

Exploring the Relationship between Religion Tourism and Economic Development of a Host Community

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Abstract: Studies that examined the correlation between religion tourism and economic development of host communities in Africa with focus on Nigeria had not been reported. This is despite the massive influx of foreign religion tourists to Africa and Nigeria in particular to seek faith adventures and solution for spiritual challenges. The article determines the perception of Nigerians, with emphasis on inhabitant of Auchi community about the concept of religion tourism and the extent it economically impacted their community. It also examines the relationship between religion tourism and dimensions of economic development in Auchi community. Economy Benefits Model (EBM) is adopted and modified to develop a model of religion tourism, and economic development for Nigeria (MREDN). About 320 questionnaires were administered by the researchers. Data collected were analysed using multiple regression. The results show that majority of the respondents attests that religion tourism could be described as a business and an activity. The implication of this for academic researchers is that two scholarly definitions of the concept of religion tourism are supported. The results further shows that respondents affirmed that religion tourism encourages entrepreneurs drive, provides both direct and indirect employment opportunities for Auchi residents. The study also shows that religion tourism generate revenue to the locals and improve their health and welfare. It is evident from the study that religion tourism encourages local transportation infrastructure, and facilitates social and cultural infrastructure development. The result of the correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation between religion tourism and the four dimensions of economic development in respect of Auchi community. In view of these findings, it is recommended that government of Nigeria to encourage the growth of this industry through feasible policy thrusts including; provision of amenities that support ease of hosting religion activities in Nigeria communities.

Keywords: Religious Tourism, Economic Dimensions, Faith- based Destination, and Auchi Residents.

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I. Introduction

Business infrastructure in Africa is characterized by underdevelopment, including fragmented economies along ethnic, religion and language dimensions (Tshabalala, 2016). The author further stated that the economy of most countries in Africa is worse than they were in 2008. Bilateral economic integration effort in the continent to come up with optimistic and more pronounced economic success story is not in sight as major economies in the region are characterized with external financing deficit of 10% or more of their total GDP (Tshabalala, 2016). Other difficulties confronting African economy include sharp decline in the price of her major export commodities in the local and global market, high ranking corruption, currency volatility, dilapidated public infrastructure, and climate change among others (Lwazi, 2016). The index in the above information shows that African economies are seriously challenged and suffocating. In attempt to recover from the current economic dilemma of African states, especially the mono-economic nature of Nigeria, the need for economic diversification had been strongly canvassed (Bello and Uboegbulam, 2017; Bello, et al., 2008). Aside, identification and optimisation of area of her competitive advantage is a key for Nigeria to be out of the current economic challenges (Bello & Uboegbulam, 2017). Beyond resource commodity exports, religion tourism had being reported as one of the major products that Nigeria needs to consider in diversifying her economy (Bello & Uboegbulam, 2017).

The uniqueness of religion tourism is its efficacy of appealing to people of different categories globally (Tourism Tidbit Archive, 2014). This brand of tourism showcases various holy sites and other attractions across religion lines capable of attracting millions of pilgrims for various reasons, major among which is the search for spiritual edification and enrichment (Digance, 2003). It was reported that annually, religion tourism attracts over 5 million Muslim faithful to Hajj (Collins-Kreiner, 2010). About same number of Catholic worshippers visits

“*Lourdes*” in France for spiritual sacrifices (Holloway & Valins, 2002). The authors further reported that “*River Ganges*” in India attracts about 28 million Hindus. This information attests to importance of religion and spirituality as the key determinant of the true identity of man (Holloway & Valins, 2002). The above information was upheld, hence, the World Tourism Organization reported that an estimated 300 to 330 million pilgrims visit the world's key religious sites every year at estimated value of US\$18 billion (Vijayanand, 2012; Shinde, 2007a). Major faith based destinations such as Israel, Italy and Saudi Arabia have developed large industries that provide services for people on pilgrimage (Vijayanand, 2012).

Global statistics on the economic relevancies of religion tourism is heart-warming hence; Taylor (2007) reported that about 23.3% of the total foreign exchange earnings in India were generated from pilgrimage tourism. In terms of employment generation, pilgrimage tourism accounted for 21 million in India (Taylor, 2007), thus, representing about 8.9% of total employment in the country. Furthermore, religion tourism accounted for over 9 million jobs representing 6.1% of total job opportunities generated across the North-East-Asia regions. China is also enjoying her fair share economically from religion tourism hence; in terms of employment provisions, religion tourism provides jobs for one out of every ten persons in China (Shinde, 2007a). All the above information affirmed the relative economic importance of religion tourism to their host communities, and the global economy at large.

