

DESTINATION PACKAGING AND THE LENGTH-OF-STAY OF VISITORS TO CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of destination packaging on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. The research was motivated by the paradox that, despite the considerable tourism potential and diverse attractions across the state, Calabar remains in the lower phase of its destination life cycle relative to competing destinations. This raises critical concerns about why visitors often spend only a short duration in the destination, particularly during and immediately after the Calabar Carnival. A convenience sampling technique was employed to survey 387 tourists who visited Calabar during the 2022 Annual Calabar Carnival. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. Following preliminary data screening and cleaning, hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis. The results revealed that destination attraction, accommodation, amenities, accessibility, and safety/security exerted significant and positive effects on visitors' length of stay. The study recommends the urgent renovation, maintenance, and restoration of tourist attractions to sustain their appeal and image. Furthermore, the government should strengthen peace-building initiatives and adequately equip security agencies to enhance safety. Regulatory bodies are advised to conduct regular supervision and monitoring of accommodation facilities to ensure quality service delivery and environmental sustainability. Finally, the Cross River State Tourism Board should foster stronger partnerships between public and private stakeholders, both locally and internationally, to advance tourism development in the state.

Keywords: Tourism, Destination Packaging, Destination Attraction, Accommodation, Amenities, Accessibility, Security.

1.1 Background to the Study

Tourism and travel have long been integral to human experience and remain vital drivers of socio-economic development. However, the industry's competitiveness necessitates innovative marketing strategies to attract and retain visitors (Shouvik & Mohammed, 2019). A tourism destination can be conceptualized as a composite product consisting of interrelated attributes that influence tourists' decisions to visit, revisit, extend their stay, and increase

expenditure (Faur & Olimpia, 2022; Ngwira & Zandivuta, 2018). Hence, effective collaboration among service providers is imperative in packaging destination offerings that provide both tangible and psychological satisfaction.

Destination packaging involves the integration of transportation, accommodation, attractions, entertainment, and other services into coherent and convenient offerings (Ebitu, 2015). This approach enhances visitor experience and destination attractiveness, as exemplified by Cross River State—Nigeria’s recognized tourism hub. Nonetheless, while attracting visitors is essential, the greater challenge lies in retaining them and encouraging longer stays. This requires an in-depth understanding of tourists’ diverse preferences and an assessment of critical factors such as attractions, accommodation quality, amenities, accessibility, and safety conditions.

Previous research underscores a strong relationship between length of stay and visitor expenditure. Carl (2011) demonstrated a positive correlation between the two, influenced by factors such as trip purpose, travel distance, accommodation type, and travel motives. Similarly, António and Ana (2011) identified socio-demographic characteristics, repeat visitation, and travel motivations as determinants of tourists’ stay duration. In the Nigerian context, Esu and Arrey (2009) found that festival-related attributes—organization, promotion, facilities, and safety—affect tourist satisfaction, while Gnanapala (2015) confirmed strong associations between satisfaction and destination elements such as staff attitude, infrastructure quality, and security.

Other scholars have further identified key destination attributes shaping tourist behavior. Li and Hudson (2016) emphasized natural beauty, historical significance, and safety as dominant motivators. Boit and Minsun (2013) highlighted cost, climate, and event availability as major determinants in the Kenyan context, while Tomic and Bozic (2014) in Serbia found hospitality, cuisine, and cultural heritage to be decisive. Collectively, these findings suggest that the strategic packaging and management of destination attributes are indispensable to enhancing tourist satisfaction and prolonging their stay—an imperative for destinations like Calabar and the broader Cross River region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite considerable efforts by agencies responsible for tourism management in Cross River State, the sector’s performance appears to be declining. One plausible explanation is the limited adoption of targeted marketing strategies tailored to the heterogeneity of tourists. The conventional “one-size-fits-all” approach has proven ineffective in addressing the distinct behavioral patterns, preferences, and motivations of various visitor segments (Thrane & Farstad, 2012). Tourists differ in the number of days they wish to stay, the amount of money they intend to spend, the type of accommodation they prefer, and the specific attractions they wish to experience. When a destination fails to provide customized and flexible packages to accommodate these diverse needs, visitor retention becomes increasingly difficult.

