ORIGINAL ARTICLE

EVALUATION OF TOURISTS SATISFACTION AND REVISIT INTENTION IN SELECTED ECO-DESTINATIONS IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Tourist satisfaction is highly influenced by the conformity of expected service and quality of service experienced. The present study is an attempt to examine tourists' attitude and satisfaction towards service quality in four selected eco-destinations in Southern Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey research design while one thousand, three hundred and twenty (1320) eco-tourists were selected from four (4) eco-destinations namely; Old Oyo National Park, Ikogosi Warm Springs, Okomu National Park and Whispering Palm Resorts. The data collected were subjected to appropriate statistical tests including regression analysis. The result showed that most of the tourists that visited the eco- destinations did so for academic/research purposes; they were mostly young adults, students and researchers from higher institutions of learning. Overall, tourists were moderately satisfied with tourism elements in the four destinations with a mean of 3.60. Findings on behavioural intentions towards the selected eco-destinations revealed that tourists have favourable dispositions towards re-visit intention in the four eco-destinations with grand mean of 3.81.The regression coefficients show that age, education and income played significant($p<0.05$) roles in visitors' propensity to re-visit eco-destination. The study recommends amongst others that the management of the destinations should improve on transportation for improved tourists' patronage.

Key words: Eco-destination, perception, satisfaction, re-visit intention, Nigeria

Introduction

Tourism is considered a segment of hospitality industry which means travelling predominantly for recreational or leisure purposes, and in addition to the provision of services in support of this act (Pileus Project Glosary, 2012); while eco-tourism on the other hand is a component of tourism which involves travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the aim of specific objectives of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants (flora) and animals (fauna) as well as any existing cultural manifestation (both past and present) found in the area (The International Ecotourism Society, 2006; Wang et al., 2014). The flora, fauna and cultural heritage are the primary attractions in such destination. Ecotourism when properly planned and managed, makes minimal impact on the environment, empowers host communities, respects the culture of indigenous people and also enhances biodiversity conservation (Ijeomah and Eniang, 2018). Eco-tourism according to Magigi and Ramadhani (2013) is one of the fastest growing aspects of tourism especially in developing countries like Nigeria.

It is an undeniable fact that Africa as a continent is blessed with great heritage and tourism potentials that are spread across the continent. According to Badiora and Bako (2020), Nigeria as a developing economy is not left out of this global opportunity for economic diversification. These scholars maintained that it is impossible to deny Nigeria its place of pride among the richly endowed potential tourist destinations in the world. This is because Nigeria boasts of numerous tourist attractions, such as waterfalls, springs, hills, mountains, islands, excellent beaches, and a range of special and common species of tropical wildlife, diverse socio-cultural events, and heritage. Nigeria is fast becoming a sensational destination for tourists from the

United Kingdom, Brazil, Germany, Netherlands, France, Italy, and the United States of America among others (UNWTO, 2015). Available information from National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2017) reveals that the tourism industry contributes up to 34% annually to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 20% of the Nation's employment. Hence, the Nigerian government views tourism as one of its important industrial sector.

In order to further harness and sustain the potential gains from tourism, there is a need for the sector to deliver quality services. The quality of all the services and products in the hospitality industry (i.e. food, drinks, accommodation and other auxiliary services) plays an important role in determining the success or failure of any tourist centre and by extension, the eco-tourism destinations (Shah and Bhatt, 2020). Service quality according to Drucker (2007) is defined as what the customer gets out and is willing to pay for rather than what the supplier puts in. In another dimension, it is conceptualised as the perceived difference between the expected and the actual service performance (Kara et al., 2005). According to Jasinskas et al. (2016), customer (tourist) satisfaction is highly influenced by the conformity of expected service and quality of service experienced.

Gnanapala (2015) argued that if a destination can identify and satisfy the needs and wants of tourists, these tourists will probably make repeat visit and spread positive word of mouth (WOM) publicity about the destination. Gnanapala (2012) maintained that there is a strong indication to believe that some close relationships exist among the psychological variables such as motivation, attitude, perception and satisfaction. The scholar asserted that motivation first arouses the needs of the tourists and then directs the individuals to search for the necessary products and services in order to gratify the need. Tourists' perception of the quality of services offered in a destination is important in this regard as it will determine if the tourist will be satisfied or not (Hau, 2014; Bello and Majebi, 2018).

