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## **TOURISM POTENTIALS OF COLONIAL RELICS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LOKOJA COMMUNITY, KOGI STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study explored the tourism potentials of colonial relics and their implication for the development of Lokoja community, Nigeria. The study surveyed 200 respondents, comprising tourism stakeholders (custodians, community members and tourist) using questionnaire as the study instrument. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze that data collected from respondents. The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents revealed that male recorded the highest percentage (60.5%) of respondents. In terms age, the 31-40 years had the highest (39.0%) percentage. Majority of respondents are married (61.5%) with tertiary certificate recording the highest with 36.0%. Most of the respondents are Muslim (60.5%). 47.0% of respondents are civil servants. 40.5% of respondents have stayed in the study area for 21 years and above. The various relics available in the study Area are Iron of liberty, World War cenotaph, Lord Lugards Bank Safe, etc. Tourism potentials of the colonial relics reveals that most of the respondents are of the opinion that relics keep culture alive and helps maintain ethnic identity of the residents with a mean value of 4.10. The perceived implications of colonial relics for development of Lokoja community showed that the standard of living of the host community has increased because of relics and increase in Infrastructure development have a slight implication on residents with a mean value of 3.87 and 3.85 each. The study concludes that that Lokoja is blessed with a good number of colonial relics which can play important roles in the promotion of tourism, and the development of Kogi state and Nigeria as a country.*

**Keywords:** Colonial relics, Lokoja community, tourism development, tourism potentials

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism development is mostly predicted on availability of natural settings that can be explored and developed to attract patronage for economic viability. However, sustainable tourism development should also focus on total valorization of special natural and cultural resources (Butnani et al., 2012). Of the diverse tourism possibilities and rich cultural heritage in Nigeria, not much have been mainstreamed and harnessed into the global tourism industry. Tylor (2017)

define culture as the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Also Oke (2014), see culture as the distinctive way of life of a people, their complete design for living. Culture, thus, encompasses all man-made parts of the environment and a whole set of implicit, widely shared beliefs, traditions, norms, values and expectations that characterize a particular group of people.

Culture serve several functional purposes in the life of a group, guides social interaction and social relations, the material artifacts and constitutes the basis on which the tourism industry is built. It manifests in arts, dance, language, literature, folklore, mores, music, governance, as well as the character of the environment acquired and transmitted through generations. As societies make attempt at cultural preservations, past cultures have survived in contemporary forms and could certainly be observed and used to reconstruct the past.

Nigeria is blessed with rich cultural and natural heritage which are universally recognized; and which can be used to develop country (Okpoko & Okpoko, 2002). It is also endowed with a friendly climate, and beautiful landscape and vegetation. Nevertheless, the country is yet to be counted as one of the main beneficiaries of tourism development. Tourism potentials of colonial relics can play significant roles in the development of tourism in Nigeria. Relics are sites, structures or edifices which have historical, cultural, or aesthetic significance. The importance of colonial relics and its implication for development cannot be over emphasized.

Lokoja, the capital of Nigeria's Kogi State is a storehouse of monument, relics and attractions. There are lots of historic products and relics which are valuable in the understanding of Lokoja's history and Nigeria. Some of these sites are unkempt and therefore, require the attention of government to improve on their current state. One of the ways of getting them well documented is for government to give priority attention. This therefore, informs the need for these sites and relics to be studied and documented not only for posterity, but also to encourage their promotion for tourism development and their implication for development of Lokoja community.