Moreover, safety and perceived risks—ranging from crime, diseases, and adverse weather to terrorism and political instability—have been identified as critical deterrents to tourism (Pennington-Gray & Schroeder, 2013). Nigeria’s prevailing insecurity—manifested in persistent insurgency, banditry, herdsmen attacks, kidnappings, and other forms of violence—has significantly damaged the country’s tourism image (Alawode, 2021). Consequently, Cross River State, despite its endowments, has not been immune to these national security challenges, which discourage both domestic and international visitors from

prolonging their stay in Calabar.

Although the development of tourism products has contributed to increased tourist arrivals in Cross River State (Esu, 2015), the destination remains at the lower stage of its development cycle compared to competing locations. Many attraction sites suffer from neglect, infrastructural decay, and inadequate amenities such as reliable electricity and water supply. These deficiencies create a substantial gap in meeting tourists' physical and psychological needs.

While numerous studies have explored destination pull factors—such as attraction, accommodation, amenities, accessibility, and safety/security—the specific variable of length of stay has received limited scholarly attention (Andres et al., 2008; Gokovali et al., 2007). Consequently, there is a paucity of research examining how destination packaging influences tourists' stay duration.

1.3 Research objectives

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effect of destination packaging on the length-of-stay of visitors in Calabar, Cross River State. The specific objectives were:

1. to determine the effect of Destination Attraction on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar;
2. to ascertain the effect of Destination Accommodation on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar;
3. to determine the effect of Destination Amenities on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar;
4. to ascertain the effect of Destination Accessibility on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar;
5. to ascertain the effect of Destination Safety/security on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar.

1.4 Research questions

To attain the above objectives, the following research questions were formulated;

1. To what extent does destination attraction effect the length of stay of visitors in Calabar?
2. What significant effect does destination accommodation has on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar?
3. To what extent does destination amenities affect the length of stay of visitors in Calabar?
4. To what extent does destination accessibility effect the length of stay of visitors in Calabar?
5. What significant effect does destination security/safety has on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar?

1.5 Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were drawn from the objectives, stated in null forms (Ho), and tested:

1. Destination attraction does not have significant effect on the length of stay of visitors.
2. Destination accommodation does not have significant effect on the length of stay of visitors.
3. Destination amenities does not have significant effect on the length of stay of visitors.

4. Destination accessibility does not have significant effect on the length of stay of visitors.
5. Destination safety/security does not have significant effect on the length of stay of visitors.

2.1 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides a logical foundation for explaining the relationships among variables, offering a systematic interpretation of cause-and-effect dynamics (Gabriel, 2018). This study is grounded in two key theories - Systems Theory and Stakeholder Theory, each offering insights into the interconnected dynamics influencing destination packaging and visitors' length of stay.

Systems Theory

Systems Theory elucidates how interdependent components interact to form an integrated whole, whose collective behavior transcends the sum of its individual parts (McMillan et al., 2018). Within the tourism context, this theory underscores the necessity of synergy among the various destination elements—such as attractions, accommodation, amenities, accessibility, and safety/security. The effectiveness of these components, functioning cohesively rather than in isolation, determines the overall visitor experience. A tourism destination is thus conceptualized as a system wherein the seamless interaction of subsystems is essential for achieving visitor satisfaction and enhancing the length of stay.

Stakeholder Theory

Originating from the seminal work of Freeman (1984), Stakeholder Theory posits that stakeholders encompass all individuals and groups capable of influencing or being influenced by an organization's objectives. In tourism development, destinations such as Calabar depend on the active collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector operators, host communities, and tourists themselves. The collective engagement of these actors shapes both the performance and sustainability of the tourism system. As Baumfield (2016) emphasizes, stakeholder collaboration fosters shared responsibility in maintaining quality standards, promoting security, and ensuring efficient service delivery, all of which enhance visitor satisfaction and destination competitiveness.

