WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND POACHING IN OLD OYO NATIONAL PARK, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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ABSTRACT

Excessive hunting and the possible extinction of wildlife have led to conservation policies globally. In Nigeria, Old Oyo National Park (OONP) is one of the wildlife conservation areas designated by the Federal Government. Despite its status as a conservation area, poaching remains a major threat. Literature has focused more on the positive implications of conservation and activities of international poaching gangs but, there is limited knowledge on local interpretations of conservation and the local poaching networks. This study, therefore, was designed to examine the political economy of wildlife conservation, local interpretations of poaching, the network and organisation of poachers, animal-specific poaching preference and the marketing processes of poached animals in the Old Oyo National Park.

Theory of Political Economy of Wildlife Extraction was used, while the exploratory research design was adopted. Three OONP ranges with high poaching activities – Marguba, Sepeteri and Yemoso – were purposively selected. Secondary data were sourced from OONP annual reports (2007 to 2017). In each range, data were collected from Key Informants: traditional rulers (3), Range heads (3), park rangers (3), poachers' leaders (3) and Interviewees: traditional chiefs (4), *bushmeat* vendors (4), hunter-poachers (8) and National Park Officials (4). Six Focus group discussions comprising two sessions in each range were conducted among youth hunter-poachers, adult hunter-poachers and members of the community from November, 2016 to April, 2017. Six case studies were conducted with hunter-poachers within the same period. Data were content analysed.

Government conservation policy alienated the indigenous population from legally accessing wildlife resources in the park. The sum of ₦65, 571,378.00 accrued to the government from 2007 to 2017 but no direct benefit was extended to the indigenous population. Interpreting the ban on hunting as marginalisation and exploitation, the local population poached to assert their right of access to the park in deliberate rebellion to the government. They perceived that the government and park officials value wildlife more than the lives, livelihood, survival and aspirations of the locals. The local poaching networks included hunter-poachers, *bushmeat* sellers (middlemen, retailers and caterers), charm makers and local medicine men in near and distant communities. The poachers network in groups of three to six and use nicknames, slangs, whistling, tree marking, plant bending and tree hitting as symbolic communication codes. They mostly poached animals for food and therapeutic reasons including Pangolin (*Akika)*, Python (*Olúfà*), Maxwell duiker (*Ẹtù)*, Porcupine (*Òorè),* Roan antelope *(Mọ̀sià*), African civeat wildcat (*Ẹtà),* Bushbuck (*Ìgalà*), Oribi (*Èkùlù)*, Waterbuck (*Òtòlò*), Crocodile (*Òni)* and Kob (*Egbin).* The marketing processes of the poached animals were 'underground' as poachers sold to *bushmeat* vendors who smoked the poached animals and ensure that they were well preserved before smuggling or selling them to vendors, retailers, chopbars and Nigerians in Diaspora.

Poaching persisted in Old Oyo National Park because the indigenous population were alienated and view the Park as the custodian of wildlife which provides livelihood for the local communities. Government conservation policy requires the reinstatement of local inhabitants as the custodians of wildlife.

Keywords: Wildlife conservation, Poaching in Old Oyo National Park, *Bushmeat*

Word count: 490

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this research was carried out by Mr. Isaiah Oladoye OJO with Matriculation number **106631** in the Department of Sociology, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated first of all to the Almighty God for His protection, favour and grace. I also dedicate this to my late father (best dad), Late Chief James Oladejo Ojo.

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Isaiah Oladoye OJO

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Over the past 150 years, wildlife conservation has attracted global scholarly and policy attentions (Lindsey, Roulet and Romanache, 2007; Yasuda, 2012; Ingram, 2014). In spite of the considerable achievements made over the years in conservation efforts, poaching of wildlife resources remains a major concern in wildlife conservation scholarship and practice (Eliason, 2008; Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011; Ayling, 2013). Described as animal cruelty, or portrayed as revolt against oppressive laws, poaching is a global concern in wildlife conservation (Manel, Berthier and Luikart. 2002; Gavin, Solomon and Blank, 2010; Kaczensky *et al*. 2011). Research has shown that the covert, and often community approved nature of poaching, implies that it has often gone undetected especially in the Third World countries (Thompson, 1975; Eliason, 2008; Crow, Shelley and Stretesky, 2013). Of greater concern is the report that public support for poaching is increasing in socio-political settings where conservation policy is seen as unfair, and hence not generally accepted (von Essen *et al*., 2014). As a result, poaching is widespread (especially in the developing countries), relatively unstigmatised, differentially handled by the law, and lacks a human victim. Therefore, it is sometimes conceptualized as "folk crime" or non-criminal among local people (Forsyth, Gramling and Wooddell, 1998; Muth, 1998).

The Oke-ogun and Oyo-ile forest reserves were upgraded from game reserve to National park in 1991 by decree Number 36 (Ejike and Ajayi, 2013) as a wildlife reserve area where no human activity like farming, fishing and hunting is allowed (Ige, 2013). Despite its status as a conservation area, poaching remains a major activity in the Old Oyo National Park (Adetoro, Oyeleye and Ijeomah, 2011; Oladeji, Agbelusi and Ajiboye, 2012). This trend is similar to what is happening in some African countries, where poaching threatens the conservation of wild animals (Fa and Brown 2009; Standley and Emslie, 2013). The persistence of poaching at the Old Oyo National Park, in spite of its conservationist status, is an indication that it is an organised venture with deep sociological inclination (Agnew *et*

al. 2009; Jenks, Howard and Leimgruber, 2012). This study, therefore, examined wildlife conservation and poaching in Old Oyo National Park with the aim of unraveling its (poaching) context, structure and the human social systems in the process of conservation policy-making at the Old Oyo National Park.

In contemporary Africa, Lemieux and Clarke (2009) argue that poaching is a set of behaviours that goes beyond just hunting for food. It encompasses theft of endangered animals; killing wild animals in their protected habitat to supply the substances or materials being used in Asian local herbs/medications; and procuring animals for pharmaceutical companies abroad (Anderson and Jooste, 2014). In countries such as Kenya, Gabon and Mozanbique, poaching is a minor offence which attracts relatively small fines (Anderson and Jooste, 2014). The dimension of poaching in some African countries is so fatal that dozens of park workers are being killed by poachers annually in the Congo, Kenya and Chad (Anderson and Jooste, 2014). In fact, efforts to arrest poachers or impound animals they secretly hunt sometimes lead to violence (Lemieux and Clarke, 2009).

In Nigeria, wild animals are regarded as public properties and, therefore, subjected to a situation whereby every interested individual seeks to harvest these public properties before the other (Nigeria Fifth National Biodiversity Report, 2014). For instance, birds such as vultures are usually killed and used by the local medicine men in traditional medicine, while numerous African Grey Parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*), are captured and smuggled to Asian and Mediterranean markets for the purpose of local herbs/medications (Nigeria Fifth National Biodiversity Report, 2014). Poaching of all kinds of animals occurs all year round, and most of the hunters have no consideration for the sex, age or reproductive condition of their targets. Poaching is also a big challenge to many of all artiodactylas, apes, rhinoceroses and elephants in the country, as the demand for ivory for use in making traditional medicine in Asia is increasing and elephants are on the verge of extinction (Nigeria Fifth National Biodiversity Report, 2014).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The site of the Old Oyo Empire of the 17th and 18th centuries shielded two great forest reserves in Oke-ogun and Oyo-ile areas which were later upgraded to the Old Oyo National Park (Emelike, 2014). The idea is to preserve the historical remnants of the Old Oyo

Empire (which contribute to the attraction of adventurous and leisure minded tourists), to connect to the great culture of the people around the park (Emelike, 2014), and to ensure that wild animals alongside their natural habitats are preserved for present and future generations.

Unfortunately, the readily available market for wild animals and their body parts has turned out to be a bane of wildlife conservation (Milliken and Shaw, 2012), as it appears to be playing a crucial role in encouraging poaching in the local communities. Also, the demand from richer communities has proved to be a crucial motivation for poaching wild animals (Stiles, 2011). Wealthy nations remain major legitimate and illegitimate recipients of wild animals and their parts (Milliken, Emslie and Talukdar, 2009; Nguyen and Nguyen, 2008). Similarly, the availability of poached game in international markets reveals that several professional poachers have access to unguarded hunting areas, and that crime rings smuggle game through a sophisticated network to markets outside their (poachers) countries (Milliken and Shaw, 2012). As a corollary, poaching activities in the Old Oyo National Park may not be unconnected with the organised network of wildlife traffickers.

The Old Oyo National Park is an area of delineated land by the government and the local inhabitants are prohibited from hunting on their ancestral hunting ground. Hunting within the park is therefore regarded as poaching with implications for traditional hunting practices in adjoining communities. Thus, whereas the state views poaching as a criminal offence, local inhabitants simply see it as hunting. This has led to disjunction between official regulations and the local interpretation of hunting and or poaching in Old Oyo National Park. The complexity of networks involved in wildlife poaching can be connected to local inhabitants, professional hunters, traders, wholesalers and retailers with final consumers of wild animals, in near and distant locations from the source of the poached animals (Duffy and St John, 2013). What are not known about the organisation of poachers, however, are the way they network and the pattern of relationship that exists among them, on one hand, and the park rangers on the other hand, especially from the point of meeting to the point of trapping, killing and selling of wild animals. This is important because poachers need networking, particularly as it relates to information gathering on park rangers, vulnerable and escape routes, potential buyers and the species

of wild animals needed. This exercise suggests the need for a deeper understanding of the networking process involved in poaching phenomenon in the Old Oyo National Park.

The norms of the communities around the Old Oyo National Park are perhaps in conflict with the legal prescriptions and this might have engendered activities that are against the conservation policy but not considered harmful by the communities, hence, making the local inhabitants to continually poach in order to perpetuate the long standing and inherited tradition of hunting. This underscores the raging contest between the tradition (hunting) and legal prescriptions (social change). Beyond the respective studies on conservation, it should be noted that wildlife hunting is deeply rooted in a 'web of meanings', this includes the interpretations and misinterpretations of poaching between the state and the local communities, which often generates conflict and obstruct development. Through these meanings attached to wildlife hunting, the local communities shape and reshape the wildlife conservation system. Against this background and beyond the respective studies that have been carried out on conservation, this study examined the poaching context, structure and the human social systems in the process of conservation policy making at the Old Oyo National Park.

1.3 Research Questions

The study brings to sharp focus the following important questions:

1. What are the local concerns and interpretations on poaching?
2. How is poaching network organised in the Old Oyo National Park?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine wildlife conservation and poaching in the Old Oyo National Park, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Probe the political economy of wildlife conservation at Old Oyo National Park.
2. Examine local interpretations of poaching in the adjoining communities of the Old Oyo National Park.
3. Investigate the network and organisation of poachers in the Old Oyo National Park.
4. Probe the animal-specific poaching preference in the Old Oyo National Park.

5. Find out the marketing processes of poached animals in the Old Oyo National Park.

1.5 Justification of the study

Most research works reviewed have widely focused on conservation issues, and the examination of the various policies and approaches to address the challenges (Eliason, 2008; Ayling 2013; and von Essen *et al*., 2014). Others reveal the devolution of wildlife conservation power and resources in local communities (Shackleton *et al.,* 2002; Udeagha, Uluocha and Shomkegh, 2016). Despite the policy and numerous studies carried out, poaching remains a phenomenal activity. Poaching is a huge threat to wildlife conservation (Groff and Axelrod, 2013). It involves the intimidation and killing of park workers and poachers alike (Douglas and Alie, 2014). Given the central position local hunting occupies in the livelihood of rural households and in the economy, the lack of understanding of the concerns of rural inhabitants and interpretation on poaching can lead to the overrating assumptions that the hunting regulations are generally acceptable to the indigenes.

The study enhances scholars' understanding on the power relations and the principle of domination and subordination inherent in the conservation of wildlife resources, and in the process of conservation policy-making. Generally, wildlife products stir social conflict and, by so doing, impede development, security, and peace (Douglas and Alie, 2014). As a corollary, the study provides deep insights to understanding conflict as a social problem in the research sites and helps to provide helpful hints for human security and development.
The research unearths the web of meanings in wildlife hunting and the structure of poaching as well as its organization. This will assist the policymakers in decision making on how to curb poaching.

Apparently, one of the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals is to ensure that countries incorporate into their policies, the sustainable management of wildlife resources and halt biodiversity loss. Consequently, this study serves as the basis for suitable formulation of policy and practice in sustainable conservation and management of wildlife resources. Finally, insights from this study advance the existing body of knowledge on wildlife conservation in scholarship.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study is limited in scope to a thorough examination of wildlife conservation and poaching in the Old Oyo National Park, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study was restricted to Marguba Range, Sepeteri, Sepeteri Range, Igboho and Yemoso Range, Ikoyi, out of the five ranges of the Old Oyo National Park because of their richness in flora and fauna, the large concentration of hunters in these ranges, the noticeable complaints about poaching activities and its effects, and the incessant incidents of conflicts in these ranges which often result in the death of park officials and indigenes.

1.7 Conceptual Clarifications

Wildlife: refers to wild fauna or various birds which have their habitat in uncultivated areas in Nigeria (National Park Service Act, 1999). The meaning of wildlife comprises all living organisms out of the direct control of man, and untamed reptiles, amphibians, birds, and mammals (Yarrow, 2009).

Conservation: refers to the protection and maintenance of natural resources in an attempt to ensure their ecologically sustainable use (National Park Service Act, 1999).

Wildlife Conservation: This is a practice which attempts to protect all wildlife species, reptiles, amphibians and bird species, along with their habitats in order to ensure that they are available for present and future generations to enjoy.

Poaching: This refers to an act that deliberately breaches the rules and regulations put in place to preserve wild animal species (Muth and Bowe, 1998). It is the illegal hunting, capturing and possessing of wildlife (Manel *et al.,* 2002).

Buffer Zone: This refers to an area, usually bordering a protected area, managed with the intention of promoting the favourable and reducing the unfavourable sides of conservation on local communities and local communities on conservation (Wild and Mutebi, 1996).

Game Reserve: This refers to a protected area with appreciable population of wild animals under the control of state government, and where hunting is allowed.

National Park: This is a defined area of land designed, managed and controlled by the federal government to preserve, protect and conserve its flora and fauna and their habitat (National Park Service Act, 1999).

Hunting: is the killing or capturing of wild animals for subsistence or commercial purpose (Nazi *et al*., 2008).

Hunter: is an individual who hunts for wild animals within the free zone.

Poacher: is a person who deliberately breaches the rules and regulations put in place to preserve wild animal species.

Park warden: is the law enforcement personnel who have been saddled with the responsibility of enforcing conservation laws that protect wildlife resources (Eliason, 2013).

Political Economy: is the interplay between economics, sociology, law and politics, and the relationship between political establishments and milieus, and the economic structure (capitalism, socialism, or a mixed system) and their impact on one another (Weingast and Donald, 2008). Political economy involves the role of government in the distribution of resources for each type of economic system (Brandt and Thomas, 2008; Helsley, 2008). Political economy explains the process leading to the creation of public policy and its implementation (Gibson, 1999).

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The literature review consists of a critical interrogation of relevant research and other literature on wildlife conservation and poaching**.** The concept behind this is to keep readers and scholars updated with the current literature on the endangered species, global trends in wildlife conservation and poaching, wildlife conservation and poaching in Africa, and poaching structure, network and marketing.

2.1 The Endangered Species

Endangered species are animals which have been classified by the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as being at risk (in danger) of extinction throughout all or a significant part of their range (Vucetich, Nelson and Philips, 2006). The formal standard is that wild animal species is included on one or more official lists, such as the IUCN Red List, the CITES Appendix, or the USA-ESA Endangered species list, and the species that are endangered are usually included on all three lists (Lemieux and Clarke, 2009; Vucetich *et al.*, 2006). Although wild animal species may be recognized by the official standard that they are endangered, conservation strategy cannot rely on these official standard and positive intentions alone (Bulte and van Kooten, 2001). Instead, official regulation or protection on paper needs to be complemented with state action, including prudent management and enforcement, that is, action to prevent poaching (Bulte and van Kooten, 2001). The legal trade in ivory which has been banned since 1989 has not stopped the poaching of African elephants *(Loxodonta africana*) (Bulte and van Kooten, 1999a). The same goes for rhinoceros horn whose legal trade has been banned since 1977, but poachers' escapades continue to threaten the survival of black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) in Africa (Brown and Layton, 2001).

In fact, the impact of poaching on species endangerment cannot be over-emphasised. Currently, about 162 species of mammals and 181 of birds are severely endangered and

may no longer exist in the forest (IUCN, 2006). Also, out of 484 animal species whose endangerment has been acknowledged since 1600, approximately 80 have gone into extinction due to overexploitation and poaching (World Conservation Monitoring Centre, 1992). Numerous species have been assigned special status as being endangered so as to protect and boost their population (Bulte and van Kooten, 2001). Some of the endangered species include (Bulte and van Kooten, 2001) but not limited to the following: Elephants, Rhinoceros, Birds, Gray snub-nosed monkey, Scandinavian wolverine, Gazelle, Leatherback turtles, Sea turtles, Scarlet macaw, Hawks, Eagles, Giant Pandas, Snow Leopards, Parrots, Huemul Deer, Asiatic Black Beers, Tiger and North American Black Beers (Naughton, 1992; Lee, 1996; Yiming et al, 2003; Raloff, 2005; Al-Lamki, Massolo and Spalton, 2008; Wyatt, 2009; Xiang *et al*., 2009; Ericsson, Persson and Segerstrom, 2009; Corti, Wittmer and Fiesta-Bianchet, 2010; Pastor, 2010; Pires and Clarke, 2011; Wyler and Sheikh, 2013).

Less than 1 percent of 5-10 million African elephants that existed in the 1930s remains, due to poaching (CITES, 2013). Also, out of dozens of species of rhinoceros that once existed worldwide, only 5 now exist, namely: the Sumatran rhino (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis),* the Javan rhino *(Rhinoceros sondaicus),* and the Indian rhino *(Rhinoceros unicornis)* the Black rhino *(Diceros bicornis)* and the White rhino *(Ceratotherium simum*) (Wyler and Sheikh, 2013). The elephant is one of the animal species that are facing endangerment as a result of poaching (Pastor, 2010). Often, Elephants are poached because of the cherished ivory and its trade that is more profitable and rising, with prices of ivory appreciating annually (Pastor, 2010). Arctander *et al.* (2008) reported that poaching activities which occurred in the 1970s to the 1980s have led to a decrease in the elephant population; and that over 80% of the elephant population was poached in less than a decade.

It should be noted, however, that many more species move into the category of endangered species by the actions of poachers. According to Xiang *et al.* (2009) the killing of wild animal species by offenders is a great challenge to the protection of endangered gray snub-nosed monkey (*Rhinopithecus brelichi).* Also, Ericsson, Persson and Segerstrom (2009) contend that poaching is responsible for the reduction and mortality of the endangered

Scandinavian wolverine *(Gulo gulo).* Also, poaching activities were responsible for the decline of gazelle's population (Al-Lamki, Massolo and Spalton, 2008).

Leatherback turtles *(Dermochelys coriacea)* is equally affected by poaching, especially their eggs (Pastor, 2010). A study on turtles revealed the number of animals poached is higher than the ones that died through natural death in Las Baulas Marine National Park and this resulted to reduction in the population of turtles in the park (Pastor, 2010). In this light, the number of turtle will continually decline rapidly unless the war against egg poaching is won (Paladino *et al.*, 2008).

Also, the illegal hunting of sea turtles *(Chelonioidea*) for food in Baja California Sur, Mexico, poses a challenge to sea turtles' survival (Mancini *et al*, 2011). Sea turtles' exploitation, since 5000 BC, has been greatly influenced by poaching (Nichols, 2003), and despite the existence of standard laws (national and international) targeted at shielding sea turtles, poaching is still hazardous to the population of sea turtles across the world (Gardner and Nichols 2001; Mancini *et al*, 2011). People have been using Sea turtles since the early 1400s for local medicine, decoration and consumption (Mancini *et al,* 2011). Turtle meat is usually served at weddings, Christmas, Mother's Day, Sundays, and regularly at Easter (Nichols *et al*. 2003; Senko *et al.,* 2009). In folk medicine, the blood of turtles can be used as a remedy for anaemia and asthma, its oil can treat respiratory issues in children, and its internal organs are used in the preparation of some soups (Mack *et al.* 1982; Senko *et al.,* 2009). Regrettably, there is a decline in the number of the five species of sea turtles at Baja California Sur in Mexico, as a result of poaching (Gardner *et al.,* 2001; Nichols 2003; Koch *et al.,* 2006).

Equally, in a study carried out by Dear, Guittar and Vaughan (2009), which investigated the nesting areas of the scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*) in the Osa Peninsula Conservation area, it was discovered that poaching had occurred in 11 of the 57 nesting areas. These are just a few examples of birds facing the possibility of extinction as a result of poaching activities (Pastor, 2010). Pastor (2010) claims that in addition to the fact that non-existence of certain animal species is a loss on its own; it has overarching effects on the ecosystem.

Taking out species can have a major effect on animal population because there are numerous predators and prey animals that co-exist in a normal ecosystem, and this implies that the disruption in a system will seriously affect their environment (Pastor, 2010). Undoubtedly, the illegal hunting and trafficking of games and their products have tremendous influence on the biosphere (Pastor, 2010).

Wyatt, (2009) described hawks and eagles as the birds that are useful in leisure hunting, which is also known as falconry/hawking. Hawks and Eagles are both endangered and their marketing is being controlled by CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) (Mishra *et al*., 2003;Wyatt, 2009).

Giant pandas *(Ailuropoda melanoleuca)* are usually poached for their skins and skull or captured for the imperial hunting park, and this remains a serious threat to the survival of wild giant panda populations in China (Zhu and Long, 1983; MOF and WWF, 1989). The giant panda (Ailuropoda melanoleuca) is an endangered and important species for conservation in China (Yiming *et al*, 2003). The challenges facing giant panda include capturing for zoos (Hu, 1998), and poaching (Hu, 1998; Li *et al*., 2000).

Similarly, the Snow Leopard *(Uncia uncia)* which exists in the high mountains of south and central Asia, with a confirmed presence covering twelve countries of Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, China, Uzebekistan, Kyrgyztan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, India and Myanmar (Mishra *et al.,* 2003) continues to be at risk. Moreover, it has been categorised as endangered in the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red Data Book and listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) (Mishra *et al.,* 2003). The reduction of wild prey due to poaching poses an indirect threat to south and central Asia region's snow leopard and other carnivores (Mishra *et al*., 2003). Pires and Clarke (2011) also claim that poaching is significantly responsible for the endangerment of protected parrots in Mexico. Likewise, the Huemul *(Hippocamelus bisulcus)* is an endangered South American deer, which is mostly found in Andean forests of southern Chile and Argentina (Corti, Wittmer and Fiesta-Bianchet, 2010). The decline in its distribution and abundance has been attributed to excessive and illegal hunting (Frid, 2001; Povilitis, 1998).

Equivalently, the populations of Asiatic black bears have dwindled to 15,000 animals throughout Asia; and they are protected and labelled as endangered (Raloff, 2005). The trafficking of bear parts is mostly accountable for this decline, and it is challenged by extinction (Philips and Wilson, 2002). A particular element in bear ursodeoxycholic acid has some effect against autoimmune hepatitis, viral hepatitis, and other liver diseases (Call, 2006). Likewise, the bile agent is also believed to improve immunity and guard against colon cancer; and prices for bile and gallbladders are encouraging as the two can fetch $10,000 each (Raloff, 2005). These explain the motive behind the desperate need to poach black bears and the cause of their endangerment.

In the early 20th Century, almost 100,000 wild tigers existed on earth (Naughton, 1992). But presently, the population of tiger has dwindled to between 5,000 and 7,000 across the world (Lee, 1996). According to Day (1994, in Lee, 1996), Russia lost 25% of its tiger population in 1994. Besides, three different breeds of tigers - the Caspian, Balinese, and Javan -- have gone into extinction, while other breeds such as the South China Tiger and Siberian Tiger are under the threat of extinction (Naughton, 1992 in Lee, 1996). The tigers are poached for their products and organs which serve as ingredients in local medicines; and its bones are utilised in producing tonics and balms to calm rheumatic pain and to treat many diseases in China and Hong Kong (Lee, 1996). Also, tiger penises mixed with wine are used to increase sexual virility and help treat impotence (Lee, 1996). In Taiwan, for instance, tiger penis soup costs as much as $320 a bowl, while a bottle of wine containing 10 grams of powdered tiger bones costs almost $10 (Lee, 1996). Claws and hides of tigers are highly demanded in South Korea, Japan, and Yemen (Allen, 1994 in Lee, 1996). As a result, the Asiatic tigers are threatened with extinction because of high demand for different tiger parts which has led to poaching and illegal trade of this species (Lee, 1996).

The American black bear is not under dangerous consequences as tigers because the total population of American black bear runs from 150,000 to 250,000 (Lee, 1996). Substantial number of black bears exists in at least forty-one states in the United States, and numerous bears are often seen in areas that are not meant for bear populations (Rappaport, 1993 in Lee, 1996). However, poachers and international traffickers now concentrates on North American continent (Lee, 1996) because of the relatively healthy population of the

American bears and similarity in appearance and behaviour to Asiatic bears (Hanback, 1992) and because all the five of Asia's bear species are on the brink of extinction (Lee, 1996). In the light of this, the American black bears may be at risk of endangerment (Lee, 1996; Williamson, 2002).

The urge to hunt for bear is not far-fetched. It is used for many medicinal and culinary purposes while bear meat and paws are regarded as delicacies that strengthen the body and soul (Hanback, 1992). The bear flesh is regarded as being very refreshing and reinvigorating, prevents cold and detoxifies human body (Lee, 1996). In Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan,the bear paw soup is fast becoming the preferred dish of rich restaurant patrons (Hanback, 1992). Also, the gall's bile has medicinal qualities and is highly valued because it presumably cures blood disorders, heart and liver ailments, nausea, hemorrhoids, and impotence; and the dried and pounded gall bladders are prescribed for abdominal pains as well as for high blood pressure and fevers (Hanback, 1992). Since the vulnerability of American black bears has not worsened to the level of tigers, there has not been any strong clamour by international groups to stop the trade of bear body parts, but the U.S. Fishing and Wildlife Service estimates that while 40,000 American black bears are legitimately killed each year in the United States of America, about 20,000 to 40,000 are killed illegitimately (Lee, 1996).

The most endangered animals in Africa are Riverine rabbit *(Bunolagus monticularis),* Ethiopian wolf *(Canis simensis),* Black rhinoceros *(Diceros bicornis),* Grevy's zebra *(Equus grevyi),* African Wild dog *(Lycaon pictus),* Mountain gorilla *(Gorilla beringei beringei),* Rothschild's giraffe *(Giraffa camelopardalis rothschildi),* Chimpanzee *(Pan troglodytes)*, African penguin *(Spheniscus demersus)* and White rhinoceros *(Ceratotherium simum)* (Davies, 2015). Dorcas gazelle *(Gazella dorcas)* is another endangered mammalian species in North Africa and their populations have been severely reduced due to overhunting (Godinho *et al.,* 2012). Other species listed as endangered in Nigeria by (Control of International trade and Traffic) Decree 11 of 1985 and the Control of International trade in Endangered Species (CITES) are Colobus monkey *(Colobus sp),* spotted hyena *(Crocuta crocuta),* Red patas monkey *(Erythrocebus patas),* Wild cat *(Felis silvestris),* Gorrila *(Gorrila gorilla),* Slender mongoose *(Herpestes sanguineus),* Roan

antelope *(Hippotragus equinus),* Serval *(Leptailurus serval),* Elephant *(Loxodonta africana),* White bellied pangolin *(Manis tricuspi*s), Lion *(Panthera leo),* Leopard *(Panthera pardus),* Chimpanzee *(Pan troglodytes),* Vulture *(Necrosyrtes monachus),* Parrot *(Psittacus erithacus),* owl *(Tyto alba),* Chameleon (*Chameleon senegalensis*), Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus),* Python (*Python sebae*) and Monitor *(Varanus niloticus)* (Soewu, 2008).

Among the Yoruba of South western Nigeria, animals such as Elephant *(Loxodonta africana)*, Roan antelope *(Hippotragus equinus)*, Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus)*, Gorilla *(Gorrila gorilla)*, Colobus monkey *(Colobus sp)*, Chimpanzee *(Pan troglodytes),* Leopard *(Panthera pardus)*, Vulture *(Necrosyrtes monachus)*, Chameleon (*Chameleon senegalensis*), Spotted hyena *(Crucuta crocuta)*, and Slender mongoose *(Galerella sanguinea)* are commonly used in traditional medicine and this has contributed to their endangerment (Soewu, 2008). For instance, Python, Elephant, Roan antelope and Crocodile body parts are used to treat rheumatism while Gorilla, Colobus monkey, Chimpanzee, Elephant and Roan antelope parts are used in treating bone fracture. Leopard, Vulture and Chameleon parts are used in protection against evil influences. Similarly, Chimpanzee, Pangolin, Vulture, Wild cat and Parrot body parts are used in boosting women's fertility. Gorilla, Pangolin, Crocodile, and Wild cats' male organs are used for men's potency.

Also, Chimpanzee, Python, Parrot, Vulture and Leopard parts are used to appease witches. Vulture, Columbus monkey, Slender mongoose, Python and Pangolin body parts are used in seeking marital partner (Soewu, 2008). The endangered species in the Old Oyo National Park include Elephant *(Loxodonta africana)*, Buffalo *(Syncerus caffer),* Bush buck *(Tragelaphus scriptus),* Water buck *(Kobus ellipsiprymus),* Maxwell Duiker *(Cephalophus maxwelli),* Green monkey *(Cercopithecus aethiops),* Red patas monkey *(Erythrocebus patas*), Oribi *(Ourebia ourebi),* Blue breasted king fisher *(Halcyon malimbica),* Grey hornbill *(Tockus nasutus),* Long crested hawk eagle *(Lophaetus occipitalis),* Glossy starling *(Lamprotormis chalcurus),* Laughing dove *(Streptopelia senegalensis),* Abyssinian Roller *(Coracias abyssinicus),* Senegal eremomela (*Eremomela pusilla*), African Jacana *(Actophilornis africana)* and Osprey *(Pandion haliaetus)* while Lion *(Panthera leo)* has already gone into extinction (Ayodele, 1988).

2.2 Global Trends in Wildlife Conservation and Poaching

Over the years, human factors have been the main reasons for dwindling wildlife. These factors include habitat destruction, excessive hunting and poaching (Soule, Wilcox and Holt, 1979; WCMC, 1992; IUCN, 2006), and they threaten many species (IUCN, 2006). Attempts made to halt these threats have concentrated on creation of parks or game reserves (Kideghesho, 2006). In contemporary times, 104,791 reserve sites which spread across 12.7% of the earth have been been established (Chape, Harrison and Lysenko, 2005). Most of the conservation efforts are targeting the tropics because of the noticeable effects of these threats on animal species in the tropics, where various wild animals are found. However, pressure on wild animals is still mounting as animals species face grave danger of being eradicated completely (Kideghesho, 2006).

In Europe, masses generally have a good inclination towards bears and their conservation, while some hunters and farmers appear to be the opposite (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). The Eastern Alps is a crucial location for several lively brown bears' (Ursus arctos) protection and recovery missions (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). Illegal killings threaten conservation of wild animals globally (Manel *et al.,* 2002). Literature abounds on poaching for financial gains (e.g., Milner-Gulland and Leader- Williams, 1992) and the avoidance of financial losses (e.g., Jackson and Wangchuk, 2004). Other reasons for poaching, especially from a non-financial angle are not well-known, and are less documented (Muth and Bowe, 1998; Eliason, 1999, 2003). In Europe, poaching is one of the factors that has contributed to the death of the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx)* (Breitenmoser *et al.*, 2010), the grey wolf *(Canis lupus;* Marucco *et al*. 2009), and the brown bear *(Ursus arctos)* (Ciucci and Boitani, 2008).

Evidently, in Europe, to sustain a certain level of hunting, whether legal or illegal, there is need for the protection of large animals (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). Intentions of poachers seem to be mainly fuelled by animosity toward large animals, which seem to be threat to self and property (Muth and Bowe, 1998), and resistance to rules enforced by a society from which certain groups feel marginalised (Skogen and Krange, 2003, Bell, Hampshire and Topalidou, 2007). Economic reasons alone do not inform the illegal killings of large animals in Europe because there is no evidence of large animals' body parts entering a wild animal market (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). Despite the fact that many countries in Europe

allow a legal harvest, illegal killings of big animals are still rampant (Andren *et al.,* 2006; Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). Also, wild animals are state properties and no one legally owns them (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011).

In Germany, a study of opposition on conserved areas indicates that there are solid psychological and social catalysts that divide wildlife conservationists and the locals into two defined factions, which are preserved by group bonding. Similarly, hunters usually rally round any of their members who hunt illegally, not because they support the act, but because they feel indicted as a group (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). In fact, hunters are always careful to discuss illegal hunting in public in order not to condemn them or the hunting activities, and they prefer to join forces in fighting illegal hunting that is detrimental to wildlife conservation (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). Furthermore, illegal killing of big animals is widespread in Europe but not as common as other forms of poaching (Bell *et al.,* 2007).

In Europe, few cases of poaching get to court with fewer being prosecuted. Also, despite wide coverage by the media, detailed information on poaching is largely limited to the media (Kaczensky *et al.,* 2011). Often time, efforts to detect and punish poachers are frustrated by legal and administrative issues (Ciucci *et al.*, 2008), inadequate capacity and training of state control body (Anderson, 1999), and a situation in which poaching is considered as minor, folk crime or non-criminals among the locals (Muth, 1998). Furthermore, the European model of wildlife conservation apportioned wildlife by land ownership and opportunity (Maning, 1993). The European model is a demonstration of class conflict between the aristocrats and the commoners, which frequently results in poaching as retaliation against the ruling class (Maning, 1993).

The North American Model of Wildlife Conservation holds that wildlife belongs to the masses, and not government, organisations or individuals (Geist, 2006). People own the wildlife and it is managed by the government for the people (Geist, 2006; 2014). Public access to wildlife enhances public support and cooperation, and makes available the financial support required to effectively manage wildlife resources **(**Pack *et al.*, 2013; Geist, 2006).

Generally, hunting does not affect the population of wild animals in North America because it is thoroughly regulated and supervised by the state wildlife agencies (Pack *et al.,* 2013). The citizens generally support wildlife conservation because many Canadians and Americans take part in hunting, bird watching and national park visitation (Park *et al,* 2013). The North American model of wildlife conservation can be described as "hunter pay", "hunter gain" system in which hunters and anglers support wildlife conservation financially (Pack *et al.,* 2013). In this view, American model is rated high because of its success and the annual generation of millions of dollars for conservation, improvement of local economies, enhancement of public interest in wildlife, and appreciable populations of wild animals (Geist, 2001).

In the United States of America, the clear contradiction of private ownership of land and public ownership of wildlife is managed by numerous administrative systems like cooperative wildlife management units, private game ranching, and fee hunting (Messmer *et al*., 1998). However, some of these systems have led to social polarisation which is disadvantaged to the poorest groups in the society (Messmer *et al.,* 1998). Wildlife conservation in some private wildlife management systems is designed to improve wildlife production systems as a function of demand and supply (Geist, 2001). In this view, exotic animal species are introduced, natural predators are destroyed, artificial selection and breeding are favoured over natural wildlife mating systems, land is privatised, and access to areas and resources that were previously public is restricted to the richest sectors of society (Messmer *et al.,* 1998). Almost every country faces modern poaching challenge, although different species or wildlife products are poached. According to Wyler and Sheikh, (2013), the U.S. government estimate on unlawful trade in poached wildlife products, including elephant ivory, rhino horns, and turtle shells worldwide, is valued at about $7 billion to $10 billion every year. In fact, modern tools such as helicopters, night-vision goggles, tranquillizer darts, and silenced heavy-caliber guns are used in poaching wild games (Wyler and Sheikh, 2013).

Conversely, the New Zealand system allows marketing of wild animals, which creates an opportunity to poach for gains and benefits (Geist, 1985). German wildlife history describes several bloody conflicts between poachers and wildlife guards, which calls for

well-armed and trained wildlife guards (Geist, 1985). The American model of national parks is practiced across the world; and the North American model of wildlife sanctuaries, ecological reserves, and many protected areas are second to none (Geist, 1985; Pack *et al.,* 2013). Similar discourses in the same trend reveal that plans to establish a wildlife system similar to the American wildlife system have received a huge support (Geist, 1985). Distribution of wildlife from the public sector to the private has resulted in loss of interest and participation in wildlife conservation in Norway (Geist, 1985).

In Asia, India's wildlife business is mostly operated by private and government agencies, and each functions distinctly (Sekhar, 2003). Private tourism operators claim that their quota to conservation can be seen in their approach to the prevention of poaching and the enforcement of wildlife preservation laws (Matthews, 2008). Since many Indians do not benefit financially from protected areas, some seek other means of exploiting wildlife, one of which is poaching **(**Pack, *et al.,* 2013). Although illegal hunting has been prohibited in India, it is still a common practice (Pack *et al.,* 2013). People hunt for cultural reasons, to access non-essential and/or luxury food supplements, and for smuggling (Aiyadurai *et al.* 2010; Velho *et al.* 2012). Hunting has already annihilated many species of Indian wildlife; hence, there is a need to safeguard these animals so as to ensure their survival (Karanth *et al.,* 2010). Communities which are close to guarded areas can have access to income from conservation (Sekhar, 2003; Karanth and DeFries, 2011).

In Africa, however, many park rangers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Kenya, Chad and other African countries are killed every year, with the support and involvement of 'insiders' that is local community members who ignores the activities of poachers, and this further frustrates wildlife conservation efforts (Anderson and Jooste, 2014; Milliken, 2014). Most poachers are not traffickers, and every wild animal that gets out of Africa's conserved areas end up with poachers' networks outside the continent (Milliken, 2014). The middlemen move the wild animal products across borders and launder associated revenues, while Mombasa and Dares Salaam are their main points of departure from Africa. On the other hand, wild animal traffickers use indirect routes or change their points of exit and entry in order to escape being detected (Anderson and Jooste, 2014). Generally, poaching networks continue to operate with little or no fear of

consequences, and in many battle-zone countries such as Gabon and Mozambique, wildlife poaching is a minor offence that attracts small fines (Herbig, 2010). Some countries, such as Zimbabwe, have laws against poaching but not trafficking, basically giving a free pass to the agents and high-level offenders who facilitate most of the deals (Haken, 2011**).** Local poaching networks that are based in rural environments may become stronger because they are supported in their activities by members of the community (Ayling, 2012).

