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Abstract

Visitor preferences is a personal choice of a destination for a defined purpose of travel. In most times it is influenced by value for money, intention to re-visit and the intention to recommend the destination to others. The purpose of this study was to assess the influence destinations affective image on visitor preferences in destination Gaborone City, Botswana. Descriptive survey design was used for describing the study population and their characteristics. The target population was 3750 and a sample size of 360 domestic tourists who visited Gaborone departing through SSKIA Structured questionnaires was used to collect quantitative data, and interview schedules was used to collect qualitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results were presented in tables. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. The study findings revealed R coefficient of 0.638, implying that destinations affective image as the independent factor had a correlation of 63.8 percent with visitor preferences in Gaborone City. This was supported by coefficient of determination (R-square) of 0.408. This meant that destinations affective image explained 40.8 percent of the variations in tourist preferences in Gaborone City. The study concludes that improving destination affective image has the likelihood of enhancing visitor preferences of destination in Gaborone City, Botswana. Gaborone city has a rich cultural heritage that can be showcased through cultural tourism, including cultural festivals, traditional dance performances, and visits to local museums and historical sites. By promoting cultural tourism, Gaborone can attract a niche market of travelers interested in experiencing local cultures and traditions. The study thus

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recommends that tourism destinations in Gaborone city needs to have a strong marketing strategy that promotes the city's unique features and attractions, including social media campaigns, collaborations with travel bloggers and influencers, and attending travel shows and exhibitions.

Keywords: *Affective, Destination image, Domestic tourist, Destination preferences, Gaborone City*

1.0 Background to the Study

Globally tourism is considered an engine of growth for world economies. It has been noted in studies by Khan, Bibi, Lorenzo, Lyu, and Babar (2020) and Barak, Maingi and Ndubi (2019) that tourism development worldwide has been recognized as a driver for economic growth as well as poverty alleviation. In Africa, tourism has equally boosted countries economically as evidently shown by the 2018 share of arrivals (UNWTO, 2019). The region recorded a 5% share of arrivals and a +7% growth in 2018 as has been published. Data shows that domestic tourism accounted to about 9 billion trips (UNWTO, 2020). Likewise, Botswana tourism has been noted as an economic booster accounting to 4.9% in 2016 to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Botswana Tourism Satellite Account (2016), one of the key objectives being to promote domestic tourism (Botswana Tourism Policy, 2020). Basupi et al. (2017) therefore concludes that there is need for a more researched strategy that will advise on the preferences of the target market and for a clear focus. This is why research on the affective destination image and its influence on visitor preferences to one of Botswana's destinations, Gaborone City, is needed to add knowledge to the country's tourism marketing strategy.

Visitor preferences according to Ching-Nok, Suntikul, Agyeiwaah, and Tolkach (2017) can be defined as visitors' personal choice of a destination based on their stimuli. While Rita, Brochado and Dimova (2019) suggests that it's a psychological decision of visitors in choosing a destination. Therefore, marketing literature submits that visitor preferences are key and vital in packaging focused destinations (Su & Huang, 2018). Adinegara, Suprapti and Yasa (2017) also notes that cost, intention to re-visit which determines the loyalty of visitors to a destination and also the intent to recommend the destination to others plays a critical role in visitor preferences.

Destination image comprises of two interconnected components cognitive which entails knowledge of the environment and affective image which brings in the aspect of emotions and feelings of visitors towards the identified environment (Marine-Roig & Ferrer-Rosell, 2018). They further suggest that cognitive and affective information of visitors towards a destination gives an idea as to how to package a well-focused destination for competitive purposes. Therefore Basaran (2016) concludes that it is important to determine destination image components that influence visitors' preferences and choice of destinations. This study therefore addresses this gap narrowing it to destination Gaborone City as it has been identified that not much has been done to address visitor preferences in Gaborone City (Stone *et al.*, 2017).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Gathering information on cognitive and affective information concerning visitor preferences in Botswana and Gaborone City in particular would easily add knowledge to guide the Botswana Tourism Policy direction and the Tourism Marketing strategy. Currently The Botswana Tourism Policy (2020) advocates for promotion of domestic tourism. Therefore, there is no advocacy for product diversification which will entail taking into account visitor preferences to promote Botswana as a preferred tourist destination which will trickle down to tourist areas within the country, like in the case of Gaborone City. On the other hand, the Tourism Master Plan (2000) advocates for tourism diversification but since its adoption, there is relatively no evidence of the achievements.

