



## EVALUATION OF THE IMPACTS OF BOKO HARAM ACTIVITIES ON THE PATRONAGE OF YANKARI GAME RESERVE, BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined the temporal pattern of tourists' patronage at Yankari Game Reserve before and after the emergence of Boko Haram between 2000 and 2019. Data for this study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were gotten through the administration of structured questionnaire. The result indicated that 90.0% of the tourists alleged that bombings and suicide attack carried out respectively by the Boko Haram sect made them not to visit the reserve in about five years. In addition, 72.5.0% affirmed that stories and news feeds of massacre orchestrated by Boko Haram have reduced their rate of patronage of the tourist site. T-test was employed to test the hypothesis. Findings revealed that there is a significant difference ( $t = 6.010, p < 0.05$ ) in the temporal pattern of tourist patronage before and after the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency. The study has shown that Boko Haram activities have affected tourist patronage of Yankari Game Reserve. It is recommended that the Nigerian government should strategize on how to put an end to the Boko Haram crisis in the northeastern part of the country which could lead to increases in tourist patronage of Yankari Game Reserve.*

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### 1.0 Introduction

Tourism sector has a great potential to distribute wealth and promotes regional development, creates a high multiplier effect and generates varying consumption of goods and services. Globally, tourism plays an essential role in the growth and economic expansion of any country. Tourism helps in the generation of foreign exchange and serves as source of income to local people who reside within the tourism environs. Tourism is one of the largest sectors in the world. It is also one of the first to be affected by terrorist attacks (Caroline, 2015). Tourism is a multifaceted activity that encourages the movement of people to reside in destinations outside their usual place of habitation. According to Cook (2011), tourism is a brief movement of people to target areas outside their usual places of works and abode; the activities carried out, during their stay in the place of destinations and facilities therein takes care of their needs. As a result, the whole tourism industry entails the act of traveling, staying in the hotel, transiting and provision of security, warmth and general peaceful environment.

Curiously, while tourism is cited as one of the world's largest industry (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2016), it could be one of the most fragile industry that is highly vulnerable to the repercussions of the ongoing terrorist threat. Terrorism has been a topic of concern in global politics and peace. Terrorism is the illegal form of hostility conducted to accumulate ransom, bring down a government, obtain the release of the hostages, ensure the total breakdown of

economic activities or penalize the non-believers of religion and much more (Ball *et al.*, 2013). Terrorist activities in Chad, Niger and Cameroon, have been impacting negatively on the security, socio-political and economic situations in the region (Joseph, 2016). The terrorists reportedly targeted these countries for attacks in retaliation for their participation in the regional joint task force and for their audacity to support Nigeria's efforts in quelling the insurgency (Enobi and Johnson-Rokosu, 2016). According to Serge Eric Epoune, a spokesman for Cameroon's Ministry of Tourism, noted that people do visit tourist sites in their thousands, but that number has dwindled because people fear for their lives. It has therefore jeopardized Cameroon's financial revenues. The economy of Lake Chad Basin has been adversely affected by the Boko Haram insurgency (Joseph, 2016). Mukesh and Priyanka (2014) opined that despite the economic strength of tourism, terrorism and political turmoil present major challenges to the industry. Terrorist activities have significant effect on international tourism of a country and are also the largest economic factor in the equation between terror and foreign tourism. This implies that terrorism, no doubt, has an effect on the flow of foreign exchange into a country as a result of its impact on international tourism. The increase in terrorist activity is causing a decline in foreign direct investment in that country.

Nigeria is not an exception because it has numerous tourist sites that have remained important and unique for sightseeing over the years. One great example of the tourist sites is the Yankari Game Reserve. Insurgency in the Northeast of Nigeria was waged by the Boko Haram group. Bintube (2015) noted that Boko Haram is an insurgent Islamic group known as Jama'atul Ahalul Sunna Waljama'a Lidda a' Wati Wal Jihadi (JASWAL JIHAD). The persistent increase in the extent of the despicable activities of the Insurgent Boko Haram sect in the northeastern part of Nigeria since 2009 has had unpleasant humanitarian consequences for the region (Imasuen, 2015). Businesses and life in the communities wrecked by the insurgency have been typically horrible and marked by violence. Since the beginning of the terrorist activities, the northeastern states have been completely devoid of civil normalcy as there is evidence of displacement in population, a refugee catastrophe, inadequate medical facilities and loss of livelihoods. The sect usually carries out irregular hit-and-run attacks, and according to Nnamdi *et al.* (2015), the insurgents develop new brutal tactics of bombing, targeted shooting, ensnaring and cutting the throats of victims. The Islamic group usually attacks "security operatives, Christians, traditional leaders, politicians, schoolchildren and teachers, Islamic scholars, public servants, traders and lately, anyone who is not a member" (Nnamdi *et al.*, 2015). These operations resulting in mass deaths have attracted international outcry and condemnation.

