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Discriminant Analysis of Tourist Revisit-Intention for Effective Marketing of Ecotourism Destinations in Plateau State.

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Abstract: *This study applied discriminant function to discriminate between tourists with high intention and low intention to revisit a tourist destination in Plateau State. Researches have shown that ecotourism destinations in Plateau state have lost their attractions due to lack of effective management, hence the need to identify the factors that could discriminate a tourist's intention to revisit. It is expected that a satisfied tourist would usually have high intention to revisit and could influence first time visitors positively at no cost to the park, through word of mouth publicity. Factor analysis employed, identified eight (8) out of thirty seven (37) variables reflecting the various aspects of 8 tourism destinations in Plateau State while 29 variables were dropped because their eigenvalues were less than 1.00. Two, items each were extracted from each construct of the questionnaire, while the discriminant analysis revealed that; physical product, programs of event and, employees' attitude are good predictors of intention to revisit. However, attitude of local community was not found to be a good predictor of intention to revisit. It was discovered that; (a) high intention to revisit is mainly the opinion of domestic tourists residing in Jos. (b) the insignificant proportion of national and international tourists implies that the tourism destinations in Jos were not attractive to tourists outside Jos. The study recommends that Public-Private-Partnership, Destination Management Organization or the Community-Based Tourism be adopted based on the peculiarity of the destination, if ecotourism destinations in Plateau are to be appealing to the international and national tourist.*

Keywords: *Ecotourism, Discriminant Function, Tourists, Destination Management and Public-Private-Partnership*

I. Introduction

Tourism, being a major employer of labor in the world has great impact on the economies of nations, Ecotourism in particular, contributes to environmental sustainability, cultural preservation and community participation in sustainable development (Ajala, 2008; Amati, 2013; Donohoe & Needham, 2006). Ecotourism destinations have therefore become important in achieving these growing environmental, social and economic impact (Clifton & Benson, 2006). In this regard, there is the need for tourism destinations to work hard and ensure that tourists visiting these destinations would leave with the memories and experiences that would make them want to revisit. Therefore revisit by tourist is largely a function of satisfaction (Quintal & Polczynski, 2010). Tourism destinations need to be well positioned both online and offline with effective branding and ensuring that tourists are satisfied on visitation (Achieng, Hayombe, & Agong, 2014; Lai & Shafer, 2005). While Achieng, Hayombe, & Agong, (2014) found that in Kenya, positioning of ecotourism destinations will lead to increase in visitations in Kisumu County, Quintal & Polczynski, (2010) found that satisfaction with the attractiveness, quality, and value provided by the destination positively influenced revisit intentions in Australia. Therefore in driving repeat visit or the intention to revisit is dependent largely on the percieved value of the destination (Assaker & Hallak, 2013). The great potential of Ecotourism in Plateau State could be observed from its poorly maintained destinations such as, the Pandam Wildlife Park, Jos Wildlife Park, Jos National Museum and Zoo, Wase Wildlife Park, Assop Falls, Naraguta Tourist Village, Rayfield Resort, Pai River Game Reserve and Amurun Bird Sanctuary. Despite being poorly managed, on an annual basis, the Jos National Museum and Zoo recorded the highest number of tourists, about 300,000 in 2003, 2004 and 2007. These tourism potentials, if properly and fully harnessed, could make Plateau State and the various tourism centers financially independent" (Ijeomah, Alarape, & Ogogo, 2011). Also, Aniah, Eja, Otu, & Ushie, (2009) observed that Plateau State has abundant tourism potentials, such as beaches, spectacular rock formations, hydrological bodies, wildlife and waterfall and other rich festival, architecture, and craft which have been abandoned or converted to resort centres.