Moreover, there is a lack of coordination and implementation plan on the ground for all entities mandated to promote and take care of visitor preferences in Gaborone City, Botswana. Visitor preferences that form the reason for the choice of destination have not been taken care of. While the Tourism Master Plan focuses much on the product lead approach leaving out the need for the preferences of the target market.

Globally, empirical evidence has linked cognitive and affective destination image to visitor preference (Bigart, Freimund & Dalenberg 2023; Ezeuduji & Haupt 2016; Mulugeta & Manjit (2019); Sigwele, Prinsloo & Pelser 2018; Sechele- Mosimanegape & Prinsloo, 2019). However, it remains an issue for empirical investigation if cognitive and affective destination image significantly affect visitor preferences in Gaborone City, bearing in mind the limited empirical evidence in the context of Botswana. While Gaborone is the capital city of Botswana, it is not as popular as other African cities such as Cape Town or Nairobi in terms of tourism and as a result there is less research available on visitor preferences in Gaborone City. This presents empirical gap.

Furthermore, empirically cognitive and affective destination image are expected to enhance visitor destination preferences by creating a positive perception, influencing decision-making, affecting satisfaction, increasing word-of-mouth promotion and encouraging repeat visitation. However, evidence from existing empirical evidence suggests that cognitive and affective destination image provide mixed outcomes with regards to their effect on visitor destination preferences. For instance, there is extensive evidence indicating a positive and significant relationship between cognitive, affective destination image and visitor destination preferences Styliadis, Woosnam and Tasci (2022) in Greece; Alfaisaly *et al.* (2022) in Malaysia; Chaulagain *et al.*, (2019); Hahm and Tasci (2019) in USA; El Sheikh, Soliman and Amer (2023) in Egypt. Whereas others such as Uwajubogu (2022) in Nigeria; Arroyo, Barbieri, Knollenberg and Kline (2023) have found negative relationship.

Additionally, most of these studies were conducted in different geographic contexts with different prevailing factors, adopted different methodologies and used different variables which gives rise to methodological and conceptual gaps. In view of the aforementioned empirical evidence, several gaps emerge. Consequently, this study sought to fill the contextual, conceptual and methodological gaps that arises by assessing the influence destinations affective image on visitor preferences in destination Gaborone City, Botswana.

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1.2 Research Objective

To assess the influence destinations affective image on visitor preferences in destination Gaborone City, Botswana.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant effect between on destination affective image on visitor preferences to destination Gaborone City, Botswana.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The six categories of attributes that make up the Dwyer and Kim model were as follows: congenital incomes, generated incomes, supportive capitals, destination organization, demand causes, and situational factors. These attributes are conceptualized as a function of the competitiveness of a tourist endpoint. Inherited resources. This is the quality that events a destination's attractive power by describing the basic elements of its attractiveness. This attribute's mechanisms are the primary explanations why tourists indicate one destination over another. Therefore this theory comprehensively addressed both the demand and the supply side of destination competitiveness. The categorization of the attributes was extremely useful and significant for future analyses and evaluations of destination competitiveness perspectives. Therefore, this study used this theory basing on Dwyer and Kim model (2003) by borrowing some of the attributes of the theory.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Affective Image

Affective images of a destination is described by some authors as a driving force in terms of emotions and feelings in choosing a destination (Girma & Singh, 2019). Authors argue that affective image mostly is concerned with the emotions and feelings attached to destinations by visitors as they make their choices of destinations, Woosnam *et al.* (2020) and Michael, James and Michael (2018). They conclude that attachments could reflect destinations as best choices for relaxation, places for retreat and many more. This study therefore seeks to appreciate the influence destination affective image has on visitor preferences in destination Gaborone city, Botswana.