2.2.1 Concept of Length of Stay

The concept of *length of stay* refers to the total number of days a tourist remains at a destination (Ferrer-Rosell et al., 2014). It serves as a critical indicator of visitor engagement and destination performance, influencing tourism expenditure, resource utilization, and local economic participation (Kozak, 2003). Empirical evidence demonstrates that longer visitor stays generate higher local revenue, increase accommodation occupancy rates, and enhance service utilization (Gokovali et al., 2007; Barros et al., 2010). Consequently, identifying and understanding the determinants of length of stay enables destination marketers to formulate effective strategies for promoting extended visits (Alegre & Pou, 2006).

2.2.2 Concept of Tourism Destination

A tourism destination is defined as a distinct geographical entity that combines various natural and human-made resources, attractions, infrastructure, and services, all presented under a unified identity to appeal to visitors (Owiyo & Jonathan, 2018; WTO, 2003). Destinations can range from cities and regions to entire countries and are typically governed or coordinated by one or more authorities responsible for planning, promotion, and management. The competitiveness of a destination is largely determined by its capacity to

deliver a coherent and memorable visitor experience through the effective coordination of its diverse components.

2.2.3 Factors Influencing Destination Choice

Tourists' destination choices are shaped by a complex interplay of environmental, psychological, social, and situational factors. Javid and Roma (2016) identify key determinants such as environmental quality, safety, accommodation, leisure opportunities, cultural festivals, and recreational events. Equally significant are perceived risks—including crime, disease, and political instability—which influence travel decisions and perceptions of destination safety (Pennington-Gray & Schroeder, 2013).

In addition to safety, pull factors—such as hygiene standards, favorable climate, affordability, attractions, ease of transportation, shopping experiences, and cultural heritage—strongly influence destination appeal (Prayag, 2012). Meanwhile, socio-cultural and psychological variables—such as destination image, accessibility, amenities, and the quality of human resources—play critical roles in shaping tourists' overall evaluation and decision-making processes (Shouvik et al., 2019). Hence, the attractiveness of a destination lies in the harmonious integration of these tangible and intangible features.

2.2.4 Concept of Destination Packaging

In marketing, *packaging* is a strategic function that protects product integrity, conveys brand value, and influences consumer purchasing behavior (Ebitu, 2015; Valentina, 2016; Anyasor et al., 2018). However, tourism products—being intangible and perishable—cannot be physically packaged in the conventional sense (Shouvik et al., 2019). In tourism marketing, *destination packaging* refers to the systematic bundling of interrelated services—such as accommodation, transport, attractions, and catering—into a single, cohesive, and priced offer (Anyasor et al., 2018).

According to Middleton (1994), package tours consist of standardized offerings that integrate two or more elements (e.g., transportation, accommodation, meals, and attractions) into a unified experience. Consequently, the tourism product represents a complex amalgamation of services—airlines, hotels, restaurants, museums, taxis, and recreational facilities—brought together through coordinated packaging to provide convenience and value to tourists.

Regional tourism organizations and tour operators employ destination packaging to market destinations as integrated bundles of activities and experiences that cater to diverse travel preferences (Valentina, 2016; Petr et al., 2022). These packages may range from half-day tours to multi-day or multi-destination itineraries, designed to stimulate extended stays and repeated visitation. By amalgamating complementary services into coherent offers, destination packaging enhances the visitor experience, facilitates planning convenience, and maximizes the economic benefits accruing to the host destination.

2.3 Conceptual Model

Drawing from the reviewed literature, this study proposes a conceptual model identifying five key independent variables - Destination Safety, Accessibility, Accommodation, Amenities, and Attractions - as determinants of the Length of Stay of visitors in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. These interrelated attributes collectively define the quality of the destination experience and directly influence tourists' decisions to prolong their stay.