Nigeria is exploring religion in the development of her tourism industry (Bello et al., 2008), especially with the proliferation of hotels and other forms of hospitality businesses that caters for religion travellers. Recently, important religion tourists across the world had being attracted to Nigeria to seek for spiritual solutions hence, strategically positioning religion as an attractive force for tourists and religion tourism development. The three major religions in Nigeria- Christians, Islam and Traditional had consistently drives religion tourism promotion, through various touristic festivals and programmes. Pentecostalism is seriously promoting religion tourism development in Nigeria due to the upsurge of evangelical activities including; crusades, seminars and festivals held in various part of the country. Among destinations that attract religious tourists to Nigeria on the Christian based religion activities is the Omega Fire Ministry Inc., Auchi, Edo State. According to the church source, over 44, 000 religion tourists visits Omega Fire ministry site, Auchi for a monthly programme tag “*Fire night*”. According to the church source, the church hosts about 12, 000 worshipers globally every Sunday aside the mid-week service that hosts over 5,000 worshipers per week. The above information affirmed that religious practices at Omega Fire Ministry (OFM), Auchi have the capacity to contributing to the economic development of Auchi town. Despite the outrageous influx of both the local and international religion tourists to Auchi through the activities of OFM, very limited study have being conducted to examine the impact of religion tourism on the economy development of Auchi town courtesy the religion activities of the OFM, thus, the gap to be filled in this research.

II. Literature Review

The Concept of Religion Tourism

Religious Travel (RT) is one of the brands of tourism travel industry (Vijayanand, 2012). Religious tourism is defined as the temporary movement of people away from their place of residence to experience destinations that hosts sacred sites or shrines (Hitec, 1990). On a precise note, when one talks about religious tourism, reference is made to travel encouraged by the need to boost once faith (Vijayanand, 2012). This implies that religion tourism explains travels to sacred places ((Padin et al., 2016; CollinsKreiner et al., 2006). Tourism Tidbits Archive (2014) argued against the above submission regarding the main reasons for engaging in religion travel. The author explains that religious travels can be motivated by the quest for humanitarian causes, including meeting of new friends. The index in the above arguments shows that religion tourism is a journey outside one place of residence for more than a day motivated by religious or humanitarian causes.

Theoretical Perspectives: Religion Tourism and Economic Development of Host Community

Various economic models had been used to explain the relationship between tourism and economy development of countries (Frechtling, 1994). These include; cost-benefit analysis (Wall and Mathieson, 2006), input-output (IO) model (Archer & Fletcher, 1996; Archer, 1991), multiplier analysis model, linear programming, and general equilibrium models (Zhou & Ritchie, 1997; Archer, 1991) among others. However, despite the growing sophistication of these models, the results may be unreliable and difficult to use to support policy and planning decisions in respect of the current study due to unavailability of adequate data that characterised the Nigeria tourism sector. Detailed data on the beneficiaries of tourist spending, transactions between industry sub sectors and their payments for production, levels of employment and sales to other industry are usually not available in the forms needed for analysis (Archer, 1991). Therefore, in this study, economic benefit model proposed in Wall & Mathieson (2006) that explain the economic development attributes facilitated by tourism to the host communities is adopted. The model identified the economic development indices to include income generation (Salih, et al., 2010; Fleischer, 2000), job creation

(Vijayanand, 2012; Taylor, 2007), infrastructure development (Salih et al., 2010), foreign direct investment (Shinde, 2003). This implies that economic development attributes in the context of religion tourism could be explained by four variables as of the following literature.

Religion Tourism and Revenue/Income Generation

Holloway & Robinson (1995) stated a tourist spends income earned in their respective places of domicile at the destination visited. As it applied to the present study religion tourists spend money made in their residence at the various destinations visited. This is an important economic attribute of religion tourism. Religious tourism is therefore found to generate more revenue in a way as no other kind of tourism does. It has a distinct edge over other kind of tourism due to the pull of huge crowds of religion tourists (Mill, 1990). Religion tourism is therefore a platform for money transfer from “income generating” countries to “income receiving” countries. However, measuring the accuracy of the income sourced through religion tourism to a destination is not easy but estimating the multiplier effect of tourist’s spending on the destination is a common approach. This is predicated on the fact that tourists spending at the destination multiplies as it flows through the various segments of the economy of the destination visited (Holloway & Valins, 2002). The first expenditure of religion tourists is received as income at the destination by the tour operators at the destination, shopkeepers, hotels, and taxi drivers (Mill 1990). Thus, religion tourist’s spending at the destination generates income in multiple times hence; having multiplier effect (Mathieson & Wall, 1982) on the destination and more-so, on the host county economy (Fleischer, 2000; Evans, 1998). This implies that religion tourists expenditure at the destination is the extra income produced in an economy (Cooper, et al., 1993). This extra income is again invested directly or indirectly thus, a different rounds of income generation.

