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MOVING BEYOND OIL: TOURISM ECONOMY OPTION AND THE REALITIES OF REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

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Abstract:

Purpose- The oil sector has been the main driver of the Nigerian economy due to its dependence on crude oil revenues. Despite the oil boom, Nigeria is still submerged in uncontrollable poverty, and scary unemployment complications. It is against this backdrop that this study scrutinizes the extent integration of tourism economy including, feasible tourism regulatory framework can impact positively to unlocking the Nigerian strangling economy.

Research Methodology- The study been an exploratory study, reviewed various reports and previous literature in this domain study upon which the study made insightful inferences.

Findings- The study finds that tourism economy has the potential to becoming instrument of economic regeneration and stability for Nigeria given its important role in revenue generation, jobs creation, and infrastructure development. Thus, further reveals that Nigeria can only maximise her tourism economy potentials if tourism regulatory framework gear towards environmental sustainability, a secure and safe Nigeria, prioritisation of the tourism sector, and promotion of health and sanitary practices were galvanized.

Research Implications- By establishing the need for economic diversification to tourism economy, this study offers an insight on the need for the government of Nigeria to enforce favourable policy environment that supports tourism business investment.

Originality: This study is the first to verify the connection between tourism economy, tourism regulatory framework and economy diversification in Nigeria. The study argues that diversifying to and promoting tourism economy has the capacity to remodeling the Nigeria choking economy.

Keywords:

Tourism Economy, Regulatory Framework, Oil Economy, Nigeria



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INTRODUCTION

The discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities in Nigeria was dated late 1950s shortly after the independence (Barbara et al. 2015). Available indicators showed that the value of crude oil exports was N8.8 million worth 2.7% of the Nigeria's total export earnings in 1960, while earnings from the non-oil sector was N321.2 million (97.3%) (Nikki et al. 2015). This implies that Nigeria's economy in the early 60s was non-oil driven. In 1976, the table turned as the amount of the oil exports improved immensely to N6,321.6 billion put at 93.6% of the Nigeria's total exports earning, while the value of the non-oil exports declined significantly to N429.5 million (6.4%) (Barbara et al. 2015). Due to the attractive global crude oil prices in the mid-70s, the attention of the Nigeria government shifted from other viable economic sectors to embrace oil as the major economy stay of the country. This trend has remained over the years till date. Evaluating Nigeria's economic indicators during the oil regime shows major concerns. Despite the oil boom, Nigeria is submerged in uncontrollable poverty with per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 2,396.30 in 2018 (Trading Economics, 2019). Report has it that Nigeria had overtaken India as the global headquarter of people with extreme poverty. It was estimated that 86.9 million Nigerians statedly to be living on less than \$1.90 (N684) a day as at June 2018 (Kazeem, 2018). Six months after being December 2018, it was reported that additional 7.1 million Nigerians joined the radar of extreme poverty hence, accounted for almost 50% of Nigeria's current estimated 197 million populations (Kazeem, 2018; Toromade, 2018; World Data Lab, 2019). Extreme poverty in this context is defined as the complete lack of means necessary to meet basic personal needs, such as food, clothing and shelter (United Nations, 1995; OECD, 2001).

Aside the issue of poverty, Nigeria is overwhelmed with scary unemployment complications. According to National Bureau of Statistics (2018), the economically active Nigeria's age population (15 – 64 years) increased from 111.1 million in Q3 2017 to 115.5 million in Q3 2018. However, within the period under review, the combined unemployment and underemployment rate in Q3, 2018 was 43.3% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). This according to Nnorom & Adegbesan (2018) infers that the number of unemployed Nigerians rose by 3.3 million to 20.9 million in Q3'18 from 17.6 million in Q3'17. In terms of unemployment by states, it was reported that Akwa Ibom state topped the list of states in Nigeria with the highest unemployment rate in third quarter 2018 put at 37.7%. This was followed by Rivers state with estimated unemployment rate of 36.4%, and Bayelsa with 32.6% on the third position despite the trio being oil producing states (The National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). It is against this backdrop that there has been calls for diversification of the Nigerian economy from oil to other sectors. Diversification in this context implies possibilities to developing new fields and stimulation including, expansion of existing traditional economic sectors (Ayeni, 1987; Iniodu, 1995; Sunday et al. 2013).

