

Protection Staffs' Job Perception in Cross River National Park, Southern Nigeria

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Abstract: Number of issues continues to distrust the effectiveness and competency of workforce in-charge of the worlds' natural resources conservation areas particularly in the developing countries where conservation activity is venerated by few. This study investigates protection staffs' qualities and job satisfaction perception in Cross River National Park, Nigeria using multi-stage sampling techniques on 40% of its workforce and data obtained subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Workforce quality determinants revealed greater proportion (94%) of the Park Protection and Conservation (PP&C) staffs are males. 49% are between 31-40 years old, 39% had secondary school educational qualification, 63% had 6-9 years working experience and 61% had reached grade level 7-12 in service. Between 1998-2008, 178(11.5%), 103(6.7%), 509(33.0%) and 753(48.8%) of staffs' in PP&C department were sponsored on conference; further education; internal capacity building; and protection staff's training respectively. Majority are dissatisfied with their job most especially on salaries and motivation. Selected socioeconomic variables tested shows that the respondents' gender, religion, number of years in service and grade level significantly ($p<0.05$) influenced respondents' job satisfaction while their age, marital status and educational qualifications are not significantly ($p<0.05$) differed. This study suggests integration of ideals that encourage the workforce building their career with the park for effective job satisfaction to avert future biodiversity menace.

Key words: Protected areas • biodiversity conservation • staffs' job perception • Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The significant of diverse natural resources in human's socio-economic and socio-cultural requirements made conservation strategies a frequent burning issue over the years at both international and local levels. This endless efforts that started from London over 500 years ago and led to the creation of several protected areas in the world which till date serves humanity in the area of ecological stability, perpetual utilization of environmental resources and conservation of biological resources [1].

Today, protected areas have turned to be the most important and effective tools safeguarding world biodiversity and other natural assets in a very large area (land or sea) and the areas are continuously managed all over the world through local or national legal instrument modified from international standard recommended [1]. Examples of these protected areas are Biosphere Reserves, Forest Reserves, Strict Nature Reserves, Game Reserves and National Parks in which Nigeria is not left out among

communities of nations in her signatory to 14 major biodiversity-related treaties [2].

Nigeria, the largest single geographical unit in West Africa on the Gulf of Guinea with total land area of 923,768km², about 140 million people and 250 ethnic groups is located on latitudes 4°16'N and 13°52'N; and longitudes 2°49'E and 14°37'E and endowed with about 1,000 fishes, 247 mammals and 123 reptiles [3] and 839 birds [4]. The country ranked eighth in the world in terms of primate diversity [5]. Nigeria today has 445 Forest Reserves, 12 Strict Nature Reserves, 29 Game Reserves, 1 Biosphere Reserve and 7 National Parks (Fig. 1).

The concept of National Park in Nigeria was introduced in 1979 through decree Number 46 of 1979 and this approved the establishment of Kainji Lake National Park. Subsequently, seven more National Parks (Chad Basin, Gashaka-Gumti, Kamuku, Okomu, Old-Oyo, Cross River and Yankari (now of Game Reserve status) were created. Enormous challenges categorized into three