Nwolise (2009) conceptualizes security to involve the deployment and use of military resources by society to support its values when faced with threats and challenges from both internal and external sources. Richmond (2012) saw the contemporary perspective of security as a change from the centric state to a people-centric approach, where the human population is regarded as a reference for security. He promotes efforts to counteract threats to human security by improving the effects of poverty, unemployment, armed conflicts and human rights violation on the population. The relationship between tourism and security revolves around concepts relating to the nature of tourism-related security incidents and crises; concepts relating to the impact of

security incidents and crises on the tourism industry, the tourists and host communities; and concepts relating to the short, medium and long-term reactions of all tourism stakeholders to existing and potential security incidents and crises (Pizam and Mansfeld, 1996 as cited in Boulal, 2017). As regards the potential impact on tourism, Pizam and Mansfeld (1996) identified crime-related incidents, terrorism, war and civil/political unrest as safety incidents that could have a negative impact on the host communities, the tourism industry and the tourists. They observed that the impact of security incidents on tourism, tourists and host communities is directly correlated with the severity of the incidents. The number of security incidents within a given period of time as well as their frequency determines how serious the effects could be on tourism growth. A high recurrence of safety occurrences causes changes in the reservation and cancellation behaviour of tourists, selective spatial behaviour in the affected destination and other tourism demand characteristics (Hall et al., 2004; Mathew and Fada, 2014).

The link between tourism and terrorism is indisputable in the present era as a result of the strength of the industry and the reality that tourists' destination sites are ultimate targets for rebel attacks intended to cause huge amounts of social and economic disorder. Many countries in Africa have the prospective of becoming the foremost traveler destination on earth with the demand rising at 10.1% yearly as estimated by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Soergel (2016) reported that Matthias Fekl, France's Minister of State for Foreign Trade, promotion of tourism and French nationals abroad, told French media that the nation had seen a 10 per cent drop in international travelers' overnight stays during the first half of 2016 compared with the same period a year earlier. A sensational illustration of tourism being harmed by a single event was an attack in Tunisia on 26 June, 2015 at the tourist resort of Port El Kantaoui, about 10 kilometers north of the city of Sousse, where a gunman killed 38 tourists on the beach, 30 of whom were British (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2016). The insecurity in the northeast within which Bauchi State falls, calls for an investigation into the effect the activities of Boko Haram have on the level of patronage of the Yankari Game Reserve.

