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Visitors' Satisfaction, Willingness to Pay, and Drivers for Enhanced Tourism Services at Olumo Rock

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Abstract
Tourism services significantly influence visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP) for enhanced experiences, yet pricing is often set without considering motivational drivers. This study assessed visitors' satisfaction, socio-economic characteristics, WTP for specific improved facilities, and motivational drivers. Structured questionnaire was used to elicit information from 384 visitors and data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential (Chi-Square) statistics. Findings from this study show that 51.6% of the visitors were female, and 91.4% attained tertiary level of education. Additionally, 37.2% were self-employed, with 43.8% earning a monthly income of ₦100,000–₦199,999. Tourism and sightseeing were the main visit motivations, with most visitors spending ₦10,000–₦20,000. The magnitude of willingness to pay for specific improvements show that 97.4% supports a single fee that doubles as redeemable credit for refreshments, 37.5% of the visitors were willing to pay 2,000-3,000 extra for improved service bundle and preferably a single ticket that covers all services. Motivational drivers included support for conservation and local communities, value for cultural and improved facilities. Inferential test showed that there is a significant relationship between the visitor's socio-economic characteristics and their WTP for enhanced services ($p = 0.00$). A positive, significant relationship was also established between visitors' satisfaction levels, motivational drivers, and willingness to pay ($p = 0.00$). The paper concludes that socio-economic characteristics and visitor satisfaction serve as critical push factors for enhanced tourism services. Destination management should leverage these insights to optimize pricing strategies and service delivery.

Keywords: Revisit Intention, Tourism, Visitors' Satisfaction, Willingness to Pay.

1. Introduction

Nature based tourism has emerged as a bedrock of sustainable tourism development, generating substantial economic benefits while ensuring the safeguard of cultural heritage, conserving natural resources and improving community livelihoods across destinations worldwide (Bakar *et al*., 2021; Mohammed *et al.,* 2024). This has necessitated the need for sustainable financing mechanisms capable of supporting conservation while ensuring visitor satisfaction. Willingness to pay (WTP) has therefore become an important economic valuation tool for estimating the monetary value visitors attach to heritage conservation and improved tourism services (Farinloye *et al.,* 2025).

Willingness to pay (WTP) has been widely used in tourism and conservation studies to guide pricing policies and investment decisions for heritage sites and protected areas (Abuamoud, 2024). It has been revealed by various studies that visitors are generally willing to pay additional fees for improved infrastructure, environmental conservation, interpretation services and enhanced visitor experiences (Jurado-Rivas, C., & Sánchez-Rivero, 2019; Adetola *et al*., 2016). Despite this, WTP differs across destinations and visitor groups because it is influenced by socio-economic characteristics, visitation patterns and destination-specific factors (Ezeh & Dube, 2024). Income, education and nationality have consistently been reported as significant determinants of WTP, while the effects of age, gender and travel characteristics remain inconsistent across different studies (Ble & Koffi, 2024; Duran-Roman *et al*., 2021).

Visitor satisfaction is another important determinant of willingness to pay. Satisfaction reflects visitors' evaluation of their experiences based on the comparison between expectations and actual experiences at the destination (Rita *et al*., 2024). Accessibility, cleanliness, safety, interpretation services, staff behaviour, including eco-friendly and socially responsible activities are major factors influencing visitor satisfaction at heritage and nature-based destinations (Adesunloye & Arowosafe, 2023; Liu, & Nguyen Hoang Thanh, 2026). Satisfied visitors are generally more willing to support conservation initiatives and pay for improved tourism services, although the strength of this relationship varies across

