

THE IMPACT OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Faith Nkhem Okobia, Ph D

*Department of Religious Studies, University of Delta, Agbor
Delta State, Nigeria*

Abstract

Religious tourism involves faith based activities and travel to holy places. Most religious programmes organized by some religious bodies in Nigeria attract tourists from all over the world which have contributed immensely to the economic development of the nation. Religious tourism improves the economy and general well being of the citizens, enrich the host community and provide employment for many people. It has become the highest earner of foreign exchange for the country. Therefore the religious bodies should upgrade their facilities and provide basic social amenities in tourist centres.

Keywords: Religion, Tourism and economic development.

Religious tourism is considered as one of the largest industries in the world today which create employment, promotes and propagates the gospel and a country's tourism resources. Most of the religious programmes organized by different religious bodies in Nigeria constitute serious tourist attractions which have been contributing to socio – economic development in the country. The programmes pull multitudes of national and international tourists who want to satisfy their spiritual yearning. As they come they get involved in many other cultural and recreational activities which may create avenues for establishing network that can be of use for economic activities such as trading relations with partners from other countries who belong to the same religious group which will stimulate economic growth. The main reasons for travelling are leisure, business, conventions, seminars, meetings, study abroad, religious purposes as well as sports or games. In the recent years, religious tourism has been on the increase with a growing number of people visiting historic places in the developed countries. This is attributed to the fact that religious obligations has become fashionable trend to people all over the world as a means of expressing beliefs and faith in the ability of God to protect and guide mankind. The religious practices both under the auspices of Christianity, Islam and traditional practices have in no small way contributed to the development tourism in the world. It is a known fact that the Christian pilgrimages to Israel has formed an economic platform for the empowerment of the localities and contributed to the economic growth of the country. Also, in Saudi Arabia, where many Islamic faithful converge twice every year for religious rituals, it has been a tremendous economic

benefit to the country and her people. With these scenarios and many others around the world, it has become valid that religious tourism can become a source of economic revival to a country and her people. Religious tourism is practiced not only in the developed countries, but also in developing countries (Vukonic, 2018). However, in Nigeria beyond allusions by government on the promotion of tourism, religion has continued to play a vital role in the development of tourism in the country. Many dignitaries have in recent times found Nigeria the essential balm to many of their spiritual problems, with many heads of government visiting Nigeria to seek solution. The growth of religious tourism in Nigeria has been enhanced by Christians, Islam and Traditional believers, through various festivals and programmes that have become tourist attractions for many, both within and outside Nigeria (Umejei, 2019). The method used in this study is historical method, which usually determines the past events of history to enable the interpretation of the events in the present and to predict the future. The historical method enables the researcher to trace the Genesis of religious tourism and its impact on economic development in Nigeria. Primary and secondary sources of data collection such as observation, books, journals, and Internets will also be used in this study.

Conceptual Framework

Religion according to Eelke (2018) is a shared set of beliefs, activities and institutions promised upon faith in supernatural forces. Agunwa (2017) defines religion as the whole complex of attitudes, convictions, emotions, rituals, beliefs and institutions by which we came to terms with and express, our most fundamental relationship with God and man. Religion is God centred and aims at bringing the human element under the control of the sacred. Religion regulates the lives of individuals in the society for peaceful co-existence.

Tourism

Ele, (2017) defines tourism as the temporary short-term movement of people to destinations outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. It is activities selected by choice and undertaken outside the home environment. Iheanacho (2018) defines tourism as the purposes and actions that are oriented towards leisure, recreation, business, religion and pilgrimage to another place with the intention to gather new information and experience to satisfy their needs. According to World Tourism Organization W.T.O. (2017), tourism industry is the world's largest and most diverse industry. In Nigeria religious tourism forms the main base of tourism industry. He also states that the dawn of history saw man as one who travels for the satisfaction of his desire, creation of opportunities, advancement of security and acquisition of knowledge in order to address the lacks which dominate his environment and improve his standard of living.