2.2.2 Visitor Preferences

Visitor preferences touch on the destination choice of visitors. The pull and push factors of destinations play a critical role in the visitors' minds, therefore, influencing their preferences. It is a psychological decision of visitors (Rita *et al.*, 2019). Preference is defined by Iizuka and Di Paolo (2007) cited in Chen, Wang, Nina and Prebensen (2016) as, "the strength or commitment with which a behavioral choice is enacted, which is measurable in terms of its robustness to different kinds of perturbations (internal or external)". Further Amanda, Santosa and Rizal (2018) concurs with Su and Huang (2018) that preferences can allude to the advantages that a preferred destination possess. Basically, the decision that the visitor will take will depend on what really stands out in comparison with other destinations, hence the need to find out from visitors to Gaborone city what their preferences are.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

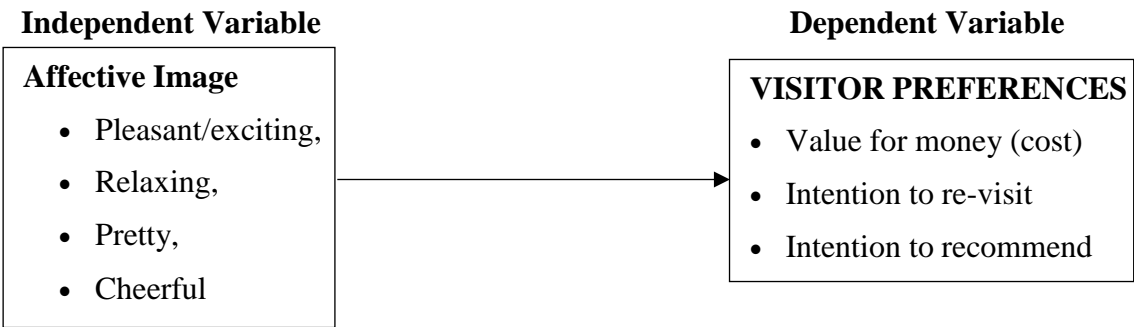


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Adapted and Modified from Um and Crompton (1991).

3.0 Research Methodology

In this study, a descriptive survey design was used for describing the study population and their characteristics. Moreover, the study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to enable the researcher to draw a valid and dependable conclusion and recommendations about visitor preferences to Gaborone, Botswana as a destination. The study was conducted in Gaborone, Botswana at the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport (SSKIA) which is the gateway to the city. Gaborone (Appendix A) is the capital city of Botswana. The headquarters of business in Botswana which boosts 10% (Statistics Botswana 2011 Census) of the population of the country. It is the metropolitan city popular for MICE (Statistics Botswana, 2017). SSKIA, where data is going to be collected is located 15 kilometres north of downtown Gaborone. Coordinates 24°33'19"S 025°55'06"E latitude and 24°33'19"S 025°55'06"E longitude..

The target population was the domestic tourists who depart through the Sir Seretse Khama International Airport (SSKIA) which is the direct entry and departure point of Gaborone. It receives about 45000 total tourist arrivals yearly, on average amounting to about 3750 on monthly basis, (Statistics Botswana, 2017). The target population of tourists was made up of 3750 tourists out of which a sample of 360 tourists were selected using Yamane’s formula (cited in Bhuiya, Setarnawat &Viriyasuebphong, 2019). This target population was chosen because data was going to be collected for a month.