Nigeria is endowed with a good number of tourism centres among which are ecotourism destinations. These tourist destinations just like other segments of the hospitality industry are expected to contribute to economic growth and development of the community where they are situated as well as the state and the country where they are located. These include provision of jobs and internal revenue for the host communities through money generated from game reserves and inflow of tourists from foreign countries. The destinations can also serve as source of revenue generation to the governments through tax and levies which can be used for further development of some facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses, restaurant and shopping facilities. They also serve as point of attractions for industries owing to the quality of services and recreational resources provided (Ijeomah and Eniang, 2018; Ukabuilu et al., 2018). However, the potential economic gains from tourist destinations may not be fully realized except the services rendered by these destinations satisfy tourists' demand. Specifically there is need to evaluate certain important variables such as tourists' attitude and perception towards the various services being offered in the destinations. John (2015) posits that tourism is very much affected by the perception they developed about a destination. According to Park and Jeong (2019), the perceived service quality in tourism is believed to have influence on tourists' choice of destination.

Although there are good number of studies carried out in the hospitality industry (both within and outside Nigeria) to examine tourists' attitude and perception towards services in the industry but the eco-tourism destinations have not been favoured in this regard as most of the research works centred mainly on the hotels and restaurants. Some of these research works include but not limited to the following: Ukwayi et al. (2012); Sathya and Sabyasachi (2015); Mangwiro et al. (2015); Mukhles (2016); Majid et al. (2018); Shan and Bhatt (2020); Lamai et al. (2020). The few ones that addressed eco-tourism destinations largely focused on other areas different from tourists' attitude and perceptions towards the services offered in such destinations; these include:

Onyeabor and Alimba (2015); Li (2016; Ukabuilu et al. (2018); Ijeomah and Eniang (2018); Arowosafe et al. (2019). This research gap will therefore constitute the focus of the present study; to evaluate tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention in selected eco-destinations in southern Nigeria.

Materials and Methods
Study Area
The descriptions of the selected eco-destinations are as follows:
Old Oyo National Park

Old Oyo National Park is one of the national parks in Nigeria located across northern Oyo state and Southern Kwara State of Nigeria at Latitude 8^0 15' and 9^0 00N and Longitude 3^0 35' and 4^0 42'E (Nigeria National Park Services, 2014). The park has total land mass of 2,512km, mostly of lowland plains at a height of 330m and 508m above sea level. The southern part is drained by the Owu, Owe and Ogun Rivers, while the northern sector is drained by the Tessi River. Outcrops of granite are typical of the Northern Eastern zone of the park, including Oyoile, with caves and rock shelters in the extreme north. The central part of the park has scattered hills, ridges and rock outcrops that are suitable for mountaineering (www. wikipedia.com). The Park is a landscape that serves various purposes which include recreational site, gene pool of immensurable biodiversity and research laboratory for students and researchers in the field of archaeology, anthropology, ecotourism and ethnobotany. The Park offers a wide variety of resources such as vast tracts of unspoiled nature, unique wildlife both fauna and flora and solid mineral deposits. Others include the ethno- historical attractions and traditional ways of life (culture) of the Yoruba race. The Park has unique and spectacular features of abundant water resources that drain most part of the park through-out the year. There is a great diversity of fish species in the major rivers and the pools/lakes.

Ikogosi Warm Springs

The Ikogosi Warm Springs is a tourist attraction located at Ikogosi-Ekiti, a town in Ekiti State, south western Nigeria. It is about 55km from Akure, the Ondo State capital. Ikogosi is located in Ekiti West Local Government Area which is about 30km from Ado-Ekiti, the Ekiti State Capital (Hairul et al., 2013). Ikogosi-Ekiti is a community with inhabitants predominantly farmers who engaged in planting of food crops (Coco-yam, Plantain, Maize, Yam, Cassava and Banana among others) and cash crops (cotton, cocoa, and coffee) (Okosun et al., 2016; Olaniyi and Atalor, 2018). There are rainy season (April–October) and the dry season (November–March). Temperature ranges between 21° and 28°C with high humidity. The south westerly wind and the northeast trade winds blow in the rainy and dry (Harmattan) seasons respectively. Tropical forest exists in the south, while savannah occupies the northern peripheries. Ikogosi has a good local natural environment combined with rich culture and history and these form the basis of what makes the community a tourists' destination (Godfrey and Clarke (2000).

