



‘Same Goal, Different Results’: A Comparative Study of Tourism and Economic Development in Nigeria and Malaysia, 1995-2020

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Abstract. This paper undertook a comparative study of tourism and its impact on the economic development of Nigeria and Malaysia between 1995 and 2020. To this end, the paper employed both qualitative and quantitative methods with emphasis on the use of secondary sources for data generation and analysis. Using information sourced from books, journal articles and online databases of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), World Bank and World Trade and Tourism Council (WTTC), the study demonstrated that although the two countries started their quest to kick-start economic growth through tourism development under almost similar circumstances in the 1970s, the two countries are currently poles apart in their international ratings, both in terms of economic advancement and tourism indices. While Malaysia has been able to come up with a macro-economic approach to planning its tourism development and it is deepening its tourism successes, the approach in Nigeria is haphazard, unscientific and piecemeal and it continues to be regarded as “potential,” only displaying latent prospects in tourism but lacking adequate governance of the sector. The study recommended the Malaysian model and urged Nigerian tourism managers to explore the opportunities/advantages the country has in tourism to foster economic development.

Keywords: Comparative Study, Economy, Development, History, Malaysia, Nigeria, Tourism

1. Introduction

The potential of tourism to foster economic growth in any nation by way of revenue generation, employment creation, and infrastructural development is no longer an issue of contestation. Indeed, tourism has been recognised, the world over, as an alternative route to development. Its capacity as the largest employer of labour globally has been

proven and its multiplier consequences on other sectors of the economy such as transport, hospitality, banking, catering, entertainment and other ancillary retail businesses are longer in doubt. The rapid growth and continued expansion of the modern tourism industry have made it one of the most important sectors in the world, particularly in economic terms. It generates more than US\$3 trillion, which is more than 10% of the global Gross National Product (GNP) and employs more than 200 million people globally representing 1 in 9 employees. In addition to this, tourism accounts for about 11% of total tax payments globally contributing about US\$655 billion to governments in direct taxes (WTTC, 1995). It is for this reason that the tourism industry has become a major income earner and a viable alternative paradigm for economic development in many countries, with Kenya, Mauritius, and South Africa leading the way in Africa.

The prospects of tourism in fostering social interaction, health benefits and economic advancement have been of tremendous interest to scholars across fields and disciplines. Hence, scholars from diverse intellectual divides have appraised the impact of tourism on human, social and economic indices. However, a cursory examination of the extant studies on tourism, across space and time, will present three major classifications. This is because of the differences in focus, period and problems they distinctively strived to address. Before and throughout the 1950s, most of the literature on tourism essentially focused on the social and health connotations of tourism and the drawbacks inherent in its practice. Scholars such as Townsend (1947), Ishmael (1948), and Ariston (1948) have extensively appraised the social imperatives of tourism and the challenges, which its practice is fraught with. Other studies such as those of Lugard (1950) and Richmond

(1955) interrogate the value that tourism holds for human health and wellness. The two scholars conclude that the aftermath of the practice of tourism is good health and freshness of life. To them, tourism is about relaxation and its therapeutic benefits.

From the 1960s, the focus of the research and publication of scholars in the field shifted to the economics of tourism. Scholars such as Rusfell (1967), Haanan (1972) and Edgerl (1989) began to look at how tourism can propel development and in particular, knit other sectors of an economy or society for optimum development benefits. Attention was given to what can be generated through tourism to facilitate development. Haanan (1972) particularly studied how tourism has stimulated untold revenue for Saudi Arabia and its government. His classic work, *Tourist Centres in Saudi Arabia: The Economic Value*, outlines vigorously how tourism is a significant contributor to the wealth of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the focus of research and analysis in the field expanded its frontiers in the 1990s following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War (Benthan, 2008). During this period, most of the studies focused on the institutional capabilities of countries to embark on, realise and sustain the benefits and opportunities of tourism within the institutional framework. Empell (2012), Sussex (2013) and Netalie (2016) focused on the institution and modernisation factors that could sustain the tourism industry. They confined their views to the framework of public policy analysis.

Meanwhile, an approach which can be distilled from the way scholars in the field undertake their studies in tourism is spatial or regional. In other words, scholars favour studying their subject within the context of a country or region. Hence, the works of scholars like Marzuki (2010), Dritsakis (2012), Lashkarizadeh *et al* (2012), Bal *et al* (2016), Govdeli and Direcki (2017), Yusuff and Ayinde (2015) and Ekanayake and Long (2012) constitute an impressive body of literature for studying tourism and its implication for economic growth and development within a country and region.

Given these considerations, this paper reflects on the nexus between tourism and national economic development, with a focus on the comparative analysis of the experiences of Nigeria and Malaysia between 1995 and 2020. The choice of Nigeria and Malaysia is apt for some reasons. Like Nigeria, Malaysia is a former British colony and therefore both countries share similar colonial experiences. Meanwhile, the two countries have heterogeneous and multi-ethnic populations and consequently

operate federal constitutions. It is, however, noteworthy that while Nigeria is a federal republic, Malaysia is a federal constitutional monarchy (Mosbah, 2014). Situated within the tropical region, both countries experience an average temperature of 26 degrees Celsius throughout the year and are blessed with an extensive shoreline with many beautiful beaches. More importantly, as shall be established in this study, the development of tourism in the two countries appears a lot similar though both have arrived at different ends.

2. The Meaning, Nature and Scope of Tourism

Tourism has no consensus definition. There are as many definitions and perspectives on the concept as there are scholars and practitioners in the field. Most academics tend to craft their definitions to suit their specific purposes. Beyond the elucidation of scholars on the subject, tourism has its day-to-day connotations and it has been used interchangeably with travel, holiday and excursion. As a phenomenon, tourism entails the movement of people from one point to another, both within and across national borders for recreation, health, sport, holiday, education or religious purposes. The first end is known as the originating point, while the other end is the destination point. What transpires between these two points and during the tourists' stay at the destination is deemed to be of interest to, and within the purview of, tourism.

