10		0.06		0.06
Adjusted R ²		0.04		0.08		0.04		0.04
SD Error		0.46		1.14		1.14		0.46
R ² Change		0.06		0.10		0.06		0.06
Df		217		217		217		217
F		2.81		5.04		2.45		2.84
Sig		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00

* $P < 0.05$ and ** $P < 0.01$

DISCUSSION

Findings from this study show that majority of the visitors to visitors to Omu resort zoo and Qbrat zoo were male, while majority of visitors to Origin zoo and Shodex zoo were female. Ogunjinmiet *al.* (2017) reported that more male visitors visit UI zoo, T.AAfolayan Wildlife Park and FUNAAB zoo Park. Adetolaet *al.* (2016) in University of Ibadan Zoological Garden reported that 51.5% of the visitors were male. Alarape (2015) in Markurdi Zoological Garden reported more male visitors, Hun and Anuar (2014) in Malaysian National Zoo also reported that 56% of visitors as male. However, Kneževićet *al.* (2016) reported that of 64% of visitors to Zagreb zoo, Croatia were female. World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA, 2014) in their report on zoos and aquarium reported that 50.3% of visitors to zoos were female.

The study shows that larger percentages of the visitors to the selected zoos were in their youthful age, within the age group of 31-40 years (53.5%) and 21-30 years of age (34.5%). This supports the findings of Ogunjinmiet *al.* (2017) which reported that larger proportion of visitors to UI Zoo, T.AAfolayan Wildlife Park and FUNAAB zoo Park were within the age group of 21-40 years of age. Also, this is in

agreement with the findings of Kneževićet *al.* (2016) which reported that 56% of the visitors to Zagreb zoo were within the age group of 25-39 year olds, Hunand Anuar (2014) reported that 91% of the visitors to National zoo, Malaysia were within the age group of 18-45 year old. Association of Zoos and Aquariums, AZA (2014) reported that 57% of the visitors to zoos and aquariums were within the age group of 21-35 years.

Furthermore, findings from the study show that large proportions of visitors to the zoos were single. This in agreement with the findings of Hunand Anuar (2014) which reported that 51% of visitors to National Zoo, Malaysia were single; but, this is inconsistent with the findings of Karanikolaet *al.* (2014) in Zoo of Thessaloniki, Greece which reported that 64% of visitors were married. Dutta (2005) also reported that most of the visitors to the National Zoo in South Africa are married. The educational status of the visitors shows that most of the visitors were highly educated attaining to tertiary level of education. Joseph (2008) reported that over half (51.2%) of visitors to selected AZA Zoos had college degree or higher. High proportions of visitors to the zoos were Christians. This supports the findings of Ogunjinmi *et al.*, (2017) which reported that larger percentages of visitors

to UI zoo, T.A Afolayan Wildlife Park and FUNAAB zoo Park as Christians. The study shows that large proportions of the respondents were gainfully employed, some had managerial/professional jobs, some were self-employed and some were civil servants. Only 24.5% of the visitors were students. Adetola *et al.* (2016) reported that 52.1% of visitors to University of Ibadan Zoological garden were students.

The study shows that 50.5% of visitors to the zoos earned between ₦21, 000 - ₦50, 000 as their monthly income. Ogunjinmi *et al.* (2017) reported that larger proportions of visitors to UI zoo, T.A Afolayan Wildlife Park and FUNAAB zoo Park as low income earners; Adetola *et al.* (2016) also reported that 63.6% of the visitors to University of Ibadan Zoological garden earned less than ₦20, 000 as their monthly income. Association of Zoos and Aquariums in their findings in 2014 reported that half (50.7%) of the visitors to zoos were high income earners. The study further indicated that majority of the visitors reside within Lagos State and were Nigerians. Shani (2012) in Central Florida zoo, USA reported that 66.9% of visitors were domestic visitors from United State of America. Majority of the visitors did not belong to any environmental, conservation or recreational organizations. This is in agreement with the findings of Ogunjinmi (2015) which reported that 68% of the ecotourists to Nigeria National Parks were not member of any environmental NGOs. The study also indicated that larger percentages of visitors to the zoos had no political orientation.

Furthermore, most of the visitors to the zoos were first time visitors. Neves (2007) in Asia Trail Smithsonian National Zoological Park reported that 77% of the visitors were repeat visitors. Lancaster (2013) in Dartmoor Zoo and Paignton's Zoo, England reported 57% and 86% of the visitors as repeat visitors respectively, Couch (2013) in Detroit Zoo, reported 80% as repeat visitors, while Couch (2013) in Potter Park Zoo, USA reported that 53% of the visitors to the Zoo as first time visitors. Findings from this study further shows that varying percentages 27%, 26% and 22% of the visitors came to the

zoos with their relatives and family members, their friends and alone respectively; while 19% and 6% of the respondents came to the zoos with their spouse and as an organized group respectively. Ogunjinmi *et al.*, (2017) reported that visitors to UI Zoo, T.A Afolayan Wildlife Park and FUNAAB zoo Park came with their friends and relatives, family members, a group or a spouse. Jordaan and Plessis (2014) in National Zoological Gardens of South Africa reported that 42% of visitors to the zoo came in the company of their family members, Puan and Zakaria (2007) reported that 61% of the respondents went to the zoo with their families. Boyd *et al.* (2014) reported that 48% of the visitors to Lok Kawi Wildlife Park, Sabah, Malaysia came as tour group. Also, Dutta (2005) reported that most of the visitors to the Peshwe Zoo in Pune came in groups.

The highest motivation of visitors to the zoos was to enjoyment of serene environment, to see wild animals in captivity, to learn about the natural history of wild animals, to seek adventure, to take photos of wild animals, to be emotionally and physically refreshed, to get close to nature, to learn about the need to protect wildlife and to get away from home. Knežević *et al.* (2016) reported that visitors chose watching wild animals, enjoying nature and spending quality time as their main motivation for visiting the zoos. According to Boyd *et al.* (2014) the main motivation of zoo visitors is to satisfy their curiosity to see wild animals in captivity. Jordaan and du Plessis (2014) in National Zoological Gardens of South Africa showed that some people visit the zoo in order to have a self-directed zoo experience (e.g., relaxation, recreation), while other visit the zoo to promote the welfare of others (e.g., family togetherness). Karanikola *et al.* (2014) reported that visitors to the zoo were primarily motivated by the prospect of spending a pleasant day out with their family. The array of animals on display at the Zoos is a major factor the visitors considered before visiting. Allenby (2014) National zoological garden, South Africa that reported majority (93.36%) of visitors visited the zoo so as to know more about the animals and as well watch them.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that male and female visitors visit the zoos and majority of the visitors were youth, indicating the vigour and love these age group has for adventures. Most of the visitors to the zoos were single, were highly educated by attaining to tertiary level of education and were Christians. Most of the visitors were gainfully employed; though some were students, half of

the visitors were low income earners. The visitors reside within Lagos State. Most of the visitors were Nigerians. Furthermore, most of the visitors were first time visitors who came in company of their relatives and family members. The main travel motivations of the visitors were to “enjoyment of serene environment”, “to spend time with people cared about deeply” and “to see wild animals in captivity”.

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