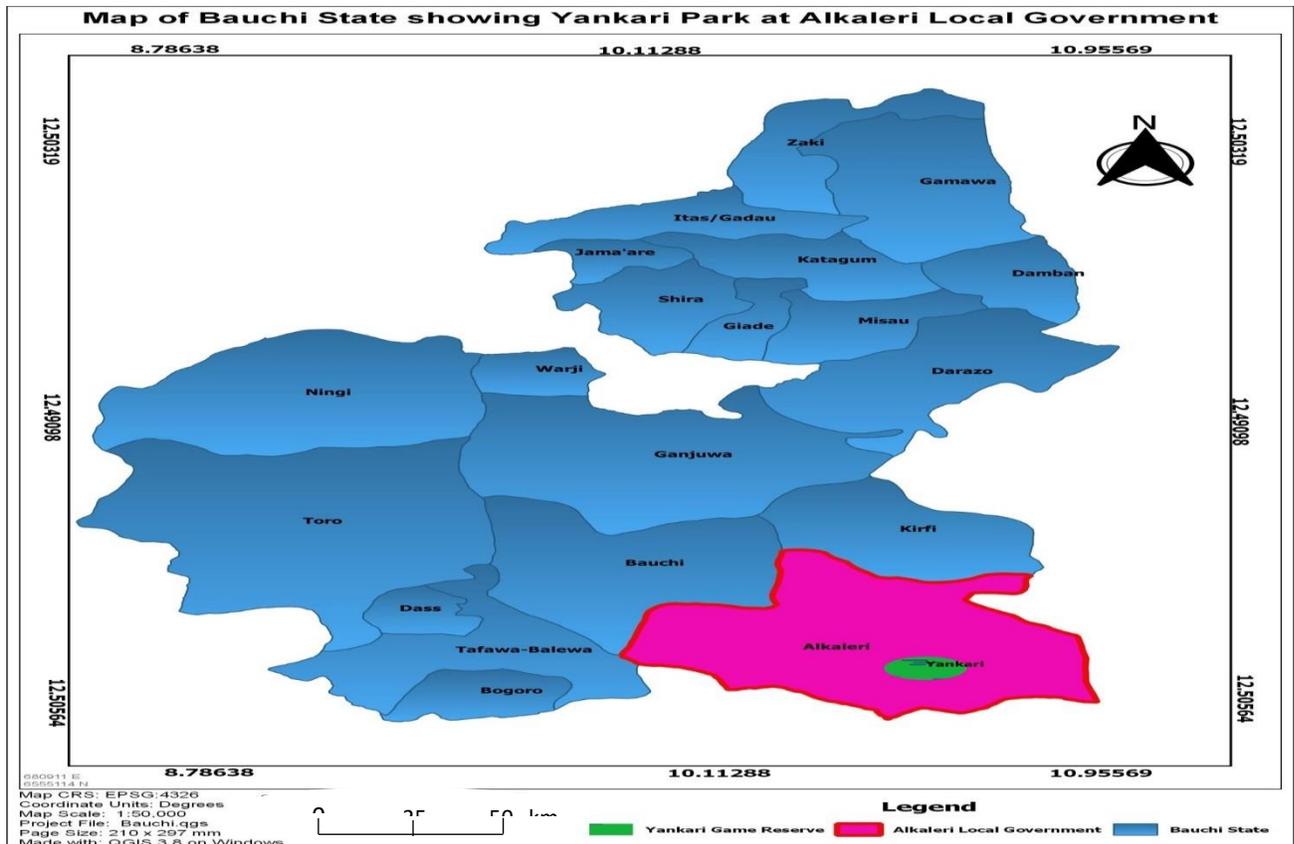
The aim of this study is to assess the effects of Boko Haram activities on the patronage of Yankari Game Reserve with the objectives to examine tourists' perception on the effect of Boko Haram activities on patronage as well as assessing the staff's perception on the effect of Boko Haram activities on patronage of Yankari Game Reserve. A null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the temporal pattern of tourist patronage before and after the emergence of Boko Haram was also tested. The area chosen for this study is justifiable because it is situated in the northeastern part of Nigeria where the activities of Boko Haram have been on the increase since 2009. Moreover, this study deals on a topical issue that is of global concern in the sense that most countries of the world have experienced or are experiencing terrorists' activities in one form or the other. The paper is organized as follows, Section I contains the introduction, Section II contain the study area, Section III contains the methodology, Section IV contains the results and discussion of findings, Section V contains the conclusion and recommendations, while Section VI contains the references.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1 Study Area**

Yankari Game Reserve can be found in south-central Bauchi State in the northeastern Nigeria (Figure 1). It covers an area of about 2,244 square kilometers (866 sq mi). The entire park lies on the Kerri development, of tertiary age, which is made up of sandstone, silt stones, kaolinites and grits. Under this lies the Gombe formation, of Cretaceous age, made up of sandstones, silt stones, and ironstones. The valleys of the Gaji, Yashi and Yuli Rivers are loaded up with Alluvium of later age. Sandy loams and clayey soils of riverine alluvium happen in the valley of the Gaji Yashi and Yuli rivers. East of the Gaji valley is a 5–7 km wide band of extremely unfortunate sandy soils that aid a shrub savanna formation. It is likewise an area of moving slopes, mostly between 200m and 400m. Kariyo Hill is the most elevated point at 640m. In the dry season, bigger natural life in the recreation area relies upon the Gaji River and its tributaries for survival (Abdullahi *et al.*, 2009). Annual rainfall in the park is between 900mm and 1,000mm ((Abdullahi *et al.*, 2009). Yankari Game Reserve is Nigeria's biggest game reserve which boasts of a wide variety of plant and animal species. Yankari is within the Sudan savannah vegetation zone with diverse flora and fauna, a historic site and infrastructural facilities. Yankari Game Reserve is one of the few places where Eco tourists are guaranteed to see diverse and varied wildlife species at most times of the year, in this way Yankari is the chief nature travel industry destination in Nigeria and plays a critical role in the development and promotion of tourism and ecotourism in particular in Nigeria.

