
THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION AND PATRONAGE PATTERN OF TRAVEL AGENCIES ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ILORIN METROPOLIS, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

Adeniyi, E. E*. & Agbola I.A.

Department of Geography and Environmental Management, University of Ilorin, Nigeria

*Corresponding author: adeniyi.ee@unilorin.edu.ng

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ABSTRACT

Travel agencies serve as vital intermediaries linking tourists with services and attractions, thereby playing a crucial role in promoting and sustaining tourism development globally. Consequently, this study aims to examine the spatial distribution and patronage patterns of travel agencies, as well as the impact of travel agencies on tourism in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. The study employed a purposive sampling technique, where data were collected from thirteen travel agencies through the administration of forty-nine questionnaires. The geographic coordinates of these agencies were recorded using a Global Positioning System and analyzed in an ArcGIS 10.8.2 environment. The Average Nearest Neighbour (ANN) tool was used to assess the location. Frequency and percentages were computed via IBM SPSS Version 20 to profile respondents and services. Findings revealed that travel agencies primarily serve a predominantly male (69.4%) and economically active (35-54 years) clientele, who are highly educated (83.7% with tertiary education). Income distribution indicates a bifurcated market requiring agencies to balance affordability and quality. The ANN result shows that agency locations were randomly distributed across Ilorin, with a concentration in Ilorin West, reflecting urban commercial hubs. The services offered were diverse, primarily focused on flight booking, international study packages, visa assistance, and religious pilgrimage arrangements. Patronage varies, with a notable annual peak associated with religious tourism, such as the Hajj and Umrah. The agencies significantly contribute to tourism development by facilitating travel, generating revenue, creating employment opportunities, and stimulating infrastructure growth. The study underscores the possibilities for expanding services to informal sector clients to enhance inclusivity and economic impact.

Keywords: Clientele, Geographic Coordinates, Average Nearest Neighbour, Service Offerings, Economic Impact

INTRODUCTION

Tourism stands out as one of the fastest-growing and most impactful industries of the modern era, offering substantial benefits in community development, government revenue generation, and individual income creation. Its significance is particularly evident in developing economies like Nigeria, where tourism drives economic expansion through multiple channels, including foreign currency earnings, international investment attraction, higher tax revenues, and job creation (Amos & Osuagwu, 2023; Augustine et al., 2023; Debbage & Daniels, 1998). The diverse nature of tourism, encompassing leisure, business, and cultural travel, means it integrates a wide array of components, including accommodation, attractions, and transportation, all of which are vital to the sector's success (Al-dmour et al., 2023; Yepez & Leimgruber, 2024). Travel agencies play an indispensable role in this ecosystem. They act as intermediaries that connect travelers to service providers, facilitating both domestic and international travel (Chang, 2020; Kutty & Joy, 2021). In Nigeria, with a population exceeding 211 million and a GDP of \$441.5 billion in 2021, tourism contributes significantly to employment. However, the sector experienced a 23% decline in jobs

between 2019 and 2020, accounting for approximately 4% of total employment (Ebiegberi, 2022; Oloyede, 2020). Despite these fluctuations, research confirms that tourism development has a measurable positive effect on revenue generation, employment, and rural development, underscoring its potential as a key driver for sustainable economic growth and diversification in Nigeria (Augustine et al., 2023; Gemar et al., 2023).

Travel agencies play a pivotal role in shaping the tourism landscape by offering a comprehensive array of services, including flight bookings, hotel reservations, car rentals, package tours, travel insurance, and even specialized arrangements such as medical item delivery and bureau de change services (Kutty & Joy, 2021; Rensburg, 2014). Acting as agents for airlines, hotels, and tour operators, they streamline the travel process for clients, providing expert advice, facilitating travel documentation, and designing customized itineraries that cater to diverse interests and budgets. Their personalized approach not only saves travelers time and effort but also enhances the overall experience by securing better deals and exclusive offers through established industry partnerships (Shariffuddin et al., 2023; Wijk & Persoon, 2006). In Nigeria, travel agencies play a crucial role in promoting both domestic and international tourism, raising awareness about local attractions, and contributing to the growth of the tourism sector by generating revenue and creating employment opportunities. The emergence of online travel agencies has further expanded their reach and efficiency, allowing them to serve a wider audience and adapt to the evolving demands of the travel market (Jolene, 2023; Zhang & Deng, 2024).

Recent studies underscore the evolving function of travel agencies within the tourism industry, while traditionally acting as intermediaries; travel agencies now face challenges brought about by digitalization, such as disintermediation due to online booking platforms and direct supplier access (Hien et al., 2024; Rensburg, 2014; Zhang & Deng, 2024). Despite these pressures, travel agencies in Nigeria continue to adapt by offering value-added services, leveraging local expertise, and forming strategic collaborations to create immersive experiences for tourists. For example, partnerships like the "Ilorin City Break" initiative, which brings together event coordinators, marketers, and youth organizations, illustrate how collaboration can enhance the authenticity and impact of tourism offerings in Ilorin (Olesin, 2023). The necessity for travel agencies to innovate and reposition themselves in response to changing consumer behaviours, technological advancements, and competitive pressures cannot be overemphasized.