It is pertinent to state that Nigeria ranks among the most privileged nations of the world in terms of endowment of tourist resources (Okoli, 2001; Bello & Bello, 2017). Nigeria's tourist resources are very great and diverse with a lot of potentials for economic transformations, poverty reduction, income redistributions and foreign direct investments (Okoli, 2001; Bello & Bello, 2017; Bello et al. 2014). In view of the abundant tourism resources available in the country, this study aims to examine the efficacy of tourism economy as an alternate sector to jumpstarting the Nigerian suffocating economy. In this wise, the study also scrutinises the extent to which feasible regulatory framework impacts to unlocking the Nigerian tourism economy potentials.

THE CONCEPT OF TOURISM ECONOMY

There is no stereotyped definition for the concept tourism economy. Various definitions had been offered based on the understanding of the definers. The concept explains all businesses that cater for the needs of the travelling public (Wall, & Mathieson, 2006; Robert et al. 2010). Tourism economy is seen as economy type that support businesses that focused on the provision of tourists' products and services capable of enhancing the touristic experience of tourists while contributing towards the economic development of the host communities (Naido, 2007). Tourism economy is defined as those internationally impactful economy with wide cross section components of products such as religion (Bello & Bello, 2017; Bello & Majebi, 2018), education (Bello & Raja, 2017), sport (Bello et al. 2017), accommodation (Bello & Bello 2015; Bello & Majebi, 2018), recreation (Bello & Bello, 2017), food and other related services (Anthony et al. 2004; Jennifer & Thea, 2013; UNWTO, 2016). It was reported that tourism economy provides both direct expenditures to the host region and the indirect effect of these expenditures on the destination income when an appropriate spending multiplier is applied (Bello & Bello, 2017). The index in the information above shows that tourism economy manages activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment or place of domicile to explore tourism products with the corresponding socio-economic impacts on the host communities.

It is pertinent to state that an ever-increasing number of destinations have opened up globally and invested in tourism businesses, thereby turning the industry into a key driver of socio-economic progress (UNWTO, 2014). Tourism economy is now an instrument of economic regeneration and stability given its important role in export revenues, jobs creation, and infrastructure development especially at this time when many countries are suffering from economic depressions (Bello et al. 2014). To this end, it is pertinent to explore the contributions of the tourism economy to global and national economy hence, the following.

TOURISM ECONOMY OUTLOOK- THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

To understand the trends, and contributions of the tourism economy to the global, and national economy, four key performance indices were explored as of the following.

Contributions of Tourism to the Global GDP

Adopting the World Travel and Tourism Council Framework of defining the economic contributions of tourism industry hence, the framework recognises that tourism industry's total contribution capture its direct, indirect and induced impacts as shown in Figure 1.

