



Public perception of Boko Haram insurgency on destination image and tourist flow in Northern Nigeria

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Abstract

The importance of destination image in influencing tourist choice of destination for visitation cannot be overemphasized. This is because tourism destination image covers a whole range of factors considered imperative for the satisfaction of tourist thirst for a memorable experience. It includes inter alia, safety and security issues which stand as huge threat to tourist enjoyment of any destination. The issue of security in Nigeria is presently threatened by the activities of Boko Haram insurgency. Therefore, despite Nigeria's rich cultural and natural attractions in all regions of the country, the activities of Boko Haram menace especially the northern regions and obstruct tourist patronage of the many attractions in that area. In the light of the above, this study aims to examine the perception of the public towards Plateau and Kaduna states as tourist destinations and seeks to evaluate the level of patronage of attractions therein. In order to achieve the aim of this study, a survey based on the perception of 103 respondents in four tourist attractions drawn from the two states were conducted. Frequencies and percentage statistical tools were used to analyze and determine how Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria affects tourist flow in that region. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that safety and security are major factors to consider in selecting a destination. However, the study concluded that fortifying the security of the study area will go a long way in overcoming the projected negative image of the destination.

Keywords: public perception, Boko Haram, insurgency, tourism attractions, destination image

Introduction

Northern Nigeria is richly endowed with a wide range of natural and cultural tourism products. The consumption of these products by tourists led to the establishment of numerous tourism service industries which tend to boost the economy of the destination. Considering this benefit of tourism, the sector was one of the sectors believed whose development would bail the country out of its oil monopoly economy. In other words, the Nigerian tourism industry has the potential to positively impact on other sectors of the economy and does not waste resources. As a key component of development in many countries, and despite its notable economic power and apparent resiliency, tourism is highly vulnerable to internal and external shocks as diverse as economic downturns, natural disasters, epidemic disease, and international conflicts (Sönmez, et al (1999). Buttressing the vulnerability of the industry, Ranga, and Pradhan (2014) asserted that terrorism and political turmoil present major challenges to the industry. The act of terrorism distorts the flow of the industry which requires a relatively



peaceful atmosphere to thrive just as “many scholars in the tourism industry advocate that being safe on vacation is an expected requirement for any visitor in a tourist destination or city” Baker (2014: 58). Thus, the slightest trace of disaster, either natural or man-made that threatens the safety and security of tourists negatively influences their perception of the destination. In view of this, the reputations of numerous tourist destinations have been marred for becoming a target for terrorist attacks.

Therefore, the decision-making process of destination image is influenced by the individual’s perception of the destination which can be influenced by various factors, one of which this research work is concerned with, namely terrorist attack. According to Ranga and Pradhan (2014) previous travel experience may affect the potential tourist’s confidence regarding future travel. In addition, information from *inter alia* the media, internet, travel brochure, also forms an image of the destination. The continuous attacks upon a destination by terrorist groups can paint a negative image of that destination. Consequently, those perceived risks and perceptions of safety may cause potential travellers to cancel their travel plans; change their destination; modify their travel behaviour; or obtain more information (Ranga and Pradhan, 2014). Araña and León (2008) assert that many tourists minimize the risk of facing a terror attack by substituting vacation destinations. Albu (2016) rightly observed that some terrorist attacks have permanently changed the way in which tourist activity is taking place within affected areas/countries (Albu, 2016). It is not disaffirming to state that terrorist activities affect the perception of tourists towards tourism destinations in general. In other words, if a destination is endowed with unique attractions these do not necessarily make it a tourists’ choice.

Hence, despite the unique tourism attraction bequeathed to the northern region of Nigeria, especially National parks, waterfalls, game reserves, traditional festivals etc., these do not alone determine tourist decisions to select the destination. This is because the current menace of the Boko Haram terrorist sect has marred the destination image of northern Nigeria. The activities of this group threaten the safety and security of people and more especially tourists. The safety of tourists is very important, hence, travellers assess the security situations of destinations before travel decisions are made.

The activities of the sect in the Northern part of the country in recent times have affected tourism patronage by both local and international tourists. It is in the light of this observation that this research is designed to examine the public perception of the Boko Haram insurgency as it affects the destination image and level of tourism patronage to the northern part of Nigeria specifically the Plateau and Kaduna states respectively. The two northern states were chosen having faced numerous attacks from the Boko Haram escapades. This provides the justification for this study. Therefore, the work is set to proffer possible ways of promoting tourism in the region in spite of this lingering problem posed by the sect.