The need for this study is underscored by the growing importance of tourism in Ilorin and Nigeria as a whole, as well as the dynamic changes affecting the traditional roles of travel agencies. Tourism contributed 5.1% to Nigeria's GDP in 2019. It accounted for 3.6% in 2021, and the sector's potential for economic revitalization remains significant, particularly as the Kwara State government seeks to boost internally generated revenue and foster sustainable development (Adebayo, 2024; Onyekwelu, 2025). Understanding how travel agencies are navigating industry shifts such as increased competition, technology adoption, and evolving market demands is critical for formulating effective policies and strategies that will sustain and grow the tourism industry in Ilorin. Moreover, as the state intensifies its focus on reviving cultural heritage and attracting investment, empirical insights into the contributions and challenges, as well as the spatial distribution of travel agencies, are vital for maximizing the sector's socio-economic benefits. Consequently, this study aims to examine the spatial distribution and patronage patterns of travel agencies, as well as the impact of travel agencies on tourism development in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. As a result, the study seeks to understand how travel agencies promote tourism by creating and selling packages, the factors influencing their efficiency and effectiveness,

and the impact of their services on tourism growth in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria. By exploring the spatial distribution and patterns of travel agencies, assessing their service quality, analyzing patterns of patronage, and evaluating their overall impact on tourism development, the research will provide actionable recommendations for stakeholders and policymakers to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of Ilorin Metropolis's travel agencies sector.

Study Area

Ilorin, the capital of Kwara State, is situated between latitudes $8^{\circ}23'N$ and $8^{\circ}33'N$ and longitudes $4^{\circ}28'E$ and $4^{\circ}40'E$, serving as a primary gateway between northern and southern Nigeria (Figure 1). The city has experienced remarkable spatial and demographic growth, expanding from its initial area of just 0.8 km^2 to approximately 765 km^2 in recent times (Abdulraheem et al., 2022; Idrees et al., 2022). According to Babatunde et al. (2014), the recent population data for Ilorin metropolis reached 1,272,908 in 2020, projected from 1991 (532,088), reflecting a consistent annual growth rate of approximately 3% over the past few years. This rapid urbanization has elevated Ilorin to one of Nigeria's most populous and urbanized cities, ranking among the country's top urban centers. The city's growth is driven by its role as a transportation hub, with major highways and an airport facilitating the movement of people and goods, as well as its diverse economic base, which encompasses agriculture, commerce, and services (Ahmed & Taiwo, 2023; Saad, 2011).

Economically, Ilorin thrives as an agrarian and commercial center, with a significant portion of its population engaged in the cultivation of crops such as maize, cassava, yam, rice, vegetables, and fruits (Ola, 2020). The city's bustling markets attract traders from across Kwara and neighbouring states, reinforcing its status as a regional commercial hub. In addition to agriculture and trade, Ilorin is a prominent educational hub, home to institutions such as the University of Ilorin and Kwara State Polytechnic, which contribute to its skilled workforce and vibrant student population. The city is also served by Ilorin International Airport (formerly General Tunde Idiagbon International Airport), which operates both domestic and international flights, and is located approximately 1.8 kilometers from downtown Ilorin. The manufacturing sector is also expanding, with small and medium-scale enterprises producing textiles, food, beverages, and construction materials (Bankole et al., 2014). Ilorin's urban landscape is characterized by diverse land use, including public parks, botanical gardens, sports facilities, and historic sites, such as the Alfa Alimi Mosque, which underscores the city's rich cultural heritage and commitment to providing recreational spaces for its residents. This combination of rapid population growth, economic diversity, and infrastructural development positions Ilorin as a dynamic and influential city in Nigeria's socio-economic landscape.

Against this backdrop, Kwara State generally features prominent tourist attractions such as the Owu Waterfalls, Esie earthen figures, Gaani festival, Takai dance, and Sobi hills, which highlight its cultural and natural heritage (Olusunle, 2023). The annual Ilorin Durbar, a vibrant cultural event, further exemplifies the state's unity and traditions (Yahaya, 2025). As a consequence, the study area's tourism development could be supported by expanding infrastructure, including multiple airlines servicing Ilorin Airport and hospitality establishments like Noktel, E-Phoenix, and Shoprite retail outlets, among others. Studies by Adekunle & Adedapo (2025) and Rufai-Ahmad & Atteh (2023) emphasized the socio-economic potential and challenges of these sites, while Meduna et al. (2024) who noted that hotels in Ilorin-West LGA adopt sustainable practices, influencing customer retention despite gaps in waste recycling and employee incentives. Falabi et al. (2022) addresses museum patronage challenges, though travel agencies remain underrepresented in current literature.