Also, some organised crime syndicates are also suspected to be involved in the poaching of wild animals (Scanlon, 2012). Evidence abounds on the use of modern gadgets in killing wild animals (tranquilising drugs, modern heavy-calibre rifles, helicopters, night vision goggles, high-powered weapons, silencers and infrared sensors) (Humane Society International, 2011; Milliken and Shaw, 2012), which is far beyond the income and local knowledge of rural communities in Africa (Herbig, 2010; South and Wyatt, 2011). International poachers usually invade the local communities to obtain information on the whereabouts of certain species in a particular region. They try to find out some escape routes and to get acquainted with the security arrangement and the movement of park rangers for the success of their onslaught. Besides, they usually utilise full moon periods in order to see clearly at night (Milliken and Shaw, 2012). Despite the efforts on wildlife conservation by various countries across the world, poaching of wild animals still continues, and this is common in wildlife sanctuaries and national parks (Martin and Redford, 2000).

2.3 Wildlife Conservation and Poaching in Africa

In Africa, the establishment of protected areas is a crucial strategy for wildlife conservation, which stipulates that any member of the adjoining communities who dares to encroach or hunt any animal in the conservation areas becomes immediately labelled a "poacher" and pays a fine if caught (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006). This approach was suitably termed the "fines and fences approach" or "fortress conservation". In contemporary times, this approach is considered to have failed in its goals of conserving wildlife in the continent (Leader-Williams and Albon, 1988). As an alternative, integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs) have been adopted by some African countries and the project has been described as a leading example of a comprehensive

initiative trying to link conservation and development (Brandon and Wells, 1992). In sub-Saharan Africa, this approach is often designed to promote conservation by linking the controlled harvest of wildlife species in conservation areas to eradication of poaching (Kiss, 1990).

In Zimbabwe, efforts to conserve wildlife and to ensure that there is cooperation between local people and government workers in protected areas, Communal Area Management Program for Indigenous resources (CAMPFIRE), has endeavoured to promote the sustainability and the acceptable use of wild animals such as Roan antelope, kob, hartebeest, elephant and buffalo in order to help the locals in getting jobs and generating income (Kiss, 1990). The program offers a general model that is being emulated across Africa (Barrett and Arcese, 1995). Wildlife extractions are determined by ecologist of a non-governmental trust that consults with local inhabitants and receives parts of the income generated from the sales of wild animals' meat in order to earn their support and cooperation (Barrett and Arcese, 1995). These initiatives are welcome by rural inhabitants because they usually get job, benefits, and also because they are considered and involved in wildlife decision making and its extraction (Lewis, Kaweche and Mwenya, 1990). Also, the objectives of wildlife conservation will be achieved because local communities have realised the essence of maintaining appreciable wildlife population because they can get job and income from wildlife conservation and the marketing of wild animal products (Barrett and Arcese, 1995).

In Rwanda, the scarcity of land and unemployment has forced many Rwandans to augment their income by hunting in the gorillas preserve areas known as the Parc National Des Volcans (Hill, 1990). As a result, many gorillas were captured alive and sold to American and European Zoos, through the black market; and many were killed by trap set for antelopes and deer (Watts, 1998). Despite the policies and laws strictly prohibiting poaching, the gorillas were not safe from poachers (Hill, 1990). In Tanzania, poaching affects the population of wildlife in Serengeti National Park, and most of the poaching activities in the park and other game reserves are carried out at night so as to evade arrest (Knapp, 2012). The high rate of poaching activities in Africa is associated with the rise in the amount of horns and ivory sold; and it has also been projected that when there was

boom in the business of ivory and rhino horns in 1980s, poachers make more money compared to twelve years of doing other works (Messer, 2000). In a bid to address the growing international concern on poaching in the continent, CITES banned trade in rhinoceros horns and sales of elephants ivory in 1977 and 1989 respectively across the world; while this approach seems to have been effective, the population of rhinocerous, elephants and other species of wild animals has continued to decline due to poaching (Bulte and van Kooten, 1999a).

Poaching is generally rife in Africa. For example, there was 184 percent rise in the poaching of the white and black rhinoceros between 2008 and 2012 from 262 poached rhinoceros in 2008 to 745 in 2012 (Emslie, 2013). In the same vein, Standley and Emslie (2013) maintained that poaching continues to escalate in South Africa and Kenya. According to Wildlife and Conservation Statistics (no date), the world loses one or more species of animals to poaching every 20 minutes, translating to at least 27,000 species per year**.** Similarly, less than 1 percent of 5-10 million African elephants that existed in the 1930s remains, due to poaching (CITES, 2013). Also, the remaining of the African wild tigers that numbers as few as 3,200 are not safe from poaching (WWF, 2011). It has also been revealed that out of the scores of species of rhinoceros that once existed on earth, only 5 now exist, namely: the Sumatran rhino *(Dicerorhinus sumatrensis),* the Javan rhino *(Rhinoceros sondaicus),* the Indian rhino (Rhinoceros unicornis), the Black rhino *(Diceros bicornis)* and the White rhino *(Ceratotherium simum)* (Wyler and Sheikh, 2013).

Literature reveals that poaching is an organized, lucrative and a capital intensive business, with trafficking routes well established in even remote national parks and reserves where animals are trapped, killed and sold (Jenks *et al.,* 2012). Poaching of wild animals and the buying and selling of their products continue because they bring huge income to the perpetrators, and this income promotes more sales (Haken, 2011; Ayling, 2012). The sales of game and other wildlife products contribute to the financial gains of many rural areas, as it serves as a source of income for the locals whose sources of livelihoods are restricted (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997). Wildlife contributes to many household incomes via trade in bush meat, trophies, skins and hides, as well as the sale of other live animals and craftwork, based on wild animal products (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997; Nasi *et al.,* 2008, Enuoh and Bisong,

2014). It is suggested that trade in wildlife products is next to narcotics, valued at nearly US$ 20 billion in the international market and, in all; more than one third is illicit (Wyler and Sheikh, 2013). Due to this high money-making value of wildlife products, tension in reserve areas is persistently increasing at a global level (Lemieux and Clarke, 2009). Poaching, therefore, is quite universal and a frequently occurring phenomenon. From one continent to another, none is free from poaching, and all wildlife species stand the risk of being endangered (Jenks *et al*., 2012).

2.4 Poaching Structure, Network and Marketing

According to Milliken (2014), the schematic poaching structure encompasses the local actors in local communities in the park ranges to the final consumer/buyer at distant locations or market. Milliken (2014) described the poaching structure as involving different stages. At Stage 1, the actors are special gangs and individuals who generally function as replaceable militants that risk their lives to hunt illegally. A majority of these poachers are cunningly recruited from the local communities adjoining the national parks. Stage 2 involves actors who are better structured and comprises those poachers who operate in well organised, dynamic associations or cliques consisting of hunters that may travel considerable distances to poach in porous national parks and across the borders of nearby countries. These actors may also function as petty buyers or local couriers obtaining wildlife products. Stage 3 represents exporters, carriers and middlemen buyers who stand at the end of national trade chains. They are usually the citizens of African countries where they carry out their activities, and work through local and international networks that buy wild animal products through several routes, including thefts, illegal private sector or unregistered stock sales and illegal hunting. Such transactions can be direct or through Stage 2 actors. These actors generally sell the poached animals and their parts to those in Stage 4, and sometimes unlawfully transport wild animal parts across international boundaries within Africa but not on to end-use buyers in foreign countries. Stage 4 actors are known for illegal export of wild animal parts out of Africa to Asian countries. The actors at this stage are usually African-based, Asian dealers with permanent resident status within African countries. They are often connected to networks of accomplices, including corrupt workers within the private and public sector. These actors are financially groomed and often move within African and between Africa and Asia for transactions. A division of

actors in Stage 4 are those who physically transport the animal parts out of Africa as agents and are either employed locally or in end-use countries in the situation of a particular transaction. Although they function at Stage 4, couriers also function as dispensable militants that can be replaced if arrested. Stage 5 consists of buyers and consumers who position themselves at the end of the trade chains. They reside in foreign countries and opportunistically boycott the law enforcement agents. Actors in this stage deliver wild animal products to end-use markets and usually bribe government officials in order to scale through.

According to Wilson-Wilde (2010) a global network of traffickers and suppliers exist with contacts in their countries of origin and connivance of law enforcement agents in other countries. Wildlife poachers engage in other deals namely; gun running, drug business and fake documents (Wilson-Wilde, 2010). Wildlife poachers can be described as networks which are well organised, utilise slang and nicknames to disguise, code conversations and make use of the internet, Skype and other social media (Wyler and Sheikh, 2013).

In Asian countries, organisation of poachers usually transport wild animal products; and endeavour to spend less in the stages of supply chain (Moyle, 2008). Also, the procurement of wild animals is subcontracted to skilled local hunters while transportation of poached wild animals to the Chinese border is usually expensive. This is minimised by the use of scale economies to transport wildlife products in bulk. Moreover, successful poaching organisations usually escape detection (Knapp, 2012).

Moyle (2008) posits that the supply chain begins with finding the animals and that there are two costs that have to be balanced by the poaching network. The first is the search costs for the wild animals. The second is the anxiety risk of the poacher (Knapp, 2012).The search costs for wild animals are comparatively high and the best method to cut the expenses is to hire local people who are used to forest terrain (Moyle, 2008). Hence, local inhabitants that are highly talented are usually the best options to be considered for poaching escapade (Donovan, 2004; Roe, 2011). Tracking wild animals by exploiting local knowledge or expertise and transporting their products to international borders are rational decisions taken by international wildlife traffickers (Wyler and Sheikh, 2013). However, there may

be obstacles to other criminal groups willing to join this business without access to information on how to get wild animals and find customers (Moyle, 2008).

Although wild animals in their natural habitats are highly prized by conservationists, they are also in high demand by those who make money from them through illegal hunting, whether for livelihood or socio-cultural reasons (for example, Roe *et al*., 2002; Donovan, 2004; Biggs *et al*., 2013). In this light, the complex social, cultural, and economic factors in wildlife business remain the underlying catalysts of illegal hunting across the world (Velasquez Gomar and Stringer, 2011).

Carrying out a sustained and strict policy in a bid to safeguard prized wild animal species, especially by enforcing trade prohibitions, is not really effective because it encourages underground sales carried out by highly organised criminal organisations, who are attracted by the huge profits in the trade, in addition, these set of people know how to escape detection given their experience in other illicit businesses such as drugs smuggling and human trafficking (Zimmerman, 2008; South and Wyatt, 2011; Conrad, 2012).

The involvement of organised syndicates is vital because poaching gangs can turn wildlife areas into flourishing demand centres based on their experience, their wealth to bribe officials at every point, and their readiness to use dangerous weapons where necessary to force local inhabitants into poaching and wildlife trafficking (Challender and MacMillan, 2013). Also, where arrests are made, fines may not be tantamount to the gravity of the profits made from the business and therefore do not serve as a deterrent to the offenders (Wellsmith, 2011; St. John *et al.* 2012). Despite the threat of arrest and prosecution, the poaching, buying and selling of wild animals remain an option to local communities that want better income, those that may have a long cultural association with hunting, and those that may also be coerced into poaching by organised wildlife syndicates (MacMillan and Nguyen, 2013).

The buying and selling of wild animal products has established the new links between notorious Eastern European and Asian organised crime networks and those in Africa; while the use of modern weapon and advanced strategic gear by some poachers suggests how clever, well-funded, and dangerous these networks are (Anderson and Jooste, 2014).

Despite the agreements and policy at both state and international levels, marketing of wild animals and their products continues because it benefits the perpetrators and encourages the business (Haken, 2011; Ayling, 2012). In fact, wildlife poaching business has been ranked as the third most valuable illegal market after drugs and arms (Haken, 2011).

2.5 Nigeria's Wildlife Policy

In Nigeria, a study on wildlife status in 1962 revealed significant decline in the population of wild animals, due to over-exploitation (Nigeria Fifth National Biodiversity Report, 2014). This led to hunting ban and the establishment of game reserves; and it was recommended that earnings from the sale of hunting licenses and wildlife trophies be spent on wildlife conservation (Nigeria Fifth National Biodiversity Report, 2014). The National Parks Decree (Decree No 36 of 1991) restricts hunting, fishing and setting of fires in the National parks (Abere and Ezenwaka, 2011). Poaching in the national parks was to be fought by park guards who were authorised by the law to arrest poachers (Usman and Adefalu, 2010). Despite the hunting ban and availability of patrol guards, poaching is common in national parks (Afolayan, 1980). The increase in the number of people engaging in poaching activities has shown that using coercion will not curb poaching (Afolayan, 1980). In Nigeria, poachers go as far as using charms to draw animals to their traps (Ijeomah, Ogogo and Ogbara, 2012). Hunters from neighbouring states also hunt in the national parks during the dry season, which also contributes to the decline in the populations of wild animals (Afolayan, 1980). For instance, in the Old Oyo National Park, strangers' like the Zuru from northern part of Nigeria often enter the park fully armed, organised and usuallycome to the park in large numbers. The Zuru are from central Kebbi State. Local people described the Zuru as very dangerous and deadly when they are in the park. The elites are said to be behind poaching because they offer better prices to the bushmeat vendors and local poachers in exchange for trophies and wild meat, which is highly valued by most Nigerians (Afolayan, 1980). In the Old Oyo National Park, the buying of poached wild animals can be traced to the elites. Hunter-poachers sell the poached animals to the bushmeat vendors. Sometimes, they sell to hoteliers, businessmen, contractors, directors and workers in government agencies who are working in their communities and who love buying bushmeat for their family members. Also, the fines

levied on these poachers are meagre compared to what they gain from the sales of trophies and bushmeat (Ajayi, 1978). This is the more reason many poachers continue to poach the wild animals. They believe that poaching is better than armed robbery because if they are caught and arrested while robbing people, they will be prosecuted and sent to jail, whereas if they are caught while poaching, they will only be arrested and asked to pay fine instead of being sent to jail, life imprisonment or being given death sentence.

2.6 Wildlife Conservation and Development

The wildlife development approach used during colonial and postcolonial Africa encouraged the fast and high exploitation of wildlife resources (Barrett and Arcese, 1995). Conservation approaches of these periods, as characterised by the fences and fines approach, favour wildlife while the contemporary development approaches are people-oriented. For instance, the integrated conservation development programmes believe that people and wild animals are interdependent hence; it would be difficult to separate the challenges of conservation and development (Barrett and Arcese, 1995).

In Africa, conservation areas are being destroyed through mechanised farming activities, forest encroachment, building construction by developers, and poaching of wild animals (Newmark and Hough, 2000). This development indicates that when proper management is lacking, conservation areas will fail to protect various wild animals as shown in Tanzanian parks where poaching of big animals were common and their extinction were experienced (Newmark, 1996) while others were experienced in southern and East Africa (Woodroofe and Ginsberg, 1998).

The availability of markets for the poached animals also promotes subsistence and the commercial poaching of several animals in conservation areas (Newmark and Hough, 2000). A study in Zambia reveals that it costs \$200 per km^2 yearly to manage and guard against the illegal hunting of animals such as rhinoceroses and elephants in conservation areas (Leader-Williams and Albon, 1988).

Unfortunately, many countries in the continent are not economically buoyant to fund and allocate enough money to manage wildlife because of other competing demands from government treasury (Newmark and Hough, 2000). The reality of these challenges made

conservationists to maintain that the solution to expand conservation areas and eradicate poverty (Newmark, 1985; 1996; Owen-Smith, 1993) is to involve and cooperate with rural inhabitants in adjoining communities (Newmark and Hough, 2000). However, past methods of conservation have not achieved the desired result and it has constantly generated resentment and severed the relationships between conservationists and rural people (Newmark and Hough, 2000), many conservationists now see the community based conservation approach as a valid alternative (Hackel, 1999). It is important to note that if nothing is put in place to address the alienation of the local inhabitants in the management and benefits from wildlife conservation, poaching will persist as long as wild animals exist in African countries.

In spite of their popularity, integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs) are gaining considerable attention because of what is considered as half-baked and the uncertainty of sustainable management and the suitability of fences and fines approach to the plight of rural inhabitants (Barrett and Arcese, 1995). In an evaluation of such projects in Africa, Brandon and Wells (1992) posit that much success has not been recorded and that most efforts of the projects have failed to achieve conservation goals because the vital ingredients that ought to connect development and conservation are not present. The core values of this approach is shown in their description as "community-based programs, using methods of involving the local people and to concurrently empower them in order to protect wild animals, and this may also account for the support the programme got from international development agencies (Kiss, 1990).

Worthy of note is the distinguishing feature of integrated conservation and development projects (ICDPs) as conservation approaches that local inhabitants are persuaded to stop poaching of wild animals and desist from the disturbance of their habitats but they would be provided with other means of livelihoods or social services linked with a better standard of living (Barrett and Arcese, 1995). Under this arrangement, local communities are persuaded and won over by carrying them along in decision-making, recruitments, provision of income and basic amenities such as pipe-borne water, electricity, good roads and vocational centres, in order to get their support for wildlife conservation (Newmark and Hough, 2000). Such arrangements are sometimes contractual. However, the main idea

behind this approach is the provision of amenities and benefits to the local in order to curb poaching (Barrett and Arcese, 1995).

Community based conservation is one which is aimed at maximising its wildlife conservation policy by carrying its local communities along (Hackel, 1999). The main features of this policy include the participation of rural people in decision making, and overseeing wildlife, as such, they will be able to benefit financially from wildlife extractions **(**Metcalfe, 1995).

Community-based conservation is an approach used across the world in order to protect wildlife species, its contemporary roots are steeped in the knowledge of conservationists who worked in developing nations between the 1960s and the 1970s (Hackel, 1999). These conservationists realised that indigenes, who were antagonistic to wildlife preservation needed to be persuaded and won over to their side, as backers of their efforts and policy (World Conservation Union, 1980). The conservationists realised that without the support of the indigenes, efforts directed at wildlife preservation would be futile (Hackel, 1999). This is also replicated in Africa, where rural people see wildlife conservation as an unfair practice which places the needs of wild animals above the rural inhabitants' (Abrahamson 1983). Although, this approach is mainly a response to the immediate economic needs of the communities, it still has its roots in the colonial legacy that marginalised local inhabitants in Africa from conservation practices (Hackel, 1999). With colonialism, Africans were faced with strict rules and constraints from an external authority which deprived them of the right to harvest wildlife as they would have wanted; this policy was characterised by coercive form of protectionism that turned blind eyes to the needs of the local communities (Metcalfe, 1995). Common features of the policy ranged from hunting restrictions to protected species designations, and the creation of game reserves or national parks, which frequently alienated people from conservation areas.

Community-based conservation remains an answer to the economic and cultural needs of rural inhabitants and the marginalised protectionist policies of the past (Hackel, 1999). Proponents of this approach maintain that the response is appropriate because it backs pre-colonial African conservation practices that employ community sanctions to control

wildlife exploitation and is also an avenue for rural inhabitants in Africa to gain economically from the protection of wildlife (Metcalfe, 1995). The idea is that locals are germane to conservation efforts in Africa (Western and Wright, 1994). It is important to ensure that the local people are carried along and sincerely involved in the conservation of wildlife resources which they have been living with for many years and that they should be provided with alternative means of livelihoods in order to promote the conservation of wildlife resources. Often, the local people abhor the feelings of resentment towards the state which governs and benefits economically from wildlife resources without meaningful benefit being accrued to the local inhabitants. This has constantly led to rebellion against the state in form of illegal hunting. Certainly, this approach would improve the relationship between rural inhabitants and wildlife agencies (Hackel, 1999). The proponents of the approach emphasised that the community based conservation is a bottom-up rather than a top-down strategy because it improves the old way of protecting wildlife by allowing local inhabitants to have a say in resource extraction decisions rather than having them imposed by higher authorities (Western and Wright, 1994). Therefore, the decentralisation of wildlife resources management from the central government to rural communities is seen as a prerequisite for an efficient wildlife conservation policy (Western, 1994).

Wildlife contributes directly to household income through hunting, sale of bushmeat, as well as sales of wild animal products for medicinal purposes. Most local people sell wild animals and their products in order to make money (Fa *et al.,* 1995). These local people also pay substantial amount of money for traditional medicines, the ingredients of which sometimes include wild animal products. The availability of wildlife contributes to local food security while the marketing of wildlife serve as a source of income for more people and contributes to rural household income (Brown and Davies, 2007). Bushmeat trade serves as a source of income for more people than any other wildlife activities and contributes to rural economy (Brown *et al.,* 2007). Aside that, the bushmeat trade contributes to local economies through the marketing of their body parts. Wildlife hunting and marketing are crucial in conservation discourse and they also play major role in people's livelihoods (Rowcliffe *et al.,* 2004) because livelihoods are tied to wildlife resources (Fa *et al.,* 2003). Thus, they can contribute to development if properly controlled and incorporated into the general economy.

2.7 Wildlife Domestication

Domestication of wildlife can be traced back to 12,000 years ago in nine areas of the world (Diamond, 2002; Zeder, 2015) namely, China, Fertile Crescent, Mesoamerica andes/Amazonia, eastern USA, Sahel, tropical West Africa, New Guinea and Ethiopia (Diamond, 2002). Domestication is an essential method that can be adopted to reduce pressure on wild animals, to save the endangered and threatened species of wild animals in the Park Forest, and ultimately to promote local food security and serve as alternative source of livelihoods for the locals. The first categories of domesticated animals were transferred from their primary homes to other parts of the world. This transfer and the introduction of domesticated animals led to important sources of food across the world (Teletchea, 2017). The first five domesticated animals produce the animal products (milk and meat) that are consumed worldwide. These five animals include cow (*Bos taurus* and *B. indicus*), pig (*Sus domesticus*), sheep (*Ovis aries*), goat (*Capra hircus*) and horse (*Equus caballus*) (Teletchea, 2017).

Across the world, wildlife plays a great role in meat production and source of animal protein especially, in African communities and cities. Generally, people prefer to consume game meat (Baptist and Mensah, 1986). For instance, grass cutter is commonly consumed among other wildlife in Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d' voire, Benin, Cameroon, Liberia and Togo because of its protein benefits. The burgeoning human population, overexploitation and food insecurity across Africa has necessitated the search for alternative sources through which meat can be provided for the people. Consequently, wildlife domestication was adopted as a tool through which this objective can be achieved (Opara, 2010). Undoubtedly, wildlife contributes to rural household income and the economy of West African countries indirectly (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997; Brown and Davies, 2007) and this is responsible for its overexploitation.

In Africa, domestication of wildlife species for meat production and for the improvement of animal protein supply has been in existence since 1848 (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997). This method of domesticating wild game is common in West Africa where bushmeat is sold for income and consumed for protein benefits. The proponents of domestication and Conservationists have advocated for the domestication of commonly consumed wild

animals for appreciable bushmeat production and supply in order to lessen hunting pressure on the population of wild animals and their habitat. The suggested wild animals for domestication include the grasscutter (*Thryonomys swinderianus*), the giant rat (*Cricetomys gambianus)*, some duiker species, the guinea fowl (*Numida meleagris)* and the giant African snail *(* sp. and *Archachatina* sp). Domestication of grasscutter was practiced in Wildlife Department in Ghana while the University of Ibadan, Nigeria focused on giant rats (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997).

The importance of wildlife domestication to wildlife conservation and food security cannot be overemphasised. Domestication of wild animals will serve as alternative sources of income, food and animal protein, thereby reducing pressure on conservation areas. Embracing this method by the people hinges on the development and provision of knowledge on how to domesticate wildlife, and low-cost system of production. This method will be widely embraced if it is cost effective and less stressful compared to the efforts put in hunting or poaching. The domestication of wild animals will contribute to household income, increase household purchasing power and promote food security with direct conservation benefits (Makombe, 1993).

The local people in the Old Oyo National Park experience abject poverty and the need to survive forced them to poach for survival. This situation has put huge pressure on wild animals and their habitat. The National Park officials do have meetings with the local communities in order to educate them on how to start rearing and domesticating wildlife but unfortunately, wildlife domestication appears to be expensive to the local people who do not have capital to start the business.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

2.8.1 The Theory of Political Economy of Wildlife Extraction

The theory of political economy of wildlife extraction analyses the exploitation of wildlife in the Third World context (Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998). The theory identifies two categories of agents: an agency managing wildlife habitat and a group of peasants in local communities (Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998). The agency managing wildlife habitat has the legal right to utilise the wildlife, while the peasants in local communities hunt illegally within the legal-rational framework (Kothari, Suri, and Singh, 1995; Naughton-Treves and Sanderson, 1995).

The theory emphasises the institutional dimension of resource management (Naughton-Treves *et al.,* 1995). This institutional dimension stresses the specification and functioning of property rights as the main factor determining the extent at which wildlife resources can be extracted and managed (Hanna and Munasinghe, 1995). Therefore, the most important thing is the establishment of a well-defined property rights system by the government and a suitability of that system with its environmental and social context (Hanna *et al.,* 1995). This view is very important in analysing factors affecting the exploitation of wildlife resources in a Third World perspective (Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998). The central issues in the discourse of wildlife resources in the Third World countries are the actions of local people living next to the wildlife and the agency that has the property rights to manage wildlife resources (Marks, 1984; Kiss, 1990; Kothari, Suri, and Singh, 1995; Naughton-Treves *et al.,* 1995).

The interaction between these two distinct groups usually generates conflicting interests because both the legal-rational actors in the wildlife (that is, the State) and the local people agitate their rights to extract and manage wildlife resources (Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998). These conflicts are created by the colonialists' conservation approach which redefined how wildlife resources should be controlled and managed. These conflicts, as established by this kind of institutional approach, are deeply rooted in the existing property structure and its operations have severe consequences for the rate of wildlife extraction and on the management of wildlife resources (Naughton-Treves *et al.,* 1995; Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998). Government and its agency with the legal rights to the benefits of wildlife resources,

gains legally and economically from the wildlife through non-consumptive use of the wildlife (Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998). As a result, the resource owner must control and protect his benefits by using anti-poaching mechanisms (Skonhoft and Solstad, 1998).

In the developed world, the citizens generally support wildlife conservation because wildlife is being managed sustainably (Park *et al,* 2013). Furthermore, governments in the developed countries generate millions of dollars from conservation annually and there is improvement in local economies which enhances public interest in wildlife and increases the populations of wild animals (Geist, 2001).

Colonialism brought about state control, nationalization of wildlife and the removal of rights to access the conservation areas from Africans in order to protect sport hunting and the safari industry for European colonialists (Jacoby, 2003; Adams 2004; Neumann, 2004). This approach of alienation, marginalization and removal of rights to subsistence hunting further impoverished African local inhabitants (Duffy and St John, 2013). This suggests the reason some communities in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to resist wildlife conservation laws because they believe they have a right to access and utilise wildlife as they have done for many years (Mackenzie, 1988; Neumann, 1998; Neuman, 2001; Bolaane, 2004; Adams 2004; Norgrove and Hulme, 2006; Roe, 2008b; Garland, 2008; Robbins *et al.,* 2009; Duffy, 2010). The position of Africans within the world political economies are characterised by structural inequalities (Garland, 2008). Wildlife in Africa can be viewed as a mode of global capitalist production which imposed laws, alienated and removed the rights of the local people to access their resources (Garland, 2008). The political economy perspective explains how wildlife conservation alienated the indigenes from their livelihoods. The local communities adjacent to the park described the acquisition of the park by the government and the removal of rights to hunt or to fish or to collect minor forest produce for their immediate needs in the national park as marginalization and exploitation. They argued that government and wildlife agencies do not care about their wellbeing because the Park Forest is so important to their financial, physical and spiritual wellbeing. In the communities around Old Oyo National Park, the local hunters transit into poachers as they deliberately move into restricted areas of the Park in rebellion to the government for survival.

The theory considers wildlife policy within the context of new institutionalism while holding the assumption of relative rationality (Massaro, 2001). The motives and actions of the actors such as government officials, wildlife agency bureaucrats, park rangers, traditional leaders, indigenous and international conservationists and subsistence local hunters (Massaro, 2001), and the influence of these actors on policy formation and outcomes indicate how the actions and motives of various agents influence the behaviours and decisions of others in order to gain economically from wildlife resources (Gibson, 1999). The theory, with the aid of the politics of structural choice, demonstrates how the actors seek to design wildlife policy to their own benefits, but do so within the framework of the existing institutional environment and their own resource endowments (Gibson, 1999). These actors compete most importantly for privileged access to wildlife resources because the resources are considered as a source of wealth and power (Gibson, 1999).

The most important concern of the agencies asides conservation may be institutional survival; the needs to establish, legalise, and extend control over contested wildlife resources (Massaro, 2001). Agencies establish structures that frustrate conservation goals because the structures are designed primarily to maintain agencies' control over wildlife, and not to enlist other actors in sharing responsibility for and benefitting from the wildlife (Massaro, 2001). In examining conservation agencies and competing actors, the theory of political economy of wildlife extraction comes to its richest historical reconstruction, whereby wildlife benefits are extended to the local people, and are often hijacked and enjoyed by the more powerful rural actors (that is, the politicians and chiefs) (Gibson, 1999). It is pertinent to note that benefits go more to Oyo town where the headquarters of the National park is located. The local communities around the Old Oyo National Park claimed that government employed more people from Oyo town because of the influence of the Alaafin of Oyo. There are good roads in Oyo town while the raods that lead to Sepeteri and other ranges are bad.

In the Old Oyo National Park, the locals claimed that wildlife conservation has marginalised and alienated them from their livelihoods. They argued that there were numerous economic gains accrued to the indigenes that accessed the Park before it was taken over by the Government. The locals also claimed that they generated huge income

from the natural resources retrieved from the Park Forest. For instance, the locals revealed that they made as much as #100,000 per month from tree felling for charcoal and about #120,000 per month from planks for roofing while they made up to #180,000 per month on bushmeat. Similarly, the location of the Administrative Headquarters of the Park is politically motivated and situated in Oyo town, far away from the Park Forest. This is equally considered by the locals as alienation from what naturally belong to them. This further explains the dissatisfaction and the alienation of the indigenes from their forest where they once accessed for their livelihoods.

Also, the theory explains the political economy of wildlife and the process of conservation policy-making, rather than known research works carried out by geographers, biologists and environmental scientists (Gibson, 1999). Although wildlife may not have the same weight in Third World economies as oil does, it is a vital natural resource that earns countries huge revenue and, still, the competition over access to wildlife resources in the Third World is more political (Hyden, 2002). Wildlife is considered as a significant political commodity; therefore, it requires a sharp political analysis because of its great economic importance (Duffy, 2000).

Although, the work of biologists and environmental scientists about the environment remains an important aspect of wildlife conservation discourse, but there is more to its critical analysis. Moreover, it is necessary to understand the role human and the society play while making decisions on the conservation of wildlife resources (Gibson, 1999). In the Third World countries, wildlife agencies and local actors shape and reshape wildlife system and exploit resources according to their satisfaction and choices (Duffy, 2000). However, in explaining the political economy of wildlife extraction, Gibson (1999) situates his observation strictly within the concept of a 'new institutionalism' analysis. In other words, the beneficial knowedge on wildlife resources, which is restricted to an economistic model, emanated from the work and explanations of the rationalists (Duffy, 2000). Nevertheless, locals find ways of neutralising legal-rational frameworks.

According to Eliason and Dodder (1999, 2000), there are four neutralisations often used by local communities while poaching. These are: the refusal to own up to actions (Poachers

often claim that their actions are unintentional); the metaphor of the ledger (That hunting skills make up for poaching); the defence of necessity (That meat is needed for survival); and the condemnation of the condemners (That poaching is a form of revolt against wildlife agencies and authorities). Of greater importance is the final neutralisation, whereby poachers commit wildlife crimes as a result of their dissatisfaction with existing wildlife rules and the authorities (Filteau, 2012). As a result, poachers commit wildlife offences for fun, to play pranks on park rangers, or as revolt against wildlife authorities (Muth and Bowe, 1998; Eliason and Dodder, 1999, 2000). The urge to hunt illegally (Katz, 1988) for some poachers emanates from a desire to show off their local knowledge and hunting prowess to wildlife authorities (Forsyth and Marckese, 1993; Forsyth, 1993). If opportune, local people may find it difficult to resist poaching in some circumstances (Eliason, 2003). Hence, poaching might be a means of getting an income, food, thrill, or a trophy (Muth and Bowe, 1998). Brymer (1991) maintains that poaching is part of the lifestyle of local hunters who live in rural communities, and that killing animals illegally is accepted as a way of life.

One of the numerous important insights that this theory provides is that wildlife conservation policies were designed in ways that particularly benefited program administrators, members of communities and wildlife but the indigenes seem not to be comfortable with this arrangement. However, sustainable management of wildlife resources requires the maintenance of wildlife, a different mind-set and a shift from combative and individualistic positions to co-operative and symbiotic behaviours (Stilwell, 2010), Action toward sustainable management of wildlife, if it is to give room for social justice, must challenge the dominant political and economic arrangement of the contemporary times (Stilwell, 2010).

In view of the fact that local people in the Old Oyo National Park are excluded from wildlife by legislation with no respect for the interest of rural communities, their traditions and cultures, wildlife legislation is constantly viewed by the poachers as an arbitrary and illegitimate intrusion of the state into a traditional activity being governed by its people. They justify their actions by maintaining that the right to have access to wildlife does not belong to the state alone. However, should poaching continue, it will lead to empty forest and empty forest may ultimately lead to empty stomach for the local inhabitants.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The nature of social research revolves around the study of social problems and challenges facing the human society. In the social sciences, research methodology involves the adoption of a systematic process of studying an identified problem with the aim of finding solutions. This process involves the procedure through which data are collected, analysed and interpreted. This procedure is crucial and must be value-free in order to achieve a valid and reliable result.

Since the primary focus of this study is to examine wildlife conservation and poaching in the Old Oyo National Park with the aim of unravelling its (poaching) context, structure and the human social systems in the process of conservation policy-making, both secondary and primary sources were explored for data collection. Precisely, data were collected using in-depth interviews (IDIs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Observation and Case study.

3.1 Research Design

The research design for this study is exploratory in nature. Exploratory research design is used in this study in order to address the newly generated research questions posed on wildlife poaching and to lay the foundation for an achievable and conclusive research. The reliability and validity of results in social research is predicated upon the usage of appropriate method (Omobowale, 2006). Social research identifies two significant methods, namely, quantitative and qualitative research methods. The Quantitative method often uses the principles of the natural sciences by quantifying noticeable characteristics of social phenomenon for the purpose of inferring meanings and interpretation while the Qualitative method involves the collection of data pictorially or verbally, followed by data analysis and interpretation (Isiugo-Abanihe, 2002; Harwood and Gary, 2003; Omobowale, 2006). The Quantitative method ensures the conduct of value-free research, but it may not be useful in

capturing observable events that have to do with human and social interaction. This is because of certain motives and actions that are shrouded in secrecy, which it may find difficult to capture (Omobowale, 2006). Consequently, the qualitative method of data collection was adopted for the study because it is deeply entrenched in socio-cultural, economic and political factors.

3.2 Study Area

The Old Oyo National Park has a land mass area of 2,512 km^2, which makes it the fourth largest National park in Nigeria (Oladeji, Agbelusi and Ajiboye, 2012). The park lies between North latitudes 8° 10′ and 9° 05′, and East longitudes 3° 35’ and 4° 21′, and is located on North latitude 8° 36′ 00′′ and East longitude 3° 57′ 05′′ (Toyobo, Raheem and Oyeleye, 2014). Territorially, it is situated in Oyo State in the Southwest of Nigeria and borders Kwara State in the Northeast (Oladeji *et al.,* 2012). The park is adjoined by ten (10) Local Government Areas in Oyo State, namely, Saki East (Ago-Amodu), Iseyin (Iseyin), Orire (Ikoyi), Atisbo (Tede/Ago-Are), Atiba (Oyo), Irepo (Kisi), Oorelope (Igboho), Itesiwaju (Otu), Olorunsogo (Igbeti and Saki West) (Toyobo *et al.,* 2014). The park comprises five administrative ranges, namely, Marguba Range, Sepeteri, Sepeteri Range, Igboho, Tede Range, Tede, Yemoso Range, Ikoyi, and Oyo-Ile Range, Igbeti (Oladeji and Agbelusi, 2014). The study specifically used Marguba Range, Sepeteri, Sepeteri Range, Igboho, and Yemoso Range, Ikoyi, because of noticeable effect and complaints of poaching, and large concentration of hunters in the communities around these ranges.