Therefore as Del Bosque, Rodr, & San Mart, (2008) observed, that preconceived image of a destination influences expectations and tourist loyalty. Therefore the impact of expectations and emotions on satisfaction, was seen to have a significant influence on behavioral intentions. This study assumes that those who visit and are not satisfied may have low intention to revisit and could end up being unfavorable ambassadors to those who may be first time visitors of the destinations through word of mouth publicity. This may gradually reduce

patronage of those who had visited before and those wishing to visit for the first time, thereby making the tourism destinations unsustainable. From the review of literature of ecotourism destinations in Plateau State, no study employed the discriminant analysis approach to the problems of ecotourism destinations. The phenomenon of revisit intention is therefore considered important because it could lead to increased patronage and assurance of the sustainability of funds and socio-cultural preservation of local communities which are needed to sustain ecotourism destinations. Several studies have shown that revisit intention of tourists is subject to their experiences with such destination (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Del Bosque, Rodr, & San Mart, 2008; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010). In investigating tourist satisfaction and the level of intention to revisit, this study used satisfaction variables broken down into; *Physical product* (such as attractions, facilities, transportation, and infrastructure), *People (*Attitudes of the local community people) *Employees* (Staff of tourism Destinations), *Price* (Value for money) *Programs* (Events, festivals, and activities arranged or programmed for tourists), *Communication* (availability of information about the destination and Promotional activities) and *Natural resources* (the natural environment such as vegetation animals) (Naidoo, Ramseook-Munhurrun, & Seegoolam, 2011; World Tourism Organisation, 2007). How strong do these factors discriminate between the two groups of intention to revisit?

1.2 Hypothesis

This study therefore hypothesized as follows;

Ho: Tourist' intention to revisit an ecotourism destination in Plateau State is independent of Physical product, programs of events and, attitude of both employees and communities.

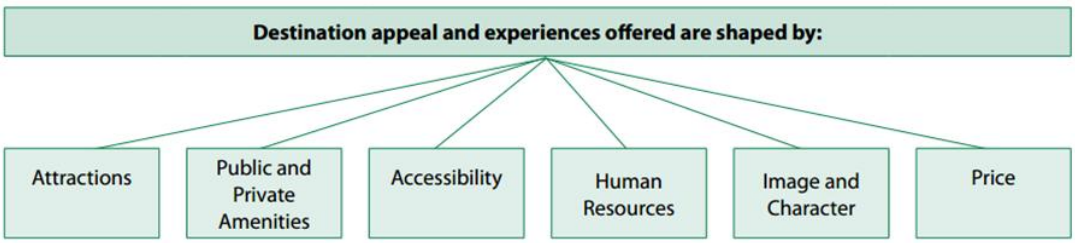
Ha: Tourist' intention to revisit an ecotourism destination in Plateau State does not depend on all the independent variables (Physical product, programs of events and, attitude of both employees and communities)**.**

II. Literature Review

2.1.1 Theoretical Framework

Destination marketing is the crucial activity of tourism marketing. Marketing of tourism destination resources in the most effective way can be realized by establishing the most suitable marketing mix components in the process of marketing decisions on target tourism markets. Effective marketing mix strategies should lead to high intention to visit and to revisit other things being equal (ÖZER, 2012). One short but accurate definition of marketing is, meeting the needs of the people profitably (Kotler & Keller, 2013). Thus, destination marketing simply means meeting the needs of tourist profitably. Figure 1 shows the categories of experiences that should significantly determine tourist satisfaction, revisit and profitability of a destination.

Figure 1 Destination experiences



SOURCE: (World Tourism Organization, 2007)

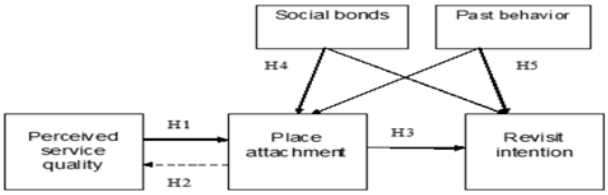
Destinations contain a number of basic elements which attract the visitors and satisfy their needs on arrival as summarized in Figure 1.