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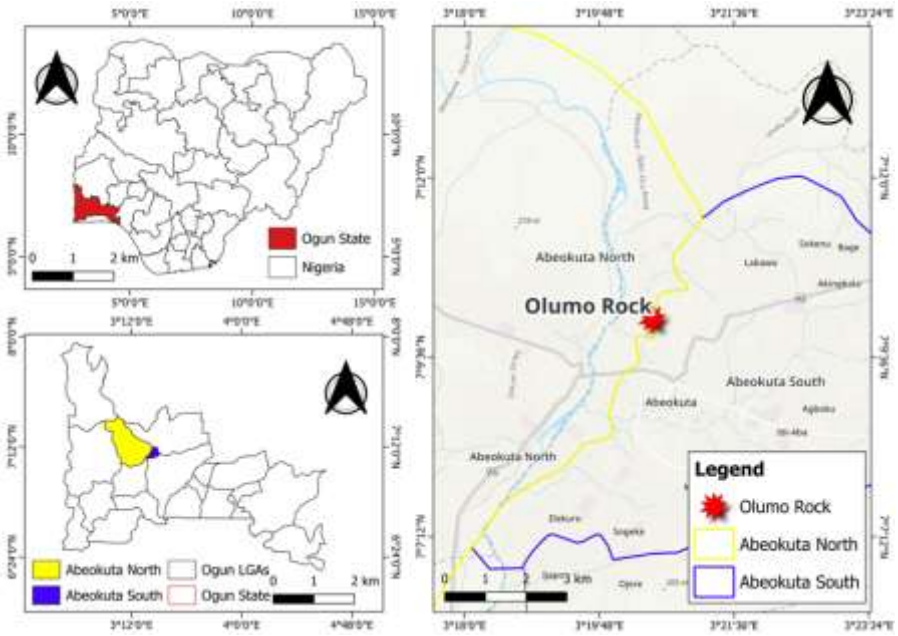


Figure 1: Map of Olumo Rock

destinations and various visitor categories (Adetola & Adedire, 2018).

Conservation programs, improved infrastructure, guided tours, visitor centers, digital interpretation, safety facilities and cultural activities have consistently attracted higher willingness to pay than convenience-related services (Abuamoud, 2024). This suggests that willingness to pay results from the interaction of visitor characteristics, destination experiences and psychological motivations rather than any single factor.

1.1 Problem Statement and Objective of the Research

While willingness to pay studies have increased globally, validation from Africa and Nigeria remains limited (Endalamaw *et al.,* 2026). Existing African studies have focused mainly on protected areas and wildlife tourism, with relatively few investigated on nature-based tourism destinations. Likewise, studies conducted in Nigeria have examined willingness to pay and visitor satisfaction within ecotourism destinations but have provided limited evidence for attractions such as Olumo Rock (Adesunloye & Arowosafe, 2023). Researches have largely examined willingness to pay, visitor satisfaction and motivational drivers separately, with little effort to integrate these variables into a single analytical framework.

Olumo Rock in Abeokuta, Ogun State, is one of Nigeria's most important cultural and geological heritage attractions. The site served as a refuge for the Egba people during the nineteenth-century Yoruba wars and has become a major tourist destination because of its historical, cultural and recreational significance (Oladipo *et al*., 2023; Aduroja, 2024). Recent government investments and partnerships have improved the site's tourism potential and increased revenue generation, yet challenges relating to infrastructure, service quality and visitor experience still exist (Leadership, 2025; Punch, 2025). Understanding visitors' willingness to pay for enhanced tourism services is therefore essential for developing sustainable financing strategies that support conservation and improve visitor experiences.

This study addressed the existing research gap by integrating socio-economic characteristics, visitation patterns, visitor satisfaction, enhanced tourism services and motivational drivers within a comprehensive framework for explaining willingness to pay at Olumo Rock. Specifically, the study examined the influence of visitors' socio-economic characteristics and visitation patterns on willingness to pay, assessed the relationship between visitor satisfaction and willingness to pay, identified the enhanced tourism services influencing willingness to pay, and examined the motivational drivers of visitors' willingness to pay. The findings will provide valuable information for destination managers and policymakers in designing appropriate pricing strategies, prioritizing tourism investments and promoting sustainable heritage tourism development in Nigeria and other African heritage destinations.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Area: Olumo Rock

Olumo Rock, an ancient granite inselberg, and Idanre Hills, a UNESCO World Heritage tentative site comprising spectacular valleys and high-altitude settlements, represent significant hubs for cultural and environmental tourism. is situated in Abeokuta North Local Government Area, within the city of Abeokuta, the capital of Ogun State, Nigeria. It is located on latitude 7°09'58.83" and longitude N, 3°20'29.85" (Figure 1). The Rock is a nature-given monument hanging in a perfect-fit architectural placement with cave-like surroundings that provided refuge to dwellers in the ancient times (Aduroja, 2024, Olumo Rock, 2017). Olumo Rock has risen to be a relevant tourism