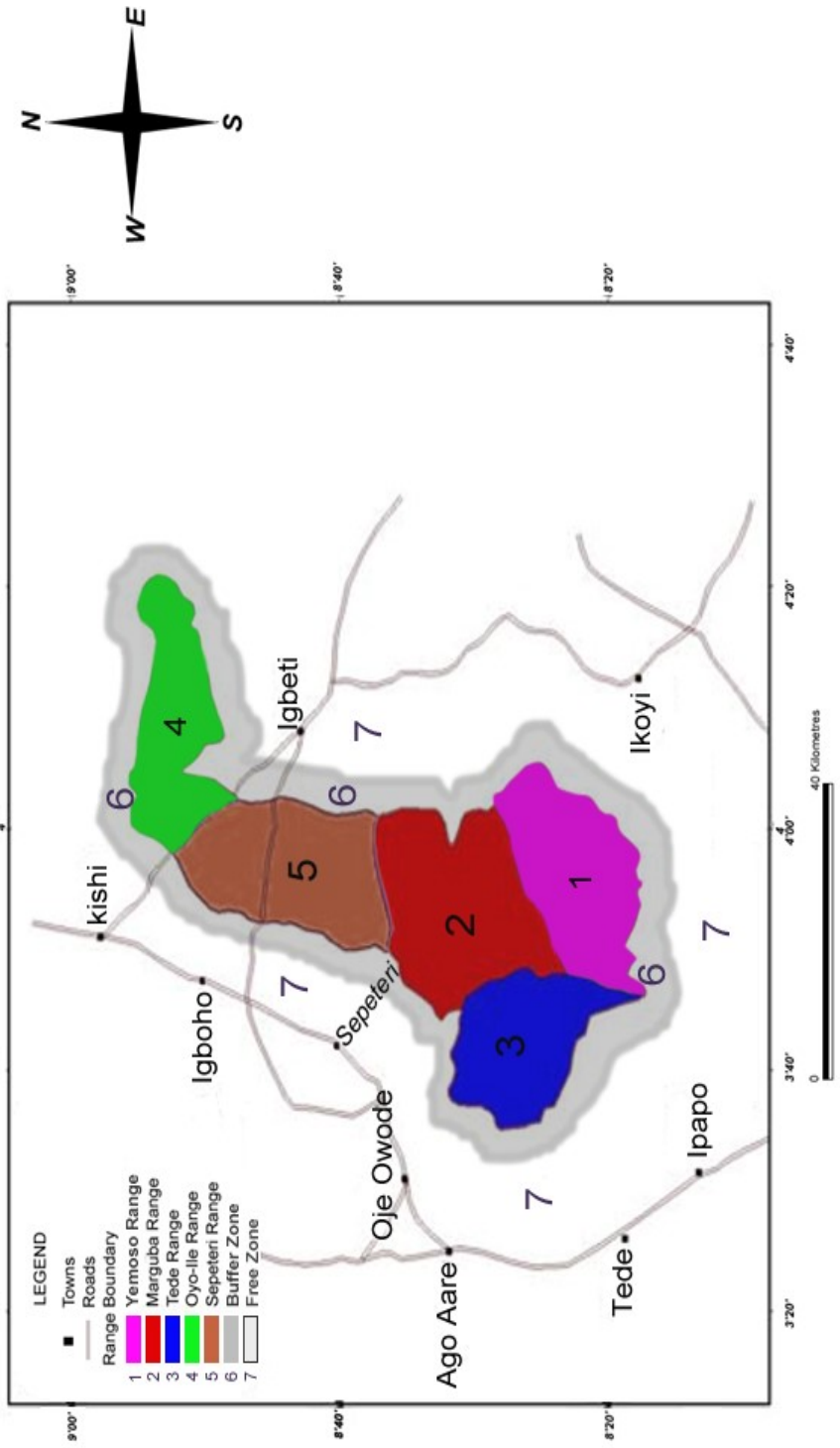

Figure 3.1: Map of Old Oyo National Park showing the adjoining communities

3.3 Study Population

The population earmarked for the study include the following:

i. Members of the community (Sepeteri, Igboho and Ikoyi communities),
ii. Traditional chiefs
iii. Traditional rulers,
iv. Officials of the National Park (i.e., Range heads and park rangers).
v. Bushmeat vendors.
vi. Poachers' leaders (Poachers for this study were unveiled through referral, including those who have been arrested before). Opportunities to interview poachers in the prison were explored but due to the option of compoundment (that is, settling out of court by paying a stipulated amount to government coffers), most poachers go for compoundment instead of going to court or being imprisoned. However, those who have returned from the police custody were interviewed.
vii. Hunter-poachers. It is pertinent to state that when the researcher got to the field, it was discovered that hunters usually transit from hunting to poaching when they go beyond the free zone and step into the park boundary or the buffer zone. Hence, hunters and poachers were merged together to be (hunter-poachers).

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

The qualitative methods of data collection were used to gather information on the subject. The methods that were used include In-depth Interview (IDI), Key Informant Interview (KII), Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Observation and case study. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study.

3.4.1 Secondary Sources

Secondary data were sourced from relevant literature, textbooks, journals, newspaper reports, memorandum, official reports, statistical bulletins and the internet.

3.4.2 Primary sources

Primary data were collected through in-depth interview (IDI), key informant interview (KII), focus group discussion (FGD), Observation and case study in order to extract data in its natural form.

3.4.3 Observation

The researcher gathered information through non-participant observation. The researcher observed everyday activities of the local hunters and bush meat vendors/sellers in the adjoining communities of the selected ranges where hunting activities take place. This was necessary for the researcher in order to observe hunters' social processes, interactions, meetings and how they team up. It was difficult to get the pictures of poached wild animals because poachers in the Old Oyo National Park often dismember the body of the animals after the animals have been killed. This act is usually carried out in order to evade arrest. With this method, Park authorities would not be able to ascertain whether the animal is from the park and it will be difficult to identify the species or conservation status of the animal in question; whether endangered, critically endangered or nearing extinction. Hence, it would be difficult to arrest the poacher with such dismembered animals.

3.4.4 In-depth Interview (IDI)

A total of 60 IDIs was conducted. Four traditional chiefs, four bushmeat vendors, eight hunter-poachers and four National Park Officials were purposively selected for interview in each of the three ranges purposively selected for the study. The aim was to generate in-depth information on local concerns and interpretation of poaching and the hunting regulations that they are familiar with, and their level of knowledge on poaching in the Park. Were poachers arrested and punished? What was the response of the community members? Specific questions were also asked in order to understand the marketing processes and animal-specific poaching preference in the park, the reactions of the arrested poachers and the impact hunting regulations have on their livelihoods.

3.4.5 Key Informant Interview (KII)

The key informants were purposively selected. One traditional ruler, one range head, one park ranger and one poachers' leader from each range, were interviewed. In all, 12 key informant interviews were conducted, using the informant interview guide. Interview questions covered the reasons they continue to poach and the role of culture in poaching activities, how poaching is organised, and the consequences of poaching for wildlife conservation and mankind.

3.4.6 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussions were conducted among youth hunter-poachers, adult hunter-poachers and members of the community who have lived in the adjoining communities of the park for about 20 years. Two FGD sessions were held in each of the three ranges purposively selected for this study in order to gather information on research objectives. In all, 6 FGDs were conducted using discussion guide, a moderator and a note-taker. Each FGD had between six and ten discussants.

3.4.7 Case Study

Case study was conducted with hunter-poachers based on years of experience and involvement in poaching. These participants have been involved in poaching for more than 5 years. Hunter-poachers were unveiled through referral, specifically those who have been arrested before. This involved an assessment of the life histories of six hunter-poachers, two from communities bordering the selected ranges of the Old Oyo National Park. The method examined and described the routine and circumstances surrounding their involvement in the poaching of wild animals. This method created a brief biography of the key informants earlier interviewed. These individuals were asked to narrate how they got involved in poaching activities, and their encounters and experiences on the poaching of wild animals. The method was used chronologically to delve into the social world of hunter-poachers.

Table 3.1: Matrix showing research objectives and participants by data collection techniques

	Objectives	Participants	Data Collection Techniques				
			Observation	IDI 60	KII 12	FGD 6	Case study 6
1	Probe the political economy of wildlife conservation at the Old Oyo National Park	Community members, Traditional rulers, Traditional chiefs, Hunter-poachers, Officials of National Park	√	√			
2	Examine local interpretation of poaching in Old Oyo National Park	Community members, Traditional rulers, Traditional chiefs, Hunter-poachers, Poachers' leaders, Officials of National Park	√	√	√	√	
3	Investigate the network of poaching in Old Oyo National Park	Hunter-poachers, Poachers' leaders, Officials of National Park	√	√	√	√	√
4	Probe the animal-specific poaching preference in Old Oyo National Park	Hunter-poachers, Poachers' leaders, Officials of National Park	√	√	√	√	√
5	Find out the marketing processes of poached animals in Old Oyo National Park	Bushmeat vendors, Hunter-poachers, Poachers' leaders,	√	√	√	√	√

Table 3.2: Matrix showing participants across study area by research instruments

Park Ranges	Distribution of Participants Across Study Area by Instruments				
	Study Population	**IDI**	**KII**	**FGD**	**Case Study**
Marguba Range	Community members			2	
	Poachers' leaders		1		
	Traditional rulers		1		2
	Traditional chiefs	4			
	Hunter-poachers	8			
	Officials of National Park	4	2		
	Bushmeat vendors	4			
Sepeteri Range	Community members			2	
	Poachers' leaders		1		
	Traditional rulers		1		2
	Traditional chiefs	4			
	Hunter-poachers	8			
	Officials of National Park	4	2		
	Bushmeat vendors	4			
Yemoso Range	Community members			2	
	Poachers' leaders		1		
	Traditional rulers		1		2
	Traditional chiefs	4			
	Hunter-poachers	8			
	Officials of National Park	4	2		
	Bushmeat vendors	4			
Total		**60**	**12**	**6**	**6**

3.5 Research Analysis Method

Research findings were analysed using content analysis. The presentation of findings was done by focusing on the central themes or objectives of the study. The study focussed on words and sentences that give details of respondents'views, attitude and actions within the context of poaching. The findings were arranged and collated into logical ideas evolving from the field while opinions of the participants considered important helpful to the study were quoted and incorporated in the data presentation. The data were interpreted by assessing the main findings and how they buttress or contradict past scholarly works stated in the literature.

3.6 Ethical consideration

Ethical guidelines governing social scientists were strictly followed throughout this study. Confidentiality of the interviewees was ensured, their identities were fully protected and elicited information was utilised for academic purpose only. The interviewees were informed about the research and its expected outcomes. They were provided with the option to decline from participating when they are no longer comfortable with the process but none declined and the opinions of the participants were helpful. The principle of beneficence was also applied in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.0. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents and discusses data in line with the specific objectives of the study.

4.1. The political economy of wildlife conservation at Old Oyo National Park

Political economy views the economy and politics as analytically distinct, but conceptually fused and regards these activities, and the relation between them, as forming the basic structures of human society (Chandhoke, 1994). The way the human society manifests itself in terms of art, production and cultural practices are essential as processes by which the individuals and communities perceive themselves (Keen, 1994; Chandhoke, 1994; Le Billon, 2000) and it situates these processes materially and interprets them as politically constructed, and as power relations in themselves **(**Le Billon, 2000**).** Power pervades all aspects of life, whether it is gender relations, educational institutions, the family, or the processes by which a society creates its symbols (Gramsci, 1975, Foucalt, 1980; Daldal, 2014). These micro structures and activities of everyday life reflect the principles of domination and subordination which constitutes society and shows that power is about access to the material benefits of life (Collison, 2003; Daldal, 2014).

Marxian political economists are concerned about the unequal access that actors have to the material benefits of life and how equal access to resources could be achieved. According to Chandhoke, (1994) political economy begins with the assumption that human society is materially rooted and politically constituted; and this has two implications: firstly, that the way in which a society arranges its economic life, that is, the tasks of production, distribution and exchange, is characterised by relations of power and secondly, that these relations determine the life chances of individuals, because they dictate who benefits from economic transactions, and who loses. A political economy approach contends that political conflicts over power are basically conflicts over access to economic resources and that power is predicated upon the management of the resources of a society, and control over

the way in which these resources are exploited (Keen, 1994). Political economy deeply analyses who gains and who loses from a particular policy and reveals the groups or individuals that wants the policy to continue, and the groups seeking to change the policy (Collison, 2003).

The political economy perspective explains how wildlife conservation policy removed the right of the indigenes to access wildlife resources in the Old Oyo National Park. The local communities adjacent to the park described the acquisition of the park by the government and the removal of rights to hunt or to fish, right to pass through the park forest, right to water necessary for the enjoyment of their hunting and fishing rights, right to collect minor forest produce for their immediate needs while hunting or fishing in the national park as marginalization and exploitation. They argue that government and wildlife administrators only care about the wildlife at the expense of their wellbeing. Participants in a focus group discussion agreed thus:

> As it is, we have no right to do anything in the Park Forest. We can neither hunt wild animals nor gather snails, plants and even, firewood. And the Park authorities say the park is our property. This is a blatant lie, a deceit. The park is truly ours but it has been hijacked by the government. Having access to the Park Forest is so essential to our physical, spiritual and financial wellbeing. The denial of access to the park is a ploy by the government to show that its power is superior to ours. It is true, but there is a way out. Government is protecting the animals but exposing the human beings (the local people) to eternal hunger. Why is the interest of government on the wildlife alone? Do our interests not deserve to be protected as well? The action of government in this regard can be described as greed, abuse of power and injustice (FGD, Marguba Range, 16th February, 2017).

Similarly, this position was strengthened by another participant thus:

> Government is interested in preserving the animals and in turning the place to a tourist centre so that Nigerians and foreigners can be visiting and this will serve as a source of foreign exchange earnings for the government. The Park serves as a source of foreign exchange earnings for the government and as a source of employment for the people but the indigenes are not enjoying enough from this arrangement. The communities too are supposed to be benefitting from the money coming into the park but reverse is the case. The primary interest of government is to protect and preserve the mineral and animal resources for the unborn generation. However, the lack of access to the Park Forest by the indigene is worrisome and it has taken away the source of income of our people. Even the wildlife resources that

> we seek in order to consume are no longer accessible. Government has taken our land from us without any compensation or alternative means of survival. This is too bad (FGD, Community member, Marguba Range, 4th March, 2017).

The above data underscore the importance of the Park Forest to the locals. The Park Forest is so important to their financial, physical and spiritual wellbeing; and because of alienation and lack of access right to the Park Forest, they no longer have sense of belonging. To the locals, the acquisition of the park by the government translates to demonstration of government's superiority over the indigenous people in their land. Colonialism will always be remembered for the removal of rights to access the conservation areas from Africans in order to protect sport hunting and the safari industry for European colonialists (Jacoby, 2003; Adams 2004; Neumann, 2004). This approach of enclosure, alienation, marginalization and removal of rights to subsistence hunting further impoverished African local inhabitants (Duffy and St John, 2013). This partly serves as the reason some communities in Sub-Saharan Africa continue to resist and ignore wildlife conservation laws because they believe they have a right to access, extract and utilise wildlife as they have done for many decades (Mackenzie, 1988; Neumann, 1998; Neuman, 2001; Bolaane, 2004; Adams 2004; Norgrove and Hulme, 2006; Roe, 2008b; Garland, 2008; Robbins *et al.,* 2009; Duffy, 2010). In order to enhance proper understanding of ownership, Fedderke, de Kadt, and Luiz, (2001) maintain that the owner of the land has the right to own it, utilise it, control and monitor what happens on it, make money from it, protect it and should have responsibility on it while Khan (2004) opines that securing property rights is crucial for the wellbeing and survival of rural people and the management of the wildlife for generations yet unborn.

In the Third World, the method of acquiring or owning land before the colonial era was essentially communal (Khan, 2004) and wildlife and its habitat were economically owned by the local people who live next to wildlife (Singh, 1986; Enuoh *et al.*, 2014). This shows that before the arrival of the colonialists, the issue of having personal land and wildlife resources was not common in local communities. Communalism in this sense signified a resource (land or wildlife) owned by the entire community, which must be accessed and utilised wisely (Falase, 2018). However, the communal ownership did not mean that people

can extract wildlife resources anyhow because of the local laws that govern the exploitation of wildlife during the period (Khan, 2004).

In the same vein, Singh (1986) stresses that the indigenes had rights to access wildlife resources inspite of the local laws governing the resources because the power to own and control were handed over to the kings (Oba) with the proviso that they must not trample upon the rights of ordinary community members. Guha (1993) posits that before the advent of colonialism, the indigenous people (forest dwellers) have been using wildlife and other valuable forest products for consumption and not for business purposes. The traditional conservation of wildlife resources and their management was the lifestyle of Africans that instituted a web of social norms, social beliefs as well as social values (Olawoye, 1996). The utilization of land was protected by the traditional institutions in order for the entire members of the community to have equal access (Falase, 2018). Forests were controlled through the indigenous traditional institutions in the pre-colonial time and it served several purposes such as sources of food, raw materials, places of worship and denoted various social meanings for the indigenous populations. The kings and the traditional chiefs were saddled with the responsibility of ensuring the judicious use of forests and the exploitation of wildlife. In spite of the traditional conservation laws, the forest met the needs of the local communities by providing bushmeat for food, woods for building materials, herbs for medicinal purposes and other socio-economic functions. The sacred groves represented the major forest preservation and different scales of conservation in the pre-colonial administration.

The traditional authorities prohibited the movements of individuals and strangers from trespassing on the supposed sacred forests, or areas referred to as evil forest (*Igbo oro)* (Oriola, 2009) or forbidden forest (*Igbo aiwo)*. Movement in the sacred forests (groves) was restricted while forests *(aginju)* could be accessed (Falase, 2018). These sacred forests are believed to be connected with strange entities and invisible deities (Murombedzi, 2003), where the chief priests perform sacred worship, burial and offer sacrifices to appease the ancestors or gods. Apart from holding the mysteries of cults like the bull-roarer (*Oro*), and the masquerades (*egungun*), this site served as a means of protecting and regulating plants and animals (Adesina, 2011; Fadipe, 1970). The sacred forests were considered to be

dangerous for individuals and were guarded by taboos; and their sacredness disallowed people from accessing such highly ritualised areas. The spirits were believed to have guarded the sacred forests therefore; the services of the local hunters were not needed. Differences and approaches in the existence of sacred forest (groves) and forest constitute preservation method carried out traditionally. However, contemporary preservation method is modernist and exploitative of the indigenous populations. The colonial approach gave power to manage and control wildlife resources to the state, through the establishment of Game Reserves and Community Forests in the 1930s (IUCN, 1986 and Sivaramakrishnan, 1995). Consequently, local people reacted to the perceived marginalised and exploitative conservation policies of the colonialists, as it removed the customary rights (traditional usufruct rights) of local communities over forest resources, which had been practiced for years (Guha, 1993). Some of these resistances include sabotage, arson, poaching and killing of park workers. This is reflected in the explanation of the participants in a focus group discussion thus:

> Before the arrival of the white people in Nigeria, the indigenous people have been using wild animals and other forest resources for consumption and not for business purposes. Our way of preserving wildlife resources and their management was our lifestyle which is associated with our belief as well as our values. Land use was protected by the local authorities in order for the entire members of the community to have equal access. Forests were controlled through the traditional leaders and it served several purposes such as sources of food and places of worshipping the ancestors and deities. The kings and the traditional chiefs were saddled with the responsibility of ensuring the wise use of forests and the exploitation of wildlife. Despite the traditional conservation laws, the forest met the needs of the local communities by providing bushmeat for food, woods for building materials, herbs for medicinal purposes and other socio-economic functions. The forest also represented the major forest preservation and different scales of conservation. The traditional authorities did not allow any movement of individuals and strangers within the forest. But when the white people took over the administration of the forest, they disregarded our traditions and introduced their ideas and understanding of how forest can be managed. They introduced strict laws that prohibited our people from hunting in their forefathers' forest (FGD, Marguba Range, 4th February, 2017).

The above data reflects how wildlife and forest resources were administered before the colonialists and how the traditional way of managing the forest helped in the preservation of forest resources. However, the sudden change in the administration of forest resources

came with its attendant consequences in terms of exploitation and marginalisation which often results in reactionary approach by the indigenes who often hunt in the park illegally.

In the same vein, the Second Schedule of Order Number 83 of 1936 made under the Forestry Ordinance (Chapter 95) for the Upper Ogun River Forest Reserve and the Opara (Oyo) Forest Reserve, which constitute the present Old Oyo National Park states that "the indigenes of Sepeteri, Ikoyi, Igboho, Igbeti, Ogbomoso, Iseyin, Saki and Aha communities have the right to hunt and fish, and that individuals in any part of the stream of the Reserve to which his community membership is recognised by the chief of the hunting guild of the most immediately concerned of the communities mentioned above, subject to Native Laws and Custom and to the provisions of Chapter 99 of the Laws of Nigeria, and provided that no damage is done to forest resources grown or tended by the Native Administration or by the Forestry Department acting for the Native Administration (The Forestry Ordinance, Lagos Standard, 1936). In the Schedule the indigenes also enjoy the followings:

> "Holders of rights to hunt or to fish in the Reserve have the right to collect minor forest produce for their immediate needs while hunting or fishing in the forest reserve; provided that no damage is done to any forest produce."
>
> "Holders of rights to hunt or to fish in the Reserve have the rights of way necessary for the enjoyment of their hunting and fishing rights in the forest reserve."
>
> "Holders of rights to hunt, fish, collect minor forest produce, farm, and of rights of way have rights to water necessary for the enjoyment of those rights."
>
> "Holders of rights to hunt, fish, collect minor forest produce and to farm have the rights to reside temporarily in the reserve necessary for the enjoyment of their rights, provided that only temporary shelters are erected and that no mud or stone is used in their construction." (The Forestry Ordinance, Lagos Standard, 1936).

However, these rights were deleted vide Native Administration Public Notice Number 109 in Gazette Number 51 of 1951 (Oyo Native Authority Forest Reserve, Oyo Ile, Old Oyo, Forest Reserve) Order, 1941. This is stated as follow:

> The Old Oyo Forest Reserve (Oyo Ile, Old Oyo Forest Reserve) Order, 1941 is hereby revised and modified by deleting paragraph two (2) of the Second Schedule relating to Hunting and Fishing Rights.
> (Oyo Native Authority Forest Reserve, Oyo Ile, Old Oyo, Forest Reserve. Amendment order, 1951).

Power is associated with space, and space is created through the exercise of power (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006). Initially, national parks were created primarily to protect wildlife; indigenous communities were allowed to retain access to other natural resources, local people were employed as guards, and reserves were viewed in a positive light by the affected local inhabitants. The legislation protecting wildlife later became stricter and local people living within the conserved areas were in many cases removed by force; and through approaches such as fences, park rangers, laws against poaching and trespassing national parks became heavily protected zone to be kept safe from rampaging outsiders (that is, the local people) (Dahlberg, Rohde and Sandell, 2010). The denial of access rights was considered as a loss of sources of living, and a denial from cultural identity that destroyed local knowledge systems and social cohesion of the local people (Ramutsindela, 2004). The removal of the hunting and fishing rights from the local people by deleting it on the gazette had an alienating implication for the hunting tradition and the indigenes' sense of community and belonging. Consequently, local communities enter into unequal power relations when attempting to have access to wildlife resources, which often results in violent conflicts.

Scholars link national parks and local people conflicts to property rights struggles (Naughton-Treves *et al.,* 1995; Mapedza, 2007). Wildlife policy is oppressive in nature (Mapedza, 2007) and the relationship between the local communities and national park officials is characterized by conflict. The doubt about who exactly owns wildlife and the forest results in constant battle, excessive hunting, dwindling wildlife resources and extinction crisis (Enuoh, *et al.,* 2014). Also, there is confusion and uncertainty about "who

owns wildlife and who governs wildlife" and its habitat (Naughton-Treves *et al.,* 1995, page 1267).

In comparison to land, which cannot move and can easily be surveyed and delineated, wild animals are resources that become owned when exterminated. Wild animals are hence, ownerless when they are still alive, and thus can move from one environment to another. Conflicts emerging from the creation and management of national parks are often associated with access rights to wildlife resources while those affecting decision making are usually restricted and stage managed by governments (Dahlberg *et al.,* 2010). Conservation initiatives affect local communities through restructured/ restricted access rights to wildlife (Dahlberg et al., 2010). The impact on jobs, culture and identity has always been harsh (West, Igoe and Brockington, 2006). This ultimately results in the depletion of local knowledge (Bender 1993) and broken relationships with wildlife agencies. It is expedient to note that conservation is about greater ecological values such as wildlife goods and services, and those who come to a decision on these values (Dahlberg *et al.,* 2010). Hence, conservation has been, and is still intertwined with issues of power and environmental justice. Additionally, what may be considered as improved justice by a group (efforts to conserve wildlife) may not appear as such to another group (rural communities alienated from essential wildlife resources) (Dahlberg *et al.,* 2010). The reaction of local groups to the preservation and acquisition of their forest by the government and the attendant strict restriction is reflected in the view of one of the traditional chiefs thus:

> We are not happy with the restriction. It appears as if government tied our hands from having access to our daily bread. We can no longer collect fruits, vegetables, medicinal plants and animals, gather snails or hunt freely in the park. Since our forest was taken over, government has not fulfilled the promised benefits such as technical school or school of forestry. Before the government took over the Park Forest, we had our way of managing the forest in such a way that will be beneficial to our people. Government collected our forest because of what they will gain from the forest and in order to punish the indigenes (KII, Traditional chief, Sepeteri Range, February, 2017).

The local communities living next to the Old Oyo National Park maintained that when the park was created, government promised them that they will be allowed access to some

wildlife resources, benefits such as technical school, school of forestry and hospital but unfortunately, government has not fulfilled these promised benefits since then. An interviewee stated that:

> When government took over the forest from our fathers, they did not say our right to hunt will be totally removed. The agreement was that the community will also have certain benefits from the preservation and conservation of the forest. But along the line, after independence, the right to benefit or to hunt in the park was removed from the indigenes. Presently, we have no right to pick anything from the Park Forest, because majority of our people are hunters and farmers. The resources in the Park Forest are what we use for consumption and cash. If government says we should not hunt in the park, how are we going to have bush meat? Our forefathers that made the agreement with the government then were local and not knowledgeable enough to do proper agreement. They were not civilized enough to know their rights. There should be an allocation of particular percentage of benefit to the community that is well documented. In fact, our forefathers made a great mistake then (KII, Traditional Chief, Marguba Range, 3rd November, 2016).

Another interviewee put it:

> The recruitment process into the National Park is quite political. The process is usually carried out in Oyo Town at the expense of our indigenes. No more bushmeat to eat and no more bushmeat to sell in order to make ends meet. The restriction deprived us of the opportunity to perpetuate our forefathers' tradition. The restriction affects us a lot. If our people are arrested today, when they are released, they will still go back to hunt in the park. This is because there is no other means of livelihood. Our indigenes that were employed are not many compared to what they employed from Oyo town (KII, traditional ruler, Marguba Range, 6th November, 2016).

The elders in the local communities of Old Oyo National Park explained that government promised the communities that jobs will be given to the indigenes but those people that were employed after the forest was taken over are dead now but are not replaced by their indigenes. Instead of maintaining the previous arrangement between government and the local communities, government started employing people with certificate from outside because the indigenes are not well educated. A traditional chief shared his opinion thus:

> Initially, the park Management believe that employing the indigenes will serve as benefit but unfortunately, most of the people employed in those days were old people and they are late now. The indigenes were happy then

> and they were also cooperative since they were seeing the benefit of the park through paid employment. Today, government only employs people with certificate and this is disqualifying our indigenes that are not educated or certificated. A majority of the people employed are not from this town. Government denied us of employment. Outsiders were given jobs. We are tired of the punishment meted to us by the government. How can other people from nowhere be employed at the expense of our indigenes? My advice for the government and wildlife authority is to ensure that our people are well considered and employed during the recruitment exercise (IDI, traditional chief, Marguba Range, 16th February, 2017).

The above data shows that the initial plan of the government was to employ the indigenes as park workers, which will serve as benefit of conservation to the community members. Also, education appears to be another tool being used by the government to sideline the local people from the benefits of wildlife resources. In an attempt to have a comprehensive view of benefits being enjoyed by the locals, the National Park officials that were interviewed claimed that the national park dug bore holes and renovates schools in some villages at the Old Oyo National Park but the communities denied these claims and argued that those things were done by the politicians with their constituency allowance. This was aptly captured in the interview with one informant:

> The communities enjoy many things from the Old Oyo National Park. For instance, bags of rice and money are sometimes shared among the indigenes. We dug borehole, tarred their roads and many more. Despite all these, they still remain a menace to the protection of wildlife and its habitat. Illegal hunting still persists in all the ranges of old Oyo National Park. No matter what government put in place to help these people, they will still poach wild animals. It is in their blood and it is their way of life. (IDI, National Park Officials, Marguba Range, 19th November, 2016).

Another National Park Officials stated:

> Some of the indigenes are employed by the park. The park Management dug borehole for the community 5 years ago. There was also thrift provision for women to stabilize their economy. At times, the Management extends financial help to the community. Bags of rice are also shared among them because without them there would be nothing like national park (IDI, National Park Officials, Marguba Range, 18th November, 2016).

This claim was contradicted by a traditional ruler in Sepeteri who noted that:

> All the facilities they claim to have provided are constructed in the national

> park. The borehole they dug and other infrastructure or swimming pool are done for the tourists in the Park. All the money realized from the tourists and arrested poachers are not extended to the community members. We are not benefitting from the National Park. (KII, traditional ruler, Marguba Range, 20th November, 2016).

A traditional chief in Igboho was of the view that:

> There is no federal government school, no forestry and no benefit whatsoever. Hunters have no access to hunt in the park. What is our offence? What have we done to the government to deserve this kind of punishment? All the money realized from the tourists and arrested poachers are not extended to the community members. We are not benefitting from the National Park (KII, traditional chief, Sepeteri Range, 15th March, 2017).

From the foregiong, it was discovered that all the benefits claimed to have been provided by the government through the national park are false and total deceit. There is no federal government school, no bank and other basic amenities are lacking especially in Marguba range, Sepeteri. The local people opine that the conservation of wildlife which they have been living with for many years and which they have been controlling through taboos and tradition is not concerned with their wellbeing. This is in line with the position of Hulme and Murphree, (2001b) that local communities view conservation ideology as focused only on the welfare of wildlife in the park and far less on the well-being of the local people outside the park. This scenario aligns with the theory of political economy of wildlife extraction which claims that the concern of the national park asides wildlife conservation appears to be institutional survival; the needs to legalise and control wildlife resources; and that wildlife agencies establish rule that frustrate conservation goals because the rules are created mainly to maintain agencies' control over wildlife, and not to share benefits from the wildlife with other actors.

The action of government in this regard exposed its exploitative tendencies in the management of wildlife resources and the antagonistic reaction of the indigenes as government has failed to incorporate conservation into the livelihood activities of the local people. Since government took over the Park Forest, the benefits that are supposed to get to the local communities surrounding the park are being hijacked by powerful individuals outside their communities. For instance, the location of the headquarters at Oyo town was

claimed to have be masterminded by Alafin of Oyo. Again, most of the local inhabitants claimed that the Park Forest is theirs. Thus, telling them not to hunt in their forest is an invitation to violence, anarchy and ultimately, mayhem. They argued that they cannot farm, fish and hunt in the park because of the restriction. All these have affected their source of livelihoods. The indigenes view this development as exploitation, punishment and wickedness on the part of government which usually results into antagonism and conflict between the indigenes and park officials. A local hunter has this to say:

> We are not happy about the restriction at the Old Oyo National Park because of the location of the headquarters at Oyo town. Actually, this is where the headquarters should be. Government first erected sign post here in Marguba Range, Sepeteri but it was later moved to Oyo town with the power of Alaafin of Oyo. We are cheated because we do not have access to the corridor of power (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 26th February, 2017).

Similarly, a traditional chief stated that:

> The location of headquarters of the park in Oyo was politically motivated. They employed Oyo people more because the headquarters is located in Oyo town. There is no forest/park in Oyo town; this is where the bush is. The Alaafin is using his power over the whole of Oke-Ogun people and we feel cheated. He used his power to take the headquarters to Oyo town that has no forest of this standard. This really saddens our hearts (KII, Traditional chief, Sepeteri Range, 12th April, 2017).

One park ranger stated that:

> The indigenes felt we came to collect their land and stop them from making their livelihoods. Some of them feel cheated. If not, they won't be going to the park to hunt. They do not like the way the park is being manage. They want the Park Forest to be left for them to do all sorts of things they like, not considering the fact that the wildlife resources and other forest products will go into extinction. The indigenes often complained that the free zone is no longer fertile and that they would prefer to farm in the Park because the land in the Park Forest is so fertile (IDI, Park ranger, Marguba Range, 26th March, 2017).

Similarly, this position was strengthened by another interviewee:

> The restriction has affected us in so many ways. The hardship is too much. Look around, how many industries can you see? How many basic amenities are functioning? The Park is the only resource that we depend on in this

> community. But unfortunately, the Federal Government has collected it from us without giving us anything in return. As you are here present, if it was before, if you say you want to eat Igala (Bush buck, *Tragelaphus scriptus*), I will get it for you. If you get to the market, you will see different species of bush meat but now, you cannot even hold it at hand because if you are caught, you would be taken to Oyo, fined or imprisoned. We want the Park Forest to be left for us. We are going to manage it better.I can promise you that the wildlife resources and other forest products will not go into extinction. The free zone is no longer fertile and we would also like to farm if government can get us fertile land (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Yemoso Range,19th April, 2017).

The indigenes are dissatisfied with the way and manner the Administrative Headquarters of Old Oyo National Park was taken to Oyo town, 139.3km kilometers away from the national park. They described this as being politically motivated by Alaafin of Oyo because of his influence and access to the corridor of power. They argued that there is no forest/park in Oyo town and that the Park Forest is within their communities; and therefore queried why the headquarters was taken to Oyo town. They asserted that government first erected the sign post of the headquarters in Marguba Range, Sepeteri but it was later removed and relocated to Oyo town with power play. The distance between the Administrative Headquarters of Old Oyo National Park in Oyo town and Marguba range, Sepeteri, Sepeteri range, Igboho and Yemoso Range, Ikoyi are shown in figures 3, 4 and 5 below.