Simple random sampling and purposive sampling was used to undertake the study. The reason for the simple random sampling was that it would be representative of the total population under study. On the other hand, purposive sampling augmented the study to select key informants as they are already established institutions that deal with the population under study daily. This is meant to further get in-depth information on tourism preferences in Gaborone, Botswana. The sample size of this study was determined by using Yamane’s formula (cited in Yot-Arlai, & Duangseang, 2018).

The formula is:
$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

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Whereby n is the sample size, N is target populace and e is the level of precision (0.05), therefore
$$n = \frac{3750}{1+3750(0.05)^2} = 360$$
.

The researcher used different data gathering tools to collect both primary and secondary data. This was to collect both qualitative and quantitative data to get in-depth data on the study subject. Primary data was composed through structured questionnaires and semi structured interviews whereas secondary data was obtained through relevant literature, journals as well as books.

This study used structured questionnaire to gather data as a widely used instrument to gather primary data on demographics, visitor trip characteristics and all attributes described in this study (Marasinghe, Perera, Simpson & Newsome, 2020). The interview schedule was used to collect data such as profiling the domestic tourists according to the flow, elaborating on the variety that the destination offers tourists and opinions on stakeholder consultations in tourism planning of destination Gaborone by government from Tourism Experts.

On the interview day, the researcher with the assistance of two data collectors administered the questionnaires to the tourists. The questionnaire was randomly distributed to domestic visitors at various levels to collect quantitative data (Suyanto, Haryono & Baiquni, 2020). This tool helped to bring out certain in-depth explanations and information. Furthermore, interview schedules was administered by the researcher to the key informants, to augment the quantitative data.

Quantitative data was examined by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 for each of the research objectives and presented using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to explain the characteristic of the study variables. Inferential statistics including Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis were used to test the connection among the independent and the dependent variables (Shemwetta, Rotich & Kibe, 2022).

Findings were obtainable in graphs chart and table. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Alyavina, Nikitas and Njoya (2020) define data analysis in qualitative research as a systematic process of transcribing, collating, editing, coding, and reporting the data in a manner that makes it sensible and accessible to the reader and researcher for purposes of interpretation and discussion. Data was recorded, transcribed, coded and grouped into themes according to the research questions for thematic analysis. This data was analyzed using the computer package NVIVO to bring out the recurring themes from the interviews and were presented in tables, selected anecdotes and comments from informants to emphasize the actual words by the informants.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

Response rate is the total number of respondents who participated in the study. The researcher administered 360 questionnaires to respondents (tourists) and interviews were administered to 7 tourism experts drawn from various institutions. Out of the 360 questionnaires distributed to the tourists, 299 were successfully filled and returned, yielding a response rate of 83%. In addition, all the 7 tourism experts selected for interview took part in the study, yielding a response rate of 100%. These response rates were considered adequate for analysis. Kothari

and Garg (2014) observed that response rate higher than 70% is sufficient for statistical analysis.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Destination Affective Image

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
I enjoyed good weather	2.7%	11.3%	18.7%	50.0%	17.3%	3.7	1.0
This destination is good for escaping my usual environment	0.0%	4.0%	34.7%	38.0%	23.3%	3.8	0.8
The tourist center’s is environmentally friendly	0.0%	2.7%	34.7%	40.7%	22.0%	3.8	0.8
This destination has good infrastructures for tourists	0.0%	6.0%	28.7%	36.0%	29.3%	3.9	0.9
It is good getaway destination	2.7%	13.3%	18.0%	59.3%	6.7%	3.5	0.9
The destination offers fresh atmosphere for rest	2.7%	8.7%	23.3%	49.3%	16.0%	3.7	0.9
This destination offers excellent spas	2.7%	12.7%	21.3%	48.0%	15.3%	3.6	1.0
It feels home at this destination	2.0%	13.3%	24.0%	44.0%	16.7%	3.6	1.0
This destination has beautiful scenery	2.0%	11.3%	22.7%	56.7%	7.3%	3.6	0.9
It boosts a nice landscape	0.7%	10.7%	26.0%	48.0%	14.7%	3.7	0.9
It has breathtaking attractions	0.7%	11.3%	23.3%	34.0%	30.7%	3.8	1.0
This destination has beautiful spas	1.3%	12.0%	24.0%	44.0%	18.7%	3.7	1.0
Experience city tourism	1.3%	11.3%	15.3%	60.0%	12.0%	3.7	0.9
Participate in unfamiliar activities	3.3%	12.7%	28.7%	37.3%	18.0%	3.5	1.0
Experience nature	3.3%	8.0%	30.7%	34.7%	23.3%	3.7	1.0
Do something challenging	4.0%	10.7%	14.7%	41.3%	29.3%	3.8	1.1
Nightlife in Gaborone is exciting	0.0%	12.1%	15.4%	44.3%	28.2%	3.9	1.0