In 1905, Eduard Guyer Freuler penned one of the earliest definitions of tourism in the *Manual Dictionary of Economics, Social Policy and Administration*. In the dictionary, Freuler defines tourism "as a phenomenon of modern time based on the increased need for recuperation and change of air, the awakened and cultivated appreciation of scenic beauty, the pleasure in and the enjoyment of nature and particularly brought about by the increasing mingling of various nations and classes of human society, as a result of the development of commerce, industry and trade, and the perfection of the means of transport" (Kaul, 2002: 4). This definition encompasses the social, health and economic imperatives of tourism and presents the fundamental dynamics that facilitate and promote the practice of tourism. Similarly, in 1942, the Swiss Professors and tourism experts, Walter Hunziker and Kurt Krapf published a book, *Outline of the General Teaching of Tourism*. In the book, they consider tourism as "the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not

connected with any earning activity” (Burkart and Medlik, 1981).

The world body responsible for tourism, the World Tourism Organisation (UN-WTO) gave a more functional and broad-based definition of tourism in 1993 when it says tourism encompasses all “the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.” This definition, as well as that of Hunziker and Krapf, basically distinguishes the temporary non-residents and their economic activities from the residents’ economic behaviour and impact. More so, the use of this broad concept makes it possible to identify tourism between and/or among countries as well as tourism within a country. Tourism, in this sense, becomes closely related to all activities of tourists, including ‘overnight visitors’ and ‘same-day visitors.’

It could be seen from the foregoing definitions that tourism has certain assumptions that cannot be compromised. First, tourism presupposes a movement of people to destinations different from their places of residence and work. This movement can be in-bound or out-bound, that is, it can either be within or across national frontiers. The second is that the movement is temporary and primarily for a short duration. This allows for further classification of tourists – those who stay overnight and those that do same-day visits (excursionists). Third, the motivation for visiting or journeying could range from recreation, business, health, or religious reasons but not to seek permanent residence or employment within the place visited. Finally, since the movement is essentially a leisure or pleasure-seeking adventure, it implies the deployment of a readily disposable income, free time and one’s free will.

Tourism is a phenomenon that is multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional. It has significant implications for all aspects of people’s lives and activities. As such, tourism can only be appreciated through a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary approach. It is, therefore, significant to emphasise that there is geography in tourism, that is, those aspects relating to physical, territorial and environmental features of tourism destinations. There is also history in tourism dealing with the evolution and development of the industry and its contribution to human well-being and advancement. One can also talk of the political economy, psychology, management and sociology of tourism representing the multidisciplinary nature of the subject. It is for this reason that tourism is of

interest to scholars across fields, professions and disciplines. Another way of classifying tourism is based on the main purpose of travelling from one point to another and this determines the form of tourism. Hence we have such typologies as medical (health) tourism, educational (excursion) tourism, pilgrimage (religious) tourism, cultural (heritage) tourism, adventure (pleasure) tourism and ecotourism to mention but a few.

3. The Concept of Economic Development

The precise meaning of development and all that it entails has been a subject of conversation among scholars across academic disciplines and ideological leanings. The concept of development is complicated, contested, unequivocal and elusive and, therefore, has a range of divergent meanings that depend on the context in which the term is used. For instance, while economists in the twentieth century viewed development primarily in terms of economic growth, sociologists instead emphasised broader processes of social change and modernisation (Jaffe, 1998). Similarly, the idea of development promoted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank differs from the one articulated by the Greenpeace organisation or UNESCO. It is also important to understand that development is a process rather than an outcome; it is dynamic, insidious and transitional as it involves a gradual change from one state or condition to another. More importantly, development is dimensional and multifaceted. Hence we have such classifications as economic development, social development, technological development, political development, cultural development, human development and environmental development.

Perhaps it is in line with this thought that the Society of International Development (SID) sees development as “a process that creates growth, progress, positive change particularly as it has to do with physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components” (SID, 2021). Development is a straight and upward movement; it deals with the current conditions or status, which is temporary and transitory. It deals with visible results in positive directions; it is a concept used to denote betterment and improvement in any realm. The rationale for development is improvement in the living conditions and quality of life of the people, reduction of poverty, vulnerability and inequality, social inclusion, equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, freedom and self-determination as well as sustainability. Development, in the final analysis, entails the strategic management of human and physical endowments in bringing about both

quantitative and qualitative change in human society and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change.

Economic development, like ‘development’ from which it is derived, does not have a universal definition. Professor Karl Seidman, a development expert conceives economic development as “a process of creating and utilising physical, human, financial, and social assets to generate improved and broadly shared economic well-being and quality of life for a community or region.” (Seidman, 2005: 5). In his wisdom, Joseph Schumpeter conceives economic development as a process of transferring capital from an established method of production to new, innovative, productivity-enhancing methods. This underscores a fundamental transformation of an economy, which involves altering the industrial structure, the educational and occupational characteristics of the population, and indeed the entire social and institutional fabric (Feldman *et al*, 2016). Likewise, Encyclopaedia Britannica conceptualises economic development as the process through which a simple, traditional and low-income economy transforms into a modern industrialised one. From the foregoing, economic development, therefore, represents the sustained and concerted efforts of policy makers and communities in bringing about the expansion of the local economy through an increase in the market value of the goods and services produced by an economy over a period, which, in turn, promotes the standard of living and economic prosperity of a specific region. It can also be defined as the quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy of a country. These changes are birthed by decisive actions which may involve multiple areas such as critical infrastructure, environmental sustainability, regional competitiveness, health facilities, literacy and human development among others.