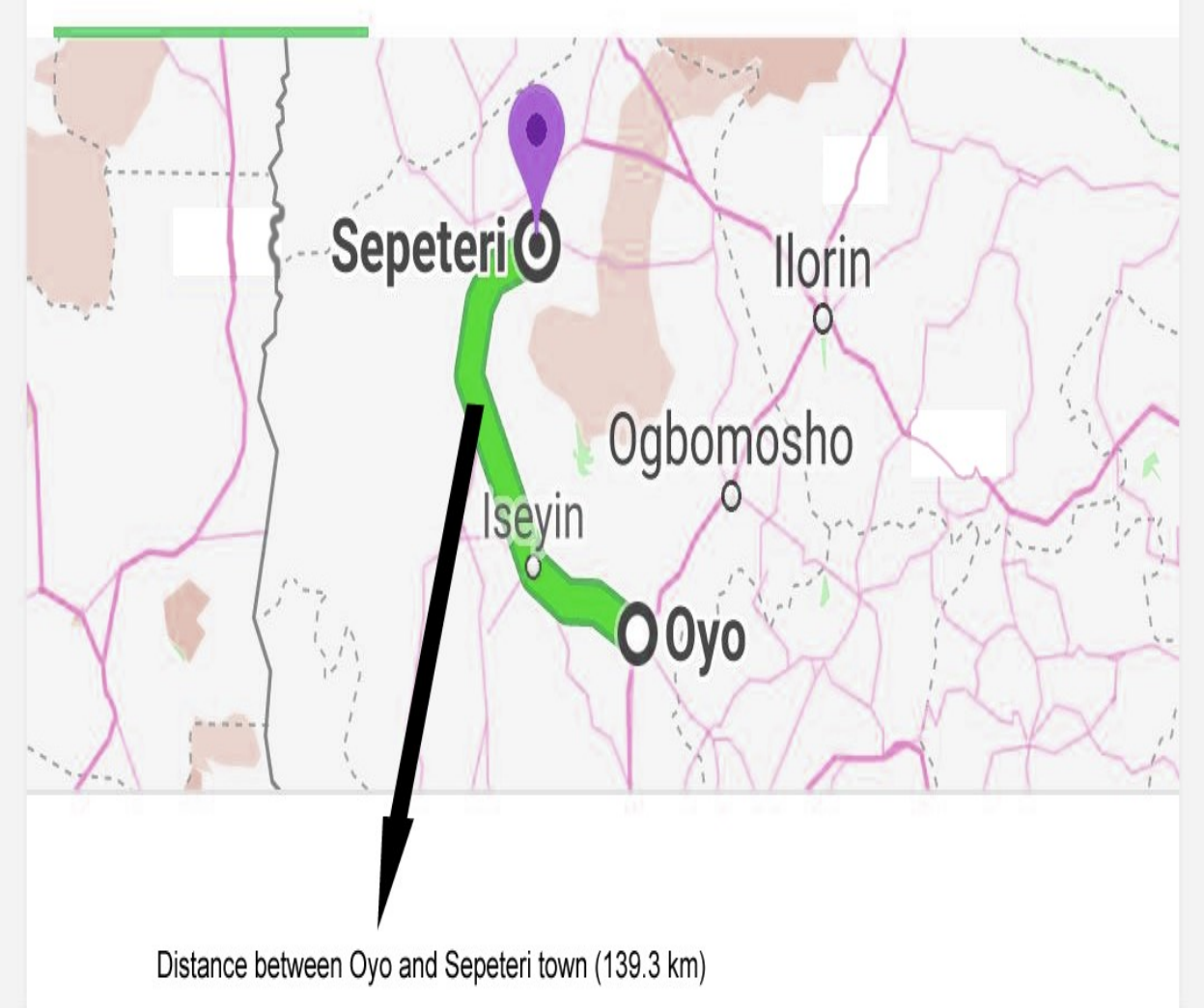

Figure 4.1: Distance between Oyo and Sepeteri

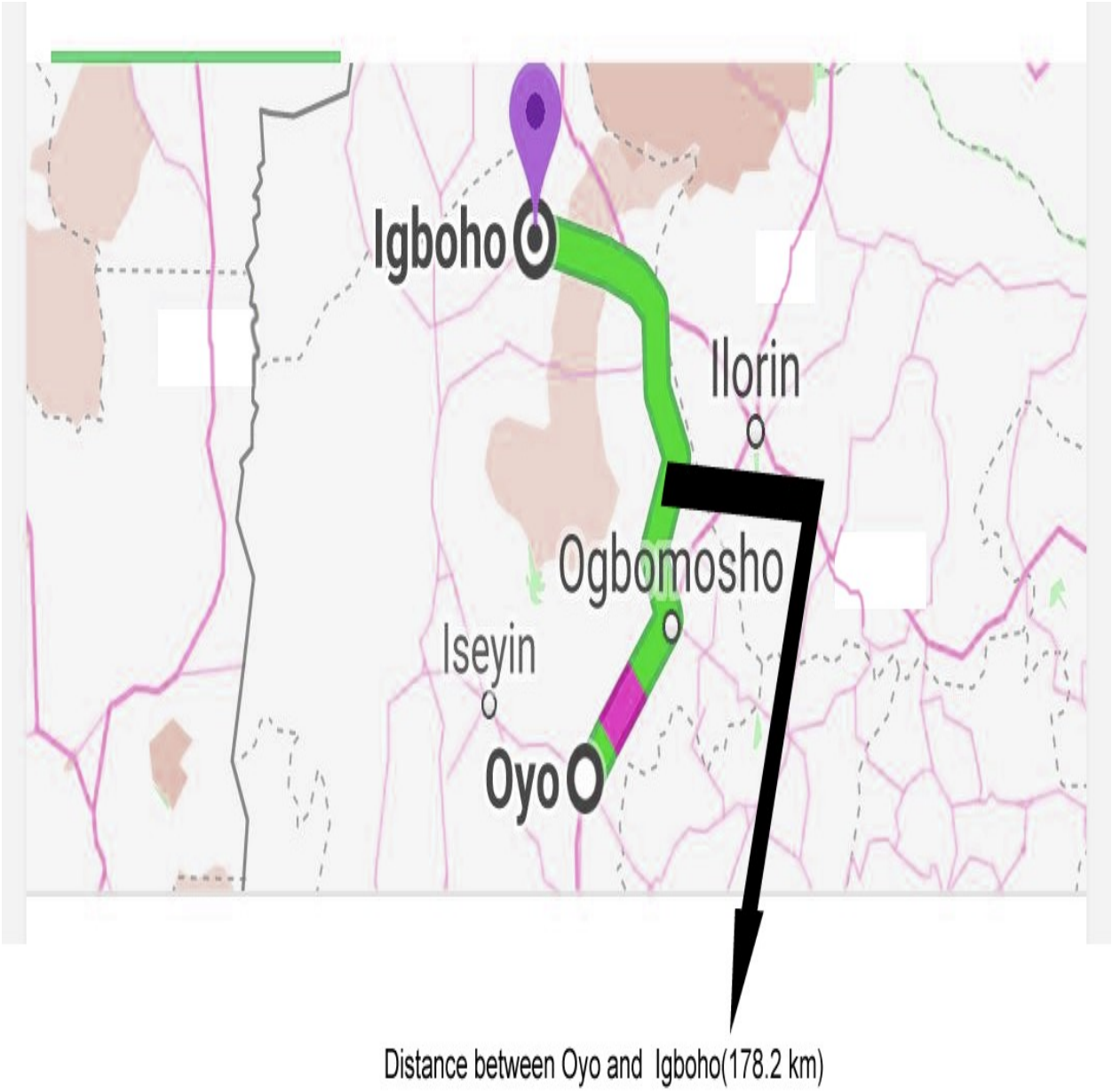

Figure 4.2: Distance between Oyo and Igboho

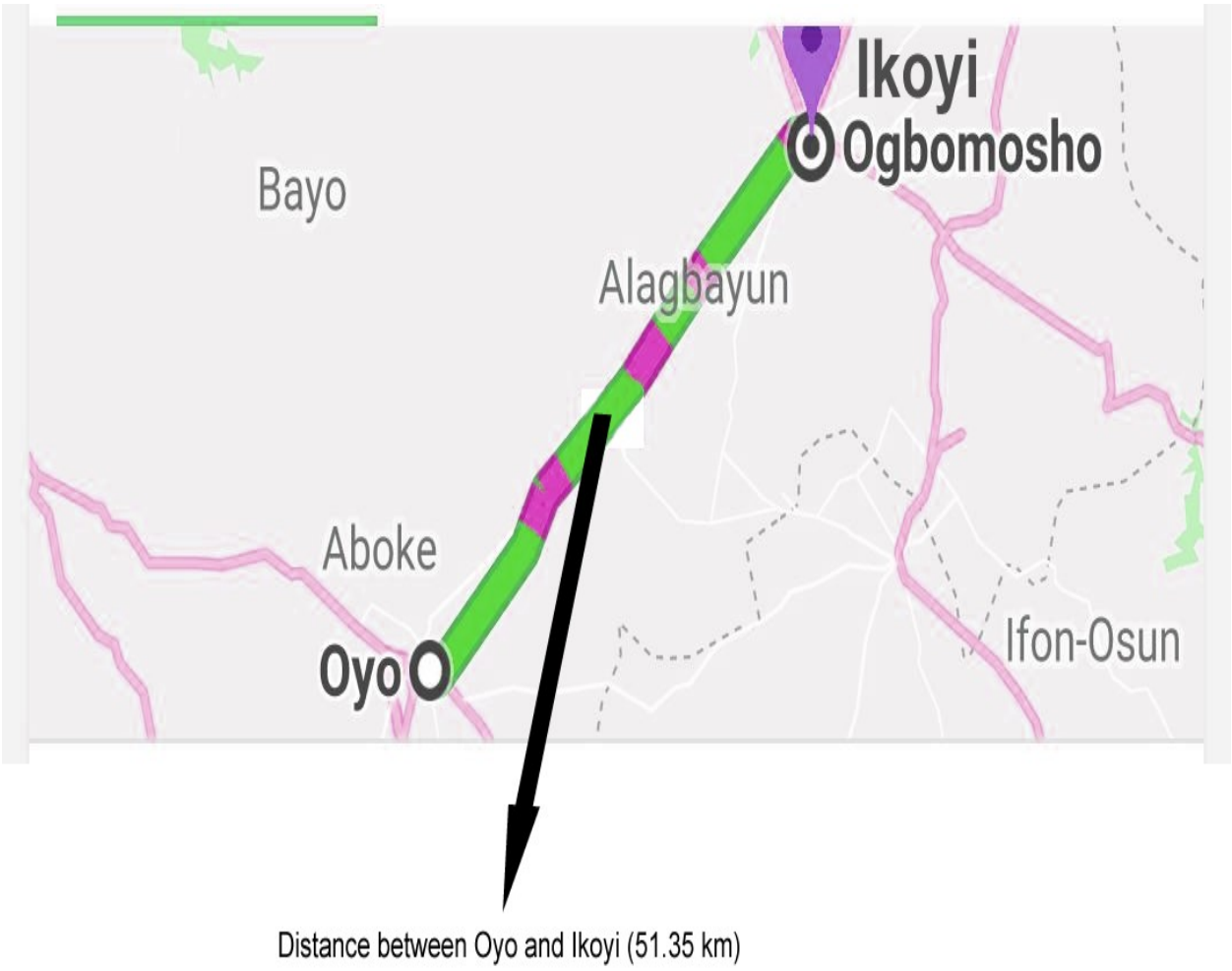

Figure 4.3: Distance between Oyo and Ikoyi

Government has failed to be just in the recruitment process into the payroll of the Old Oyo National Park. The recruitment exercise is often conducted in Oyo town where the Park headquarters is situated. Consequently, more people are employed from Oyo town due to the influence of Alaafin of Oyo. This is as an attempt to continue to favour the Alaafin of Oyo's candidates over the local populations living next to the Park. The arrangement is pure politics and the indigenes are bitter with this development. This is a clear case of powerful indigenes hijacking the benefits of wildlife conservation to their own advantage at the expense of other actors, and hence, can be situated within political economy analysis which is concerned with the interaction of political and economic processes in a society; the distribution of power and wealth between different groups and individuals, and the processes that create, sustain and transform these relationships over time (Collison, 2003). Power is therefore explained as the process of marginalisation and alienation by diverse parties competing over resources (Le Billon, 2000).

The indigenes are aggrieved with the hunting restriction which denied them of their right to continue to perform their ancestral tradition of wildlife hunting and access to variety of bush meat for consumption. Indeed, the political economy of wildlife conservation presents government as anti-people and anti-survival, hence, the negative impression, negative attitude and apathy to wildlife conservation in Old Oyo National Park. More so that wildlife governance is not built on securing benefits for the local communities that shoulder the burden of conservation. Many of the informants emphasized this view:

> The Park serves as a source of foreign exchange earnings for the government and as a source of employment for the people but the indigenes are not enjoying enough from this arrangement. The communities too are supposed to be benefitting from the money coming into the park but reverse is the case (KII, Traditional chief, Marguba Range, 3rd November, 2016).

Similarly, this position was strengthened by another key informant who claimed:

> We are not benefitting anything from the Old Oyo National Park. Government deceived our uncivilized forefathers who naively gave the forest to the government. During the negotiation, government promised our forefathers that the indigenes will have certain benefits such as minor forest products but this is not so. We cannot even enter the park without being arrested not to talk of fetching minor products. The promised employment for our indigenes is not done with sincerity of purpose. Many employees of

> the national park are not our indigenes (KII, Traditional chief, Sepeteri Range, 3rd February, 2017).

This corroborates the explanation of another interviewee in Yemoso Range who stated that:

> We are farmers and hunters. Hunting and farming are the two major occupations here. Our lands that we use for cultivation are no longer fertile; therefore, we need more lands. If you have the opportunity to farm in the park you will be so rich because the land there is so fertile. The restriction at the Old Oyo National Park has affected our farming activities tremendously. We still hold on to the promises made by the government to give us benefits such as school of forestry, hospital, creation of jobs or alternative source of livelihood. No more opportunities to kill animals for our ceremonies. If you are caught, you are in trouble. Government said that we should not hunt again but refused to help us. They did not provide any alternative source of livelihood for us. So, what does the government want us to be doing if we do not hunt? Worse of, we cannot even cut trees in the park to roof our houses, ah aah, why? What is our offence? (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 6th November, 2016).

The local communities asserted that the lands they use for cultivation are no longer fertile; therefore, there is need for virgin lands such as the Park Forest. They asserted that the Park Forest is very fertile and that it would increase their farm yields but, the restriction has prevented them from this great opportunity. They however described the embargo placed on their source of food, livelihoods and income as alienation.

Conservation areas have become a way of seeing and understanding the activities of everyday life which reflect the principles of domination and subordination; and the power relations embedded in the extraction of wildlife resources as well as the distribution of its benefits. As a result, conservation areas are important terrain and sources of exploitation, antagonism and conflict among various actors because wildlife resources are economic resources that determine the life chances of individuals in rural communities. Locals are defenceless when their livelihoods and survival strategies are intentionally obstructed, or if their group identity, political position and resources show that they are marginalised (Keen, 1994; Le Billon, 2000). The political economy approach explains why the strength and weaknesses of various groups in the control and exploitation of resources changes overtime, and how their activities in resource exploitation and management influence others (Collison, 2003). The locals have a history of alienation from the park, and they regard

poaching as a form of resistance to their dispossession and exclusion from resources they once enjoyed. Clearly, wildlife resources are not immobile and their allocation and pervasiveness are free flowing, and are closely linked with policy and politics (Jones, 2006). Wildlife policies and their consequences reveal endeavours by people and groups to have economic personal and group advantages, or plans to influence existing conditions or create new ones so as to fulfil their ambitions (Gibson, 1999; Ramutsindela, 2004). Varying agendas and perspectives about the environment among diverse interest groups in local communities with differing power levels have contributed to a complex and iterative conservation story; in addition, they have also brought about significant challenges to environmental governance, as a result of the diversity and dynamism of people in wildlife interactions. The denial of local people of access to the national park does not only take its toll on their livelihoods but also on their belief system. A key informant shed more light on this:

> Initially, when the park was created, the indigenes were given the right to pass through the park in order to access their shrines and perform their rituals but these rights were later removed by the government without any consideration and respect for our customs and tradition (KII, Traditional chief, Sepeteri Range, 15th March, 2017).

This view is complemented by another respondent thus:

> The restriction at the Old Oyo National Park deprived us of the opportunity to perpetuate our forefathers' tradition. For instance, we are unable to access our forefathers' shrine (IDI, Traditional ruler, Marguba Range, 15th November, 2016).

It is worthy of note that the Park Forest housed the old palace of Alaafin of Oyo Empire. Also, there are the relics of Old Oyo Empire, memorable gods such as god of thunder (Sango), god of iron (Ogun), Masquerades shrine, deities, ancestral burial site of past Alaafin, Antete shrine, Ogun shrine, Esu shrine, Sango shrine, Asabari shrine (Oke Asabari) which is in line with part of the supposed aim of establishing the Old Oyo National Park, that is, to preserve the historical remnants of the Old Oyo Empire and wildlife for the benefit of present and future generations (Emelike, 2014). A cave called Agbaku cave is also located in the Old Oyo National Park. This cave could accommodate up to one thousand people at once. The place was used as hide out for Oyo-Ile people

during war. Unfortunately, the local inhabitants are no longer allowed to have access to their shrines because they are located within the park and nobody is allowed to enter the park for any reason whatsoever.

In some African countries such as South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zimbabwe wildlife conservation areas have provision for hunting permit and the permit specifies whether to hunt with a fire arm, bow and arrow or knife (Taylor, 2009; Morgera, 2009; Lindsey *et al.,* 2015). However, it was discovered that there are no licensed agents or individuals that are allowed to hunt in the Old Oyo National Park. A local hunter commented that:

> Government does not consider us as regards the license or hunting permit. Our people are interested in having the license or the hunting permit but there is nothing as such in all the ranges of the Park. We are not allowed to hunt in the park, whether legally or illegally. We believe that government will have mercy on us one day and come up with the idea of issuing license for the interested members of the community (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Yemoso Range, 4th April, 2017).

The above data is an indication that the local people are interested in legal hunting, if hunting permit or license is made available by the government. Another local hunter stated that:

> There is no legal hunting in the park because we are not given any license or hunting permit. It is a decree. Anyone who tries to hunt in the park will have a free ride to the national park headquarters in Oyo town where he will be sent to police net. Most times we hunt in the free zone because some animals migrate from the park to the free zone but large animals do not go to the free zone (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 4th November, 2016).

Another local hunter-pocher put the issue thus:

> There is no legal hunting in the park because hunting is not allowed. The park management or government has not started giving us hunting license. Anyone who tries to hunt in the park will be arrested and prosecuted. Most times, we hunt in the free zone because some animals migrate from the park to the free zone but large animals do not go to the free zone. Help us to tell government to consider the issue of legal hunting which will give our people that are interested in legal hunting in the park the opportunity to do

> so. Anyone who wants to hunt in legally goes to the free zone when those who want to hunt illegally goes to the park to hunt because of the abundance of the wild animals in the park. Our major occupation in this town is hunting. It will be highly appreciated if government can give us license so that we can be hunting in a legal manner (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Yemoso Range, 20th November, 2016).

Similarly, a hunter-poacher expressed his opinion about the issuance of hunting license thus:

> We are not giving any license to hunt in the park. We heard that it is practiced in Europe, America and some African countries. The Park Management does not put anything in place in term of legal hunting. We are not allowed to hunt in the Park whether legally or illegally. We hope they will do this one day. This is what some people living around the park are enjoying in some other countries. I believe that if people are given license to hunt legally and accordingly the rate of poaching will reduce because the people that are hunting legally will also be in support of conservation. There are no processes involved in legal hunting in the park because hunting is not allowed. We usually hunt freely at the free zone. We hope that one day government will consider the issue of legal hunting which will give the law abiding indigenes who are interested in hunting legally the opportunity do so. Some of us in this community are interested in obtaining hunting license but government does not want us to do anything in the park again. As I speak, there are not processes for legal hunting (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 4th November, 2016).

A national park official stated that:

> There is no plan for legal hunting at the Old Oyo National Park. There is no process for legal hunting and hunting is not allowed in the park. However, some recalcitrant hunters do enter the park illegally. I think if government can put in place something like local hunting and issuance of license to the interested members of the community, this may go a long way in reducing the rate of poaching. Nobody is licensed to hunt in the Old Oyo National Park. No legal hunting processes at the Old Oyo National Park. Here at Sepeteri and most parks in Nigeria, hunting is not allowed. This is only practiced in Europe, America and in some African countries. The management of Old Oyo National Park has not put anything in place for local people to be hunting legally in the park. The local people are not allowed to hunt in the park whether legally or illegally. We hope they will do this one day. This happens in some countries. I do not know why it is not so in Nigeria. If government can look into this and consider issuing licenses to local people who are interested in hunting legally, this will give them a sense of belonging and make them to be more committed to conservation thereby reducing the rate of poaching (IDI, National Park Official, Sepeteri Range, 18th January, 2017).

A traditional chief expressed his view on licence thus:

> They are not giving us any license. We have not experienced such at Sepeteri. We are interested in getting the license but there is no provision for such now. Government does not have any consideration for us in terms of hunting and that is why people will go there to hunt illegally when government will not allow them to hunt legally. There are no legal hunting processes in the Old National Park. We are not allowed to hunt neither are we issued license to hunt legally. If a process of legal hunting is put in place, it will go a long way in reducing poaching (IDI, Traditional Chief, Marguba Range, 4th November, 2016).

A poacher has this to say:

> There are no licensed agents or individuals in the park. We are not issued license to hunt in the park. Government just closed eyes while making the law. If we are issued hunting license we would not be risking our lives by sneaking into the park at night (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 2017).

In the Sepeteri range of the Park, a local hunter-poacher shared his view thus:

> Help us to tell government to consider the issue of legal hunting which will give our people that are interested in the legal hunting in the park the opportunity to do so. Anyone who wants to hunt legally goes to the free zone when those who want to hunt illegally goes to the park to hunt because of the abundance of the wild animals in the park, especially the big animals. The Park Management does not put anything in place in terms of legal hunting. We are not allowed to hunt in the Park whether legally or illegally. This is what some people living around the park are enjoying in some other countries. I believe that if people are given license to hunt legally and accordingly, the rate of poaching will reduce because the people that are hunting legally will be in support of wildlife conservation as this will give them a sense of belonging and make them to be more committed to conservation thereby reducing the rate of poaching (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Sepeteri Range, 21st November, 2016).

The above data is a clear case of marginalization and exploitation whereby the local people who are willing to hunt legally are being denied hunting permit since government does not put anything in place in term of legal hunting. However, there is need for the government to consider the issuance of hunting permit to the interested indigenes. This will go a long way in giving the indigenes sense of belonging, thereby promotes the conservation of wildlife; discourages apathy and reduces the rate of poaching. Also, the inability of government to

allow legal hunting in the park supports the view that communities are often marginalized from accessing wildlife resources and conservation benefits, which creates negative impression about authorities (Newmark, Leonard, Sariko, and Gamassa, 1993). Often, such negative relationships are deteriorated by human wildlife conflict, insensitive anti-poaching mechanisms and age-long grievances over denial of access (Lindsey *et al.,* 2015). In such instances, poaching may be adopted as a form of protest to the authorities (Holmes, 2007). For any development and environment policies to be successful, involvement at the community level becomes crucial. Involvement is an important component of development and it is only when individuals and communities are mobilised to participate that development objectives can be achieved. Therefore, the involvement of relevant stakeholders in the distribution of wildlife benefits is so crucial in achieving the objectives of wildlife conservation.

Figure 4.4: Diagram of wealth creation

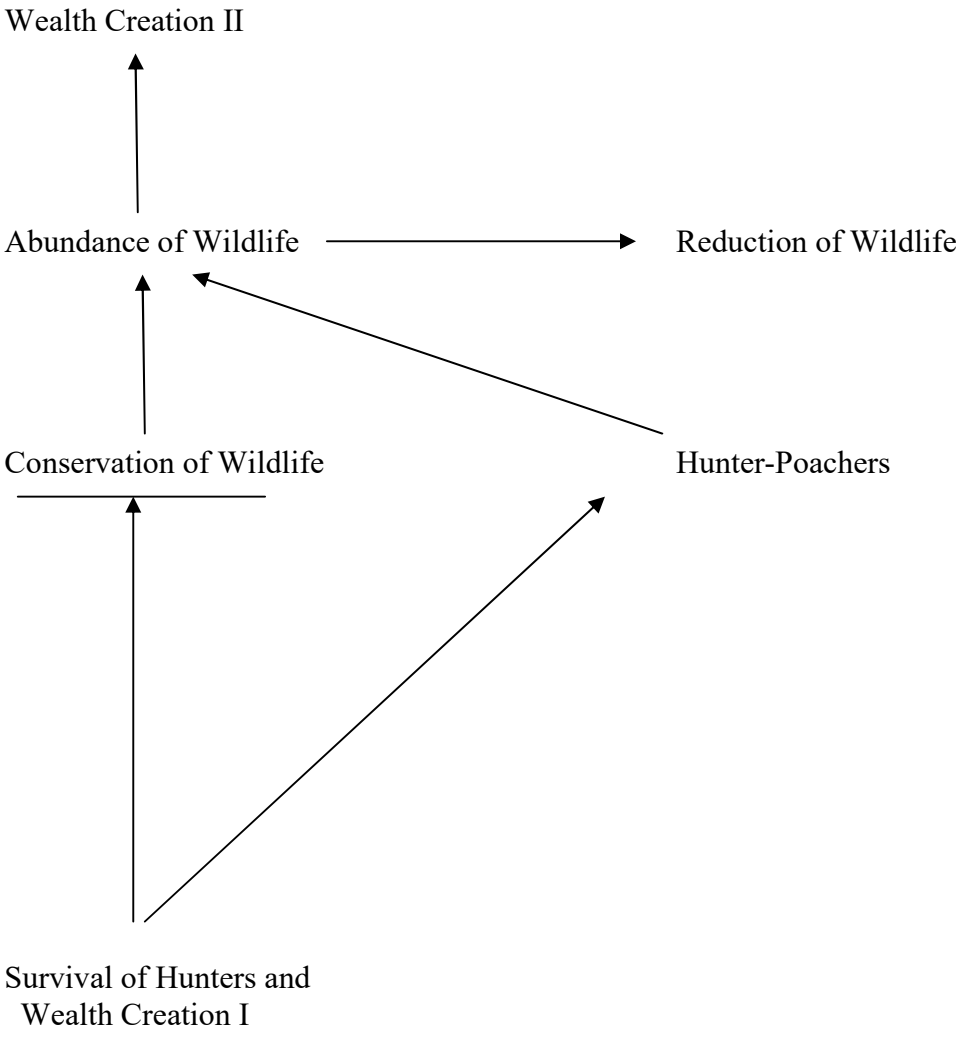

Figure 4.4 illustrates how the survival of the local hunters (wealth creation I) turned them to hunter-poachers which has negative effect on abundance of wildlife thereby reducing the population of wildlife. Wildlife conservation can lead to the abundance of wildlife for (wealth creation II) through entry fees, research fees and game viewing fees which are levied on tourists and students who come for research or excursion. The rural household income and the economy of the local communities adjacent to the Park can be improved through this. However, linking wealth creation I with wealth creation II in order to arrive at survival of both humans and wild animals remains a challenge. However, linking the two will reduce conflict and promote wildlife conservation. There is the need for government to link wealth creation I and II for sustainability and development.

The political economy further explains the hold of government on the forest to its benefit and that of the elite class at the expense of the alienated indigenous populations. In fact, the acquisition and subsequent turning of the Forest to the National Park involved penalties for local inhabitants who encroached upon Government Forest Reserves for subsistence hunting. The study revealed that that some poachers may or may not be sentenced to imprisonment because the penalty attached to poaching of animals varies. They may go through "compoundment". By "compoundment", an accussed settles out of court by paying for the conservation value of the animals illegally killed. This is clearly stated in the **National Park Service Act**, (1999) that:

> "anyone arrested on the account of poaching has committed an offence under this Act. Based on this, the Compounding Officer appointed to enforce regulation stipulated in Section 51 of the Act, may make the offender to pay certain amount for the conservation value of the animal(s) killed instead of taking the matter to court. After the payment, the offender will be released from the police net. However, the Compounding Officer is not authorised to collect money from the arrested poacher but must ensure that the stipulated amount for the conservation value of the animals is paid by the offender into the National Park account and the offender must be issued a receipt that will serve as the evidence of payment".

This was aptly captured in the explanations of the national park official thus:

> A typical hunter has poverty in his life. There is no way hunters will be prosecuted and will not affect his economic life. His family will take money to Old Oyo National Park headquarters in order to bail him. There is a

> process we call "compoundment" that is out of court settlement which is common these days. This is always between the arrested poachers or suspects and the park Management. When a poacher is arrested, the Management will ask the person whether he wants the case to be settled out of court or not. It all depends on the decision of the suspect. Arrested poachers are aware of the fact that court process is usually longer and therefore prefers to settle out of court. The compoundment committee set up by the Management will decide on how much the arrested poacher will pay (KII, National Park Official, Yemoso Range, 16th April. 2017).

Similarly, a national park official put it thus:

> Poverty and unemployment are the factors responsible for poaching. Most of the villagers are not doing other work apart from farming and hunting while the youths have no job. The creation of the national park has led to the sack of many local inhabitants from hunting in the park and they are not happy about this. That is why they resulted to hunting of wild animals in the park. In fact, the arrested ones still go back to the Park Forest to poach. However, there is a process we call "compoundment" (that is out of court settlement) which is common these days. This is always between the arrested poachers or suspects and the park Management. When a poacher is arrested, the Management will ask the person whether he wants the case to be settled out of court or not. It all depends on the decision of the suspect. Arrested poachers are aware of the fact that court process is usually longer and therefore prefers to settle out of court. The compoundment committee set up by the Management will decide on how much the arrested poacher will pay (KII, National Park Official, Sepeteri Range, 12th May. 2017).

Another informant explained that:

> To kill and to capture are forbidden in the park. Anyone caught will be arrested. Recently, some poachers were arrested and brought to Oyo because they killed a crocodile in the park. They were taken to court and as we speak they are presently in the prison. They were sentenced to one month imprisonment. If you kill a crocodile, there is nothing like compoundment. It is purely a jail term. Also, poaching of endangered species like pangolin (*Manis tricuspis*) cannot be settled by compoundment. The case will be taken to court. Most of the animals that have reached extinction or endangered status attract jail term (KII, Park Inspector, OONP Headquarters, 26th February, 2017).

The above data indicates that there is an arrangement that provides an option for the poacher to settle his case out of court which most poachers usually prefer in order to avoid the delay in the court process. However, the national park authorities posited that most of the animals that have reached extinction or endangered status such as crocodile and

pangolin attract jail term and cannot be settled through compoundment. Some of the species of animals that can be settled by compoundment if illegally killed are Warthog *(Phacochoerus aethiopicus),* Kob *(Kobus kob),* Waterbuck *(Kobus defassa),* Roan antelope *(Hippotragus equinus),* Hartebeest *(Alcelaphus buselaphus),* Red patas monkey *(Erythrocebus patas*), Green monkey *(Cercopithecus aethiops),* Bush buck (*Tragelaphus scriptus),* Baboon *(Papio anubis)* and African wildcat (*Felix sylvestris*).

The park officials have the authority to arrest, fine or imprison poachers. The Park Officials are often armed and they can use force to make arrest. This authority with the use of police and the law court is exhibited in many cases and the way local inhabitants experience it is usually inhuman. On many occasions, park rangers have employed violence towards local people (Norgrove and Hulme 2006; Robbins *et al*., 2007; Ogra 2008; Milgroom and Spierenburg, 2008; Laudati, 2010; Brondo and Bown, 2011). In fact, some countries have used a shoot-to-kill policy against alleged poachers in conservation areas, despite the fact that poaching is not a capital offence (Holmes, 2013). The resulting deaths from this policy have been described as extra-judicial killings (Neumann, 2004). The memory, threat and anticipation of violence from national park rangers can discourage the local people in supporting conservation policy (Norgrove and Hulme 2006; Almudi and Berkes 2010). Neumann (2004) posits that violence in conservation areas has continued because it is legalised by certain dominant discourses about wildlife, illegal hunting, and the extinction crisis. Similarly, local people can in turn use violence against conservation areas' staff and this can be very helpful in changing policy (Orlove 2002; Norgrove and Hulme, 2006).

The local people expressed their grievances further that 'strangers' like the Zuru from northern part of Nigeria often enter the park while the indigenes cannot. The Zuru are from central Kebbi State. Local people described the Zuru as very dangerous and deadly when they are in the park. They are well armed, organised and often come to the park in large numbers. Also, the Fulanis and their cows that enter park chase the wild animals farther to Republic of Benin. Apart from grazing, the Fulanis often kill wild animals in the park. This was expressed by one of the respondents thus:

> Strangers such as the Zuru are allowed to enter the park while we the indigenes are not. Cattles are allowed to graze in the park thereby chasing the wild animals farther to Republic of Benin. Interestingly, anytime our

> wild animals migrate to Republic of Benin, the authorities there will barricade the border boundary by digging holes in such a way that the wild animals will not be able to return to Nigeria. These strangers called zuru have sophisticated weapons and the park rangers fear them. They dare not move close to them. We are not happy about this. The restriction sacks many of us from the park and allows the Zuru and Fulani. The park rangers alone cannot face the zuru. The zuru are so destructive. They kill as many animals as possible. They do not care whether the animals are pregnant or not (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Marguba Range,12th January, 2017).

Similarly, another local hunter stated that:

> The Zuru enter the park while we the indigenes cannot because of the double standard law. Cattles are allowed to graze in the park thereby chasing the wild animals farther to Republic of Benin. Interestingly, anytime our wild animals migrate to Republic of Benin, the authorities there will barricade the border boundary by digging holes in such a way that the wild animals will not be able to return to Nigeria. These strangers called zuru have sophisticated weapons and the park rangers fear them. They dare not move close to them. We are not happy about this. The restriction sacks many of us from the park and allows the Zuru and Fulani. The park rangers alone cannot face the zuru. The zuru are so destructive. They kill as many animals as possible. They do not care whether the animals are pregnant or not. There is injustice here because the park rangers cannot arrest the Zuru but they can arrest us (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Sepeteri Range,19th February, 2017).

Another interviewee revealed that:

> The indigenes usually give the park management information about these external poachers. These external poachers are known as Zuru. The Zuru usually come from the northern part of the country to hunt wild animals in the Park. They come in large numbers with all the weapons capable of killing anyone who stand on their way. They are so deadly and always ready to kill park rangers who they see in the park. Some local people do not support poachers while some sympathise with them by covering them. Poachers are members of the community. Therefore, there is likelihood that they will have the support of community members. Someone who does not have job or what to eat will definitely find something to eat. If I say we do not have good relationship with them, it is a lie (KII, National Park Official, Marguba Range, 21st February, 2017).

Clearly, the park rangers play a significant role in the management of the park. It was revealed that the rangers ignore the Zuru and the Fulani when they enter the Park Forest but, they wage war against the indigenes and label them as poachers when they hunt in the

park. This is because these groups from northern part of the country especially, the Zuru are powerful and well armed. Most of them, if not all, have sophisticated weapons and are acclaimed to have fetish power. Even the park officials fear them. The Zuru can go to any length to safeguard their interests. In fact, the activities of the Fulani and the Zuru in the park have been described as being inimical to conservation because they drive the wild animals farther thereby depleting the game population in the park. The incessant rate of poaching in the Old Oyo National Park however is attributed partly to the networks of the Zuru and Fulani herdsmen. The local inhabitants are often accused of poaching of wild animals, and that the rate of poaching was due to tradition and, possibly also, as a result of poverty. While all these argument are significant, findings reveal here that incessant rate of poaching is connected to the networks of the Zuru on one hand, and Fulani herdsmen on the other. This is not to say that the locals are completely exonerated as they also share the blame of poaching. The issue of poaching succinctly clarify, beyond doubt that poaching has protruded beyond the activities of the locals or beyond divisions between the national park officials and the local poachers. The indigenes get frustrated by what they perceive as the failure of the state or its agencies to do the needful.

The political economy analysis, which examines the interaction of political and economic processes within a society shows that states actually act as they do and formulate the policies because of vested interest. Findings revealed that government benefit greatly from wildlife resources through tourism, game viewing and payment of compoundment (i.e. an amount of money paid by poacher(s) so that the case can be settled out of court). Government generate revenue from numerous tourists who visit the Old Oyo National Park. For instance, entry fees, research fees and game viewing fees are levied on students who come for research or excursion. This also helps in boosting the forest dwellers but there is no direct benefit to the local people because they do not get any share from the money generated from the park by the government and wildlife authorities. The internally generated revenue of the Old Oyo National park from 2007 to 2017 is listed in the table below:

Table 4.1: Table showing the internally generated revenue of the Old Oyo National park from 2007 to 2017.

YEAR	REVENUE (#)
2007	3, 305, 442.89
2008	4, 670, 965.07
2009	5, 819, 020.00
2010	6, 001, 496.25
2011	6, 768, 955.00
2012	8, 291, 390.00
2013	6, 324, 689.24
2014	6, 202, 486.25
2015	6, 592, 069.00
2016	6, 820, 375.00
2017	4, 774, 490.00

Source: The Old Oyo National Park Annual Reports

The event centre built at the headquarters of the park in Oyo town equally generates income for the government. The entry fee is often different from game viewing fees. Any visitor who is willing to see the wild animals will still pay for "game viewing" after the payment of entry fees. All these go into the government coffers. This suggests the reason why it is important for government to deny the locals access to the park in order to continue to enjoy these benefits alone under the guise of wildlife conservation or the protection of wild animals for the benefit of mankind. This is in line with the position of Gibson (1999) that the agency managing wildlife habitat has the legal right to utilise the wildlife, while the peasants in local communities hunt illegally within the legal-rational framework**.** As a matter of fact, the people in the local communities surrounding the Old Oyo National Park are not allowed to have access to the park. The denial of access rights in this regard translates to a loss of important livelihood sources, and and alienation to the local people. Their indigenous way of life (hunting) is criminalised by labelling anyone who hunts in the park a poacher. Anyone who hunts in the park and arrested will be punished without considering the circumstances or the conditions of the arrested poachers.

This approach ignored the tradition and culture of the local people who do not only see hunting as a tradition, but as a means of livelihood and survival. The government held on to the wildlife benefits to the extent that the local people were not provided with options of legal hunting such as issuing of hunting permit or license to the interested members of the community. The action of government made the locals to consider wildlife policy as obnoxious, faceless, inhuman and an act of alienation; and the only option left for them is to hunt illegally, which is defined as poaching by the government. The local communities lack the right to access wildlife resources that they live with and poaching is usually the only means through which they can benefit from wildlife resources. This is in line with the assertion of Suich, Child and Spenceley, (2009) that the local people lack clear right over their land and wildlife resources they live next to and poaching is the only means through which they benefit from wildlife resources because government keeps huge amount of revenue from wildlife resources. More importantly, the role of the government in the management of wildlife resources is not totally different from that of the colonialists and this can be linked to political economy which focuses on how one group outsmart another over the control of resources.

4.2. Local interpretations of hunting vis-a-vis poaching in the Old Oyo National Park

In contemporary times, conservation sites are now being used by many people to view, understand, experience, and utilise parts of the world, usually referred to as nature (West *et al.,* 2006). This virtualising idea (Carrier and Miller, 1998) has forced the European nature/culture dichotomy on places and people where the difference between nature and culture was not initially in existence (Strathern, 1980). As such, conservation areas have become a new cosmology of the natural, that is, a way of seeing and being in the world that is now viewed as ethical, just and right (West, *et al*., 2006). The establishment of national parks and their benefits come with some difficult but essential sacrifices, as some forms of wildlife hunting restrictions are put on members of the communities (forest dwellers), resulting in subsistence and commercial loss (Bergseng and Vatn, 2009). This approach involves demarcating the prized environment and having it placed under state control; reducing human influence on these environments via monitoring and policing; excluding indigenous people from such areas; intercepting the exploitative use of the wildlife (Ghimire, 1994); neglecting customary rights (Nepal and Weber, 1995); as well as increasing individual, group and community vulnerability (Naughton-Treves, 1997). The underlying principle behind the wildlife conservation policy is that locals are the menace to wildlife (Dwivedi, 1996). In Africa, the people whose livelihoods are tied to wildlife and forest are the ones suffering from hunting ban because they practice wildlife hunting as an age-long tradition.

Game hunting is entrenched in sub-cultural webs of meaning which include tradition, ethnicity, individual and social identities, and socio-cultural reasons (Muth and Bowe, 1998). Game hunting is part of the lifestyle of local hunters and illegal killing of game is accepted as a way of life (Brymer, 1991). To the local people, game killing is hunting, not poaching. They have a particular belief that it is when they are caught that they become poachers. Once they do not allow park rangers to catch them, they remain hunters. At some other times, in deliberate defiance to the government, they hunt to hurt the government, not necessarily to satisfy their survival needs. Game hunting may be carried out in order to have cash or for food (Muth and Bowe, 1998). In specific circumstances, where resources are inadequate and employment opportunities are scarce, subsistence needs might be the main reason for poaching (Hampshire, Bell, Wallace and Stepukonis, 2004; Pratt,

Macmillan and Gordon, 2004). However, reasons why people poach may go beyond subsistence and financial needs. Poaching to some local people is a source of enjoyment and pleasure. Forsyth *et al.*(1998) implies that poaching depicts a refusal to accept discerned impositions of foreign cultural values. However, in the Old Oyo National Park, poaching has social significance and competing meanings. For many local people, their lands and the wildlife resources provided by such lands is held in high esteem. They rely on wildlife and wildlife constituted an important meaning in their relationship with one another, as well as defines their identity. Wildlife hunting in the Old Oyo National Park, illegal (as defined by current wildlife laws in Nigeria) or traditional (as defined by local people) the extraction of wildlife within the park for both subsistence and economic gain continues and it has a deep social, political, economic and cultural roots and its meanings are multifaceted.

The practice of hunting in the Old Oyo National Park extends beyond legality and illegality. The perceptions and practice of hunting in the park can be understood in the context of alterations to wildlife resources on which people once depended for their wellbeing. In this case, illegal hunting becomes a symbol of lost subsistence, traditions and identities and some form of opposition. The loss of wildlife for consumption and cash is of great concern to local people as the communities lack employment opportunities, infrastructure development, tertiary institutions, vocational training centres and favourable wildlife policies. The respondents regarded most violations of hunting rules in the park as a need in daily reality, immersed in indigenous cultural values as opposed to a criminal offence. The significance of hunting in the Old Oyo National Park was expressed by a respondent thus:

> Hunting is our tradition. It is part of our culture. We cannot really separate it from our community, culture and identity. Restrictions cannot deter hunting in our community. Hunting to us is a kind of exercise. To us it is a sport. Poaching is when you enter the park to hunt. Unfortunately, there may not be large animals in the free zone. This may take a hunter and his group to go hunting in the Park Forest. We know that hunting in the Park Forest is illegal but we cannot stop hunting. We must hunt but must not let the Park Rangers arrest us. For us, hunting is not only a tradition but a source of

> income and livelihood. So, prohibiting hunting can be likened to a child's play (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 16th February, 2017).

This position is strengthened by another respondent thus:

> I have seen a lot and have experienced much injustice on the issue of our national park. Hunters like me hunt in the park anytime I feel like hunting. Hunting in the Park Forest is a normal routine activity, especially to some of us that were born by hunters. Some of the wild animals we kill in the Park Forest are the ones we use in conjunction with other herbal materials in making medicine for people. It is used for healing and protection against danger. So, apart from making money from the sales of hunted animals, I also make money from using the wild animal products to heal people. I learnt this from my father. You cannot be hungry and at the same time be seeing what to eat in the Park Forest and pretend as if you do not see them, knowing full well that the government is not responsible. They are protecting the animals at the expense of human beings. They want us to die of hunger. We cannot do without hunting. It is part of us. Hunting was transferred to us by our forefathers and we are also going to transfer it to our children and grand children. Hunting is for us and poaching is for the government (KII, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 6th March, 2017).

