



**DESTINATION IMAGE AND TOURISTS' REVISIT INTENTION
IN TOURISM SITES IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined destination image and tourists' revisit retention to tourism sites in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study established empirical relationship between cognitive destination image and affective destination image of the tourism sites under investigation. The geographical scope of the study was the various local governments in Cross River State, Nigeria. Cross River State has tourist sites that have attracted tourists from all parts of the country and beyond for decades. Specifically, Obudu Mountain Resort, Marina Resort, Cross River National Park, **National Museum** Calabar, and **Tinapa Resort** tourist destinations were selected for the study. The study used descriptive survey design, and Questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. 323 People were sampled, but 240 questionnaire were returned and used.. The researchers used mean statistic, ANOVA, and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 23) for data analysis. The key findings of the study are that *Cognitive destination image exerts significant positive impact on tourists' revisit intention. Put differently, the higher the cognitive destination image, the higher the tendency that tourists will revisit a destination site for tourism/leisure.* Also, the study found that there is an insignificant positive relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists. This implies that for every unit increase in affective destination image, tourists' revisit intention also increase, but to an insignificant extent. Factors that influence tourists' revisit intention include service quality, destination image, perceived value, and novelty, among others. It was recommended that elements of cognitive destination image, which includes but not limited to rich culture, legendary history, and safety, should be professionally managed to the admiration of tourists as this could enhance the tourists' revisit intention. Since repeat visit is one of the main targets of destinations managers, different programs should be developed and implemented for first-time and repeat visitors so as to stimulate a revisit intention.

Key Words: Destination Image, Tourist, Tourists' Revisit Intention, Tourism Sites, Cognitive Image, and effective Image.

INTRODUCTION

Following the ever increasing desire for tourism destination sites that meet tourists' taste, tourism destination managers and tourism sites developers are constantly eager to enhance the brand value of tourism sites in order to build a positive destination image that will guarantee tourists' revisit intention. By way of definition, tourist destination is a

geographical terminal visited by tourist, which may be a village, centre, town, district, region or inland (Bierman, 2017). It is the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about a place. Destination image influences tourists' decision-making in regards to where they will spend their vacation and money. Whenever there is need to embark on a tourism tour, tourists usually consider a number of factors; these factors form the components of destination image.

As the tourist destination image is a highly abstract concept with the characteristics of diversity, comprehensiveness, dynamics, and relativity, there are disagreements in the measurement content of the tourist destination image (Tang, Wang, Jin, & Zhang, 2022). Destination image can be grouped into psychological, social, cultural, religious, economic, environmental and legal determinants, while according to Gartner (1993), destination image is formed by three different, yet interrelated, components: cognitive, affective and conative. Gartner describes the cognitive component as the sum of beliefs and attitudes of an object leading to some internally accepted picture of its attributes. In other words, the cognitive component is formed on the basis of the tourist's beliefs of a destination. The affective component becomes operational in connection with the tourist's evaluation of destination choice, while conative image component leads to action, because a decision is reached, and one destination from the 'decision set' is chosen. It can therefore be argued that the conative image is formed on the basis of the cognitive and affective components.

Extant literatures pose further argument that economic factors that could influence a tourist's choice of destination and revisit intention include disposable income, per capita income, private consumption, cost of living, tourism costs and exchange rate, while psychosocial determinants of tourism destination include demographic factors like age, sex, occupation, motivation for recreation, travel preferences, benefit sought (or perceived fulfillment), image of destination, awareness of opportunities, cognitive distance, attitude towards the destination, amount of leisure time available to the tourist and duration of the travel. On the other hand, environmental factors that potential tourists could consider are: availability of tourism resources, accessibility of the tourism site, incidence of natural disasters, environmental safety, and socio-cultural attraction. In fact, a reasonable degree of controversy exists as to what factor(s) dominate a tourist's choice of destination and revisit intention. While psychologists lay emphasis on the psychological determinants (intangibles) as the prevailing factors, economists like McElvey (2005) argue that cost implication is the dominant factor. Philips, Tazz and Prescott (2017), writing from a demographic perspective, identify age, occupation, marital status, size of family responsibilities, gender, social class and personal income as the inevitable factors. However, tourism managers place environmental and business factors at the forefront; hence, from business environmental point of view, factors like tourism resources, tourism regulatory laws, access to the tourism zone, culture of the people as well as safety and security of the zone, play leading roles.

Cross River State of Nigeria is unarguably blessed with several tourism sites; this includes, but not limited to, the Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, Cross River National Park, Qua falls, Ikom Monoliths, Canopy walkway, Obudu cattle ranch, which features Africa

mountain race, Agbokim water falls, Tinapa Business Resort, Calabar Marina, Calabar Residency Museum and the Calabar Slave Park, and the Calabar Christmas Street party (Igwe, Otaba, & Edem, 2022). In fact, the city of Calabar in Cross River State arguably hosts the largest street party in Africa with visitors coming from all over the world. Little wonder tourist attractions in Cross River State have continued to receive considerable research attention in recent times. Notable among the tourist attractions are: natural beauties such as beaches, tropical Island resorts, national parks, mountains, deserts, forests, historical places, monuments, ancient temples, zoos, aquaria, museums, art galleries, botanical gardens, castles, libraries, skyscrapers, bridges, carnivals, museums, ethnic enclave communities, historic trains and cultural events. Others are factory tours, industrial heritage, as well as creative art and crafts workshops.

Considering the fact that destination image is a key determinant of tourists' destination choice and revisit intention, it is however important to note that different researchers approach the issue from different perspective. As controversial as the subject matter may be, an empirical study of this kind would enable us examine the factors from the perspective of selected local communities in Cross River State of Nigeria. Surely, influencing factors of tourism destination choice can hardly assume a worldwide applicability, however, universal factors do exist, which remain valid across states or countries.