4. Tourism Development in Nigeria

Tourism activities are of ancient recollection in Nigeria, dating back to the kingdoms and empires that dotted the entire landscape of West Africa. The establishment of such expansive and multi-racial polities as the Old Ghana, Mali and Songhai, Oyo, Benin and the Kanem-Bornu necessitated the movement of people across the length and breadth of the West African region for economic, political and socio-cultural interactions. Similarly, the organisation, pomp and spectacle of the various annual socio-cultural and religious festivities in the ancient kingdoms, empires, emirates and city-states, which attract a great assemblage of people from far

and near is a clear confirmation of the existence of some degree of domestic tourism activities in the region that is today known as Nigeria.

The emergence of the trade across the Saharan Desert and the introduction of Islam further intensified the movement of people both within and outside the kingdoms and empires as people had to travel to markets and trade points located strategically along trade routes to participate in the exchange with the Berber and Arab merchants. More so, the propagation of Islam and subsequent popularity of the faith among the people of these polities meant that many of them, particularly the ruling class, embarked on pilgrimages to the Middle East as one of the basic tenets of the Islamic religion. This introduced another dimension to tourism activities in Nigeria that can be classified as inter-regional tourism. A classical example of such travels was the pilgrimage of Mansa Musa, the famous 14th-century emperor of the Mali Empire, to Mecca en route to Egypt. However, the remarkable and ostentatious nature of Musa Musa’s journey points to the fact that the pilgrimage was more of a pleasure trip than a religious one.

Another important phase in the development of tourism in Nigeria is the arrival in 1472 of the first Portuguese merchants, who landed in Lagos for trade purposes (Ovat, 2003). The success of this trip and subsequent trans-Atlantic travels, facilitated by the invention of the more sophisticated ocean-going vessels could rightly be said to be the beginning of international tourism. However, the influx of the Europeans and the establishment of colonial rule in Nigeria generally stretched the paradigm of tourism beyond trade to an organised activity of travelling for recreation, albeit without deliberate or conscious efforts to develop the endeavour. From this period until now, tourism, as a pleasure-oriented activity, in Nigeria has grown in leaps and bounds and undergone different phases of development. Meanwhile, the prospects of Nigeria in cultural and heritage tourism became publicly acknowledged in the late 1920s with the discovery of some ancient terracotta artworks and sculptures of the Nok culture by some foreign archaeologists (Esuola, 2009). Since then, archaeological excavations have been carried out in several locations across Nigeria yielding fruitful evidence and legacies of ancient cultures and civilisations.

The first organised efforts at creating a viable tourism industry in Nigeria could be traced to the establishment of the Nigerian Tourist Association (NTA) in 1962. It was a voluntary association of Nigerians with a common interest in promoting

tourism with membership drawn from both the private and public sectors (Ashikodi, 2010). Prominent among the sponsors of the Association were Nigerian Airways, Shell Petroleum Company and the Nigerian Tobacco Company. Though the NTA had government support, it achieved little in developing a virile tourism industry for the country. The only notable achievement of the Association in its 14 years of existence was the acquisition of membership of the International Union of Official Travel Organisations (IUOTO) in 1964 (Ukpanah, 1991). The IUOTO was renamed the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) in 1975.

In its bid to reposition the tourism industry whose growth had been painfully slow, the government contracted the African Development Bank (ADB) in 1971 to conduct a feasibility study and come up with a white paper on the potential and viability of tourism in Nigeria. The Report detailed the enormous potential that Nigeria possessed in tourism and emphasised the need for the development of the various tourist destinations in the country as a means of strengthening the national economy. It was this report that encouraged the government to promulgate Decree No. 54 of 1976, which came into effect in 1978, establishing the Nigerian Tourist Board (NTB) as a government agency to oversee the promotion and development of tourism as a viable industry in Nigeria (Olokesusi, 1987). Hence, the NTB had effectively replaced the privately-inspired Nigerian Tourist Association. As part of its efforts to deliver its statutory role, the NTB was to set up a tour operating company, the National Travel Bureau, to organise tours both within and outside Nigeria on a commercial basis.

Meanwhile, state tourism committees were established in each of the 19 states of the federation to assist, advise and recommend to the Board other measures as may be necessary for the full realisation of the objectives of the decree. The committees were also to undertake necessary initiatives and actions expedient for the promotion and development of tourism in their states (Effiom, 2013). To facilitate the achievement of these noble goals of the decree, the government disbursed one million Nigerian naira (#1,000,000) take-off grants to each of the 19 states of the federation, totalling a whopping 19 million Nigerian naira (NOUN, 2006). Unfortunately, the funds were misappropriated and the performance of the NTB left much to be desired as it made no significant impact on the tourism industry. Apart from the issue of corruption and misappropriation of funds, the decree was also confronted with certain inherent flaws in its provisions. For instance, the

government did not create any tourism board or organisation at the local government level, thereby, overlooking a vital organ of government that would have been pivotal in jumpstarting tourism initiatives in the country. It was also palpable evidence of the total ignorance of the military government of the federal nature of the country. The Board also demonstrated the lack of determination to sanction any organisation that flouted its laws or directives with the effect that the tourism space remained largely ungoverned and uncoordinated.

The failure of the NTB to make any significant impact on the tourism industry necessitated several attempts to reposition and effectively address the challenges confronting the development of tourism in Nigeria. For instance, the then Muhammadu Buhari regime (1983-1985) initiated the Master Plan on Tourism Development in the country but the country's first tourism development policy was not ready until 1990 (Akinsanmi, 2017). The policy paved the way for the promulgation of Decree No. 86 of 1991 establishing the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) in 1992 with the sole responsibility of regulating and overseeing the sector. With the return to civilian rule in the country in 1999, President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration (1999-2007) created the Ministry for Culture and Tourism in its bid to galvanise tourism as a major income earner in its economic diversification drive. In 2017, the Nigerian Senate voted to amend the NTDC Act, 2004 which replaced Decree No. 86 of 1991, to rename the agency as the Nigerian Tourism Development Authority and, among other things, make it a fully-fledged or 'stand-alone' ministry (Ojo, 2017). The NTDC, currently under the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and National Orientation, remains the apex tourism agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria charged with the overall responsibility of promoting, coordinating and marketing tourism activities in Nigeria.