The data reveals that the local people know that hunting in the Park Forest is illegal but they cannot stop hunting. They must hunt but must not let the Park Rangers arrest them because this is what they do to earn a living. The study discovered that poaching is practiced in order to remain connected with nature, which hunting signifies. To most local hunters, what they are doing is hunting, not poaching, this is expressed by an interviewee thus:

> I feel more refreshed while in the bush and this makes me feel in touch with nature. There is no noise and distraction in the Park Forest. The place is so serene. My relationship with the forest and hunting started with my family of orientation. It is a tradition that is transferred from father to child. I enjoy hunting wild animals. It is like a sport exercise to me. What I do is hunting not poaching (KII, Poachers' leader, Yemoso Range, 17th November, 2016).

Similarly, another interviewee shared his opinion thus:

> I began hunting with my father, at first, but later worked on my own. I also taught my offspring how to hunt. We love roaming and hunting in the forest. The Park Forest forms part of me. My life is wildlife. Whenever I

> hunt, all my problems disappear. The forest is our own place of enjoyment and relaxation (KII, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 12th March, 2017).

The local hunters asserted that what they are doing is hunting, but to the government, they are poaching. Many poachers alluded to the fact that they related well with the natural world beyond daily realities and shared their experiences of excitement, success and narrow escape from death with friends. However, despite the history of hunting in the Old Oyo National Park, poachers prize it highly as an integral aspect of their identity. Despite the fact that hunting is generally categorised as a worthless occupation as a result of its low-income when compared to jobs in multinational companies, the most experienced local hunters maintained that they would go hunting even if no wild animal remained in order to have a feel of nature. This strong identification with hunting and nature extends to the park itself, even among young hunters. Beyond the contribution of hunting to household income, it integrates people and wildlife through a shared aesthetic value. The aesthetic values attached to wildlife resources by the local communities surrounding the park cannot be overemphasised. Indeed, poachers cherish any chance to wander about and enjoy nature while in the Park Forest. Some view it as an opportunity to commune with nature. The locals' relationship with wildlife is complex. Although, wildlife functions as an integral means of livelihood, wildlife in national parks also constitutes threats to local people's livelihoods through crop damage (Bell and McShane-Caluzi, 1984; Prins, Grootenhuis and Dolan, 2000). Therefore, for forest dwellers, the wildlife form complex parts of their lifestyle and culture. This complex link to wildlife was developed through growing up in closeness to wildlife, experience-based learning, interaction with wildlife and knowledge through socialization processes which manifested through social norms, practices and expressed social values and views (Jankulovska, Vedeld and Kaboggoza, 2003). A local hunter stated that entering the Park Forest is a way to unite them with gods and their ancestors. Similarly, a poacher shared his views thus:

> We take delight in exploring the landscapes within the park. We appreciate their beauty of our natural resources. This is part of the reason why we venture into the difficult terrain, that is, the Park Forest (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 19th February, 2017).

Another poacher stated that:

> It is beautiful to listen to the cry of some wild animals and birds in the Park Forest. That is part of the reason why we enter the Park Forest, because we love nature (KII, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 17th February, 2017).

The local inhabitants enjoy exploring the beauty of the wildlife resources in their environment, which partly accounts for their persistent in entering the Park Forest. Findings revealed that hunting is also a means of bonding with friends and gaining prestige amidst members of the community. It is a meeting point for men in the communities. Hunting provides interesting subjects of discussion in the palm wine joint. One poacher said:

> You can talk to people about your experience with wild animals in the Park Forest for a whole day. Hunting also cements wider social relationships through the distribution of bushmeat to neighbours, friends and family. Often, we use bushmeat as gifts and they are highly appreciated as gifts to doctors, teachers or anyone else who has helped us (KII, Poachers' leader, Yemoso Range, 19th March, 2017).

The pride, pleasure and benefits derived from hunting of wildlife resources goes beyond the local hunters. It extends to bushmeat vendors and other members of the community. Sharing of poached meat among members of the community strengthens local solidarity against the power of government and park authorities. People derive satisfaction and shared meanings from the shared meat which they consider as rightful access to wildlife resources in their land. For instance, a local poacher stated that:

> It is not every time I sell all the wild meat I poached from the Park Forest. Occasionally, I offer them to some community members and elders who will pray for us on safety, protection and success in all our hunting expeditions. Sharing poached meat with friends and neighbours promote unity, community cohesion and bring joy to people. This shows that we are still covertly in control of our resources (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 19th March, 2017).

Similarly, another poacher described values attach to the sharing of poached animals thus:

> We do not encourage poaching in this town. Our people have been warned not to hunt in the Park Forest. Whoever is arrested will be prosecuted. We are solidly behind the government on the protection of wild animals in the forest. The agitation of our people has not been attended to by the government. There is no other job for our people to engage in. You will recall the saying that "the idle hand is the devil's workshop. Some of our

> children that have been arrested before always complained that if they do not hunt, what other things do we want them to be doing in order to make ends meet? The restriction somehow affects the rate at which the people have access to bush meat. Instead of selling the poached meat, I may decide to share them with community members and my family. Sometimes, one would feel guilty to say that there is no meat (KII, Poachers' leader, Yemoso Range, 19th March, 2017).

Sharing poached meat with friends and family is celebrated and stands as a symbol of oneness, solidarity and common identity as local hunters and other community members. This aligns with the position of Bell *et al.* (2007) that sharing of poached animals represents merrymaking, and can also serve as a sign of agreement or solidarity, and a shared identity amidst hunters. In the Old Oyo National Park, poachers usually rebel against the park rangers and engage in acts they regard as being parts of their culture. The poachers describe illegal hunting as normal behaviour and part of their culture; and consider park authorities as comedians. In the communities around the park, local hunting is considered as an entitlement by the locals; furthermore, it is seen as a tool which is essential to the maintenance of order and stability in the communities.

The local people argued that they can no longer freely hunt or gather snails or fruits in the Park Forest given to them by their creator and that this is unacceptable. A respondent has this to say:

> We are not benefitting from Park Forest and this is very painful. We are not happy with this. Apart from the wildlife resources, there are also mineral resources in the park. The restriction affects us negatively. It also has it advantages in terms of keeping the animal for future generations. But the people that are living in the community may find it difficult to hunt because this is their job. We have been deprived of our right to hunt on our ancestors' hunting ground. Eversince government took over the park we have been finding it difficult to hunt freely in the park. If we do not hunt, there will be no food on our tables. Government does not want us to hunt, yet they do not provide other things for us to do. Again, we are not getting anything as benefits from the park. We are not in support of the restriction because we cannot freely hunt in the park to get our daily bread. We are not gaining anything from the park. Government that prohibited us from hunting in the Park did not give us any alternative as a source of income and livelihood. We like bush meat. If you say people should not hunt again, what do you want them to be doing? We are not happy with the institutional restriction. They forced it on us. The National Park is the only resource we

> have in this town and government said we should not go there to farm or hunt without giving us anything in return. If I say we are in consent, it is a blatant lie but we are trying as much as possible to abide by the rule. Government should wake up and provide alternative sources of livelihoods for the local inhabitants in order to make life better for them (FGD, Adult hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 11th January, 2017).

The local people maintained that the National Park is the only resource in their town and government prohibited them from farming and hunting in the park without giving them anything in return. Illegal hunting is acknowledged by poachers to be a usual practice. A poacher readily admitted in an interview and stated that: "We all hunt illegally, since we enter the Park Forest, which is prohibited". Another poacher made the following disclosure "more money is made from illegal hunting because certain wild animals are scarce because of restriction, and may not be found by just anybody except you are a poacher who can take the risk of entering the Park Forest to get such wild animals", this also aligns with views of other poachers that: "the poaching of wild animals can never stop". Wildlife hunting is inevitably linked with social, economic and cultural meanings. According to Bell *et al.* (2007) there is a connection between the personal level (emotional drivers) and group or community level (cultural drivers). The importance of threatened free behaviours is essential in provoking the reaction of the local people to legislation governing wildlife hunting. However, the significance of such unrestricted acts (the hunting tradition) largely emanates from the fixed connotations these have on the negotiation of people's social life (Bell *et al.,* 2007).

The management of wildlife resources requires that rules governing the conservation of wildlife are complied with and these rules are meaningless without compliance (Keane *et al.,* 2008). Costs of conservation are often borne by local inhabitants whose wellbeing depends greatly on the wildlife resource. As a result, wildlife laws are often not willingly complied with by the locals (Rowcliffe, de Merode and Cowlishaw, 2004) and law enforcement in the form of anti-poaching and measures to prohibit hunting are essential in controlling poaching. Findings revealed that some of the indigenous populations are in compliant with conservation rules of Old Oyo National Park while the majority are not compliant due to various factors ranging from erosion of local knowledge and cultural values, loss of contact with nature, loss of fertile land for cultivation, and the failure of

government to provide other means through which the locals can make money. They believe that providing alternative means of livelihood will improve their living standard. This is rightly expressed by a respondent in Marguba Range thus:

> We are not happy with the restriction. Government is using power to deny us entrance into the forest. The restriction is not giving the people the opportunity to hunt and make money from the sales of bush meat. This is affecting us all in this community. Again, there is no benefit from the government. Government has failed to fulfill the promised benefits such as school of forestry, employment, vocational training school etc. We inherited hunting from our forefathers, therefore, stopping us from hunting without giving us another job is punishment and this is why poachers go to the extent of killing park rangers. In this town, we hunt and farm but since government has taken over the park, we have no choice than to appeal to them to provide an alternative source of livelihood for our people. We cannot fight government but we can bite (KII, Traditional ruler, Marguba Range, 20th January, 2017).

The data shows that poaching may be adopted as a form of a fight back or resistance to government's failure to provide other means of livelihood. Illegal hunting as an opposition tool has also been explained in literature (see Forsyth et al. 1998; Muth and Bowe, 1998 and Pendleton, 1998). Poaching in the Old Oyo National Park goes beyond an individual action; it is carried out by the locals in order to defend communal and individual identities in the face of livelihood, cultural and aesthetic value wane. Therefore, poaching is carried out as a form of communal opposition, and as a reaction/s to the violation of culturally valued people-wildlife interaction. Poaching is practiced as a consolidated opposition tool by locals who are faced with dwindling wildlife resources and devastation of the wildlife resources by the outsiders such as the Zuru, the Fulani and their cattle which chase wild animal farther to neighbouring countries. Many of the respondents in a focus group discussion lamented that:

> We are not happy with the restriction. Government is using power to deny us entrance into the forest while the Zuru come into the park to do whatever they like. The restriction is not giving the people the opportunity to hunt and make money from the sales of bush meat. This is affecting us all in this community. Again, there is no benefit from the government. Government has failed to fulfill the promised benefits. We inherited hunting from our forefathers, therefore, stopping us from hunting without giving us another job is punishment and this is why poachers go to the extent of killing park

> rangers. We cannot open our eyes and allow aliens to cheat and destroy our God-given resources. We have to stand up and hold our future in our hands since government is not bold enough to stop them from this destruction. The way the Zuru and the Fulani operate in the Park Forest is a source of concern to us all. They extract our resources and destroy the ones they can. They do not care. Now, hunting within the park is a survival of the fittest. If we do not make use of our resources, outsiders will do, even beyond imagination (FGD, Community members, Marguba Range, 20th February 2017).

The local communities consider wildlife and environmental policy as benefitting government and distant poachers rather than the locals. They claim that poaching done by them is less damaging than the one carried out by the outsiders such as the Zuru and the Fulani. Thus, illegal hunting takes shape as a tool of opposition against the approach of the Park authorities which allows the destructive tendencies of the Zuru and the Fulani. The denial of local people to have access to their sources of livelihoods, seeming erosion of local knowledge and tradition becomes crucial for them to preserve an awareness of being via a sense of shared identity and collective memory, which usually revolves round a perceived association between the locals and wildlife. This is buttressed by the perspective of McCay (1984) and Muth and Bowe (1998) that poachers are described as social actors, with group solidarity forming an essential component of poaching behaviour. This is reflected in the words of an interviewee thus:

> We may spend 2-3 days in the Park Forest. We would rather increase the number of days we are to spend in the park instead of coming back home empty handed. Hunting in the Park Forest is more enjoyable when you go in groups. It is common to have group members which we identify with. You can be rest assured of your safety and the fact that all of us cannot be arrested at the same time. Even, if we are arrested, we will have community support because we are many. Community will show their solidarity by contributing money to bail us. We the hunters know ourselves. Many of us are from hunting background. Most of the things we discuss in palm wine joint is hunting of wild animals and the negative attitude of park rangers towards us and our hunting traditions. We cannot stop hunting because it is our way of life. Although, things are changing, money is difficult to get and things are expensive. I do not think that the restriction can stop hunting tradition in our community. Hunting is our live. It is our tradition. We can not stop hunting because this is what we do to make ends meet. Poaching is for the government and park officials while hunting is for us. We are simply hunting in our forefathers' land and government termed it poaching,

> Hunting is our job, our food and our tradition (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 19th March, 2017).

The data indicates that poachers prefer to hunt in groups in order to have community sympathy in the event of being arrested. Community members will show their solidarity by sponsoring poachers bail. The study discovered dialectics of meanings attached to poaching. To the indigenous hunter, he is merely securing his livelihoods in the land bequeathed by the ancestors, but to the legal rational agents (that is, the park authorities), he is a poacher. The local people in the Old Oyo National Park maintained that hunting is not only their tradition but a source of livelihoods (cash and food), exercise, exhibition of hunting skills and local knowledge over the park rangers. They argued that they cannot separate hunting from their community, culture and identity. These locals asserted that hunting restriction in the town can never put a stop to hunting activities in their community. Often, resistance to conservation measures arises because of differences in the way wildlife hunting is seen by local communities and that state. The state defines hunting within the park as poaching while the locals described poaching as when someone enter the park to hunt and the person is caught but if he is not caught, he is still a hunter. Most of the poachers agreed that if they are not arrested, they remain hunters but once they are caught, they become poachers; and that poaching is for the government because what they do is hunting. They perceived poaching as an exercise, an opportunity to catch fun. To them, poaching is playing, therefore, stopping them from hunting without giving them another job is suicidal and that is the reason those who poach go to the extent of killing park rangers in the park. The interpretation they give to restriction can be likened to dismissal from work without any benefit or alternative means of survival. They described this as a death sentence. They maintain that hunting is not only about perpetuating a tradition but what to do in order to put food on their tables. The locals claimed that there is no job opportunity for them in their community, no school, no facilities and no alternative source of livelihood to take care of the indigenes. A poacher in Marguba Range has this to say:

> They deprived us of our right to hunt on our ancestral land. We see poaching as an exercise and as an opportunity to catch fun and demonstrate our hunting skills. This is also what we do to provide food and daily needs for our family. To us, hunting is like playing football. Hunting keeps people busy. But this restriction is not doing us fine, because after hunting people

> will be happy and become more refreshed. And this is not helping our children to know more on how to hunt. We may not be able to transfer and develop hunting skills in our children. Hunting restriction clipped our hands with the hope that conservation will bring benefits to the community but unfortunately not so. Government that prohibits us from hunting in the park has not done anything to cushion the effect of wildlife conservation on the local communities. Hunting is our own job. It is our live. It is our tradition. We cannot stop hunting because this is what we do to make ends meet. Poaching is the language of government and park officials while hunting is our own language, our job, our food and our tradition. If you are not caught you just carry your meat and go to your house and remain a farmer or a hunter. For us to stop hunting in the Park, government must provide us with alternative farming of wild animals or source of livelihoods (IDI, Poachers leaders, Marguba Range, 19th November, 2016).

Similarly, another poacher in Sepeteri range explained that:

> Today, what we do is to sneak into the Park Forest. We cannot stop hunting if government does not provide alternative source of livelihoods to us. To the government, hunting in the park is illegal. We just have to hunt but we must not be caught. Restriction in the park does not mean we should stop hunting. More so, that we are not found in the park. Anyone caught in the park hunting will be arrested and prosecuted and will be charged for poaching. Income from the sale of bushmeat is what we use to take care of ourselves, our family and children. If we do not hunt, how do we survive without any intervention programme or palliative measure from the government to cushion the effect of restriction on the local communities? Government should help us to establish training centres on how to start rearing and breeding wild animals in our community (IDI, Poachers leaders, Sepeteri Range, 11th December, 2016).

Furthermore, the blanket term "poaching" is viewed differently by the local people. Most locals view poaching as hunting, and thus a right, source of pride, pleasure; opportunity to have meat or cash, and a necessary venture while other actors in the management of wildlife (national park officials) see it as destructive and criminal. There is resentment of excessive regulation of hunting, and particularly of having to go to jail or pay for animals killed in the Park Forest when caught. Most illegal hunting, particularly those regarded as traditional hunting practice is considered by those who practice it not as an attempt to

destroy or empty the park of wildlife resources. According to the locals, the use of force to conserve wildlife is unjust and unnecessary. Poaching is considered by the local people as a necessary evil. This aligns with the position of Hampshire *et al.* (2004) and Pratt *et al.* (2004) that poaching is an exercise that people view as an important activity that one cannot do without. Poaching to many poachers is a source of pride, joy, employment rather than crime and defiance. This is reflected in the words of an experienced poacher who noted that:

> That is what I do too. We are not allowed to hunt in the park but we are hunting there. The park rangers do not allow us and they do not give us anything as an alternative to poaching or as benefit which will take our eyes off the forest. In the past, we poach in connivance with the park guards, but today it is difficult to connive with park rangers. The only thing that can take this job from me is death. If I do not poach, hunger will kill me. If I poach, I can only be arrested and released after some time and I will still be alive to poach again because no one will kill you for poaching. I am not educated; therefore, I cannot be employed and I need to survive. Hunting is my job; the Park Forest is my employer. What I am doing is hunting, not poaching. I was born in a family of great hunters. So, this hunting job was transferred from my forefathers to my father and it was transferred from my father to me (IDI, Poachers leaders, Marguba Range, 19th March, 2017).

The above data is an indication that poachers prefer to hunt illegally rather than allowing hunger to kill them. More so that when they are arrested, they will still be alive to poach again. However, the study discovered that some local inhabitants are in passive consent with institutional restriction but what they do not like is when the park rangers arrest their people on the street or in their kitchen. They maintain that people should be arrested in the park but once they are on the street they should not be arrested if found with bushmeat and this has been made known to the park authorities. The community leaders have warned the indigenes in the community not to enter the park again and that anyone caught will not be pleaded for. They asserted that they are in consent with the hunting restriction but the youths that are unemployed and cannot fend for themselves cannot but go to the park to hunt because there are no other means of survival and they have wives and children to take care of. To some indigenes, the conservation law does not hold water and that is why people poach. They are not in support of the restriction because government did not provide

alternative means of livelihood to take their eyes off the park. This is aptly captured in the words of an interviewee thus:

> How are we going to feed ourselves? This is why we always go poaching. Indigenous populations are in consent with institutional restriction but that is not to say we are happy about it. We are not in any way in support of the restriction because government did not give us an alternative. Again, most of the people employed in the park are outsiders who do not have any knowledge of the forest paths. They must provide alternative source of livelihood to us, but if they fail to do so, then the struggle continues. Government can only force you to do certain things but we also know how to handle the situation (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 21st February, 2017).

Discussants in an FGD agreed that:

> Our community is in consent with the restriction from the Old Oyo National Park. We know that we are not supposed to hunt in the Park Forest, but that is not to say that everyone in the community is compliant. Some recalcitrant indigenes still go there to hunt but the position of the community is that whoever is caught should be arrested and prosecuted. Despite the fact that government has constantly failed to fulfill the promised benefits we are still in support. Those who go to the park to hunt have said that they are going to hunt because they do not have any other thing to do. Our community supports restriction in one way and does not support in another way. We support restriction because we also do not want these wild animals in the park to go into extinction (FGD, Community members, Marguba Range, 20th January, 2017).

An official of the National Park expressed his views thus:

> You cannot totally stop them from hunting in the park because they have this belief that the land belong to them. Therefore, stopping them from hunting in the park is a huge joke. Some of the indigenes are in consent with the institutional restriction from the park while some are not. They see the institutional restriction as if you are punishing them. They feel you are depriving them of their rights but some of them understand and see the need to conserve wildlife. The local people are not compliant with the institutional restriction but they are forced by the law. They believe that government forced the restriction on them; therefore, they are not happy about it. Most of them are complaining about government's failure to provide them job (KII, National Park Official, Yemoso Range, 16th February, 2017).

From the above data, it can be inferred that some indigenes support the institutional restriction regardless of government's failure to provide alternative sources of livelihoods and because they do not want the wild animals to go into extinction. The officials of the National Park alluded to the fact that some local people at the Old Oyo National Park are cooperative and compliant with institutional restriction but many do deviate. He noted that:

> They comply with restriction but some do deviate. It is just like the case of armed robbers. If you catch some today, others will still go rob tomorrow. Even the one caught will still try if he thinks that he will not be caught. Government forced the restriction on them and they are not happy about it. They believe that the land belong to them. So, stopping them from hunting in the park is a joke. Poaching is a cultural thing to them. They will tell you they are hunters. They will even show you the artefacts of the big wild animals killed by their forefathers. So when the park was created, it was a shock and sad thing to them. We do castigate them that your forefathers killed Elephants in this place but where are the Elephants today? That is why you are not able to sight them again. This used to curb them a bit. The local inhabitants in this community cannot do without poaching. Poaching is part of their tradition. To them, it is a way of life. Most of them are hunters. Their forefathers were hunters. They are not happy with the institutional restriction. Poaching is their major preoccupation in this town. Most of the people here are farmers and hunters. They only pretend to be happy with the institutional restriction. If you ask them, they will tell you they are in consent with hunting restriction. The people that are going to hunt in the park are from this same community. The hunting for bush meat is part and parcel of them (IDI, National Park Official, Marguba Range, February, 2017).

The local communities in the Old Oyo National Park viewed the prohibition from hunting on their land without giving them anything as an alternative as an act against their custom. The restriction is an infringement on their inalienable right to hunt on their forefather's hunting ground and to worship their ancestors/gods in the Park Forest. They claimed that this arrangement has negatively affected them, their culture, tradition and their sources of livelihoods. As a result, many local people who lack a sense of ownership of wildlife resources operate secretly and illegally for personal gain. An interviewee succinctly put it thus:

> The restriction is an infringement on our right to hunt on our ancestor's hunting ground. This kind of arrangement has negatively affected us (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Sepeteri Range, 15th February, 2017).

Another interviewee stated that:

> They are protecting animals and resources, what about us the human beings? If we the local inhabitants near the park do not hunt or enter the park to get certain plants for eating, selling and for medicine, how do they want us to survive? There is no job for us, no school of forestry that can help develop our town and government want people to comply with the rules. Ah! Okay oo. Hunting is our job in this town. We hunt in order to put food on our tables. If we do not hunt, Mr. researcher, please tell me, what do you want us to be eating? Are we benefiting from the money government is generating from the park? We are not benefitting from Park Forest and this is very painful. We are not happy with this. Apart from the wildlife resources, there are also mineral resources in the park. The restriction affects us negatively. The people that are living in the community may find it difficult to hunt because this is their job. Government should wake up and provide alternative sources of livelihoods for the local inhabitants in order to make life better for us (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Yemoso Range, 19th January, 2017).

The local inhabitants that live next to forest find it difficult to hunt because this is their job. They maintained that government refused to provide alternative sources of livelihoods for them. They believe that provision of alternative means of livelihood for them by the government would make life better for them.

The study discovered that there is good relationship between the indigenous population and the local hunters in the Old Oyo National Park because they make bushmeat available to the local populace. A respondent in a focus group discussion stated that:

> If there is need for us to get a particular animal, we will give this task to the local hunters. This makes people happy. Many people are not allowed to enter the park again and it is only the brave hunters that are going there to make bushmeat available for us. The local hunters also protect the indigenes against robbery and external aggression. They help in the protection of our town (FGD, Community member, Marguba Range, 19th February, 2017).

A respondent has this to say:

> Some of us are farmers and they also hunt in the forest or on our farm but we do not belong to the hunters association. There is good relationship between the members of hunters association and the community. We are all one. We do things and share things together (FGD, Adult hunter-poacher, Sepeteri Range, 29th February, 2017).

Another interviewee stated that:

> The relationship between us and the hunters are cordial. We are one in the community. We do things together. They buy things from the community members who happen to be traders and the community members buy bush meat from them. They are wonderful because they help immensely in the protection of our people and security of the community. Almost everybody in our community is a hunter. We are also farmers. As we farm, we also hunt. Therefore, we are all one. We have good relationship with one another. The local hunters are also members of the community. They have association. There are other people who hunt but who are not members of this association. For instance, I am a farmer, anytime I am going to my farm I go with gun and I hunt along the line but I am not a member of the hunters association. Hunters help a lot in the security of our community. They are great warriors. We love them so much and we are one in this community. The hunters and the community members are one. We have good relationship. The relationship between the community and hunters are cordial. Hunters share bushmeat with fellow hunters and some community members. We do get our bush meat from them. At my age, I can no longer hunt. But if hunters go hunting and come back with bush meat, of course I can buy from them. If we are being terrorised by robbers or Fulani robbers, it is the hunters we will call upon to come and rescue the community. The hunters help in the security of the community. For instance they help to chase away the thieves that are coming from Ogboro land to snatch our people's motorcycle and other valuables (FGD, Adult hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 21st February, 2017).

The local hunters have association and they are also members of the community. Some of the local people are farmers and they hunt in the forest or on their farms but they do not belong to the hunters association. There is good relationship between the members of hunters association and the community. Also, there are professional local hunters and opportunistic local hunters (farmers). The professional hunters belong to the hunters association while the opportunistic hunters do not. Opportunistic hunters usually kill wild animals around their farms because they go to farm not only to cultivate but to also kill any wild animals which comes their ways. This implies that farmers also hunt. The distinctions between hunters and farmers are often blurred. The only thing is that a farmer may not be a member of the professional local hunters association. This account for the reason it is difficult to know the total number of hunters in each range of the Old National Park. This is similar to the position of Afolayan, (1980) that statistics on total number of hunters in most African countries are either non-existent or outdated, that in contemporary Africa, few

people take hunting solely as an occupation and that most hunters are farmers or artisans. Some poachers are members of the professional hunters association while some are not. Furthermore, the data underscores the importance of professional hunters and their functions in the provision of bushmeat and the protection of lives and properties of community members.

The locals claim that although communities do not support poachers but they cannot rule out the fact that they are one of them in the community. Poachers are someone's children, brother, uncle, cousin and in-law. It is poverty that is making them to leave their homes and enter the bush at night, thereby risking their lives. The local people believe that if poachers are gainfully employed or they have alternative source of livelihoods, poaching rate will reduce in their community.

The political economy of wildlife extraction which reflects the principle of domination and subordination analyses the local concerns and the local interpretations of poaching in the Old Oyo National Park. The interpretation of poaching in the Old Oyo National Park goes beyond legality and illegality, and also extends beyond an individual decision. Poaching is embedded in cultural nets of meaning, and it is the lifestyle of the local people who practice it for social, economic, cultural and aesthetic reasons. This practice gives deep meaning to local people's lives as forest dwellers because they have powerful identification with wildlife and forest, hence, it becomes imperative for them to maintain contact with nature and defend collective identities in the face of tradition, livelihood and wildlife decline; and challenges of external actors in the extraction of wildlife (that is, the poachers from northern part of Nigeria). But unfortunately, government and wildlife agencies do no view poaching in the light of the local people who live next to the conservation areas and who do not have alternative source of livelihood.

4.3. The Network of Poaching in the Old Oyo National Park

The structure of poaching network is among rural harvesters, professional hunters, traders, wholesalers and retailers with final consumers of wild animals, in locations far from the source of the poached animals (Milliken, 2014; Duffy and St John, 2013). Across the world, poaching networks are organized; and the members code conversations, make use of the internet, Skype and other social media (Milliken and Shaw, 2012; Wyler and Sheikh,

2013). In the Old Oyo National Park, hunting provides the bond that holds together social networks among local hunters, poachers, family members and friends. Learning to hunt is a way of growing up and this helps in forging family and intergenerational ties. Among the local people, traditional hunting methods include setting fire into the forest, utilisation of local dogs, use of locally made guns and setting traps for prey. The local people are predominantly farmers and hunters. Most of the local hunters that are also farmers spend their daytime on farming and hunting. A local hunter leaves his house in the morning and returns in the evening. The local hunter may hunt individually, usually with the assistance of a carrier (who carries the killed animals), or as a team (usually between three or six in number). Individual hunting is done by the daytime or at night, while the group hunting is usually at night within the free zone, Park or in the buffer zone near farms. Night hunting is mostly a joint or group affair. An interviewee in the Marguba Range of the Park stated:

> We started learning hunting from our childhood days. Our fathers learnt it from their fathers too. While hunting, we adopt the use of locally made guns, cutlasses, fire to sniff animals out and dogs. We also set traps for the wild animals. All these are the various methods and instruments we employ in hunting activities. Most of us are hunters and farmers in this community. We go to our farms and we also hunt on our way to the farm. Hunters leave their homes in the morning and return in the evening after they are satisfied with hunting for that day. Often, we hunt individually, usually with the assistance of a carrier (who carries the killed animals). The carrier may be our children, brother, cousins or any close community members that we are comfortable working with. Sometimes, we may also hunt in group depending on our motives. We are not allowed to hunt in the buffer zone and the Park but we are allowed to hunt in the free zone with a caution. In the free zone you must not be found with wild animals that belong to the Park (KII, Hunter-poacher, Marguba Range, 2nd March, 2017).

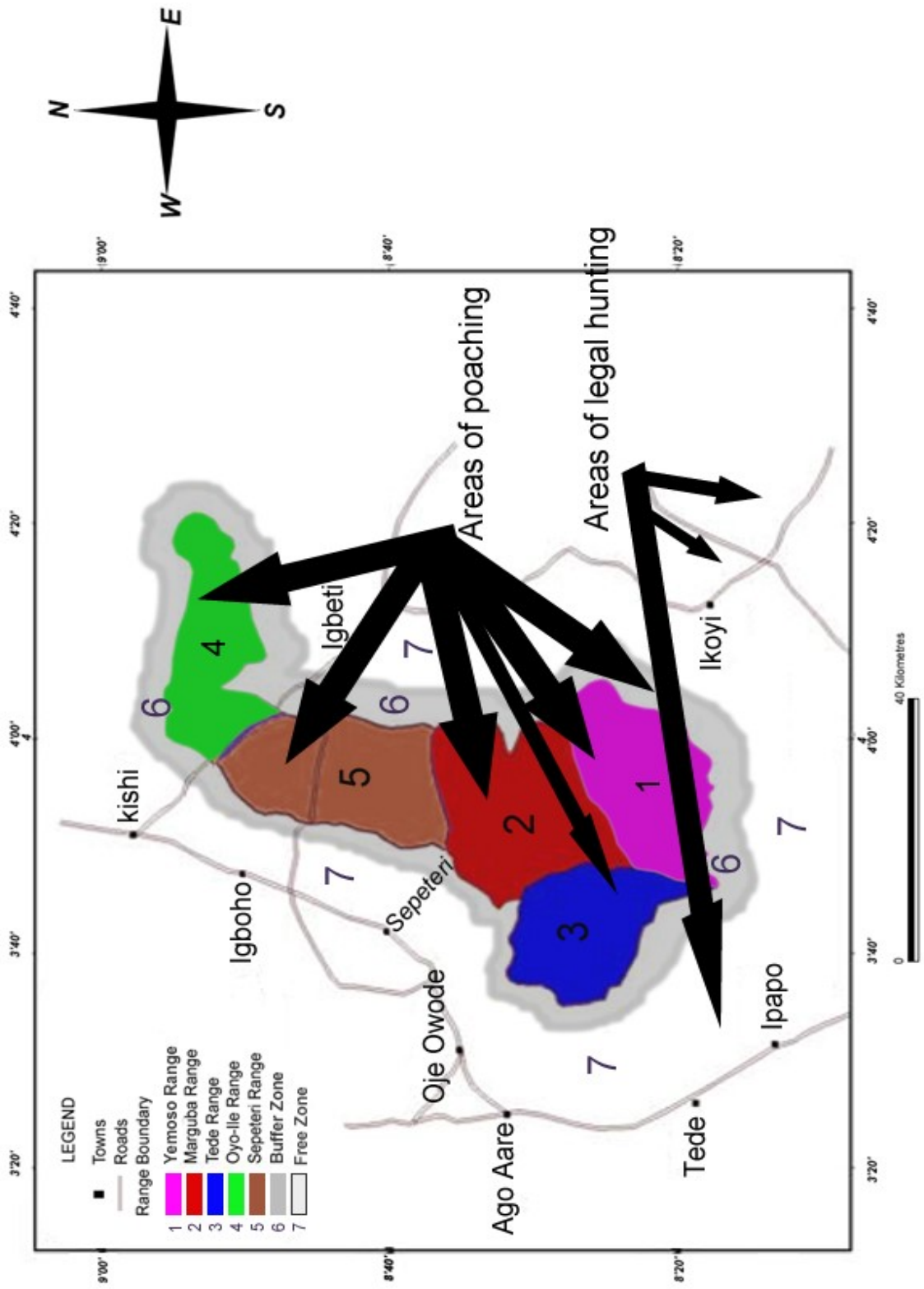

Figure 4.5: Map of Old Oyo National Park showing the park ranges (areas of poaching), buffer zone (areas of poaching) and the free zone (areas of legal hunting).

These local hunters remain hunters as long as they are hunting within the free zone but the moment they step into the Park boundary or buffer zone, they automatically become poachers. Even when they are in the free zone and they are backing the buffer zone and the Park with a captured animal that is endangered, near extinction or any animal that belongs to the Park, they will still be arrested as poachers. Often time, the local hunters enter the Park in agitation that the Park Forest does not belong to the state alone and that the Park Forest is the only resource in their land. Although, some illegal hunters may hunt individually with a helper or someone to carry the poached animals, most of them usually restrict their night hunting activities to the Park Forest. Night hunting is common among poachers since the success rate is much higher and the risk of being arrested is lower during this period. The poachers leave their houses after sunset for the Park and hunt till the following morning. Two or three poachers as a team usually camp in the Park to lunch attack on animals and stays there for one to two days. This is reflected in the words of an interviewee thus:

> Anytime we get to the Park Forest, we try as much as possible to construct a shed for ourselves in order to rest. This will serve as our base and where we keep all the killed animals. We may not be more than three in a team. In our community, most of us are hunters while some of us are poachers. It is not everybody that poaches. Anyone who will poach must be very strong and must have the ability to take a great risk. The feeble ones cannot survive (KII, Poachers-leaders, Yemoso Range, 5th April, 2017).

The distinction between a hunter and a poacher is often blurred but one can safely and logically state that majority of the hunters are poachers but not all hunters are poachers, especially the aged hunters. For instance, the aged hunters often hunt in nearby forest (free zone) and usually rely on what the younger hunters bring from the Park Forest. Findings revealed that poachers usually construct a shed in the park and hunt at night.

In the Old Oyo National Park, group poaching is common. The poachers may enter the park and carry out their activities on the first day successfully without the knowledge of park rangers. However, before they spend two or four days there, the park rangers would trace their activities through gunshot or smoke. A poaching group is not closed. It is open to other members from another group because some members of a particular group may not be

available sometimes. The case of a 55year old poacher in the Marguba range of the park is a typical example. See the box below:

Name: Otugbokindi (not real name)
Gender: Male
Age: 55years

Mr. Otugbokindi is a professional local hunter who has hunted in both free zone and in the Park Forest for 35 years. He started poaching at the age of 20, got involved in poaching through learning and remains in the business in order to make ends meet. According to Mr Otugbokindi, it is better to steal from government than from the people because it is less criminal than armed robbery because ones name cannot be soiled like that of armed robbery. In his words, the poaching groups in this town are up to forty and one may choose from any of the groups one wants to work with at a particular time. He stated:

> In my group, we are not more than six in my group. We may spend 5-6 days and we go with food that can take care of us throughout the number of days we are going to spend in the park. Sometimes, we might plan for 3 days and end up spending 5 days either because we did not get animals or we were getting them in plenty which is keeping us busy. We will remain in the camp that we constructed in the forest till we are through. Sometimes, we may have to use dogs. Definitely, a hunter from another group whose dogs are known to be efficient would be called upon. Sometimes, we decide on using both dogs and guns or only dogs. The dogs work better for us by killing many wild animals except the large animals.

According to him, poachers prefer to increase the number of days they were to spend in the park to coming back home empty handed. He noted that they might get lost in the forest and it might take 3 days for them to remember and locate where they are and that many factors are responsible for this. For instance, there are many evil spirits in the forest which spell breezes of confusion. This had happened to him many times. He maintained that there

are instances when they shoot at certain animals and these animals would disappear afterwards. Some might jump into the river and they would never see them again. In Mr. Otugbokindi's opinion, the animals' might be spirits and might come in the afternoon or at nights. Similarly, in the hurdles of hunting, a wounded animal shot by a poacher might escape and come back to attack another poacher. He believed that hunting is stressful but compulsory because it is their only source of livelihood. He stressed, 'I have nothing to do in the Park Forest than to go there and hunt'.

As he said, there would be nothing left in the park if the government should leave the park to be managed by the people and that children, especially, would not be able to identify certain animals if the park was not managed by the government. In his discussions, he and his group members cannot stop poaching because they had been cheated and treated unfairly. He lamented that even after he returned from prison, he was still poaching because he had nothing else to do. The Park Forest is the only resource in their town. Often times, Mr. Otugbokindi could be deadly and dangerous in the forest because he would not want to be arrested again. He would rather die fighting the rangers than being arrested. In his revelations, poachers meet at night, consult the oracle and go with black magic, guns, cutlasses and knives. With the black magic, the park rangers could never trail them as he claimed. Sometimes poachers network when they need the skill of another group according to Mr. Otugbokindi. For example, if they want to use dogs, they consult other groups. They might even go together depending on the nature of the operation. He noted that the park is not fenced and there are so many routes that lead to the park. They always sneak in through these alternative routes, use mouth to whistle to call on one another in the forest, mark and use trees as a landmark in order to locate their way into and out of the forest. He identified the species of the animals he poaches in conjunction with his group as Etu (Maxwell Duicker), Igala (Bush Buck) and Oya (Grass Cutter). He made it clear that the poached animals are marketed by taking them to the *alapata* (bushmeat vendors) to sell for them and to give them money in return. Sometimes, they collect the money immediately. He added that they often smuggle the poached animals to Ogboro and Saki, where there is no hunting restriction and where there is no ban on the selling of the animals. In the words of Mr.