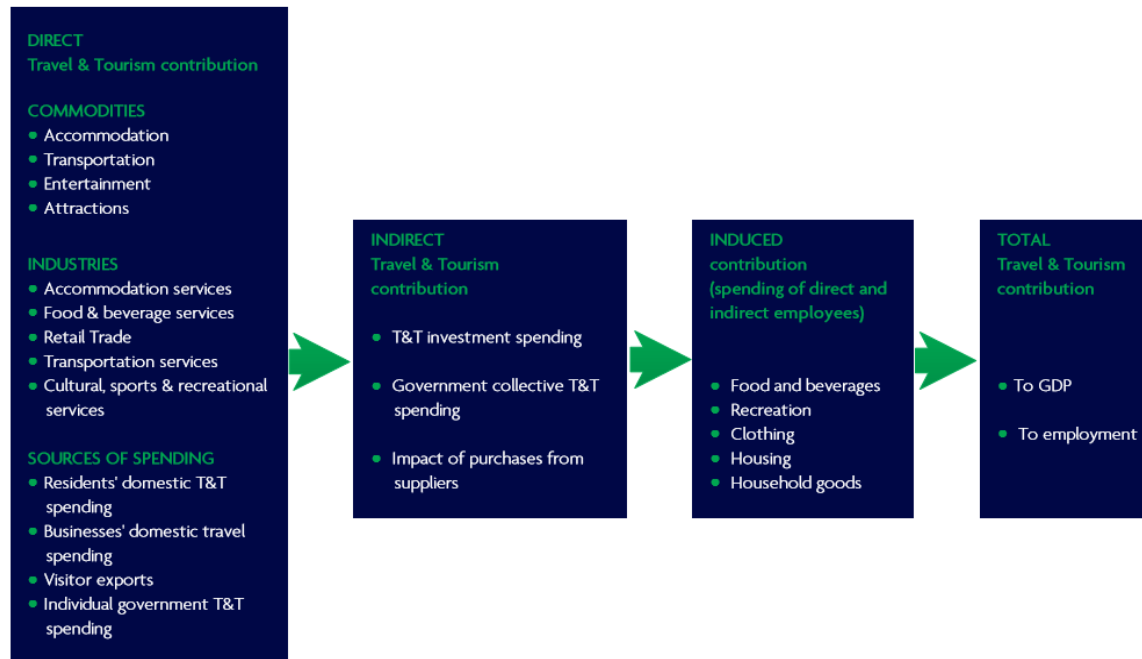


Figure 1: Economic Contributions of Tourism Industry to GDP

Source: Adapted from WTTC (2019).

From Figure 1, it was deduced that the direct contribution of tourism industry to GDP reflects the total internal spending on travel and tourism by residents and non-residents including, government individual spending. The direct contributions to GDP in this context is calculated from total internal spending by netting out the purchases made by the different tourism sectors. This approach is consistent with the definition of tourism GDP, specified in the 2008 tourism satellite account recommended methodological framework (TSA: RMF 2008). According to the framework, the indirect contribution includes travel and tourism investment spending, government collective spending, and domestic purchases of goods and services by the sectors dealing directly with tourists. The induced contributions on the other hand explain the contributions measured in terms of the spending of those who are directly or indirectly employed by the travel and tourism industry.

In absolute terms, tourism industry's contribution to the global GDP had been stable. The industry contributed US\$6, 630.4 billion and US\$10, 507.1 billion to the global GDP in 2012 and 2013 respectively (Jennifer & Thea, 2013). Report has it that \$8.8 trillion were added to the global GDP by the tourism industry in 2018 compared to \$8.3 trillion contributions in 2017 (WTTC, 2019). The 2018 contributions increase by 3.6% worth USD9, 126.7 trillion put at 10.4% of GDP by the end of 2019.

Trends in Global Employment Provision

Tourism industry contributed 319 million jobs, representing one in ten of all jobs (i.e. 10%) globally in 2018 compared to 313 million jobs created in 2017 (WTTC, 2019). The industry now accounts for one in five of all new jobs created globally and is forecast to contribute 100 million additional new jobs globally over the next ten years, accounting for 421 million jobs by 2029 (WTTC, 2019) as shown in Figure 2.

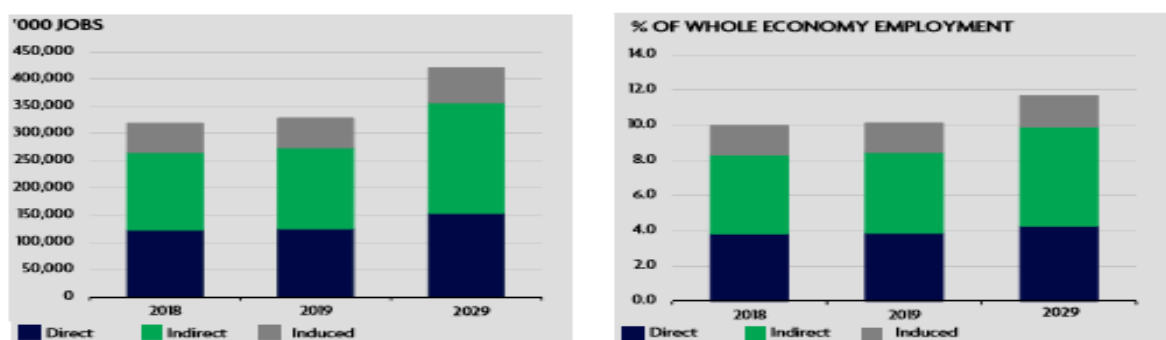


Figure 2a-b: Total Contribution of Tourism to Global Employment

Source: Adapted from WTTC (2019).