5. Tourism Development in Malaysia

As in Nigeria and many other Third World countries, pleasure travels, holidaying, sightseeing and other tourism-based activities in Malaysia are legacies of the British colonial rule in the country. However, the earliest efforts of the government of Malaysia at developing tourism date back to 1959 when the Department of Tourism was created under the Ministry of Trade of Malaysia (Tan, 1991). Despite this initiative, tourism development did not gain momentum as a viable economic sector because of the half-hearted attitude of the government to providing necessary impetus and drive, with the

effect that the Malaysian economy continued to be a mono-cultural economy that relied heavily on primary products such as rubber, tin, palm oil and crude oil. It was not until the early 1970s that the required political will to drive the necessary development in the tourism industry surfaced on the heels of the 21st Conference of the Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA), which was hosted by Malaysia in 1972 (Marzuki, 2010). The conference was pivotal to the breakthrough of the Malaysian tourism industry as it opened the eyes and minds of the government of Malaysia to the enormous, and almost endless, opportunities in tourism, thereby propelling the country to the international stage.

In the aftermath of the conference, the government heightened its intervention in the tourism industry with the establishment of the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) in 1972, and the completion of the National Tourism Master Plan in 1975 as part of the Second Malaysia Plan. Although created as a development agency under the then Ministry of Trade and Industry by an Act of the Parliament, the TDC's performance was lacklustre and modest as it failed to transform Malaysia into a tourism destination of choice like other neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia (Mosbah and Saleh, 2014). The period between 1976 and 1985 captured under the Third Malaysia Plan (1976-'80) and the Fourth Malaysia Plan (1981-85) witnessed aggressive government efforts to develop the tourism sector through the unprecedented allocation of budgetary allocation into public infrastructure, product development, marketing and promotional activities. This gradually increased the traffic of international tourists into the country and boosted the reputation of Malaysia as a tourist destination in the Southeast Asian region.

The transformation of local and regional airports into the international status and the development of various tourist destinations within and across the country further increased the inbound traffic of tourists into Malaysia. In attestation to its improving position as a critical tourism player in the Pacific, Malaysia hosted the 35th Conference of the Pacific Area Travel Association in 1986. The conference provided the Malaysian government with the needed opportunity to showcase improved facilities and services as well as the transformed state of the Malaysian tourism industry to the conferees and delegates. The following year, in 1987, the government established a separate Ministry of Culture and Tourism and this was expanded into the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism (MOCAT) in 1990, to "...expand and diversify the tourism base and to reduce country's dependency on a narrow

range of activities and markets" (Marzuki, 2010). The TDC was moved to this newly-created ministry.

A new phase opened in the history of tourism development when in 1990 Malaysia, under the auspices of MOCAT, organised a landmark tourism promotional fanfare; the "Visit Malaysia Year 1990". As a consequence of this event, more than 7 million international tourist arrivals were recorded in the year, with a growth of 53.6% from 1989 (Awang and Aziz, 2010). The programme was so successful that it surpassed the target of increasing tourist arrivals by only 10% (Tan, 1991). This success was followed up by another 'Visit Malaysia Year' in 1994. In addition to driving tourist arrivals into Malaysia, the 1994 campaign was also focused on encouraging the growth of domestic tourism. Meanwhile, the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) had transformed into the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) through the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board Act of 1992. The MTPB, popularly known as 'Tourism Malaysia', was saddled with the sole responsibility of promoting Malaysia domestically and internationally while MOCAT retained the oversight functions over the tourism industry with policy formulation and implementation. The MTPB has so far opened 29 offices globally to project, promote and market Malaysia to the world (Awang and Aziz, 2010). All these efforts represent the commitment of the government to establish tourism as a viable sector of the Malaysian economy

The last decade of the 20th century witnessed significant achievements and results in tourism development in Malaysia, which were the fruits of the unbroken commitment of the government to repositioning the sector for greater socio-economic impact over the years. More so, the opening of a new decade and millennium saw a further expansion and growth of the tourism industry with increasing international tourist arrivals and receipts necessitating the split of MOCAT in April 2004 to facilitate the creation of a separate ministry, the Ministry of Tourism (MOT), to oversee the tourism sector, with MTPB as the major government agency for the promotion of tourism in Malaysia (Hamzah, 2004). All these efforts portrays government's seriousness to deepen the economic gains from tourism and also transform the sector into money spinner and possibly, the second major income earner for the economy after manufacturing. Over time, the tourism catchphrase that projects Malaysia tourism had changed from 'Beautiful Malaysia' to 'Only Malaysia', followed by 'Fascinating Malaysia' and currently 'Malaysia, Truly Asia' projecting Malaysia's cultural and linguistic diversity that

represent all the major civilisations in Asia as its tourism tag line and image.

The Malaysian model of tourism planning organisation is complex, diversified, multi-sectoral and structured along the federal system involving the three tiers of government, that is, the national, state and local authorities. At the national level, the overall policy formulation, implementation, regulation and planning of the sector are the responsibility of the MOCAT and the newly-established MOT, while MTPB is concerned with the marketing and promotional aspects of tourism (Awang and Aziz, 2010). Apart from this, the government made it incumbent on its agencies to key into the national tourism agenda making some of them directly involved in tourism development. Accordingly, Hamzah (2004) asserts that the Department of Agriculture is responsible for agrotourism; the Department of Forestry for ecotourism; the Department of Fisheries for coastal tourism; the Department of Wildlife and National Parks for pleasure tourism; the Department of Aborigines' Affairs for ethnic/sociological tourism, while the Department of Museums and Antiquities is responsible for cultural/heritage tourism in Malaysia.