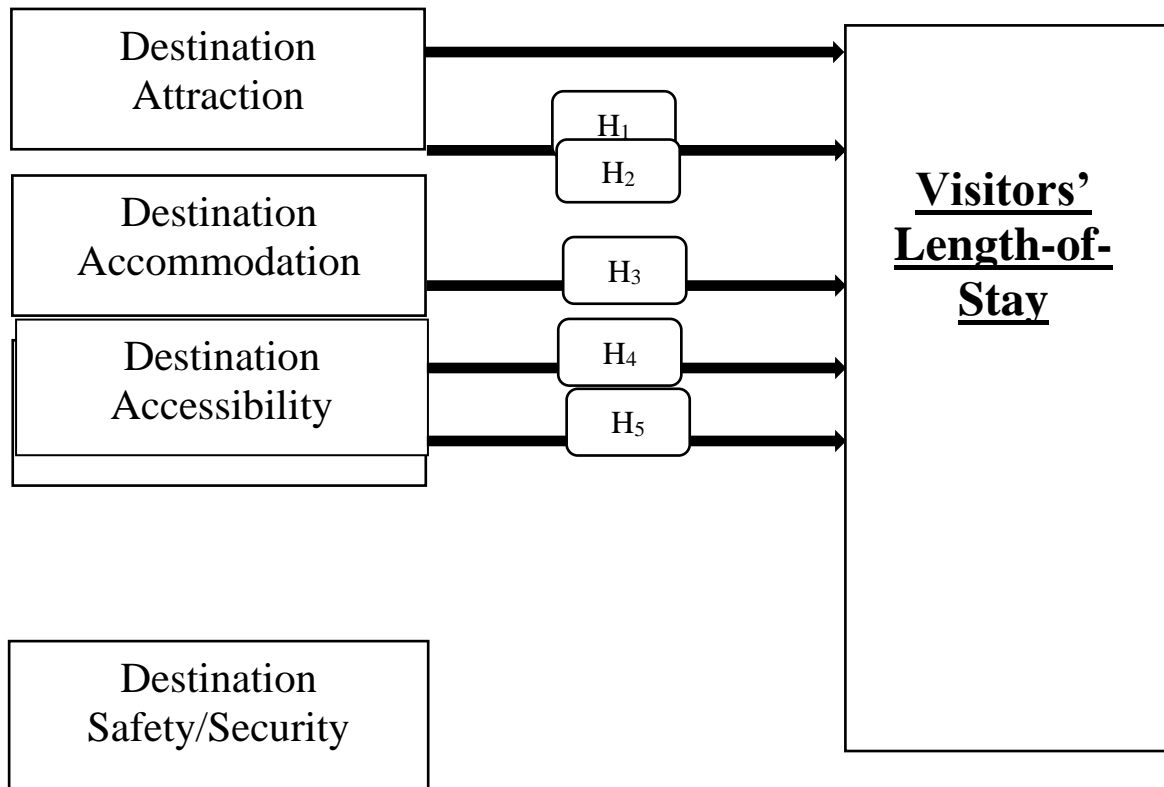


Fig. 1: Conceptual model of Destination Packaging and the Length-Of-Stay of Visitors
Source: Researcher, 2023.

Destination Packaging and Length of Stay

The proposed model (Figure 1) conceptualizes the interrelationship between destination attributes, namely attractions, accommodation, amenities, accessibility, and safety/security, and their collective influence on the length of stay of visitors. The hypotheses derived from this framework examine the extent to which each factor significantly affects the duration of tourists' stay at a destination.

Attractions

Attractions represent the primary motivators that stimulate tourists' initial interest and travel decisions. They encompass natural features (such as landscapes, beaches, and climatic conditions), built attractions (including resorts and theme parks), cultural elements (such as festivals, museums, and heritage sites), and social experiences (notably interactions with local residents) (Reid & Bojanic, 2010; Verma, 2018). These attractions serve as critical demand drivers, expanding market potential, shaping visitor expenditure patterns, and enhancing the likelihood of extended stays when effectively managed (Gang, 2023; Wanasinghe & Sammani, 2019). However, their effectiveness in sustaining visitor engagement is contingent upon supporting factors such as accessibility, safety, and the availability of complementary amenities.

Amenities

Amenities refer to the infrastructural and service-based facilities that improve tourists' comfort, convenience, and overall experience. They include elements such as transport networks, entertainment centers, water supply, communication systems, and other support services (Barros et al., 2010; Reid & Bojanic, 2010). Both natural amenities (e.g., beaches,

scenic trails) and man-made amenities (e.g., recreational facilities, entertainment events) contribute to enriching the tourism experience and encouraging longer stays. Conversely, the absence or deterioration of these facilities can reduce destinations to mere transit points or short-stay locations (Ataiz et al., 2022).