Satisfaction Theory

Giese & Cote, (2002) observed that all the definitions share the following elements: 1) consumer satisfaction is a response (emotional or cognitive); 2) the response pertains to a particular focus (expectations, product, consumption experience, etc.); and 3) the response occurs at a particular time (after consumption, after choice, based on accumulated experience, etc) Satisfaction is determined by the difference between expectations of the consumer and the actual experience. The following satisfaction theoretical approaches have been advanced: Assimilation theory, contrast theory, assimilation-contrast theory, and negativity theory (Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2013). The contrast theory is found to be suitable to this study for the fact that it claims that consumers would exaggerate any contrast between expectation and product evaluation. Dawes, Singer, & Lemons, (1972 cf. Aigbavboa & Thwala, 2013) define contrast theory as the propensity to magnify the discrepancy between "one's own attitudes and the attitudes represented by opinion statements" validated by

persons with opposing views. Tourist behaviour is characterised into Pre-decision and decision process (Post-Purchase evaluation) and Future decision making (Moutinho, 1987 cf. Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999)**.** However, this study is concerned with a tourist who has past through these processes and those intending or not (intention to re-visit or not).Figure 2 presents theoretical structural model used by Neuvonen, Pouta, & Sievänen, (2010 pg 50) in their study which examined "how the perceived quality of recreation services, with the intervening factors of place attachment, explain the future intention to revisit a national park region". However, this study is significantly different from their study in the sense that it adopted the discriminant function while they used the structural equation model.

Figure 2: Theoretical Structural model



Source: (Neuvonen, Pouta, & Sievänen, 2010)

While their study focused on the societal perspective, concerned about revisit and its implications on the society and the Park. While this study is focued on understanding the tourists in particular by discriminating between two groups of tourists, that is, those with high intention and those with Low intention to revisit a destination. (Neuvonen, Pouta, & Sievänen, 2010)

III. Methodology

This is an empirical research that investigated practical problems relating to the intention of tourist to revisit a tourism destination in Plateau State and the discriminating power of the factors responsible for their intention while a predictive model was also developed to discriminate between high and low intention to revisit. The nature of the phenomena of study (level of intention to revisit) could best be measured using survey design as observed from several studies (Achieng, Hayombe, & Agong, 2014; Aniah, Eja, Otu, & Ushie, 2009; Ijeomah, Alarape, & Ogogo, 2011; Naidoo, Ramseook-Munhurrun, & Seegoolam, 2011). Survey allows us to gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of the existing conditions in ecotourism destinations in Plateau State and or identifying standards against which the existing condition can be compared, while also determining the relationship (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011) that exist between the tourist and the ecotourism destinations. The questionnaire method of data collection was employed to generate the primary data used. A seven-point Likert-scale ranging from "extremely unsatisfied" to "extremely satisfied" (i.e. 1 = 'Extremely Unsatisfied', 2 = 'Very Unsatisfied', 3= 'Unsatisfied, 4 = 'Neutral', 5 = 'Satisfied', 6 = 'Very Satisfied', 7= Extremely Satisfied) was used to reflect the degree of satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the respondents. Due to poor record keeping, the actual number of tourists visiting the tourism destination was not obtained, therefore we adopted a population of 424,525 tourist who visited the surveyed ecotourism destinations in Plateau state as at 2004 provided by Ijeoma, Alarape, & Ogogo, (2011). The surveyed destinations which fits our chosen destinations includes Pandam Wildlife Park, Jos Wildlife Park, Jos National Museum and Zoo, Wase Wildlife Park, Assop Falls, Naraguta Tourist Village, Rayfield Resort, Pai River Game Reserve and Amurun Bird. These make up the major destinations (Ijeoma, Alarape, & Ogogo, 2011) However, recent studies have shown that Crisis has drastically and negatively affected all the sectors that constitute the tourism industry in Plateau State, particularly the hotels and tourist attractions in Jos (Fada & Mattew, 2015). Hence, there is the likelihood of a drop in tourist visit as at today compared to 2004. Since the population is relatively large there was need for sampling. Using Yamane (1967) formula a sample sized of 400 tourists was obtained and administered questionnaires. 191 were duly filled and returned representing 48% of the total questionnaire administered. 150 were returned unfilled due to low turnout of tourist and complete absence at some destinations like Pandam wildlife Park and Kura falls while 59 were not returned. However, the returned questionnaire were found to be statistically testable.