Objective of the study

The primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of public perception of Boko Haram insurgency and its effect on tourism promotion in the northern part of Nigeria with particular reference to Plateau and Kaduna state. In other to achieve the above objective, the research findings will answer the following:

1. What are the factors that influence tourist choice of destination?
2. How do tourists view Boko Haram insurgency in Plateau and Kaduna states respectively?
3. What is the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on tourist flow?
4. In what ways can the destination image of Plateau and Kaduna state be improved?



Study Area

This study area covers tourism attractions in both Kaduna and Plateau state respectively. Kaduna state was created on 27th May, 1967 out of the former Northern region by the then regime of General Murtala Mohammed. The state derives its name from the Hausa word “KADA” meaning crocodile and “Kaduna” is the Hausa plural word for crocodiles many of which abound in River Kaduna. Its capital is Kaduna, the state shares boundaries with Niger State to the west, Zamfara, Katsina and Kano states to the north, Bauchi and Plateau States to the east and FCT Abuja and Nassarawa state to the south. Being one of the ancient Hausa state is rich in cultural and natural attractions not limited to the following Gamji park, Kagoro Hills, Lord Lugard Hall, Zaria city Wall, Kanuku National Park, Durbar festival, Hamdala hotel etc.

Plateau state was created in 1976 when the state was carved out of Benue-Plateau State. The state shares common boundaries with Bauchi state in the north, Taraba state in the east, Nasarawa state in the south and Kaduna state in the west. The state is endowed with numerous tourism attractions ranging from its cold, sunny, dry climate typically considered desirable by international tourists, to beautiful geological formations, cultural heritage etc. The state numerous tourism attractions earned it the slogan “Home of peace and tourism”. The following are some of its tourist attractions: National museum Jos, Kurra Falls, Assop Falls, Kurang Volcanic Mountain, Gwaram Forest Reserve, Jos Wildlife Park, Wase Rock, Kahwang Rock Formation, Wushiri Cultural Festival etc. Considering the numerous tourism attractions in both state, the following attractions were selected for the research Gamji Park and Hamdala Hotel in Kaduna state and Jos Wildlife Park and the Museum of Traditional Nigerian Architecture in Plateau state.

Literature review

Tourism is a multidimensional, multi-faceted activity which touches many lives and business activities. It comprises a conglomeration of services offered by *inter alia* restaurants, hotels, motels, travel agencies, transport (Ezenagu and Olatunji, 2016) to tourists in any destination. Visits to a destination are not without purpose and Ezenagu and Umarrh (2017) asserted that tourism is a purposeful temporary journey to different destinations for different reasons. Amongst the numerous reasons is the attraction of a region which many scholars take to be the *raison de entrée* for tourism activity. Subsequently, tourists seeks destinations with more interesting and exciting features worthy of their time and income which calls for visits to sites with a variety of attractions (Ezenagu and Olatunji, 2016). Attractions are central to visitors overall enjoyment and experience within any given destination. In many respects, they are the lifeblood of a destination because they are part of the appeal, ambience and overall experience that visitors seek to consume in areas they visit (Page, 2009).

Despite the importance of attractions to tourist visitation numerous factors hinder the choice of destination. In Nigeria, the northern part of the country is endowed with unique and appealing attractions of both cultural and natural origin but the continue menace of Boko Haram insurgency stands as a huge threat to their patronage. Therefore, that attractions are unique does not guarantee patronage rather tourist perception of the destination. In other words, destination image is one of the paramount factors that influence tourist choice of a destination.