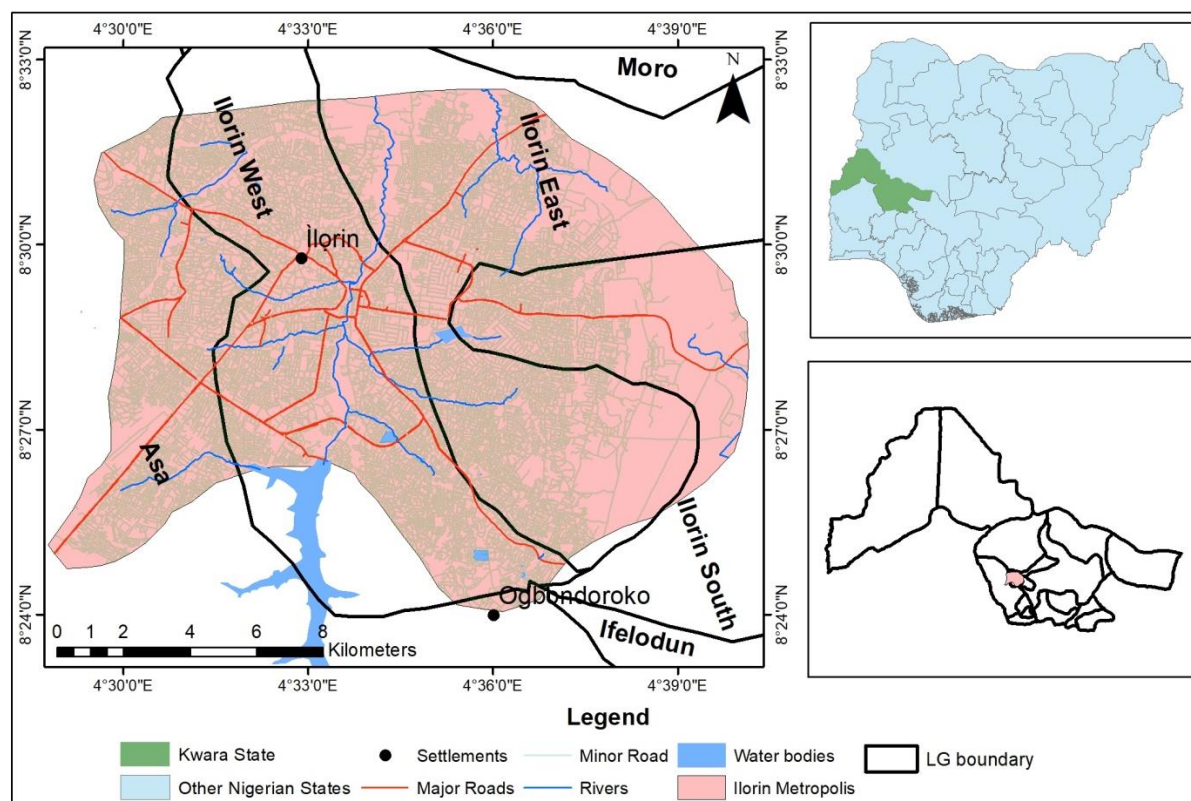


Figure 1: Ilorin Metropolis

Source: Adapted and modified from Ministry of Environment (2023)

Materials and Methods

The study targeted travel agencies within the specified research area (see Figure 1), employing a sample size of thirteen travel agencies in the Ilorin Metropolis. Data collection relied on both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered through field observation, reconnaissance, and the administration of 49 questionnaires to travel agency operators. This sample size adequately reflects the limited number of travel agencies in Ilorin Metropolis, providing reliable insights into their spatial distribution and patronage patterns. Questionnaire administration varied, with Midrah Travel & Tour Agency receiving two copies and U-fit Fly receiving the highest number at 4, resulting in a mean of 3.77 questionnaires per agency. The study was confined to these thirteen agencies due to their prominence in the area, as discovered during the reconnaissance survey, and the lack of comprehensive secondary data to determine the total number of travel agencies within the research area. The questionnaire was administered directly to the operators of the travel agencies in Ilorin to obtain firsthand, accurate information essential for understanding the spatial patterns of patronage, as these operators possess detailed knowledge of customer flows and operational dynamics within their agencies. The study was limited to 49 copies of the questionnaire because it was administered to owners, directors, secretaries, or any willing member of Ilorin travel agencies, as they are the key decision-makers and stakeholders with comprehensive knowledge of the agency. Secondary data were sourced from journals, relevant documents, and online materials, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the context. The questionnaire was distributed using a purposive sampling technique, as all travel agencies in Ilorin were included in the sample. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean, were calculated using IBM SPSS Version 20 to analyze respondents' socio-economic characteristics, the types and primary services offered by travel agencies, patronage patterns, and the overall impact of these agencies.