Statement of the Problem

It is widely reported that destination image has influenced tourists' behaviors (Bosque, 2008); revisit intention is one of those tourists' behaviours. No doubt, an increasing tourist activity and a growing number of tourist destinations have resulted in a complex and highly competitive global marketplace in which destinations compete for the attention of potential tourists. Regrettably, according to Iyiola (2014), it is a common knowledge that tourism sector in Nigeria has failed to stand out among the growing number of competitors competing for consumers. Worst still, potential tourists are not able to pre-taste a destination before purchase, which results in an inherent uncertainty and anxiety for the tourists. It therefore becomes imperative to examine factors that influence tourists' loyalty and revisit intention to tourism sites.

Prior studies on the relationship between destination image and tourists' revisit intention show inconsistent findings. While some studies found that destination image has significant effect on tourists' satisfaction/revisit intention (Atika, David, & Fredrick, 2016), others do not establish any significant direct relationship between destination image and tourists' loyalty/satisfaction (Ramseook-Munhurrana, Seebalucka, & Naidoo, 2015). Also, Artuger & Cetinsoz (2017) found that cognitive and affective image do have an impact on the intention of Arab tourists to revisit Istanbul, while Helena, et al. (2017) established that destination image influences satisfaction and intention to recommend and/or return to tourist destinations. The current study brings stability in previous conflicting results/findings using very recent data and unique data compilation approach.

Furthermore, considerable studies in the past on destination image and tourists' revisit intention focused more on foreign countries, amid a few methodological flaws. For instance, Zuhier (2021)'s study centered on the city of Karbala in Iraq, using only 40 questionnaires for primary data collection; Vincentius (2020) carried out his study in the city of Budapest,

Hungary using 131 on-line questionnaire responses only; Neethiahnanthan, Hema, and Saeed, (2014)'s study focused on Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, sampling 140 respondents; while, in China, Tang, Wang, Jin, and Zhang (2022), examined the effects of motivation, destination image and satisfaction on rural tourism tourists' willingness to revisit. Hence, the need for a wider coverage (sample) in a Nigerian environment is therefore vital, in view of the perceived dearth of information on the study area in the country. Also, some studies failed to disaggregate destination image into specific components, as in the case of Wahyuni, Agus, and Titis (2020) in a study on the influence of image destination on revisit intention and word of mouth through tourist satisfaction.

Based on the above identified gaps, this study aims to ascertain how and the extent to which cognitive and affective images affect revisit intention of tourists. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no empirical study has been undertaken to examine the relationship between destination image and tourists' revisit intention to tourism sites in Cross River State of Nigeria. Hence, this study tends to fill the gap.

The connection between destination image and revisit intention is diagrammatically presented in Fig. 1 below. A review of extant literatures reveals that frequently cited factors that influence tourists' willingness to revisit a destination site include cognitive image and affective image. Little wonder Shaohua, Salmi, Yiyue, Jinyuan, and Danping (2022) opine that destination image model, including cognitive image and affective image, has been firmly established as an acceptable means to gain an understanding of tourists' behavior toward revisiting and recommendations. It can therefore be argued that cognitive and affective images are joint factors that determine the purchase behavior (revisit intention) of tourists as depicted below.

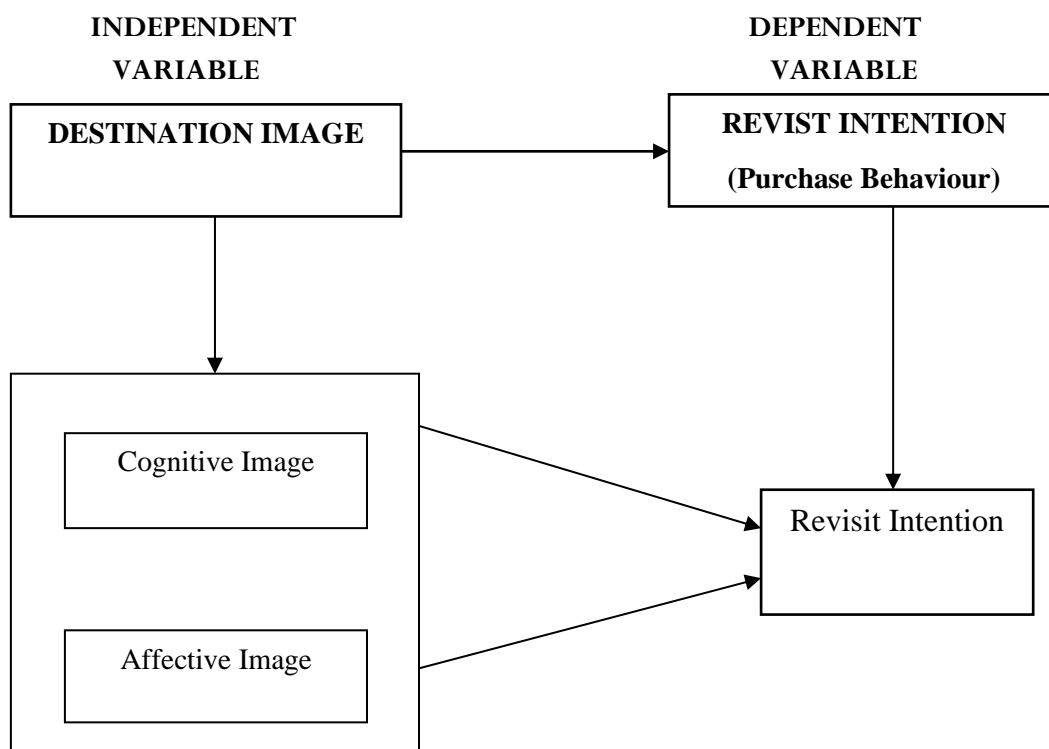


Fig. 1: Proposed Operational Framework

Source: Conceptualized by the Researcher

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of destination image on tourists' purchase behavior in selected tourism sites. Specifically, the study aims to examine:

1. the extent to which cognitive destination image affects re-visit intention of tourists.
2. the extent of relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists.
3. the factors that influence tourists' revisit intention.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives of this study, the following questions are posed to guide the study:

1. To what extent does cognitive destination image affect re-visit intention of tourists?
2. What is the extent of relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists?
3. What factors influence tourists' revisit intention?