At this juncture, it is worthy to note that the image a destination presents determines its patronage. This is because an important aspect in tourist industry is tourist intention to return to a specific area/region/city/country. That is why we should take into account the fact that a tourist destination image may positively influence tourist’s behavioural intentions, especially



their desire to return to that particular area (Lertputtarak, 2012: 111). The image is an essential component within the process of choosing a holiday destination. In other words, Corniglon and Turnois (2011) consider the image of a destination as an influencing factor not only on the actual situation of the destination, but also on the tourist's behaviour, in general. This implies that the tourist perception of destination image determines their behaviour. Therefore, destination entails the totality of information and impression accumulated by tourists over time of a particular place in respect to many factors. Specifically, Assael (1984) asserted that destination image is "the overall perception of the destination that is formed by processing information from various sources over time". This perception or image of the destination is formed by a number of agents in the society as Abd El Jalil, (2010) pointed out that in the image creation process, brochures, tour operators, and travel agencies also play significant roles. In addition to image creation process are uncertain unforeseeable factors that arise in the destination not limited to social conflict, political uprising and /or terrorist attacks. As Albu (2016) stated that tourism destinations make no exception from being strongly affected by terrorist acts.

Today, the northern region of Nigeria, is reeling from the recent continuous attacks of the Boko Haram sect and this has created a negative impression of the area as an unsafe destination. As a result of this insurgency certain northern destinations of the country were declared unsafe by the Nigerian government. With official declaration of certain states in Nigeria as unsafe tourism destinations, many foreign nations have placed debilitating travelling bans on the country in order to prevent their citizens from visiting and endangering their lives. Despite the fact that tourism is an economic pillar of many nations it cannot thrive in an atmosphere of insurgency such as that created by the Boko Haram terrorist sect. In other words, Boko Haram's wanton destruction of lives and property poses a huge threat to northern Nigeria as a tourism destination and has drastically reduced tourist patronage in the region, witting it down to almost nothing. Albu (2016) citing Sofroni (2010), asserts that such events lead to a fall in tourist numbers in a given touristic destination or even lead to the complete avoidance of that destination for a very long period of time, until the tourists' confidence might be restored. Many tourism scholars across the globe agree that terrorist attacks do indeed tarnish a tourism destinations image especially after the 9/11 experience. As Baker (2014: 62) observed that

The terror attacks of September 11, 2001 had an immediate and substantial impact on worldwide travel. The attacks induced substitution away from air travel generally and caused a shift in the preferences of travellers for particular destinations. The United States in particular experienced an immediate and precipitous drop in arrivals of international visitors.

After the US 9/11 experience terrorism became a global threat to the world economy, yielding activities especially tourism, less effective. The terrorist activities obstruct tourist flows in many destinations where the image has been marred by incessant attack. Yaya (2009) buttressed this effect of terrorism on tourism from his study of Tourism in Turkey for the period from January 1997 to December 2006. He asserted that terrorism in Turkey accounted for a reduction of 6 million tourists over the last nine years. He stated that the economic cost of terrorism in the tourism industry was more than \$700 million in 2006. The cost of terrorism on tourism economy is quite disastrous as it affects virtually all the service industries related to tourism. After the 9/11 terrorist attack many tourism service industries were affected and as a result many people lost their employment due to the drop in the number of tourists.

Henderson (2003) using a newspaper report illustrated the effect of Bali bombings on the Indonesian island's tourism industry. From his study, the Indonesian island of Bali confronted an unexpected crisis in 2002 when terrorist bombs exploded in a resort area crowded with tourists, leaving almost two hundred dead and many more injured. The event had serious consequences for tourism in Bali and Indonesia. He states that:



almost immediately after the bombings, 2,000 tourists cut short their holiday in Bali...and 2,833 international visitors were recorded on 15 October compared to an average of 4,650 prior to the blasts... All types of accommodation saw a corresponding fall in demand, and occupancy rates in larger hotels plummeted from 74.8% on 11 October to 33.4% on 19 October; figures later reached 10% in certain instances. Restaurants, retailers and attractions also had fewer customers and the future of small enterprises was threatened. The livelihoods of individuals such as tour guides and craftsmen were jeopardized, including members of the large informal sector of hawkers and vendors.

In the northern region of Nigeria, Oketola (2015) has observed that in spite of Nigeria's robust cultural assets and rich natural beauty, Boko Haram insurgency is driving local and foreign visitors away from the country's tourist destinations. He stated that because of the level of insecurity in the country, tourists are shunning the northern region tourist destinations. Nmodu, et al. (2015) reported that most of the Nigeria National Parks in the northern regions have ceased to be tourist destinations and are now 'dens' for militants. In other words, numerous national parks were abandoned by tourists. Notably Gumti Park, Kamuku National Park, Lake National Park, Chad Basin National Park Borno State, Yankari National Park and Sambisa Game Reserve which were previously attractive destinations for tourists but now situated in a very unsafe destinations of the country.