IV. Results And Discussions of Findings

Factor analysis was employed as a data reduction tool to reduce the number of variable enabling us to focus on the important variables for the analysis. The discriminant function was adopted to classify tourist into one of two groups, 1. (low intention) and 2. (high intention) to revisit ecotourism destination on the basis of a set of independent variables, Physical Products, People, employees, Price, Programs, communication and resources this maximize the between group variance relative to the within-group variance (Chandra & Menezes, 2001).The study discovered that majority (56%) of the tourists that visited ecotourism destinations in Jos were

female. It further revealed that 96% of them were Nigerians out of which 95% live in Jos, with about 86% living within the Jos/ Bukuru Metropolis. Most respondents (99.5%) fall between the ages of 15-55 years. In determining the length of stay in Jos, 64.9% of the respondents have lived in Jos for more than one year and have visited at least one of the following ecotourism destinations; Pandam wildlife Park, Jos wild life park, ASSOP water falls, Kurra falls, Naraguta Leather works, Shere Hills, Solomon Lar amusement park and or Riyom rock formation.

A factor analysis reduced the structure of the 37 variables reflecting various aspects of the eight (8) tourism destinations visited by the respondents to 8 variables. Based on the items of the factor loadings, the two items each were extracted from each construct of the questionnaire were labeled: **Employees:** (a) Staff Willingness and Knowledge (b) time of Service and opening hours; **Physical Product** (a) attractive with sign direction (b) Comfortable and spacious; **Price and communication**; (a) sufficient information (b) reasonable price and value for money and **programs, Natural resources and People** (a) pollution free and knowledge for visitors (b) peaceful attraction with rare animals and plants.

SPSS version 21.0 for Windows was used to subject the questionnaire was to several validation and reliability tests. Data cleaning was conducted and three variables were found to be out of range (outliers) and were corrected. Item difficulty analysis was conducted for the questions and they were found to be moderate and easy to understand by the respondents. All the variables were tested for multicollinearity and were found to have no multicollinearity problem as no value of the correlation is as high as 0.90 (Field, 2006).

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha, KMO and Bartlett

	Alpha	KMO	Bartlett	sig
Employees Attitude	0.813	0.820	435.04	0.000
Physical Product	0.883	0.882	775.47	0.000
Price	0.647	0.815	571.57	0.000
Communication	0.829	0.806	516.89	0.000
Programs, Natural Resources and People	0.837	0.885	525.78	0.000

Reliability test was used to test for the internal consistency of each of the questions (variables) in the questionnaire. The result in table 1 shows that the all constructs in the questionnaire are reliable except for Price with a Cronbach alpha of 0.647, which is said to be moderately reliable. However, the average reliability for all the construct is 0.8018, which exceeds the bench mark of 0.7 which is considered highly reliable (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy are all above the benchmark of 0.5 The value of the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy (Which test whether the partial correlations among variables are small) for this set of variables are adequate this gives the confidence needed to proceed with the further analysis as they are above the bench mark.

Bartlett's test of sphericity tests the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix; i.e. all diagonal elements are 1 and all off-diagonal elements are 0, implying that all of the variables are uncorrelated. If the significant value for this test is less than our alpha level, we reject the null hypothesis that the population matrix is an identity matrix. The Significant value for all the constructs are less than the 0.05, hence, the null hypothesis is reject, meaning that there are correlations in the data set.