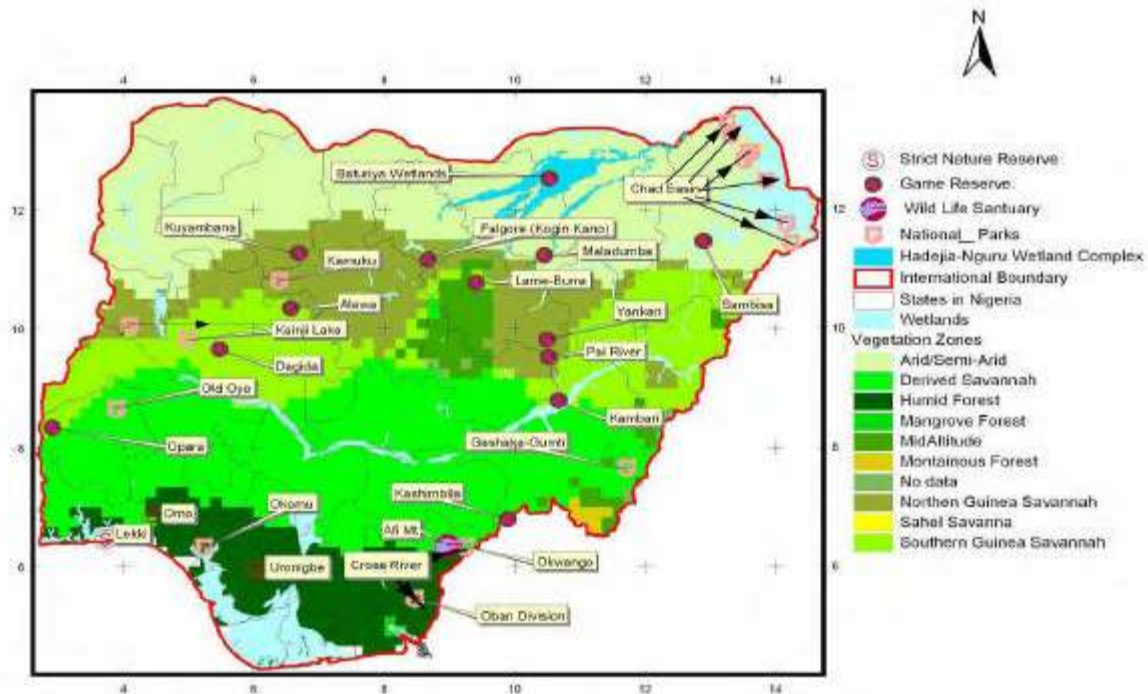


Fig. 1: Locations of Some Protected Areas in Nigeria.
 Source: Adapted from Nigeria Biodiversity and Tropical Forest [2].

underlying cause; indirect threat; and direct threat are limiting the effectiveness of protection activities in protected areas [6] in which Nigeria National Parks not left-out despite three decade of conservation activity.

Workforce are no doubt are the brain behind biodiversity conservation in protected areas and this is missing in all the investigation related to protection activities in Nigeria National Parks in spite of the verity that they are playing key responsibility. With diverse environmental challenges dawdle on ecological imbalance that protected areas continue to screen and effectively reducing its impact on human wellbeing, it became imperative for the subject master specialists to act faster to safe the biological resources in one of the Nigeria tropical rainforest protected area. The research team for this exercise approached this study examined the perception of the concerned staffs' on their job.

Job perception is generally how people feel about different aspects of their jobs [7] extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs and also considered a strong predictor of overall individual well-being [8] as well as a good predictor of intentions or decisions of employees to leave a job [9]. The importance of job satisfaction for both employers and their workers are summarized [10,11] believed that job satisfaction depends on the balance between work-role inputs (such as education,

working time and effort) and work-role outputs (such as wages, fringe benefits, status, working conditions and intrinsic aspects of the job) [12]. opined that job satisfaction as a bi-dimensional concept consisting of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction dimensions. In the report, the intrinsic sources of satisfaction depend on the individual characteristics while extrinsic sources of satisfaction are situational and depend on the environment, such as pay, promotion, or job security; these are financial and other material rewards or advantages of a job. This study investigates how protection staffs' in Cross River National Park, Southern Nigeria are managed and their perception on job so that the efforts of the conservation actors of Nigeria National Parks creation will not fade out.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Cross River National Park established under Decree 36 of 1991 with total land area of 4,000km² is one of the seven in National Parks in Nigeria. It is divided into two divisions (Oban and Okwangwo); Oban division lies within longitude 8°02'E and latitude 8°55'E and latitudes 5°00'N and 6°00'N; and Okwangwo division located on longitudes 9° 02'E and 9°27'E and latitudes 6°04'N and 6°28'N. For administrative and management purpose, the park is divided four departments namely Park Protection and Conservation; Ecotourism; Park Engineering and

Maintenance and Finance and Administration departments.

Methods of Data Collection: This study made use of both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through the use of one hundred structured questionnaire and in-depth interview to elicit information from randomly selected park protection staff at the head office and those on field in the two divisions of the park while secondary source made use of the office documents available for public consumption.

Sample Population, Sample Techniques and Sample Size: The study population was 78% of the whole workforce of CRNP in the year 2008 (i.e. staffs in department of Park Protection and Conservation, PPandC) using multi-stage sampling technique. The respondents' were first stratified into two according to the divisions of the park. Fifty percent ranger stations in each of the division were randomly selected given two and four ranger stations from Okwangwo and Oban divisions respectively. Because of the far distance of the study sites from one location to another and the rugged nature of park terrain, 40% of the respondents were purposively sampled.

Statistical Analysis: Socio demographic data of the respondents were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis while inferential statistical analysis made use of Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analyses to test the relationship between the selected socioeconomic and the respondents' job satisfaction.

Research Hypothesis

H₀ : There are no relationship between selected socioeconomic variables of the respondents' and job perception.

H_A : There are relationships between selected socioeconomic variables of the respondents' and job perception.