At the level of the state, the State Economic Planning Unit (SEPU) is saddled with formulating policies and strategies related to tourism development in each state. State governments are required to provide the enabling environment for tourism to thrive through the provision and maintenance of tourism-related infrastructure and to facilitate private investment in the sector. They engage in promotional activities and organise events such as the 'Visit Sarawak Year', 'Visit Perlis Year' etc to showcase the tourism destinations in their various states. To ensure synergy between the states and the Federal government on tourism matters, State Tourism Action Council (STAC) was created in 2002 under MOCAT for every state in Peninsular Malaysia. In the same vein, the local authorities are also expected to key into the national tourism agenda through the promotion of tourism in their domains. Created under the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, the local authorities maintained recreational areas, landscaping, garbage disposal, organising local carnivals, street improvement and beautification programmes (Hamzah 2004).

6. Tourism and National Economy of Nigeria and Malaysia

Tourism stands out as one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the last century.

This is not likely to change for centuries to come because of the unprecedented expansion of the industry worldwide. For the majority of the countries of the world, tourism has developed to become of the most dynamic and fastest growing sectors of the economy after technology and telecommunications. Today, tourism is the leading export commodity only next to oil in the international arena. The last forty years have witnessed a phenomenal expansion of global tourism recording an average of 7% annually in arrivals and 12% in receipts, a growth record unmatched by any other economic sector (Omotosho, 2000). Traditionally, tourism and its contributions to national economies are measured using statistics of international tourist arrivals and receipts as well as the contribution of tourism receipts to the gross domestic product (GDP) of a country (UNWTO, 2000). However, a more recent approach to studying and analysing the economic contribution of tourism to national economies has witnessed the inclusion of such data as the economic contribution of tourism to foreign exchange earnings, employment, taxation and the impact of tourism on other industries within an economy.

6.1 International Tourist Arrivals in Nigeria and Malaysia

International tourist arrivals refer to international inbound tourists who travel to a country other than that which they have their usual residence for a period not exceeding twelve (12) months and whose main purpose of visiting is not connected to any activity remunerated from the country visited. It refers to the number of entries, thus a person who makes several trips to a country during a given period is counted each time as a new arrival.

According to World Bank Group online database, Nigeria recorded a total of 5.2 million tourist arrivals in 2016, ranking 35th in the world. In the period between 2000 and 2016, this indicator reached a maximum value of 6.1 million in 2010 and a minimum value of 1.5 million in 2000. As Table 1 and Figure 1 below indicates, there was a steady improvement in tourist arrivals in Nigeria between 2000 and 2015, reaching 6 million in 2015 before dipping to 5.2 million in 2016. On the other hand, the records show that Malaysia accounted for 26.8 million tourist arrivals in 2016, ranking 9th in the world. Between 2000 and 2015, this indicator reached a maximum value of 27.4 million in 2014 and a minimum of 10.2 million in 2000. There is an observed improvement in tourist arrivals within the same period with Malaysia only witnessing a dip in its tourist arrivals records twice in 2003 and 2015.

Table 1: International Tourist Arrivals in Nigeria and Malaysia, 1995-2016

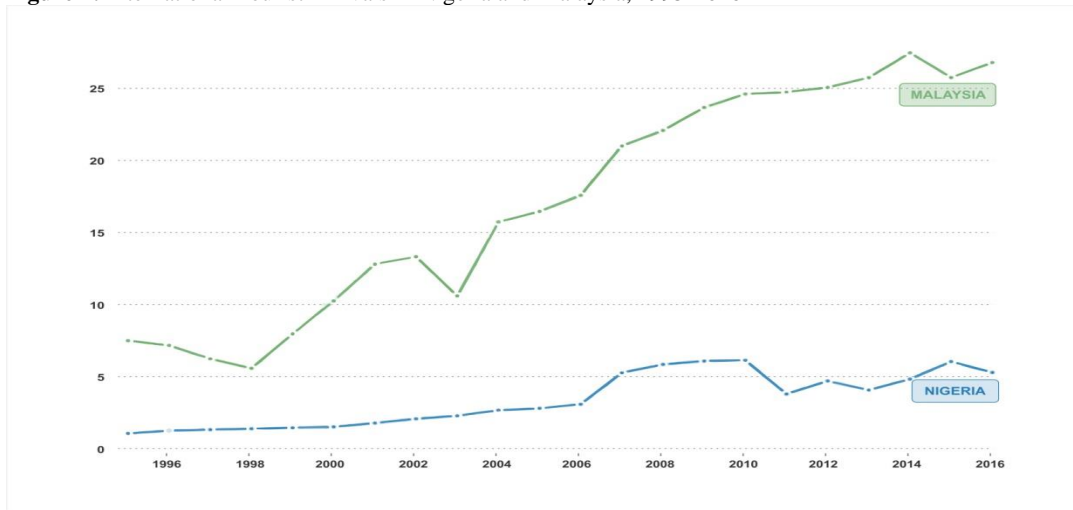
Year	Nigeria	Malaysia
1995	1,031,000	7,469,000
1996	1,230,000	7,138,000
1997	1,292,000	6,211,000
1998	1,357,000	5,551,000
1999	1,425,000	7,931,000
2000	1,492,000	10,222,000
2001	1,753,000	12,775,000
2002	2,046,000	13,292,000
2003	2,253,000	10,577,000
2004	2,646,000	15,703,000
2005	2,778,000	16,431,000
2006	3,056,000	17,547,000
2007	5,239,000	20,973,000
2008	5,820,000	22,052,000
2009	6,053,000	23,646,000
2010	6,113,000	24,577,000
2011	3,765,000	24,714,000
2012	4,673,000	25,033,000
2013	4,038,000	25,715,000
2014	4,803,000	27,437,000
2015	6,017,000	25,721,000
2016	5,265,000	26,757,000