The importance of embarking on a systematic documentation of colonial relics and sites as well as those things created presently which would become historically important tomorrow cannot be overemphasized (Arinze, 2019). A good number of what should be recognized and declared monuments in Nigeria have been neglected. As a result, these relics face degradation and defacement (Bodam, 2018). This study opts to identify, document and determine the relevance of colonial relics to the development of Lokoja community.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Lokoja is the capital of Kogi State. Its location on the Nigerian map is on the intersecting point of longitude 7049'N and latitude 6044'E (Edah, 1987, as cited in Okpoko, 1993). The town lies on the western bank of the River Niger at an altitude of 45 – 125 metres (Lokoja Master Plan 1974-2005, as cited in Alabi, 2009). Lokoja is also approximately 162 kilometres from Abuja the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria. In other words, the town is strategically located, as it is a gateway to the Northern and Southern parts of the country (Alabi, 2009). It is located on the slope of a hill known as Mount Patti which is above 400 metres above sea level. As a result of the altitude of this hill, one can view the whole town from it. The town is bounded on the North

and East by river Niger and Benue respectively, on the West by mount Patti and on the south by Ajaokuta (Okpoko 1993).

Lokoja also share common boundaries with Kabba/Bunu, Ajaokuta, Koton-Karfe, Bassa and Adavi Local Government Areas (Alabi, 2009). The vegetation of the area falls within the Guinea Savannah zone. There are tall grasses, shrubs and trees with very big roots and trunks in the study area. These grasses and trees are greenish and blossom during the wet seasons, but wither during the dry seasons, thereby leaving the land relatively open. Lokoja experiences two main seasons: rainy season and dry season. The rainy season lasts from May to September each year, with August and September having the highest amount of rainfall. The annual average rainfall ranges from 1000mm to 1500mm, while the mean annual humidity is about 70% (Kogi state Tourist Guide, n.d).

The population for this study consists residents of the community adjoining colonial relics and resources present in Lokoja, Kogi state tourism board and tourists. The study surveyed 200 respondents, and collected primary data using questionnaire. Purposive techniques was used to select custodians and tourism stakeholders, simple random sampling was adopted in selecting community members while accidental sampling was used for tourist respondents. The data collected were analyzed using frequency and simple percentage.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristic of Respondents**

DEMOGRAPHIC	Variables	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender	Male	121	60.5
	Female	79	39.5
Age Group	21-30	54	27.0
	31-40	78	39.0
	41-50	42	21.0
	50 and above	26	13.0
	Marital status	Married	123
	Unmarried	77	38.5
Level of education	No formal education	22	11.0
	Primary	44	22.0
	Secondary	62	31.0
	Tertiary	72	36.0
Religion	Christianity	64	32.0
	Islam	121	60.5
	Traditional	15	7.5
Occupation	Civil Servants	94	47.0
	Farmer	47	23.5
	Artisan/craftsman	59	29.5
Years of Stay	1-10	53	26.5
	11-20	66	33.0
	21 and Above	81	40.5
	Total	200	100

Source: Field survey (2022).

Table 1 present the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, in which male gender recorded the highest percentage of 60.5% while their female counterpart has the total number of

39.5%. Furthermore, age group 31-40 years had the highest with 39.0% while age group 50 and above is the least (13.0%). Majority of the respondents are married (61.5%) while unmarried are 38.5%. Respondents with tertiary certificate recorded the highest with 36.0% while secondary school certificate had 31.0% and primary school certificate had 22.0%. The table also showed that most of the respondents are Muslim (60.5%) while Christianity recorded 32.0% and traditional religion is the least with 7.5%. The table also revealed that 47.0% of the respondents are civil servants, followed by artisan/craftsman with 29.5% and the least are farmers with 23.5%. 40.5% of the respondents has stayed in the study for 21 years and above, followed by 33.0% that had stayed between 11-20 years and 1-10 years and is the least with 26.5%.

**Table 2: Identified Relics Available in the Study Area**

<b>Relics</b>	<b>Location</b>
Iron of liberty	Lokoja
World War Cenotaph	Lokoja
Concrete pillar of British Government	Lokoja
Burial ground of Bishop AjayiCrowther	Lokoja
Lord Lugard's colonial two room rest house on mount Patti	Lokoja
Lord Lugard's Bank Safe	Lokoja
European/African missionaries and soldiers Cemeteries	Lokoja
The first Prison Yard in Northern Nigeria	Lokoja
Tombs of Late Emirs	Lokoja
The Oldest Primary School in Northern Nigeria	Lokoja
The Confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue	Lokoja

Source: Field survey (2022).