During questionnaire administration, a handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) device was used to record the geographic coordinates of each travel agency. These data were saved in a comma-delimited Excel format compatible with the ArcGIS 10.8.2 environment, which facilitated the conversion of location data into point shapefiles for spatial visualization. Spatial analysis was conducted using the Average Nearest Neighbour (ANN) tool in ArcGIS 10.8.2 to evaluate the spatial pattern of travel agencies. ANN calculates the average distance between each agency and its nearest neighbour, providing statistical evidence to support the distribution pattern. The use of ANN, supported by a z-score and a confidence level below 0.05, enabled the study to assess spatial patterns rigorously, a method widely recognized in tourism and travel research for its reliability in identifying distribution trends and informing strategic planning (Mutgurun et al., 2020; Qu et al., 2023).

Results and Discussion

Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 displays the socio-economic characteristics of the Respondents. Table 1 revealed that travel agencies in Ilorin primarily serve a male-dominated clientele (69.4%), suggesting potential gender-based disparities in travel agency patronage or differing travel preferences between genders. The majority of respondents fall within the economically active age groups of 35-54 years (63.9%). This finding aligns with that of Ebiegberi (2022), indicating that middle-aged adults are key drivers of tourism due to greater financial stability and interest in structured travel experiences. The high percentage of tertiary-educated respondents (83.7%) may be due to educated travelers valuing professional travel services for complex itineraries and risk mitigation, particularly in emerging destinations like Ilorin, where local expertise is crucial. These results are consistent with those of Karl (2018) who demonstrated that while higher age groups are more prevalent among risk- and uncertainty-averse tourist types, high educational levels and frequent travel are unique traits of hazard-affine tourists. Occupational data show significant engagement from civil servants (51%) and students (34.7%), reflecting dual trends: government workers utilizing agency services for official travel and students seeking affordable packages for educational or leisure trips, consistent with Nigeria's growing youth tourism market.

Income distribution indicates that 32.7% earn below ₦50,000 monthly, while 24.5% earn above ₦150,000, highlighting a bifurcated market where agencies must cater to both budget-conscious travelers and higher-income clients seeking premium services. This duality mirrors challenges identified in Nigerian tourism where agencies balance affordability with quality amid infrastructure. The predominance of civil servants, a stable income group, suggests that agencies play a vital role in facilitating official and leisure travel for this demographic, thereby contributing to Ilorin's tourism revenue. However, the low representation of self-employed individuals (2%) among travel agency clients may indicate limited engagement with entrepreneurs and informal sector workers. These findings align with those of Amos and Osuagwu (2023), who emphasized the need for agencies to adapt services to diverse socio-economic groups to maximize tourism's local economic impact, particularly in employment and community development.

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	15	30.6
Male	34	69.4
Total	49	100
Age		
18-24	6	12.2
25-34	8	16.3
35-44	13	26.5
45-54	17	37.4
55 and above	5	10.2
Total	49	100
Educational Attainment		
Primary	1	2
Secondary	7	14.3
Tertiary	41	83.7
Total	49	100
Occupation		
Artisan	2	4.1
Civil Servants	25	51
Retired	4	8.2
Self Employed	1	2
Students	17	34.7
Total	49	100
Income		
<₦50,000	16	32.7
₦100,000-₦150,000	9	18.4
₦50,000-₦100,000	12	24.5
Above ₦150,000	12	24.5
Total	49	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Spatial Distribution of Travel Agencies in Ilorin Metropolis

Figure 2 illustrates the spatial distribution of travel agencies within Ilorin metropolis, while Table 2 provides their names alongside precise geographic coordinates. These agencies are predominantly situated in the central part of the metropolis, spanning its two local government areas (LGAs) of East, South, and West, with a notable concentration in Ilorin West, which is the most urbanized and commercially active LGA of the metropolis (see Table 2 and Figure 2). This clustering in Ilorin West likely reflects the presence of the city's major commercial and industrial zones, which attract businesses, including travel agencies. Notably, twelve travel agencies are located in Ilorin West, including Al-Fathiu-Lahi Travels & Tours, Almaruf Global Works, Al-Haqq, and Al-Arbrer Travel & Tour, among others. In contrast, Ilorin South LGA hosts none while Ilorin East hosts one, such as the Omotosho Travels and Tours, indicating a less dense distribution in this area. The spatial distribution aligns with urban development trends where service-oriented businesses cluster around

economic hubs to maximize accessibility and patronage, a phenomenon observed in the study of Adeniyi (2018) on hospitality and service industries in Ilorin (e.g., hotels clustering around commercial centers). This distribution highlights the impact of urbanization and economic activity on the locational decisions of travel agencies in the Ilorin metropolis.