Source: World Bank Group (2022)

The undeveloped and lethargic nature of the Nigerian tourism industry is further understood when one

considers that the meagre tourist arrivals in Nigeria originate mostly from within the West African sub-region and neighbouring countries like Benin Republic, Liberia, Chad, Niger, Ghana and Sudan from where access to Nigeria is effortless and through the land borders (Ogonu and Dibia, 2019). The data published by Statista Research Department in 2022 shows that in 2020, China and Niger had the highest number of tourists in Nigeria, with six per cent in the total arrivals respectively. India, the United States and the United Kingdom followed with 5%, 3% and 3% respectively. The same indicator for Malaysia indicates that the ASEAN region continues to be the largest contributor to tourist arrival with about 75% of the total arrivals. For instance, out of the 26.7 million tourist arrivals for the year 2016, Singapore, Indonesia and China were the three top originating countries with approximately 13.3 million (50%), 3 million (11%) and 2.1 million (7.9%) respectively (UNWTO, 2017). The stronger tourism performance in 2016 is attributed to cheaper air travel and numerous flights due to the expansion of the low-cost carriers in the region (Misachi, 2017).

Figure 1: International Tourist Arrivals in Nigeria and Malaysia, 1995-2016



Source: Adapted from the World Bank Group Database (2022)

6.2 International Tourist Receipts in Nigeria and Malaysia

International tourism receipts have been defined by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) as the expenditure of international inbound visitors including their payments to national carriers for international transport. They include any other payment or payments afterwards made for goods and services received in the destination country. These also may include receipts from same-day visitors, except when these are important enough to justify separate classification. The definition is more extensive than that of the travel expenditure in the Balance of Payment in which international passenger transport is not included. It is usually calculated in current US Dollars (US\$).

As Table 2 demonstrates, the value of international tourism receipts for Nigeria in 2000 was US\$186 million, representing about 0.9 per cent of the total exports for the year. The terminal year, 2020, recorded a total receipt of US\$321 million, constituting 0.8 per cent of the total exports for the year. In the period between 2000 and 2020, this indicator reached a maximum value of US\$2.62 billion in the year 2017 and a minimum value of US\$49 million in 2004. The threshold of US\$1 billion was reached in 2016 from US\$461 million in 2015 before dipping to US\$1.98 billion in 2018. For Malaysia, the international receipts for the year 2000 totalled US\$5.87 billion while that of 2020 was US\$3.39 billion, amounting to 5.2% and 1.6% of the total exports for the respective years. Between 2000 and 2020, this indicator reached a maximum stretch in 2014 with a record of US\$24.47 billion and a minimum value of US\$3.39 billion in 2020, corresponding to 9.8% and 1.6% of the total exports of Malaysia for the respective years.

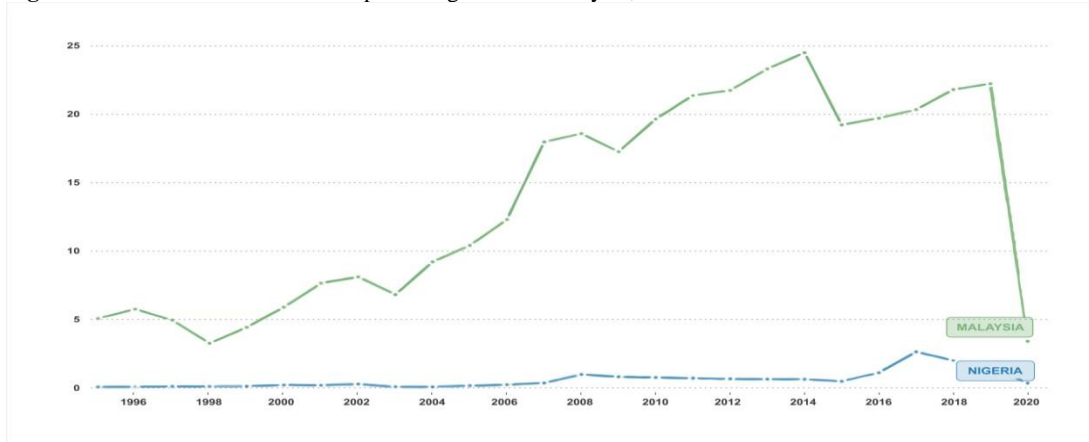
Table 2: International Tourist Receipts in Nigeria and Malaysia, 1995-2020

Year	Nigeria (US\$)	% of Exports	Malaysia (US\$)	% of Exports
1995	47 million	1.2	5.04 billion	6.1
1996	58 million	1.1	5.73 billion	6.2
1997	83 million	1.7	4.29 billion	5.3
1998	81 million	2.9	3.24 billion	3.9
1999	99 million	0.7	4.4 billion	4.6
2000	186 million	0.9	5.87 billion	5.2
2001	168 million	0.9	7.63 billion	7.5
2002	256 million	1.4	8.08 billion	7.5
2003	58 million	0.2	6.8 billion	5.7
2004	49 million	0.1	9.18 billion	6.4
2005	139 million	0.2	10.39 billion	6.4
2006	209 million	0.4	12.28 billion	6.7
2007	337 million	0.5	17.95 billion	8.7
2008	958 million	1.1	18.55 billion	8.1
2009	791 million	1.4	17.23 billion	9.2
2010	736 million	0.9	19.62 billion	8.8
2011	688 million	0.7	21.34 billion	8.4
2012	638 million	0.6	21.71 billion	8.7
2013	616 million	0.6	23.28 billion	9.5
2014	605 million	0.7	24.47 billion	9.8
2015	461 million	0.9	19.19 billion	9.2
2016	1.09 billion	2.8	19.16 billion	9.8
2017	2.62 billion	5.1	20.31 billion	9.1
2018	1.98 billion	3.0	21.77 billion	8.9
2019	1.47 billion	2.1	22.20 billion	9.3
2020	321 million	0.8	3.39 billion	1.6