Furthermore, Garba (2017) confirmed that the first UNESCO (United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture) World Heritage Site in Nigeria, "Sukur World Cultural Heritage" in Madagali local government area of Adamawa state, was destroyed by Boko Haram insurgents in 2014. The landscape has since been shut-down after the attack in September 2014. Before the advent of Boko Haram, the site was considered the biggest international tourism centre in Nigeria and Africa's first cultural landscape patronised by significant number of international and domestic tourists on daily basis. Government and the inhabitants used to generate a lot of money from the tourists and other visitors to the area. Therefore, the site devastation is a huge loss to both the government and the people. The traditional festivals of the northern region which are a tourist's delight were all suspended and even the Abuja carnival was affected. In view of this, Okeke (2015) stated that Nigeria losses were at least over N200 billion that would have accrued to the economy as profit from festivals when the tourists board flights, book hotels, eat and pay for other leisure associated with the festival.

However, northern Nigeria is not only the home of tourism but also the food basket of the nation. Without our local cuisine what will the tourists eat in Nigeria? Idris et al. (2014) looked at the effect of the crisis on our local cuisine and concluded that the current violence situation has succeeded in strangling the economy of northern Nigeria. This implies that apart from the tourism industry other sectors of the economy have been devastated by the incessant Boko Haram attacks. The manufacturing sectors in the affected regions are losing their investments and subsequently there is general loss of jobs. According to Okereocha (2016) if the Boko Haram attacks continue, more manufacturers, especially those in the Northeast, may quit. With the continuous menace of the insurgency the affected regions have continued to witness the lowest tourists' arrivals, including business visits. There has also not been any opening of an international branded hotel. Most amusements parks, national parks, game reserves, eateries, restaurants, bars, and other public relaxation points have closed, as people heed calls by security experts and the authorities to avoid such places. With the very sharp reduction in occupancy rates of hotels and recreation facilities, the implication is that affected regions will continue to lose huge revenues that would have been accruing to them from tourism-related businesses. To sum up, Sönmez, et al. (1994) stated that terrorist attacks on destinations threaten the normal operation and conduct of tourism-related businesses;



damage a tourist destination's overall reputation for safety, attractiveness, and comfort by negatively affecting visitors' perceptions of that destination; and, in turn, these all cause a downturn in the local travel and tourism economy, and thus interrupt the continuity of business operations for the local travel and tourism industry by the ongoing reduction in tourist arrivals and expenditures.

Theoretical framework: Perception theory

For this study, the theoretical framework employed was the perception theory. This was selected since the decision on choice of destination is most times influenced by the tourist perception of a destination. As Philemon (2015) rightly observed, the tourism industry is very greatly affected by the perception the tourists carry with them concerning a destination. When international tourists carry positive perceptions about a destination, they will be encouraged to visit and then possibly even revisit that destination. Otherwise, they may be deterred from visiting at all and discourage others from visiting. Therefore, perception is a multifaceted concept that has many important determinants, depending on the disposition of the individual towards the given issue. Folarin (2002) states that opinion perception depends on a complex mix of variables such as psychological disposition, past experiences, cultural expectations and social relationships. This implies that tourist perceptions of northern destinations of Nigeria is influenced by the destination image amongst the many factors. This image has recently been marred by Boko Haram insurgency. This invariably affects their psychological disposition towards the destination. In order not fall victim to such terrorists' activities, tourists instinctively select a safer and more secured destination as a matter of course. From the foregoing, it is clear that perception is an important factor in tourism promotion simply because tourist behaviour is based on their perceptions of a destination. In this study, efforts were made to elicit tourist perceptions on the activities of Boko Haram in the northern tourism destinations of the country.

Research Methodology

This study is based on the examination of public perception of Boko Haram insurgency and tourism promotion in the northern part of the country, using Plateau and Kaduna States as a case study. The authors employed quantitative research analysis using the statistical instrument of a questionnaire. The population of this study consist of selected state government staff at the attractions, tourists, and members of host community in Kaduna and Plateau states respectively.