Religion tourism been a labour intensive service industry (Inskeep 1991) can create income for the host community through the expenditure made by the tourists on goods and services purchased at the destination (Spanou, 2007). Negi (2009) pointed that expenditure by the religion tourists at the destination does not stop moving after it is spent until it revolve the economy of the entire destination (Taylor, 2007). This implies that part of the money spent by the tourist in a destination becomes income for the people living in that region. Part of this income is spent which generates income for others to spend. As it applied to the present study, it is proposed that religion based travels occasioned by religion programmes of OFM at Auchi have a positive and significant relationship on income generation capacity in the community.

Religion Tourism and Infrastructural Development

Religious tourism has the efficacy to enhance infrastructure development of any tourist destination (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Infrastructure development in the context of tourism explains those utilities and amenities that are useful to both the tourists and local population (Akal, 2010). This implies that increase in religion tourist’s arrivals to a destination increases the demand for infrastructure facilities. Hence, both the government and the organised private sector need to synergise to invest in planning and provision of the state of the art tourism infrastructure. Smith (1977) support the above information, hence affirmed that tourist infrastructure established in the destination creates touristic product experience among the tourists and the locals. Goeldner et al., (2000) affirmed that religion tourists’ general impression about the image of the destination is created on visit to the area. It is therefore pertinent to state that the state of public infrastructure at the destination contribute to quality tourist experience and subsequently branding the image of the destination. The infrastructural dimension is thus a necessary element for religion tourism development hence the basic elements for attracting visitors to a destination. Laurent & Kapferer (1985) asserts that infrastructure is a big part of the religion tourist equation (Akal, 2010). Inhabitants of developed countries, from where the majority of religion tourists originate, are used to modern transport infrastructure that enables high quality service hence; prefer to maintain the same comforts as at home while at the destination (Cohen, 1979; Mo, Howard & Havitz, 1993). Mo, Howard & Havitz (1993), find that religion tourists prefer to travel to countries that have better infrastructures compared to their home country (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). This implies that if religion tourist’s preference for a destination is inhibited by inefficient public infrastructure, the likelihood that they will seek alternative destinations may increase. As it applied to the present study, it is proposed that religion based travels occasioned by religion programmes at OFM have a positive and significant relationship on infrastructure development programme in Auchi community.

Religion Tourism and Employment Generation

Employment generation to the host communities is another economic significance dimension of the religion tourism (Vijayanand, 2012; Inskeep, 1991) hence; contributing both directly and indirectly (Taylor, 2007). Businesses such as hotels, restaurants, transport companies, and travel agents, among others flourish in religious tourism destination as the services of these businesses are highly needed for enhanced memorable experience of the tourists (Mathieson & Wall 1982). These businesses cannot exist without employees who were

employed in these companies to offer their specialised skills by supplying the requirement of the religion tourists in exchange for an agreed wages / salaries. In Indian region Pilgrimage tourism provided jobs for about 21million people, representing an average of 8.9% of total employment (Taylor 2007). Pilgrimage tourism employment in North-East-Asia is estimated at 9 million jobs or 6.1% of total employment. In China, one out of ten people works in a pilgrimage tourism related industry (Shinde, 2007a). All the above information affirmed the relative importance of religion tourism to their host communities, and global economy. The implication of the above information shows that religion tourism development makes people turn to productive activities, hence brings about economic growth and poverty reduction (Mill & Morrison 1992). As it applied to the present study, it is proposed that religion based travels occasioned by religion programmes at OFM have a positive and significant relationship on employment generation in Auchi community.

Religion Tourism and Investment Promotion

Shinde (2003) proposed a model that explained the interaction between religion tourism and economic development of the host community including; it’s associated impacts. Economic development in this contest is measured with various religiously oriented businesses and facilities that surround the holy sites such as souvenir shops, travel agencies, hotels, eateries, hospitals that provide health services for the host community and the tourist (Evans, 1998).In particular, the sale of religious souvenir items, for example sacred water, icons and candles and other religious items brings in considerable revenue. Pearce (2007) states that, “Religion tourism is essentially about people and places, the places one group of people leave, visit and pass through, the other group who make their trip possible and those they encounter along the way”. These groups of people need some essential amenities such as the hotel industry which provides facilities and services such as accommodation, communication, laundry, meals, etc. in other to prolong their stay at the destination visited. Dwyer (2002) argue that lack of entrepreneurship skills among the domestic investors to involve themselves with the religion tourism industry, coupled with reluctance by domestic financial institutions to make funds available for tourism developments, have led to FDI to fill this gap. Today, the development of the hotel industry has been rapid and wide spread in the last half century due to the increased number of travellers and tourists. This industry is making heavy investments in new facilities for already existing hotels, including more parking areas, swimming pools, and new buildings with larger guest rooms being constructed to accommodate tourists. The World Tourism Organization (1998) estimates that the world hotel room inventory grows by about 2.5% per annum.It is apparent from the above discussion that religion tourism brings investment in the local economy and facilitates infrastructural development and the benefits of which can be enjoyed not only by tourists but also the local communities as well. The index from the above information shows that religion tourism has a positive correlation to investment contributions to host community. As it applied to the present study, it is proposed that religion based travels occasioned by religion programmes at OFM have a positive and significant relationship on investment promotion in Auchi community.