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency (N=384)	Percentage (%)
GENDER		
Male	186	48.4
Female	198	51.6
AGE		
18-25	95	23.4
26-35	195	50.7
36-45	83	21.6
46-55	16	4.2
MARITAL STATUS		
Single	226	58.8
Married	125	32.6
Divorced/Separated	33	8.6
RELIGION		
Christianity	222	57.8
Islamic	162	42.1
EDUCATION		
Secondary	33	8.6
Tertiary	351	91.4
OCCUPATION		
Unemployed	25	6.5
Student	137	35.7
Private	79	20.6
Self-employed	143	37.2
INCOME		
Below NGN100,000	81	21.1
NGN100,000 – NGN199,999	168	43.8
NGN200,000 – NGN299,999	80	20.8
NGN300,000 – NGN499,999	22	5.7
Above NGN500,000	33	8.6

Source: Authors

and attraction site with recent renovations and development by the Ogun State Government at the destination making it an ideal destination for both local and international tourists.

2.2 Research Design and Data Collection

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using a structured questionnaire. The respondents were the visitors to Olumo Rock and their selection was based on their willingness to participate in the study (convenience sampling). The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) method of sampling determination from the total annual visitors' influx to the site in the last five years (2021-2025).

Three hundred and eight-four respondents were selected from the site. Structured questionnaire was self-administered to the visitors. The questionnaire elucidates information on the socioeconomic characteristic of respondents, visitation pattern, visitor's satisfaction, willingness to pay for enhanced services and drivers of visitors' Willingness to Pay. Visitors' satisfaction was measured in Likert-scale type and rated as 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= undecided, 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree.

2.3 Data Analysis

The collected data were coded and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v24). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. All stated objectives were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage and mean) while the hypotheses were analysed using inferential statistical tool - Chi-square tests (p=0.05).

2.4 Ethics

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Ogun State Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the management of Olumo Rock Tourist Centre prior to data collection. Participation in the survey was voluntary, informed consent was obtained from all respondents, and no personally identifiable information was collected. Responses were treated confidentially

Table 2: Visitors' Visitation Pattern

Variable	Frequency (384)	Percentage (%)
Is this your first time of visit?		
Yes	210	54.7
No	174	45.3
If no, how many times have you visited?		
Twice	114	29.7
3 to 5 times	60	15.6
Purpose of Visit		
Tourism/Sightseeing	311	81.0
Education	31	8.1
Love for natural landscape	26	6.8
Escape from stress	16	4.2
Who did you visit with?		
Alone	25	6.5
Friends	212	55.2
Family	75	19.5
Tour group	72	18.8
How long do you plan to stay?		
2 hrs	26	6.8
3 hrs	154	40.1
4 hrs	120	31.3
5 hrs	16	4.2
More than 5 hrs	68	17.7
Mode of transport		
Private car	112	29.2
Public transport	175	45.6
Group Tour Bus	97	25.3
Expenditure for the Visit		
Less than N10,000	40	10.4
10,000 – 20,000	138	35.9
20,000 – 30,000	43	11.2
30,000 – 40,000	57	14.8
40,000 and above	106	27.6

Source: Authors

and used solely for academic purposes.

3. Results

3.1 Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents as shown in Table 1 reveals that a higher percentage of the respondents were female (51.6%) while closely gapped by (48.4%) which were males respondents, with the age group 26-35years (70.3%) dominating the results and 21.6% within 36-45years age group. Also, the highest percentage of the respondents were single (84.9%), and mostly Christians (83.9%). Most respondents had tertiary education (91.4%), and majority were self-employed (37.2%). Pertaining to their income, majority earns N100,000-N199,000 (43.8%) and N200,000-N299,999 (20.8%), respectively.