Source: Research Data (2023)

Table 1 indicates that majority (67.3%) of the respondents agreed that they enjoyed good weather, destination is good for escaping usual environment (61.3%), tourist center's is environmentally friendly (62.7%), and destination has good infrastructures for tourists (65.3%). The findings imply that most of the respondents appreciated the pleasant nature of Gaborone, which could influence tourists' preference of this destination.

Regarding relaxing, the results indicates that majority (66%) of the respondents agreed that it is good getaway destination, destination offers fresh atmosphere for rest (65.3%), destination offers excellent spas (63.3%), and it feels home at this destination (60.7%). The findings imply that most of respondents appreciated the relaxing nature of Gaborone, which could influence tourists' preference of this destination.

The results also show that majority (64%) of the respondents agreed that the destination has beautiful scenery, it boosts a nice landscape (62.7%), it has breathtaking attractions (64.7%), and destination has beautiful spas (62.7%). The findings imply that most of respondents appreciated the pretty nature of Gaborone, which could influence tourists' preference of this destination.

Furthermore, majority (72%) of the respondents agreed that visitors experience city tourism, participates in unfamiliar activities (55.3%), experiences nature (58%), and do something challenging (70.5%). The findings imply that most of respondents appreciated the exciting nature of Gaborone, which could influence tourists' preference of this destination.

Regarding cheerfulness, majority (72.5%) of the respondents agreed that nightlife in Gaborone is exciting, destination boosts excellent nature walks (47.3%), destination is lively (71.3%), and destination is boosting a different atmosphere (68.6%). The findings imply that most of respondents appreciated the cheerful nature of Gaborone, which could influence tourists' preference of this destination.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

In addition, the tourism experts were asked in an interview to explain how Gaborone destination differ from others in relaxation, pretty, pleasant and others. Their responses were analyzed using nvivo and the findings are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Themes on Destination Facilities

Theme	Narrations
Relaxation	<p>This destination has not received enough marketing and promotions, but for travelers who are looking at beauty therapies this is the place, the beauty of both man-made and natural attractions it has, local cuisine festivals, culture festivals of its kind, quality and up-market accommodation facilities, the beauty of the hospitality & tourism service industry, top of the notch customer service, easy mobility and security+++</p> <p>This destination boosts attractions particularly those that depicts on the history of the country that cannot be found in any other part of the country. Ideally, they could have been packaged as tourist attractions but that is not easily coming out. It could have been a unique selling point to differentiate this destination from others across the country who have received a lot of coverage marketing wise///</p>
Prettiness	<p>Looking at the fact that this destination has not been marketed that much to usual tourists, but there’s a rise of beauty spas, meat festivals, popular annual culture event that attracts people across the country to the city@@@</p> <p>If marketed, promoted and packaged well, Gaborone as a destination offers top of the range beauty spas, local cuisine, infrastructure and its very accessible with smooth running transportation###</p>
Pleasure	<p>The experience is awesome because it boosts a range of activities, relaxation parks according to the target market, beauty spas of high quality but affordable to the entire market and all other good entertainment areas of high quality for easy relaxation***</p> <p>The destination has one of the fresh atmospheres in the country, with good customer service, good environment, beauty spas of quality that observe health protocols and others+++</p>