Table 2: Coordinates of the Travel Agencies

S/No	Name	Latitude	Longitude	LGA of Domicile
1	Batt Travels and Tours	8.48289	4.54858	Ilorin West
2	Salow travels	8.48253	4.57551	Ilorin West
3	Koog Logistics	8.48795	4.55982	Ilorin West
4	Al-Fathi-Lahi Travels & Tours	8.48464	4.55634	Ilorin West
5	Almaruf Global works	8.48385	4.54216	Ilorin West
6	Al-Haqq	8.48152	4.56277	Ilorin West
7	Al-Arbrer travel & tour	8.45945	4.52572	Ilorin West
8	Omotosho Travels and Tours	8.46394	4.58222	Ilorin East
9	Nokbah travels and tours	8.48385	4.54216	Ilorin West
10	Jyraf Travel Agency	8.53751	4.54437	Ilorin West
11	ABC Cargo Express	8.48713	4.53477	Ilorin West
12	Midrah Travel & Tour Agency	8.45911	4.5258	Ilorin West
13	U-fit fly	8.49115	4.56777	Ilorin West

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

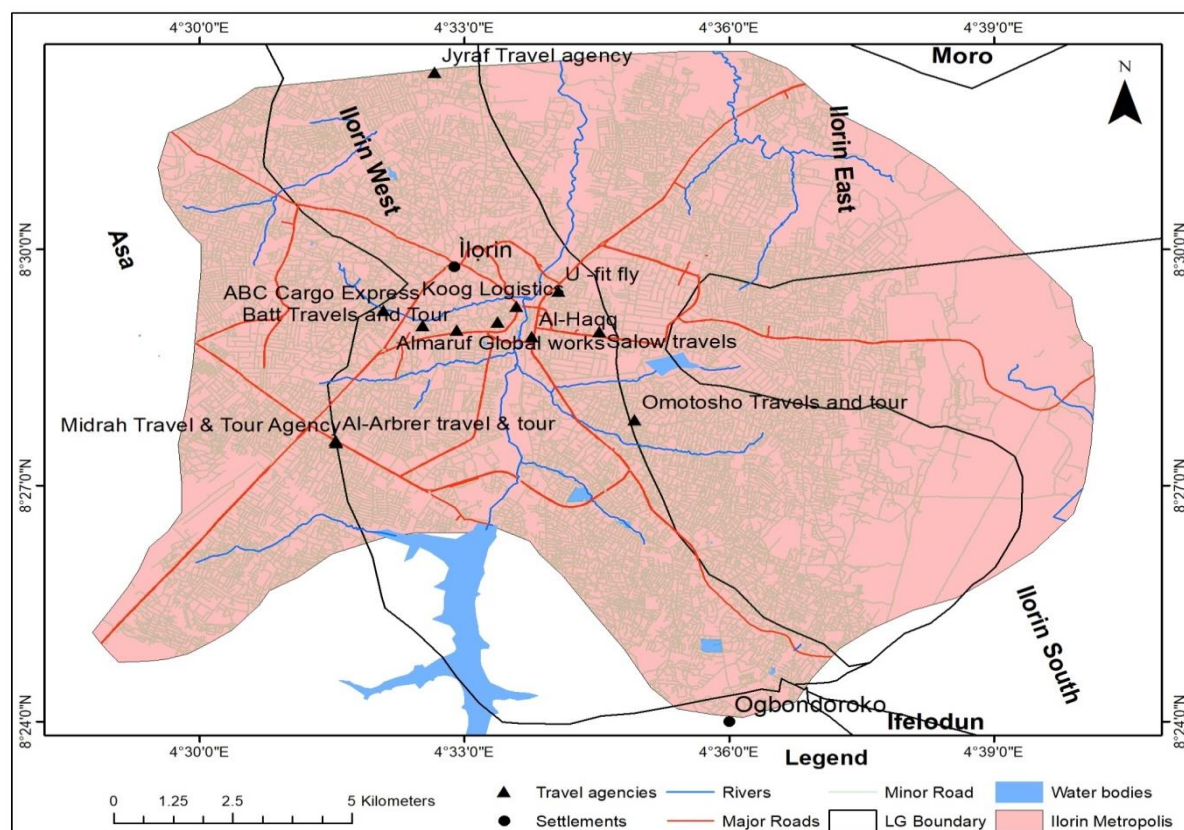


Figure 2: Spatial Distribution of Travel Agencies in Ilorin Metropolis

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

The spatial pattern of travel agencies in Ilorin Metropolis reflects a distribution that is not significantly different from random, as indicated in the results of the ANN analysis (Figure 3). The observed mean distance (1,046.44 meters) between agencies is only slightly higher than the expected mean distance (1,007.85 