Otugbokindi, direct selling to the public is rare; the sales take place underground. He preserves the poached animals by smoking them very well and the patronage is encouraging because people love bushmeat and they always demand for it.

Box 1: Case study of Mr. Otugbokindi, a 55year old poacher in Marguba range.

Another example is the case of Mr. Soronigbo, a 51year professional local hunter in the Sepeteri range of the Park who explained his experience and involvement in poaching and how poaching is organized. See the box below:

Name: Mr. Soronigbo (not real name)

Gender: Male

Age: 51years

Mr. Soronigbo is a local hunter in Yemoso Range of the Old Oyo National Park, who has hunted in both the free zone and in the Park Forest for 31years. He started poaching at the age of 20 and got involved in poaching through learning. In his discussions on how poaching is organized, he revealed:

> We study the Park rangers and we understand that they do shift. Those that do nights are not always active. We also know when they will leave their duty post. We hunt before the dawn. Sometimes, poachers meet at night. Vigilante cannot see us because they are hunters and we are hunters too. Most times, we go before local vigilante comes out. We can never meet with Park rangers because afternoon and night can never meet. We are always well fortified, no animal can harm us. There is nothing else to do than to poach. Even when we envisage that the road will be difficult, we still have to go but we would be fully prepared for any eventuality and be more dangerous in the forest/park, as if we are going to the warfront. We are usually 3 or 4 in number so as to play safe. If we are too much, something may happen to any of us. We the strong 4 are always working together we do not go with a learner or a weak hunter. Sometimes, in the park when fight ensues between the park rangers and the poachers, rangers are killed by poachers. Recently, one ranger was killed on Easter day.

Box 2: Case study of Mr. Soronigbo, a 51year old poacher in Yemoso range.

A national park official stated that:

> Poachers are easily detected when they are spending more than a day in the park. The park rangers will trace their activities through gunshot and smoke. If God says it is not yet time, they may escape it. They are not always successful (KII, National Park Official, Yemoso Range, 2nd March, 2017).

The above data provides a deep insight of how poaching is organized by the illegal hunters. The name Otugbokindi simply means 'powerful hunter who can comb the forest at anytime'. This poacher claimed that he was arrested once and since then he has not been arrested in the last 30years. This poacher is a sharp shooter who knows the nooks and cranny of the Old Oyo National Park. The poacher claimed that he enjoys hunting and killing the big animals, especially the dangerous ones. One of this poacher's strategies is hiding on top of the tree before attacking the animals and in times of danger.

The name of the hunter-poacher (Soronigbo) simply means 'someone who frequently sneaks into the forest in search of wild animals'. Among his peers, he has deomonstrated his prowess in sneaking into the Park Forest without being detected by the Park rangers. The number of years he has spent in poaching implies that he has acquired experience and skill on how to comb the Park Forest. One of this poacher's strategies is the use of charms and incantations in order to disaapear in times of distress. The hunter-poacher also has the local knowledge of the Park. The gender of most of the hunter poachers for case study reveals that poaching is common among men while the marketing of bushmeat is common among women. The hunting knowledge acquired from learning and the community must be practised. It is always difficult for the hunter-poachers not to demonstrate their talents and skills. It is also important to note that some hunters want their children to practice hunting so that the tradition and skills will no go into extinction.

The hunter-poachers claimed that they would rather kill rangers than to be arrested. This is buttressed by the position of Douglas *et al.*, (2014) that poaching involves the intimidation and killing of park workers and poachers alike; and that wildlife resources generate conflicts and impedes development. In fact, poaching phenomenon is so fatal that many park workers are being killed by poachers annually in some African countries such as Congo, Kenya and Chad (Anderson and Jooste, 2014).

4.3.1 Symbolic codes in poachers' network

In the communities around Old Oyo National Park, loosely organized local poaching network can be linked to hunter-poachers (who are primarily hunters but transit into poachers when they deliberately move into restricted areas of the Park in rebellion to the government for survival), *bushmeat* middlemen, *bushmeat* retailers and *bushmeat* caterers, charm makers and local medicine men with contacts in near and distant communities, towns and states where there is no hunting restriction. The poachers are in groups (usually between three and six members in each group) that are well organized and use nicknames, jargon, mouth whistle, tree marking, plant bending and tree hitting in order to conceal communication and these increase the rate of poaching success in the Park Forest. This is similar to the position of Wilson-Wide (2010) that poachers have a network, and that they usually belonged to large systemised groups, in which they utilised slangs and appellations in order to cover up meanings while communicating during their activities. A staff of the National Park revealed that:

> Poachers have many codes known to them and they use any specific code when the need arises. However, they do not use any signal that brings too much noise. They sometimes blow whistle when they are trying to locate one another but the sound must not be too much because they do not know where the park rangers are. Again, they sometimes set fire in the Park. Afterwards, they will leave and come back in the evening. This will enable these poachers to see animals clearly. They do not find it easy to communicate in the park, so they have a lot of signs. For instance, they may mark trees so as not to miss the way or path. Usually, they bend the grasses. They do not make noise but they have a way of calling themselves or a member that is lost in the bush by hitting the tree with cutlass just once for the person to know where they are (KII, Range head, Sepeteri Range, 6th March, 2017).

A poacher stated that:

> We mark the trees in order to locate our way to where the killed animals are and to know our way out of the park. We communicate in low voice. Sometimes, we use whistle. We know the sound of one another's whistle. Even if the rangers hear us, they can never reach us in the centre of the forest. They are not familiar with the terrain. Tree marking help us a lot in finding our way within and out of the park because hunters are sometimes lost in the park. We mark trees in the park in other to find our way in and out of the park. Otherwise, if you miss your way, you may spend three days in the forest; and there are instances where hunters die in the forest when they get lost. For example, there was a time one hunter got lost in the forest.

> It was discovered that he trekked till he died. Sometimes, we may have to use dogs. Definitely, a hunter from another group whose dogs are known to be efficient would be called upon. Sometimes, we decide on using dogs. The dogs work better for us by killing many wild animals except the large animals (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 9th January, 2017).

From the above data, poachers have many symbolic codes known to them and they use any specific code when the need arises. They do not find it easy to communicate in the park, so they have a lot of signs and codes. For instance, they may mark trees so as not to miss the way or path; to locate their way to where the killed animals are and to know their way out of the park. Usually, they bend grasses; they avoid any signal that brings too much noise; and blow whistle when they are trying to locate one another, but the sound must not be too much because they do not know the location of the park rangers. Poachers claimed that they communicate in low voice and they recognise the sound of one another's whistle. Furthermore, they use local dogs that have been well trained to poach wild animals. These local dogs would kill wild animals and bring the animals to the poaching spot or camp for the poachers. This idea of using local dogs to poach helps the illegal hunters to circumvent restriction. Sometimes, poachers will stay in the free zone and send the trained local dogs to hunt for them in the Park, and the dogs will kill wild animals and return to the location of the poachers in the free zone. This method appears to be the safest for the poachers as they would not have to enter the Park except for large games and also because the park rangers are trailing poachers (human beings) and not local dogs which may be considered by rangers as animals too. Also, poachers set fire in the Park Forest in order for them to see animals clearly. They do not make noise but they have a way of calling themselves or a member that is lost in the bush by hitting the tree with cutlass just once for the person to know where they are. Poachers believe that even, if the park rangers hear them, rangers can never reach them in the centre of the forest because rangers are not familiar with the terrain. Tree marking helps poachers a lot in finding their way within and out of the park because hunters are sometimes lost in the park. This shows that poaching has many hazards and one of such hazards is getting lost in the Park Forest. This is due to the similarities of the forest terrain and topography which has made many local hunters to be lost in the Park Forest and has led to the death of many. The poachers alluded to the fact that there are instances where

illegal hunters died in the Park Forest when they were lost and that a particular lost poacher trekked till he died in the Park.

Conversely, most groups of poachers make use of the porous nature of the park because the Old Oyo National Park is not fenced and the poachers enter the Park Forest through the porous routes. As part of their methods of operation, poachers usually have spies or informants that monitor park rangers for them. In explaining how poaching is organized, an informant stated that:

> We move from our meeting point into the park. The park is not fenced. We have some hunters stationed outside the park that will be monitoring the movement of the park rangers. Once we are through from poaching in the park, we send someone to go out of the park. This person will meet with the people we stationed outside for information about the park rangers. This person will rush back to tell us about the escape route out of the park where there are no park rangers. Instead of us to go home, we would go and hand over the poached animals to the bushmeat vendors to sell for us (KII, Poachers-leaders, Sepeteri Range, 6th March, 2017).

In line with the explanations of how poaching is organized another informant stated that:

> We usually meet at our meeting point at 7pm and move into the National Park, since the Park is not fenced. Sometimes, we may smuggle the animals to nearby communities where hunting is not restricted. The bushmeat vendors usually smuggle the poached animals to the neighbouring communities too. We work hand in hand with the bushmeat vendors because sometimes, you may be tired after hunting and you may not have time to market it (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 8th January, 2017).

The data revealed that poachers have the knowledge of how park rangers operate and therefore capitalize on rangers' weaknesses. Poachers often move from their meeting point into the park. They have spies stationed outside the park that will be monitoring the movement of the park rangers. Once they are through from poaching in the park, they will send someone to go out of the park. This person will meet with the people stationed outside for information about the park rangers. This person will rush back to tell them about the escape route out of the park where there are no park rangers. Afterwards, they would go and hand over the poached animals to the bushmeat vendors for marketing. The bushmeat vendors usually smuggle the poached animals to the neighbouring communities too. This indicates that poachers network with the bushmeat vendors.

Furthermore, the park has large expanse of land, with a land mass area of 2,512 km^2, therefore, poachers can come into the park through various routes. They are more knowledgeable about the routes and paths because it is their community. A National Park Official has this to say:

> The park is not fenced. Trees are used to demarcate the park not iron or block. The park is only demarcated by trees and river. They can come in through a particular route and go out through another route. They usually sneak into the park through these porous routes. They have the local knowledge of every nooks and cranny of the park because the community belongs to them. Sometimes, they will pretend as if they are going to their farms. The park is so wide with many resources. They use local science and knowledge; and carry other dangerous weapons when going into the park in order to escape arrest and to protect themselves against gunshot and attack from dangerous animals. Most of them use this to outsmart us and some dangerous animals in the Park Forest. They go into the park at night or in the evening. They can go into the park in about two to three group or one group as the case may be (KII, National Park Official, Marguba Range, 13th January, 2017).

Another National park Official stated that:

> Poachers can enter the Park Forest through many routes in the community because the Old Oyo National Park is neither fenced nor barb wired. The park is somehow porous but for the paramilitary approach of the Park Rangers, it is becoming secured but poaching has not stopped. Poachers sneak into the Park Forest through any path they consider safe for them. Poachers claimed to consult some gods and oracle. They have many dangerous charms. We got to know these during our interrogation with the arrested poachers. The park is blessed with large expanse of land and it is not fenced, so, this helps them a lot from escaping arrest. They can sneak into the park and sneak out through any route. More so, that they grew up in this community and they have the local knowledge of the routes in the park. These poachers believe so much in their local know-how and this also helps them to escape arrest sometimes. Some of them can be very dangerous because they have been arrested before and they do not want to be arrested again. So, they are so violent and are always ready to kill (KII, National Park Official, Yemoso Range, 7th February, 2017).

A poacher stated that:

> The park is so wide. There are some places park rangers cannot reach. Ah! poachers are really suffering. If you leave your house in the morning, there are some places in the park you cannot reach until late at night. These are

> the surest places you cannot get to without having animals to kill. There are many dangerous animals there. The Management of the park created a road through which you can access the park but we will never make use of such road. We usually sneak into the park through other outlets. More so, that people live around the boundary of the park. Our strength lies in the local science and knowledge. Nobody knows the way to the house of a "strange being" is one of the many powers we use. Whenever we put this charm on our route and bury it under the ground, the park rangers will never see our camp or location in the park by using this strange power. We use charm in order to escape arrest in the park. In fact, everyone in my group use their charms while going into the park in order to escape arrest (KII, Poachers' leader, Yemoso Range, 7th February, 2017).

The above data shows that trees are used to demarcate the park and not iron or concrete materials. The park is not fenced but only demarcated by trees and river. Thus, poachers can come in through a particular route and go out through another route. Poachers usually sneak into the park through these porous routes. They have the local knowledge of every nooks and cranny of the park because the community belongs to them. Poachers usually pretend as if they are going to their farms. They maintained that they would rather walk a long distance in the Park Forest than to utilize the available constructed roads within and outside the park in order to conceal their activities, movement, and circumvent restriction. Some of them can be very dangerous because they have been arrested before and they do not want to be arrested again. Consequently, they are so violent and are always ready to kill. They asserted that they carry other dangerous weapons when going into the park in order to escape arrest, and that they go through stress, danger and suffer more in order to outsmart park rangers and circumvent restriction. More intriguingly, poachers claimed that they consult some gods and oracle which is their own local science and that they believe so much in their local science, which helps them to escape arrest and protect them against attacks from dangerous animal as well as gunshot from the park rangers. The local science can be described as the act of consulting with herbalists and oracle, the use of charms, magical powers and rituals by the local people in order to prevent or escape from harm, evil or dangerous circumstances. This practice is passed from one generation to another by tradition. However, the effectiveness of this local science has not been scientifically examined and proven. Also, the procedure of the local science is unknown to the uninitiated and yet it is also difficult to empirically establish.

Hill (2011), posits that professional local hunters maintain good relationship with wild animals regularly by communicating with wild animals, by singing and offering sacrifices in form of rituals. This serves as a sign of respect for the wild animals which will increase the rate of hunting success and shield them against diseases. The professional local hunters perform a number of rituals before hunting and these rituals according to Aiyedun, (1996) include: those claimed by professional hunters enable them to find animals easily, those which enable the hunters to kill exorbitant wild animals and those that empower them to get within the Park Forest without being seeing by wild animals or detected by park rangers. Other forms of rituals and objects associated with successful hunting have also been documented by McNiven and Feldman (2003) and Skelly (2011) pointed out two types of rituals that boost the rate of hunting success. The first is the immobilization rituals, which enable hunters to kill wild animals conveniently; and the second is the allurement rituals, which attract wild animals to the hunter. Ritual behaviours concerning other-than-human persons intimately involve the hunter, who interacts with, speaks to, and observes taboos regarding animals everyday (Nuttall 2000; Jordan 2008), by handling bones, skins and hides properly and thinking positively (Hill, 2011). However, all these rituals and hunting magic are rather or peradventure, preparations that make hunting easy; and they fall within the local science and knowledge.

In the Old Oyo National Park, poachers claimed that they rely on their local science and knowledge such as consulting oracle, performing rituals, the use of charms, wearing of fortified ring, bracelet, a necklace or a talisman round their necks or a waistband (*igbadi*) around their waist. Although, poachers maintained that all these protect them against evil and danger but perhaps rather, rationally, these improve their hunting success; and enhance individual and group confidence in hunting. The reliance on local science and knowledge is reflected in the explanation of an interviewee thus:

> We are always well fortified because animals may want to fight you sometimes. With fetish power (juju) all you need do is to tell the animal to become weak instantly. We use *Ifunpa (armshell/armbelt), bante (waistband), ohunde (charm belt)* to protect ourselves in the forest. For instance, if you shoot a large animal and you missed your target. The animal will fight back by coming to kill you. This is when the juju (*fetish power*) comes into play. One will just disappear and shoot again. With these

> methods, we always make headways (KII, Poachers' leader, Yemoso Range, 9th February, 2017).

Furthermore, poachers claimed that, more often than not, they consult herbalists in order to know whether their outing will be successful or end up in failure and disaster. This usually enhances their confidence in hunting. The majority of the poachers and some professional local hunters claimed that on many occasions, spirits do not want them to kill the wild animals in the Park Forest because these spirits believe those animals are their livestock. This usually results in serious fight between the spirits and the powerful poachers. As a result, the poachers must fortify themselves and be well groomed spiritually before setting out for hunting expedition. Poachers in the Old Oyo National Park shared their encounter with the custodian of quarry (that is, the animals being hunted) by revealing that this custodian of the animals is a spirit in the Park Forest that regulates, controls and directs the affairs of the forest. The poachers claimed that the custodian may block them from going to a particular route in the forest and if they obeyed, they may have plenty harvest in the Park Forest. Interestingly, on the other hand, if they obeyed, they may not have a good harvest in the end. This doubt about having a good harvest usually compels poachers to disobey the custodian of the quarry, which is very dangerous for the poachers. These events and many other reasons have therefore necessitated the poachers in the Old Oyo National Park to consult oracle and use fetish power in order conquer the "strange beings" in the park and also to escape arrest. The professional local poachers depended on their hunting prowess, oracle consultations, and their experiences and knowledge about the behaviour of wild animals. Nevertheless, the authenticity of these spiritualists' claims cannot be empirically ascertained.

The poachers expressed their views about the role of oracle in the poaching escapade and maintained that consulting oracle before going to hunt in the Park Forest is inevitable. The case of a 41year old local hunter in the Sepeteri range of the Park illustrates this further. See the box below:

Name: Mr. Ajagunmale (not real name)

Gender: Male

Age: 41years

Mr. Ajagunmale is a local hunter in the Sepeteri Range of Old Oyo National Park, who has poached in the Park Forest for more than 20years. He started poaching at the age of 20, got involved in poaching through learning from his friends whose fathers were hunters. According to Mr. Ajagunmale, the only work he does in order to survive is poaching. He acknowledged the abundance of wild animals in the Park Forest which has been his surviving grace and that of the community members, especially on the availability of bushmeat. While discussing his experience on poaching and how poaching is organized he maintained:

> Sometimes, the oracle helps us in the selection of members who make up our group. We consult oracle and herbalists before embarking on the journey to the park. The herbalist will tell us which route to follow and the ones to be avoided. This consultation has helped us a lot. Sometimes, the oracle may warn us not to embark on poaching journey because there is danger. The dangers may be associated with the arrest by park rangers or attack by dangerous animals or "strange beings" in the Park Forest which may be fatal or lead to bloodshed. In fact, we lost a close friend who was an adventurous poacher in his lifetime. I remember that in that particular year, we were warned by the oracle to avoid the Park Forest for two weeks. Five of us in the group obeyed but our deceased friend disobeyed and went on solo hunting. Unfortunately, he was attacked and killed in the Park Forest by wild animals. This has reinforced our belief in consulting oracle anytime we want to go into the Park Forest.

Box 3: Case study of Mr. Ajagunmale, a 41year old poacher in Sepeteri range.

The name Ajagunmale signifies a 'strong and brave warrior who fears no evil'. This poacher's wealth of experience in hunting and application of fetish power and charms cannot be overemphasised. The poacher usually consults oracle, understands the behaviour of the animals, the Park terrain and the method of operation of the Park rangers, due to the number of years he has spent in poaching. Although, this poacher makes a living from

hunting in the Park Forest but still lives with poverty. Most poachers claimed that oracle plays a great role in the selection of members of a poaching group which guarantees success. The idea behind this is that human selection or wrong selection may bring “bad luck” which may lead to the arrest of poaching team or poor harvest.

Besides the dependence on hunting skills, consulting oracle, experience and knowledge about the behaviour of wild animals as well as a thorough knowledge of the forest within which they hunt, the professional local hunters also adopt some strategies involving the use of "magical power", which promotes and aids successful hunting and protects the hunters (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997) against strange but dangerous wild animals, and park rangers. According to Ntiamoa-Baidu, (1997), four of those tactics are commonly used, but their reality of the success has not been empirically examined. These four strategies are listed below:

Charms: a local hunter can put on a fortified ring or armlet round his neck, a waistband *(igbadi)* on his body. These are claimed and believed by hunters to aid their activities in the forest.

Magical power of transformation: this hunting strategy empowers and enables a hunter to transform into a wild animal. For instance, if the hunter transforms into an antelope or elephant, this will increase the chances of similar wild animals approaching the hunter thinking that the transformed animal is one of them, which greatly improves the hunting success.

Powers of invisibility: these are powers which enable a hunter to become invisible to a wild animal or the park rangers. This will help the hunter to get closer to the animal and he will be able to kill the animal through this power.

Powers of disappearance: this form of magic is meant for the protection of the hunter. These powers require certain procedures to be followed, which may be long. The procedure involves rituals such as taking bath with some prepared herb ointment and consumption of specific food.

After initiating the hunter, the native doctor will give him a prepared armlet or bangle to wear. This is commonly practiced by aged local hunter of large wild animals. The process is claimed and believed to enable the local hunter to disappear in time of danger. For

instance, if a hunter is faced with a wounded or angry animals or park rangers, he might utilise the bangle or armlet to escape from the danger in the Park Forest. This power functions anytime the hunter is threatened by danger or immediately the hunter says a word in form of incantation. However, these mystic allusions could not be empirically verified.

There is no unanimous consensus among scholars yet on the truism, efficacy and reality of magical powers, charms and rituals. However, evidences that charms were in use in Western Europe and that the use of charms such as talismans and amulets were once widespread in both Europe and Africa as early as the pre-Christian era have been documented by scholars **(**Orser 1994; Leone and Fry 1999, Davidson, 2004). The act of using amulets to perform magic and prevent harm can also be traced to the United States **(**Davidson, 2004**).** The rationality of magic has been described as a classic problem in both history and anthropology (Kieckhefer, 1994). Lynn Thorndike, (1923) reveals in his book "History of Magic and Experimental Science" the historical link between magic and science, while Yates, (1979) posit that the occult sciences played a significant role in the early modern scientific revolution. The duo asserts that there are elements of continuity between magic and modern scientific thought while more recent scholars have proposed that magic represents an alternative form of rationality **(**Kieckhefer, 1994**).** Likewise, Tambiah (1990) describes magic and religion as forms of logic which are different from that of science as they order reality according to participatory principles rather than causal principles. Cultural anthropologists describe magic as being symbolically expressive rather than being causally efficacious, which implies that, magic is not designed to work but to express wishes and to encode in symbols a perception of how things should function (Penner, 1989; Neusner, Frerichs and Flesher, 1989). Therefore, magic cannot be said to be irrational but perhaps rather that it is non-rational (Neusner, *et al*., 1989; Kieckhefer, 1994).

The fifteenth century was a significant point of convergence between medieval and early modern concerns, and the disillusionment it upheld was not a sudden rejection of earlier magical thoughts, but a burgeoning movement which shed light on continuing apprehensions and discourses on magical operations even into the modern era (Thorndike, 1923; Yates, 1979; Kieckhefer, 1994). The sociologists, anthropologists and folklorists in the late 19th century till date described belief as an incredibly clumsy construction, due to

its broad nature, which implies cosmological, ideological, sacred and secular beliefs, including when it is being narrowed to beliefs about the spiritual, the magical and the supernatural (Mullen, 2000). Ethnologists refer to belief as belief in irrational ideas or belief that is different from accepted beliefs among scholars (Magliocco, 2012).

According to the early scholars of belief, Enlightenment views were compared with and distanced from those of non-Western peoples, with whom Europeans were increasingly tied through the process of colonialism, and with those of European peasants, considered to preserve an earlier, antiquated mode of thought along with rural lifestyle (Magliocco, 2012). Belief in charms, rituals and magical power is not visible, not audible, it is part of local cultural legacy hidden behind practices and narratives; it lives in practitioners' minds, it is a convention understood and shared by community members, and comprises of individuals who participate in promoting and internalizing the act (Degh, 1996). The only way to understand belief is by participating and becoming familiar to its manifestations in daily activities such as the performance of magic or the story of a legend (Degh, 1996; Magliocco, 2012). Generally, scientific rationalism sustains the argument that many of the expressions identified as folklore, especially folk belief, were pathological (Mullen, 2000). Scientific rationalism maintains the standpoint of superiority and power over the primitive, and describes the beliefs of indigenous people as one which is inferior and stems from ignorant myths (Bassett 1885; Hand 1961; Puckett 1926).

However, Evans-Pritchard (1990) and Malinowski (1954) argue that people can sometimes behave rationally and at another time mystically, switching easily between the two modes of thought according to the context. Stanley Tambiah (1990), in Magic, Science, Religion and, the Scope of Rationality posits that people across cultures have two co-existing viewpoints as regards the world; that is, causality, which involves the observation of physical phenomena with indifference; and participation, which is typified by the use of all the senses and emotions through narrative and ritual.

What is more, the poachers in the Old Oyo National Park claimed that there is a particular spirit in the Park Forest that makes them to lose their memories and get lost in the Park Forest. According to the poachers, this particular spirits is different from other spirits that appear, disappear and sometimes transform into wild animals. This spirit is known as

"IDAKO". Some poachers maintained that Idako spirit operates with the breeze and that it is when they feel this breeze that they get confused and lost in the Park while some claimed that the Idako spirit resides in a leaf and once that leaf is touched, they would lose their memories, but they have not been able to identify the leaf. They however asserted that powerful poachers usually survive this mysterious confusion and loss of memory while the amateur ones die in the process of bewilderment. This is aptly captured in the case of a 46year old poacher in Marguba range of the Old Oyo National Park. See the box below:

Name: Mr. Shakaatanda (not real name)

Gender: Male

Age: 46years

Mr. Shakaatanda is another skillful professional local hunter who has hunted in both the free zone and in the Park Forest for over 27 years. His father is also a hunter. He has been hunting since age 8 but was introduced to poaching at age 18 by his friends. Mr. Shakaatanda poaches not only because of survival and tradition but because he and his friends believe that the Park Forest belong to their forefathers. He said, "the Park Forest is the only resources in our land, if I do not hunt the profitable animals there, what else will I be doing"? According to him, he has killed different types of wild animals such as Red-flanked duicker, Grass cutter, Maxwell duiker, Colobus Monkey, Warthog, Kob, Waterbuck, Roan antelope, Hartebeest, Red patas Monkey, Bushbuck, Pangolin, Crocodile, and African wildcat. In his words, he revealed:

> We mark trees in the park in other to find our way in and out of the park. Otherwise, if you miss your way, you may spend three days in the forest. There are instances where hunters died in the forest when they get lost. In fact, there is a spirit called IDAKO that comes as breeze in the forest. When the breeze comes, one will lose his memory and get lost in the forest. For instance, there was a time one hunter got lost in the forest. It was discovered that he trekked till he died.

Box 4: Case study of Mr. Shakaatanda, a 46 year old poacher in Marguba range.

Another example is the case of Mr. Orinlakiipatan, a 48year old poacher, who started hunting in the park from age 18. See the box below:

Name: Mr. Orinlakiipatan (not real name)

Gender: Male

Age: 48years

Mr. Orinlakipatan is a professional local hunter in Yemoso Range of the Old Oyo National Park, who has hunted in both the free zone and in the Park Forest for 30years. He joined poaching through learning. According to him, he has killed different types of wild animals such as Grass cutter, Maxwell duiker, Warthog, Kob, Waterbuck, Roan antelope, Hartebeest, Bushbuck, Pangolin, African wildcat and Crocodile. While sharing his experience on poaching, he revealed:

> There is a particular spirit known as "Idako" in the National Park that makes us to lose our memories and get lost in the Park. The Idako spirit stays in a particular leaf or plant that we cannot identify, if you touch such leaves or plants, you will loose your memory and get lost in the Park Forest. Many of our friends have got confused and lost in the Park Forest. It was not a pleasant experience. Even, if we survive it you will be so dehydrated, emancipated and fall seriously sick.

Box 5: Case study of Mr. Orinlakiipatan, a 48 year old poacher in Yemoso range.

The name Shakaatanda is the mixture of the poacher's name with his bravery and skills. Other poachers believe that he is 100 percent dependable in times of trouble while in the Park Forest because of his wealth of experience in local science (fetish power, charms and rituals). The name Orinlakiipatan simply means 'at least one child in a family will be usefull to the family'. It also means that ' no matter how bald the big head, there will still be some hair around it'. These two poachers share some similarities. They are so adventourous and the only thing they know how to do in life is hunting wild animals. Although, they are well respected among their peers but they are still affected with poverty because they often borrow money from the bushmeat vendors. Inspite of the hazardous nature of poaching they still poach. Poaching has many hazards and one of such hazards is getting lost in the Park Forest. This is due to the similarities of the forest terrain and topography; and more importantly to the presence of a particular strange spirit known by the locals as "Idako" which has made many local hunters to be lost in the Park Forest and

has led to the death of many. Poachers claimed that anyone who encounters this strange spirit will first lose his memory and begin to wander in the Park Forest for days. If he survives the third day, he will then regain consciousness. However, the survivors tend to be dehydrated and fall seriously sick after their ordeal.

In the 20th century, folklorists' approaches to belief shifted from those based on a purely rationalist paradigm that stigmatized the expression of belief as outdated and primitive, to more nuanced approaches stressing its connection with experience and context **(**Malinowski, 1954; Evans-Pritchard; 1990). In these approaches, belief is understood as iterative, complex, emergent, varying and shifting within communities (that is, communities of both believers and skeptics); and in a lifetime, people can explain belief in certain circumstances and disbelief in another **(**Tambiah, 1990; Greenwood, 2009; Magliocco, 2012).

Belief in the existence of spirits is not found upon loose speculation, but upon solid, personal experiences, the reality which is strengthened by sensory perception (Magliocco, 2012). Generally, informants react critically to supernatural experiences, and want to consider true only that which they saw or which some relations experienced (Honko 1964). However, the importance of taking seriously the informant's phenomenological experience and the recognition of the empirical, social reality of the spirit world within the cultural context in which it occurs cannot be overemphasized (Magliocco, 2012). Nevertheless, the researcher is unable to see the spirits and therefore, cannot admit that the informants really saw them. This raises an epistemological suggestion that the "idako spirit" may be a kind of psychotic plants"? The psychotic plants affect the mental states and minds of humans who inhale them (Nagy *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, the claim of confusion and loss of memory by poachers may be as a result of stress or similarities of the forest terrain and topography. The movement of poachers in groups may be a good approach to guide against this. Indeed, the claims on spiritualism by the poachers cannot be scientifically verified. However, science does not have claim of capacity to explain everything as well.

The study revealed that there is a good relationship among poachers. They do not betray one another because of Ogun (god of iron) that binds them together. The Ogun (god of iron) is the Yoruba god of hunting and war (Peel, 2016) who governs the world of local

hunters. Often, poachers assist in bailing out any one of them who is arrested. They do this by contributing money for the arrested poacher's release. They may even go to the extent of raising fund from the bushmeat vendors. A key informant has this to say:

> There is a very strong bond among us through Ogun (The god of Iron). We are so close and we do not betray one another. We share meat accordingly and we dare not betray one another in order not to face the wrath of Ogun. Sometimes, repentant poachers may betray by telling the rangers about our method of operation and our routes but such poachers always meet their waterloo for betrayal because "whosoever betrays the earth will surely be consumed by the earth". Any poacher who goes to the park behind the scheduled date will go to the park and come back empty-handed (KII, Poachers-leaders, Sepeteri Range, 5th March, 2017).

The above data indicates that poaching strengthens the relationship among poachers. They are well united as an oppressed group against a common enemy (the government). They have links with the bushmeat vendors within and outside the town and this facilitate quick market. Therefore, it is important to point out that there is a strong link among poachers, between local hunters and poachers, and between poachers and bushmeat vendors. They work hand in hand and they are interconnected. After poaching, poachers give the poached animals to the bushmeat vendors (middlemen) who will preserve them and later smuggle them to neighbouring communities, towns and states where there is no hunting restriction. This is well captured in the explanation of an interviewee thus:

> There is a close link between hunters and poachers. There is also a close link among poachers, hunters and bushmeat vendors. We are interconnected. We give the poached animals to the bushmeat sellers who will sell to the public (KII, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 6th March, 2017).

The study discovered that the relationship between poachers and bushmeat vendors is more than that of customers, they are business partners. It was gathered that bushmeat vendors often facilitates materials and support for the poachers before going to the Park Forest to hunt. Even, when poachers are arrested, bushmeat vendors usually sponsor their bail and release. Poachers collect money upfront from the bushmeat vendors to buy food, bullets and other weapons before going hunting.

On the other hand, the attitude of poachers during hunting leaves much to be desired as they eat both ripe and unripe fruits, and drink dirty stream or any available water. These poachers are prone to becoming victims of stray bullets which may result in permanent loss of sensitive organs like legs, arms, eyes, ears, head and even loss of life due to poor handling of certain hunting tools by an armature or inexperienced poacher. This is reflected in the case of a 40year old poacher in Sepeteri range of the Old Oyo National Park. See the box below:

Name: Mr. Irunmu Ekun (not real name)

Gender: Male

Age: 40years

Mr. Irunmu ekun is a skilled local hunter who has hunted in both the free zone and in the Park Forest for over 21 years. His father was a hunter and a tree cutter. He has been hunting since age 6 but was introduced to poaching at age 19 by his uncle after the death of his parents. Due to the demise of his parents he could not go beyond secondary school. He poaches because he has younger ones and children to take care of. In his group, they may be up to 3 or 5. Poaching is the only business he engages in. He poaches with charms in order to go safely and return safely. He goes into the Park with food, bullets and gun. According to Mr. Irunmu Ekun, the members of another group he poaches with are usually six in number; they call each other and choose time, date and venue. According to him, he has killed different types of wild animals such as Pangolin, African wildcat and Crocodile, Grass cutter, Maxwell duiker, Warthog, Kob, Waterbuck, Roan antelope, Hartebeest, Duicker, Bushbuck. While sharing his experience on poaching and how poaching is organized, he said:

> For us not to starve in the Park Forest, we eat any fruit we see. We also drink any water available to us in the Park Forest. We may be thirsty in the centre of the Park Forest where there is no clean river. The best we can do is to drink from any river around, whether clean or dirty. Today, we do not allow an inexperienced hunter to carry gun because he may injure himself or other members of the poaching crew. Poachers often experience accidental discharge which may lead to a member's death or severe injuries to any part of the body. Spending more than a day in the Park Forest is another challenge which may make one sick. Fatigue may set in, one may develop feverish symptoms or malaria and one may even get injured while trying to escape from charged wild animal.

Box 6: Case study of Mr. Irunmu Ekun, a 40year old poacher in Sepeteri range.

The name Irunmu Ekun indicates 'toughness'. This poacher claimed that he can never be arrested just as his name signifies and that it is difficult to get the mustache of a tiger. This poacher is rugged, brave and he is a sharp shooter who knows the nooks and cranny of the Old Oyo National Park. He targets animals from long range and get such animal killed. He has many years of poaching experience and he has trained many local people on how to kill wild animals from long range. The poacher claimed that his hunting skills, talent and local science motivate him to hunt in the Park Forest frequently. One of this poacher's strategies is using highly charmed guns. In other words, the gun must have been saturated in charms and any animal that is shot by such guns must die. The poacher explained that poachers suffer a lot in the Park Forest. While poaching, they may become deformed or even loose their lives. They may get injured while trying to escape from charged wild animals or park rangers. Infact, there is abject poverty in the lives of poachers. They suffer health problems, go through trauma and psychological problem as well as sufferings and torture from the spirits. Poachers may even get lost in the Park Forest because of the similarities on forest topography. They eat and drink anything they see which may become poisonous to their system. All these sufferings experienced by poachers support the position of knapp, (2012) that poachers usually take a great risk in their poaching activities; that poachers operate at night when the possibility of injury by wildlife or travel increases and possibility of detection decreases; and that poachers may develop ailments such as malaria, and sustain injuries including sprains, severe wounds, broken bones and/or infections. This is reflected in the explanation of a poacher thus:

> There are many insects in the Park Forest that may bite you and poison your body systems. Mosquitoes in the park will feed fat on you and gives you scars all over your body. This may lead to malaria fever. Sometimes, we may get injured in the forest. In fact, we suffer a lot while poaching (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 8th January, 2017).

The data above reveals mosquitoes and other insects' bites as another form of hazards suffers by poachers which usually leads to fever or malaria for them. The data also shows that poachers suffer and go through stress which may be a factor responsible for their confusion, getting lost and death in the Park Forest which they blame on "idako spirit".

The political economy of wildlife extraction which reflects the power relations embedded in the conservation of wildlife resources explains the poaching network and its organisation in the Old Oyo National Park. The government and wildlife agencies controls and protects conservation areas through anti-poaching mechanisms such as park rangers, laws against poaching and the use of military weapons while the local people rely on their local science such as the use of talisman, bracelet, amulet, rituals and oracle in deliberate rebellion to the state; and in other to agitate that the right to access wildlife resources does not belong to the state alone. The locals view the national park as the only resource in their land and they cannot stop hunting in the park even after an arrest by the wildlife authorities. They asserted that it is only death that can stop them from hunting in the park.

Research has revealed that the conservation of wildlife in countries which have sufficient wildlife resources, particularly, Sahara Africa, has brought about a failure in the creation of livelihoods for the inhabitants of such local communities (West *et al.,* 2006). Similarly, in the Old Oyo National Park, the failure of government to consider the interests and needs of local communities sets the stage for hostility and long term battles between the locals and wildlife agencies. The relationship between the poachers and park rangers can be likened to that of criminal groups and the law enforcement agents. Many attempts to eradicate poaching in parks have brought about injuries and the loss of lives. This is also emphasised in the point-of-view held by Lemieux and Clarke (2009); Anderson and Jooste (2014), who posited that poaching can be a hazardous activity in some African countries as a result of the annual death count which arises from wild-life conservation tussles. While explaining his views about the relationship between poachers and park rangers a national park official stated that:

> Poachers are our enemies. They do not like us. They are well united as an oppressed group against us. They have no other job apart from poaching and they are always ready to harm or kill anyone who tries to arrest them in the bush. Some of them have been arrested and prosecuted in the past and they are still poaching. Although, some of them that are employed by the park used to reveal their modus operandi to us and this helps a lot. Poachers come into the park with different kind of arms and charms ready to kill anyone who stands on their ways. We are always battle ready for them. It is a major war between us and poachers in the bush. They come into the park with series of weapons and charms. They are always battle ready. Recently,

> they killed one of us in the Park Forest. They know for sure that if we get them arrested they will either pay for compoundment or be prosecuted. In order not to do any of these, they have resulted to violence these days (IDI, National Park Official, Sepeteri Range, 5th March, 2017).