4.1.1 Model Specification

The discriminant function model for this study is stated as:

$$\mathbf{D}_j = \boldsymbol{\beta}_0 + \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 PHP_j + \boldsymbol{\beta}_2 ATT_j + \boldsymbol{\beta}_3 POE_j + \boldsymbol{\beta}_4 EMP_j \quad \ldots (1)$$

Where:

D = discriminate function for intention to revisit and not to revisit

PHP= respondent's score for Physical product

ATT= respondent's score for attitude of people of Local community

POE= respondent's score for Program of Event

EMP= respondent's score for Destination employees' attitude

$\boldsymbol{\beta}_0$ = a constant

$\boldsymbol{\beta}_1$ $\boldsymbol{\beta}_2$ $\boldsymbol{\beta}_3$ and $\boldsymbol{\beta}_4$ = the discriminant coefficient or weight for the independent variables

Model fit

The minimum ratio of valid cases to independent variables required for discriminant analysis is 5 to 1, with a preferred ratio of 20 to 1. In this study, there are 179 valid cases and 4 independent variables, giving a

ratio of 45 to 1 which satisfies the minimum requirement of 1 to 20. This validates the use of the discriminant analysis.

Table 2: Prior Probabilities for Groups

Rating of intention to revisit	Prior	Cases Used in Analysis	
		Unweight	Weighted
Low intention to revisit	.500	58	58.000
High intention to revisit	.500	121	121.000
Total	1.000	179	179.000

Source: SPSS Output

Also discriminant analysis requires that the number of cases in the smallest group must be larger than the number of independent variables, and preferably contains 20 or more cases. The number of cases in the smallest group in this study is 58, which is larger than the number of independent variables (4), satisfying the minimum requirement.

The independent variables could be characterized as useful predictors of membership in the groups defined by the dependent variable if the cross-validated classification accuracy rate was significantly higher than the accuracy attainable by chance alone. Operationally, the cross-validated classification accuracy rate should be 25% or more high than the proportional by chance accuracy rate.

The proportional by chance accuracy rate was computed by squaring and summing the proportion of cases in each group from the table of prior probabilities for groups ($0.500^2 + 0.500^2 = 0.500$).

Table 3: Classification

Classification Results[a,c]

			Predicted Group Membership		
		How would you rate your intention to revisit?	Low intention to revisti	High intention to revisit	Total
Original	Count	Low intention to revisti	37	21	58
		High intention to revisit	42	79	121
		Ungrouped cases	1	1	2
	%	Low intention to revisti	63.8	36.2	100.0
		High intention to revisit	34.7	65.3	100.0
		Ungrouped cases	50.0	50.0	100.0
Cross-validated[b]	Count	Low intention to revisti	35	23	58
		High intention to revisit	46	75	121
	%	Low intention to revisti	60.3	39.7	100.0
		High intention to revisit	38.0	62.0	100.0

a. 64.8% of original grouped cases correctly classified.

b. Cross validation is done only for those cases in the analysis. In cross validation, each case is classified by the functions derived from all cases other than that case.

c. 61.5% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.

Source: SPSS output

From table 3, the cross-validated accuracy rate computed by SPSS was 61.5% which is slightly less than the proportional by chance accuracy criteria of 62.5% (1.25 x 0.5% = 62.5%). The criteria for classification accuracy is slightly satisfied.

4.1.2 `Descriptive statistics

Table 4: Group statistics

Group Statistics

How would you rate your intention to revisit?		Mean	Std. Deviation	Valid N (listwise)	
				Unweighted	Weighted
Low intention to revisti	Staff make Visitors to feel welcome.	4.0345	1.40132	58	58.000
	The attraction is uncrowded and unspoiled	3.7069	1.40186	58	58.000
	Cultural festivals organized for tourist	3.9828	1.67008	58	58.000
	Attitudes of the local community people	4.2414	1.69944	58	58.000
High intention to revisit	Staff make Visitors to feel welcome.	4.5041	1.45559	121	121.000
	The attraction is uncrowded and unspoiled	4.4380	1.68272	121	121.000
	Cultural festivals organized for tourist	4.6942	1.58031	121	121.000
	Attitudes of the local community people	4.2231	1.90826	121	121.000
Total	Staff make Visitors to feel welcome.	4.3520	1.45113	179	179.000
	The attraction is uncrowded and unspoiled	4.2011	1.62971	179	179.000
	Cultural festivals organized for tourist	4.4637	1.63960	179	179.000
	Attitudes of the local community people	4.2291	1.83843	179	179.000

