DESTINATION IMAGE AND BUSINESS TRAVEL CHOICE: A CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVE ON KANO

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Article history:		Abstract:
		Business tourism is a crucial driver of economic growth, facilitating trade, investment, and international collaboration. Destination image plays a pivotal role in business travel decisions, shaping perceptions of accessibility, infrastructure, security, and overall attractiveness. While extensive research exists on destination image and leisure travel, limited studies have examined its influence on business travel choices, particularly in emerging economic hubs like Kano, Nigeria. This conceptual paper explores the relationship between destination image and business travel choice, drawing on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to explain how cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory dimensions influence decision-making. Kano, a historic commercial center in Northern Nigeria, presents significant business tourism potential, yet challenges such as infrastructure gaps, security concerns, and limited destination marketing hinder its competitiveness. This study highlights strategic interventions to enhance Kano's destination image, emphasizing infrastructure development, security improvements, and targeted promotional efforts. The findings contribute to theoretical discussions on business travel and provide practical insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to position Kano as a premier business travel destination

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector is a cornerstone of the global economy, with business tourism emerging as a critical driver of economic growth, accounting for approximately 21.4% of total travel expenditures worldwide (Curley, et al., 2020). Business travel facilitates international trade, fosters global business relationships, and stimulates investment, underscoring its significance in the global economic landscape. In today's interconnected world, business travel has become indispensable for professionals attending conferences, meetings, and seeking investment opportunities. Consequently, the decision-making process for selecting a business travel destination is of paramount importance. This process, often referred to as business travel choice, is influenced by a myriad of factors, including the availability of business facilities, connectivity, safety, and the overall appeal of the destination (Derudder & Witlox, 2016; Swarbrooke & Horner, 2012).

Central to the concept of destination appeal is the notion of destination image, which encapsulates the perceptions and impressions individuals hold about a place (Ndu & Chikwe, 2018). Destination image is a multi-dimensional construct comprising cognitive (knowledge-based), affective (emotion-based), and conative (intention-based) components, all of which play a pivotal role in shaping a traveler's decision-making process (Basaran, 2016). Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) emphasize the importance of destination image in influencing travel behavior, highlighting that a favorable destination image, characterized by modern infrastructure, ease of access, economic opportunities, safety, and comfort, enhances the likelihood of attracting business travelers. Similarly, Phau et al.

(2010) found that university students' travel intentions to Mauritius were significantly influenced by their perceptions of the destination, confirming that positive destination image correlates with higher tourist satisfaction and intention to return. Furthermore, Trang et al. (2023) introduced the concept of multi-sensory image as an additional dimension, further enriching the understanding of destination image.

Despite the wealth of research on destination image and its influence on general and leisure travel choices, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding its impact on business travel decisions, particularly in the context of a lucrative business hubs such as Kano State, Nigeria. Kano, renowned as a historic commercial and cultural hub in Northern Nigeria, boasts a rich heritage, a strategic economic position, and a growing infrastructure network. The state is home to key industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and trade, making it a potential magnet for business travelers (Adamu, 2020; Zhou & Yao, 2023). However, despite its potential, Kano seems yet to fully capitalize on its status as a premier business destination. As with other Northern States of the country, challenges such as insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and limited marketing efforts have contributed to a less favorable destination image, deterring potential business travelers (Ladan, 2023).

Ohida et al. (2023) observed this low tourist inflow, noting that Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport recorded significantly lower passenger traffic in 2021 compared to the airports in Lagos and Abuja, reflecting the state's underutilized potential as a business hub. Additionally, Aliyu and Ibrahim (2023) noted that facilities, such as hotels and conference centers, struggle with low occupancy rates and customer retention, reflecting broader issues of low business tourist patronage.

The implications of these challenges are far-reaching. If unaddressed, Kano risks losing out on significant economic opportunities, as business travelers may opt for destinations with better infrastructure and security. This could lead to a decline in revenue for local businesses and the hospitality sector, further exacerbating the state's negative perception and hindering future investments (Aliyu & Ibrahim, 2023). Enhancing Kano's destination image presents a viable solution to these challenges. Studies have shown that well-developed infrastructure, effective marketing, and improved security can significantly enhance a destination's appeal (Phau et al., 2010). By addressing the cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory dimensions of destination image, Kano can position itself as a more attractive business destination (Basaran, 2016).