RESULTS

From the above Table 1, greater part of the PPandC staffs (94%) are males; this is not far from the nature of the park protection work in Nigeria which requires some degree of toughness that females can hardly endure. Higher proportions (49%) are between 31-40 years old, married. Highest percentage (39%) had secondary school qualification with more than half of the respondents (63) between 6-9 years working experience and majority of them (61%) had reached grade level 7-12 in their professional career.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Cross River National Park Protection Staff

Variables	Frequency (N=100)	Percentage	Mode
Gender			
Male	94	94	Male
Female		6	6
Age			
21-30	7	7	
31-40	49	49	31-40
41-50	32	32	
51 and above	12	12	
Marital status			
Married	70	70	Married
Single	30	30	
Religion			
Christianity	72	72	Christianity
Islam	28	28	
Educational qualification			
Primary School Certificate	4	4	
SSCE	39	39	SSCE
OND/NCE	36	36	
HND/B.Sc	20	20	
M.Sc	1	1	
Years in service			
6-9	63	63	5-9
13-13	18	18	
14 and above	19	19	
Grade level			
1-6	35	35	
7-12	61	61	7-12
12 and above	4	4	
	100	100	

Sources: Field Survey, 2009

Table 2 above shows the staff strength of Cross River National Park from 1998 to 2008. It was clearly confirm that PPandC had the highest total number of staff 1887(70.5%) while PEandM had the least staff of 177(6.6%) of the four departments. It was also discovered from this research work through in-depth interview that less than 250 PPandC are policing the 4,000km² land area of the park which is abhorrently inadequate in forested rainforest zone.

From above Table 3, the authority of CRNP from 1998 to 2008 sent different cadre of the park workforce on four different categories of training in order to improve their quality towards effective job performance. It was made known that 178(11.5%), 103(6.7%), 509(33.0%) and 753(48.8%) of the workforce were sent on conference, further education, internal capacity building and protection staff's training respectively.

Table 2: Staff Strength in Cross River National Park (1998-2008)

Year	PPandC	PEandM	Ecotourism	FandA	Total
1998	53	19	15	38	125
1999	57	19	15	38	129
2000	80	18	15	32	145
2001	126	17	19	40	202
2002	161	17	19	40	237
2003	228	14	18	38	298
2004	228	14	18	38	298
2005	228	14	18	38	298
2006	238	17	21	38	314
2007	238	14	18	42	312
2008	250	14	18	38	320
Total	18s87(70.5%)	177(6.6%)	194(7.2%)	420(15.7%)	2678(100%)

Source: Adapted and modify from CRNP annual Report, 2008

Legend

PPandC- Park Protection and Conservation
 PEandM- Park Engineering and Maintenance
 FandA- Finance and Administration

Table 3: Cross River National Park Staff Training List from 1998 - 2008

Year	NSSC	NNSSFC	NSICT	NSPST	Total
1998	2	-	-	-	2
1999	7	2	25	138	172
2000	13	7	29	-	49
2001	21	7	45	-	73
2002	15	9	30	52	106
2003	9	14	60	-	83
2004	13	11	74	103	201
2005	18	12	28	-	58
2006	22	9	0	75	156
2007	26	13	75	175	289
2008	32	19	93	210	354
Total	178(11.5%)	103(6.7)	509(33.0%)	753(48.8%)	1543(100)

Source: Adapted from CRNP annual report, 2008

Legend

NSSCN: No. of staff sent for conference
 NSSFC: No. of staff sent for further education
 NSICT: No. of staff on internal capacity training
 NSPST: No. of staff for protection staff tr

Table 4: Relationships among Selected Socio-economic Variables and Staffs' Job Satisfaction

Variable	Correlation of determinant(R)	Correlation of determinant(R2)	Adjusted (R2)	DF	P-Value	Decision
Gender	0.204	0.042	0.032	1	0.021	S
Age	0.062	0.004	-0.006	3	0.271	NS
Marital Status	0.089	0.008	-0.002	1	0.189	NS
Religion	0.134	0.018	0.008	1	0.093	S
Edu. Qualifications	0.122	0.015	0.005	4	0.113	NS
Years in Service	0.187	0.035	0.025	2	0.31	S
Grade Level	0.204	0.042	0.032	2	0.021	S