Religious Tourism

Religious tourism as a faith based tourism can be described as a unique type of tourism where by people travel either individually or in groups to visit different places for pilgrimage, missionary work, convention and conference in order to satisfy their spiritual yearning. Also religious tourism is travelling for the purpose of viewing religious monuments, artifacts, worship of God, and to acquire more spiritual power.

Economics: According to Agunwa (2017) is the science which studies human behaviour as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. Economics is the material aspect of human endeavour, that looks into how to satisfy the needs of man out of the scarce resources of money, food and production. This shows the essence of market which is the only place where produced goods can be sold or exchanged either through trade by barter or with money.

Economic Development

Anozie (2018) states that economic development is the process by which there is a long period of sustained growth in the per capital fundamental changes in the structure of the economy and an overall sustained improvement in the material well-being of the people. They maintained that economic development occurs if the rate of growth of real per capital income in the country is higher than the rate of growth of population, over a long period of time. It means an expansion of health and educational services and more persons having access to them. Economic development is followed by an increase in life expectancy and standard of living. Similarly Oguji and Kene (2019) assert that “economic development is the process of growth in total and per capital income accompanied by fundamental changes in the economy.

Religious Tourism in Nigeria

Ejizu (2019) states that religion is man’s experience of the holy and ultimate reality as well as the expression of that awareness in concrete life. Religion is humanity response to the divine. The response of man to the existence of being beyond him takes many forms hence the search for God and devotion to His cause through religious tourism. Ele (2017) states that Nigeria, has three dominant religions; namely: Christianity, African Traditional Religion and Islam. Nigeria as a country did not adopt any religion as a state religion. Hence, she is understood as a secular nation as entrenched in her constitution. There is freedom of religion affiliation on the platform of religious pluralism protected under her laws. Ele (2017) opines that one could easily identify two distinct dimensions of religious tourism in Nigeria, one is religious tourism in the domestic or local front within the country while the other is internationally oriented where Nigerians leave the country on religious tours to foreign countries. The other aspect of this international tourism is that Nigeria plays host to foreign pilgrims who come into the country for the fulfillment of their religious obligations or to find solace in

the miracles of the many Catholic, protestant and Pentecostal adorations, apparitions, conference, crusade and programmes. The great members who come into the country for the sake of her various religious activities such as *Eyo* festival in Lagos state, the *Mmanwu*, *Omabe* and *Odo* masquerades in Enugu State attest to tourism in African Traditional Religion. Others who visit shrines or groves believed to be inhabited by spirits are also many (OkonkwoandNzeh2019).

Some shrines that have tourism attractions in Nigeria for the practitioners of African Traditional Religion include *Adoro Ero (Alor)*, *Ube* Uhun owerre and *Api, Opi*, all in Nsukka cultural zone of Enugu State. These shrines have tourists who travel to them for various religious reasons such as reconciliation, oath-taking, covenant making and sacrifices.

Umejei (2019) opines that the numerous festivals in our traditional societies have given huge boosts to tourism in Nigeria. These include the Osun Osogbo festival. The Osun river goddess is believed to hold power to wealth and fertility, which many have found potent. The Osun Oshogbo festival is regarded as one of the prime cultural fiesta that most expatriates look forward to. The Argurgu Fishing festival is one of Nigeria's greatest cultural festivals, attracting over one million participants and has existed since 1934. In the Niger-Delta, the Udju Iwhurie festival popularly known as Agbasa juju festival, is a colourful display of heritage celebrated by the Agbara people of Warri in Delta State. The god of war, reputed for war prowess. It has been celebrated since time immemorial, with a display of matchetes and regalia. The display of valour by the locals make Agbasa Juju festival a festival to watch. The Iriji Festival, celebrated by the Igbo people of Nigeria to certify the new yam for consumption has become a cultural heritage which enjoys international reputation that's even foreigners participated and corporate organizations struggle to endorse, in a bid to identify with the pride of *Ndi Igbo*.