This study seeks to bridge the existing gap in the literature by examining the relationship between destination image and business travel choice in Kano State. By doing so, it aims to provide valuable insights for both academic and practical applications in the field of hospitality and tourism management. Furthermore, the findings of this study will offer actionable recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders to enhance Kano's appeal as a business destination, thereby contributing to the economic growth of the region. Through this exploration, the study underscores the critical role of destination image in shaping business travel decisions and highlights the potential for targeted interventions to transform Kano into a thriving hub for business tourism.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Underpinning: Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen in the 1960s, serves as the foundational theoretical framework for this study. TRA posits that an individual's behavioral intentions, which are shaped by their attitudes and subjective norms, are the primary predictors of their actual behavior (Ajzen, 2012). The theory emerged as a response to the need for a structured understanding of the relationship between beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and actions, emphasizing the rational decision-making process that individuals undertake when evaluating the consequences of their actions (Al-Suqri & Al-Kharusi, 2015).

In the domain of consumer behavior, Kim et al. (2011) investigated consumer decision-making by using a modified Theory of Reasoned Action, demonstrating its applicability in understanding travel and hospitality choices, while Yzer (2017) further explored its integration with the Theory of Planned Behavior, highlighting its continued significance in contemporary research. This study examines the relationship between destination image and business travel choices in Kano State, focusing on cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory dimensions. TRA provides a robust theoretical framework for understanding this relationship, explaining how attitudes (cognitive image), subjective norms (affective image), behavioral intentions (conative image), and sensory experiences (multi-sensory image) influence decision-making (Ajzen, 2012).

According to TRA, travelers' beliefs shape their attitudes toward a destination, ultimately influencing business travel choices. Subjective norms, representing perceived social pressures, play a crucial role, as business travelers may be influenced by colleagues, industry standards, and societal expectations. Additionally, TRA posits that behavioral intentions are strong predictors of actual behavior, meaning that favorable or unfavorable perceptions of Kano's destination image can significantly impact travel decisions (Al-Suqri & Al-Kharusi, 2015; Langdridge et al., 2007). By integrating TRA into this study, we systematically analyze how business travelers' perceptions and social influences

shape their travel decisions, reinforcing TRA's relevance in exploring the intricate relationship between destination image and business travel choices in Kano State.

2.2 Application of TRA to Destination Image and Business Travel Choice

Cognitive Image and Attitudes: The cognitive dimension of destination image refers to the knowledge-based perceptions that business travelers hold about Kano State, such as its infrastructure, economic opportunities, and accessibility. According to TRA, these perceptions shape travelers' attitudes toward the destination. For instance, if business travelers perceive Kano as having modern conference facilities, reliable transportation networks, and a thriving business environment, they are likely to develop positive attitudes toward the destination, increasing their intention to visit (Basaran, 2016; Tasci et al., 2007).

Affective Image and Subjective Norms: The affective dimension captures the emotional responses evoked by Kano State, such as feelings of safety, comfort, and cultural appeal. TRA emphasizes the role of subjective norms, which reflect the perceived social pressures or expectations from colleagues, industry peers, or societal standards. For example, if business travelers perceive Kano as a culturally rich and hospitable destination, and if their peers recommend it as a viable business hub, these subjective norms will positively influence their travel intentions (Stylos et al., 2016).

Conative Image and Behavioral Intentions: The conative dimension represents the intention to visit Kano State, which is a direct precursor to actual travel behavior. TRA asserts that behavioral intentions are strong predictors of actual behavior. If business travelers develop favorable intentions based on their cognitive and affective evaluations of Kano, they are more likely to choose it as their destination for business activities (Basaran, 2016; Kim et al., 2011).

Multi-Sensory Image and Holistic Decision-Making: Recent advancements in destination image research have introduced the concept of multi-sensory image, which encompasses the sensory experiences associated with a destination, such as visual, auditory, and olfactory stimuli (Trang et al., 2023). TRA's flexibility allows for the integration of this dimension, as sensory experiences can shape attitudes and intentions. For instance, if Kano State is perceived as offering a vibrant and stimulating sensory environment, it can enhance the overall destination image and strengthen travel intentions.