3.2 Visitors' Visitation Pattern

The respondent's visitation pattern and travel characteristics at Olumo Rock revealed the highest percentage of the respondents were first time visitors (54.7%), while 45.3% were frequent visitors who have visited twice (29.7%), and 3 to 5 times (15.6%). In examining the respondent's purpose of visit, result shows that majority of the respondents visited Olumo Rock for tourism/sightseeing (81.0%), 6.8% visited because of their love for natural landscape, 8.1% visited for education purpose, while 4.2% visited to escape from work stress. Furthermore, the visitors travel companion was examined, and result reveals that higher percentage of the respondents visited with their friends (55.2%), 19.5% visited with their families, 18.8% visited as a tour group and 6.5% were solitary visitors.

Additionally, visitor's length of stay was assessed, and majority of the respondents stated they were staying for at least 3 hours (40.1%), 31.3% were staying for at least 4 hours, 17.7% were staying for more than 5hours, 6.8% were staying for 2 hours and 4.2% were staying for about 5 hours. Their mode of transportation to Olumo Rock was majorly public transport/train (45.6%), private cars (29.2%) and 25.3% group tour buses. The study also examined the visitor's approximate total expenditure for their visit and the results reveals that majority budgeted between N10,000 – N20,000 (35.9%) for their visit, 27.6% above N40,000 and N30,000-N40,000 (14.8%) while 11.2% budget within N20,000 – N30,000 as shown in Table 2.

Table 3: Visitor Satisfaction with Existing Facilities and Services

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Efficient safety measures (railings, guards)	4.43	0.57
Good signage and interpretive information	4.34	0.55
Cleanliness of the destination/pathways	4.25	0.77
Availability of shaded rest areas	4.35	0.56
Guided tour services (availability/knowledge of guides)	4.38	0.63
Ticketing/entrance process is well organized	4.30	0.61
Accessibility for elderly/disabled visitors	3.48	0.99
There are on-site vendors/refreshment options	4.12	0.69
Restroom facilities are available	4.10	0.73
There is value for money of visit	4.29	0.64

Keys: Strongly Agree (4.20 – 5.00), Agree (3.40 – 4.19), Undecided (2.60 – 3.39), Disagree (1.80 – 2.59), Strongly Disagree (1.00 – 1.79).

Table 4: Specific Enhancements and Visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP)

Features	Yes	No
Improved cultural exhibits and interpretive virtual displays (e.g., museum, exhibitions)	93.2%	6.8%
A single-entry fee that doubles as redeemable credit for refreshments	97.4%	2.6%
Visitor orientation center and ticketing improvements (online/kiosk)	91.1%	8.9%
Better hiking trails/improved trail surfacing and railings	94.8%	5.2%
Accessibility ramps and lift facilities for elderly/disabled visitors	75.8%	24.2%
Enhanced safety measures (emergency points, first aid)	89.1%	10.9%
Trained guided tours (storytelling)	96.1%	3.9%
Clean and modern restroom facilities (more toilets)	89.3%	10.7%
More complimentary items (e.g. snookers, shooter games etc.)	93.2%	6.8%

Source: Authors

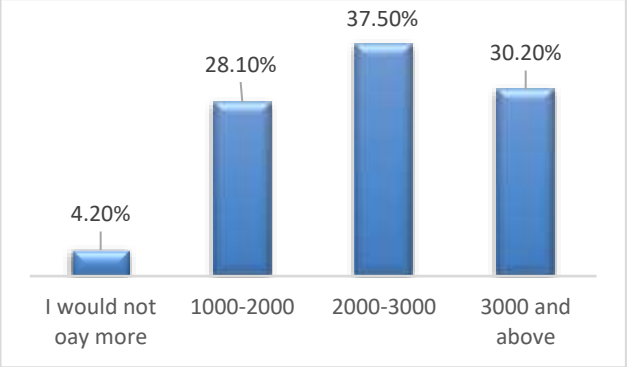


Figure 2: Visitor's willing to pay for extra service bundle
Source: Authors

3.3 Visitor Satisfaction with Existing Facilities and Services

The mean value on visitor's satisfaction with existing facilities/services at Olumo Rock ranged from 4.43. ("Efficient safety measures (railings, guards)") to 3.48 ("Accessibility for elderly/disabled visitors") which shows a concrete agreement with the facilities and services statements (Table 3).