The Ikogosi Warm Springs is situated at the Latitude of 7° 35' 38.9" and the Longitude of 4° 58' 52.6"; with an average elevation of 479m above sea level and underlain by a group of slightly migmatized to non-migmatized paraschists and meta-igneous rocks (Caby and Boesse, 2001; Ikudayisiet al., 2015; Olaniyi and Atalor, 2018). The spring covers an area of about 32 hectares. The Vegetation of this resort centre is a highly thick forest and this natural and rich vegetation is closely maintained and protected from arbitrary deforestation. The undulating topography of the entire tourist centre and the symmetry of the surrounding hills add more to the aesthetic beauty of this centre. The warm and cold springs of Ikogosi originate from a close proximity, converge at a point, and flow onward together with each spring retaining its thermal features. According to Jimoh (2012), the warm spring has a temperature of about 70° C at the source and

37°C after mixing with the cold spring. The springs sprout out and flow with a constant temperature and volume up to 150 litres/seconds on a daily basis, at all seasons, all- year round. These attributes make the spring a tourist attraction in Nigeria. Hence, it has become a destination of choice for tourists both from far and near.

The whole environment of the spring has been deliberately left un-tampered with, for eco-tourism appeal while the source of the warm spring has been provided with a viewing structure for easy spotting by tourists. Strangely also, there is a tree and a palm growing from the same source at the meeting point area of the warm and cold springs. Another unique quality of the Ikogosi Warm Spring is its acclaimed curative power. It is widely-believed to have some kind of therapeutic effect which relieves body aches and all sorts of ailments (Kukoyi, 2014). A lot of tourists visiting the place take advantage of the large warm water swimming pool provided for this purpose and other recreational needs. It is also the home of the 5-star Gossy Brand Spring Water bottled by United Africa Company (UAC) of Nigeria.

Okomu National Park
Okomu National Park is situated to the north west of the ancient city of Benin. Okomu National Park is a rainforest in Ovia South-West, Edo state. It has the geographical coordinate of 6° 20'0"N 5°16'0"E and a land area of 200 km^2 [77 sq m] (www.wikipedia.com). The park is a blissful forest where you experience the beauty of a rainforest full of huge forest trees with several species of plants and animals. Although the forest reserve continues to shrink due to encroachment, it still holds some endangered wildlife such as the rare white-throated monkey. The Park is a forest block set within the 1,082 km² Okomu Forest Reserve, and situated about 60 km north-west of the city of Benin. The park is drained by the Osse River which defines its eastern boundary. The Okomu River forms the western boundary of the park. The rainfall is between 1,524 and 2,540 mm per year while the soils are acidic, nutrient-poor sandy loam. The vegetation of the park is Guinea–Congo lowland rain forest and also includes areas of swamp-forest, high forest, secondary forest, and open scrub.

Among the common trees are Ceiba pentandra, Celtis zenkeri, Triplochiton scleroxylon, Antiaris africana, Pycnanthus angolensis and Alstonia congensis. The park is probably the best example of mature secondary forest in southwest Nigeria (www. wikipedia.com). The park has diverse fauna, with 33 species of mammals including the African buffalo (Syncerus caffer) and the endangered African forest elephant (Loxodonta cyclotis). The vulnerable white-throated guenon (Cercopithecus erythrogaster), a primate chimpanzees were reported to be present in the region in 2009 (www. wikipedia.com). Other animals found in the park include dwarf crocodiles, Red river hog, sitatunga, warthog, civet cat, Maxwell's duiker, grass cutter, mona monkey, Thomas's galago, leopards, porcupine, antelopes, putty nosed guenon and tree pangolin.