From the above data, it is evident that poachers who have been arrested in the past usually go back to poaching on returning from the police net. This buttress the claim of the local inhabitants that there is no alternative source of livelihood and that many of these poachers cannot do without hunting. However, returning poachers become more dangerous than previously, as they would rather kill park rangers than for them to be arrested. Another National Park Official further shed more light on the relationship between poachers and park rangers thus:

> We are neither friends nor enemies. Poachers may be useful one day. You need them when you want to know how to curb poaching in the park. Therefore, you can not totally do away with them. Poachers see us as their enemies. They believe we are the one stopping them from hunting in the park. They see poaching as a job and a way to make food available on their tables. They see us as someone who wants to take food from their mouth. They believe we are the ones that took over their fore fathers hunting ground. They threaten us a lot. The relationship between us is that of cat and dog (KII, National Park Official, Marguba Range, 9th January, 2017).

Similarly, a poacher expressed his views about poachers-park rangers' relations thus:

> The park rangers are our enemies, they do not think well of us, no good relationship because we know that they allow people from outside to enter the park and hunt, while they deny us from entering the park. Poachers and hunters usually assist the park rangers in combating the zurus. The zurus are poachers from the Northern part of the country. They are very deadly and they are always after killing park rangers. It is always extremely difficult for the rangers to arrest the zurus because they are well armed (KII, Poachers' leader, Yemoso Range, 7th February, 2017).

The study discovered that the endangered Animals species in Old Oyo National Park are: Maxwell Duiker (Etu), Savannah Elephant (Erin), Hyena (Ikooko), Roan Antelope (Mosia), Bufallo (Efon), Green monkey (Aaya), Bush buck (Igala/Agbonrin), Oribi (Ekulu), Water buck (Otolo), Jaquar (Ajako), Golden cat (Idagiri), Pangolin (Akika), Lion and Elephant

have gone into extinction but a researcher through the aid of her camera saw a baby Elephant and Hyena in the park. This is supported by a national park staff thus:

> A woman came for her PhD research and planted camera in the park. After some days, she took the camera and discovered that there was a baby Elephant and Hyena in the park. Even we the rangers could not have believed this if not for the camera which revealed this fact (KII, National Park Officials, Marguba Range, 4th November, 2016).

The study discovered that the existence of Pangolins in the Old Oyo National Park whereas, previous studies have failed to mention the existence of Pangolins in the Old Oyo National Park. This is not listed in a study conducted by Ayodele (1988), which posits that the endangered species in the Old Oyo National Park include Elephant *(Loxodonta africana)*, Buffalo *(Syncerus caffer),* Bush buck *(Tragelaphus scriptus),* Water buck *(Kobus ellipsiprymnus),* Maxwell duiker *(Cephalophus maxwelli),* Green monkey *(Cercopithecus aethiops),* Red patas monkey *(Erythrocebus patas*), Oribi *(Ourebia ourebi),* Blue breasted king fisher *(Halcyon malimbica),* Grey hornbill *(Tockus nasutus),* Long crested hawk eagle *(Lophaetus occipitalis),* Glossy starling *(Lamprotormis chalcurus),* Laughing dove *(Streptopelia senegalensis),* Senegal eremomela (*Eremomela pusilla*), Abyssinian Roller *(Coracias abyssinicus),* African Jacana *(Actophilornis africana)* and Osprey *(Pandion haliaetus)* while Lion *(Panthera leo)* has already gone into extinction.

In the Old Oyo National Park, the management of the park consider wildlife conservation as the protection of wild animals and their habitats for the benefit of the people and the generation yet unborn. It was discovered that the presence of some animals help to maintain balance in the ecosystem. For instance, an adult pangolin can consume more than 70 million insects per annum. Therefore, if pangolin should go into extinction the number of insects in the ecosystem will escalate and this has implication for mankind. A staff of the Old Oyo National Park stated expresses his views thus:

> The existence of some animals in the forest helps a great deal in controlling the activities in the ecosystem. For example, the increase in the population of particular species is usually controlled by another species and this increase is also a source of food for other species (KII, National Park Official, Marguba Range, 19th February, 2017).

Findings revealed the advantages of the hunting restrictions/ wildlife regulations at the Old Oyo National Park to some indigenes. It was gathered that hunting in the park is a stressful activity, time wasting and a risky exercise. As poachers are trying to avoid park rangers, they are also guiding themselves against the risk of being attacked by dangerous animals. On this, an interviewee stated that:

> They are saving us from stress. In the park you can walk from morning till night without anything. You may be hungry for days. 'If a hunter thinks of the stress he went through in the forest he will definitely not share the bushmeat he killed with anybody'. Also, they are trying to save the wild animals in our land in order not to go into extinction and for our grandchildren and future generations to see and be able to identify these animals (IDI, Hunter-poacher, Sepeteri Range, 14th April, 2017).

One of the informants who is a traditional ruler in Sepeteri stated that:

> The only benefit we see is the influx of people into the town which in turn boost our economy. Again, the park popularized our town. The influx of educated people coming for research encourages our people to want to go to school (IDI, traditional ruler, Marguba Range, 16th November, 2016).

The study found that apart from the influx of people into the town which improves the economy of the rural inhabitants, it also encourages the indigenes to seek after education.

4.3.2 Relationship between Poachers and Park Officials

The relationship between the national park officials and poachers is of great importance to wildlife conservation and how to achieve its goals. A better understanding of how they interact, influence, and shape one another will improve the effort to conserve the wildlife and the lives of indigenous populations living in and around the Old Oyo National Park who are usually poor. Dissatisfied rural inhabitants living around the park usually resist national park regulations, protest against them in form of sabotage and refusal to cooperate with the park authorities. This does not only undermines the national park as an institution, but the health of the wildlife within it and the goals of wildlife conservation. Often, the local people are displeased with the national park regulations and the park rangers because of the costs and constraints the park imposes on them, total lack of access to fertile land and failure on the part of government to deliver promised benefits. They believe that the park authorities displace them from their lands, restrict their source of livelihoods by limiting

access to wildlife resources. This emphasises Holmes' (2013) analysis about locals who are displeased with the costs and complaints of wildlife conservation; the postulation is that indigenes will fight against conservation efforts, thereby causing conservation efforts to fail. Most times, locals' dissatisfactions arise from home displacements, the loss of livelihoods, and unfulfilled benefits (West *et al*., 2006). Hence, they may resist the aforementioned through formal political oppositions such as legal battles, lobbying and dissents (for example, Sullivan 2003), or repeatedly, via less formal circuitous dissent forms such as non-cooperation and the disruption of conservation efforts (Holmes, 2007). Recently, development studies which interrogate the politics of the existing contact between wildlife conservation agencies and locals have shown that such relationships are dictated by power tussles, which in turn influence the reactions of the parties involved, in effect, these reactions make or mar conservation efforts (Holmes, 2013).

Brown (2002) and Few (2001) portray cases in which the involvement of community members were manipulated to reduce the influence of locals on conservation areas. In these instances, participatory processes were structurally shaped, the events were orchestrated, and participants were painstakingly selected in order to avoid dissent, these then brought about the accomplishment of the pre-set goals. The complications which arise from a formal opposition to conservation areas include the fear of attacks, detention, ignorance and the inadequate wherewithal to deploy legal action where necessary; these can propel the indigenes to strike back via indirect confrontations such as sabotage, arson, and malevolent and noncompliant acts (Norgrove and Hulme 2006; Holmes 2007). Indigenes deploy the aforementioned in the absence of structured and effective methods and shift to structured and effective methods whenever they are available (Neumann 1995; Norgrove and Hulme, 2006).

Wildlife conservation stimulates antagonism and misgivings between wildlife authorities and community members inhabiting wildlife conservation areas (Anderson and Grove, 1987). However, with the exclusion of local communities from wildlife conservation areas, these feelings of mistrust are eliminated (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006). At first, hunting was carried out to ensure the provision of meat and as a source of livelihood, eventually, it became a socially exclusive pleasurable recreation; therefore, with the inhabitants' shift,

park rangers marked them derogatively as poachers (Beinart, 1987). This negative attitude derived from the colonial style of conservation, as it brought about the isolation of communities from wildlife resources through regulations like hunting license measures, the establishment of restricted conservation areas and disciplinary channels (Infield and Namara, 2001), in return, hostile relations between national park authorities and indigenes were formed; the locals deliberately 'poached' and 'infringed' the borders of the parks as a means of showing their outrage, while park rangers hunted down the poachers. The extent to which park rangers go in their attempts to curb poaching cannot be overstated (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006). A poacher in a key informant interview asserted that:

> Park rangers can never be our friends. Armed robbers can never be friends with the Police. Park rangers will chase you till you are caught. No mercy in the forest. One must not get caught. If one is caught, you will be sent to their headquarters in Oyo town where you will be asked to pay compoundment. If you cannot pay you will be taken to court in Aawe. In this court, some arrested poachers who could not pay have been sentenced to three months or one year imprisonment in the past. Unfortunately, we cannot stop poaching because we have been deceived and cheated by the government. We have no other things to do and this is the only resources in our land. Even when we return from the prison, we will still go back to poaching. We become more dangerous in the bush because we would not want to be arrested again. We are always ready to kill any park officials found in the forest. Poachers are thieves. We can be likened to smugglers. We know it is wrong to hunt within the park. We are all looking for what to eat. It is the person caught that is a thief. We usually trespassed to hunt in the park. The relationship between us is that of cat and mouse. Anyone caught will be prosecuted (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 26th February, 2017).

In another key informant interview, a national park official expresses his views on the relationship between poachers and park rangers thus:

> We are not friends. Hunters see us as their enemies. Most of them believe on what they will eat now and forget about the future. This is due to the fact that they find hunting as their source of livelihoods. They hate us so much. When they see you in town, they threaten to kill you but some hunters reason with us. The same goes for poachers. They see us as enemies. For instance, there was a day hunter were doing their festival and I ran into them with my car and they stopped me. They said this guy is very wicked. Let us teach him a lesson then. So they threw bullet into my car thinking that something evil will befall me. But I told them that if truly I am carrying

> out my official duties the way I should, nothing evil will befall me and nothing happened to me (KII, National Park Official, Marguba Range, 16th February, 2017).

Poachers deploy all manner of dangerous measures in a bid to avoid detention by park rangers, thereby, fueling the feud between both parties (Vonessen, 2014). As a result of the rangers' pseudo-military backgrounds, they resort to the use of combative counter measures while waging war against the poachers. Presently, park rangers' trainings seem to be more inclined towards a martial approach, this is also evident in their uniforms, which has similarities with the army's (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006).

The above data gives the true picture of views of the park rangers and poachers about the relationship that exists between them. Evidently, the level of hatred and enmity between the duo has made them to be suspicious of one another which has culminated into the issue of "strike before you are struck". The escapades of poachers against the onslaught of park rangers in order not to be arrested or re-arrested are so deadly. Poachers deploy all manner of dangerous measures in a bid to avoid detention by park rangers, thereby, fueling the feud between both parties (Vonessen, 2014). As a result of the rangers' pseudo-military backgrounds, they resort to the use of combative counter measures while waging war against the poachers. Presently, park rangers' trainings seem to be more inclined towards a martial approach, this is also evident in their uniforms, which has similarities with the army's (Spierenburg and Wels, 2006). This is similar to what is happening at the Old Oyo National Park. The park rangers are now fully paramilitary due to the dangerous and deadly nature of the poachers and other competing actors in the park. Today, the park rangers are fully kitted in green uniform, they carry guns and the approval to do this is from the Federal Government. One of the key informants who is a National park officials have this to say:

> We are now carrying weapons. The weapons come from the Federal Government duly approved by Minister of Defence. Apart from the local poachers, there are other deadly and dangerous gangs in the Park Forest; gangs such as the Fulani herdsmen and the Zurus from northern Nigeria. In one of our parks in the North, the cattle rustlers have killed many of our staff. The attack and killing of our members of staff led to the approval of our paramilitary status. Today, poachers are fully armed with sophisticated weapons. They do not want to be arrested because they do not want to face

> the consequences especially, the ones that have been arrested before (KII, National Park official, Marguba Range, 13th February, 2017).

This is captured in the words of another informant thus:

> The Yoruba people will say we do not return from court to become friends. In fact, we are now paramilitary because of the insecurity in the country and we carry guns around. The rampaging poachers are ready to kill any park ranger in the Park Forest. The Fulani herdsmen and the zurus are also dangerous. Another reason for our being paramilitary is because of the cattle rustlers (KII, National Park Official, Yemoso Range, 15th March, 2017).

Another informant who is a poacher stated that:

> Conniving with park rangers was in the past. Today, it is so difficult to poach in connivance with rangers. It is now fire for fire. They are our enemies. We must not meet in the forest. The Park Forest has turned to warfront for us. Hunting is our forefathers work. It is our tradition. Most of us in Sepeteri are hunters. We all hunt for meat, money and to take care of our households. There is no relationship between the poachers and park officials. The condition is "enter the park and have a free ride to Oyo town" where poachers are prosecuted (KII, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 3rd November, 2016).

The above data indicates that the Old Oyo National Park that is supposed to be a peaceful and serene environment has turned to battle ground among the actors in the extraction of wildlife resources which is associated to power and wealth. Furthermore, wildlife conservation areas are problematic because the management of the areas often brings untold hardships to poor and rural communities living in or around them. These result from lost economic opportunities and exclusion from the benefits of wildlife resources and from damage caused to farms and livestock by wild animals (Naughton-Treves, 1998). This is similar to what is happening in the Old Oyo National Park. A traditional chief in an interview lamented thus:

> If I see any wild animal on my farm that has destroyed my crop, there is no way I would not kill such animal in order to replace my loss. Sometimes, we get to our farms only to see that it has been devastated by wild animals and there is nothing like compensation from the management of the park. Here, we face the challenge of wild animals and that of the Fulani herdsmen (IDI, Traditional Chief, Sepeteri Range, 26th March, 2017).

4.3.3 Relationship between hunters and park officials

During the course of conversation with the local hunters and the park rangers, it was discovered that there is cordial relationship between faithful local hunters and park rangers. Often, the national park officials educate the local hunters on the need to desist from hunting in the park and the reason they should support wildlife authorities by being the whistle blower. There is conservation department in the national park which is saddled with the responsibility of meeting with the local communities in order to support wildlife conservation efforts of government. Although, most of the park staff agreed that there is cordial relationship between them and the local hunters, some of them are of the opinion that there is no much relationship between them and the hunters because, a poacher arrested is a relation of a hunter but they however agreed that there is good relationship between them and the community members. The study discovered that most poachers are hunters but not all hunters are poachers. An official of the Old Oyo National Park interviewed opined that:

> The majority of the hunters are poachers but not all the hunters are poachers. We have cordial relationship with the hunters but not with poachers. We do have meetings with the hunters. There is good relationship between us and the hunters. The relationship is mutual. We have conservation department which usually meet with the local communities in order to enlighten hunters and other indigenes on the need to preserve the fauna and flora resources and the need for them to find alternative source of livelihoods. Most of them see reasons to this fact. Also, the Park organizes a workshop for them on bee keeping (IDI, National Park Officials, Yemoso Range, 8th November, 2016).

The above data reveals that the Old Oyo National Park has conservation department saddled with the responsibility of educating the local people on the need for wildlife conservation and the need for the locals to find alternative source of livelihoods. This raises the question of who should provide alternative source of livelihoods. Is it the government or the poor and marginalized locals who have been denied access to the ancestral hunting ground? If a developmental policy of government says local people should not hunt in the conservation areas, what should they be doing when there is no intervention programme from the government in order to cushion the effect of conservation? Poaching of available

wildlife resources may be the preferable solution for the poor and marginalized local people. Another interviewee expressed his view thus:

> The park officials used to organize meetings whereby the local populace will be enlightened. They meet with the chiefs and the king. There is good rapport between hunters and park officials because when a hunter is arrested and taken to Oyo, it is the elders and the hunters association that gave them the go ahead. If not, the park officials will not do that without the elders' approval. This is so because the park rangers and officials respect hunters Association and the palace authority. The officials do take permission from the palace before sending arrested poachers to Oyo town. Atimes, the Park Management gives job to notorious poachers in order to reveal the modus operandi of poachers. The relationship between hunters and park rangers is cordial but there is need for government to employ our children in order to maintain and sustain this cordiality. There is peace as long as they do not enter people's houses to arrest them. Anyone caught in the park can be arrested but not at home (KII, traditional chief, Marguba Range, 29th November, 2016).

Findings revealed that there is relative good relationship between the local hunters and park officials and that when hunters are arrested for hunting in the park, the park rangers will first take permission from the elders in the communities before they are taken to Oyo town for prosecution. Also, some notorious hunters are being employed by the national park in order to fortify security of the national park. The data revealed that the local people are not happy with the way park rangers are harassing their people on the street, at home and in their kitchen for possessing bush meat. The elders in the local communities maintained that people should only be arrested in the Park Forest and not in their homes and that there would be peace as long as these rules are complied with.

4.4. Animal-Specific Poaching Preference in the Old Oyo National Park

Across the world, traditional and spiritual values are attached to the wildlife (Schama, 1995). These traditional and spiritual values form an essential aspect of the indigenes way of seeing life, and this plays a major role in shaping their views about the environment (Schama, 1995). In diverse cultures, people are strongly connected to their physical environment; mountains, water bodies; and different species of wildlife (BSP, 1993). However, local and customary cultures have established livelihood systems which have changed landscapes with the aim of guaranteeing the sustainability of wildlife resources (Pretty *et al.,* 2009).

Historically, rural communities in Africa have exploited wild animals to meet their dietary, material, cultural and spiritual needs (Scoones *et al.,* 1992; Nazi, *et al*, 2008; Enuoh *et al.*, 2014). However, consumer preference influences the species of animals that are hunted or the choice of wild animals which are taken to the market once killed (Bodmer, 2000) and certain species of animals may be exempted from being killed by hunters because of the existence of traditional taboos or totems (Kumpel, 2006). Apes and other primates are often exempted by hunters because of their resemblance to man (Kumpel, 2006). Belief system contributes to avoidance of particular species, as Muslims avoid pork (and therefore wild pig), primates and snake species (Davies, 1987). The expansion of the global village has weakened the customs of traditional communities, eroded the beliefs, taboos and cultural preferences thereby leading to dwindling wildlife population while some species have gone into extinction (Bowen-Jones, 1998; Peres, 1990). Illegal hunters who encounter large and profitable animals when hunting within conservation areas kill rather than ignore them (Alvard, 1994), which suggests that the more vulnerable (that is, the larger and more profitable animals) are preferred and are threatened with extinction if they continue to be hunted illegally (Milner-Gulland and Leader-Williams, 1992). Wildlife exploitation and consumption arise from complex combination of factors including financial limitations, preferences and cultural values (Ntiamou-Boadu, 1997). In West Africa, the grasscutter is the most important bushmeat species in terms of preferences and quantity of trade; and rodents are hunted and consumed more, perhaps because they are not subject to hunting restrictions in many countries and because of their high reproductive rate which makes them relatively more abundant (Anadu, 1987; Afolayan and Ajayi, 1983; Osemeobo, 1992).

In Nigeria, cane rats, maxwell duikers, porcupines, pigs, giant rats are preferred in markets, especially in the South-west (Anadu, Elamah and Oates, 1988, Soewu, 2008; Soewu, Bakare, and Ayodele, 2012). The preferences for these species are also recorded in some parts of Africa (Njiforti, 1996). The high rate of demand and profit turnover determines the amount and type of game meat marketed in distance locations rather than sold locally or consumed by the local people (Fa *et al.,* 1995). Maxwell duikers are always available in markets (Robinson and Bennett, 2000b) because they are medium in size, thus, transportation is more economic than for smaller or larger wild animals and consumers prefer them (Fa *et al.,* 1995). In the Old Oyo National Park, mostly poached animals are

Red-flanked duicker (*Cephalophus rufilatus*), Giant rat (*Cricetomys sp. Ansogei),* Cane rat/Grass cutter (*Thryonomys swinderianus*), Maxwell's duiker *(Cephalophus maxwelli),* Brush-tailed Porcupine (Atherurus africanus), Colobus monkey *(Colobus sp),* Warthog *(Phacochoerus aethiopicus),* Kob *(Kobus kob),* Waterbuck *(Kobus defassa),* Roan antelope *(Hippotragus equinus),* Oribi *(Ourebia ourebi),* Hartebeest *(Alcelaphus buselaphus),* Red patas monkey *(Erythrocebus patas*), Green monkey *(Cercopithecus aethiops),* Bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus),* White bellied pangolin *(Manis tricuspi*s), Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus),* Python (*Python sebae*), Baboon *(Papio anubis)* and African wildcat (*Felis libyca*), and they are commonly sold but in the black market. However, illegal hunters do not have any specific animal they poach. The poachers kill any animal on sight, especially at night. In the pre-modern times, having a specific animal as a target was common and then a particular hunter can be referred to as "*Ode Aperin"* (Elephant killer) but presently, any animal is killed once sighted. A respondent stated that:

> In our community, the illegal hunters do not really have a particular animal they kill. They kill all animals on sight, whether young or old, male or female, pregnant or not. Joblessness do not allow them to consider all these factors. More importantly, hunting is their main occupation here. If they do not hunt, they farm. Although they kill any animal that they encounter in the bush but at the same time they have respect for some powerful animals. Hunting within the Park Forest for wild animals is a serious challenge in Marguba Range. In the park, poachers do not have any consideration for animal's age, sex or whether they are endangered or extinct. They kill these animals as they see them. Poaching is in their blood just as hunting is part of their culture. Sometimes, our hunters hunt in the park during their festival. They rate themselves based on the types of animals they kill. Most of our children are hunters. Any animal that comes their way must die and end up being sold or consumed. These poachers are serious threat to the conservation of wildlife in the Old Oyo National Park (KII, Traditional ruler, Marguba Range, 16th January, 2017).

Similarly, another interviewee stated that:

> Poachers do not really have a particular animal they kill or hunt down. They kill animals on sight, whether young or old, male or female, pregnant or not. Poverty and greed do not allow them to consider all these factors. More importantly, hunting is their main occupation here. If they do not hunt, they farm. Although they kill any animal that they encounter in the bush but at the same time they have respect for some powerful animals. Poaching of wild animal is a serious challenge in Marguba Range. Here, poachers do not

> have any consideration for animal's age, sex or whether they are endangered or extinct. They kill these animals as they see them. Poaching is in their blood just as hunting is part of their culture. Sometimes, the association of hunters hunts in the park during their festival. They rate themselves based on the types of animals they kill. Most of the youth are hunters. Any animal that comes their way must die and end up in their pots or black market. These poachers are big menace to the conservation of wildlife (IDI, National Park Official, Marguba Range, 16th January, 2017)
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The above data presents a situation that is different from what poachers do in countries like South Africa where poachers kill Elephants and Rhinos for their ivory and horn. In South Africa, a rhinoceros was killed every 8 hours in 2016 for its horn while an elephant was killed every 20 minutes daily for its ivory between 2016 and 2017 (Kamminga *et al.*, 2018). In the Old Oyo National Park, poachers kill wild animals for food, medicinal, spiritual, cultural purposes and sometimes, ultimately as a rebellion to agitate their rights of access to wildlife resources against the state. They maintained that the national park is the only resources or wealth and source of livelihoods for the local people, but unfortunately, they are not benefitting anything from the conservation of wildlife resources apart from intimidation and arrest of the indigenes by the wildlife authorities. Poachers have no consideration for the sex, age or reproductive condition of their targets. In recent times, some of the animals commonly found with arrested poachers are: Roan antelope, Crocodile, Grass cutter, Wild dog, Wildcat, Oribi, Bushbuck, Baboon, Red flanked duiker, Water buck, Maxwell duiker and Pangolin.

Poachers kill all types of animals represented in the park, they do not want to know whether the animals are endangered or not, and they hunt these animals anytime they want to. Scarce or vulnerable species are often marked by poachers for consumption and sale, while some species are selected for their end products. For instance, species such as Baboon which is killed in order to harvest the body part for medicinal purposes and protection. Also, a remarkable rise in the illegal hunting of Pangolin has been recorded. This is due to the belief in its medicinal benefit in the treatment and prevention of convulsion and spinal cord ache. This buttresses the stance of Ntiamoa-Baidu (1997) that pangolin body parts are considered to be potent medicine. A poacher in Marguba range revealed:

> I have killed different species of wild animals in the Park. The species of the

> animals I poach with my group are *Etu* (Maxwell Duicker), *Igala* (Bush Buck), *Oya* (Grass Cutter), *Esoro* (Red Flanked duicker), *Ekulu* (Oribi), *Eta* (African Civeat cat), *Egbin* (Kob), *Otolo* (Water Buck) *Ira kunugba* (Western Heartebees), *Mosia* (Roan Antelope) and *Okete* (Giant rat). I have seen a lot and have experienced much injustice on the issue of our national park. Hunters like me hunt in the park anytime I feel like hunting. Hunting in the Park Forest is a normal routine activity, especially to some of us that were born by hunters. Most of the wild animals I kill in the Park Forest are the ones I use in conjunction with other herbal materials in making medicine and juju (fetish power) for people. It is used for healing and protection against danger. So, apart from making money from the sales of hunted animals, I also make money from using the wild animal products to heal people. I learnt this from my mother's father (KII, Poachers' leaders, Marguba Range, 11th January, 2017).

An interviewee stated that:

> The animals that are killed in the park can be found and bought from the "*Alapata*" (Bushmeat vendors). The ones I know that they sell to us are: *Igala* (Bush buck) *Esoro* (Red flanked duicker), *Ekulu* (Oribi), *Eta* (African civet cat), *Egbin* (kob), *Otolo* (Water buck) *Ira kunugba* (Western Heartebeest), *Mosia* (Roan antelope). Mostly poached animals are: Pangolin (*Akika*), Python (*Olufa*), Bush buck (*Igala*), Maxwell duicker (*Etu),* Waterbuck (*Otolo*), Baboon *(Akiti),* Bushfowl (*Aparo*), Bushbuck (*Igala or Agbonrin),* Oribi (*Ekulu*), Bufallo (*Efon*), Red patas monkey (*Aaya*) (IDI, Bushmeat vendor, Marguba Range, 11th January, 2017).

The above data reveals the various animals that are poached and that are bought by the bushmeat sellers. Most of the wild animals that are poached from the Park Forest are not only consumed or sold but they are used and combined with other herbal materials in making herbal medicine and "*juju"* (fetish power) for people. Their body parts are utilised in making local medicine, charms, local drums including numerous rituals and traditional functions. Therefore, apart from making money from the sales of poached animals, poachers also make money from using the wild animal products to heal people. This aligns with the position of Scoones, Melnyk, and Pretty, (1992) that wild animal body parts remain essential items for consumption and their products have rich medicinal and spiritual values across cultures in human societies. Also, the local families depend on wild animals as food and protein sources to supplement their diets (Wunder, 2001). This suggests that the demand for wild animal body parts for food, protein supplement, traditional medicines and cultural practices contribute to illegal hunting. The additional value that attained from

selling animal parts for ceremonial purposes enhances the profitability of wildlife hunting in many cases.

4.4.1. Nutritional Values attached to Poached Animals

In Africa, almost all wild animals' species are suitable as food resource to many people. The species which are considered as taboo by one group of people are a delicacy to another group in another place. In the Old Oyo National park, the nutritional value of wild animals' meat indicates that bush meat is comparable if not better than domestic meat. Wildlife such as rodents, insects and snails tend to be low in fat. This is in line with the position of Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997, who claims that the flesh of most game is low in fat and that the protein content is the same as that of beef, mutton, chicken and pork, while the vitamin content is much higher. Many edible insects have a high level of vitamin and calories (see for example, Hickin, 1971). For instance, the edible silkworm larva in rural Nigeria *Anaphe venata*, has more protein than animal flesh (lamb and pork). Its iron (Fe) content is higher than that of the chicken; furthermore, the larva has six of the eight amino acids, which are indispensable to the human body, namely; threonine, valine, isoleucine, leucine, phenylalanine and lysine. This makes the Anaphe venata a good addition to diets which lack protein and minerals. The snails nutritional benefit -1.3 % fat and 12.2 mg/100g – makes it almost at par with domestic livestock. In the same vein, in the Old Oyo National Park, poached animals' meat is an important protein source while gathered species such as snails, fishes and birds are essential dietary additives to the starchy staple diet. Wild meat and fish form a substantial amount of the meat in rural diet and supply a sizeable amount of calories and the needed proteins and fats to the locals. The lifestyle of the local people such as farming, hunting and gathering remain important to many rural households. Poached wild animals and their parts provide better quality of food, which have a lower level of fat, a higher level of protein and more healing powers than domestic meats. This allows for a higher level of food security, and indicates the dietary and medicinal functions of wildlife in the lives of the forest-dwelling people of the Old Oyo National Park. A respondent expressed his view thus:

> The poached animals are our sources of food and with them, having something to eat is guaranteed. Poached wild animals are very rich in protein and highly medicinal. For instance, Cane rat is so delicious and highly nutritious. Again, we use the scale of Pangolin in the treatment of

> convulsion and spinal cord ache while the bone of Bushbuck (Igala) is used to heal human bone and to become stronger (IDI, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 10th January, 2017).

Another respondent stated that:

> Bushmeat is highly rich in protein content and highly medicinal. Some of them are used in the treatment of certain ailments and diseases. For instance, the nail of monkey is used for sexual virility and potency. The poached animals are highly proteinous than domestic animals. These animals are so medicinal. They are used in the treatment of many ailments. When we eat them we feel much more refreshed than when you eat domestic animals. They are so agile and so strong. Wild animals do not fall sick unlike the domestic ones (IDI, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 2017).

The above statement is strengthened by a respondent thus:

> The belief we attach to poached animal has to do with our happiness. When we hunt these animals, we are happy because we make a lot of money from them. Again, when we eat the bushmeat we become more refreshed and stronger. The medicinal purpose of these wild animals is second to none. They work for us. They are used for treating various ailments, such as impotency, body ache and many more. The belief we attached to poached animals is that when we are hunting we feel excited and happy, as if we are going to play football. Hunting is our own football. It is a kind of job we do as if we are playing. It is our job and it is our tradition. More importantly, most of these poached animals are medicinal. We also use them for protection (IDI, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 5th March, 2017).

The study also discovered that the values attached to each of the animals poached are monetary and food security purposes and it is traditional in nature. The local hunters poach these animals because of money and because they are very proteinous than domestic animals. Often, they risk their lives to hunt in the Park Forest. A respondent alluded to this fact thus:

> We hunt these animals because we make a living from there and it is our way of life. We value these animals because of the money we get from their sales. For instance, if you kill an antelope, it may fetch you as much as N15, 000. We can also say we attach value to it because hunting was inherited from our forefathers. The value we attach to poaching of these animals is more monetary than traditional. Although, it is our tradition to hunt but the financial aspect of it matters to us more than the tradition. The money we make from these animals helps us a lot in setting debt and taking care of our family (IDI, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 13th January, 2017).

Another interviewee stated that:

> We hunt in the park in order to get money and for eating. We hunt for bushmeat consumption, protein and cash. Our believe is to kill wild animals, eat and sell the rest or probably share them with the people. We hunt these animals because of money and because they are very proteinous than domestic animals. We hunt in the Park Forest because we are poor. If not because we are poor and do not have anything to do to get money, it is not easy for us to be risking our lives by entering the park. We might be killed by wild animals or be arrested by Park Rangers. We take all these risks in order to fend for ourselves and family members (IDI, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 10th March, 2017).

The data shows that the poached animals are highly nutritious, refreshing and revitalizing. The local communities poach for cultural, commercial and subsistence purposes. This is in line with the position of Kumpel, (2006) that bushmeat is considered as a desirable, organic, healthy meat, compared to imported or adulterated farmed frozen poultry and livestock; that bushmeat provides local people with a source of animal protein and valuable source of income in the absence of source of livelihoods and that the nutritional need for animal protein drives the high demand and consumption of bushmeat. The poachers sell the poached animals in Saki and other neighbouring towns where there is no reserve and hunting restriction.

4.4.2. The therapeutic values attached to poached animals

The importance of wildlife and its contributions to well-being in Africa cannot be overemphasised (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997). Wildlife resources contribute to nutritional well-being. In herbal medicine, the use of wildlife products lessens the amount of money spent on healthcare in many families (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997). Also, numerous wild animals can be utilised in spiritual healing in Africa (see, Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1987; 1992; 1995; Sanagho, 1991; Adeola, 1992). Animals which serve spiritual functions are viewed as hallowed objects, and are feared because of the religious/cultural importance attached to them. According to Ntiamoa-Baidu, (1995) wild animals with spiritual/cultural functions can be placed in three groups. These are:

Totem species: animals considered as symbols of an existing, cherished, unseen relationship; accorded respect and regarded as being sacred. This category of animals are not killed or consumed. For instance, the worshippers of "Onikoyi" in the communities around the park must no kill or eat Giant Rat, Crycetomys gambianus (*okete*) because of a particular belief that Giant rat has an association with their forefathers. Therefore, they are also attached to Giant rat through their ancestors. They believe that when they kill this animal, they are killing their forefathers or ancestors.

Tabooed species: (i) These are animals considered as hallowed because of the help rendered to the ancestors as a result of their connection with the species; and (ii) animals considered as unholy as a result of their connection the species. The aforementioned animals cannot be touched, eaten nor killed. For instance, among Muslims, the eating of pork is not allowed. The situation is similar to what exists in the local communities adjacent to the Old Oyo National Park where the killing of baby of Roan Antelope *(Mosia*) is a taboo because of a particular belief that it can cause chicken pox for the killer. Also, the parents of twins must not kill or eat Red patas monkey (Aaya). It is the belief of the local communities that when they eat Red patas monkey they are eating their twin children because Red patas monkeys are genetically twins.

Sacrificial and ceremonial species: These are the animals which are utilised in certain cultural rites and festivals, be it rituals or the preparation of the special meals necessary for such ceremonies. For instance, dogs are offered as sacrifices or in worshipping of Ogun, (god of thunder) by the professional local hunters during their festival. In the communities around Old Oyo National Park, dogs are commonly killed and offered as sacrifices by the professional local hunters during their annual festivals.

In Africa, the practice of traditional medicine is common and wild animal products are often sold in rural and urban markets and; in towns and cities as medicine (Ntiamou-Baidu, 1997). Ntiamou-Baidu, (1997) posits that numerous wildlife varieties and their products are either used alone or combined with herbs, and this constitutes the ingredients of the remedies utilised by traditional healers. These animal products include the skin, tail, bones, meat, hair, teeth, fat, faecal pellets and glands. It is believed that the specific part of a certain species can heal several diseases. For instance, the fat gotten from Python can cure

rheumatism, deep cuts, bone injuries gunshot wounds, boils and back-ache, while oils from the leatherback turtle can be used to treat stroke, fevers, general body pains, skin diseases and constipation. In addition, it was reported that elephant dung can treat at least five different illnesses such as bone fractures, oedema, elephantiasis, toothache and childhood diseases; and that the body parts of the African Giant Snail (*Achachatina marginata*) in rural Nigeria is used for the suppression of hypertension. It can also be used to curb aggression and; bone structure malformation, promote easy child birth, cure anaemia and suppress of convulsion; while the fluid is used to stem bleeding from cuts, treat eye problems, circumcise male children and suppress small pox. On the other hand, the shell is used as an anti-rheumatic and storage for charms (Osemeobo, 1992). Adeola (1992) claims that twenty-three species of wild animals including sixteen mammals, six reptiles and one bird are used for healing and preventive medicine in Nigeria, another thirty-four species can be used in fertility treatments, while thirty-three species can be used as aphrodisiacs. These wild animals used by the local communities and traditional healers for healing and preventive medicine are listed in table 4.2.

The species of medicinal and healing ingredients in the Old Oyo National Park are listed in table 4.3. Similarly, in Africa, especially in the communities surrounding forest national parks in south western Ghana, the wildlife that possess medicinal and healing ingredients are listed in table 4.4.

Table 4.2: Wild animals used by traditional healers for healing and preventive medicine

Species	Part used	Use
MAMMALS		
Duiker (*Philantomba maxwellii)*	Intestine	Can be used to cure stomach discomfort
Buffalo *(Syncerus caffer)*	Bone	Can be used to stop vomit
Bushbuck (*Tragelaphus scriptus)*	Head	Substance used in treating leprosy
Waterbuck *(Kobus ellipsiprymnus)*	Skin and placenta	To prevent trypanosomiasis
Leopard (*Panthera pardus)*	Skin	To prevent snake poison
African Civet (*Civettictis civetta*)	Anus	Used in the healing of convulsion
Spotted Hyena (*Crocutta crocutta)*	Bone	Substances to appease witches
Slender Mongoose (*Herpestes sanguineus*)	Anus	To appease evil spirits and witches
Gorilla *(Gorilla gorilla*)	Penis	To guard against poison consumption
Patas monkey *(Erythrocebus patas*)	Skull	To heal whooping-cough
Tree Squirrel (*Funisciurus pyrrhopus*)	Hair	To treat poison consumption
	Whole	Substances to guard against convulsion
Porcupine *(Atherurus africanus)*	Intestine	To cure stomach discomfort
Pangolin (*Manis tricuspi*s)	Head	To stop flow of blood from injury
Aardvark *(Orycteropus afer)*	Bone	To cure back discomfort
Warthog *(Phacochoerus aethiopicus)*	Legs	To heal the lame
BIRDS		

Double-spurred francolin (*Francolinus bicalcaratus*)	Bone	To enhance infants ability to walk
REPTILES		
Tortoise (*Kinixys spp*)	Whole	To heal chest ache
Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus)*	Intestine	Anti poison drug
Puff Adder *(Bitis arietans)*	Intestine	To avoid adultery
Python *(Python sebae)*	Bone	To prevent backpain and spinal cord discomfort
	Fat	To heal rheumatism
	Fat	To heal injured bones and joint aches

(Source: Adeola, 1992).

Table 4.3: Wild animals used by local communities in the Old Oyo National Park

Species	**Usage**
Pangolin *(Manis tricuspis) (Akika)*	Scales are used in treatment of convulsion and spinal cord ache.
Bufallo *(Syncerus caffer) (Efon)*	The horn is used for automatic answer to ones request.
Python (*Python sebae) (Olufa)*	The fat is used in healing wound, joint pain and fractured bone.
Bush Buck (*Tragelaphus scriptus)* (*Igala or Agbonrin*)	The bone is used to heal human bone to become stronger. It is used to heal children who find it difficult to walk. The horn is also useful for local protection. The tail is used for Irina so that we would not meet with rangers and park guards. Even smugglers and travelers use this. This helps them to always go scot free and escape danger.
Maxwell Duiker (*Cephalophus maxwelli*) (*Etu*)	The horn is used for automatic response to ones demand from the people. Ase, with it, whatever we say is what will happen
Water Buck *(Kobus ellipsiprymnus) (Otolo)*	The pancrease is used for treating stomach ache.
Western *Heartebees (Alcelaphus buselaphus) (Irakunugba)*	The pancrease is used in the treatment of ache and pain.
Baboon *(Papio anubis) (Akiti)*	The skin is for protection. Sometimes, it is used by park rangers for protection against gunshot.