The Proposed Model: Religion Tourism and Economic Development for Nigeria

In view of the literature reviewed above, including the hypothesis proposed, the current study thus, proposed a model capable of explaining the perceived impact of religion tourism on the economic development of Auchi, Edo State, Nigeria. The model is depicted in Figure 1.

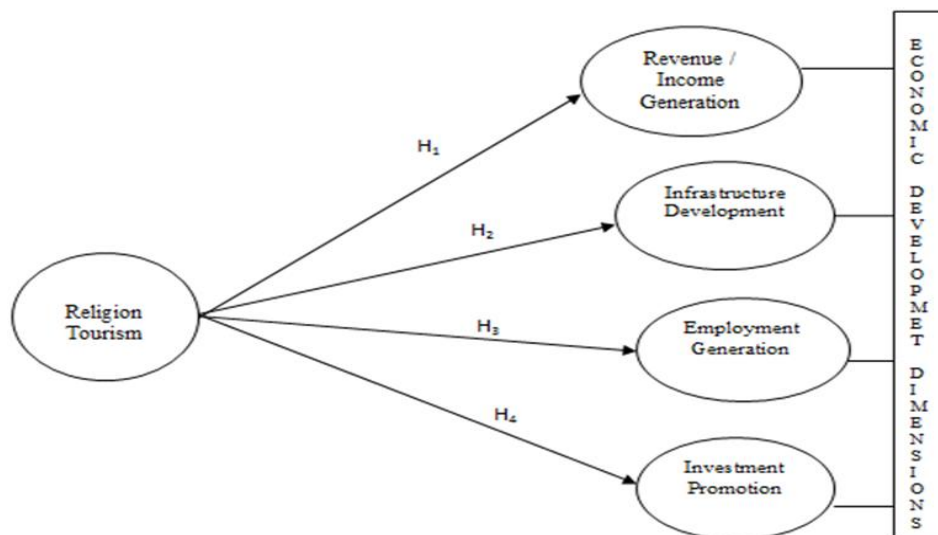


Figure 1: Model of Religion Tourism and Economic Development for Nigeria (MREDN)

The Model of religion tourism, and economic development for Nigeria (MREDN) as represented in Figure 1 comprised of a predictor (i.e. Religion Tourism) and a dependent variable (i.e. Economic Development) measured using four dimensions (Tourism Tidbits Archive, 2014; Vijayanand, 2012; CollinsKreiner, 2010). This implies that religion tourism in Nigeria context has the capacity to engender economic development in the country and more so in Auchi. Economic development (ED) in this context is the dependent variable in this study. ED could be seen as the development of economic wealth of countries, regions or communities for the well-being of their inhabitants (World Bank, 2013; Todaro and Smith 2009). In addition, economic development explains efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life of Nigerians, especially those of the inhabitants of the host communities of the various religion tourist sites. The economic development attributes in the context of religion tourism could be explained by four dimensions which include; Revenue / income generation, infrastructure development, employment generation, and investment promotion.

III. Research Methodology

Survey approach was applied in this study. Survey research provides a quantitative or numerical description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2010) of 640 households spread across 20 streets in Auchi community, Edo State. This implies that the study focused on about 127, 718 inhabitants of Auchi community as prescribed by the 2006 national population commission (NPC). Since it is practically impossible to compile a list of all the 127, 718 inhabitants of Auchi, thus a multistage stage sampling (Clustering) method are adopted for the study (Babbie, 2007). In stage 1, the researchers acknowledged the most popular number of streets in Auchi community hence, a total of twenty (20) streets which include Shagadi, Ikharo, Famous, Ekese, Alasah, Inu-Umoru, Idonigie, Egbeadokha, Abere, Afekelo, Ahmed-Mor, Newton, Afeokhai, Solo, Oyarema, Dr Ahmed, MallamShaibu, Abose, Paul Osa, and George-Ini streets were serially numbered 1-20. In stage 2, the first street on the list were automatically picked while others were picked at an interval of two (2) thus, about Ten (10) streets which include Shagadi, Famous, Alasa, Idonigie, Abere, Ahmed-Mor, Afeokhai, Oyarema, Mallam Shaibu, and Paul Osa streets were picked. This is necessary to allow all streets in the community equal chances of being picked (Creswell, 2010). In stage three, the researcher administered two questionnaires each per household and about sixteen (16) households were covered within each street of an average of thirty two (32) households. This implies that the 16 selected household out of the 32 total household per street were selected at an interval of 2. Therefore a total of thirty (32) questionnaires were administered per street; hence, three hundred and thirty two (320) questionnaires were administered in all the ten (10) selected streets in Auchi community under study.