3.4 Specific Enhancements and Visitors' Willingness to Pay (WTP)

This study assessed the specific enhancements and visitors' willingness to pay for the services (Table 4). The results show that 97.4% supports a single fee that doubles as redeemable credit for refreshments, 93.2% supports improved cultural exhibits and interpretive virtual displays (e.g., museum, exhibitions), 96.1% supports trained guided tours (storytelling), 94.8% supports better hiking trails/improved trail surfacing and railings, 93.2% supports more complimentary package (e.g. snookers, shooter games etc.) and are willing to pay for these enhanced services and packages at Olumo Rock.

Figure 2 visitors were willing to pay if an improved service bundle (e.g., guided tour + refreshments + art

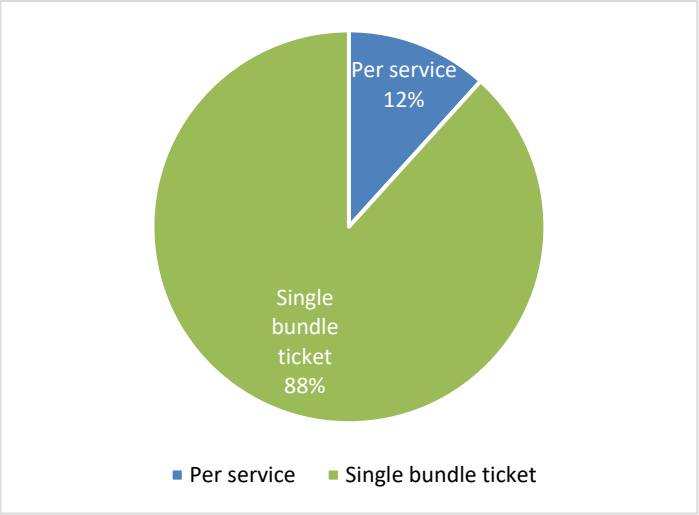


Figure 3: Visitor's willingness to pay for enhanced services
Source: Authors

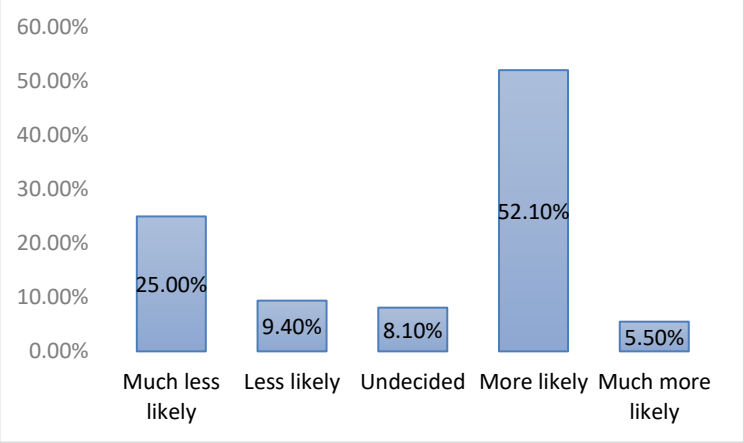


Figure 4: Visitor's WTP for modest extra fee for improvements
Source: Authors

gallery) was offered, and which price point per visit would they find acceptable. 37.5% of the visitors were willing to pay 2,000-3,000 extra, 30.2% were willing to pay more than 3,000, 28.1% were willing to pay between 1,000-2,000 while 4.2% were not willing to pay more.

Figure 3 revealed the percentage of visitors' preference to pay per service or a single increased ticket that covers all enhanced services. Visitors (88.3%) were willing to pay for a single bundle ticket that covers enhanced all services, while 11.7% prefers to pay per service.

Figure 4 revealed that 52.1% were more likely to recommend the site to their friends/relatives, while 25.0 were much less likely to do so.