Comparative Analysis of Sectorial Growth Rate

WTTC (2019) reports that tourism industry is the second-fastest growing industry in the world growing at (+3.9%), ahead of healthcare (+3.1%), information technology (+1.7%) and financial services (+1.7%) but behind only the manufacturing, perhaps with growth rate of 4% globally in 2018 as shown in Figure 3.









	MANUFACTURING	4.0%
	TRAVEL & TOURISM	3.9%
	CONSTRUCTION	3.4%
	RETAIL & WHOLESALE	3.3%
	HEALTHCARE	3.1%
	AGRICULTURE	1.8%
	COMMUNICATION	1.7%
	FINANCIAL SERVICES	1.7%

Figure 3: GDP Growth Rate by Sector in 2018.

Source: Adapted from WTTC (2019).

Contributions to Global Export and Investment

Tourism industry contributed US\$1.5 trillion to global exports in 2018 put at 6.5% of total global exports, and 28.8% of global services exports (Oxford Economics & WTTC, 2019). Visitor's export in this context implies money spent by foreign visitors to a country visited. Furthermore, the tourism industry attracted capital investment worth USD940.9bn in 2018. This is expected to rise by 4.2% pa over the next ten years to USD1, 489.5trillion in 2029 (Oxford Economics & WTTC, 2019). The implications of these economic indices shows a mature and promising tourism sector in respect to its global contributions to the GDP, employment provision, stable growth rate, and investment promotion. However, it is expedient to explore tourism business outlook in Nigeria to determine the extent tourism business performed in the country.

THE NIGERIAN TOURISM ECONOMY OUTLOOK

The contributions of the tourism industry to the Nigerian economy had been applauded despite the lip service to priorities the industry by the government (Bello et al. 2014). Hotel been one of the critical industries in the Nigerian tourism sector attracted significant investment put at over US\$3 billion in the last three years (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2017). The author further reports that hotel industries' room revenue expanded at 22.6% compound annual rate of \$US1.1 billion in 2018 from \$448 million in 2014. In terms of contribution to the GDP, hotel industry contributed N1.7 billion (\$US 5.5 million) put at 4.8% to the Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016 (Ekwujuru, 2016; Jumia Travel, 2017). The industry generated 651,000 jobs directly in 2015 put at 1.6% of total employment in the country and another 1.6% in 2016 worth N661,000 (Jumia Travel, 2017). The fast food industry is another key component of the tourism industry hence, generated annual revenue of N230 billion and taxes in excess of a billion naira to national economy (Bukola, 2017). The author further opine that the fast food industry collectively provided employment for over 500,000 people at the processing and retailing level in Nigeria in 2017.

Two main components of domestic travel, leisure and business travel both grew at 2.7 and 2.8%, contributing N1.98 billion and N1.92 billion respectively to Nigeria domestic earnings in 2017 (Bukola, 2018). In terms of contribution to the GDP, domestic tourism in Nigeria contributed N3.63 billion to the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017 (Bukola, 2018; Vanguard Newspaper, July 12th, 2018). Proshare (2017) reports that domestic travel spending generated 93.2% of direct travel and tourism GDP in 2016 compared to 6.8% of visitor exports. Furthermore, through domestic tourism, about 600,000 Nigerians were employed in the year 2016 (Jumia Travel, 2017). In 2018 Osun Osogbo festival attracted 21,713 domestic tourists including, 123 international tourists worth N58, 230, 170. The author's further reports that Abuja Carnival in 2018 recorded 19,015 domestic tourists, which include 113 international tourists valued N147, 385,250.