Hypotheses Formulation

The following null hypotheses are derived from the research questions and objectives, in order to guide the study:

H₀₁: Cognitive destination image does not significantly affect re-visit intention of tourists.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists.

Conceptual Review

In this sub-section of this chapter, the concept of tourism destination, tourism image and its sub-sets, and detailed discussion on the individual factors influencing tourists' choice of destinations are presented.

Destination Image

Product or service image is an important concept in consumer behavior. Hallmann, Anita, and Sabine (2015) define destination image as the sum of beliefs, feelings, impressions, and expressions people hold or have of an object, or a place, while destination image formation is defined as the collection of an individual's beliefs and thoughts about a specific environment or setting (Abdelhamid, Heqing, Zahid, Javed, & Nasser, 2022). Furthermore, destination image is defined as the tourists' overall impression towards a destination which is formed based on both their perceptions and the total effect of a destination's tangible and intangible attributes (Tosun, Bekir, & Alan, 2015). Destination image has various dimensions. Rittichainuwat (2008) believed that the image of a tourist destination consists of natural scenery, dining and accommodation, shopping environment, tourism services and other elements.

The positive image of tourists about tourist destinations can affect their satisfaction, and in the end, it will have an impact on their intention to visit again (Kim, Holland, & Han, 2013). The importance of destination image in the marketing of tourism services cannot be

overemphasized. Due to the rising competition among destinations, the need to create a distinctive image (for the destinations) is therefore more critical than ever before. Destination image is central in destination selection (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Several previous studies show a positive relationship between the destination image and tourist satisfaction. Wang and Hsu (2010) propose an integrative model that describes the relationship between destination image, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions, and the destination image that is realized is closely related to satisfaction. Meanwhile, Prayag and Ryan (2012) explored the relationship between destination image, place attachment, personal involvement, visitor satisfaction, and loyalty and emphasized that a more positive destination image resulted in a higher level of visitor satisfaction.

Revisit Intention

Revisit intention has been defined as a visitor repeating an activity or revisiting a destination (Baker & Crompton, 2000). It also relates to the visitor's judgment about the likeliness or plans to revisit the same destination (Khasawneh & Alfandi, 2019). Research studies agree that repeat visitors tend to stay longer at a destination, participate more intensively in consumptive activities, are more satisfied, and spread positive word of mouth, whilst requiring much lower marketing costs than first-time visitors (Lehto, O'Leary, & Morrison, 2004; Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). It is generally agreed that customer satisfaction is significant to achieve loyalty; not only in physical products, but also in the context of tourism (Som & Badarneh, 2011). Satisfied customers always tend to come back, in particular, in the hotel industry (Cha & Borchgrevink, 2019). The intention to revisit is a sign of loyalty and an indication of customer satisfaction. So, according to Barkah and Febriasari (2021), in an industry like tourism, where customers have many choices, it is very important for tourism destination managers and the government to comprehend what ticks customers' revisit intention.

Factors that Influence Tourists' Revisit Intention

Extant literatures have discussed a number of factors that affect tourists' revisit intention. However, the factors enumerated by Islam, Mazumder, and Hossain (2022) are hereunder presented;

- **Service Quality**

Service quality is the sum of the overall evaluation of service performance, or the overall evaluation of products and services as good or bad (Tosun, Bekir and Alan, 2015), while according to Ranjbarian and Pool (2015), perceived service quality is the outcome of customer's viewpoint on the dimension of service package with regard to technical and operational dimensions. Tourists' perceived service quality has been revealed as one of the major determinants for both tourist satisfaction and future intentions (Ahrholdt, Gudergan, & Ringle 2017). In the context of tourism, it is believed that service quality of a destination leads to tourist satisfaction, and a high level of satisfaction creates positive word-of-mouth

transmission and enhances tourists' future intentions, which in turn, affects the financial performance of the host destinations.

- **Destination Image**

Destination image is the tourists' overall impression towards a destination which is formed based on both their perceptions and the total effect of a destination's tangible and intangible attributes (Tosun, Bekir, & Alan, 2015). Generally, image is defined as the sum of beliefs, feelings, impressions, and expressions people hold or have of an object, or a place (Hallmann, Anita, & Sabine, 2015). In the context of tourism, destination image is defined as tourists' overall impression towards a destination which is formed based on both their perceptions and the total effect of a destination's tangible and intangible attributes (Chiu, Shiheng, & Philip, 2016). Destination image not only influences travelers' decision making when selecting a destination but also affects future decision making behaviour (Chen & Tsai, 2007).

- **Perceived Value**

Perceived value is a comparative evaluation of customers' desirability for a product and service based on the perceived benefits and perceived costs (Islam, Mazumder, & Hossain, 2022). Perceived value of a destination's services influences tourist satisfaction, which in turn, affects tourists' future intentions to revisit that destination. Lee, Choong-Ki, and Youngjoon (2011) found that perceived value especially functional value, emotional value, overall value significantly affects travelers' satisfaction, recommendations, and revisit intentions. Perceived value is lodged in customers' minds and significantly affects their satisfaction and behavioural intention (Pham, Wann, Hong, & Tuan, 2015).