**Table 2: Community Perception towards the presence of the Relics**

Perception	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Mean	Rank
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Colonia relic has play a major role in local economy	61	30.5	57	28.5	43	21.5	28	14.0	11	5.5	3.42	9 <sup>th</sup>
Host community benefits from recreation	149	74.5	51	25.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.14	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Colonial relics has Improve the community appearance	126	63.0	56	28.0	18	9.0	0	0	0	0	4.09	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Colonial relics has Preserve the cultural identity	161	80.5	39	19.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.24	1 <sup>st</sup>
It has improve quality of life	111	55.5	59	29.5	19	9.5	11	5.5	0	0	3.89	5 <sup>th</sup>
It provides opportunity to local residents to interact with different people	101	50.5	63	31.5	26	13.0	10	5.0	0	0	3.76	6 <sup>th</sup>
It encourages people to protect surrounding environment	73	36.5	61	30.5	32	16.0	29	14.5	5	2.5	3.44	8 <sup>th</sup>
It is potential to strengthen and rejuvenate local values	88	44.0	69	34.5	29	14.5	12	6.0	1	0.5	3.59	7 <sup>th</sup>
It encourages heritage and environmental conservation	121	60.5	56	28.0	15	7.5	8	4.0	0	0	4.00	4 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey (2022).

The perception of the residents towards sustainable tourism development is shown in table1, in which the resident said colonial relics has preserve the cultural identity of the study area which recorded the highest mean value of 4.24, followed by host community benefits from recreation which recorded mean value of 4.14, colonial relics has Improve the community appearance recorded a mean value of 4.09 and the least is colonial relic has play a major role in local economy with a mean value of 3.42. The finding of this works suggest that the residents have a positive perception towards the presence of colonial relics in their community.

This work was in agreement with Bülent (2017), which reported that majority of the participants stated that urban development is incompatible with the natural and historical pattern of the city and that city walls, historic buildings and artifacts discovered in archaeological excavations are significant contributions to the historical and cultural values of the city. Also Andereck et al. (2005) reported that tourism can generate new employment opportunities for local residents, provide business opportunities for residents, increase locals' quality of life, help preserve monuments and archaeological sites and preserve residents' identity and the cultural pride.

**Table 3: Tourism Potentials of the Colonial Relics**

Potentials	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	Rank
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Revenue generation	0	0	15	7.5	26	13.0	74	37.0	85	42.5	3.87	5 <sup>th</sup>
Business opportunity	35	17.5	56	28.0	26	13.0	61	30.5	40	20.0	3.46	9 <sup>th</sup>
Colonial relics has attracted more investment to Lokoja	30	15.0	51	25.5	28	14.0	66	33.0	45	22.5	3.57	8 <sup>th</sup>
It keep culture alive and helps maintain the ethnic identity of the residents	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	14.5	17	85.5	4.10	1 <sup>st</sup>
Colonial relics has enhance employment opportunities in my community	0	0	0	0	10	5.0	69	34.5	12	60.5	4.01	3 <sup>rd</sup>
It helps to creates more natural theme	15	7.5	25	12.5	35	17.5	81	40.5	64	32.0	3.71	6 <sup>th</sup>
It has improved the destination image	0	0	0	0	5	2.5	56	28.0	13	69.5	4.04	2 <sup>nd</sup>
It has change attitude and behavior of the residents as a result of presence of the site	20	10.0	39	19.5	31	15.5	78	39.0	52	26.0	3.60	7 <sup>th</sup>
It provides entertainment opportunities for the local community	0	0	10	5.0	24	12.0	67	33.5	99	49.5	3.99	4 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey (2022).