The index in the above information shows that tourism industry has the capacity to stimulating the Nigeria economy if given the deserved attention. It is therefore pertinent to state that one of the major factors that needed to be urgently addressed to maximise tourism potentials in Nigeria is feasible regulatory framework. Bello et al. (2014) defined tourism regulatory framework (TRF) as those policy related issues that guarantees a climate of assurance for people to liberally and happily engage in tourism business transactions. Bello (2018) opined that TRF promotes and maintain sanity and orderliness in tourism business practice. It ensures that tourism business activities are in line with the economic and fiscal policies of the government. It compels tourism business operators to become ethical in their conduct and assume some measures of social responsibilities in the society. Aside, it protects and promotes the interest and investments of genuine investors in tourism sector. In view of the potency of tourism regulatory framework to tourism economy survival of countries, it is pertinent to unveil its elements as it relates to Nigeria tourism economy hence, the following.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND THE NIGERIA TOURISM ECONOMY

It is pertinent to state that one of the major factors that needed to be urgently addressed to maximise tourism potentials in Nigeria is feasible regulatory framework. Jennifer & Thea (2013) highlighted elements of TRF to include: Policy rules and regulations, Environmental sustainability, Safety and security, Health and hygiene, and Prioritisation of travel and tourism. The relationship between these elements of tourism regulatory framework and the Nigeria tourism economy are discussed as follows.

Tourism Policy, Rules and Regulations and Nigeria Tourism Economy

This explains the extent to which the policy environment of a country supports tourism business investments (Okoli, 2001; Jennifer & Thea, 2013; Bello, 2018). In 2006, the Nigerian government developed the Nigeria Tourism Master Plan (TDI, 2014) with sole aim to providing a policy thrust capable of enhancing the Nigeria tourism sector (BGL, 2014). The gazette takes into account the extent to which foreign ownership and foreign direct investment (FDI) in tourism are welcomed and facilitated by the government of Nigeria, how tourism investment rights are protected, and the time and cost required for setting up a tourism business in Nigeria (NTDC, 2010). Other information contained in the gazette include; tourist's visa requirements, and bilateral air service agreements among others. Thirteen years after the master plan had been drawn; the observation on Nigeria's tourism industry is probably worse (BGL, 2014; Bello et al. 2016) due to poor implementation. Years after, the tourism and hospitality industry still represent a meager (4.8%) of the Nigeria's GDP (Ekwujuru, 2016; Jumia Travel, 2017). The implication of this is that international tourists and tourism investors may likely choose tourism destinations outside Nigeria a preferred tourist destination rather than Nigeria for patronage and investment respectively.

Environmental Sustainability and Nigeria Tourism Economy

Realising the importance of the natural environment for providing an attractive location for tourism and other business development, the government and people of Nigeria had made various efforts towards sustaining her environment for accelerated tourism business development (Atilola, 2012). Various efforts made include, establishment of environmental coordinating bodies, formulation of environmental legislations and regulations, promotion of environmental based strategic policies and plans, and partnerships with the non-governmental bodies to save the environment (NCP, 1992). Through these various efforts, Nigeria had achieved major milestone in environmental protection and conservation of natural resources (NCP, 1992). However, all these efforts are not yielding positive impacts on the quality and sustainable environment capable of attracting tourism investor's confidence to visit and invest in Nigeria tourism sector. The implication of this is that international tourists and tourism investors may not have confidence to patronise and recommend Nigeria for investment.

Safety and Security and Nigeria Tourism Economy

Safety and security are important factors that define the competitiveness of a country's tourism economy (Bello et al. 2014). This implies that tourists and tourism investors are likely to be deterred from traveling to or investing in Nigeria due to insecurity. Insecurity through crime and terrorism had been identified as one of the major problems confronting the development of tourism business in Nigeria (Bankole, 2002; Bello et al. 2014). According to 2019 edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI), Nigeria is ranked among the five least peaceful countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Aworinde, 2019). The GPI measures peacefulness across three domains: safety and security, ongoing conflict, and militarization. Despite notable military advances, and apparently premature proclamations of Boko Haram's defeat by government forces in Nigeria, the group remained a threat to national security. Abductions, suicide bombings, banditry, and attacks on civilian targets by Boko Haram persisted. Aworinde (2019) reports that at least 1,200 people died and nearly 200,000 were displaced in the northeast in 2018. In June, 2019 at least 84 people were killed in double suicide bomb attacks attributed to Boko Haram at a mosque in Mubi, Adamawa State. The author further opined that decades old communal conflict between nomadic herdsman and farmers in the Middle Belt intensified in 2020 and further aggravated the security situation in the country. At least 1,600 people were killed