- **Novelty**

Novelty, a fundamental trend in tourism, is a departure from the ordinary when experiencing something new and different; it also connotes the need for variety (Mitas & Bastiaansen, 2018). Novelty in tourism experiences is the feeling of experiencing something new and unusual from one's typical everyday routine. Recent research indicates that fresh encounters might elicit powerful emotions and boost focus, hence enhancing the memorability of the event (Skavronskaya, Moyle, & Scott, 2020).

Theoretical Review

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

This study is anchored on the theory of planned behavior. The theory of planned behaviour advocates that behaviours are influenced by intentions, which are determined by three factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). It is also possible for external factors to directly force or prevent behaviours, regardless of the intention, depending on the degree to which behaviour is actually controlled by the individual, and the degree to which perceived behavioural control is an accurate measure of actual behavioural control. In the context of this study, **Attitudes** toward destination or tourism site visitation are influenced by both subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. **Subjective norms**, in this context, comprises cognitive and affective images. The beliefs, feelings, or impression of tourists regarding the safety, level of awareness, side

attractions, as well as convenience and serenity of environment are all elements of subjective norms. **Perceived behavioural control, in this context**, is how a tourist feels in relation to revisiting a destination site. Thus, it includes self-control on the part of tourists, and external factors such as service quality, perceived value, novelty, etc. In fact, the more favourable the three factors are, the more likely the intention and action are to occur. According to Boston University School of Public Health (2022), the TPB is comprised of six constructs that collectively represent a person's actual control over the behaviour.

1. **Attitudes** - This refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour of interest. It entails a consideration of the outcomes of performing the behaviour.
2. **Behavioural intention** - This refers to the motivational factors that influence a given behaviour where the stronger the intention to perform the behaviour, the more likely the behaviour will be performed.
3. **Subjective norms** - This refers to the belief about whether most people approve or disapprove of the behaviour. It relates to a person's beliefs about whether peers and people of importance to the person think he or she should engage in the behaviour.
4. **Social norms** - This refers to the customary codes of behaviour in a group or people or larger cultural context. Social norms are considered normative, or standard, in a group of people.
5. **Perceived power** - This refers to the perceived presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of behaviour. Perceived power contributes to a person's perceived behavioural control over each of those factors.
6. **Perceived behavioural control** - This refers to a person's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour of interest. Perceived behavioural control varies across situations and actions, which results in a person having varying perceptions of behavioural control depending on the situation.

The above constructs are diagrammatically summarized and presented Fig. 2 below.

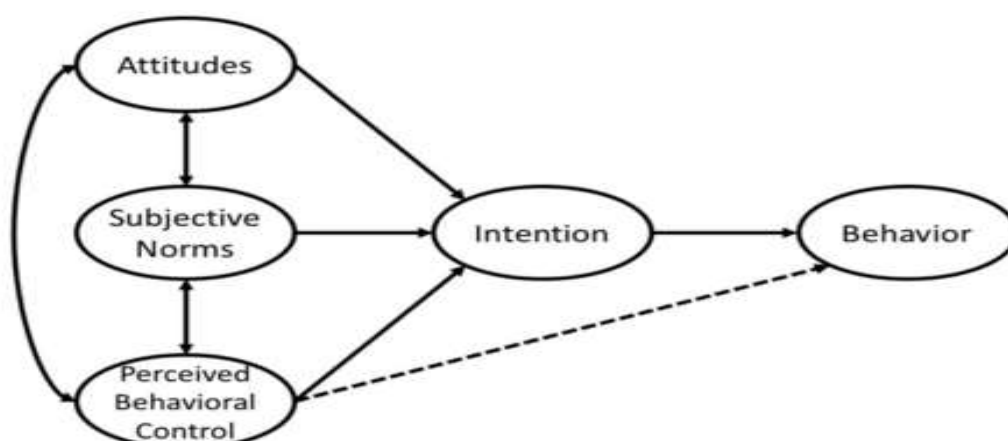


Fig. 2: The Theory of Planned Behavior Model adapted from Ajzen (2005).

Source: Ajzen, I. (1991). *The Theory of Planned Behavior*. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

Empirical Review

A good number of researchers have established empirical relationship between destination image and tourists' revisit intention. Abdelhamid, et al. (2022) studied the impact of destination image formation on tourist trust, with emphasis on the mediating role of tourist satisfaction. The study employed quantitative approach based on survey of 644 domestic and foreign tourists to find a positive correlation between local community participation (LCP), authenticity (A), access to local products (ALP), which led to tourist satisfaction and, eventually, tourist trust. The study concludes that destination image formation (DIF) and tourist satisfaction (TS) result in increased tourist trust.

Tang, Wang, Jin, and Zhang (2022), in China, examined the effects of motivation, destination image and satisfaction on rural tourism tourists' willingness to revisit. The authors argue that with the diversification of tourist demand for a destinations' supply, rural tourism destinations are facing an increasingly fierce competition environment. Hence, creating brand value and improving tourists' willingness to revisit has become an inevitable strategic choice for rural tourism destinations. The study which proposed a framework of "tourism motivation-destination image-satisfaction willingness to revisit" to investigate rural tourism, employed a survey research approach and structural equation modeling (SEM) technology. The findings indicate that learning and entertainment motivation, natural environment, social environment, and tourist satisfaction had a direct and positive effect on tourists' willingness to revisit. In addition, tourist satisfaction played an intermediary role between tourists' tourism motivation and destination terrain image and their propensity to return. Nevertheless, one key flaw associated with the study is that there is no theory upon which the study was anchored.

Azzez (2021) in a study to examine the effects of travel motivation on image of destination in the city of Najaf used survey research approach and descriptive analysis technique; the results of study confirmed the reality of the impact of the image of the destination on attracting tourist destinations and encouraging tourists to visit it. The study concludes that, to achieve a favourable tourist image, the combination of the cognitive and emotional aspects of the destination image is an influential factor. From another perspective, Milan, Miroslav, Caslav, Milosav, Uglješa, Sanja, and Vasiljevic. (2021) conducted a research on "Rookie Tourism Destinations - The effects of attractiveness factors on destination image and revisit intention with the satisfaction mediation effect" using a sample of 2030 visitors. The results revealed the positive direct effects of destination attractiveness factors on satisfaction, destination image, and revisit intentions. Moreover, the research confirmed the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination image, and revisit intentions.

