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YUSUFARI OASIS AND SAND DUNES ARE POTENTIAL RESOURCE FOR NATURE-BASE ECOTOURISM SITE IN YOBE STATE, NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

Yusufari called Tulo Tulo Oasis in Yobe State, North-East Nigeria, is a notable tourist destination, often referred to as the desert land of hope and best referred to as mini-Dubai. This breathtaking oasis and dunes combine natural beauty, a rich cultural heritage, and exciting, unique activities. This study sought to investigate the potential of the oasis in combination with dunes to draw the interest of both local and international tourists. This study clearly shows that by fully exploiting its tourism capabilities, as shown in Plates 1-6, the Yobe State Government and Nigeria can promote sustainable tourism, stimulate the local economy, generate employment opportunities, and showcase the natural beauty of this area.

Keywords: Oasis**,** Tourism, Destination, Sand Dunes Yobe State, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

In the entire portion of the world, arid areas occupy 41% component of the earth's surface (Bauer, 2009). The tourism industry has now grown to be the world's largest industry and one of its fastest-growing economic sectors (Erturk, 2020). Ekundayo et al (2015) asserted that in an era of economic challenges, tourism is one of the few economic sectors in the world growing strongly, driving economic progress in developing and developed countries alike and most importantly, creating much-needed jobs. A dune is an amount of sand formed by the erosional action of wind or water (Elhag et al., 2019). Dunes are creations from nature's dazzling handiwork. They are prominent geomorphological features of an arid environment whose morphological (shape, size, height, interdune distance), granulometric and

compositional characteristics in combination with their dynamics (Michel et al., 2018) make them irresistible tourist attractions. Nigeria is a nation rich in cultural and nature–based legacies derived from its diverse communities (Adekunle, 2024). This is because of its importance for research, education, tourism, history, economy, arts and the variety of plants and animal species. The natural environment influences tourists on anything interesting and valuable, as well as those who are interested in visiting tourist destinations, sightseeing, and gaining a new experience of a particular destination (Irawan et al., 2022). In Asia, activities like sledging, jogging, parasailing, paragliding, dune Camel/Horse riding, sandboarding, dune cycling, biking tour, Snorkelling/Scuba diving, Sailing and kayaking, bungee jumping, nature photography, cultural study, camping and village homestay have been practiced in Sikkim, Goa and Rajasthan in India (BharatGoGreen, 2023). Even though desert dunes in these destinations have pronounced the required physical characteristics that can support a variety of recreational activities. Oases are formed along the bank of the dry river. The Oases are largely spread in the Northern part of Yobe State and the Diffa region of the Niger Republic. The larger concentration of the oases is within the political boundary of Niger republic Specifically Gudumaria District of the Diffa region. The most prominent Oases sites within the Nigerian boundary include Tulotulo, Kaska, Sosono, and Maimalari, among several others. Some scholars refer to these Oases as Manga grassland Oasis (Abubakar et al, 2021).

Based on the literature that has been gathered, indicated that there is a limited online information gap about Yusufari Oasis and dunes, hindering awareness, visibility and underreporting on its existing, making it a relatively unknown tourist destination. These motivate the

Researchers to produce and document online database which would explores and showcases the potentiality of the Oasis and dunes, locally and internationally as a tourist's destination hotspot and might not yet gained the same level of recognition as other popular tourist destination globally, but Tulo tulo oasis features fit viral publicity, Despite its unique landscape and cultural significance in Yusufari, Yobe State, Nigeria. This review work seeks to assess tourist alterations and expose their potential within the Yusufari Oasis tourist destination, and identify and geomorphological features of the dunes and oasis

STUDY AREA

Yusufari, is one of the Local Government Area in Yobe State, situated on the longitude 130 04'06" N and latitude 110 10'33" E it share a border in the north with the republic of Niger in the semi-arid region of north-east Nigeria, with high temperatures throughout the year often reaching 400 C (1040 F) with average annual rainfall of around 500 mm The terrain consists of undulating plains, with elevations ranging from 322 m to 355 m (see: https://en- Manga, Fulani and other few tribes of people who have inhabited the area for centuries Articles connctnigria.com (Anon, 2025). Ng.topographic-map.com/maps/ghff/Yobe. (Anon,2025). It has an area of 3,928 km2 www.wikipedia.org (Anon, 2025).