Religious Tourism in the Bible

Religious tourism according to Hirani (2018) is aimed at gaining spiritual satisfaction. It is the movement of people to sacred sites to witness or participate in one or more religious activities. The first religious tour in the bible was in 1 Samuel 1 verse 3 where Elkanah and his family travelled to Shiloh for yearly worship and sacrifice under the leadership of Eli the Priest. The Israelites from different places went to Jerusalem for the worship of God during the feast of Pentecost and Passover. In the New Testament, the three wise men or Magi from the East went to Bethlehem to worship Baby Jesus and gave Him three different gifts such as gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2: 1 – 12). The Bible also states that the earthly parents of Jesus, Mary and Joseph who were with Jesus went to Jerusalem every year for the feast of Passover (Luke 2:41) Jesus himself went to Jerusalem with his parents (Luke 2:1 – 43) later as an adult he was going there on his own. Jesus Christ fed the 5,000 religious tourists with five loaves of bread and two fishes and 4,000 with seven loaves of bread and few small fishes who gathered around him to hear the word of God on several occasions (Matthew 14: 13 – 21 and Mark 8: 1 -

8). Until the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 AD, the Jews in diaspora travel led down to Jerusalem for different feasts and worship of God.

The Classification of Religious Tourism

Ashiegbu and Achunike (2014) opine that the classification of tourism are based on either geography or objective. The geography-type is sub divided into domestic, in bound or regional and out bound or international tourisms. While the tourisms based on objective, intention or purpose include cultural tourism, nature tourism, sport tourism, business/economic tourism, educational tourism, healthy/medical tourism, leisure relaxation and recreational tourism, ecological tourism, and religious tourism. Religious tourism can best be described as a unique type of tourism whereby people travel either individually or in groups to visit different places for the purposes of missionary work or pilgrimage and other religious activities. Religious tourism comprises of many facts which include: Pilgrimages, Marian shrine visits, Missionary travel, Leisure (fellowship), crusades, conventions and rallies, retreats, monastery visits, Faith-based camp and Religious tourist attractions. Ele (2017) avails that Religious Tourism also called “Faith Tourism” is a form of tourism whereby people of faith travel individually or in groups for reasons related to religion or spirituality in their quest for meaning. It could be under pilgrimage, missionary or leisure purposes. The pilgrimage has a mediation function between the natural and the cultural world and between the natural and the supernatural world. It is a vacation, but a transformational journey during which significant change takes place; new insights are given, deeper understanding is attained, new and old places in the heart are visited, blessings are received, healing takes place, and on return from pilgrimage, life is seen with different eyes and nothing will ever remain the same again. While pilgrimage has ultimate spiritual goal, the search for ultimate truth and becoming close to God, it is a journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, and internationally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding. Sacred site that houses holy artifacts promotes ritual practice and attracts religious travelers or pilgrims, who often return with joy and spiritual strength. Christian tourists include missionaries who travel for the sake of Church planting by taking the church to places where she has not yet taking roots, pastoral work, humanitarian services and charities. Recent developments in evangelization through the Pope’s travels to nations, international religious events like World Youth Day, the camps, crusades, conferences and retreats, adoration ministries and apparition centres constitute a large part of religious tourism.

African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Tourism

Ashiegbu and Achunike (2014) posit that the ATR is the oldest religion in Africa and it is the indigenous religion of Africans. This indigenous religion is what Nigerians have been practicing before the advent of Christianity and Islam in Nigeria. Like Christianity and Islam, ATR fosters tourism. This shows itself in the various religious and cultural festivals of the different parts of Nigeria which take place at different

seasons of the year. Okpoko (2008) makes reference to the New Yam festivals in Igbo land, the Argungu fishing festival in Sokoto State. The Masquerade festival in different parts of the country, the Ofala festival in Onitsha, etc. Those festivals attract people from other parts of the country and in some cases, wealthy Nigerians invite their foreign friends to witness those festivals when they are celebrated. This encourages international tourism.