About 150 species of birds have been identified. These include Angolan pitta, grey parrot, wrinkled hornbill, fish eagle, hawks, woodpeckers, great owl, grey hornbill, cattle egret, black-casqued hornbill, yellow-casqued hornbill, Sabine's spinetail, Cassin's spinetail, black spinetail, white-breasted negrofinch, chestnut-breasted negrofinch, pale-fronted negrofinch and yellow-throated cuckoo; thereby making it one of the best places for bird watching in Nigeria. A survey of land molluscs in a small area of the forest found 46 species in 11 molluscan families, of which Streptaxidae snails accounted for over a third. Perhaps of greater interest to most visitors, the park has over 700 species of colourful butterflies. The park is accessible to tourists, and has well marked trails. There are two tree houses, one 140 feet high in a silk-cotton tree, from which visitors can view the park from above and observe bird life. Visitors can stay at chalets built on stilts, just outside the park entrance, surrounded by fig trees that are often occupied by Mona monkeys.

Whispering Palms

Whispering Palms is located at Iworo Village, after Aradagun, off Lagos Badagry Expressway, Lagos State Nigeria. It is about thirty minutes' drive from Agbara and about twenty minutes' drive from the Badagry roundabout. The ancient city of Badagry is located in south western part of Nigerian border with the Benin Republic. Badagry is located at latitude 6.5°N of the Equator and longitude 3.25°E of the Greenwich Meridian. It is bounded on the West by Porto Novo and Seme, on the North by Ilogbo, Ipokia, on the South by the Osa lagoon and the Atlantic Ocean on the East. Badagry has the Awori settlements of Ojo and Lagos. As a result of its strategic location, Badagry became a cultural transition zone at a time in its history. The municipality has a population of 241,093 and total land size of 441km^2.

Whispering Palms Resort is positioned at 6.4169° N, 3.0448° E. It is one of the oldest resorts, most popular attractive and popular tourist destinations in Nigeria offering maximum fun and serenity due to its great hospitality. It is a conference resort on eight acres of land overseeing the lagoon. It offers beautiful greenery surrounded with aesthetic stunning designs and artworks. One unique thing about the Whispering palms is that it offers competitive hotel rooms for different budget sizes making it not just an affordable but also a preferred and top-rated resort in Nigeria.

Whispering Palms offers ecological, beach and aquatic tourism where tourists can view some of the exotic animals and birds in its mini zoo. Some of the animals in the zoo include; crocodile, turtles, monkey, baboons, peacock, etc. an art gallery, an open museum, a sports centre, a gym and many other facilities. Facilities at Whispering palms Resort include; Swimming Pool, Football field, Mini Golf course, Mini Zoo, Museum, Art gallery, Outdoor bar, Basketball court, Chalets, Volleyball court, Restaurants, Event halls, Pools and gym, Bicycle Ride, Spa, Boat Ride, Water sports activities, bicycle boats, pedal boats etc. The outdoor setting and relaxation arena is very appealing and beautiful. Beach huts, numerous mini gardens that host various Nigerian carvings and artworks, including bronze heads of various Yoruba deities and, the landscape of the resort. The landscape of the resort was beautifully designed with lush vegetation everywhere and largely dominated by palm trees.

Data Collection and Analysis

This research utilized a descriptive survey approach. Four specific eco-destinations were chosen for the study: Old Oyo National Park in Oyo State, Ikogosi Warm Springs in Ekiti State, Okomu National Park in Edo State, and Whispering Palm Resorts in Lagos State. These destinations were intentionally selected not only for their eco-tourism attractions but also because they offer accommodation facilities for visitors. In the second phase, convenience sampling was used because it was not feasible for the researcher to obtain the participation of all tourists present during data collection, so only those who agreed to participate were included. The average number of tourists visiting each destination over the past four years was calculated and served as the basis for selecting the sample. The numbers were 1365, 3315, 10,000, and 1410 for Old Oyo National Park, Whispering Palm Resorts, Ikogosi Warm Springs, and Okomu National Park, respectively. A total of 302, 346, 370, and 302 visitors were chosen from Old Oyo National Park, Whispering Palms Resort, Ikogosi Warm Springs, and Okomu National Park, respectively, following the guidelines from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) on determining sample size. Altogether, 1,320 eco-tourists were chosen for the research as presented in table 1.

Some necessary information were gathered through direct observations, interviews, and questionnaire. The gathered information were analysed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequency count, percentage, weighted mean and standard deviation.