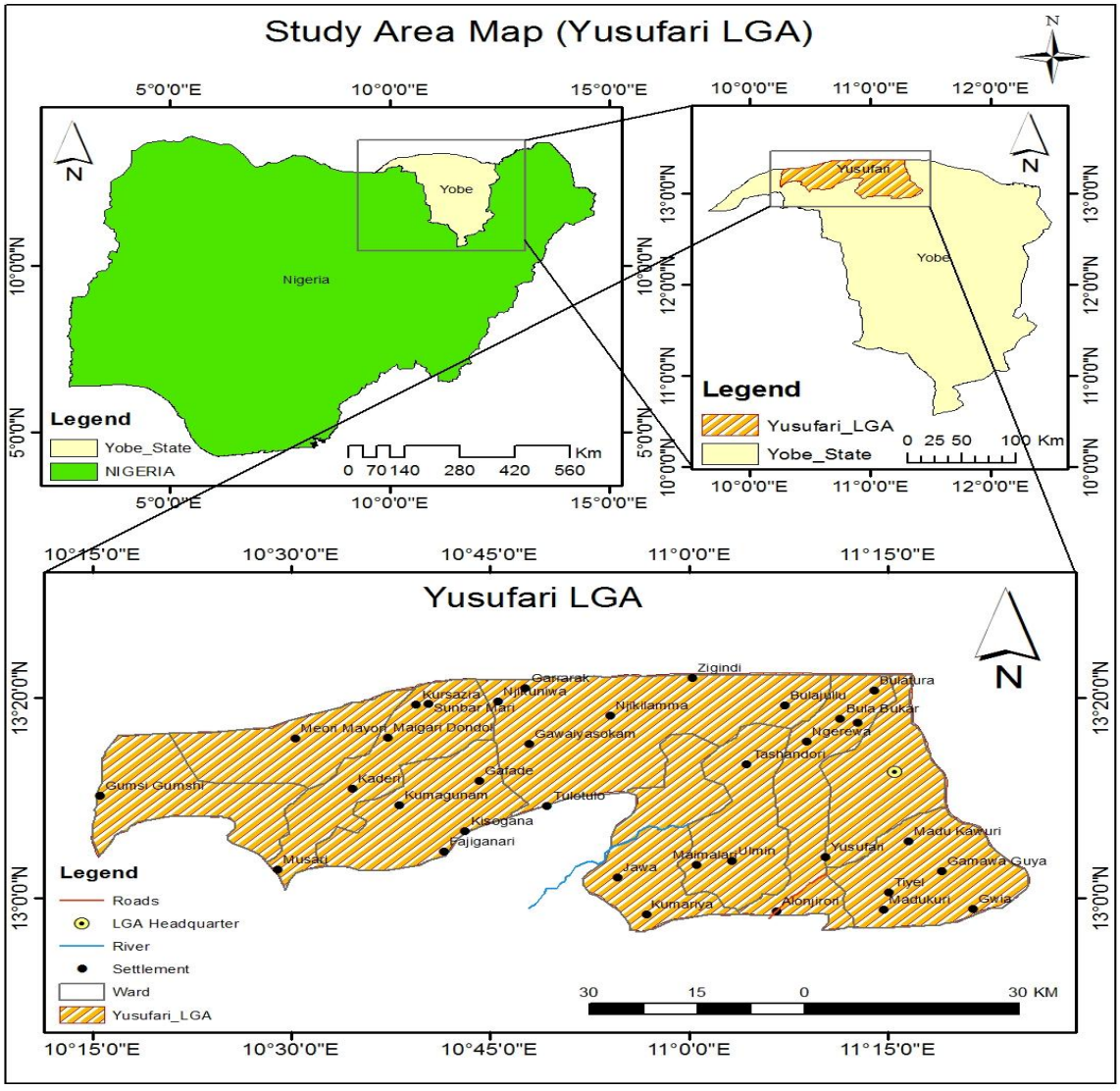


Figure: 1 Map of Nigeria, Showing the Location of Yusufari Local Government Area in Yobe State Source: Agbo, (2025)