Another study was also conducted by Andrea, Astrid, and Kateřina (2020) on impact of destination image on satisfaction and loyalty using sixteen (16) destination image factors. It was found that: nine of the factors have an influence on overall satisfaction (the most influential one being the attractiveness of a destination, the uniqueness of a destination and the friendly acceptance by the locals); eight factors were statistically proved to have an

influence on loyalty by means of oral or online recommendation, with the most influential factor being the sense of security. Finally, four factors have an influence on loyalty by means of the intention to revisit a destination (the uniqueness of a destination, food, the suitability of a destination for summer and all-year-round holiday).

In Indonesia, Wahyuni, Agus, and Titis (2020) carried out a study on the influence of image destination on revisit intention and word of mouth through tourist satisfaction. The researchers employed partial least square technique, involving sample size of 174. The study's independent variable is image of the destination; the dependent variable is revisit intention and word of mouth advocacy, while the intervening variable is tourist satisfaction. The research proves that the destination image can provide a sense of satisfaction and give a good impression to tourists. In other words, when tourists have a good impression, they will confidently share their experiences with others, and from that experience and good images, they will feel satisfied and of course, will make a return visit. However, the study failed to look at destination image from more specific perspectives, such as cognitive and affective aspects. Hence, the current study will split the explanatory variable (destination image) into two components for a more robust analysis.

A study of tourist satisfaction to experience quality of visit to Budapest, Hungary, as cultural heritage destination by Vincentius (2020) employed the methodology of Holiday Satisfaction (HOLSAT) model, 131 on-line questioners' responses from international tourists who visited Budapest between October 24 and November 17, 2019, and found that: there are seven attributes indicating tourist satisfaction: staff knowledge, language competence, preservation, sign & information, ease of access, public transportation, and safety & security. Technology, traffic, and crowdedness are three indicators of tourist dissatisfaction. Furthermore, service, staff interaction, exhibition display, facilities, cleanliness, site accessibility, unpleasant behaviour of other visitors, and learning experience have a less significant difference between expectation and experience.

Dissanayake and Arachchi (2018) investigated tourist attitudes of visitor management techniques in Sigiriya for the visitor experience quality. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed in the study, while data were collected from 200 respondents, to find that there is a positive relationship between visitor management techniques and quality of visitor experience in Sigiriya. It was also found that quality of visitor experience positively related to the repeat visit intention. However, there are many areas visitors have negative attitude which need to improve such as refreshment and catering facilities, sanitary facilities, Direction and signing facilities and medical facilities.

Helena, et al. (2017), in their study on "Tourist destination image and consumer behaviour: The Case of the Azores", Survey research design, 384 respondents, and stratified sampling technique were employed as methodology to establish that overall (destination) image influences satisfaction and intention to recommend and/or return to tourist destinations; and that satisfaction influences intention to recommend and/or return to tourist destinations. The study also verified that most tourists are very satisfied with the Azores, as well as having a quite positive overall image of the destination. Similarly, Artuger and

Cetinsoz (2017) studied the impact of destination image and the intention to revisit, a study regarding Arab tourists. Survey research approach, descriptive analyses, 385 Arab tourists, and structural equation model (SEM) constitute the study's methodology. The study concluded that cognitive image did have an impact on the intention of Arab tourists to revisit Istanbul. However affective image was not effective in terms of intent to revisit.

Khan, Chelliah, and Ahmed (2017)'s study on factors influencing destination image and visit intention among young women travelers, with emphasis on the role of travel motivation, perceived risks, and travel constraints employed a quantitative approach and 370 young university women in Malaysia. The results revealed that the travel motivation of young women has positive effects on the cognitive and affective image, whereas the dimensions of perceived travel risks and travel constraints have negative effects on cognitive and affective destination images. The results also found that cognitive and affective images positively influence the visit intention of prospective young women travelers.

Atika, David, and Frederik (2016) analyzed the effects of destination image and tourist satisfaction on revisit intention in case Bunaken National Park. Survey research, 100 respondents, and multiple regression model form part of the study's methodology. The research findings showed that the independent variable (destination image and tourist satisfaction) has significantly effect on revisit intention.

Contributing, Pratminingsih, Rudatin, and Rimenta (2014) conducted a similar study on the roles of motivation and destination image in predicting tourist revisit intention, a case of Bandung in Indonesia. Survey research, 268 respondents, and multiple regression and qualitative analysis were adopted to find that destination image and motivation influenced tourist satisfaction, and satisfaction directly influenced revisit intention.

Ho, Thanh, Thao, & Nhon (2022) investigated effects of destination image on revisit intention, with particular emphasis on the intermediate role of satisfaction & words of mouth. Most of the tourist destinations are facing tourist loyalty and expanding market share. The authors argue that research on factors influencing visitor satisfaction and revisit intention to the tourist destination has not been given sufficient attention, especially the relationship between destination image and satisfaction, word of mouth, and revisit intention. The study used a survey of 350 domestic tourists staying at least 3 days in the city and applying a structural modeling approach in the analysis. The results reveal that factors of the destination image positively impact satisfaction, word of mouth, and revisit intention. Components of the destination image include: cognitive image; affective images; and tangible images.