Bushfowl *(Francolinus bicalcaratus)(Aparo)*	Body part is used for healing bareness. The body part and the sand the sparrow bath with, will be mixed together. Sometimes, the sand will be taken and used for the barren especially, if the person is known to have miscarriage.
Oribi *(Ourebia ourebi) (Ekulu):*	The four legs are used in business in order to have more customers (patronage) and for athletes to triumph.
Red patas monkey*(Erythrocebus patas) (Aaya)*	Body part is utilised to heal mental related ailment and to prevent gunshot and machete wound. The tail is used for sexual virility and potency. Especially, for men whose pennis are no longer working.

(Source: The local people living next to the Old Oyo National Park, 2017)

Table 4.4: Wild animals that possess medicinal and healing ingredients in Africa

Wild Animals	Animal products	illness	Usage
African Civet	Faeces	- Gonorrhoea - Body odour	- Combined with pepper in the treatment of enema. - Smeared over affected part - Combined with shea butter and apply as body cream
	Anal gland	- Spiritual powers	- Utilised to ward off evil spirits
Leopard	Skin	- Convulsion - Kwashiorkor - General body weakness	- Utilised as charm - Combined with herbs as ointment
	Bone	- Weak child	- It is bath with (everyday)
Lion	Skin	- Convulsion - Weak child - Vanishing powers	- Utilised as charm . - It is bath with (everyday) - Utilised as charms
Ratel	Bone, skin and hair	- Spiritual powers	- Burnt, combined with herbs and utilised as ointment; by hunters for defence
	Bone	- Weak child	- It is bath with (everyday)
Mongoose	Faeces	- Barrenness - Spiritual powers	- Combined with herbs as ointment
Chimpanzee	Bone	- Abdominal pains	- The powder is mixed with the food.
Black & White Colobus Monkey	Meat	- Purification & strengthening of widow/widower	- Combined with food.
	Faeces	- Spiritual strengthening after birth of tenth child - Miscarriage	- Combined with herbs as ointment - Combined with herbs as ointment
Olive Colobus monkey	Hair	- Diseases in children associated with close births	- Utilised as fetish power.
Red Colobus Monkey	Skin	- Bruises and rashes on new-borne babies.	- Utilised as charms
Bossman's Potto	Hair	- Burns	- Combined with honey and smeared
Maxwell Duiker	Hooves	- Antenatal care	- Utiltsed in conjunction with herbs in palm-nut soup

	Meat	- Purification and strengthening	- Consumed with food
	Skin and Horns	- Magical powers to catch thieves	-Consumed with food
Black Duiker	Horn	- Magical powers to catch thieves	- Utilised in conjunction with incantations to arrest thief
Royal Antelope	Brain	- Magical powers to catch thieves - Diseases resulting from evil spirits	- Utiltsed in conjunction with herbs - Utiltsed in conjunction with herbs
	Horns	- Childhood illnesses associated with close births	- Utilised as fetish power
Bush Buck	Skin	- General body pains	- Utilised as ointments.
Elephant	Dung	- Childhood diseases associated with close births.	- Utilised to stimulate evacuation of the bowels by rubbing it on the ill child
		- Bone fractures, oedema, elephantiasis	- Combined with herbs and applied on fractured area
	Molar tooth	- Toothache	- Utilised to wash mouth with warm water
Giant Rat	Head	- Fertility improvement	- Combined with herbs and food to enhance pregnancy
Palm Squirrel	Faeces	- Removal of thorns	- Rubbed on the surface
Tree Pangolin	Scales	- Cough	- Burnt, ground and combined with soups.
Brush-tailed Porcupine	Stomach contents	- Breast abscess	- Dried contents combined with ground tree bark and robbed on breast
Grasscutter	Faeces	- Weight loss in children	- utilised as clyster
Tortoises	Testes	- Stammer in children	-
Crocodile	Bile	- Poisoning	-
Snake (Vipers)	Head	- Snake bites	- Ground with herbs and applied
African Python	Fat	- Swellings - Rheumatism	- Rubbed on the area - Rubbed on the area
	Bone	- Removal of thorns	- Rubbed on the area.

Chameleon	Whole	- Antenatal care - Diseases in new-born baby - Convulsions	- Utilised with herbs as clyster by pregnant women. - Put on the wrist as fetish power. - Combined with herbs and applied on the body
Mud-fish (Clarias sp.)	Head	- Fertility improvement	- Combined with herbs and food to enhance pregnancy.

(Source: Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1992).

In the same vein, animals such as Elephant *(Loxodonta africana)*, Roan antelope *(Hipotragus equineus)*, Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus)*, Gorilla *(Gorrila gorilla)*, Columbus monkey *(Colobus sp)*, Chimpanzee *(Pan troglodytes),* Leopard *(Panthera pardus)*, Vulture *(Necrosyrtes monachus)*, Chameleon (*Chameleon senegalensis*), Spotted hyena *(Crucuta crocuta)*, and Slender mongoose *(Galerella sanguinea)* are commonly used in traditional medicine among the Yoruba of South western Nigeria (Soewu, 2008). For instance, Chimpanzee, Pangolin, Vulture, Wild cat and Parrot body parts are used in boosting women's fertility. Gorilla, Pangolin, Crocodile, and Wild cats' male organs are used for men's potency. Also, Chimpanzee, Python, Parrot, Vulture and Leopard parts are used to appease witches. Vulture, Colobus monkey, Slender mongoose, Python and Pangolin body parts are used in seeking marital partner (Soewu, 2008). However, all these therapeutic and spiritualists' claims have not been scientifically proven in theatre as at the time of conducting this research, and in the literature the researcher accessed.

The importance of wild animals in the development of modern drugs cannot be overemphasized (Nguyen and Nguyen, 2008; Wilson-Wilde, 2010; Anderson and Jooste, 2014). For instance, the demand for snake venom is on the increase because of its healing powers: two types of snake venom, haematoxin and neurotoxin are utilised in the healing of haemophilia in sedatives and neurogesics (Ntiamou-Baidu, 1997; WHO, 2010; Bhattacharjee and Bhattacharyya, 2014).

The illegal hunters kill various species of animals in the park and care less about their conservation status. They hunt these animals in the Park Forest anytime they want to. These animals are poached/hunted for survival, medicine and sometimes deliberately as a means of protesting against government's acquisition of their ancestral hunting ground without any respect for their custom, consideration for their livelihoods or provision of alternative means of survival. The locals constantly view the acquisition of their land by the government as marginalization and exploitation. They argue that the state and wildlife authorities only care about the wildlife and are less concerned about their livelihoods or interest, and asserted that the way the park is being managed by government reflects the principle of domination and subordination.

4.5 The Marketing Processes of Poached Animals

The act of buying and selling of wild animals can be traced back to ancient times (Ayling, 2012). As Mackinnon (2006) puts it, wild animals were gathered by both the Greeks (from the seventh century BC) and Egyptians (dating from 2500BC). Demand for wild animals increased greatly because of their usefulness in entertainment, especially in the amphitheatre games from 186BC until AD523 (Ayling, 2012). Symbols and images of Indian and African wild animals during the Roman era still exist in mosaics at Piazza Armerina in Sicily and other places in Turkey and North Africa (Mackinnon, 2006). Also, it has been revealed that the Romans recruited and used local hunters to capture wild animals, which suggests that a system of payment for these services must have existed (Ayling, 2012). In spite of the widely publicised international agreements and all the rhetoric and policy at both state and international levels, buying and selling of wild animals and their products continues because it brings huge income to the perpetrators, and this income promotes more sales (Haken, 2011; Ayling, 2012).

The exchange of game meat for foodstuff and other essential household items was common in Africa (Falconer, 1990; Tutu *et al.*, 1993; Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997). Although, this is still in existence it is no longer as popular as it used to be. The sales of game and other wildlife products contribute to the financial gains of many rural areas, as it serves as a source of income for the locals whose sources of livelihoods are restricted (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997). Wildlife contributes to many household incomes via trade in bush meat, trophies, skins and hides, as well as the sale of other live animals and craftwork, based on wild animal products (Ntiamoa-Baidu, 1997; Nasi *et al.,* 2008, Enuoh *et al.*, 2014).

In the Old Oyo National Park, the buying and selling of poached wild animals takes place at the black market. Hunters sell the poached animals to the bushmeat vendors. Sometimes, hunters sell to hoteliers, businessmen, contractors, directors and workers in government agencies who are working in their communities and who love buying bushmeat for their family while travelling back to their base during the weekend. The way in which poached animals are marketed depends on the situation on ground. If the hunters need money urgently, they sell to whoever comes their way first. Sometimes, hunters may decide to sell the poached animals directly to the public by boycotting bushmeat vendors in order to have

more profit. Hunters make more money when the bushmeat vendors are boycotted, as this enables them to transact directly with the buyers. The general public pays more than what the bushmeat vendors will offer the hunters. The restriction on hunting in the Old Oyo National Park sometimes forced hunters to sell to the bushmeat vendors who will smoke the game and later smuggle them to neighboring states, towns and communities where hunting law does not exist. In the pre-colonial era, the bushmeat market was open and it was in existence before the hunting law became strict, but now the market is no longer open as such because of the wildlife laws that prohibit hunting in the conservation areas and the sales of endangered species. The buying and selling of poached endangered animals goes on underground just like a black market. This was aptly captured in the statement of an interviewee thus:

> We sell to the bushmeat vendors (*Alapata*), these bushmeat vendors sell to the restaurants, travelers, visitors, indigenes, food canteen, businessmen, local government workers and contractors. The marketing happens underground. There is no open market for bushmeat sale here. There is no specific market for bushmeat in our community because it is illegal. Poached endangered wild animals are contraband goods and therefore, the products of the black-market. After selling them to the bushmeat vendors, they will smoke them thoroughly and smuggle them to neighbouring communities where hunting law does not exist, for quick market and higher price. I think they smuggle them out of the community to the neighboring communities such as Saki and Ogboro (IDI, Poachers' leader, Marguba Range, 29th January, 2017).

Another interviewee put it thus:

> Poachers sell the poached animals to us and we sell to the people such as businessmen, contractors, hotel owners, canteen owners, directors and government workers. After buying from poachers, we smoke these animals for preservation and smuggle them to town where there is no hunting restriction. It is not open. It is a black market. The marketing process and patronage is underground. It is shrouded in secrecy (IDI, Bushmeat vendor, Marguba Range, 21st January, 2017).

The above data reveals that poached animals are not sold the way goat meat, cow meat, yam, or pepper are sold in the market and that people usually buy the poached animals for ceremony such as wedding, funeral, birthday, naming, housewarming and anniversary. To the local hunters, the business of poached animals is like cocaine business. Poachers dare

not go to the road to display such animals. The bushmeat vendors sell to the canteen, hotel and the general public. The market structure is not open. It is operated underground. Often times, the bushmeat vendors operate from home. An interviewee has this to say:

> The bushmeat vendors operate from home. The money we make from the marketing of these wild animals helps in feeding and sending our children to school. There is no way the hunting restriction will not affect us. The ban on hunting in the National park affects our sources of income (IDI, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 1st March, 2017).

Hunting, buying and selling of wildlife, including birds, reptiles and amphibians provide revenue for the local inhabitants and help in sending children to school in the communities around the Old Oyo National Park. Hunting and bushmeat trade provide the main source of income for a large network of people ranging from local hunters, farmers, bush meat vendors to market women in these communities and neighboring communities, towns and states where poached animals are smuggled to. The local inhabitants have limited sources of livelihood and they are not only hunting for consumption but for business motives, which contribute to household income and enhances rural economy. In the light of profit making from bushmeat businesss, the blanket prohibition of hunting and the trade of poached animals have a negative impact on the livelihood of the local people. It is important to note that prohibiting local people from hunting without providing them with alternative means of livelihoods will not promote the conservation of wildlife resources. More so that the local people abhor the feelings of resentment towards the state which governs and benefits economically from wildlife resources without meaningful benefit being accrued to the local inhabitants. This has constantly led to rebellion against the state in form of illegal hunting through which the locals benefits from the national park.

The study discovered that bushmeat trade does not require much capital and the bushmeat vendors make more money because they do not have to invest much money before making profit. Also, hunters make more money from the sales of poached animals because they do not invest much money on hunting. Furthermore, there is no impediment to stop anyone from starting the buying and selling of wild animals. This is similar to the position of Brown (2003) that the increase in bushmeat trade and wildlife hunting can be associated with no impediment or restriction in joining the business because whoever wants to hunt is

free to hunt all day as they are encouraged by the high revenue generated by hunters. It could be said that bushmeat trade has lots of advantages and it is more lucrative compared with other farming activities because hunters generate more returns or proceeds than graduates joining the government organisations. Poaching of endangered wild animals continues because the actors in the marketing process benefit from it. This is in line with the perspective of Cowlishaw, Mendelson, and Rowcliffe, (2005) that wildlife hunting continues because those involved in the trade make significant gain from the business.

The bushmeat vendors pre-finances the hunters before going to the Park Forest to get certain animals that might have been booked by some people for their ceremonies. The local hunters are always motivated to hunt for certain animals in the park whenever they are paid in advance. This is similar to the position of Falconer, (1990) and Tutu *et al.* (1993) that the main success of high revenue for bushmeat traders involved in large scale, small scale or small family business which could be passed on from generation to generation is hinged upon a well planned, structured or organised bushmeat trade. Falconer, (1990) and Tutu *et al.*. (1993) maintain that the bushmeat vendors (wholesalers) control both the hunters' prices and the retails prices; that each bushmeat vendors has hunters who usually supply her bushmeat; that the bushmeat vendors often pay the hunters in advance with the agreement of repaying the bushmeat vendors with meat; and they also provide credit facilities to the retailers. Through this system, a regular supply of meat and market for the bushmeat vendor (wholesaler) is guaranteed. The trade chain for the poached animals is complex. In order to ensure a successful business giving the complexity of the trade, a bushmeat vendor would act as the middleman saddled with the responsibility of controlling and setting the prices. However, hunters supplying bushmeat to vendors or final consumer may exercise supreme control over the price within the marketing process and can gain considerable incomes. This shows the contribution of bushmeat trade to the wellbeing of the local inhabitants.

The marketing process of poached animals at the Old Oyo National Park has important gender aspects. It showcases the role of male and female in the bushmeat business and provides important benefits to women. An interviewee put it thus:

> We men poach while women sell the poached animals' meat. We do this to take care of our family. Anytime there is crop failure, hunting of wild animals is what we fall back on (IDI, Poachers' leader, Sepeteri Range, 7th March, 2017).

The data reveals that illegal hunting is common among men, while women do the selling of the poached animals.

The marketing process can be described as a chain of interlinked connections from extractions of bushmeat to final consumer (Ribot, 1998). The people that benefit from the marketing of bushmeat, ranges from forest dwellers, consumers, smugglers to marketers in a distant location to the Park Forest. It is important to note that the marketing process of the poached animals is shrouded in secrecy because there is no open market for the poached animals. The marketing process goes on underground. The bushmeat vendors smoke the poached animals and ensure that they are well preserved before selling it to the retailers such as Nigerians in Nigeria and Nigerians in Diaspora who sell bushmeat abroad. For instance, the local hunters and bushmeat vendors smoke the game meat thoroughly with firewood. They also put them in the local pot and use *owu tutu* (fresh cotton) to cover the meat with ashes or put *ata Ijosin* (hot/chili pepper) on top. Some use *elubo* (yam flour) or *eeru* (ashes) to preserve it further after smoking. Smoking the game meat properly enables the traders to carry them in large quantities to neighboring states and communities. This also helps their numerous customers from abroad to transport them without getting spoilt. This is reflecte in the words of a bushmeat vendor in Marguba range thus:

> We preserve the poached animals by smoking them with firewood. We preserve the poached animals by smoking with firewood or by salting. We use *owu tutu* (fresh cotton) to cover the meat with ashes or put *ata Ijosin* (hot/chili pepper) on top. We also use *elubo* (yam flour) or *eeru* (ashes) to preserve it further after smoking. We use iyo (salt) to preserve it further after smoking. After which it may spend up to months without being spoilt. Ashes may be applied after smoking in order to extend the numbers of days it can spend and this may preserve the bushmeat for up to three months (IDI, Bushmeat vendor, Marguba Range, 21st February, 2017).

Another bushmeat vendor stated that:

> We use *owu tutu* (fresh cotton) to cover the meat with ashes or put *ata Ijosin* (hot/chili pepper) on top. We also use *elubo* (yam flour) or *eeru* (ashes) to preserve it further after smoking. We use iyo (salt) to preserve it

> further after smoking. We can also use rag to cover carbide and put it in the bottom of a container and put another carbide on top and cover it like that. It can spend three years like that. People patronize us well and we make our money through this work but the period at which we make highest gain is seasonal. These are the periods at which we make the highest sales. The patronage is wonderful indeed. For instance, March, April, May and June are the peak of the market because the bush will be much grown. We get more wild animals during the dry season because it is easier for the poachers to see the animals easily and clearly as against the wet season when the wild animals will have opportunity to hide. Also, the rain do affect the poachers during the wet season. If the poacher is in the Park Forest and it is raining, the poacher may come back home empty handed. This is the reason most of them avoid going to hunt in the park when it is raining (IDI, Bushmeat vendor, Marguba Range, February, 2017).

Similarly, a bushmeat vendor in Sepeteri range stated that:

> Immediately the wild animals are killed and brought to the community by the poachers we smoke the poached animals very well. This is our own way of preserving the poached animals since there is no freezer to preserve them in our community. Even if there is freezer, what about light that is not always available. We also use elubo (yam flour) or eru (ashes) to preserve the poached wild animals further after smoking. We can also use rag to cover carbide and put it in the bottom of a container and put carbide on top and cover it like that. It can spend three years like that. But we do not use carbide anymore because of its poisonous tendencies and properties. People patronize us well. The patronage is wonderful indeed. March, April, May and June are the peak of the market because the bush will be much grown. We preserve through smoking every three days. It is very lucrative (IDI, Bushmeat vendor, Sepeteri Range, February, 2017).

The above data reveals that poachers get more wild animals during the dry season because it is easier for them to see the animals easily and clearly as against the wet season when the wild animals will have opportunity to hide and that the rain use to affect the poachers during the wet season. This raining season is a period of shortfall for the poacher because they come back home empty handed when it is raining. This is the reason most of poachers avoid going to hunt in the park. Apart from using *owu tutu* (fresh cotton) to cover the meat with ashes or put *ata Ijosin* (hot/chili pepper), *elubo* (yam flour) or *eeru* (ashes) to preserve the poached animals further after smoking the bushmeat vendors also use rag to cover carbide and put it in the bottom of a container and put carbide on top and cover it but they do not use carbide anymore because of its poisonous tendencies.

The bushmeat vendors mentioned carbide as one of the materials used in bushmeat preservation and also claimed that they are no longer using carbide to preserve the bushmeat, but to what extent is this true? The use of carbide in food preservation is also common among farmers and fruitsellers across the country which has toxic effects on human health. The use of calcium carbide for food preservation is being discouraged globally, because of related health hazards. The use of calcium carbide in food preservation is highly hazardous because it is a toxic and highly corrosive chemical which has negative effect on human health (Asif, 2012). It also contains traces of phosphorous hydride and arsenic that have the ability to alter human cells into cancerous cells (Asif, 2012). However, the secret nature of the bushmeat trade, marketing and processing is not regulated by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) yet, vendors sell to the public.

Figure 4.6: Pictures of Ata Ijosin lilo (Grinded Hot/Chili Pepper) (*Capsicum frutescens*)

Figure 4.7: Picture of Eeru (Ashes) (Caustic Potash)

Figure 4.8: Pictures of Elubo (Yam Flour) ***(Dioscorea rotundata)***

Figure 4.9: Pictures of Owu tutu (Fresh cotton) (Gossypium hirsutum L.)

Figure 4.10: Picture of Salt (Iyo) ***(sodium chloride)***

It is important to state that the hunting restriction at the Old Oyo National Park conceals the contribution of wildlife hunting and bushmeat trade to the economy of communities living next to the park**.** Historically, wildlife has been monopolized and tagged as "national parks" and largely regulated by the government. However, as the government is generating revenue from wildlife, the local inhabitants are also making money from wildlife exploitation. Unfortunately, the hidden nature of bushmeat trade at the Old Oyo National Park has concealed its economic contribution to the rural economy. This substantiates the position of Child, Musengezi, Parent and Child, (2012) that economic signals are crippled by a combination of government conservation policy, making economic analysis of wildlife hunting near impossible.

Wildlife contributes directly to household income through hunting, sale of bushmeat, as well as sales of wild animal products for medicinal purposes. Even among communities in the Old Oyo National Park where the main occupation is farming and hunting, income from hunting represents an important part of rural household income which cannot be stopped without causing hardship to the rural inhabitants. Most local people sell wild animals and their products in order to make money (Fa *et al.,* 1995). These local people also pay substantial amount of money for traditional medicines, the ingredients of which sometimes include wild animal products. The availability of wildlife contributes to local food security while the marketing of wildlife serve as a source of income for more people and contributes to rural household income. This is in line with the position of Brown and Davies (2007) that bushmeat trade serves as a source of income for more people than any other wildlife activities and contributes to rural economy. Also, the bushmeat trade contribute to local economies through the marketing of their body parts. However, the exact amount of money going into the communities through bushmeat trade is not known.

Wildlife hunting is not only important in a conservation context, but is also a major component of people's livelihoods (Rowcliffe *et al.,* 2004) because livelihoods are tied to wildlife resources (Fa *et al.,* 2003). More importantly, wildlife hunting and trade could contribute to development if managed for sustainability and transparently incorporated into the general economy (Brown, 2003). The political economy of wildlife hunting in the Old Oyo National Park deeply analyzes who gains and who loses from the conservation of

wildlife resources and provides important clues as to which group might be seeking to change the conservation policy.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Wildlife hunting in the Old Oyo National Park, illegal (as defined by current wildlife laws in Nigeria) or traditional (as defined by local people), the extraction of wildlife within the park for both subsistence and economic gain continues and it has a deep social, political, economic and cultural roots; and its meanings are multifaceted. Wildlife extraction involves deep rooted meanings and politics that affect conservation of wildlife resources and development. In the context of Nigeria, the knowledge about local actors' interpretation of wildlife extraction and the struggle that have engendered activities that are against the conservation policy as a result of locals' loss of access to wildlife resources and livelihoods is an essential step to achieving conservation objectives. Findings revealed that wildlife conservation reflects the principles of domination and subordination; and the power relations embedded in the extraction of wildlife resources as well as the distribution of its benefits.

The removal of the hunting and fishing rights from the local people by deleting it on the gazette had an alienating implication for the hunting tradition and the indigenes' sense of community and belonging. The local communities claimed that there are no licensed agents or individuals that are allowed to hunt in the Old Oyo National Park. Many local people are interested in legal hunting, if hunting permit or license is made available by the government.

To the local people, killing wild animals is hunting, not poaching. They believe that it is when they are caught that they become poachers. Once they do not allow park rangers to catch them, they remain hunters. At some other times, in deliberate deviance to the government, they hunt to agitate their right of access to the Park, and not necessarily to satisfy their survival needs.

The local poaching network include poachers (suppliers), local hunters (suppliers), bushmeat vendors (middlemen and traffickers) with contacts in distant communities, towns and states where there is no hunting restriction. The poachers are in groups (usually between three and six members in each group) that are well organized and use nicknames, jargon, mouth whistle, tree marking, plant bending and tree hitting in order to conceal communication and these increase the rate of poaching success in the Park Forest.

The animal-specific poaching preference in the Park includes *Igala* (Bush Buck) *Esoro* (Red Flanked Duicker), *Ekulu* (Oribi), *Eta* (African Civet Cat), *Egbin* (Kob), *Otolo* (Water Buck), *Ira kunugba* (Western Heartebeest), *Mosia* (Roan Antelope), *Etu* (Maxwell's Duicker), *Aaya* (Red patas monkey) and *Olufa* (Python). Presently, most of these animals are endangered and will soon assume extinction status if poaching in the Old Oyo National Park is not eradicated.

The marketing process of the poached animals goes on underground among poachers, local hunters, bushmeat vendors and traders. The bushmeat vendors smoke the poached animals and ensure that they are well preserved before selling it to the retailers such as chopbars or Nigerians in Diaspora who sell bushmeat abroad.

5.2 Conclussion

The zero wildlife benefits, dwindling wildlife population, lack of access right, competing cultural values and household livelihood with wildlife conservation, and interconnection with unemployment and infertile farmlands coupled with tensions around poachers from northern Nigeria, and the interface between the national park and communities can be described as "wicked problems". The fauna and flora resources in the Old Oyo National Park should be a blessing to the local communities rather than "resource curse" – an unreasonable phenomenon in which numerous natural resources have been linked with poor management, irrational resource extraction and poor development result (OECD, 2011). Conservation policy design looks so good on paper but lacks sincerity of purpose at the level of implementation. Indeed, the local communities are listed in sharing from the benefits of wildlife resources on the management plan for the Old Oyo National Park but this is only so in theory. In practice, the local communities are not benefitting from this

arrangement apart from the usual “cajole and empty promises” from the government and its agencies.

5.3 Recommendations

Most of the local people demanded that government should consider the issuance of hunting permit to the interested indigenes, as this will go a long way in giving the indigenes a sense of belonging, thereby discourage apathy, reduce the rate of poaching and eradicate violence.

The locals should be educated on the need to domesticate wildlife and be empowered to domesticate some wild animals such as grass cutter (oya), guinea fowl (awo), oribi (ekulu), water buck (otolo), maxwell duiker (etu), bush buck (igala or agbonrin), pangolin (akika) for commercial purpose, survival, economic returns and conflict resolutions. They should be provided with starter colony and training to start the business. They should also be trained on honey production as an alternative source of livelihood in order to cushion the effect of conservation on the local people. Furthermore, the locals should be allowed to visit their caves and shrines, perform their ceremonies, record it and sell to generate income. The shrines can be decorated to attract tourists’ attention. This will be double benefits to the locals, that is, they will have a sense of belonging and at the same time be making money which are ways of reintegrating them into the system. This could also serve as a source of revenue share between the locals and government especially, where the locals are employed to explain the significance of the shrines and caves to the tourists.

Park rangers that once arrested the indigenes do not find it easy to walk freely in the communities. This is a fall out from rangers work environment. Government should therefore provide Park rangers with adequate security and protection.

Science has not been able to explain all the phenomena same way the local science/ tradition has not been able to explain ‘Idako’ phenomenon. However, Idako should still be subjected to scientific enquiries, investigated and taken from the level of spirit to the level of science. The idako can be used by criminologists for security and protection purposes.

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) pays huge attention to the assessment of food and drug in the country but pay less attention to the use of carbide in bushmeat preservation. The use of carbide to preserve bushmeat and farm produce is a serious public health issue that must be given attention by the government and stakeholders in the health sector.

In a break from previous design on wildlife development which lacks benefit sharing formula; and considers communities a hindrance to progressive conservation and undermines their roles in wildlife conservation, new policy should not only involve local people in the management plan but must ensure that they benefit meaningfully from wildlife conservation. Government must build the capacity of the local people by investing in education, vocational activities, nutrition, health care, rural electricity, rural water and sanitation. Wildlife hunting is loaded with meanings and its misinterpretation could perpetuate conflict, and negatively affect sustainable management of wildlife resources and rural development. Thus, the local interpretation of poaching, which could further exacerbate conflict and impede development as a result of variations in poaching interpretations between the state and the local communities must be acknowledged by the policy-makers and be given an adequate attention. The livelihoods of the local communities and wildlife benefits sharing formula should be incorporated into wildlife conservation policy.

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APPENDIX 1

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IDIS)KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW (KIIS)/FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)GUIDE FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND POACHING IN OLD OYO NATIONAL PARK, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

Objective 1: Probe the political economy of wildlife conservation at Old Oyo National Park.

Probe for:

i. The primary interest of government in the Old Oyo National Park.
ii. What economic gains are derived from the Old Oyo National Park?
iii. What processes are involved in legal hunting operation in the Old Oyo National Park?
iv. Are there licensed agents that are allowed to operate at the Old Oyo National Park?
v. How does restriction at the Old Oyo National Park positively affect the indigenous population?
vi. How does restriction at the Old Oyo National Park negatively affect the indigenous residents?
vii. The relationship between hunters and government officials.
viii. The relationship between poachers and government officials.

Objective 2: Examine local interpretations of poaching in the adjoining communities of the Old Oyo National Park.

Probe for:

i. Local interpretations of restrictions at the Old Oyo National Park.
ii. Local interpretations of hunting vis-à-vis poaching.
iii. Whether the indigenous populations are in consent with institutional restriction from the Old Oyo National Park.
iv. The compliance or otherwise of local population to restriction/conservation rules of Old Oyo National Park.
v. Local population engagement with hunters.
vi. Local population engagement with poachers.

Objective 3: Investigate the network of poaching in the Old Oyo National Park.

Probe for:

i. How poaching is organised?
ii. What networks of poaching are in existence?
iii. What kind of relationship exists between poachers and national park officials?
iv. How do poachers circumvent restrictions to access the park?
v. What code/symbols are utilized in poachers networks?

Objective 4: Probe for animal-specific poaching preference in the Old Oyo National Park.

i. Probe for the types of species of animals that are poached.
ii. The reasons why such animals are poached.
iii. The values attached to each of the animals identified.
iv. Therapeutic values/reasons ascribed to poached animals.
v. Beliefs attached to poached animals.
vi. Nutritional values attached to poached animals.

Objective 5: Find out the marketing processes of poached animals in Old Oyo National Park.

Probe for:

i. How poached animals are marketed.
ii. The sellers and buyers.
iii. The structure of the marketing process.
iv. Animal preservation methods.
v. Patronage (sales and profit).

APPENDIX 2

CASE STUDY (For Wildlife Conservation and Poaching In Old Oyo National Park, Oyo State, Nigeria)

i. What is your name?

ii. How old are you?

iii. Kindly share your experience on poaching in the Old Oyo National Park.

iv. Kindly share your experience on hunting in the park.

v. Kindly share your experience on Old Oyo National Park.

vi. How long have you been involved in poaching?

vii. How did you get involved in poaching activities?

Probe for:

viii. The primary interest of government in the Old Oyo National Park

ix. What economic gains are derived from the Old Oyo National Park?

x. What processes are involved in legal hunting operation in the Old Oyo National Park?

ix. Are there licensed agents that are allowed to operate at the Old Oyo National Park?

x. How does restriction at the Old Oyo National Park positively affect the indigenous population?

xi. How does restriction at the Old Oyo National Park negatively affect the indigenous residents?

xii. The relationship between hunters and government officials.

xiii. The relationship between poachers and government officials.

xiv. Local interpretations of restrictions at the Old Oyo National Park.

xv. Local interpretations of hunting vis-à-vis poaching.

xvi. Whether the indigenous population are in consent with institutional restriction from the Old Oyo National Park.

xvii. The compliance or otherwise of local population to restriction/conservation rules of Old Oyo National Park.

xviii. Local population engagement with hunters.

xix. Local population engagement with poachers.

xx. How poaching is organised?

xxi. What networks of poaching are in existence?

xxii. What kind of relationship exists between poachers and national park officials?

xxiii. How do poachers circumvent restrictions to access the park?

xxiv. What code/symbols are utilized in poachers networks?

xxv. Probe for the types of species of animals that are poached.

xxvi. The reasons why such animals are poached.

xxvii. The values attached to each of the animals identified.

xxviii. Therapeutic values/reasons ascribed to poached animals.

xxix. Beliefs attached to poached animals.

xxx. Nutritional values attached to poached animals.

xxxi. How poached animals are marketed.

xxxii. The sellers and buyers.

xxxiii. The structure of the marketing process.

xxxiv. Animal preservation methods.

xxxv. Patronage (sales and profit).

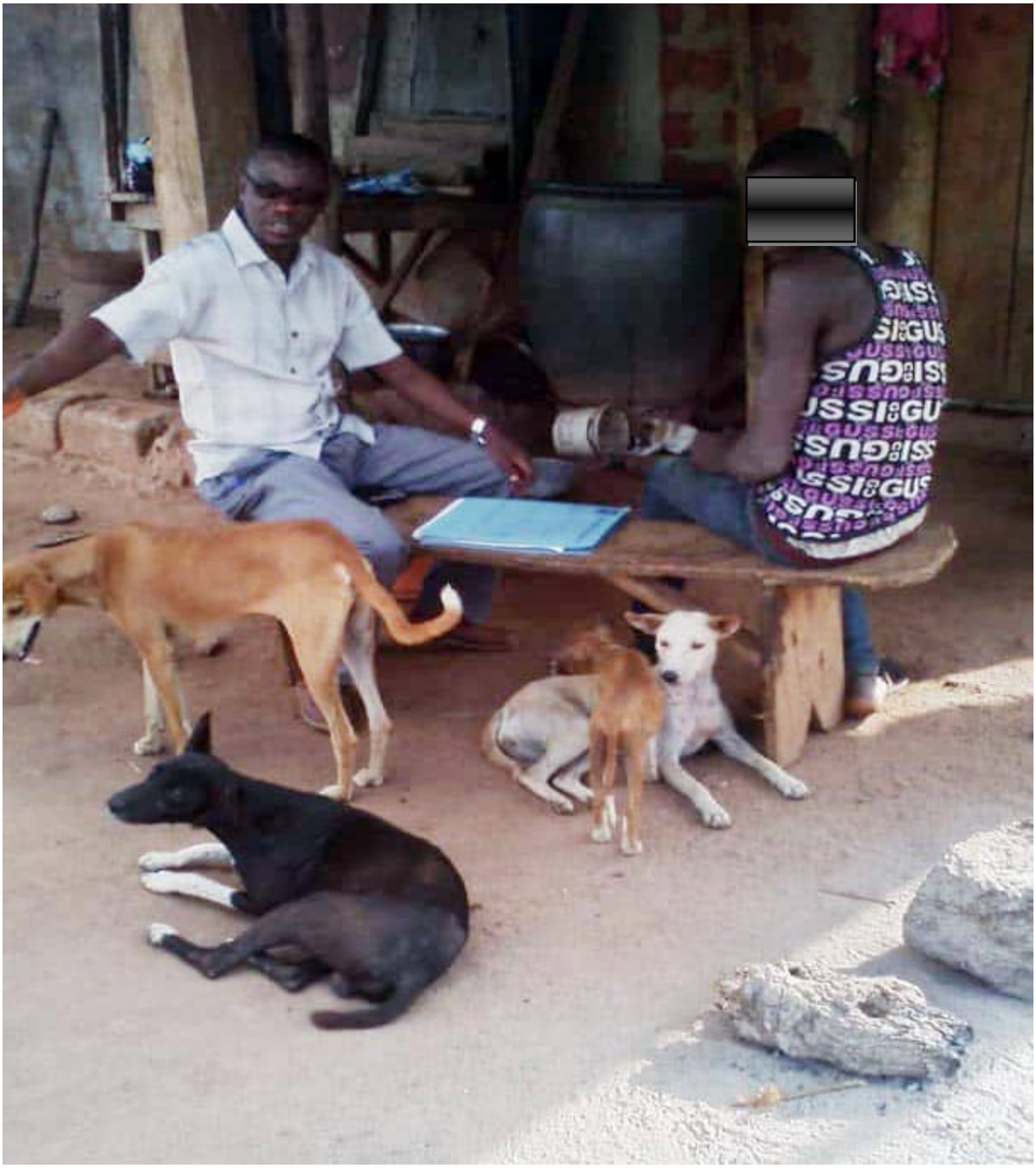
APPENDIX 3

Pictures

Picture of arrested poachers and their weapons in the Old Oyo National Park

Picture of arrested poachers and their weapons in the Old Oyo National Park
(Source: OONP Headquarters).

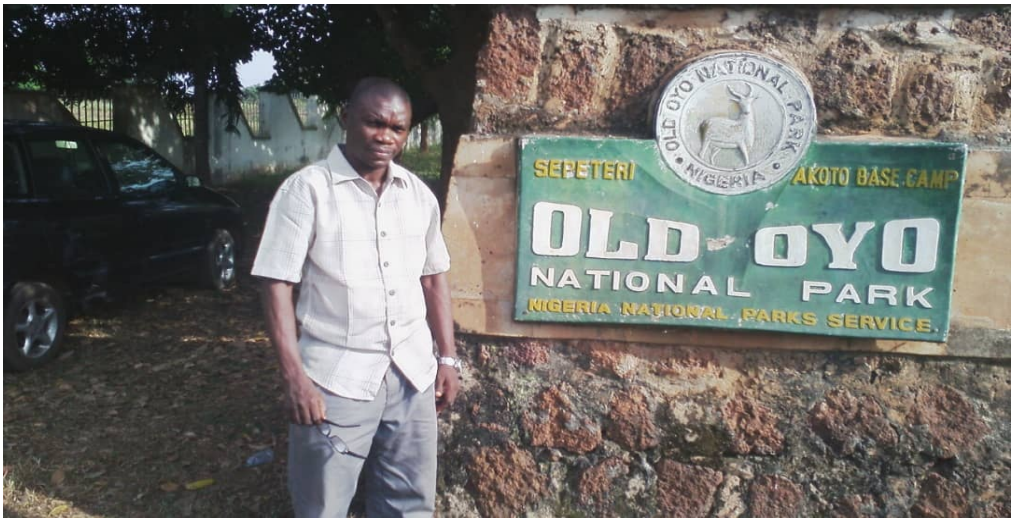
(Source: OONP Headquarters).



Picture of the researcher, poacher and local hunting dogs

Picture of the researcher and a national park official

Pictures of the community members during the FGD session



Picture of the researcher, a local hunter and local hunting dogs

Picture of the researcher and an indigenous commercial motorcycle rider

Picture of the researcher and local guards

Picture of the researcher and a poacher

Picture of the researcher and some local hunters

Picture of the researcher, a national park official and a Red patas monkey

Picture of the researcher and the community members

Picture of the researcher in the Park Forest

Picture of the researcher at Old Oyo National Park