The instrument used in this research survey is a set of questionnaire adapted from Bello et al. (2014). The questionnaire which was originally used to examine the perceived impact of tourism on economy of Ekiti State was adopted and modified. The original instrument consists of 11 items: the core dimension of employment generation consisted of 3 items; revenue generation and standard of living 3 items; investment promotion 3 items; and infrastructure development 3 items on a five-point scale. For the purpose of this study, the modification was 30 items of four dimensions of economic development. Each item is measured on a 5 point Likert scale, with 1 representing strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree. Multiple regressions were adopted for the analysis of data collected, and the results are as follows.

IV. Results and Discussion

Psychometric test of the independent variable (i.e. Religion Tourism), and four dimensions of economy was tested, and the results of the reliability coefficient of individual items met the threshold Cronbach's alpha (α) value $> .7$ (Pallant, 2010). Hence; the Cronbach's alpha (α) value of religion tourism (RT) is 0.673; employment generation (EG) is 0.805; revenue / income generation (RIG), 0.825; investment promotion (INP), 0.847, and infrastructural development (INF), 0.812. This suggests that all the items measures underlying dimensions consistently (Coakes et al., 2009). The composite reliability score for aggregate dimensions of economic development (SPT) is 0.810. This implies that items for the measures of economy in respect of Auchi community are moderately and internally consistent (Barrett, 2007).

Results of Percentage Item Analysis of the Independent and Dependent Variables

Table 1: Percentage Item Analysis of the Concept of Religion Tourism in Respect of Auchi, Nigeria

Religion Tourism	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Religion tourism is primarily motivated by the quest for faith.	19.7	58.8	11.6	3.8	6.1
Participants in religion tourism engage in religion activities.	25.0	36.3	24.4	10.9	3.4
Religion tourism is business impactful activity on transportation, accommodation, recreation, food and other related services.	28.4	36.6	23.1	10.0	1.9
Religion tourism is an economic activity that provides both direct expenditures to the host region.	25.3	40.0	21.9	11.4	1.4

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=None, D=Disagree, SD=strongly disagree

Result from Table 1 reveals that items with high scores fall under the Likert scale (Agree); hence, the statement “Religion tourism is primarily motivated by the quest for faith” has the highest percentage of 58.8%, followed by item with the statement “Religion tourism is an economic activity that provides both direct expenditures to the host region” (40.0%), and items with statement “Religion tourism is business impactful activity on transportation, accommodation, recreation, food and other related services” (36.6%) and “Participants in religion tourism engage in religion activities has (36.3%). The result implies that greater percentage of Auchi people agrees to the measures of religion tourism as a business and an activity.

Table 2: Percentage Item Analysis of Employment Generation Capacity of Religion Tourism in Auchi

Employment Generation	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Religion tourism provides direct employment opportunities.	0.6	42.2	24.7	6.3	26.3
Religion tourism encourages entrepreneurs drive among locals.	0.9	44.1	25.6	2.5	26.9
Induced employment is created as local residents re-spend additional money earned through religion tourism.	0.6	40.9	24.7	5.3	28.4
Religion tourism creates jobs satisfaction and economic security for resident.	0.9	41.3	24.7	6.3	26.9
Religion tourism promotes multiplier effect for local business.	0.3	40.0	25.3	8.4	25.9
Religion tourism provides indirect employment opportunities.	0.6	43.8	24.1	8.1	23.4

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=None, D=Disagree, SD=strongly disagree

Table 2 showed the respondents’ opinion about employment generation capacity of Religion Tourism in Auchi community. The result shows that item with statement “Religion tourism encourages entrepreneurs drive among the locals in Auchi community.” has the highest percentage of 44.1%, followed by the statement “Religion tourism provides indirect employment opportunities for the locals in the community” (43.8%). Item with the statement “Religion tourism provides direct employment opportunities for the locals in Auchi community” has (42.2%), and item with the statement “Religion tourism creates job satisfaction for resident of Auchi community” (41.3%). Other items with the statement “Induced employment is created as local residents re-spend additional money earned through religion tourism” has (40.9%), and the statement “Religion tourism promotes multiplier effect for local business at Auchi community” (40.0%). All of the response to each of the statements falls under the Likert scale (Agree). The results show that majority of the respondents believed that religion tourism generate employment in Auchi community.