Weisheng, Shiheng, & Philip (2016)'s study is titled "The influence of destination image and tourist satisfaction on tourist loyalty: A case study of Chinese tourists in Korea". The purpose of the study is to explore both the cognitive and affective images and examine the effects of destination image through both aspects on satisfaction levels and tourist loyalty. Data collection was conducted using the convenience sampling method. The on-site survey was carried out with Chinese tourists at the popular tourist sites in Seoul City. The results showed that the cognitive image had a direct influence on the affective image and confirmed

the formation process of the destination image. Both cognitive and affective images had positive influences on satisfaction, and in turn, satisfaction predicted tourist loyalty. Moreover, the relationship between destination image and loyalty revealed that the affective image had a direct influence on tourist loyalty. Although the cognitive image showed no direct linkage to tourist loyalty, the authors found that it had an indirect influence on tourist loyalty through affective image and satisfaction.

Mulugeta and Manjit (2019) carried out a study on the impact of destination image on tourists intention to revisit Ethiopia. The authors posit that a given destination image significantly affects visitors' behavior before, during or after travel, which contributes later on the construction of the overall image. The study aimed to investigate the dimensions of destination image impact on revisiting intention of tourists in Ethiopia context. 400 usable responses were collected from 450 distributed questionnaires on leading tourist site of Ethiopia. The results of regression analysis confirm that destination image dimension significantly affects tourists revisit intention.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used descriptive survey design. It is descriptive in the sense that it attempts to describe the relationship among the basic variables of the study, by obtaining data from appropriate sources and analyzing them.

Population and Sampling

The precise population of this study is unknown. This is because there is no documented (published) data that indicate the number of tourists or community members in the area under study. Hence, determination of sample size is hereunder done on the assumption that that the population size is unknown. A number of formulae exist for sample size determination. According to Susan (2015), to calculate the sample size based on the sample required to estimate a proportion, at 95% confidence level, especially when the population size is unknown, you can use the following formula:

Hence, the sample size was calculated using a standard formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2(pq)}{e^2}$$

Where Z is a critical point of Z-evaluated at $\alpha/2$, and ' α ' is the size of the critical region.

n = sample size (number of respondents)

Z = statistical certainty usually chosen at 95% confidence level, that is 1.96

p = estimated level/coverage to be investigated, that is 0.5. This estimates probability of success.

q = 1-p (probability of failure)

e = precision desired (tolerable error) expressed as a fraction of 1, that is 0.05

In this study, from the pilot study conducted, probability of success (p) was 0.7 (i.e. 70% probability of success); and q = 0.3 (i.e. 30% probability of failure). These figures were determined by presenting questions relating to destination image to tourists at the selected destinations. Hence,

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 (0.7)(0.3)}{0.0025} = 322.7 = 323$$

It should be noted that the computed sample size of 323 was distributed almost equally to respondents at the five tourists' destination sites chosen for the study including: Obudu Mountain Resort, Marina Resort, Cross River National Park, **National Museum Calabar, and Tinapa Resort**. Only tourists who have spent at least one night at the site are qualified to be chosen for the study.

Data Collection Method

The study's research instrument (copies of structured questionnaire) was personally administered to each of the respondents at the selected tourism destinations/sites. They were given enough time to study the questions before providing their responses, thereafter; the researcher retrieved the instrument after checking for necessary corrections. Each question item contained four response options graded in the order of 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. Specifically, likert-scale format was adopted in preparing the questionnaire. In other words, respondents were expected to Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD) to the research statements/questions posed.

Validity of the Research Instrument

A research instrument is said to be valid if it measures what it is designed to measure (Asika, 2006). To validate the research instrument (questionnaire), copies of the questionnaire were given to ten experts (pilot study sample size) in hospitality and tourism management to ascertain the suitability of the question items in relation to the objectives of the study. Thereafter the questionnaire was also submitted to two senior colleagues who are renowned academic authorities, for final verification.

Reliability Test

Reliability of the research instrument (questionnaire) was confirmed using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, at 5% level of significance. Cronbach Alpha Coefficient (α) is the most common measure of internal consistency (reliability). It is most commonly used when you have multiple Liker questions in a survey/questionnaire that form a scale and one wish to determine if the scale is reliable. According to Robert (2005), Cronbach's coefficient alpha is used primarily as a means of describing the reliability of multi-item scales. The general rule of thumb is that a Cronbach's alpha of 70% and above is good, 80% and above is better,

and 90% and above is best. According to Keith (2018), a value of (Cronbach's Alpha) around 0.70 or greater is widely considered desirable.

Model Specification

This study made reference to the model used by Atika, David, and Frederik (2016) in their study on the effects of destination image and tourist satisfaction on revisit intention. The model is stated thus: $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$

Where:

- a = a constant, the value of Y when all X values are zero
- b_1, b_2 = the slope of the regression surface
- Y = revisit intention
- X_1 = destination image
- X_2 = tourist satisfaction
- e = error

In this study, the above model has been modified thus;

$$RIN = f(CIM + AIM) \text{-----} (1)$$

The above can be represented in econometric format thus:

$$RIN = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CIM_{it} + \beta_2 AIM_{it} + \mu \text{-----} (2)$$

Where:

- RIN = Re-visit intention (Dependent variable)

β_0 represents the constant term or intercept of the relationship in the model. The coefficient β_1 , represents the intercept for the independent variable (cognitive and affective image), while μ represents the stochastic or error term.

Data Analysis Techniques

The importance of employing appropriate analytical technique(s) for any research cannot be overemphasized. The applicable analytical tools should be able to address the research problem and the research hypotheses in the most appropriate manner (Kotheri & Garg, 2014). Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 23) was employed in analyzing the data generated for the study. Interestingly, the software is capable of seamlessly providing statistical results like correlation coefficient (R), adjusted R-square (R^2), t-statistics (for individual test of significance), and F-statistics (for joint test of significance), among others, for use in making decisions and conclusion. Descriptive statistics (such as mean and standard deviation) also formed the basis for decision-making, while correlation analysis technique was adopted in estimating the parameters of the study's model.