Test at 0.05 limit

Legend Edu- means Educational S- means Significant NS- means Not Significant

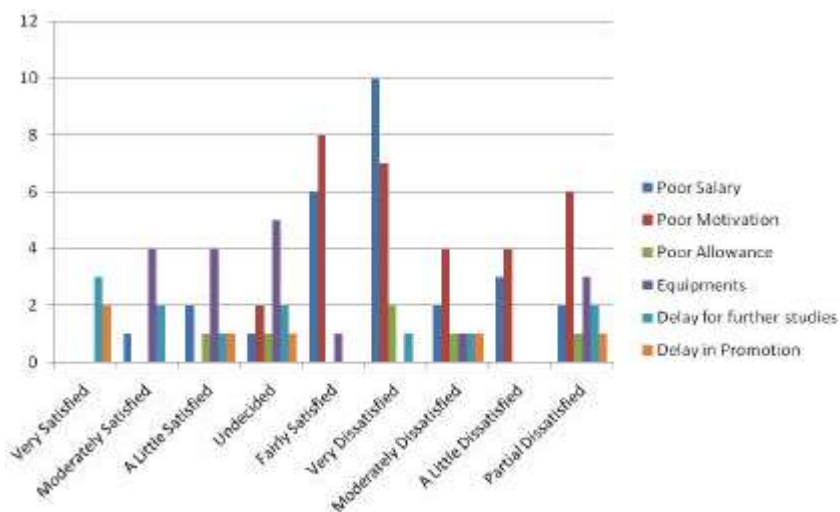


Fig. 2: Protection Staffs' of Cross River National Park Perception on their Job

The above Figure 2 revealed two side of staff perception on their job. Their perceptions were satisfied and dissatisfied. Majority of the staff were dissatisfied with job due to poor salary and poor motivation while equipments ranked highest in the staff satisfaction.

Correlation and multiple analyses were employed to test the association between the selected socioeconomic and workforce quality variables of the respondents and their job satisfaction. The result from Table 4 above, the selected socioeconomic variables shows that the respondents' gender, religion, years in service and grade level significantly ($p < 0.05$) influenced respondents' job satisfaction while their age and marital status and educational qualifications are not significantly ($p < 0.05$) differed.

DISCUSSION

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Cross River National Park Protection and Conservation Staffs':

Highest proportion of the sampled population that form the core conservation activity of the park are male (94%) and the remaining 6% are female which agreed with [13] that women had fewer opportunities to participate in making environmental decision and this is not complied with [14] recommendation of ensuring gender equity in protected area management for achieving Millenium Development Goals. However, gender disparity was strongly associated with the tough nature of National Park work in Nigeria which very few female can muddle through. The job no doubt provides proportion of emotional stability to the respondents for 70% of them are married. Forty-nine percent are within the age range of 31-40 years old. They are dexterous and have tendency to cope and deliver the conservation objectives as discussed by [7]. More than half of the sample size (63%) had between 6-9 years working experience and majority of them (61%) had reached grade level 7-12 in their professional career. Regrettably, higher percentage (39%) had secondary school qualification indicating that the workforce quality of CRNP need to be improved and well managed (Table 1).

Protection Staff Strength and Management: Staff strength of Cross River National Park from 1998 to 2008 clearly confirm that PPandC had the highest total number of staff 1887(70.5%) while PEandM had the least staff of 177(6.6%) of the four departments (Table 2). In addressing the menace of low quality of workforce measured with the educational qualifications; working experience

(year in service); and staff grade level, the management of the park embarked on staff training the inception of the park creation. The workforce sent on training was drawn athwart the cadre. Table 3 revealed that 11.5%, 6.7%, 33.0% and 48.8% of the workforce were sent on conference, further education, internal capacity building and protection staff's training respectively.

Perception of Protection Staffs' on Their Job: Despite all the management strategies adopted to safeguard biodiversity of Cross River National Park, majority (76%) of the staff in the PPandC department of CRNP sampled are not satisfied with their job (Table 4). Their dissatisfaction followed poor salary (14.8%), poor motivation (14.0%), poor allowance (13.7%), lack of standard equipment (13.5%), delay on further studies (11.2%) and delay in promotion 228(8.8%). Correlation and multiple regression analyses test employed revealed that the respondents' gender, religion, years in service and grade level significantly ($p < 0.05$) influenced respondents' job satisfaction while their age and marital status and educational qualifications are not significantly ($p < 0.05$) differed. It was revealed that 76% of the 40% sampled population are not job satisfied which can be link with [15] opined that job satisfaction and general happiness are positively related.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that despite some management measures put on ground to encourage and improves the protection staffs of Cross River National Park over years, perception of majority of these whom the safety of Cross River National Park biodiversity depends upon was towards job dissatisfaction direction. For the biodiversity resources of the area to be safeguard, various lapses resulted in job dissatisfaction needs to be addressed in the park's staff management plan.

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