Table 3 revealed tourism potentials of the colonial relics, in which most of the respondents are of the opinion that relics keep culture alive and helps maintain the ethnic identity of the residents with a mean value of 4.10, follows by It has improved the destination image and Colonial relics has enhance employment opportunities in my community with a mean of 4.04 and 4.01 respectively. Colonial relics has attracted more investment to Lokoja and Business opportunity recorded the least mean of 3.57 and 3.46 respectively. This implies that residents are willing to protect and support conservation of this relics. According to Lim, (1998) Local people are important and core to the development of tourism since they ensure proper conservation where they are the stewards of their own local environment and are also placed to anticipate and regulate the negative impacts of tourism development. Local people provide a structure for more effective planning, implementing and monitoring tourism initiatives and for determining the most appropriate scale of economic activity (Lim, 1998).

**Table 4: Perceived Implications of Colonial Relics for Development of Lokoja Community**

Implications	No implication		Slight implication		Uncertain		Moderate implication		Major implication		Mean	Rank
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Increase in revenue generation	0	0	19	9.5	44	22.0	58	29.0	79	39.5	3.68	6 <sup>th</sup>
Increase in Infrastructure development	0	0	0	0	3	215	82	41.0	115	57.5	3.85	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Leads to building of hotels and restaurants	0	0	0	0	25	12.5	74	37.0	101	50.5	3.79	3 <sup>rd</sup>
The number of jobs in the community has increased due to the presence of the relics	0	0	25	12.5	63	31.5	51	25.5	61	30.5	3.63	7 <sup>th</sup>
The standard of living of the host community has increased because of relics	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	19.5	161	80.5	3.87	1 <sup>st</sup>
Due to influx of tourists, is becoming difficult to find a quiet place for recreation in Lokoja	10	5.0	39	19.5	61	30.5	34	17.0	56	28.0	3.56	8 <sup>th</sup>
It has contributes to social problems such as crime, prostitution and other social vices	37	18.5	71	35.5	43	21.5	21	10.5	28	14.0	3.41	11 <sup>th</sup>
It can induce prices of many goods and services in Lokoja to increase	0	0	0	0	36	18.0	69	34.5	95	47.5	3.74	4 <sup>th</sup>
It will encourages residents to imitate the behaviour of the tourists	22	11.0	61	30.5	54	27.0	29	14.5	34	17.0	3.45	10 <sup>th</sup>
Seasonal nature of tourist can create high-risk, under- or unemployment issues	14	7.0	48	24.0	59	29.5	32	16.0	47	23.5	3.51	9 <sup>th</sup>
It results in greater cultural exchange between tourists and residents	0	0	9	4.5	39	19.5	65	32.5	87	43.5	3.71	5 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey (2022).

The perceived implications of colonial relics towards the development of Lokoja community are portray in table4, in which the standard of living of the host community has increased because of relics and Increase in Infrastructure development have a slight implication on the residents with a mean value of 3.87 and 3.85 each. This was followed by it leads to building of hotels and restaurants with a mean value of 3.79 and It has contributes to social problems such as crime, prostitution and other social vices recorded the least mean value of 3.41. The finding of this work



indicated that the presence of colonial relics have leads to the increase in the standard of living of the residents. This work corroborated with the work of Ekundayo, (2018) which stated that “Tourism sector has attracted more investment opportunities to Lokoja since the advent of this democratic governance. He also reported that many hotels have sprung up in the city, including eateries and other relaxation joints thereby creating job opportunities for the teaming youths in Lokoja.”

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the studies concludes that Lokoja is blessed with a good number of colonial relics which can play important roles in the promotion of tourism, and the development of Kogi state and Nigeria as a country. However, for this purpose to be realized, there is the need that urgent preservation/conservation measures be taken. This is because these relics are heading towards destruction and extinction if nothing is done as fast as possible. The relics in Lokoja are unique and are not available anywhere in the world.

The study recommends that government should provide stable policies to improve tourism development; that government should provide fund to modernize tourism resources available in the study area; that government raise awareness of the tourism potentials of colonial relics in Lokoja community; and that government should provide infrastructure to attract tourists to Lokoja community.

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