Data Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of Results

Data Presentation

Distribution and Return of Questionnaires

Table 1: Analysis of Questionnaire Distribution and Return Rate

Tourists' Destination Site	%		%		%		%	
	Number Distributed		Number Returned		Number Returned		Number not Returned	
<i>Obudu Mountain Resort</i>	65	20.12	46	14.24	3	0.93	16	4.95
<i>Marina Resort</i>	65	20.12	51	15.79	5	1.55	9	2.79
<i>Cross River National Park</i>	65	20.12	44	13.62	2	0.62	19	5.88
<i>National Museum Calabar</i>	64	19.82	40	12.38	1	0.31	13	4.02
<i>Tinapa Resort</i>	64	19.82	59	18.27	5	1.55	10	3.10
Total	323	100.00	240	74.30	16	4.95	67	20.74

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents at the five (5) tourists' destination sites selected for the study. This comprises 65 questionnaires each to respondents at Obudu Mountain Resort, Marina Resort, and Cross River National Park, while 64 questionnaires each were distributed to respondents at **National Museum Calabar** and **Tinapa Resort** as indicated in table 1 above, bringing the total number of questionnaires distributed to three hundred and twenty-three (323). Expectedly, this figure tallies with the earlier computed sample size. Out of the 323 questionnaires, 240 (representing 74.30%) were properly filled, returned, and considered valid, while 16 (representing 4.95%) were returned but considered invalid as they were not properly completed. The remaining 67 (representing 20.74%) constitute number not returned; efforts to reach the respondents could not yield results. Further analysis will be based on the returned and valid 240 (representing 74.30%) questionnaires. Interestingly, this number is adjudged reasonable for use in further analysis.

Presentation of Descriptive Statistics

This section presents and analyses the data gathered from the survey. The tables and computations below show the descriptive statistics of the responses from tourists at the various destination sites. An average response (mean) of 2.5 has been adopted as decision point. Note that the rating/ranking of the responses are as follows:

SA – Strongly agree	4.0
A – Agree	3.0
D – Disagree	2.0
SD – Strongly disagree	1.0
Average	2.5

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Responses on Cognitive Image

S/N	Research Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean
1	This tourism site is safe and in a secure environment.	70 (29.17)	170 (70.83)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	240 (100)	3.29
2	The tourism site is known for its distinctive history and cultural heritage.	94 (39.17)	47 (19.58)	72 (30.00)	27 (11.25)	240 (100)	2.87
3	The host community is friendly and helpful.	73 (30.42)	70 (29.17)	45 (18.75)	52 (21.66)	240 (100)	2.68
4	The scenic mountains, sandy beaches, and exotic places are enough attractions for tourists.	29 (12.09)	44 (18.33)	89 (37.08)	78 (32.50)	240 (100)	2.10
5	The environment is clean and unpolluted.	88 (36.67)	51 (21.25)	68 (28.33)	33 (13.75)	240 (100)	2.81

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

In table 2 above, five (5) research statements were put forward to respondents in relation to cognitive image. From the responses (mean score of 3.29), the respondents agreed to the notion that the tourism site they visited is safe and in a secure environment. The next mean scores of 2.87 and 2.68 imply that the respondents admit that the tourism sites they patronized are known for distinctive history and cultural heritage, and that the host community is friendly and helpful. On the contrary, with mean score of 2.10, the respondents infer that the scenic mountains, sandy beaches, and exotic places are not enough attractions for tourists, while the last mean score of 2.81 is an indication that the tourism environment is clean and unpolluted.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Responses on Affective Image

S/N	Research Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean
6	The relaxation places are appealing and interesting.	94 (39.17)	107 (44.58)	22 (9.17)	17 (7.08)	240 (100.00)	3.16
7	There are comfortable and convenient places.	90 (37.50)	53 (22.08)	71 (29.58)	26 (10.83)	240 (100.00)	2.86
8	The environment is charming and exciting (at night).	70 (29.17)	34 (14.17)	50 (20.83)	86 (35.83)	240 (100.00)	2.37
9	The hospitality experience is encouraging.	64 (26.67)	58 (24.17)	89 (37.08)	29 (12.08)	240 (100.00)	2.65

//	The tourism site is pleasurable.	49 (20.42)	69 (28.75)	98 (40.83)	24 (10.00)	240 (100.00)	2.60
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Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

From the information in table 3 above, responses to the first research question/statement produced a mean score of 3.16, implying that respondents agree to the statement that the relaxation places are appealing and interesting. The next research question produced mean score of 2.86, giving rise to the conclusion that there are comfortable and convenient places at the tourists' destination sites visited. Furthermore, with mean score of 2.37 (for question 8), it can be deduced that the tourists' destination sites/environment is not charming and exciting, especially at night. However, the last two (2) mean scores (being 2.65 and 2.60) are above 2.5; this implies that tourists' hospitality experience is encouraging, and the tourism sites are pleasurable.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Responses on Revisit Intention

	Research Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean
//	I will consider visiting this tourism site during my next holidays.	74 (30.83)	43 (17.92)	51 (21.25)	72 (30.00)	240 (100)	2.50
/2	I will bring my family and friends when next I want to visit this particular tourist site.	92 (38.33)	49 (20.42)	72 (30.00)	27 (11.25)	240 (100)	2.86
/3	The service quality of this tourist site would make me come back next time.	59 (24.58)	83 (34.58)	45 (18.75)	53 (22.08)	240 (100)	2.62
/4	I will consider visiting here at least once in a year.	22 (9.17)	49 (20.42)	90 (37.50)	79 (32.92)	240 (100)	2.06
/5	The facilities and environment here is the key motivation behind my decision to revisit.	68 (28.33)	51 (21.25)	74 (30.83)	47 (19.58)	240 (100)	2.58

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Note: Figures in parentheses are percentages.