The responses show that visitors in Gaborone City seek destinations that offer opportunities for relaxation and stress relief. Gaborone city, with its parks, nature reserves, and serene landscapes, can provide visitors with a calming and peaceful atmosphere, making it an attractive destination for those seeking a break from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Relaxation is a key aspect of wellness tourism, which has become increasingly popular in recent years. Gaborone city's natural beauty, combined with its spa resorts and wellness centers, can attract visitors looking to recharge and rejuvenate their mind and body.

The prettiness of Gaborone city can enhance its aesthetic appeal and make it a more attractive destination for visitors. The city's well-maintained parks, gardens, and public spaces, as well as its modern architecture, can create a visually appealing environment that visitors enjoy exploring. It is clear that most of the visitors who visits Gaborone City often look for destinations that offer good opportunities for photography, and the prettiness of Gaborone city can provide this. The city's scenic views, natural landscapes, and cultural landmarks can be appealing for photography enthusiasts, and social media influencers, who often share their experiences on social media, can help to promote the city's beauty.

Furthermore, it is evident that most of the visitors in Gaborone City seek destinations that offer a range of recreational activities, such as sports, outdoor adventures, and cultural experiences, which can provide pleasure and enjoyment. Gaborone city offers visitors opportunities for hiking, wildlife watching, shopping, and cultural festivals, among other activities, which can provide pleasure and create memorable experiences. Visitors may also be drawn to destinations that offer entertainment options, such as music concerts, theater performances, and nightlife venues, which can provide pleasure and excitement. Gaborone city has a vibrant music scene and a variety of bars, clubs, and restaurants, which can cater to visitors looking for entertainment.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

This study sought to find out the nature and the strength of the association between destinations affective image and visitor preferences in destination Gaborone City, Botswana. The correlation analysis results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

		Visitor preferences	Destinations Image	Affective
Visitor preferences	Pearson			
	Correlation	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Destinations Image	Pearson			
	Correlation	.638**	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results depicts that affective image had a positive and significant relationship with visitor preferences ($r = .638$, $p = .000 < .05$). This implies that a change in affective image is associated with a significant change in visitor preferences of destination Gaborone. The findings are consistent with the assertions by Woosnam *et al.* (2020); Michael, James and Michael (2018) that affective image mostly is concerned with the emotions and feelings attached to destinations by visitors as they make their choices of destinations. They concluded that

attachments could reflect destinations as best choices for relaxation, places for retreat and many more.

4.4 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between destinations affective image and visitor preferences in destination Gaborone City, Botswana. Table 4 presents the regression model summary.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.638 ^a	.408	.405	.477

a. Predictors: (Constant), Destinations Affective Image

As presented in Table 4, destinations affective image was found to be satisfactory in explaining visitor preferences of Gaborone City. The R coefficient of 0.638 indicated that the destinations affective image as the independent factor had a correlation of 63.8 percent with the dependent variable visitor preferences in Gaborone City. This was supported by coefficient of determination also known as the R square of 0.408. This means that destinations affective image explains 40.8 percent of the variations in visitor preferences in Gaborone City. The remaining 59.2 percent of the variation in preferences among visitors in Gaborone is determined by other factors not explained in this study. Table 5 provides the analysis of the variance (ANOVA) results.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.978	1	14.978	87.884	.000
	Residual	26.928	297	.170		
	Total	41.906	298			

a. Dependent Variable: Visitor Preferences

b. Predictors: (Constant), Destinations Affective Image

The results in Table 5 indicate that the regression model was statistically significant. Further, the results imply that destinations affective image is a good predictor of visitor preferences in Gaborone City. This was supported by an F-statistic of 87.884 and the reported p-value of p=.000 which was less than the conventional probability significance level of p<.05 implying that destinations affective image is significant in predicting visitor preferences of tourism destinations in Gaborone City, Botswana. Regression of coefficient results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.556	.256		6.080	.014
	Destinations Affective Image	.595	.064	.598	9.375	.002
a. Dependent Variable: Visitor Preferences						