Table 3: Percentage Item Analysis of Revenue Generation Capacity of Religion Tourism in Auchi

Revenue Generation and Standard of Living	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Income multiplier of the locals in Auchi community is boosted due to tourist expenditure.	0.6	35.6	20.9	6.9	30.0
Local business turnover receives a boost due to tourist’s expenditure in Auchi community.	0.6	41.6	25.0	5.0	27.8
Import multiplier of local goods and services in Auchi community is created and enhanced due to religion tourism.	0.6	27.2	31.9	3.4	26.9
Tourist expenditure through religion tourism enhances output multiplier of the locals in Auchi community.	0.6	43.4	26.9	6.6	22.5
The quality of life of the locals in Auchi community generally improves due to religion tourism.	-	37.2	26.9	7.8	28.0
The quality of health and welfare of residents of Auchi community changes due to the impacts of religion tourism.	0.9	41.9	23.4	7.2	26.6

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=None, D=Disagree, SD=strongly disagree

Table 3 shows the response of participants on revenue generation capacity of religion tourism in Auchi community. The result shows that the statement “Tourist expenditure through religion tourism enhances output multiplier of the locals in Auchi community” constitute the highest percentage 43.4%, while item with statement “The quality of health and welfare of residents of Auchi community changes due to the impacts of religion tourism” constitutes 41.9%, followed by the item “Local business turnover receives a boost due to tourist’s expenditure in Auchi community” (41.6%) and item “The quality of life of the locals in Auchi community generally improves due to religion tourism” (37.29%). The statement “Income multiplier of the locals in Auchi community is boosted due to tourist expenditure” has (35.6%). The result further shows that most of the responses with high score fall under the Likert scale (Agree) except for one “Import multiplier of local goods and services in Auchi community is created and enhanced due to religion tourism” that fall under the Likert scale (Strongly disagree). The result implies that majority of the participant in the study area recognize that religion tourism is a source of revenue generation and increasing standard of living of the people of Auchi community. However, religion tourism activities in Auchi have not been able to facilitate importations of local goods and services in Auchi community.

Table 4: Percentage Item Analysis of Investment Promotion Capacity of Religion Tourism in Auch

Investment Promotion	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Religion tourism attracts direct foreign investment to Auch	0.6	42.2	24.7	5.9	26.6
Religion tourism facilitates economic development in Auch.	0.9	45.6	22.5	5.9	25.0
Religion tourism brings investment to the local economy and facilitates infrastructural development.	0.9	41.9	23.4	5.3	28.4
Religion tourism enhances investment opportunities in Auch.	1.3	40.3	24.4	7.8	26.3
Religion tourism activates brand image of Auch to outside world.	1.3	45.9	22.2	7.2	23.1
Religion tourism enhances demand for landed assets in Auch	0.6	43.4	23.4	5.6	26.9
Small scale businesses that support religion tourism are enhanced.	-	40.0	25.9	8.1	25.9

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=None, D=Disagree, SD=strongly disagree

Table 4 shows information from respondents regarding investment promotion capacity of religion tourism in respect of Auch community. The result of the analysis found that the statement “Religion tourism activates brand image of Auch community to outside world” constitute the highest percentage (45.9%), followed by item with statement “Religion tourism facilitates economic development in Auch community” (45.6%), and item with statement “Religion tourism in Auch community enhances demand for land and landed assets” has (43.4%). It was also revealed that item with the statement “Religion tourism attracts direct foreign investment to Auch community” has (42.2%). Other items with the statement “Religion tourism enhances investment opportunities domicile in Auch community” and “Small scale business enterprise that support quality religion tourism development is enhanced” constitutes (41.9%), and (40.0%) respectively. All of the response fall under the Likert scale (Agree). The findings show that majority of the people felt that religion tourism plays a major role in investment promotion in Auch community.

Table 5: Percentage Item Analysis of Infrastructural Development Capacity of Religion Tourism in Auch

Infrastructural Development	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
Religion tourism facilitates social and cultural infrastructure development among the locals in Auch community.	0.3	35.6	28.8	9.7	25.6
Local transportation infrastructure is enhanced due to tourist arrival and expenditure in Auch community.	-	40.6	23.4	8.1	27.8
Religion tourist industries are socially responsible to the locals and the host communities.	0.6	40.3	25.3	7.5	26.2
Religion tourism brings about positive present and future conditions of the environment.	-	69.4	16.9	0.3	13.4
Religion tourism offers new social opportunities for local residents.	31.3	28.4	14.7	18.4	7.2
Religion tourism provides essential services that enhance and sustain good living condition in Auch community.	31.3	23.4	15.5	20.6	9.1
Religion tourism attracts permanent installations necessary for the support, redeployment and operation of businesses and other social services in Auch community.	34.7	8.1	4.7	48.8	3.8

SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=None, D=Disagree, SD=strongly disagree.