Data analysis and interpretation

A total of 120 questionnaires were administered in both states, specifically 60 persons from each state who gave their voluntary consent to participate. Of the 120 copies of questionnaire distributed 103 copies were returned. In analyzing data from the 103 copies of the questionnaires returned, a simple frequency table was adopted to interpret and analyze the research findings following detailed and descriptive interpretation of the table. In addition, data from personal interviews conducted in each of the four different tourist attractions was captured, namely Gamji Park and Hamdala Hotel which are both in Kaduna state and Jos Wildlife Park and the National Museum in Jos which are both in Plateau state and were used to supplement data from questionnaires.

Table 1: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21-30	29	28.2
31-40	40	38.8



41-50	19	18.5
51-60	14	13.6
60 and above	1	1.0
TOTAL	103	100

Source: Field Survey 2016

From table 1 above, those that fell within the age group (21 - 30 years) were 28.2% of the samples. Respondents within the age group (31 - 40 years) constitute 38.8% of the sample, 18.5% fell within the age range (41 – 50 years), while those within the age range (51 – 60 years) are 103.6%. Only 1% of the sample was within the age group of (above 60 years.)

Table 2: Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	59	57.3
Female	44	42.7
TOTAL	103	100

Source: Field Survey 2016

Table 2 above shows that the respondents comprised of 57.3% male and 42.7% female, indicating that the male respondents were a bigger sample than the female respondents.

Table 3: Marital status

Reponses	Frequency	Percentage
Single	37	35.9
Married	63	61.2
Widowed	3	2.9
TOTAL	103	100

Source: Field Survey 2016

From table 3 above, singles were 35.9% of the sample. Respondents that are married constituted 61.2% of the sample. Only 2.9% of the samples were widowed.

Table 4: State of resident

Destination	Frequency	Percentage
Kaduna state	55	53.4
Plateau state	48	46.6
TOTAL	103	100

Source: Field Survey 2016

Table 4 above, shows that the respondents from Kaduna state account for 53.4% of the total while that of Plateau state constitute 46.6% of the sample.

Research question 1: What are the factors that influence tourist choice of destination?

In response to the above question, tourists were given a list of the common factors that could influence choice of destination. as displayed below in table 5:

Table 5: Responses to the factors that influence tourist choice of destination

Questions	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	NT (%)	TOTAL (%)
a Safety and security	65(63.1)	36(35.0)	-	-	2(1.9)	103 (100)
b Entertainment	6(5.8)	50(48.6)	16(15.5)	12(11.7)	19(18.4)	103 (100)
c Natural attractions	36(35.0)	57(55.4)	8(7.8)	3(2.9)	1(0.9)	103 (100)
d Cultural attractions	34(33.0)	52(50.5)	14(13.6)	-	3(2.9)	103 (100)
e Cost	10(9.7)	-	21(20.4)	55(53.4)	17(16.5)	103 (100)
f Accessibility	33(32.0)	51(49.6)	6(5.8)	2(1.9)	10(9.7)	103 (100)



From question item (a.) above, 63.1% strongly agree, 35.0% agree, while 1.9% were undecided. Furthermore, 0% disagree and 0% strongly disagree with the research question. This implies that security and safety is one of the major factors that influences tourist choice of a tourism destination.

From question item (b.) above 5.8% and 48.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed and agreed respectively with the question, 18.4% were undecided while 11.7% and 15.5% agree and strongly agree respectively with the question. One may thus conclude that entertainment also holds an important role in destination selection, but does not pose a great influence as safety and security do.

From question item (c.) above 7.8% strongly disagreed while 2.9% of the respondents disagreed respectively with the question, 0.9% were undecided while 55.4% and 35.0% agree and strongly agree respectively with the question. It is safe to conclude that tourists take into consideration natural attractions while making decision on which destination to visit.

From question item (d.) above 33% and 50.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the question, 2.9% were undecided while 0% and 13.6% disagree and strongly disagree respectively with the question. This consolidates the fact that poor cultural attractions among tourist destinations, also deters tourist from visiting a particular area.

From question item (e.), 9.7% and 0% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the question, 16.5% were undecided while 53.4% disagreed and or 20.4% strongly disagree with the question. It is safe to conclude in this case, that contrary to what is suggested in the literature, cost has very little influence on tourist choice of a suitable destination.