Another cultural festival in Nigeria that attracts visitors from near and far is the masquerade (*mmonwu* or *mmuo*). The mask is carried by a human being but within it there is the belief that it is the spirit (*mmuo*) of the land. Masquerades are very popular in Anambra and Enugu States of Nigeria. Many parts of Nigeria exhibit the masquerade festival at different seasons. In some places like Nsukka, particular masquerades appear once in every three years. Different peoples in Nigeria have different socio-religious festivals they celebrate and at given times. But the cultural festival in Nigeria as Okpoko and Okpoko (2019) also confirmed, which attracts tourists from many parts of the world is the early celebrated Argungu fishing festival, celebrated in Sokoto State. This is only surpassed by the festival of art, the Carnival Calabar, which is organized by Cross River State every year. In ATR there is the belief in a supreme being. This is variously named according to the various ethnic groups in Nigeria. For instance, the Yoruba call it Oluwa or Olorun; the Hausa call it Ugbangiji, while the Igbo call it Chukwu or Chineke. Traditional religion also acknowledges the existence of priesthood, oracles, divination, spirits (gods), ancestors, medicine, medicine-persons, magic or sorcery. In Igbo traditional religion, the supreme being does not communicate. He communicates through deities or oracles.

Okon (2018) states that, Nigeria festivals owe their origin to the traditional religions of Nigeria. The various festivals in Nigeria are celebrated throughout they ear and are practice of the major religions in Nigeria. Masquerades and dance play an important role in the festivals of Nigeria. Some of the eminent Nigeria festivals are the Eyo, the Shadi, Durbar, Shango and soon.

The Eyo festival is celebrated only by the Lagos people. It is also said to be the precursor of the present day Brazil carnival. All the main road ways are blocked on the Eyo day to allow the procession pass freely. The masquerade starts from Idumota to Igaldunganran. Those who take part in this festival, pay homage to the Oba of Lagos. Eyo festival is mainly held on the last burial rites of an eminent chief, butisal so held when time demands it.

The Sharo or the Shadi festival is derived from the Fulani culture. The word Sharo means flogging. The festival features unmarried men accompanied by beautiful girls to the center ring. Now a challenger starts to whip the opponent and this continues. The mob bursts out in joy and drumming and singing starts accordingly to cheer the fighters. The one wreathing in pain is considered to be the loser and coward.

Okon (2018) states that the Arugungu fishing festival is the annual festival and is the most vibrant compared to the other festivals. The festival is celebrated in the

The Impact of Religious Tourism on Economic Development in Nigeria

Arugungu town of Kebbi State, one of the tourist attractions. The festival was celebrated as a tribute to Sultan Dan Mu'azu, k when he visited the area in 1934. Since then it is celebrated every year around February and March. In this festival local people, armed with fishnets get in the water. They are then accompanied by drummers who with loud beating of their drums drive the fishes to shallow waters. Canoe racing, fishing bare handedly, diving competitions are also part of this festival.

The Antilogwu dance is a remarkable art form. The dance is done with the help of foot stomping steps. Great training is needed to perform this dance and is performed in Igbo's in Anambra State. The Osun festival is celebrated in the Yoruba land and mainly worships Sango, god of thunder. Then the Benin festival is the harvest festival and is celebrated at the end of them on soon season, when the harvests are gathered. The Durbar festival showcases the horsemanship of the people. Durbar means military parade. The Emir used to invite the nationals to exhibit their horsemanship and valor. Since then it has become a respectable festival. Today the Katsina Durbar is the most remarkable and glorious. The Nigeria festivals have become the tradition of Nigeria, worth seeing. Besides, there are several other local festivals celebrated with gaiety and fun.

Islam and Tourism

In Nigeria, Islam is known for promoting religious tourism in the way of pilgrimages. Every year a good number of Muslims go on pilgrimage to Mecca. This is religious tourism at the international level. At the domestic and regional levels, religious tourism is observed in Nigeria mostly during the major Islamic festival, Id el Fitr. According to Okafor (2019), it was King Muhammed Rimfa of Kano who introduced the feast of Id el-Fitr for the first time in Northern Nigeria. During this feast, Muslims do a lot of movement from one part of the country to the other, both for prayer and for social celebrations to mark the feast. During the feast, a lot of rams are exported from other African countries to Nigeria to facilitate the celebration of the feast. Another way in which one observe faith activities within the circle of the Islamic religion in Nigeria is in the area of conferences from time to time of Muslim youths, Muslim women and other Islamic groups for religious reasons.