meters) for a random distribution, resulting in a nearest neighbor ratio of 1.038. The z-score of 0.264 and a high p-value of 0.792 both indicate that there is no statistically significant clustering or dispersion among the agency locations. Since the p-value is much greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05, it can be inferred that the spatial distribution of travel agencies in Ilorin Metropolis is consistent with a random pattern. This finding aligns with Moses et al. (2017), who examined urban spatial patterns in Ilorin, showing that certain activities and facilities, including commercial services, may not exhibit strong spatial linkage or zonation, especially in a city transitioning from traditional to more modern urban forms. Therefore, the location of travel agencies appears to be influenced by factors that do not produce marked clustering or regular spacing, resulting in an essentially random spatial arrangement.

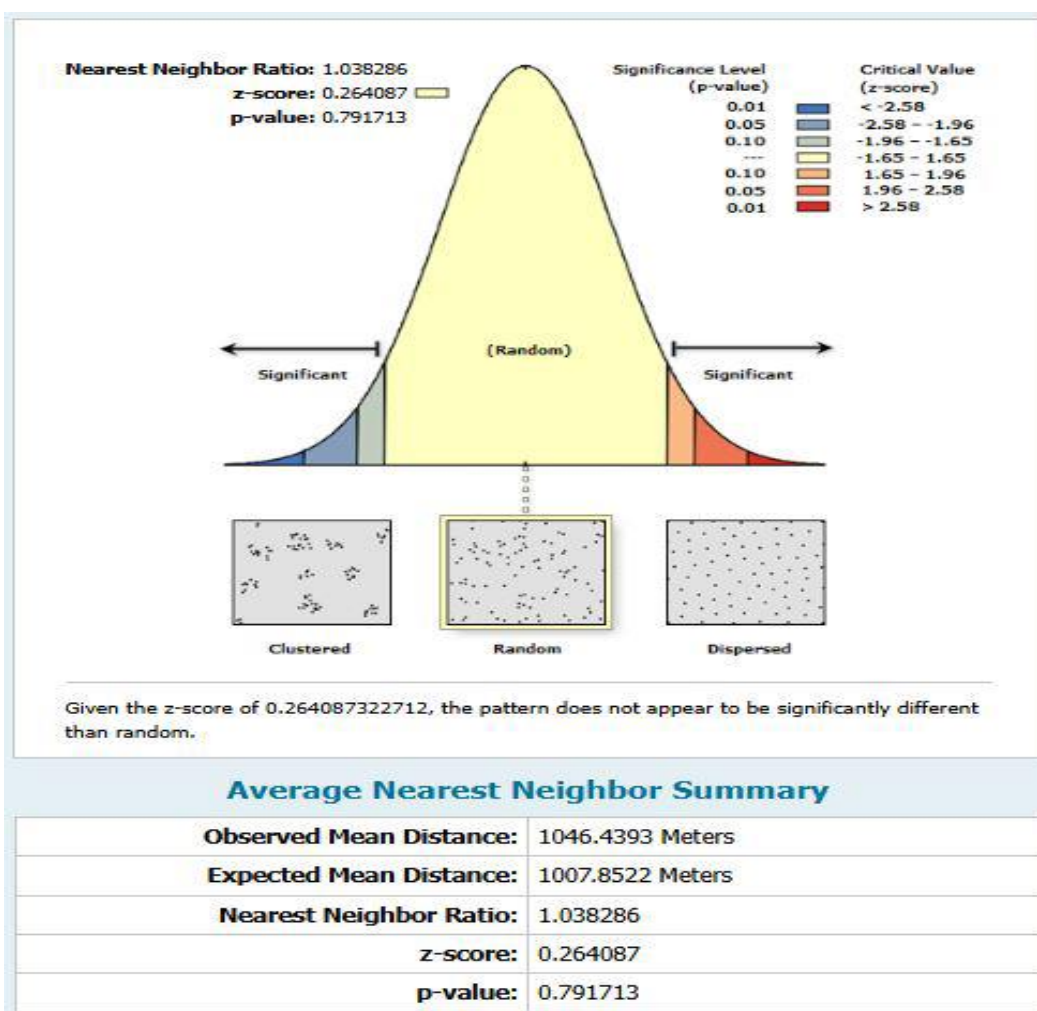


Figure 3: Spatial Pattern of Travel Agencies in Ilorin Metropolis

Functions of Travel Agencies

The types of services offered by travel agencies in Ilorin are listed in Table 3. Findings in Table 3 revealed that among the sampled travel agencies in Ilorin, three offer courier services, six provide