Responses on whether or not the respondents/tourists have the intention of re-visiting the destination are presented in table 4 above. From the information in the table, it can be deduced (following the mean score of 2.50) that the tourists will consider visiting the tourism site during their next holidays. In other words, the re-visit intention is positive. Based on the next mean score of 2.86, it was found that the tourists are willing to bring their family and friends when next they want to visit the tourist site. Furthermore, the study found that the service quality of the tourist sites would make the tourists come back next time, and the facilities and environment is the key motivation behind tourists' decision to revisit, going by the mean scores of 2.62 and 2.58 respectively. Finally, the mean score for

question 14 (i.e. 2.06) suggests that the tourists are not considering visiting the tourism sites at least once in a year.

Table 5: Reliability Statistics

<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.990	.991	15

Source: Reliability Result (see Appendix 3; SPSS 23.0 Output)

Appendix 3 shows the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient result. It could be observed from table 5 above that the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient is far above 90%, which is a highly desirable rate. This implies that the 15 multiple Likert questions in the study's questionnaire are internally consistent and reliable.

Test of Hypotheses

The two hypotheses earlier stated in the introductory chapter are hereunder subjected to test using correlation technique.

Table 6: Correlations Matrix

		RIN	CIM	AIM
<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	RIN	1.000	.649	.082
	CIM	.649	1.000	.620
	AIM	.082	.620	1.000
<i>Sig. (1-tailed)</i>	RIN	.	.000	.102
	CIM	.000	.	.000
	AIM	.102	.000	.
<i>N</i>	RIN	240	240	240
	CIM	240	240	240
	AIM	240	240	240

Source: SPSS 23.0 Output (Extracts from Regression Results – Appendix 2)

Hypothesis One:

H₀₁: Cognitive destination image does not significantly affect re-visit intention of tourists.

Test statistic:

The significance value of CIM is 0.000 (see table 6 above).

Conclusion: Since the Sig. value of 0.000 is less 0.05; we reject the null hypothesis (H₀₁) and conclude that cognitive destination image significantly affects re-visit intention of tourists.

Hypothesis Two:

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists.

Test statistic:

The significance value of AIM is 0.102 (see table 6 above).

Conclusion: Since the Sig. value of 0.102 is greater than 0.05; we accept the null hypothesis (H₀₂) and conclude that there is no significant relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists.

Discussion of Results

The crux of this study is to ascertain how destination image affects tourists' revisit intention to tourism sites in Cross River State, Nigeria. The empirical results indicate that the coefficients of the study's explanatory variables are all positive; meaning that without the study's explanatory variables, both cognitive and affective destination images will have a positive impact on the revisit intention of the tourists. Interestingly, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) result (Appendix 2) also shows that both cognitive and affective destination images exert joint significant impact on tourists' revisit intention. The empirical results are hereunder discussed further, with particular emphasis on the relationship between the dependent and explanatory variables.

Revisit Intention and Cognitive Destination Image

It was found that cognitive destination image exerts significant positive impact on tourists' revisit intention. In other words, the higher the cognitive destination image, the higher the tendency that tourists will revisit the destination for tourism/leisure. The magnitude of impact can be measured in the fact that one unit increase in cognitive destination image will amount to 42.2% increment in revisit intention (see Appendix 2). This result is in conformity with Basaran (2016) who established that the assessment of both the cognitive and the affective components of destination image can be used as a predictor of tourists' behavioural intentions toward destinations, such as intention to revisit. Other prior empirical studies have proved that destination image dimension significantly affects tourists revisit intention (Mulugeta & Manjit, 2019; Ho, et al., 2022).

Revisit Intention and Affective Destination Image

Furthermore, the empirical results show that there is an insignificant positive relationship between affective image and re-visit intention of tourists. In other words, the coefficient of affective destination image has a positive sign as shown by the value of 0.081 (see Appendix 2). This implies that for every unit increase in affective destination image, tourists' revisit intention enhances by 8.1%. The result aligns with that of Tosun, Bekir, and Alan (2015) who established that affective destination image perceptions on revisit intention provide a more robust determinant for repeat visitors to the destination than for first-time visitors. Similarly, Weisheng, Shiheng, and Philip (2016) postulate that the relationship

between destination image and loyalty shows that affective image has a direct influence on tourist loyalty.

Conclusion

This study examined the effect of destination image on tourists' revisit intention. The destination sites under study include: Obudu Mountain Resort, Marina Resort, Cross River National Park, **National Museum** Calabar, and **Tinapa Resort**, all in Cross River State of Nigeria. It has been generally accepted in the literature that destination image has influenced tourists' behaviors (Bosque, 2007), and factors that influence tourist's choice of tourism destination have been examined from several points of view. This study concludes that cognitive destination image significantly and positively affects tourists' purchase behaviours (revisit intention), while affective destination image has insignificant positive effect on revisit intention. These results are in congruence with prior empirical findings ((Machado, 2010; Shahida, 2019; Basaran, 2016; Tosun, Bekir, & Alan, 2015). The practical implication of this conclusion is that an understanding of the relationship between destination image and tourists' revisit intention is extremely important to tourism destination (site) managers, so as to enable them create, develop and successfully implement strategies to attract tourists and build long lasting emotional bonds between visitors/ tourists and tourist destinations.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this research work, the following recommendations are proffered;

1. Elements of cognitive destination image, which includes but not limited to rich culture, legendary history, and safety, should be professionally managed to the admiration of tourists as this could enhance the tourists' revisit intention.
2. Since repeat visit is one of the main targets of destinations managers, different programs should be developed and implemented for first-time and repeat visitors so as to stimulate a revisit intention.
3. There is need for managers of tourism destinations to develop strong emotional messages through advertisements, as well as structure tourism sites in a manner that will positively arouse the emotions of tourists, with the view to luring the tourists to the destination in future.

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