DESERT LAND OF HOPE (MINI DUBAI)

Yusufari have notable oasis refer to as the Tulo Tulo oasis or Yusufari oasis kenempress.org (Anon, 2025). The oasis is surrounded by rolling sand dunes and desert plain, creating stunning contrast between the lush greenery and the arid dessert landscape. The oasis is also home to the village of Tulo Tulo meaning marshy land with abundance of water and settled among the palm tree and hill

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1. Unique landscape: Yusufari's unique landscape, featuring dunes, Doum palm Hyphaene thebaica trees, and a natural spring, bears some resemblance to Dubai's iconic desert landscape.

2. Tourism potential: Yusufari Oasis has been identified as a Tourism potential destination, with opportunities for a luxury resort, recreational activities, and cultural experience, similar to Dubai's tourism industry.

3. Government initiative: The Nigerian government has initiated efforts to develop the Yusufari oasis into a tourist destination, drawing inspiration from Dubai's successful tourism model.

Some of the nature-based attraction sites of yusufari oasis

Oasis Pond: Visit the tranquil oasis pond surrounded by lush green vegetation, Doum Palm Hyphaene thebaica and palm tree,

offering a serene escape from the desert heat article connectinnigeria.com (Anon, 2025). Sand Dunes: Explore the majestic dunes which can reach up to 30 metres (100 feet) surrounding the oasis, perfect for sandboarding, camel riding, or simply taking in the breathtaking views Tulo Tulowa village refineding.com (Anon, 2025).

Articlec onnctnigria.com (2021) reported that annually, Nigeria spends millions of naira to experience the desert safari in Dubai. Here are some reasons why it is called Mini Dubai. Of course, tweets about this oasis' potential were online as far back as 2013. Tour Nigeria had tried to draw attention to the dunes in 2018 with a photo taken by Irene Backer. But its potential was first captured in August 2019 when Muhammad Bukar Umara, a Nigerian digital storyteller who specializes in documentary photography.



Plate: 1 showcasing the Oasis with Doum Palm *Hyphaene thebaica*, trees and Grass surrounded by sand dunes in Yusufari Local Government Area
Tijjani Idriss Yusufari O. Nismate, (2025)..