3.5 Drivers of Visitors' WTP (Visitors' Determinants)

In assessing the drivers of visitor's willingness to pay as shown in (Table 4), respondents reveal that they value cultural interpretation and exhibits at heritage sites (96.1%), and 96.1% prefer to pay a small extra fee if it supports conservation and local communities. Fifty and a half (50.5%) stated that price is the main factor determining whether they would visit again while 49.5% disagrees. Furthermore, 58.9% of the respondents stated that lack of facilities prevented them from visiting or spending more time at Olumo Rock, while all the respondents believes the improved facilities/services at Olumo Rock would benefit the local community (e.g. jobs, vendor services).

3.6 Hypothesis Testing

Table 6 reveals that there is a significant relationship between the visitors' willingness to pay for enhanced services at Olumo Rock and gender (P=0.00), age (P=0.00), marital status (P=0.00), religion (P=0.00), occupation (P=0.00), income (P=0.00) and visitors' visit expenditure ((P=0.00).

Table 7 reveals that there is a significant relationship between visitors' willingness to pay for enhanced services and their level of satisfaction for visiting the study area.

Table 8 reveals that there is a significant relationship between visitors' drivers of willingness to pay for enhanced services at Olumo Rock and their willingness to pay.

Table 5: Drivers of Visitors' WTP

Drivers of WTP	Frequency (384)	Percentage (%)
I value cultural interpretation and exhibits at heritage sites		
Yes	369	96.1
No	15	3.9
Improved facilities increase my willingness to pay for a site?		
Yes	369	96.1
No	15	3.9
I prefer to pay a small extra fee if it supports conservation and local communities		
Yes	369	96.1
No	15	3.9
Price is the main factor determining whether I would visit again		
Yes	194	50.5
No	190	49.5
Has lack of facilities ever prevented you from visiting or spending more time at Olumo Rock		
Yes	226	58.9
No	158	41.1
Do you think the improved facilities/services at Olumo Rock would benefit the local community (jobs, vendors services)?		
Yes	384	100

Source: Authors

Table 6: Relationship Between Visitors' Willingness to Pay for Enhanced Services and Their Socio-Economic Characteristics

Variables	Chi square (χ^2) value	P-value	Remark
Gender	73.17	0.00	*
Age	544.08	0.00	*
Marital Status	120.93	0.00	*
Religion	162.72	0.00	*
Occupation	257.79	0.00	*
Income	413.59	0.00	*
Visitor's Visit Expenditure	366.16	0.00	*

$p<0.05$, * - Significant

Table 7: Relationship Between Visitors' Willingness to Pay and Their Level of Satisfaction for Visiting the Study Area

Variables	Chi square (χ^2) value	P-value	Remark
Visitors' Willingness to Pay Vs Level of satisfaction	1437.93	0.00	*

$p<0.05$, * - Significant

Table 8: Relationship Between Visitors' Drivers of WTP at Olumo Rock and Their Willingness to Pay

Variables	Chi square (χ^2) value	P-value	Remark
Visitors' drivers of willingness to pay for enhanced services Vs Willingness to Pay	165.50	0.00	*

$p<0.05$, * - Significant

4. Discussion

This study observed that majority of the visitors to Olumo Rock are females. This is consistent with the findings of Adesunloye and Arowosafe, (2023) which revealed that majority of visitors to ecotourism destinations were females. They are also in their youthful ages (26-35years) and are also mostly single. This is in agreement with the findings of Knezevic *et al*. (2016) who reported that majority of the visitors to tourism destinations were within the age group of 25-39years old. The visitors are mostly Christians. Their educational status reveals that majority of the visitors have tertiary education which is also an indicator of them being mostly self-employed. This is in line with the assertion of Farinloye *et al.* (2025). Most of the visitors earn a low-level of income of less than N200,000, similar to findings by Adamu *et al*. (2015) who revealed low income among the respondents. All the respondents are Nigerians indicating prominence of local tourism rise.

Most of the visitors visited Olumo Rock for the first time through the use of public transport and train service. This is in tandem with the findings of Adetola and Adedire (2018). They also claimed they visited mostly with friends which supports findings by Oladipo *et al*. (2023), who revealed majority of travel companions were friends and families. They also visit the site mostly for tourism and sightseeing and they stay for substantial number of hours as supported by Adetola and Oluleye (2014) who stated that people travel to ecotourism sites for leisure and sightseeing.