Accommodation

Accommodation constitutes a fundamental component of tourism, as overnight lodging differentiates tourists from same-day visitors (WTO, 2003). The quality, variety, and affordability of lodging options—ranging from luxury hotels to guesthouses and hostels—have a significant impact on visitor satisfaction, retention, and repeat patronage (Oklevik et al., 2021). In some cases, high-end accommodation facilities themselves serve as attractions, offering unique experiences that enhance destination appeal (Albert, 2021). Furthermore, the provision of competitive pricing, discounts, and diverse lodging categories can encourage visitors to prolong their stay and explore more extensively.

Accessibility

Accessibility encompasses the ease with which tourists can reach and move within a destination, determined by the quality, connectivity, and affordability of transportation infrastructure, including airports, roads, railways, and waterways (Reid & Bojanic, 2010). Efficient transport systems not only facilitate visitor inflow but also influence the convenience of intra-destination travel. As Carl (2011) notes, destinations with better accessibility tend to experience increased visitation and longer average stays, as mobility within the destination enhances exploration opportunities and overall satisfaction.

Safety and Security

Safety and security are indispensable preconditions for tourism development and sustainability. They encompass concerns related to crime, political instability, health hazards, natural disasters, and emergency preparedness (Owiyo & Jonathan, 2018; Pennington-Gray & Schroeder, 2013). Tourists' perception of safety significantly affects both destination choice and the duration of stay (Ryglova et al., 2015; Zhou et al., 2015). Consequently, destinations that successfully maintain stable and secure environments are more likely to retain visitors for longer periods and encourage repeat visitation.

Destination Packaging and Length of Stay

Empirical studies demonstrate that the length of stay is influenced by multiple factors, including tourists' socio-demographic profiles, travel motivations, accommodation type, group size, and range of activities available (António & Ana, 2011; Elisa et al., 2015). While some studies suggest that prolonged stays may sometimes correlate with reduced satisfaction due to diminishing novelty (Mastura & Mana, 2014; Thrane & Farstad, 2012), the preponderance of evidence supports the view that customized destination packaging—tailored to the specific needs and expectations of different tourist segments—enhances both satisfaction and stay duration. Well-structured destination packages thus represent a strategic approach for maximizing economic benefits and sustaining visitor engagement.

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is conceptualized as a post-consumption evaluative judgment, reflecting the degree to which a service meets or exceeds visitor expectations. It is typically influenced by tourists' expectations, perceptions, and motivations (Szyndlar, 2021). From a marketing perspective, customer satisfaction serves as both a theoretical construct and a practical

performance metric. It is increasingly recognized as a strategic tool for market segmentation, customer retention, and competitive differentiation.

Godovykh and Tasci (2020) define satisfaction as a psychological state or attitude that emerges following the consumption of a tourism service. In both marketing and leisure contexts, service quality has been consistently linked to overall customer satisfaction (Lee et al., 2004). Within tourism, Kozak (2003) emphasizes that satisfaction is essential for successful destination marketing, as it directly influences repeat visitation and positive word-of-mouth. Similarly, Peypoch et al. (2012) observe that sustained attention to satisfaction enhances competitiveness among leisure and hospitality firms.

Empirical studies further affirm the interconnection between service quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intention, demonstrating that higher satisfaction levels positively affect destination choice, product consumption, extended stay duration, and the likelihood of return visits. Hence, achieving high levels of tourist satisfaction is integral to destination loyalty and long-term sustainability.

3.1 Research Methodology and Design

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design, which enables the examination of relationships among variables at a single point in time. The research was conducted in **Calabar**, Cross River State, Nigeria, with the target population comprising visitors aged 18 years and above at various tourist destinations within the state. Based on the Cross River State Tourism Bureau's 2013 report, which recorded 931,458 visitors, and applying an annual growth rate of 2.47%, the projected visitor population for 2022 was estimated at 3,002,089.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula for finite populations at a 5% margin of error, resulting in a sample of 400 respondents.

3.5 Sampling Technique

A convenience sampling technique was adopted to select respondents who were readily available and willing to participate at major tourist sites in Calabar during the study period (Julia, 2023). This approach was deemed appropriate due to its practicality in engaging transient populations such as tourists.