Source: SPSS Output

Table 4 shows that the average number for all the independent variables for high intention to revisit are higher than for low intention to visit except for attitude of the local community people living around the tourism destinations. Consequently, the mean value for programs of cultural festivals organized for tourist have a higher mean (4.69) than all the other variables under high intention to revisit. This is followed by the attitude of staff with a mean value of (4.50), physical product (4.43) and attitude of the local community (4.22) in that order.

Table 5: Tests of Equality of Group Means

Independent Variables	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Staff make Visitors to feel welcome.	.977	4.180	1	177	.042
The attraction is uncrowded and unspoiled	.956	8.210	1	177	.005
Cultural festivals organized for tourist	.959	7.658	1	177	.006
Attitudes of the local community people	1.000	.004	1	177	.951

Source: SPSS Output

Table 5 shows the values of F-statistic and provides strong statistical evidence of significant differences between means of high intention to revisit and low intention to revisit of all independent variables with employees' attitude, physical product and programs of events producing very high value F's. The Wilks' Lambda tested functions for statistical significance, the direct analysis identified one discriminant functions that were statistically significant.

Table 6: Canonical correlation (Eigenvalues)

Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	.083[a]	100.0	100.0	.277

A canonical correlation of 0.277 suggests that the model explains 27.7% of the variation in the grouping variable, i.e. whether a respondent have a high or low intention to revisit.

Table 7: Standardized Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients

Independent variables	Function
	1
Staff make Visitors to feel welcome.	.199
The attraction is uncrowded and unspoiled	.608
Cultural festivals organized for tourist	.600
Attitudes of the local community people	-.356

$$\mathbf{D}_j = (\mathbf{0.608}\ *\text{PHP}) - (\mathbf{0.356}\ *\text{ATT}) + (\mathbf{0.600}*\text{POE}) + (\mathbf{0.199}*\text{EMP}) \quad \ldots (2)$$

Table 7 reveals that the coefficients are structure coefficients or discriminant loadings. They serve like factor loadings in factor analysis. The result shows that Physical product, programs of events, attitude of the local community and employee attitude discriminate between high intention to revisit and low intention to revisit.

Table 8: Structure Matrix

Independent Variables	Function
	1
The attraction is uncrowded and unspoiled	.748
Cultural festivals organized for tourist	.723
Staff make Visitors to feel welcome.	.534
Attitudes of the local community people	-.016

The structure matrix (table 8) shows the correlations of each variable with the discriminate function. The interest here is to find the largest loadings for the discriminate function. Generally, just like factor loadings, 0.30 is seen as the cut-off between important and less important variables.

4.2 Test of hypotheses

Ho: Tourist' intention to revisit an ecotourism destination in Plateau State is independent of Physical product, programs of events and, attitude of both employees and communities.

Ha: Tourist' intention to revisit an ecotourism destination in Plateau State does not depend on all the independent variables (Physical product, programs of events and, attitude of both employees and communities)**.**

From table 9 the coefficient values of physical product (0.748), programs of event (0.723), and employees' attitude (0.534) were higher than the bench mark value of 0.30. Therefore, we conclude that physical product, programs of event and employees' attitude were significant predictor of intention to revisit.

However, the coefficient value of attitude of local community (0.016) is less than the bench mark value of 0.30. Meaning that attitude of local community does not significantly predict intention to revisit Tourism destination.