Christianity and Tourism

Okon (2018) avails that in Nigeria, every year good number of Christians embark on religious tours to Israel and to other major Christian holy sites. This is also religious tourism at the international level. At the regional and domestic fronts, Christians devote much time to faith-based travels. Various Christian denominations have their various programmes and places for faith-based activities. One cannot easily forget Prophet T.B. Joshua and his church's activities. The Redemption Camp close to Lagos is also another place that attracts great attention. In the Catholic Church the adoration grounds of Fr. *Oku na – ere ere*, Fr. Mbaka, Fr. Edeh at Elele and the Awlum

Monastery at Udi are places to reckon with. The cave and waterfall at Awhum is a natural wonder and it is said to be potent for healing. Many other Christian groups and individuals have uncountable programmes that foster faith travels from one part of the country to the other. It has been noticed that many people come from outside Nigeria to attend those religious activities especially Pastor Dr. Oluka D.K. Church, Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministries where millions of people come from Nigeria and outside Nigeria for healing, deliverance, power must change hands, convention and annual anointing service. Also Dynamics Church Pastored by Dr. Enenchie Paul where thousands of people come from all over the world for healing, deliverance and spiritual strength in the convention and ministers conference.

Umejei (2019) posits that the Pentecostal Christians are taking the lead in contributing tourism development in Nigeria, through many evangelical activities. The many Christian crusades, seminars and festivals that are held in every nook and cranny of Nigeria have become an avenue for the development of tourism, especially with the crowd that normally throng these venues. Umejei, (2019) states that various Christian programmes have made Nigeria to be preferred destination for religious tourism. Living Faith Chapel, a.k.a Winners Chapel through its annual convention, tagged Shiloh brought Nigerians from home and abroad and foreigners alike, to Otta, Ogun State headquarters of the church to seek the face of God and divine turn around with many high profile preachers of the gospel coming from all over the world to add colour to the event.

The Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), one of the leading Pentecostal churches in Nigeria has contributed to the phenomenal growth of religious tourism through its monthly “Holy Ghost” and yearly “Holy Ghost Congress”. The number of people, both Nigerians, and foreigners that throng these festivals is said to be in excess of five hundred thousand, a boast for tourism. House on the Rock, another Pentecostal group hold its yearly festival tagged “The Experience” in Lagos, with high profile international gospel artistes in attendance, thus boasting the confidence of foreigners that Nigeria is not a haven for kidnapping and scam. The Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC) also holds yearly Christian festival tagged “Retreat”, which is also known to attract Nigerians from home and abroad, including foreigners who throng the venue of the retreat seeking one form of spiritual restoration or the other.

The Economic Benefit

According to Ele (2017) the religious man in search of God must travel to the shrine or holy site, he must eat while on this religious tour, he must clothe himself, take shelter and enjoy guaranteed safety and security, among others. These necessary ventures connected to religious tours are not intrinsically faith-based activities but economic. In John 6 verse 9 the little child with five loaves and two fish did some supplies, whether as a hawker or a generous and benevolent pilgrim, his action speaks volume about the economic affairs associated with faith-based travels and venues. Host communities and countries of destinations do not hinge all of their reasons for accepting the crowds on

The Impact of Religious Tourism on Economic Development in Nigeria

pilgrimage nor protecting the holy sites on religious reasons only. There are reasons from the viewpoint of the economy.

The holy communities and nations experience some positive and robust economic impacts on their lives and environment from the material facts associated with religious tourism. They expect that the expenditures of the pilgrims would be translated into their incomes. Ordinarily, a lot of business grow around pilgrimage centers and these activities have tremendous effect on economy. Religious tourism has the core value of religious faith but as a human activity, it has economic characteristics and implications. This paper argues that religious tourism has the huge capabilities to prompt opportunities that will enhance economic advancements and human development. Today religious tourism represents a vital and viable sector of the world economy. It is a major player in the economy of many nations whose foreign exchange earnings, economic growth and empowerments come from faith-based travels.