3.6 Data Collection

Primary data were obtained through on-site administration of questionnaires to visitors and were complemented by brief semi-structured interviews for contextual insights and validation.

3.7 Instrument for Data Collection

The study utilized a structured questionnaire comprising two sections. The first section captured respondents' demographic characteristics, while the second measured key study variables—destination attractions, accommodation, amenities, accessibility, safety/security, **and** length of stay—using a five-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (5)*.

3.8 Validity of Instrument

The instrument's face validity was established through expert review and validation by academic supervisors. Feedback from these experts ensured that the questionnaire items

adequately captured the constructs under investigation and aligned with the research objectives.

3.9 Reliability of Instrument

The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, yielding an overall value of 0.78, which surpasses the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2014). The reliability coefficients for individual variables ranged between 0.74 and 0.84, indicating satisfactory internal consistency across all measurement scales.

Reliability was tested with Cronbach Alpha, yielding 0.78 overall, exceeding the 0.7 benchmark (Hair et al., 2014). Variable reliabilities ranged from 0.74–0.84.

3.10 Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, SD) and multiple linear regression via SPSS v23.

$$Y = a + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3 + \beta X_4 + \beta X_5 + e$$

where Y = Length of Stay; X_1 = Attraction; X_2 = Accommodation; X_3 = Amenities; X_4 = Accessibility; X_5 = Safety/Security.

4.1 Data Presentation, Analysis and Results

Out of the 400 questionnaires administered to visitors in Calabar, 383 were successfully retrieved, representing a response rate of 95.8%. The demographic distribution of respondents indicated that 53.8% were male, while 46.2% were female. A majority (58.2%) were single, and most respondents fell within the 18–55-year age bracket. In terms of visitor type, 57.7% identified as tourists, with 53.5% indicating that it was their first visit to Calabar.

Regarding destination awareness, 31.6% of the respondents reported discovering Calabar through online platforms, while 29.5% became aware of it through personal experience. Major pull factors included attractions (27.7%), safety/security (13.6%), and amenities (15.4%). A significant proportion (62.9%) organized their trips independently, without utilizing travel agencies.

Perceptions of tourist attractions were varied. While historical landmarks attracted minimal agreement, 70.2% of respondents strongly agreed that Calabar offered rich cultural and artistic experiences, and 59% acknowledged the convenience of recreational facilities. Amenities were rated moderately; food courts (63.9%) and shopping malls (62.7%) received favorable assessments, although opinions regarding parks and game centers were less positive.

Safety and security perceptions were generally positive: 66.6% highlighted the friendliness of locals, 67.4% agreed on cleanliness, and 77.8% acknowledged visible security presence. In terms of accessibility, respondents expressed strong approval for buses (80.9%), boats (75.2%), and tricycles/taxis (73.8%) as viable transport modes. Accommodation quality was also highly rated, with 79.3% agreeing that lodging facilities offered a homely atmosphere and diverse options.

Concerning factors influencing the length of stay, hospitality (81.5%) and the availability of attractions (62.9%) encouraged longer visits, whereas transportation-related constraints discouraged extended stays, as indicated by 56% of respondents.

Descriptive Statistics (Means)

Demographics

- i. Gender mean = 1.46 (\approx 54% male, 46% female)
- ii. Age mean = 2.21 (predominantly young adults aged 18–35)
- iii. Marital status mean = 1.42 (majority single)
- iv. Visitor type mean = 1.42 (mostly visitors; 53.5% first-timers)

Awareness and Motivation

- i. Online platforms were the dominant awareness channel (mean = 2.91).
- ii. The main travel motivator was attractions (mean = 4.01).
- iii. Most trips were independently arranged (mean = 1.37).

Tourism Attributes (Selected Mean Scores)

- i. **Attractions:** Cultural and artistic elements rated high (mean = 3.78); historical sites rated lower (mean = 2.43).
- ii. **Amenities:** Food courts (mean = 3.27) and malls (mean = 3.56) outperformed parks (mean \approx 2.28).
- iii. **Safety/Security:** Cleanliness (mean = 2.74), friendliness (mean = 2.69), and visible security presence (mean = 2.57) received moderate ratings.
- iv. **Accessibility:** Bus transportation was most preferred (mean = 3.27); other modes scored moderately (\approx 2.77).
- v. **Accommodation:** Service quality was moderately rated (mean \approx 2.77).