From question item (f.) above, 32% and 49.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the question, 9.7% were undecided while 1.9% disagree and 5.8% strongly disagree with the question. This reinforces the fact that accessibility also has an important place in decisions concerning destination selection. Difficulty of accessibility (transportation) was seen as another factor putting people off but to a much lesser degree than was expected.

Research question 2: How do tourists perceive Boko Haram insurgency in the study area?

This question displayed tourist perception of Boko Haram activities in both Plateau and Kaduna state.

Table 6: Responses to tourists view of Boko Haram insurgency

Variable	Frequency	Percentages (%)
As a major threat	89	86.4
As a minor threat	10	9.7
As no threat	0	0
Don't know/refused	4	3.9
Total	103	100

Source: Field Survey 2016

Data gathered on the tourist perception of Boko Haram shows that majority of the respondents view insurgency as a major threat in the region. The data revealed that 87(86.4%) of the respondents agreed to that.



Table 7: Responses to tourists' perception of Boko Haram insurgency

Questions	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	NT (%)	TOTAL (%)
Can tourists visit destination with series of terrorist attacks?	12(11.7)	20(19.4)	24(23.3)	47(45.6)	-	103(100)
Despite Boko Haram attacks, do tourists still visit the study area?	18(17.5)	15(14.6)	29(28.2)	38(36.9)	3(2.9)	103(100)
Do the activities of Bok Haram restrain tourist movement within the study area?	17(16.5)	57(55.3)	7(6.8)	13(12.6)	9(8.7)	103(100)
Do tourists feel secured with the level of security in the study area	6(5.8)	22(21.4)	25(24.3)	37(36.0)	13(12.6)	103(100)
Would you as a tourist visit the study area with your loved ones amidst all these attacks?	2(1.9)	4(3.9)	33(32.0)	64(62.1)	-	103(100)
After being a victim of Boko Haram attack, will you repeat your visit to the study area?	5(4.9)	20(19.4)	66(64.1)	11(10.7)	1(1.0)	103(100)

Question 1 above shows that, 11.7% and 19.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the question, 0% were undecided while 23.3% and 145.6% strongly disagree and disagree respectively with the question. One can conclude that tourists do not wish to visit destinations where there are regular terrorist attacks

From question 2 above, 17.5% strongly agree, 14.6% agree, while 2.9% were undecided. Furthermore, 36.9% disagree and 28.2% strongly disagree with the research question. One can thus infer that tourists do not visit the study area due to the activities of the Boko Haram sect in the region which is a critical factor in non-selection.

Question 3 above shows that, 16.5% strongly agree with the research question, 55.3% agree, while 8.7% were undecided. In addition, 12.6% disagree and 6.8% strongly disagree with the research question. This consolidates the fact that the many activities of Boko Haram do in fact restrain tourist movement within the study area.

From question 4 above, 5.8% strongly agree, 21.4% agree, while 12.6% were undecided. Furthermore, 36.0% disagree and 24.3% strongly disagree with the research question. It is safe to conclude that tourists do not feel secure with the level of security required in the study area.

From question 5 above, 1.9% strongly agree, 3.9% agree, while 0% were undecided. Furthermore, 62.1% disagree and 32.0% strongly disagree with the research question. It is safe to conclude that tourists will not visit the study area with their loved ones while Boko Haram attacks continue.

From question 6 above, 4.9% strongly agree, 19.4% agree, while 1.0% were undecided. Furthermore, 10.7% disagree and 64.1% strongly disagree with the research question. One can infer that after being a victim of a Boko Haram attack, tourists are more likely not to ever repeat their visit to the study area.

Research Question 3: What is the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on tourist flow?

The question deals with the perception of respondents in relation to the impact of Boko Haram insurgency on tourist flow at the four attractions selected for the study.