Yankari is home to several natural warm water springs and its location in the heartland of the West African savanna makes it remarkable for sightseers and holidaymakers to see wildlife in its natural habitat. In 1956, the Reserve was chosen for a game reserve and in 1962, the Yankari Game Reserve was officially launched for public sightseeing. It is in fact one of the leading eco-conservation sites in Nigeria and one of the top emergent and admired eco-tourism target tourism locations in West Africa (Umar *et al.*, 2015). The recreation area's principle entrance is at Mainamaji village, about 29 km from Dindima. It is situated within the Duguri, Pali and Gwana districts of Alkaleri LGA, Bauchi State. This LGA has a populace of 208,202 involving an absolute land area of 7,457.78 square kilometres (Ogunjinmi *et al.*, 2008).



**Figure 1:** Map of Bauchi State showing Alkaleri L.G.A and Yankari Game Reserve

## 2.2 Methods

Data for this study were obtained from primary and secondary sources. The sets of primary data were sourced through the administration of structured questionnaires to respondents. The questionnaire contained questions on the level of patronage before and after the emergence of Boko Haram among others. The secondary data includes data on the temporal distribution of tourist patronage between 2000 to 2009 and after the emergence of Boko Haram (2010 to 2019). This data was collected from the record office in Yankari Game Reserve as well as other available published data sources. Specifically, a t-test was employed to test the hypothesis. For the questionnaire administration, one hundred and eighty-two persons were sampled (142 staff and 40 tourists). The questionnaire administration was carried out within five days as staff come to work on routine. As such, repeated visits were made to the area to cover a good number of staff and tourists. All copies of the questionnaire were administered and returned with the help of three research assistants.

## 3.0 Results and Discussion

The result showed that male tourists constituted 62.5% of the total tourists, while females were 37.5% at the time of the survey. This implies that even in the midst of fear and uncertainty, men take more risk than the women. However, quite a number of the tourists who patronized the game reserve during the persistent Boko Haram activities were males while females constituted a smaller percentage. Similarly, staff gender indicated that 78.2% were males, while 21.8% were females. The high number of male staff may not be unconnected with the nature of the reserve

as well as the religious belief of the people which prohibits women to work in certain places tagged as unholy. Another reason might be that men being the stronger vessel must always provide for their families.

The results also showed that none of the tourists was below the age of 18 years, 12.5% were between the ages of 18 – 27 years; 45.0% were between the ages of 28 – 37 years, while 42.5% were above 38 years. This age bracket is however significant as young adults tend to explore many areas or tourism sites. The curiosity to see certain phenomenon of interest makes many young tourists to explore sites irrespective of their security challenges. This can be likened to the situation reported here where despite the security challenges in the northeast, tourists still make visits to the game reserve. For the staff of the game reserve, the results showed that 14.1% were within the ages of 18 – 27 years; 45.1% were within the ages of 28 – 37 years, while 40.8% were above 38 years. The information shown here implies that majority of the staff fall within the ages of 28 years and above.

The educational qualification of tourists and staff of the game reserve varies ranging from no formal education to tertiary education. The result indicated that majority (52.5%) of the respondents had Masters and PhD, this was followed by respondents with OND/HND/BSc (30.0%) followed by respondents with primary education (10.0%), while only a few (7.5%) had secondary education. On the side of staff, the results indicated that majority (30.3%) of the staff had OND/HND/BSc (first degrees in different disciplines), 23.2% had secondary education, 25.4% had primary education, and 7.7% had Master's degrees while 13.4% have no formal education. This result suggested that most of the respondents were knowledgeable enough to understand and give responses pertaining the issue of insecurity in Yankari Game Reserve.

### **3.1 Tourist's perception on the effect of Boko Haram activities on patronage**

The result shows that tourists have varied perceptions on the activities of Boko Haram insurgents which have impacted negatively on the game reserve. From the result, 47.5% opined that they were first discouraged from making trip to the game reserve due to the increasing kidnapping in the region. The kidnapping in the area as at that time was high and this actually put fears in the mind of tourists which affected their choice of destination to the reserve. The result also indicated that 90.0% of the tourists alleged that bombings and suicide attacks carried out respectively by the Boko Haram sect made them not to visit the reserve in about five years especially from 2010 to 2015

Hence, as noted by the tourists, these two operations (bombings and suicide attacks) carried out by the Islamic Sect affected their visit to the game reserve during that period especially from 2010 to 2015. In addition, 72.5.0% affirmed that stories and news feeds of massacre orchestrated by Boko Haram have reduced their rate of patronage of the tourist site. As noted above, the stories of massacre carried by Boko Haram are reported in international newspapers and published online as well as different social media platforms made tourists to have bad feelings concerning Nigeria and this affected their destination to the site. From the result also, 55.0% of the tourists alleged that the deplorable infrastructures such as roads and electricity affected their choice of destination to the game reserve.