Length of Stay Influences

- i. Hospitality (mean = 3.56) and attractions (mean = 3.27) positively influenced extended stays.
- ii. Transportation factors discouraged prolonged visits (mean \approx 2.04–2.19).

4.2 Data Analysis

Preliminary diagnostic tests confirmed the absence of missing values, acceptable outlier limits, normal data distribution, and linearity among variables. Pearson's correlation matrix revealed strong positive associations across most variables. Tests for multicollinearity indicated tolerance values above 0.10 and variance inflation factors (VIF) below 10, suggesting no multicollinearity issues.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

A multiple regression model was employed, with destination attraction, accommodation, amenities, accessibility, and safety/security as independent variables, and length of stay as the dependent variable. The model produced significant results ($R = 0.749$, $R^2 = 0.561$), explaining approximately 56% of the variance in visitors' length of stay. The ANOVA results confirmed model significance ($F = 96.471$, $p < 0.001$).

Regression coefficients revealed that destination attraction ($\beta = 0.121$, $p = 0.001$), amenities ($\beta = 0.148$, $p < 0.05$), and safety/security (β significant) exerted strong positive influences on visitors' length of stay. Accommodation demonstrated a moderate influence, while accessibility exhibited minimal impact.

Correlation Analysis (Pearson)

Strong positive relationships were observed between visitors' length of stay as follows:

Destination accessibility ($r = .683$, $p < .01$), Safety/security ($r = .593$, $p < .01$), Accommodation ($r = .532$, $p < .01$), Amenities ($r = .309$, $p < .01$), and Attractions ($r = .231$, $p < .01$). While the Inter-variable analysis revealed: High correlation between accessibility and accommodation ($r = .780$, $p < .01$), Strong associations between safety/security and both accommodation ($r = .654$, $p < .01$) and accessibility ($r = .613$, $p < .01$), and Attractions demonstrated weaker correlations with other predictors. Overall, the findings indicate that accessibility, safety/security, and accommodation are the most influential factors in determining visitors' length of stay in Calabar.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The study's major findings are summarized as follows:

1. Destination attraction significantly and positively influences visitors' length of stay in Calabar.
2. Destination accommodation exerts a significant positive impact on visitors' length of stay.
3. Destination amenities have a positive and significant relationship with visitors' length of stay.
4. Destination accessibility positively influences the duration of visitor stays.
5. Destination safety and security significantly enhance visitors' willingness to stay longer in Calabar.

5.2 Conclusion

Packaging remains a critical determinant of consumer behavior, shaping perceptions, influencing choice, and ultimately affecting satisfaction. In the tourism context, destination packaging performs a similar role—presenting an integrated image that attracts potential visitors and influences their decision-making processes. This study investigated the effect of destination packaging on the length of stay of visitors in Calabar, Cross River State, focusing on five key components: attractions, amenities, accommodation, accessibility, and safety/security. Empirical results indicate that all five dimensions exert significant positive effects on visitors' length of stay. Hence, effective destination packaging not only attracts tourists but also encourages prolonged engagement and repeat visitation, reinforcing Calabar's position as a viable tourist destination.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. The State Government should embark on an immediate renovation and maintenance tourist sites in the state.
2. The government should initiate Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) with willing investors to develop world-class attraction centers capable of revitalizing Calabar's tourism image and extending visitor stays.
3. The government must intensify peacebuilding initiatives and adequately equip security agencies with manpower and logistics to ensure tourist safety and security.
4. Hospitality agencies should implement periodic monitoring to maintain high service standards and prevent facility degradation.
5. A collaborative network linking hotels, transport operators, and attraction site managers should be established to ensure a seamless visitor experience to all tourists to the state.

6. The government should also develop a multi-modal transport systems involving, road, air and water transport, in order to significantly improve mobility and tourists' satisfaction, increased convenience, and potentially prolong visitor stays.

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