Table 8: Responses to the impact of Boko Haram insurgency

Questions	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	NT (%)	TOTAL (%)
The emergence of Boko Haram has reduced tourist population in Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park in Kaduna state	8(22.9)	12(34.3)	5(14.3)	7(20)	3(8.6)	35(100)
Tourist expenditure has increased as a result of Boko Haram attacks.	4(7.0)	15(26.3)	12(21.1)	24(42.1)	2(3.5)	57(100)
Do tourists still repeat their visit to Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park not minding the attacks?	-	8(22.9)	5(14.3)	21(60)	1(2.9)	35(100)
Do tourists still repeat their visit to Jos Wildlife Park National museum Jos not minding the attacks?	1(4.3)	4(17.4)	8(34.8)	10(43.5)	-	23(100)
Do you think Boko Haram Insurgency will affect the Hotel and the Park as a tourist attraction in the future?	10(28.6)	13(37.1)	3(8.6)	7(14.3)	2(5.7)	35(100)

From question 1 above, out of the 35 respondents that responded to this question (staff of Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park), 22.9% strongly agree, 34.3% agreed, while 8.6% remained undecided with the research question. 14.3% of the respondents disagreed and 20% strongly disagree with the questionnaire item. One can therefore conclude that the emergence of Boko Haram has reduced the tourism numbers at the Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park in Kaduna state.

From question 2 above, out of the 57 respondents that responded to this question (staff of Hamdala Hotel, Gamji Park, Jos Wildlife Park and National museum Jos), 7.0% and 26.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed. However, contrary to their opinion, 42.1% and 21.1% respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 3.5% of the respondents remained undecided. This implies that tourist expenditure has undeniably decreased due to persistent Boko Haram attacks

From question 3 above, out of the 35 respondents that responded to this question (staff of Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park), 0% strongly agree, 22.9% agreed, while 2.9% remained undecided with the research question. 60% disagree while 14.3% strongly disagree with the questionnaire item. One can therefore conclude that tourists do not repeat their visit to Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park as a result of Boko Haram attacks in the state

From question 4 above, out of the 23 respondents that responded to this question (staff of Jos Wildlife Park and National museum Jos), 4.3% and 17.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively with the research question. However, contrary to their opinion, 43.5% and 34.8% respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed with this research question, while 0% of the respondents remained undecided. This implies that tourists do not repeat their visit to the Jos Wildlife Park and National Museum Jos as a result of Boko Haram attacks in the state.

From question 5 above, out of the 35 respondents that responded to this question (staff of Hamdala Hotel and Gamji Park), 28.6% strongly agree, 37.1% agreed, while 5.7% remained undecided with the research question. 14.3% of the respondents disagreed and 8.6% strongly disagree with the questionnaire item. One can therefore conclude that the activities of Boko Haram Insurgency will affect the Hotel and the Park as a tourist attraction in the future, if nothing is done to redeem the destinations image as a safe place to visit.

Discussion of Findings

The data analysis established that Boko Haram insurgency indeed stands as a huge setback to tourism activities in the study area. Considering tourist perceptions of the destination image of the study area, the findings identified safety and security as major factors that many tourists consider while selecting a destination. On this note the destination image of the study area has been marred by the regularity of Boko Haram terrorist attacks. Since the target of their attacks is usually the destruction of lives and property, tourists becomes highly vulnerable. The consequences of such attacks instigate fear in the tourists which psychologically affects their perception of the destination. As Pizam and Smith (2000) rightly observed, fear and insecurity about the possibilities of terrorism affect tourism demand. Therefore, in choosing a destination for a vacation or for any touristic purpose, the image of that destination in terms of political stability, health matters, natural disasters are put into serious consideration but Fletcher and Morakabati (2008) affirmed that major natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes or floods, do not tend to have the magnitude of impact as that associated with political instability as a result of terrorist activities. That is why the issue of destination image cannot be overlooked especially when a destination is vulnerable to terrorist attack. Only in safe destinations are touristic experiences memorable.

In the light of the above, from the findings of the study it has emerged that many tourists and members of the host communities of the study area attested that activities of Boko Haram insurgency threaten the tourism industry of the study area. According to the Senior Personnel Officer of one hotel, every tourism related businesses, especially the hospitality industry in Northern Nigeria generally have been adversely affected by the negative image created by the Boko Haram terrorist sect. She added that the media reports of Boko Haram attacks in the region have been exaggerated and this adversely affects the revenue generated by the hotel. Tourists having seen the adverse impact of such attacks from the media will definitely substitute such a destination if it was originally on their list of places to visit. This is because all around the globe the media is regarded as an authentic source of information and it subsequently influences tourist perceptions.