The experience we have in Nigeria is that once a place becomes a destination for religious tourism, it automatically attracts some public utility infrastructure and services from religious organizations, good-spirited individuals and sometimes by the government. Such areas acquire anew environmental outlook and commercial activities begin to grow around them. Markets for shopping, banks for financial transactions, hospitality industries, hotels, hostels, restaurants, and even security outfits such as police posts are in place as necessary consequences of these centres. These have economic implications for the tourists, host region and communities. Every naira and kobo spent by the tourist translates automatically into income for the business men and women found along the chains of economic activities which religious tourism stirs, stimulates and sustains.

The improvement of transportation facilities is one of the primary economic effects of religious tourism. The access roads to the tourism destinations are built almost immediately and this infrastructure impacts positively on the rural and remote villages that host them. Transportation activities increase due to the huge human traffic and agricultural product around the healing ministries, adoration or apparition grounds, electricity, bore holes, education and health care facilities, communication network, housing estates and filling stations are put in place as well. Another economic dimension of religious tourism is job creation. Employment it offers have results in vast proportions. Some workers are directly connected with the systems and structures of the religious sites. The religious clergy and personnel who are gainfully employed to serve in those areas, the cooks, the guards, cleaners and producers of religious items like the stickers, books, cassettes. There is also the increase of the sale of animals and food items.

The economic benefit according to Okon (2018) is the rapid growth of religious tourism which led to a growth of household incomes and government revenues directly and indirectly by means of multiplier effects. The inflow of foreign exchange into the country at this period is very high and a lot of employment is generated for the inhabitants of the area new hotels are been built which provide employment and

residential quarters are been erected by private individuals who want to take advantage of the growing development in the area. The economic activities that take place during this period is very enormous boosting the economic growth of not only the inhabitants living in the axis but also increasing the economic growth of other sectors of the economy that are direct or indirectly involved in these conventions. As a result, the development of religious tourism can generally be considered a positive contribution to the tourism sector.

Tourism Contribution to Employment

The economic benefit according to Okonkwo (2014) is tourism is the number one employment of labor in the world and jobs created by tourism spreads across the economy in areas of construction, telecommunications, retail and manufacturing, thus, creating jobs in large number for young people, women, and men (Akpan and Obang, 2018). It has been estimated that tourism is the sector with the biggest employer of labor in Nigeria as it is generating employment for millions of people and its effect rubs on every aspect of people from taxi drivers to Bank managers (Ezenagu, 2018)

Tourism Contribution to Foreign Exchange Earnings

Tourism is a potential source of income generation especially through foreign exchange as it further transcends with a multiplier effect to the rest of the whole economy. Obeta and Onah (2018) posit that tourism is the main source of foreign exchange for at least 38% countries in the world, and it is among the top five main source of foreign exchange for as many as 83% of countries. The government of Nigeria in view of tourism's contribution put in place machineries to upgrade the tourism sector and to enhance it as a major revenue earner. This came particularly at a time of economic depression and to diversify her economic base from petroleum.

Investment and Regional Impact of Tourism

Euro monitor International (2018) states that Nigeria in recent years is experiencing an expansion in her travel and tourism industry with its hospitality industry attracting huge and potential Direct Foreign Investment. The country is having an influx of international holiday lodging, such as Sheraton, Hilton, Best Western and Marriot. Again, the invasion of these is as a result of a search for a high- growth market

Conclusion

Religious tourism is faith based travels which generate activities that satisfy one's spiritual yearning and create opportunities that enhance economic development of the host communities and the country at large. Religious tourism has become the highest earner of foreign exchange for the Nigeria's tourism industry because the springing up of different churches in the country and the various conventions being held annually and quarterly by these churches have increase the numbers of delegates from overseas who

The Impact of Religious Tourism on Economic Development in Nigeria

visit the country for different religious programmes. Therefore religious tourism is a powerful force for economic growth, human and national development, job creation, cultural preservation and peace.