Table 5 depicted the respondent perception about infrastructural development capacity of religion tourism in Auch. The result shows that item with statement “Religion tourism brings about positive present and future conditions of the environment” has the highest percentage of (69.4%), followed by the statement “Local transportation infrastructure is enhanced due to tourist arrival and expenditure in Auch community” with (40.6%). Item with the statement “Religion tourist industries are socially responsible to the locals and the host communities” has (40.3%), and item with the statement “Religion tourism facilitates social and cultural infrastructure development among the locals in Auch community” has (35.6%) agree response rating. Other items with statement “Religion tourism offers new social opportunities for local residents” and “Religion tourism provides essential services that enhance and sustain good living condition in Auch community” have equal percentages of (31.1%) strongly agree rating. Religion tourism attracts permanent installations necessary for the support, redeployment and operation of businesses and other social services in Auch community” has (48.8%) disagree rating. All of the response to each of the statements falls under the Likert scale (Agree), except for the statement “Religion tourism attracts permanent installations necessary for the support, redeployment and operation of businesses and other social services in Auch community” that fall under the Likert scale (Disagree). The results show that majority of the people in Auch community believe that infrastructural development in Auch constitutes largely to economic impact of religion tourism.

Results of Correlation Analysis of Religion Tourism and Economic Development in Auch

The data collected was analyzed using Pearson correlation to determine the relationship between economic development and religion tourism in respect of Auch Community. The result is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlations of Religion Tourism and Economic Development in Auchi

Variables	R	P	Level
Religion Tourism (RT)	--	--	--
Employment Generation (EG)	0.122**	0.000	Small
Revenue and Income Generation (RIG)	0.368**	0.010	Medium
Investment Promotion (IRO)	0.325**	0.040	Medium
Infrastructure Development (INF)	0.313**	0.021	Medium

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2 tailed)

The results as shown in Table 6 depicted that there is positive and significant correlation between religion tourism and the four dimensions of economic development; Employment generation (EG) ($r = 0.122$; $p = 0.000$), Revenue and Income generation (RIG) ($r = 0.368$; $p = 0.010$), Investment Promotion (IRO) ($r = 0.325$; $p = 0.040$), and Infrastructure Development (INF) ($r = 0.313$; $p = 0.021$). This suggests that all the tested variables have a positive and significant relationship with religion tourism (RT) in respect of Auchi. In terms of the strength of the relationship, the results shown that the employment generation has a small and positive relationship ($r = 0.122$), Revenue and Income generation has a medium and positive relationship ($r = 0.368$), Investment Promotion (IRO) ($r = 0.325$) and Infrastructure Development also has a positive and medium relationship ($r = 0.313$). Therefore, the alternate hypothesis was accepted which states that there is a significant relationship between religion tourism and the dimensions of economic development (Employment generation, Revenue and Income generation, Investment Promotion (IRO), and Infrastructure Development in respect of Auchi.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.831 ^a	.582	.454	.26824

a. Predictors: (Constant), INF, EG, IRO, RIG,

From Table 7, it was depicted that the R for the model is .831 which implies that the impact of religion tourism on dimensions of economic development (employment generation, revenue and income generation, investment promotion and infrastructural development) is explained by 45.4% of the variance in religion tourism. Thus, the remaining 54.6% is due to other factors and residuals. Also, the R^2 ($R^2 = .582$) revealed a significant high relationship between independent variable (Religion Tourism) and dependent variables (employment generation, revenue and income generation, investment promotion and infrastructural development).

Table 8: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.057	4	.014	197	.090 ^a
	Residual	.144	2	.072		
	Total	.200	6			

a. Predictors: (Constant), INF, EG, IRO, RIG

b. Dependent Variable: RT

From Table 8, the result of the analysis shows that F value was significant ($F = 0.197$, $p = .090$). This shows that the model was valid. Thus, based on the findings it can be concluded that there was a linear relationship between religion tourism and the predictors of economic development (employment generation, revenue and income generation, investment promotion and infrastructural development).