Table 1: Sample Size Selection

Destinations	Population (2019-2021)	Number selected
OONP	1365	302
IWS	10,000	370
WP	3315	346
ONP	1410	302
Total	16,090	1320

Results and Discussion

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Tourists

Based on analysis of the socio-demographic features of the respondents (tourists) in the study areas, the males made up 58.6% of the tourists, with females making up the remaining 41.4%. In terms of age, majority of the visitors in each of the four (4) study locations fell into the 18–54 age groups. The respondents were mostly students (43.3%), followed by the civil servants (28.5%) and the private job owners (28.3%). Regarding the educational status of the tourists, the primary school graduates made up 9.3%, secondary school graduates (15.3%) while the tertiary school graduates accounted for the majority (75.4%).

The singles made up 49.1% of the population, married people (43.9%), and divorcees (5.8%), with other categories accounting for just 1.2%. Tourists' household size characteristics revealed that the majority, 79.8% and 64.5% in OONP and WPR, respectively, had between 1 and 3 members. In IWS and ONP, household with between 4 and 6 members made up 52.7% and 62.9%, respectively. Overall, tourists' household size consisted of 49.0% of those with between 1-3 members, 41.0% (4-6 members), and those with more than 6 members, just 10.0%. Based on income status, a respectable number of the respondents in each of the four study locations made less than ₦30, 000 per month.

Nigerians made up a greater percentage of the visitors in each of the four research locations in terms of nationality. Only 6.8% of the respondents were foreigners

Majority of the tourists were young adults, researchers and students from higher institutions of learning. These findings could be ascribed to the abundance of resources related to flora and fauna, as well as the socio-cultural and heritage endowments that these destinations offer, which offer good ground and research opportunities for those who wish to pursue them.

This finding is consistent with the finding of John (2015), that tourists visiting Tanzania destinations were comparatively well educated, with an average age of 38.7 years. It is not surprising that WPR had tourists that were relatively older than those of the other 3 locations. This could be explained by the fact that most tourists come there for leisure and relaxation. This group of visitors/tourists has a strong financial capacity to pay for the nature of services (recreational, food and beverages) that are offered. While WPR is a privately managed destination with a primary focus on profit-making, OONP and ONP are government properties that are meant to serve the public good as well as conserve and preserve plant and animal resources and other socio-cultural and heritage resources. Of a particular interest is the finding that majority of the tourists in this study were Nigerians and only very few number of foreigners were recorded. This finding can be justified in view of the ravaging COVID-19 pandemic that was prevailing at the time of conducting the study which leads to travelling restriction being imposed by many countries of the world as one of the safety measures against the disease outbreak. This situation might discourage potential foreign tourists from embarking on travel to destination of their choice.

Tourists' Satisfaction with Tourism Elements

The results of analysis carried out to examine the level of tourists' satisfaction with tourism elements (Table 2) revealed that, in OONP, tourists were moderately satisfied with six out of thirteen tourism elements which include accommodation, safety and security, tourism attraction facilities/infrastructure, tour guidance, and wildlife with estimated weighted mean

response score of 3.60 each. The overall mean response score is 3.20 and standard deviation of 0.58.

Table 2: Tourists' Satisfaction with Tourism Elements

Tourism Elements	OONP		IWS		WPR		ONP		Overall	
	Mean	St.dev	Mean	St.dev	Mean	St.dev	Mean	St.dev	Mean	St.dev
(1) Accessibility	2.20	0.40	3.76	0.71	4.09	0.44	3.73	1.23	3.48	1.04
(2) Accommodation	3.60	0.80	3.88	0.86	3.77	0.66	4.05	0.98	3.82	0.84
(3) Safety and security	3.60	0.80	3.79	1.00	4.11	0.35	4.65	0.50	4.03	0.81
(4) Tourist attraction	3.60	0.80	3.37	1.17	4.01	0.44	4.29	0.62	3.80	0.89
(landscape, hydrology fauna and fauna e.t.c)										
(5) Facilities/infrastructure	3.60	0.80	2.99	1.09	3.91	0.58	4.00	0.80	3.60	0.94
(6) Tour guidance	3.60	0.80	3.31	1.03	3.51	0.76	4.42	0.59	3.68	0.92
(7) Entertainment	3.00	0.00	3.05	1.00	3.72	0.76	3.97	0.79	3.42	0.86
(8) Wildlife	3.60	0.80	3.01	1.05	3.03	0.94	4.02	0.81	3.38	1.00
(9) Heritage and culture	3.00	0.00	2.95	1.15	3.81	0.66	3.85	0.93	3.39	0.93
(10) Restaurants food (food and beverages)	2.80	0.40	3.06	1.20	4.05	0.42	3.68	0.89	3.40	0.95
(11) Transportation	2.20	0.40	3.24	1.13	3.97	0.55	3.63	1.11	3.28	1.08
(12) Hospitality	3.40	0.80	3.35	1.09	4.08	0.48	4.29	0.73	3.77	0.91
(13) Cleanliness	3.40	0.80	3.48	1.04	4.05	0.54	4.21	0.73	3.78	0.87
Overall	3.20	0.58	3.32	1.04	3.86	0.58	4.06	0.83	3.60	0.93