The application of TRA in this study is justified by its ability to systematically analyze how business travelers' perceptions, attitudes, and social influences shape their travel decisions. By examining the cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory dimensions of destination image through the lens of TRA, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing business travel choice in Kano State. Furthermore, TRA's emphasis on behavioral intentions aligns with the study's aim to explore the intricate relationships between destination image and travel behavior, offering actionable insights for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to enhance Kano's appeal as a business destination. Essentially, TRA serves as a robust theoretical foundation for this study, enabling a nuanced exploration of how destination image influences business travel choice in Kano State. By integrating TRA's core principles with the multi-dimensional aspects of destination image, this study contributes to both academic knowledge and practical strategies for promoting Kano as a competitive business travel destination.

2..3 Destination Image

Destination image refers to the overall perception and set of beliefs, impressions, feelings, and expectations that individuals hold about a particular place. According to Kim et al. (2021), destination image is formed over time through a combination of emotional and cognitive evaluations. Li (2013) emphasizes that this image is a composite of various elements, including identity, values, ideas, and feelings, which collectively shape how a destination is perceived by travelers. The choice of a destination is often influenced by these elements, and as Afshardoost and Eshaghi (2020) pointed out, destinations must create a strong and distinctive image to position themselves favorably in the minds of travelers.

A destination that offers more than just an experience, but rather a memorable one, stands out among its competitors. Thus, effective strategic management of the destination image is crucial to attract a diverse range of tourists, including business travelers, enhance competitiveness, and increase repeat visits. In line with this, Sirgy et al. (2018) propose that a destination's image must align with travelers' self-congruity, meaning that the image projected by the destination should resonate with the travelers' self-identity for an enhanced travel experience. This alignment can significantly influence the likelihood of travelers choosing a destination, especially for business purposes.

Yılmaz (2021) explained that the image of a destination is dynamic, evolving over time and influenced by both internal and external factors. It is complex and multidimensional, as it is shaped by the interactions between travelers and the destination, including its tangible and intangible attributes. Stepchenkova and Mills (2010) also emphasized that the image plays a key role in travelers' destination choices, often serving as a differentiator in a competitive market. Further research by Basaran (2016) underscores the importance of cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions in

destination image formation, pointing out that each of these dimensions plays a critical role in the decision-making process for business travelers.

As tourism destinations compete globally to attract the tourist market, image differentiation becomes increasingly important. Destinations with positive attributes such as safety, infrastructure, and hospitality tend to have an advantage over those with negative perceptions. Thus, in today's tourism industry, creating and maintaining a positive destination image is vital for success. Awaritefe (2004) examined this dynamic in Nigeria, noting that prospective travelers may have differing perceptions compared to actual tourists, which underscores the fluidity of destination image.

Juwaheer and Yuen (2019) observed that the reputations of countries and destinations can be viewed similarly to product images and company images. Therefore, just like the image of a company would give it a competitive advantage and a higher chance of success, the same can be observed with destination images in the tourism industry. As such, a sound destination image gives the destination an upper hand and the chance to run a smoother operation that will likely progress positively.

The concept of destination image is multifaceted, encompassing various dimensions that collectively shape how a location is perceived by potential visitors. To fully understand the influence of destination image on business travel choice, it becomes imperative to delve into its specific dimensions. These dimensions—cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory—offer a deeper insight into how individuals form mental representations of a destination, which in turn influences their travel decisions and experiences (Basaran, 2016; Trang et al., 2023).

Cognitive Image: Cognitive image refers to an individual's knowledge and beliefs about a destination, encompassing an evaluation of its perceived attributes (Zhang et al., 2014). In the context of Kano State, cognitive image is shaped by perceptions of specific attributes such as business facilities, infrastructure, and accessibility. For instance, Kano's status as a historic commercial hub in Northern Nigeria, coupled with its growing infrastructure network, contributes to its cognitive image. The presence of key industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and trade further enhances this perception, making Kano a potential magnet for business travelers (Aliyu & Ibrahim, 2023).

According to Basaran (2016), cognitive image concerns an individual's beliefs and knowledge about a destination's attributes. These attributes may include natural attractions, cultural heritage, and built environments like local architecture and infrastructure (Lam et al., 2024). In Kano, the cognitive image is bolstered by its rich cultural heritage, including landmarks such as the Great Mosque of Kano and the Emir's Palace, as well as its vibrant markets like Kurmi and Wudil Market, which is one of the oldest in Africa.