The overall percentage response indicates that a good number of the respondents (92.3%) affirmed that the aforementioned activities carried out by Boko Haram actually affected their desire to visit the game reserve in recent years. Similarly, Chothia (2012) noted that Boko Haram Islamic sect have caused massive destruction through series of bombings, bloodbath, suicides and major damage of infrastructural facilities and these have negative impact on foreign arrivals. This means that these activities have direct and indirect impacts on tourists' patronage to the reserve. The findings above was justified by Butler (1980) when he argued that a momentous proportion of tourists to a given tourist site decreases as a result of social conflicts or increased level of insecurity.

However, in the past seven years, the patronage level of the once highly visited Game Reserve in West Africa has dwindled as a result of the increase in terrorism orchestrated by the activities of Boko Haram. These activities characterized by bombing, suicide attacks, kidnapping, massacres and destruction of infrastructure (Eme and Ibietan, 2012; Bintube, 2015) have put fear in the hearts of tourists and this has effects on their resolve to choose the area as a tourist location cum tourist arrival. Compared to other business sectors, tourism is the most uncovered business sector vulnerable to social conflicts (Krol et al., 2000). Tribe (2010) stated that social conflicts could have an effect on tourism in terms of inadequate business approach, redundancy in employment, inadequate infrastructure and destruction of properties. In a similar manner, Butler (1980) noted that a significant number of tourists to a given tourist site may decrease as a result of social conflicts.

The operations of Boko Haram in the northeastern region have had a spillover effect on tourism activities in Bauchi State. This is because the waves of violence, carnage and destruction of infrastructure have dissuaded tourists from choosing the Yankari Game Reserve as their destination. The patronage level of the game reserve is seriously affected because no tourist will visit a destination that is unsecured and characterized by suicide attacks, bombings and kidnappings. The reduction in the number of tourists visiting the game reserve as a result of the happenings in the northeast has negatively impacted on the revenue of this tourist site in particular and Bauchi State in general. This is so because tourists are forced to cancel their bookings and appointments including room reservations as a result of the threats of Boko Haram (Suleiman, 2011).

### **3.2 Years of service or employment**

The result showed that 7.7% had been employed in the reserve for 1 – 3 years, 26.8% had been working in the reserve for 4 - 6yrs, 21.1%% had been working in the reserve for 7 – 10yrs; 26.8% had been working for 11 – 13yrs, while 17.6% had been staff of the game reserve for more than 13years. This information indicated that most of the staff interviewed have been working in the game reserve for more than 3yrs, which implies that they have adequate knowledge on tourists' patronage to the game reserve. Since they have been working long and even during the peak of the Boko Haram activities, they would be able to give precise and detailed information on how the activities have impacted or affected tourists' visits to the reserve.

### 3.3 Staff's perception on the effect of Boko Haram activities on patronage

Like the tourists, the staff of the Yankari Game Reserve has varied discernment concerning the effects of Boko Haram activities on tourists' patronage.

The result shows that 91.5% of the respondents affirmed that they have worked in the game reserve for years now and have not experienced Boko Haram activities while 8.4% refuted the claim. This implies that there has never been any form of Boko Haram activity in Yankari Game Reserve. Similarly, all the respondents alleged that tourists' level of patronage to the game reserve was high before the emergence of Boko Haram and have drastically fallen since the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency. Nevertheless, the result implies that tourists' level of patronage has considerably declined since the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency. On the other hand, the result indicated that 52.8% were of the opinion that tourist's low patronage to the game reserve has affected the staff of the Game Reserve psychologically, economically and emotionally, while 47.2% held a contrary viewpoint as they believed that tourist low patronage has nothing to do with them psychological, economically and emotionally. Furthermore, 65.5% of the respondents held the opinion that tourists' patronage has no effect on flora and fauna composition of the Game Reserve while 34.5% of the respondents had different opinion as to that regards.

### 3.4 Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant difference in the temporal pattern of tourist patronage before and after the emergence of Boko Haram.