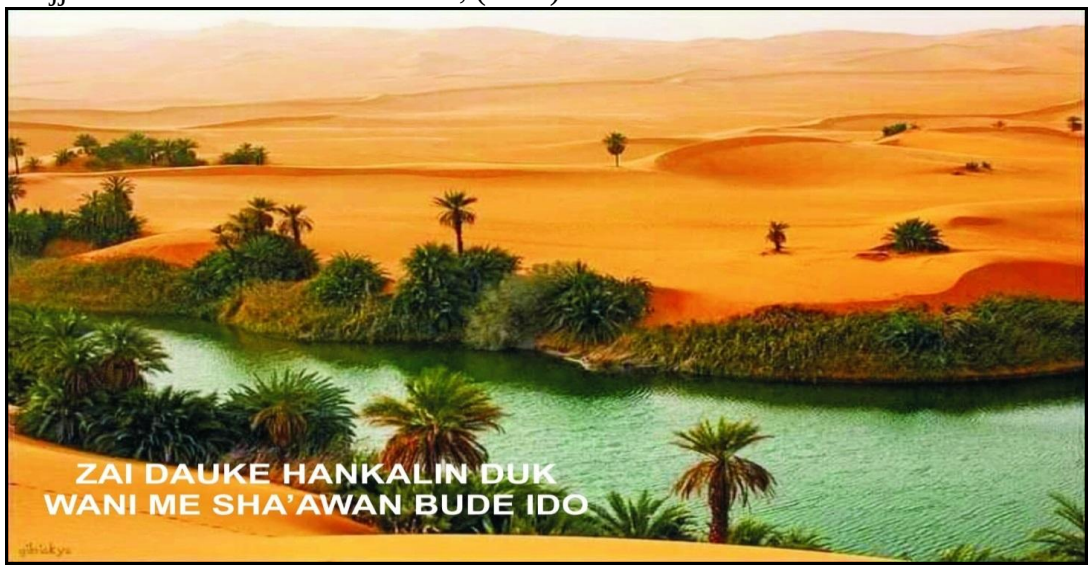


Plate: 2 showcasing the Oasis narrowed pond surrounded by reddish undulating landscape and palm trees *Phoenix dactylifera.*
Source: Jelani and Moha (2023).



Plate: 3 showcasing pond oasis surrounded by sand dunes landscape, vegetation, Doum Palm *Hyphaene thebaica*, and other Acacia trees spp in Yusufari local government area
Source: Agbo, (2025)



Plate: 4 showcasing the pond oasis, scattered Doum Palm *Hyphaene thebaica* and (4x4 wheels), drive Jeep used in sand dunes area
Source Tijjani Idriss Yusufari Onismate, (2025)



Plate: 5 showcasing the Oasis pond with Doum Palm *Hyphaene thebaica*, Date Palm *Phoenix dactylifera* tree along the bank of the pond and surrounded by sand dunes in Yusufari Local Government Area
Source: Jelani and Moha (2023).



Plate: 6 showcasing Reddish Undulating Landscape this covers the unique reddish landscape, creating picturesque scenery that's perfect for photography and the visitor relaxing on the hill of web sand dunes in Yusufari Local Government Area.
Source: Tijjani Idriss Yusufari Onismate, (2025)

CONCLUSION

Annually, Nigerians spend millions to experience the desert safari in Dubai, but do you know that we have the same picturesque location right here in Nigeria, that is Yusufari Oases and Sand Dunes, which support different characteristics ranging from variable shapes, sizes, heights and colours. These characteristics would constitute its potential for ecotourism utilization. These potentials made oases and desert dunes exceptionally attractive compared to beach dunes, which are shapeless, heightless and single colour. Sand Dune's characteristics in the study area can support a range of ecotourism activities like hiking, sandboarding, camel riding, dune athletics, parasailing, paragliding and a host of other activities which will consolidate tourist satisfaction and improve revenue generation to achieve financial independence. The following recommendations are deemed fit based on the findings of this study.

i. Since desert oasis and dunes support varieties of ecotourism activities, which made it an avenue for luxury potential eco-destinations, there is a need for the provision of on-site or up-site accommodations, transportation and security facilities to access the area via 4-wheel drive and Giwa-Giwa vehicles. To cater to tourists' expectations when visiting a chosen destination, there are several Departments /Ministries /Governments and Non-Government bodies that could play a significant role in improving the experience of tourists and making the place popular among tourists.

ii. Frequent monitoring of dunes' status in the study area should be carried out because dunes are mobile, and these characteristics that support sand-based ecotourism activities change over time due to the erosional action of wind.

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Table 1: Showing the Most Visited Countries by International Tourists

RANK	**COUNTRY**	**REGION**	**TOURIST ARRIVAL 2011**	**TOURIST ARRIVAL 2010**
1	France	Europe	79.5 Million	77.5 Million
2	United State	North America	62.3 Million	59.8 Million
3	China	Asia	57.6 Million	55.7 Million
4	Spain	Europe	56.7 Million	52.7 Million
5	Italy	Europe	46.2 Million	43.6 Million
6	Turkey	Europe Asia	29.3 Million	27.0 Million
7	United Kingdom	Europe	29.2 Million	28.3 Million
8	Germany	Europe	28.4 Million	26.9 Million
9	Malaysia	Asia	24.7 Million	24.6 Million
10	Mexico	North America	23.4 Million	23.3 Million

Source: Mejabi, (2015)