Agapito et al. (2013) suggest that a destination's personality, derived from its cognitive image, can be used as a viable tool for branding and shaping a unique identity for tourism destinations. For Kano, this could involve highlighting its historical significance, economic opportunities, and cultural richness to create a distinctive identity that resonates with business travelers. Successful implementations have been seen in destinations like Spain and Paris, perceived as welcoming and romantic destinations. Similarly, Kano can leverage its unique attributes to build a strong cognitive image that appeals to business travelers.

Affective Image: Affective destination image is defined as the emotional response individuals have toward a destination, reflecting their feelings about the place (Papadimitriou et al., 2015). In Kano State, the affective image is shaped by emotional perceptions such as safety, hospitality, and cultural appeal. For example, the warmth and hospitality of Kano's residents, combined with its rich cultural traditions, can evoke feelings of excitement and curiosity among potential visitors.

Qu et al. (2011) explained a model that categorizes affective image into both positive (exciting, pleasant, relaxing) and negative (gloomy, distressing, unpleasant) dimensions, highlighting the emotional spectrum of destination image. In Kano, the affective image can be enhanced by emphasizing its cultural festivals, such as the Durbar festival, which showcases the state's rich heritage and creates a sense of excitement and pride among visitors.

Marques et al. (2021) highlighted that the affective image is strongly linked to the notion of personal value responses, indicating that tourists' emotional interpretations of destinations are subjective and influenced by pre-established perceptions. These emotional reactions significantly shape tourist behavior, including destination choice and satisfaction levels. For Kano, fostering positive affective perceptions through effective marketing and storytelling can enhance its appeal as a business destination.

Conative Image: The conative image refers to the behavioral intentions of travelers, such as their willingness to visit or revisit a destination. In Kano State, the conative image is influenced by the cognitive and affective dimensions, as well as the overall experience of the destination. For instance, business travelers who perceive Kano as having modern conference facilities, reliable transportation networks, and a thriving business environment are more likely to develop positive intentions to visit (Basaran, 2016; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010).

According to Stylos et al. (2016), the conative component of destination image is directly linked to behavior, as it reflects the decision-making phase where travelers select a destination based on their perceptions and evaluations. In Kano, enhancing the conative image involves addressing key factors such as safety, infrastructure, and hospitality to ensure that business travelers have a positive experience and are likely to return or recommend the destination to others.

Ullah et al. (2022) noted that travelers' conative destination image is shaped by their emotional solidarity with the residents, as well as their attachment to the place, in addition to the cognitive and affective dimensions. For Kano, fostering a sense of connection and belonging among business travelers through cultural immersion and personalized experiences can strengthen the conative image and drive repeat visits.

Multi-Sensory Image: A multi-sensory image, as a dimension of destination image, refers to the holistic perception of a place through sensory engagement, encompassing sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch (Trang et al., 2023). In Kano State, the multi-sensory image can be enhanced by leveraging its rich cultural and sensory experiences. For example, the visual appeal of Kano's historic landmarks, such as the Great Mosque and the Emir's Palace, can be complemented by the auditory experience of traditional Hausa music and the olfactory appeal of local cuisine, such as suya and masa.

According to Tuominen (2023), a multi-sensory approach underscores the role that each sensory input plays in creating a deeply immersive and memorable experience for visitors. In Kano, this could involve curating aesthetically appealing public spaces with local art, green areas, and well-maintained urban infrastructure that present a clean and attractive environment for tourists. Hosting local music festivals or live performances in open spaces could enrich the auditory experience, making cultural immersion accessible to visitors.

Furthermore, promoting regional culinary experiences through food festivals or street food markets could showcase the unique flavors and aromas of Kano's cuisine, creating lasting olfactory and gustatory memories. Tactile engagement can be enhanced by providing opportunities for visitors to interact with locally crafted goods and even participate in workshops, offering an experiential dimension that links tourists directly with the local culture and craftsmanship.

By strategically integrating these sensory elements, Kano can craft a multi-sensory destination image that sets it apart and enhances its appeal to business travelers. This comprehensive approach not only enriches the overall travel experience but also strengthens the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of destination image, making Kano a competitive and attractive destination for business tourism.