Source: World Bank Group Database (2022)

It is noteworthy that international tourism receipts per capita vary with each year. For instance, in 2000, each international tourist that visited Nigeria was estimated to have expended US\$125 as against US\$575 calculated for Malaysia, representing the lowest per capita international receipts for Malaysia. The lowest value for per capita international tourism receipts for Nigeria was US\$19 calculated for 2004, which was the year the international tourism receipt was at an all-time low. However, the per capita international tourism receipts of Malaysia amounted to US\$585 for the same year. The highest value of this indicator for the available information on Nigeria is for the year 2016 at US\$207 while the highest value for Malaysia is US\$892 in 2014. It needs to be highlighted too that the poor performance of the two countries in tourism indices for 2020 was due to the Covid-19 pandemic that led to the total shutdown of borders and airspaces for some months of the year.

Figure 2: International Tourist Receipts in Nigeria and Malaysia, 2000-2020



Source: Adapted from World Bank Group Database (2022)

6.3 Tourism Contribution to Foreign Exchange Earnings in Nigeria and Malaysia

Tourism is a potentially viable source of income generation for both the developed and developing economies, especially through foreign exchange earnings with transcending impact on the entire economy. Tourism is the main source of foreign exchange for at least 38% of countries and is also among the top five main sources of foreign exchange for as many as 83% of countries in the world (Obeta and Onah, 2013). Such income is earned through tourist expenditures injected into the economy of the destination having rendered goods and services such as food and drink, transport, accommodation, entertainment, shopping etc. The long-term forecast of the World Tourism Organisation that the global tourist arrivals will increase by an estimated 3.3% annually from 2010 to 2030 to reach 1.8 billion by 2030 presents enormous opportunities for many countries of the world in terms of foreign exchange earnings through the tourism industry (WTO, 2011).

As the data already presented above shows, more than 1 million tourists visited Nigeria in 1995 for various purposes such as international conferences, meetings, and holidays coupled with foreign investors on business trips and the country earned US\$47 million in the process for goods and services provided within the country. The average per capita receipt for the year amounted to US\$46. The tourism receipt for the year 2000 was US\$186 million for an estimated 1.5 million tourists amounting to US\$125 per tourist. This was to, however, drop to a paltry US\$50 per tourist in 2005 and then increase to US\$120 in 2010 with a total tourism receipt of US\$139 million and US\$736 million respectively. Nigeria reached the billion threshold in tourism earnings in 2016 when it recorded an estimated

US\$1.1 billion from 6 million tourism with the per capita receipt of US\$207 for the year.

The foundation of the Malaysian tourism industry had been firmly laid in the early 1990s that by 1995 the country earned a whopping US\$5.04 billion in foreign exchange from 7.5 million tourists at an average of US\$675 per tourist. In 2000, the per capita receipt had dropped to US\$575 per tourist with total tourism earning of US\$5.87 billion from about 10 million arrivals. This was, however, to pick an increasing trend from 2005 per capital receipt of US\$632 from a total receipt of US\$10.39 billion from 16.4 million tourists. The receipt per tourist for 2010, 2015 and 2019 was US\$798, US\$746 and US\$851 from the total foreign exchange earnings of US\$19.62 billion, US\$19.19 billion and US\$22.20 billion respectively. The number of tourists for the same period was 24.6 million, 25.7 million and 26 million respectively.

6.4 Tourism Contribution to Employment in Nigeria and Malaysia

The tourism industry offers great opportunities for job creation and has become the world's biggest employer of labour. The job opportunities offered by tourism encompass a wide spectrum of the economy such as construction, transport, accommodation, catering services, telecommunications, trade, manufacturing as well as support and other services, thereby, creating enormous job opportunities within an economy for young people, women and minorities in either small or medium-sized businesses (Akpan and Obang, 2012). In 2015, Travel and Tourism generated a total of 284 million jobs, an increase of 7.2 million from the previous year, which means that tourism provided, directly or indirectly, 1 in 11 jobs worldwide (WTTC, 2015).

In Nigeria, tourism has become a significant employer of labour, generating employment for millions of people with a consequence on the standard of living of the people. However, compared to the population size and the employment rate in the country, the contribution of tourism to employment is abysmally low. In 2020, there were 2.6 million jobs in the tourism and travel sector, representing about a paltry 4% of the total employment in Nigeria. This was despite a decrease of about 23% to that of 2019, in which tourism accounted for 3.3 million jobs, representing 4.8% of the total employment in the country (statista.com, 2022). The decrease was the result of the COVID-19 emergency that led to the shutdown of international travel and border closures around the world for about four months in 2020. However, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Economic Impact Report for 2022 expects the tourism sector in Nigeria to create 2.6 million new jobs over the next ten years to double the number of those employed within the sector by 2032. The WTTC's forecast indicates that an average of nearly 260,000 new jobs would be created every year to reach more than 5.1 million in 2032 (Olopade, 2022).