and another 300,000 displaced as a result of the violence. In July 13th- 19th, 47 deaths and 14 kidnappings occurred due to Boko Haram and Fulani Herdsman- related clashes. In July 20th, President Muhammadu Buhari condemns the killing of 37 innocent people by bandits in the Sokoto State. Also, in July 27th, more than 60 dead as Boko Haram target a funeral procession, in retaliation to an alleged incident where villagers fought off an earlier Boko Haram attack in Borno. In July 29th, 25 Soldiers and 47 Boko Haram militants were killed during a clash in Kukawa, Borno while in August 2nd, 5 pastors were reportedly abducted by the Fulani on their way to attend an annual church conference in Ogun State.

All the above-mentioned security cases affirmed failure in Nigeria's security architecture hence, the government of Nigeria cannot afford to compromise the safety and security of the tourism entrepreneurs and their investments, if intending to develop her tourism sector. The argument above shows that for a country to be competitive for tourism investment and tourist patronage, the government must take into account the costliness of common crime and violence as well as terrorism, and the extent to which police services can be relied upon to provide protection from crime as well as the incidence of road traffic accidents in the country.

Prioritisation of Travel and Tourism and Nigeria Tourism Economy

The extent to which the government prioritises the travel and tourism sector has an important impact on travel and tourism competitiveness of a country (Jennifer & Thea, 2013). It sends a clear signal of the government's intentions, which can have positive spillover effects such as attracting further private investment into the sector. Prioritization of the sector can be reflected in a variety of other ways as well, such as government efforts to collect and make available travel and tourism data on a timely basis and commissioning high-quality destination-marketing campaigns. Realising that tourism is a strong alternative to crude oil as a revenue earner; the government of Nigeria in 2006 selected the tourism sector as one of six priority areas central to the revival of the Nigeria economy (BGL, 2014). Tourism became a cardinal stone for achieving the Nigeria's 7-point agenda, its Vision 20:2020 program, and the quest for attracting foreign direct investment (Bello & Bello, 2012). The authors affirmed that the tourism sector in Nigeria suffered from a policy shift when the reformists, President Olusegun Obasanjo left power in 2007. The tourism industry has fallen off the radar once again and is still straddling for attention while more Nigerians are exporting jobs and revenues to less endowed destinations.

Health and Hygiene and Nigeria Tourism Economy

Health and Hygiene is the act of creating and maintenance of conditions favourable to good health. Good health and sanitary practices are fundamental for tourism competitiveness of a country (Jennifer & Thea, 2013; Bello et al. 2014). Access to improved sanitation practices within a country is important for the comfort and health of travellers. In the contemporary Nigeria, it is common to see people selling foods, sleeping, eating and drinking beside human faeces in cities across the 36 states of the federation (Bello et al. 2014). From the backyard of an average compound in Nigeria, to public places such as railways, motor parks, airport terminal buildings, filling stations, footpaths, highways, street roads, playing grounds, prayer houses, forests and stadiums, there is faeces everywhere. This information validated the global survey that identified Nigeria as the second in the world among countries where open defecation is prevalent (Adedigba, 2019). It is not surprising that open defecation costs Nigeria over US\$ 1 billion yearly (UNICEF, 2019). Open defecation in this context explains condition where human faeces are disposed of in fields, forests, open bodies of water,

beaches or other open spaces or disposed with solid waste. Report had it that 47 million Nigerians representing 24.4 per cent of the population practice open defecation (UNICEF, 2019).