3. Business Travel Choice and Kano as a Destination

Business travel choice is a complex decision-making process influenced by a combination of tangible and intangible factors. According to Swarbrooke and Horner (2012), key determinants include the availability of business facilities, connectivity, safety, and the overall appeal of the destination. For business travelers, the cognitive image of a destination—such as its infrastructure, economic opportunities, and accessibility—plays a critical role in shaping their perceptions and decisions (Basaran, 2016). Additionally, the affective image, which encompasses emotional responses like safety and hospitality, further influences their willingness to visit (Tosun et al., 2015). Conative image, reflecting the intention to visit or revisit, is also a significant factor, as it directly links perceptions to actual behavior (Stylos et al., 2016).

In the context of Kano State, these factors are particularly relevant. Kano's strategic position as a historic commercial hub in Northern Nigeria, coupled with its growing infrastructure and economic opportunities, positions it as a potential destination for business travelers. However, challenges such as insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and limited marketing efforts have hindered its ability to fully capitalize on its potential (Ladan, 2023). Addressing these challenges while leveraging Kano's strengths is essential to enhancing its appeal as a business destination.

Kano State, often referred to as the "Centre of Commerce" in Northern Nigeria, boasts a rich history as a major trading hub dating back to the trans-Saharan trade era. Today, it remains a vital economic center, with key industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, and trade driving its economy. The state's strategic location, coupled with its extensive road network and the Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport, provides a solid foundation for attracting business travelers. Additionally, Kano's vibrant markets, such as the Kurmi Market and Kantin Kwari Market, are said to be among the largest in West Africa, offering unique opportunities for commerce and investment. Kano's potential as a business destination is further enhanced by its cultural richness and historical significance. Landmarks such as the Great Mosque of Kano, the Emir's Palace, and the Gidan Makama Museum showcase the state's heritage, providing a unique backdrop for business events and conferences. The annual Durbar festival, a colorful cultural celebration, adds to Kano's appeal by offering business travelers a chance to experience the state's traditions and hospitality.

Despite these strengths, Kano faces challenges in fully realizing its potential as a business travel destination. Insecurity, particularly in the form of insurgency and banditry, has deterred some travelers, while inadequate infrastructure, such as unreliable power supply and poor road conditions, has limited the state's competitiveness. Furthermore, limited marketing efforts have resulted in a lack of awareness about Kano's business opportunities and cultural attractions among potential visitors.

4. Strengths of Kano's Destination Image

Economic Opportunities: Kano's status as a commercial hub offers significant economic opportunities for business travelers. The state's thriving agricultural sector, particularly in the production of crops such as groundnuts, cotton, and sesame, provides a strong foundation for agribusiness investments. Additionally, its manufacturing sector, which includes textiles, leather goods, and processed foods, presents opportunities for partnerships and trade.

Cultural and Historical Appeal: Kano's rich cultural heritage and historical landmarks contribute to its unique destination image. The Great Mosque of Kano, the Emir's Palace, and the Gidan Makama Museum are not only tourist attractions but also symbols of the state's identity and pride (Tosun et al., 2015). These cultural assets can be leveraged to create memorable experiences for business travelers, enhancing their overall perception of the destination.

Strategic Location and Connectivity: Kano's strategic location in Northern Nigeria, coupled with its extensive road network and international airport, makes it a accessible destination for business travelers. The Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport serves as a gateway to the region, facilitating both domestic and international travel.

5. Challenges of Kano's Destination Image

Insecurity: With issues such as insurgency and banditry, Northern Nigeria has collectively faced security challenges in the past, which has impacted travellers' perception of the region, despite Kano itself being safe for travelers. Additionally, negative media representation of the state has also influenced it attractiveness to tourists. Addressing these security concerns is critical to improving the state's destination image and attracting more visitors.

Inadequate Infrastructure: Despite its potential, Kano's infrastructure is often inadequate to meet the needs of business travelers. Issues such as unreliable power supply due to the region's unhealthy dependence on the national grid—which is prone to poor management and subsequent collapse—as well as limited conference facilities hinder the state's ability to compete with other business destinations.

Limited Marketing Efforts: Kano's destination image is further weakened by limited marketing efforts, which have resulted in a lack of awareness about its business opportunities and cultural attractions. Kano's attractions appear not to be as prominently featured in national and international tourism campaigns as they could be, leading to lower awareness among potential tourists. Effective marketing strategies, including digital campaigns and partnerships with travel agencies, are needed to promote Kano as a viable business destination.