On the other hand, tourism is one of the biggest sectors of employment in Malaysia, accounting for just under a quarter of all employment in the country. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia, the tourism industry recorded 3.5 million employed persons in 2020, contributing 23.1% to the total employment in Malaysia. This was despite a contraction of 2.9% to 2019 figures, in which the tourism industry accounted for 3.6 million jobs, representing 23.6% of the total employment in the country (Saari, 2021). The reduction in the tourism contribution to employment for 2020 is also attributable to the Coronavirus pandemic which put international travel and tourism to a halt in 2020. Globally, the WTTC 2022 Report ranks Malaysia's travel and tourism industry's total contribution to employment as the second highest in the Asia-Pacific region behind Cambodia, and the 50th highest in the world.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has explored a comparative analysis of the tourism industry and its contributions to the economic development in Nigeria and Malaysia. It has been made fundamentally clear that the potentials of the tourism industry in bringing about an improved standard of life for people as well as fostering the development of national economies are enormous. However, as the statistics show, Malaysia is far ahead

of Nigeria on every index of tourism development and inherent national economic prosperity. As pointed out earlier on, Malaysia ranks very high in tourism indices and was considered 9th in the world for tourist arrivals in 2012 (UNWTO, 2012). The 2017 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report ranks Malaysia 25th out of 136 countries globally. Malaysia has three of its cities – Kuala Lumpur (9), Johor Bahru (39), and Penang Island (66) – in the list of the top 100 tourist destinations in the world (Euromonitor International, 2019). Hence, Malaysia is a global and regional heavyweight in the tourism industry. In the same 2017 Report, Nigeria ranked 129th out of 136 countries studied, lagging behind smaller African countries like South Africa (53rd) Mauritius (55th), Cape Verde (83rd), Botswana (85th), Rwanda (97th) and Ghana (120th) in the ranking (WEF, 2017).

The question to ask is what then has Malaysia done right and what lessons or strategies are there for Nigeria to learn in the Malaysian model of tourism development? First and foremost, it needs to be emphasised that the present challenge of terrorism, banditry, kidnapping and general insecurity has to be tackled head-on and stamped out if the tourism potential of Nigeria is to be realised. Terrorism and tourism are two opposing forces of social and economic globalisation. Another challenge facing tourism is the terrible state of public infrastructure in Nigeria. Many of the tourist destinations in Nigeria are located in remote locations of the country where critical social amenities are lacking. As we speak, there is none of the national parks in Nigeria that is easily accessible by road let alone constant electricity, water supply and other recreational facilities. In addition, the tourism industry has suffered neglect and low prioritisation by the government. Government attention has been on the oil industry as the mainstay of the economy since independence in 1960. This has to change now that oil revenues are dwindling continuously globally.

What then is the way of this conundrum? As the Malaysian experience has shown, there can never be a success story in the tourism industry without a massive investment in destination development and the proper management of the industry. There is no tourist attraction anywhere in the world that is good enough to generate the windfall necessary to turn any economy around if the destination is not well-developed and properly managed. This seems to be a major problem in Nigeria. Our beaches are overcrowded and uncultivated. Numerous famous and prospective sites of tourism significance are lying fallow across the nation. The ones that are currently

operational lack basic amenities to ensure the comfort and satisfaction of visitors. Hence, repositioning the industry for maximum performance requires the development and adequate management of destinations as well as the repositioning, and in some cases putting in place, social infrastructures such as airports, roads, electricity etc.

Furthermore, there can never be optimum utilisation of tourism as a means of fostering economic development without effective marketing strategies. As the experience of Malaysia has shown, bringing your tourism products to the attention of the world remains a sure way to fully maximise the economic potential of tourism. What is the equivalent of “Tourism Malaysia” in Nigeria if I may ask? How many offices does the Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) have abroad to drive tourism campaigns for Nigeria? Even smaller countries like Rwanda have partnered with big European football clubs such as Arsenal FC to market their tourism industry. The World Under-17 World Competition (Nigeria '99) was an opportune time for Nigeria to jump-start its tourism sector but it wasted national resources to host that event and never followed it up with focused planning and actions. The same opportunity presented itself for South Africa in 2010 and the country is yet to recover from its impact. A glance at the websites of Tourism Malaysia and Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) will show the difference in the commitment and focus of the drivers of our tourism sector. We need to wake up! Tourism can settle every section of the Nigerian state and reduce the pressure on crude oil as the mainstay of our crumbling economy

The need for tourism policy sustainability is important. Tourism should be made a national economic goal. Every ministry, department, and agency should be involved one way or the other in this task. There is no need to repeat the Malaysian story. The idea that government is a continuum remains relevant here. The Stone Age idea that every administration has to come up with its programmes at the detriment of the ones already initiated by the previous government should be jettisoned forthwith. This has been the bane of the growth of tourism in Nigeria. Meanwhile, there should be synergy among different government ministries such as the Ministry of Transportation, Environment, Water Resources, Education, Finance and Budgeting, Culture and Information to activate all forms of tourism. One tourism area that Nigeria urgently needs to exploit is religious tourism. Nigeria is a big religious attraction in the world, capable of overshadowing even Saudi Arabia if properly harnessed. The number of foreign visitors that visited the late Prophet T. B. Joshua’s

The Synagogue Church in Lagos is a case in point (The Guardian, 2018). What of foreign visitors that attend annual conventions of such denominations as the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Winners’ Church and so on? The case being made is that religion is natural to a Nigerian and by extension the Nigerian state, and this can be converted into some economic and tourism gains.

Finally, Nigeria runs a federal constitution with a federal structure that recognises three tiers of government. It is imperative to run a truly federal system and not the feeding bottle arrangement, where the states go cap in hand to Abuja to share national oil proceeds every month. This has given rise to a situation whereby when the federal government sneezes, the state governments catch cold and the local governments are paralysed. As the Malaysian experience has shown, running a proper and good federal system implies reviving the tourism industry in Nigeria. It gives responsibilities to every tier of government, which most often than not, results in tangible deliverables. The current situation whereby the FG currently owns and operates the national parks and other national monuments is not the best for the development of tourism. Some of these functions should be shed off the Federal Government and devolved to the states where these assets are located for proper management. Some of them could be privatised or be run under the public-private arrangement. The gory sight of malnourished animals in our zoos is, to say the least, perplexing and this lends credence to the failure of the system we currently run. We can do better as a people and with focused leadership and the right attitude from the citizens, we can achieve national greatness and command respect in the comity of nations.

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