flight booking, and four organize package tours. This distribution shows that flight booking is the most widely available service, consistent with broader trends in Nigeria, where travel agencies primarily focus on airline ticketing, hotel reservations, visa assistance, and tour packages. These findings are supported by those of Abiola-Oke & Aina (2020), who observed that flight and hotel reservations are increasingly made online via email, telephone, and other internet services, streamlining the booking process and reducing delays in Nigeria. The presence of agencies offering package tours and courier services, though less common, further demonstrates the diversity of travel-related services available in Ilorin Metropolis, reflecting patterns reported in other Nigerian cities where agencies tailor their offerings to meet a variety of customer needs. The provision of package tours, which include prearranged itineraries and accommodations, is moderately common, while courier services are less widespread. These findings highlight the diversity of services offered by travel agencies in the study area, with flight booking being the most widely available, package tours moderately offered, and courier services less common. This suggests that most agencies in the area offer flight booking, tour packages, and courier services to cater to various customer needs.

Table 3: Types of services offered

Types of Services	Category of Services	Number of Travel Agencies Involved
Courier Services	Auxiliary/support	3
Flight Booking	Core/primary	6
Package tours	Value-added/Sales	4
Total		13

Source: Author's Field Survey (2024)

The distribution of services rendered by travel agencies in the study area is shown in Figure 4. Flight booking is the most prominent service, accounting for 20% of total offerings, followed by international study packages at 15%. Visa purchase and hotel accommodation each represent 12%, while tour guide services and both Hajj and Umrah arrangements individually make up 10%. Vacation services constitute 5%, whereas passengers' transportation, passport procurement, and logistics services are the least common, each comprising 2% of the total. This hierarchy of services reflects the focus of Ilorin Metropolis travel agencies on facilitating air travel and international study opportunities, with support for religious pilgrimage and tourism also being significant. The limited provision of passenger transport, passports, and logistics services suggests these are niche or supplementary offerings. These findings align with the research of Pinto & Castro (2019 and Singh et al. (2018), who emphasize that travel agencies enhance convenience and customization in tourism products, driving demand for local suppliers involved in tour packaging and courier services, thereby generating employment opportunities. Overall, the service profile of Ilorin Metropolis's travel agencies mirrors broader Nigerian trends, highlighting their role in meeting diverse travel needs through a mix of core, value-added, and auxiliary services.

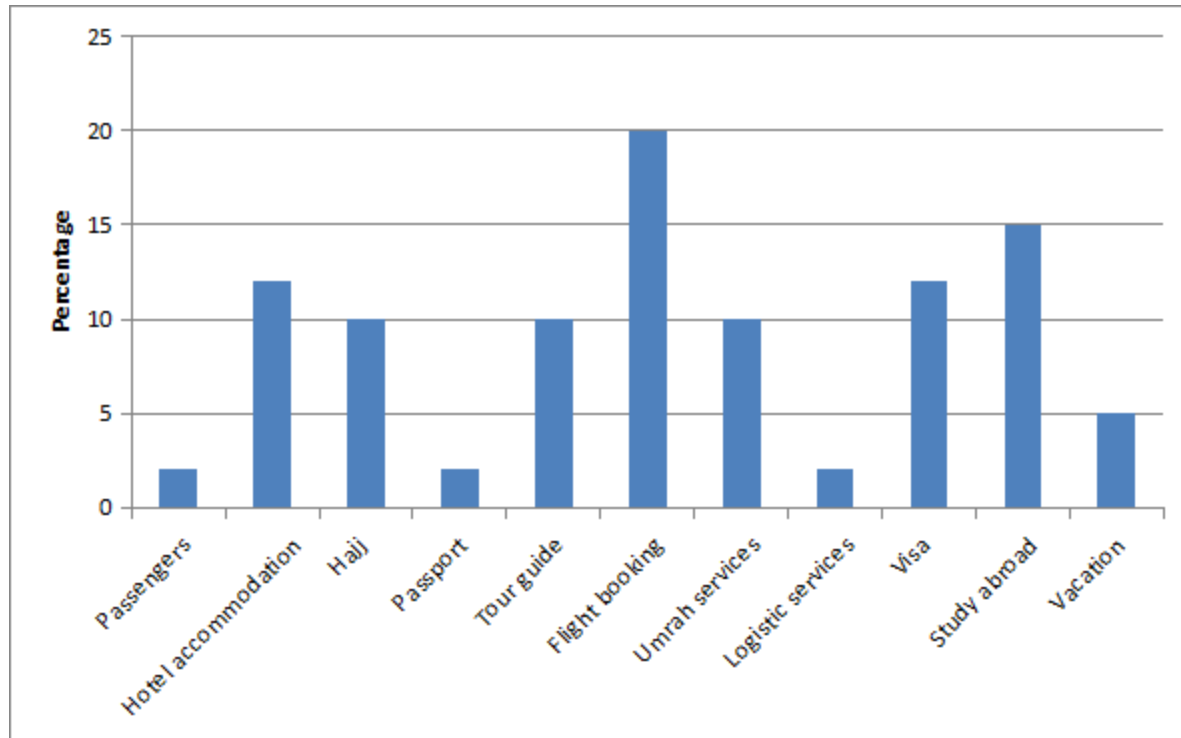


Figure 4: Main services provided by travel agencies in Ilorin Metropolis

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Patronage Frequency of the Travel Agencies