Kano State possesses significant potential as a business travel destination, driven by its economic opportunities, cultural richness, and strategic location. However, challenges such as insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and limited marketing efforts have hindered its ability to fully capitalize on this potential. By addressing these challenges and leveraging its strengths, Kano can enhance its destination image and attract more business travelers. This, in turn, will contribute to the state's economic growth and position it as a competitive hub for business tourism in Nigeria.

6. Implications of The Study

This study has explored the relationship between destination image and business travel choice, with a specific focus on Kano State, Nigeria. The findings highlight the critical role of destination image in shaping business travelers' decisions, emphasizing the importance of cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory dimensions. Kano's rich cultural heritage, economic opportunities, and strategic location position it as a potential hub for business tourism. However, challenges such as insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and limited marketing efforts have hindered its ability to fully capitalize on this potential. Addressing these challenges while leveraging Kano's strengths is essential to enhancing its appeal as a business destination.

The study also underscores the applicability of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) in understanding how business travelers' perceptions and social influences shape their travel decisions. By examining the cognitive, affective, conative, and multi-sensory dimensions of destination image, this study provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the factors that influence business travel choice.

7. Theoretical Contributions

Integration of TRA and Destination Image: This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of destination image by integrating the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) into the analysis of business travel choice. It demonstrates how cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of destination image align with TRA's constructs of attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral intentions, providing a robust framework for future research.

Multi-Sensory Dimension of Destination Image: The study introduces the concept of multi-sensory image as an additional dimension of destination image, building on recent research by Trang et al. (2023). This dimension highlights the importance of sensory experiences—such as visual, auditory, and olfactory stimuli—in shaping travelers' perceptions and decisions, offering a more holistic understanding of destination image.

Contextual Insights for Emerging Destinations: By focusing on Kano State, this study provides valuable insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by emerging business destinations in developing economies. It contributes to the growing body of literature on destination image by offering a contextualized perspective that can inform future studies in similar regions.

8. Practical Contributions

Strategies for Enhancing Kano's Destination Image

The study offers actionable recommendations for enhancing Kano's attractiveness as a business travel destination. These include improving infrastructure, enhancing security, implementing effective marketing strategies, and promoting cultural and sensory experiences. These strategies can serve as a roadmap for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to position Kano as a competitive hub for business tourism.

Role of Stakeholders: The study emphasizes the importance of collaboration among stakeholders, including the government, private sector, hospitality industry, local communities, and international partners. By working together, these stakeholders can address existing challenges and capitalize on Kano's strengths to attract more business travelers.

Policy Implications: The findings of this study have significant implications for policy formulation. For instance, the government can establish a dedicated tourism development agency to coordinate efforts and allocate resources effectively. Additionally, offering incentives such as tax breaks and grants can attract private sector investments in hospitality and tourism infrastructure.

9. Areas for Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between destination image and business travel choice, several areas warrant further exploration:

Comparative Studies: Future research could compare Kano's destination image with that of other emerging business destinations in Nigeria and beyond. Such comparisons can provide a broader understanding of the factors that influence business travel choice in different contexts.

Longitudinal Studies: Longitudinal studies can track changes in Kano's destination image over time, particularly in response to interventions such as infrastructure improvements and marketing campaigns. This can help assess the effectiveness of these interventions and inform future strategies.

Cultural and Social Influences: Further research could delve deeper into the cultural and social factors that influence business travelers' perceptions of Kano. For instance, how do cultural differences between domestic and international travelers affect their destination image and travel choices?

10 CONCLUSION

This study has highlighted the critical role of destination image in shaping business travel choice, with a specific focus on Kano State. By leveraging its economic opportunities, cultural richness, and strategic location, Kano has the potential to become a competitive hub for business tourism. However, addressing challenges such as insecurity, inadequate infrastructure, and limited marketing efforts is essential to realizing this potential. The findings of this study provide valuable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and researchers, offering a roadmap for enhancing Kano's destination image and attracting more business travelers. Through collaborative efforts and strategic interventions, Kano can transform its destination image, contribute to the economic growth of the region, and establish itself as a premier destination for business tourism in Nigeria.

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