Recommendations

This paper recommends that:

1. Religious bodies should upgrade the infrastructure around the sites and the sites should be respected and visited for sacred purposes.
2. Religious bodies should build hotels that are of international standard around the holy sites.
3. Religious bodies should provide basic social amenities such as electricity, good water and effective communication systems in tourism centres.
4. The hospitality industry should upgrade existing facilities to meet international standards.
5. The moral virtues and positive cultural values of the people of Nigeria should be throned to permeate every aspect of individuals in the society in order to expunge robbing or kidnapping of tourists.
6. Adherents of various religions should be encouraged to be of good behaviour.

References

- Agunwa, T.V.C.(2017).Religious and Economic Development in Nation Building. *In International Journal of Religion and HumanRelation*.9(1).Pp. 200– 201.
- Akpan, T.U. & Obang, B.C.(2018) .*Religious Pilgrimage Tourism*. Kaduna : Nation wide. Anozie E.E.(2018).Christian Church:A Catalyst for Economic Development in Nigeria. *In International Multidisciplinary Journal Ethiopia*.7(4).Pp.276&282.
- Ashiegbu P.O. and Achunike, H.C.(2014). Religious and Tourism in Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*. Pp. 132 – 133.
- Eelke,i.(2018).*Mega Churches Stir Tourism in Nigeria*. Benin-City: Henry Best.
- Ejizu, C.I. (2019). *The interface of Religion-Morality and National Development*. Nsukka: University Press.
- Ele,C.O.(2017). Religious Tourism in Nigeria: The Economic Perspective. *Journal of Arts Management and Social Sciences*2(1). Pp.220 –232.

Euro monitor international,(2018). *Sustainable tourism management* . NEW YORK ;CABI. Ezenagu,B.C.(2018).Tourism a Sacred Journey.*Journal of Religion and Social Sciences*. 3(1)pp55-66.

0

Hirani, R. (2018). Religious Tourism Cultural Diversity:*In the Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*.3(2).Pp.15 – 17.

Iheanacho, N. (2018). The Nexus of Culture and Tourism in Akama E.S. (Ed) *Introduction to Religious and Cultural Studies*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt.

Obeta. H. & Onah, .B. (2018). Unlocking the Potential of Religious Tourism. *International Journal of Business and Management* 6(4)pp 150-161.

Oguji, K.I. & Kene, B.H. Tourism Regional and Religious Journey in the *Journal of Arts and Humanities*. 2(1)pp 1-10

Okon,E.O.(2018).Socio Economic Assessment of Religious Tourism in Nigeria. *In International Journal of Islamic Business and Management* 2(1).Pp.1, 5 –6.

Okonkwo E.E., and Nzeh, C.A. (2019). Faith-Based Activities and their Tourism Potentials in Nigeria. *In International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Sciences*. 1(2). Pp. 80 –91.

Okonkwo, H.C.(2018). *The Socio–Economic Contribution of Tourism to Nigeria and North Cyprus*: Masters Thesis.Pp.3–4.

Okpoko,A.I.(2008).*Traditional Foundation for Christian virtues in Igbo Land*. Onitsha: Jet Okafor,.M.I.(2019).*Tourism in Nigeria* . Onitsha: Jet.

Okpoko, P.U. & Okpoko, A.I.(2019). *Tourism planning* Nsukka :Afro-Orbis.

Umejei,E.(2019).Religious Tourism Economic Value or an empty box? *Zagreb International Review of Economic and Business*. 1 (1).Pp.83– 94.

Vukonic ,B. (2018). *Religious Tourism Economic Value or an Empty box? Zagreb International Review of Economics and Business*1 (1)83-94. World Tourism Organization,(WTO)(2017). *The Impact of Religion on Tourism*. [http://www.Destinationworldinfo/news/letter/feature66. Html](http://www.Destinationworldinfo/news/letter/feature66.Html)retrieved on13/12/2017.