From above we reject the null hypotheses and conclude that tourist' intention to revisit an ecotourism destination in Plateau State does not depend on all the independent variables, because attitude of the local communities is not a good predictor of intention to revisit. This could be a reflection of the fact that 96% of respondent are Nigerians out of which 95% live in Jos and are likely to be familiar and at home with the local communities.

Table 9: Functions at Group Centroids

Rating of intention to revisit	Function
	1
Low intention to revisit	-.413
High intention to revisit	.198

In Table 9, each function divides the groups into two subgroups by assigning negative values to one subgroup and positive values to the other subgroup. Function 1 separates survey respondents who have low intention to revisit (-0.413) from survey respondents who have high intention to revisit (0.198).

V. Conclusions And Recommendations

The analysis showed that employees' attitudes towards tourists, Physical products in terms of infrastructure with particular reference to attractiveness of the destination and the availability of signage with clear direction, Price and communication, program, Natural resources, and people, all have significant influences on the intention of Tourist to revisit a tourism destination in Plateau state. Therefore the major challenges here include how management of the tourism destinations should effectively and consistently deal with tourist concerns both in terms of managing relationships between staff and tourists and providing attractions that would be profitable and sustainable with great care for the natural environment. The intention to revisit should therefore be seen from a marketing perspective if the goal of the tourism destination is to maximize tourist visit and revisit. The group statistics shows that the average for all the independent variables for high intention to revisit are higher than for low intention to revisit except for attitude in the local community people living around the tourism destinations. Consequently, the mean value for programs of cultural festivals organized for tourist have a higher mean (4.69) than all the other variables under high intention to revisit. This is followed by the attitude of staff with a mean value of (4.50), physical product (4.43) and attitude of the local community (4.22) in that order. Table 6 revealed that model 2 explains 27.7% of the variation in the grouping variable, i.e. whether a respondent have a high or low intention to revisit. The importance of revisit intentions lies in the fact that it is born out of the value of past experience of the tourist with the destination. The value of the past experience is gauged based on the expectations of the tourists, which is further determined by the experiences of the tourist with other destinations nationally and internationally. Given that there is largely high intention to revisit tourist destinations in Plateau State as shown by this study, the caution here is that 95.8% of the tourists were domestic tourist and from these 95.3% were Jos residents, therefore these signals two important issues; (1) the high intention to revisit is mainly the opinion of those residing in Jos. (2) the tourism destinations in Jos do not seem to attract tourist outside Jos neither do they attract international tourist.

Therefore recommendations are provided here based on these two critical findings .The high level of intention to revisit is from the tourist resident in Jos, which is said to be good, because "charity begins at home," it is expected that the resident tourist should have confidence in their tourism sector and patronize them, so that outsiders can also be encouraged. However, the caution here is that, if the standards that the domestic tourist are used to, and have adapted to, is below the expectations of international and other well-travelled nationals tourist, then visits and revisit intentions by this categories would continue to be low. In this regard therefore this study specifically recommends as follows:

1. The State Government should consider engaging the Private sector into the tourism sector through Public-Private-Partnership. Study on the best option to adopt which should be carried by independent consultants.
2. Destination Management Organization is another option that can be employed with government putting in significant amount of resources.
3. Some destinations may be suitable for community-based tourism which would not only take away significant burden off government, but also empowered the communities. Government would then only regulate and assist the communities to operate within the ethics and guidelines of the sector.

Therefore from a marketing perspective the solution to this problem would be to conduct a further study that would focus on a comparative analysis of the state of the attractions, infrastructure and management models of all ecotourism destinations in Plateau state with industry standards and benchmarks in Nigeria and African countries like Kenya, South Africa and Ghana. After which necessary gaps should be filled before embarking on comprehensive market development campaigns. It is important for the government to take

strategic decisions because the tourism sector management approach in Plateau state today is far behind what the benchmark is internationally and spending money on marketing without necessary upgrade would amount to waste of funds. The challenges of tourism in Plateau State is not a tactical one but strategic, without which resources would only be wasted.

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