Results in Table 6 revealed that destinations affective image was positively and significantly related to visitor preferences in Gaborone City ($\beta=0.595$, $p=.002<.05$). This implies that a unit improvement in destinations affective image among tourist destinations in Gaborone City results into an improvement in visitor preferences of tourism destination in Gaborone City by .595 units. The results are in agreement with the conclusion made by Woosnam *et al.* (2020) that, affective image mostly is concerned with the emotions and feelings attached to destinations by visitors as they make their choices of destinations and that attachments could reflect destinations as best choices for relaxation, places for retreat and many more.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis was tested by using the linear regression model and determined using p-value. The acceptance/rejection criterion was that, if the p-value is less than .05, H05 is rejected; however, if $p > 0.05$, then H05 is not rejected and alternative hypothesis adopted. So the study’s null hypothesis was that there is no significant effect between on destination affective image on visitor preferences to destination Gaborone City, Botswana. Results in Table 6 show that the p-value $=0.002 < 0.05$. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected and alternative hypothesis adopted to conclude that there is significant effect between on destination affective image on visitor preferences to destination Gaborone City, Botswana. The findings support the work of Woosnam *et al.* (2020) and Michael *et al.* (2018) who conclude that attachments could reflect destinations as best choices for relaxation, places for retreat and many more.

5.0 Conclusion

Destination affective image has a positive and significant effect on visitor preferences in Gaborone. Gaborone is pleasant, relaxing, pretty, exciting and cheerful. The implication is that improving destination affective image has the likelihood of enhancing visitor preferences of destination Gaborone. Destination affective image is a critical factor in influencing visitor preferences because it can either attract or repel potential tourists. The affective image of a destination can evoke positive or negative emotions in individuals. For example, a destination with a beautiful natural landscape may evoke feelings of awe and wonder, while a destination with a history of political unrest may evoke fear and anxiety.

Additionally, emotional appeal is a powerful factor in influencing visitor preferences. Moreover, destination affective image plays a significant role in the branding of a travel destination. A strong affective image can help create a unique brand identity for a destination,

making it more memorable and attractive to potential visitors. A destination's affective image can impact its reputation in the tourism industry, enhance a destination's reputation and attract more visitors, while a negative image can damage its reputation and discourage visitors. Also, visitor experiences and opinions have a significant influence on the affective image of a destination. Positive word of mouth from satisfied visitors can help enhance the affective image of a destination and attract more visitors, while negative word of mouth can have the opposite effect.

6.0 Recommendations

The management of destination Gaborone should improve affective image, which had a positive and significant effect on visitor preferences. The management should ensure the destination is pleasant, relaxing, pretty, exciting and cheerful. Visitors to Gaborone City should plan their trip in advance, including booking accommodations, transportation, and any activities they want to do. This will help them to better manage their time, budget, and expectations. Visitors should use accredited tour operators for any activities they want to do in Gaborone City. This will ensure that they have a safe and enjoyable experience, and that they are supporting responsible and sustainable tourism.

Also, destination management plan is a strategic plan that outlines the goals, objectives, and strategies for managing a destination. The plan should also consider the needs and preferences of visitors, as well as the potential impacts of tourism on the local economy, environment, and society. This study mainly focused on destinations affective image. The variables accounted for 40.8 percent of the variations in visitor preferences. The researcher thus recommends future research on other aspects of this variable and affective destination image that can further predict the visitor preferences such as brand image, personal values and motivation, perceived authenticity, emotional appeal and word-of-mouth recommendations.

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