Source: Field Survey, 2021

While the tourists expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of accessibility and transportation, they were however neutral in their opinion on the remaining five aspects based on the mean score which range from 2.80 to 3.40.   On the overall, the results indicate that tourists were indifference in their opinions with respect to satisfaction with tourism elements. For IWS, the results indicate that tourist were only satisfied with just three (3) tourism aspects namely; accessibility, accommodation as well as safety and security with estimated mean score of 3.76, 3.88 and 3.79 respectively. These three aspects might be considered as essential part of tourism which contribute to tourists' satisfaction. They were however neutral in their opinions on the remaining ten (10) aspects with mean response score ranging from 2.95 to 3.48. The overall mean response score of 3.22 and standard deviation of 1.04 indicate that tourists could not really form an opinion with respect to satisfaction at the destination. It is however observed that tourists were satisfied by all the tourism elements at WPR except that of wildlife; with the estimated mean response score which range from 3.51 to 4.11; while tourism guidance scored the least, safety and security scored the highest. The overall estimated weighted mean score of 3.86 and standard deviation of 0.58 also confirmed this observation. At ONP, tourists revealed that they were satisfied with all the tourism elements as indicated by the estimated mean score which range from 3.63 to 4.65; with transportation scoring the least while safety and security scored the highest. The overall mean response score is 4.02 with standard deviation of 0.83. On comparative basis, WPR scored the highest in terms of accessibility while ONP take a lead in all the remaining twelve (12) tourism aspects. This finding is an indication that ONP performed the best with respect to the subject matter. On the aggregate, tourists were moderately satisfied with tourism elements in the four destinations with a mean score of 3.60 and standard deviation of 0.93.

A critical examination of the results also indicates that ONP and WPR were mostly preferred as they had the highest rating; being ranked the first and second best respectively. It was found out that elements that relate to managerial issues such as safety and security, accommodation, cleanliness and hospitality were ranked 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th positions respectively. This is an indication of good management of the destinations by the staff. It could therefore be said that tourists place high premium on these elements. This finding is in line with Meng et al. (2008)

that employees' friendliness and quality accommodation were more cherished by tourists with respect to their satisfaction than the unique natural landscape in the United States of America (USA). Interestingly, tourist attraction (landscape, hydrology, flora and fauna etc.) ranked the 3rd. This is purely natural element (natural resources) that no one does anything to bring into existence. These natural resources however need some level of investment to maintain for sustainability.

This finding attests to the rich natural resources that abound in Nigeria. Worthy of note is the fact that tourists could not form opinion regarding the aspects of transportation and restaurant. This finding may be a reflection of the poor states of infrastructure especially the roads within and around the destinations and by extension, the study area at large. Additionally, the fact that these destinations do not make provisions for the movement of tourists especially within the locations is an issue that calls for concern. This situation subjects tourists to some level of inconveniency as they have to cater for themselves in this aspect. This finding is line with that of John (2015) who found out that transportation among others was one of the problems bedevilling tourists in Tanzania destinations. On the issue of restaurant, the scholar noted that food constitute an important component of tourists. He noted that in many African tourists' destinations, restaurants do not usually offer the kind of services that meet the expectation of the tourists. Issues such as unattractiveness of menu, poor presentation, lacks of meals variety, unhygienic conditions, interior décor and outrageously high prices were observed by Mabunda (2004) to be the drawback in this regard in Kruger National Park, South Africa