In examining the visitor satisfaction with existing facilities and services, efficient safety measures (railings, guards) ranked the highest mean, showing that the upgrade of the destination has also ensured the safety of visitors during their visit as paramount. Guided tour services, signage, availability of shaded rest areas, value for money, onsite vendors also ranked high. Rita *et al*. (2024) and Nowacki (2013), asserted that major factors influencing visitor's satisfaction with ecotourism products relies on accessibility, cleanliness, safety, interpretation services, staff behaviour, recreational facilities and destination attractiveness.

Visitors expressed willingness to pay for enhanced site services at Olumo Rock. Specifically, they favored a single-entry fee redeemable for refreshments, alongside upgrades such as virtual interpretive displays, trained guided tours, and complimentary recreational activities like snooker and arcade games. This finding is in agreement with Adesunloye and Arowosafe, (2023) who reported that majority of the visitors were willing to pay for ecotourism services. Adetola and Adedire (2018) also reported that visitors may be willing to pay more if the recreational quality of a park improves and enhanced services. The visitors' willingness to pay for improved service bundle is consistent with the assertion of Jurado-Rivas and Sánchez-Rivero (2019), that visitors are willing to pay a higher price for a more sustainable tourism products/service. In the same vein, Bakar *et al*. (2021) estimated that Kuching residents were willing to accept fee increments ranging from about 4 percent to over 200 percent for Kubah National Park's current entrance fee. The visitors also prefer to pay for a single increased ticket that covers all enhanced services, and a modest extra fee for improvements won't stop them from recommending the site to friends and families.

The drivers of visitor's willingness to pay reveals the determinants behind visitor's willingness to pay for ecotourism services. They opined that they value cultural interpretation and exhibits at heritage sites, improved facilities, support for conservation and local communities, and they believe the improved facilities/services at Olumo Rock would benefit the local community in terms of local economic integration. These visitors' assertions are supported by Adetola *et al.* (2016) that improved facilities, value for cultural and nature-based tourism motivates visitors to pay more. Furthermore, when individuals pay more for services, it helps to improve the destination's image and local communities which also encourages more visitors to patronize.

Significant relationship which existed between the visitor's willingness to pay for enhanced services at Olumo Rock and their socio-economic characteristics, is supported by Rui and James (2019). They posited that standard socio-economic variables like income, employment status, education, and age have a positive impact on the WTP of visitor's to enhanced services. It is also revealed that there is a significant relationship between visitors' willingness to pay for enhanced services and their level of satisfaction. This is supported by Arowosafe and Emmanuel (2014), who revealed that satisfaction are indicators of visitor's reasons to pay for enhanced ecotourism facilities. The positive level of significance obtained from visitors' drivers of WTP and their WTP reflects that these drivers serve as a push factor on the visitors towards these services and also seen as likely to bring them satisfaction. To enhance tourism services and facilities, destinations must consider visitor demographics and key motivators.

5. Conclusion

This study concluded that income, employment status, level of education, and visitors' determinants of WTP are important determinants influencing visitor's willingness to pay for enhanced services in the study area. The comparatively higher and more uniform acceptance at Olumo Rock reflect genuinely strong local demand for service improvement, given that many respondents were first-time visitors and were highly satisfied with the existing facilities with push factor for extra services which can be applied by the management of tourism destination sites. The study also concluded that visitors are ready to pay an extra fee for services and a single bundle that covers all services including refreshments and games facilities available at the destination. The study therefore recommends that charging visitors an economically

viable bundle fee to nature and extra services like museum and games in tourism sites is one of the best options that would improve destination facilities and local economic development.

Declarations

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Authors' Contributions

Kelvin Oluwatosin Adewale: Data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, writing original draft preparation of manuscript, and correspondence with the journal.

Opeyemi Lucia Daramola: Introduction and Literature review, Methodology review, validation.

Rhoda Inioluwa Adeniji: Data collection, discussion of findings, manuscript review, and drawing conclusion to findings.

Oluwafunmilayo Modupe Farotimi: Conceptualization, methodology, statistical review, validation of findings, and manuscript review.

Wuralola Cynthia Oluwayemi: Data collection, discussion of findings of the research, and timeline structuring.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets and analyzed output during the study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript

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