The findings of Table 4 revealed a varied pattern in the patronage of travel agencies in Ilorin Metropolis. According to Table 4, 24% of respondents patronize travel agencies weekly, 20% monthly, 18% quarterly, 7% fortnightly, and 33% yearly, while 8% do not use these services at all. The highest proportion of yearly patronage suggests that many clients engage travel agencies for annual events, likely religious tourism such as Hajj or Umrah, which is consistent with the services offered by local agencies specializing in religious and pilgrimage travel. Most people become aware of these agencies through word of mouth or their online presence, reflecting the importance of personal recommendations and digital marketing in attracting customers. This pattern aligns with Corluka (2019), who found that travel agency patronage peaks during annual or seasonal vacations, influenced by holidays, cultural events, and social factors. The diverse frequency of use also highlights the agencies' ability to cater to different travel needs, from regular business trips to occasional leisure or religious journeys.

Table 4: Patronage Pattern of the Travel Agencies

Patronage	Frequency	Percentage
Weekly	12	24
Fortnightly	2	7
Monthly	10	20
Quarterly	9	18
Yearly	16	33

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Impacts of Travel Agencies on Tourism Development

Travel agencies significantly impact tourism development through various channels, with flight bookings ranked highest (mean = 4.873), as shown in Table 5, underscoring their crucial role in facilitating travel and increasing tourist arrivals. Package tours (mean = 4.518) and cargo services (mean = 4.424) further support the industry by offering comprehensive travel solutions and logistical support, which enhance the overall tourist experience and convenience. Agencies also contribute to local economies by generating income (mean = 4.371) and revenue (mean = 4.325). The multiplier effect (mean = 4.336) highlights their broader economic influence through job creation and increased demand for local goods and services. Infrastructure development (mean = 4.312) is another notable impact, as the presence of travel agencies often stimulates investment in hotels, transport, and related facilities. In Ilorin Metropolis, these contributions could have fostered a more vibrant tourism sector by attracting diverse visitors and encouraging local entrepreneurship, thereby reinforcing the city's position as a growing tourism hub. This finding is supported by Amos & Osuagwu (2023), who highlight that travel agencies in Nigeria create significant employment opportunities, positively impacting the growth and sustainability of the travel industry. Thus, the study area benefits from enhanced economic activities and improved infrastructure directly linked to the operations of travel agencies, which catalyze broader tourism development. Collectively, these effects confirm that travel agencies play a vital role in driving tourism growth, promoting economic development, and enhancing infrastructure in their destinations.

Table 5: Impacts of Travel Agencies

Effects of Travel Agencies	Mean	Rank
Multiplier Effect	4.336	5
Revenue	4. 325	6
Income	4.371	4
Package Tours	4.518	2
Infrastructure development	4.312	7
Cargo Services	4. 424	3
Flight Bookings	4.873	1

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2024)

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study of travel agencies in Ilorin revealed that their clientele is predominantly male, aged 35-54 years, and largely tertiary-educated, reflecting a demographic with financial stability and a preference for professional travel services, particularly in emerging destinations such as the Ilorin Metropolis. The client base primarily consists of civil servants and students, indicating a demand for both official and leisure travel. Income disparities among clients create a bifurcated market, where agencies must balance affordability and quality, a common challenge in Nigerian tourism. The relatively low participation of self-employed individuals highlights an opportunity for agencies to expand services to informal sector workers, promoting inclusivity and economic growth. Geographically, most agencies are located in Ilorin West, the commercial and industrial center, aligning with urban economic patterns. However, spatial analysis reveals that this distribution is statistically random, suggesting that factors such as business strategy and market demand influence the choice of locations. Service offerings are diverse, but primarily focused on flight bookings, international study packages, visa assistance, and religious pilgrimages, reflecting local and national

travel trends. Patronage frequency varies, with many clients engaging agencies annually, likely due to religious tourism such as the Hajj and the Umrah.

Given these findings, two recommendations emerge: first, travel agencies should diversify and customize their services to serve better underrepresented groups, such as self-employed individuals and informal sector workers, thereby enhancing market and economic benefits. Second, policymakers and urban planners should support the development of integrated transport and commercial hubs beyond Ilorin West to encourage more balanced spatial distribution, improve access, and reduce market saturation risks. These measures would strengthen the travel industry's role in Ilorin's socio-economic development and tourism growth.

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