Table 9: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	1.381	.895		1.543	.263
	EG	.371	.723	.332	.513	.659
	RIG	-.327	.647	-.344	-.506	.663
	IRO	-.299	.625	-.325	-.479	.679
	INF	-.136	.736	-.119	-.184	.871

a. Dependent Variable: RT

From Table 9, in comparing the contribution of each independent variable, Beta values are used. As illustrated in the standardized coefficient column, revenue and income generation (RIG) makes the strongest unique contribution to Auchi community through religion tourism with ($\beta = .344$), followed by employment generation (RIG) with ($\beta = .332$), Investment promotion (IRO) with ($\beta = .325$) and infrastructural development (INF) made the fourth relative contribution, ($\beta = -.119$). However, regarding the effect of each of the economic dimensions on religion tourism, all dimensions of employment generation made significant unique contribution to the prediction of religion tourism in Auchi. Employment generation, Revenue and income generation, Investment promotion and infrastructural development contributed negatively to religion tourism in Auchi. Based on the regression analysis, the model consists of four predicting variables namely: employment generation (χ_1) revenue and income generation (χ_2) investment religiously oriented business (χ_3) and infrastructural development (χ_4). Thus, the prediction equation of the four dimensions of religion tourism model is as follows: $\hat{Y} = a + \beta_0 + \beta_1\chi_1 + \beta_2\chi_2 + \beta_3\chi_3 + \beta_4\chi_4 + e_1 \dots (1)$.

Where: \hat{Y} = (the independent variable) - Religion Tourism, a = the intercept / regression constant, β = the slope, or regression coefficient of each variables; χ_1 = Employment generation, χ_2 = Revenue and income generation, χ_3 = Investment Promotion, and χ_4 = Infrastructural Development.
 e_i = Error terms assumed to have zero.

V. Conclusion and Policy Implications

The results of analysis of the perception of people of Auchi on the concept of religion tourism show that they view religion tourism from both the activity and business perspectives. This in consonance with previous literature, hence religion tourism is defined as an internationally impactful business with wide cross section components of activities such as transportation, accommodation, recreation, food and other related services (UNWTO, 2006; Anthony et al. 2004). Defining the concept as an activity, religion tourism is defined as the movement of person(s) away from his / her original place of residence with the purpose of faith and whose period of stay at the destination is not less than 24 hours, not permanent in nature and unconnected to earning purpose (Padin et al., 2016; Tourism Tidbits Archive, 2014; Vijayanand, 2012). The conclusion that we arrived at in view of the above is that there is no stereotyped definition for the term religion tourism. Thus, the implication of this for academic researchers is that two scholarly definitions of the concept of religion tourism are supported.

The results of analysis of extent religion tourism generates employment opportunities for inhabitants of Auchi community shows that majority of the respondents were of the view that religion tourism encourages entrepreneurs drive, provides both direct and indirect employment opportunities, and creates job satisfaction for the resident of Auchi community. This result is in consonance with the previous studies in domain of tourism as reported in Yan & Wall (2002) and Archer & Fletcher (1996). These studies agree that tourism encourages entrepreneurial drives in local residents, and provide jobs opportunities. The conclusion that could be drawn from this study is that religion tourism support employment generation. The implication of this for Nigeria government is to encourage the growth of this industry through feasible policy thrusts.

The results of the extent that religion tourism generate revenue to the local residence shows that tourist expenditure through religion tourism enhances output multiplier of the locals, improve the quality of health and welfare of residents, boosts local business turnover, and income multiplier of the locals. These results are in consonance with previous literature in domain of tourism as reported in Vanhove (2005); and Dwyer et al. (2004). The conclusion that could be reached based on this study is that the income generation capacity of local residence in Auchi is enhanced through religion tourism events hosted in the area. The implication of this is urgent government involvement through security support and infrastructure development. Furthermore, the outcome of analysis on the extent of investment promotion capacity of religion tourism in Auchi community shows that religion tourism activities brand image of Auchi community positively, enhances investment opportunities domicile in Auchi community, and supported the growth of small scale business enterprise in the area. The result is in line with reports in Bull (1991); Dwyer and Forsyths (1994). The implication of this result is aggressive marketing of religion event in Nigeria, including provision of amenities that support ease of doing business in the host communities.

In addition the result of the extent religion tourism supports infrastructure development in Auchi community shows that religion tourism encourages environmental sustainability, enhance local transportation infrastructure, and facilitates social and cultural infrastructure development of the host community. It also enhances and sustains good living condition of the local residence. This result validates the report in Shaw & Williams (2002); and Swarbrooke (1999) hence; more hosting of religious events, more development in

infrastructure experienced in the host community. Based on the hypothesis testing, the correlation analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between dimensions of economic development and religion tourism in respect of Auchu community. In view of this aggressive investment opportunities and infrastructural development should immediately be deployed to the area and its surrounding communities to achieve the desire objectives of sustainable religion tourism development in Nigeria.

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