The fact that the tourists, on the average could not form opinion with respect to the aspect of entertainment, heritage and culture as well as wildlife could be a reflection of the fact that majority of the tourists were in those destinations for research/educational purposes. As a result of this they might have divergent interests about the resources in the destinations as well as the available tourism aspects. This finding agrees with Ijeomah and Eniang (2018) that OONP and ONP particularly known to be rich in wildlife while IWS is known for socio- cultural heritage that can appeal to the minds of visitors,

Tourists' Behavioural Intentions towards the Selected Destinations
Behavioural intentions towards the selected eco-destinations revealed that tourists have favourable dispositions to re-visit all the four destinations. In OONP, tourists agreed to four out of the five statements of intention presented with estimated weighted mean score ranging from 3.83-4.01; with the overall mean of 3.83 and standard deviation of 0.28. For IWS, tourists also agreed to four out of the five statements of intention presented to them with the estimated mean score ranging from 3.56-3.81 while the overall mean response score stood at 3.56 and standard deviation of 1.05. At WPR, tourists also agreed to three out of five re-visit statements with mean score that range from 4.08 to 4.09 and with the overall mean score of 3.76 and standard deviation of 0.55. For ONP, tourists acceded to all the five statements of intention with the estimated mean score that range from 3.79-4.46 and overall mean score of 4.14 and standard deviation of 0.79. In comparison, ONP was highest in terms of behavioural (revisit) intention, followed by OONP; WPR ranked third, while IWS has the least mean (Table 3).

Table 3: Tourists' Behavioural Intentions towards the Selected Destinations

Statement of intension	OONP Mean	St. dev	IWS Mean	St. dev	WPR Mean	St. dev	ONP Mean	St. dev	Overall Mean	St. dev
(1)I am willing to come back to this destination in the future	4.00	0.22	3.81	0.77	4.09	0.41	3.95	0.99	3.96	0.68
(2)I can recommend this destination to others	3.99	0.22	3.68	0.95	4.08	0.36	4.26	0.64	3.99	0.66
(3)I consider this eco-destination as my first choice compare to others	3.99	0.24	3.54	1.16	3.15	0.86	3.79	0.97	3.60	0.95
(4)This destination is suitable for recreational activities	3.15	0.46	3.34	1.24	4.08	0.39	4.25	0.7	3.70	0.92
(5)This destination is suitable for eco-tourism activities	4.01	0.27	3.41	1.15	3.38	0.73	4.46	0.67	3.78	0.91
Grand Mean Response	3.83	0.28	3.56	1.05	3.76	0.55	4.14	0.79		

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The findings from the study established that tourists have good and positive behavioural intention towards the four studied destinations; with ONP scoring the highest with mean value of 4.14 and standard deviation of 0.79 which is followed by OONP; while WPR ranked third. IWS scored the least with respect to revisit intention. This finding is similar to that of Fauzunnasirah et al. (2014) who established that about 98% of tourists to heritage city of Melaka in Malaysia confirmed their revisit intention to the destination in the future. It is also similar to that of Chi (2012), who noted that tourists loyalty depends on their satisfaction (attractions, accessibility, accommodation, amenities, and activities), and their expectations being met. These findings further attest to the potentials and suitability of the destinations for eco-tourism activities. Do Valle et al., (2006) also carried out a survey of 486 tourists from the Portuguese tourist resort of Arad and pointed to the importance of tourist satisfaction as a determination of destination loyalty.

Furthermore, it can be said that these destinations offered fair service quality to the tourists considering the high mean response scores which suggest that they derived high level of satisfaction and its attendant good revisit intention. This finding concurs with that of Lamai et al (2020) who discovered that customer satisfaction has a positive influence on to revisit intention towards the restaurant in China. Customer satisfaction is highly influenced by the conformity of expected service and quality of service experienced (Jasinskas et al., 2016). Access to infrastructure, prices, parking, signals on roads, and the humane treatment received are major influence for revisiting and recommendation of tourist destinations (Carvache-Franco et al., 2020). Satisfied tourists are more likely to engage in positive word of mouth promotion, which also positively affects the decisions of potential visitors (Bayi and Singh, 2020). It should be noted that the suitability of OONP and IWS scored very low for recreational activities while WPR scored low in terms of eco-tourism resources. This finding calls for attention by the managers of the destinations for better and effective service delivery.