The t-test result in Table I showed that the probability value of 0.000 is less than a 5% (0.05) significance level; based on this result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate accepted. It therefore shows that there is a significant difference in the temporal pattern of tourist patronage before and after the emergence of Boko Haram ( $t = 6.010$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This means that tourist patronage in the two time periods differs significantly. A look at the mean values further shows that patronage level was higher before the emergence of Boko Haram but declined immediately after the emergence of Boko Haram.

**Table I:** T-test result of temporal pattern of tourist patronage to Yankari Game Reserve before and after the emergence of Boko Haram

Temporal scale	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Sig (2-tailed)
Before Boko Haram	10	34645.86	7029.08	6.010*	0.000
After Boko Haram	10	14672.00	5283.44		

\*Difference between means is significant at 5% alpha level;  $df = 20$

It is clear that terrorism is major challenge that has affected the rate of tourism patronage in Nigeria. This is in agreement with the findings of Deemua and Ogujiofor (2013), who stressed that any tourist destination with a record of terrorist attacks has a reduced number of visitors due to the fear of being attacked. It was further stressed that the tourism industry is susceptible to shocks such as terror attacks or the incidence of infectious disease which shape the risk perception of the destination countries. Some countries recover quickly from terrorist attacks while others do not. This is backed up by the study carried out by Pizam and Fleischer (2002) when the authors stress that significant effects of terrorism on tourism usually occur with a bit

of a time delay within three to nine months following an attack and vary in length of time. They also found that certain countries recover relatively quickly from terror attacks if they are not followed by additional attacks. Repeated terror attacks, however, can result in a lasting decline in tourist demand or wipe it out entirely.

Similarly, Nnamdi et al. (2015) assert that the various activities of Boko Haram have damaged properties and lives have been destroyed, banks and business burgled, and police stations and infrastructure damaged. This concurs with the findings of this study which asserts that in the past seven years, the patronage level of the once highly visited Game Reserve in West Africa has dwindled as a result of the increased terrorist activities orchestrated by Boko Haram. These activities characterized by bombings, suicide attacks, kidnappings, massacres and destruction of infrastructure (Eme and Ibietan, 2012; Bintube, 2015) have put fear in the mind of tourists and this has effects on their resolve to choose the area as a tourist location cum tourist arrival. The persistent insecurity risk posed by the Boko Haram sect has greatly affected the growth of tourism in the Yankari Game Reserve as a result of gross insecurity. The killings and abduction of people have also worsened the situation in the area, thereby affecting tourist patronage.

Boko Haram terrorism has resulted in a drastic reduction in economic investment in the region. In the wake of the crisis in the country, many international agencies and countries began to issue travel warnings to their citizens about the dangers involved in visiting and doing business in some parts of the country (Joseph, 2016). The government of the United States fired the first shot of warning to its citizens about the risks of going to Nigeria. This situation has had grave consequences for the economic development of the country, as the insurgency has further damaged Nigeria's profile as a desirable destination for investment, travel, tourism, scholarship and migration.

## **Conclusion**

This study evaluated the temporal pattern of tourists' patronage at Yankari Game Reserve before and after the emergence of Boko Haram between 2000 and 2019. Data for this study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were gotten through the administration of structured questionnaire. The hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the temporal pattern of tourist patronage before and after the emergence of Boko Haram was tested using the Independent Samples Test. The result revealed that there is a significant difference ( $t = 6.010$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) in the temporal pattern of tourist patronage before and after the emergence of the Boko Haram insurgency. The study has shown that Boko Haram activities have effects on tourist patronage of Yankari Game Reserve. Each of the activities carried out by Boko Haram has exerted a great influence on tourists' decision to visit the game reserve in the past 7 years.

This study recommends that the Nigerian government should improve on security. As a matter of fact, security in and out airports and tourism sites in the northeast (Yankari Game Reserve) should be beefed. For the Yankari Game Reserve, the state government should make the necessary effort to secure all the territorial boundaries of the reserve and ensure strict screening of tourists to the reserve. In addition, the government should strategize on how to put an end

to the Boko Haram crisis which will in turn lead to an increase in tourist patronage of the northeast, especially Yankari Game Reserve. The government should also devise means of convincing investors and business organizations to invest in the area by promising them maximum security. Moreover, the management of the game reserve can increase patronage by making the reserve more attractive and fun to be at. More state-of-the-art facilities should be constructed to meet the demands and needs of the tourists.

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