Also buttressing this effect of media coverage of Boko Haram attacks on the destination image of the study area the Chief Security Officer of a nature reserve, stated that the role media plays in tarnishing the image of northern Nigeria over Boko Haram activities cannot be over-estimated. He agreed that the security of lives and property is of paramount importance to tourists when it comes to selecting a destination, and anything that jeopardizes that will discourage a tourist from choosing a particular destination. From all indications, it is vividly clear that the activities of the Boko Haram sect in northern Nigeria, have negatively affected tourism in-flows, leading to a great reduction in tourism patronage in the region.

Despite the negative destination image created by the regularity of these attacks the Senior Personnel Officer of a hotel stated that the destination image could be redeemed by Nigeria Broadcasting Commission (NBC) regulating the information they expose to vulnerable tourists. Further, she urged the Nigerian government to invest more on security in the region. In conclusion she stated that tourist attractions in the region should embrace the new trend of e-marketing in the hospitality industry to promote and expand their businesses. In addition, Chief Security Officer of a national park, urged the media to be sincere in their report to avoid destroying the economic activities of the state. Thus, the investment in security made the Nigerian government redeploy its military headquarters to Bornu state in close proximity to Sambisa forest, the hideout of the Boko Haram terrorists. With this move, the Boko Haram sect has been subdued although not entirely annihilated. The success of this move has to a large extent had a great impact on the destination image of the study area. As a result, tourist still patronise northern destination of Nigeria though the flow is low.



Conclusion

Stability is one of the keys to successful tourism development (Fletcher and Morakabati, 2008). In other words, with political stability the success of any tourism destination which is the “tourist return policy” would be achieved. This implies that a tourist would repeatedly visit the destination. However, the inability of tourists to return to a previously visited destination or even encourage others to visit same destination, is detrimental and will have a profound effect on the destination’s tourism industry. In this vein, the destination image plays a vital role in the tourist decision process of destination choice. The destination image is not only sustained by unique attractions but also by other activities, both natural and man-made, that can obstruct political stability of the country. That is why many scholars agree that the tourism industry is vulnerable and cannot thrive under the current spate of terrorist activities. In other words, the choice of destination though influenced by several factors is solely the decision of a tourist. That is why Sönmez, et al (1999) asserted that the effects of negative occurrences on the local tourism industry and tourist destination can be profound. Random acts of terrorism curtail travel activity until the public’s memories of the publicized incidents fade, which usually takes years. Persistent terrorism, however, can tarnish a destination’s image of safety and attractiveness and jeopardize its entire tourism industry forever. As Korstanje and Clayton (2012) rightly observed, tourists have been the victims in several mass-killings, in places such as Egypt and Bali including Nigeria, with devastating consequences for tourism.

In conclusion, the public perceptions of Boko Haram insurgency are the major factor that deters tourists from visiting the study area. As many of the research respondents asserted, security and safety constitute a major factor that influences a tourist’s choice of destination. Consequently, Boko Haram insurgency degraded the destination image of the study area and greatly reduced tourism flows. In addition, it also led to the closure of many tourism related businesses in the study area. Nevertheless, the Nigerian government has to a great length subdued the terrorist group activities in the study area with the deployment of military headquarter close to the terrorist hideouts. It is believed that there will be improvement in the tourism services as the security status of the study area and northern region of the country in general has been fortified.

Recommendations

The discussions and analysis clearly pointed out that, potential tourists are discouraged from visiting the study area because of the negative image projected by Boko Haram insurgency. The negative perception tourists have of the study area and northern region of the country in general suggests that more work need to be done on branding and communications through marketing. Overcoming this negative image of the states will require constantly reiterating the safety of coming to study area through all the marketing outlets, such as guidebooks, promotional videos, websites and social media, and emphasis on the attractions and activities that the states have to offer. The media should also be encouraged to promote a positive destination image of the study area by reporting incidents as they seem to be in reality, without negative exaggeration, so as not to manipulate tourist perceptions relating to the destination. The use of social networks and other means by which people can directly share their tourism experience of the study area with friends and family would offer one of the greatest opportunities to overcome the negative image created by the insurgency. Lastly, strengthening security in the region will go a long way in seeking to halt the insurgency and restore tourism confidence in this beautiful and pristine destination.

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