The socio-economic factors that Influence Visitors' Propensity to Re-visit the selected Eco-tourism Destinations

Table 4: The Results of Multiple Regressions

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.854	0.084		45.668	0.000
Age	-0.062	0.024	-0.085	-2.597	0.010
Education	0.055	0.025	0.064	2.185	0.029
Income	-0.026	0.009	-0.095	-2.912	0.004
Gender	0.004	0.032	0.004	0.13	0.897

   a.   **Dependent Variable: Propensity to revisit**
   b.   **$R^2 = 0.028$, F(4) = 9.402, p = 0.000**

On the socio-economic factors that influence visitors' propensity to re-visit the selected eco-tourism destinations, the result (Table 4) shows that the value of coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.028. This implies that about 2.8% of variation in tourist propensity to revisit an eco-destination is accounted for by all the included explanatory variables (i.e. age, education, income and gender of tourists). The F-statistics value of 9.402 was found to be statistically significant at 1% level which implies that the fitted model is statistically significant (i.e. it has a good fit). Hence we can gain confidence in the results of the model.

The regression coefficients show that age, education and income play significant roles in visitors' propensity to re-visit eco-destination. Age and income displayed inverse relationship with visitors' propensity to re-visit which is statistically significant at 1% level. Education on the other hand, had a direct relationship with propensity to re-visit eco-destination which is statistically significant at 5% level. On gender basis, the results show that the propensity to re-visit eco-destination is relatively higher in males compare to the females; although the relationship is not significant at the conventional 5% level.

The finding that education of tourists displayed a positive relationship with propensity to revisit eco-destination may be explained in view of the fact that high level of research works are being carried out in these destinations by the academics from various higher institution of learning. This is in line with a study carried out by Oladeji et al. (2012), who found out in their study that students and researchers accounted for 41% of the total number of tourists that visited Old Oyo National Park. It was also reported by TIES (2006) that visit by eco-tourists from higher institution of learning was high in Europe. This is also in line with the statement of Han and Hsu (2018), that tourists with higher education levels may be more environmental conscious and appreciate the educational aspects of ecotourism, potentially increasing their likelihood to revisit. It is worthy of note that age on the other hand had negative influence on tourists' propensity to revisit eco-destination. This development might be attributed to the fact that some level of activeness and agility are required by tourists to be able to cope with activities in the destinations which the relatively older people might not be able to display. This conforms to the study of Oluwakemi and Eveso (2017) which pointed out that majority (74%) of the visitors at the Okomu National Park falls within the age bracket of 20-29 years, which is the youthful age. In some cases, tourists have to go on foot during the course of their stay at the locations which can be strenuous and energy consuming. This is particularly true in places like OONP and ONP. Furthermore, the coefficient of gender which was positive and significant could be explained to mean that the male tourists have higher propensity to revisit a destination than the female tourists. Lastly, the coefficient of income was found to be negative which may imply that income level of tourists does not really play important role with respect to propensity to revisit eco-destination but other factors.

Conclusion

There is a moderate level of satisfaction among the tourists towards few of the tourism elements; which include accommodation, safety and security, tourist attraction, facility/infrastructure, tour guidance, hospitality and cleanliness. The other elements such as transportation, restaurant, heritage and culture, wildlife, entertainment and accessibility were poorly rated. This is an indication that there is need to improve on these aspects so as to further attract both local and foreign potential tourists to the destinations. Behavioural intentions towards the selected eco-destinations revealed that tourists have favourable dispositions to re- visit intention in all the four destinations. The high percentage of tourists that indicated their revisit intention adds to the values and sustainability of the destinations. The socio-economic factors such as education of tourists displayed a positive relationship with propensity to revisit eco-destination. With respect to gender, the male tourists showed higher propensity to revisit a destination than the female tourists. The study also established that income level of tourists does not really play important role with respect to propensity to revisit eco-destination. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the management of the destinations should improve on the tourism elements for improved tourists' patronage.

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