Out of the 47 million people, North-Central Nigeria has 53.9 per cent which constitute 15 million people making it the highest region practicing open defecation in the country. South-West has 28 per cent, and South-East has 22.4 per cent. North-East has 21.8 per cent, South-South 17.9 per cent, and North-West 10.3 per cent (UNICEF, 2019). Efforts at promoting effective hygiene and health practices in Nigeria have been piecemeal and have not been effective enough to engender the required mass behavioural change. However, Nigeria needs additional two million toilets annually over 7 years for effective sanitary control (UNICEF, 2019). This implies that nearly 20 million household toilets and 43,000 toilets in schools, health centers and public places needed to be constructed. This will be requiring an average annual investment of about NGN 100 billion (UNICEF, 2019a). To this end, Nigeria needs N959 billion to eradicate open defecation by 2028.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion that could be drawn from this study shows that the current mono centric nature of the Nigerian economy can be injurious to our collective socio-economic growth if urgent attempt to diversify the economy is not sincerely and vigorously pursue. Despite the oil boom, Nigeria is still submerged in uncontrollable poverty, and overwhelmed with scary unemployment complications hence, indicators of suffocating economy. The paper also concludes that diversifying to and promoting tourism economy has the capacity to remodeling the Nigeria suffocating economy. Hence, declared that tourism economy has the potential to becoming instrument of economic regeneration and stability for the country given its important role in revenue generation, jobs creation, and infrastructure development. Thus, further reveals that Nigeria can only maximise her tourism economy potentials if the government put in place the required tourism regulatory framework (TRF) to sharpen the industry. The paper also concludes that environmental sustainability is key to providing an attractive Nigerian tourism business development and competitiveness. It is further concluding that a secure and safe Nigeria is critical to unlocking the competitiveness of the Nigerian tourism economy. The study further concludes that the extent to which the government of Nigeria prioritises the tourism sector has an important impact on the competitiveness of tourism sector in the country. Finally, it is concluded that good health and sanitary practices are fundamental for Nigeria to unlocking her tourism economy competitiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the foregoing, the government of Nigeria should vigorously pursue favourable policy environment that supports tourism business investment. Therefore, urgent review of the current Nigerian tourism master plan is strongly recommended. Hence, the proposed reviewed tourism master plan should take into account issue of tourism resources stock-taking, tourism product development strategies, and human capital development initiatives in tourism, international tourism marketing, tourism investment right protection, and tourism infrastructure development. Due to the huge financial resources required for this purpose, governments should explore Public-Private-Partnership arrangements under mutually agreed legal frameworks.

Furthermore, realising the importance of the environmental sustainability in providing an attractive environment for tourism business development, and corresponding with the fact that previous efforts of government in this regard have not yielded the desired positive impacts, this paper therefore sturdily recommends that the government and the people of Nigeria should renew her effort towards sustaining her environment for accelerated tourism business development. In this wise, the National

Environmental Policy Guidelines and Standards; Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Law; National Energy Policy; and Nuclear Safety and Radiation Protection Legislation should be urgently reviewed in line with the current environmental realities.

In view of the realities that safety and security are critical factors determining the competitiveness of a country's tourism economy, this paper therefore recommends decisive overhauling of the Nigerian security architecture. In this wise, international collaboration is stalwartly recommended. Aside, politicising the security framework of the country should be strappingly avoided. Quality investment in training and re-training of security personnel including, provision of modern weapons is muscularly recommended. Recruitment and enlistment officers and men of the security agencies on the basis of intellectual capacity and qualification rather than quota system is also recommended.

Appreciating that the extent to which the government of Nigeria prioritises the tourism sector has an important impact on the competitiveness of tourism sector in the country. This paper therefore recommends that government of Nigeria should make decisive efforts to collect and make available travel and tourism data on a timely basis. This is expected to help in tourism planning and designing high-quality destination-marketing campaigns. The government of Nigeria should urgently restore tourism to a full ministry status as against the current merger of the sector with the ministry of information, culture and national orientation. A bold step to appoint experts as minister of tourism is strongly recommended.

Finally, recognising that access to improved sanitation practices is important for the comfort and health of travellers, this paper therefore recommends that a state of emergency be declared in WASH sector. Aside, the government of Nigeria should announce in clear terms the plan by the country to become open defecation free country by year 2025.

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