Tourism: A Means for Diversifying the Nigerian Economy

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Abstract

Nigerian economy is mono-cultural, depending on a single commodity—oil. Other sectors of the economy have been relegated to the background, while the management of oil revenues has proven ineffectual in driving the economy to bring about the needed level of development. This scenario has serious negative implications on the nation’s development calculus, as, after five decades of exploration activities, a good percentage of Nigerians live in abject poverty, unemployment is double-digit and productivity is at its lowest ebb. Given this scenario, the study seeks possible ways of diversifying the productive base of the Nigerian economy. Using descriptive method of analysis, it is revealed that considering Nigeria’s peculiar circumstances and the successes recorded before the advent of oil, for Nigeria to break loose from the problems inherent in a monotype-economy, especially one largely dominated by oil, which is subject to depletion, international price shocks and unfavourable quota arrangement, there is a need for diversification. Tourism suggested as possible options for diversifying the Nigerian economy. Drawing from the implications of the study, certain recommendations, which include among others that funds voted for tourism should be scaled up. Infrastructure around tourism sites such as hotels, roads, etc., should be improved to meet international standards. Such facilities should be increased to check the problem of increasing competition for them, which is often brought about by influx of tourists.

Keywords: Tourism, Diversification, Nigeria, Oil.

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Background to the Study

Nigeria is the largest oil exporting country in Africa and has a rapidly growing economy. The country follows a resource based growth strategy driven by the production and exporting of oil. With the volatility of global oil prices and often volatile growth of Nigeria's economy, the country has wasted much of its opportunities to break away from underdevelopment despite its massive natural and human resources endowments. It has dwelled only on its huge crude oil resources as the major source of revenue, driving a monolithic economy for years in spite of the enormous developmental challenges it faces. Regrettably, the oil resources are being mismanaged and a substantial part of it has gone on rent-seeking and red-tapism common in Nigerian bureaucracy. For more than a decade now, Nigeria has been enjoying high levels of economic growth, human development, and relative political stability.

As it continues along the path of economic progress, it is imperative that the country finds ways to diversify its economy by boosting nontraditional sectors, expanding its range of products for exports and engaging new economic and trade partners. The economic nerve center of Africa shifted northward when Nigeria took South Africa's long-held position as the country with the continent's largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While GDP neither reflects the wealth distribution nor accounts for the size of the population, it is a significant indication of Nigeria's emerging economic power. If these growing resources are invested intelligently, the country can benefit and exceed the International Money Fund's estimated GDP growth of seven per cent in past years. As a matter of priority, Nigeria government must encourage the diversification of Nigeria's economy. It is the only viable way to survive the current environment of global economic uncertainty with the volatility of oil price. It is crucial that the government do not believe that oil provides an endless source of revenue.

At the advent of democracy in 1999, Obasanjo's first full national budget in 2000 was under N600bn naira but now we have as much as 80% increase over this, yet we can only see little development but surplus of preaching's and governance by billboards while vision 20-2020 is in a state of rest like Newton's first law of thermodynamics. We say unequivocally that resource looting and wastage is much concentrated at the state levels because most of our Governors are not just most wanting but problematic and the very impediment to development.

Diversification presents the most competitive and strategic option for Nigeria in light of her developmental challenges and given her background. Diversification has a lot of benefits for Nigeria to maximally utilize her abundant resource – base to rebuild the economy and enjoy the benefits of all the linkages, synergy, economies of scale, grow national technology and foreign investment profile, build human capital, exploit new opportunities, lessen average operational costs, increase national competitiveness and grow the standard of living and confidence of the citizens for national renaissance.
Diversification does not occur in a vacuum. And, the need to have in place an enabling environment to make diversification possible remains necessary. A number of key drivers have already been identified. These, for example, include investment, trade and industrial policies; a dynamic growth performance; macroeconomic stability; a competitive exchange rate and expansionary but responsible fiscal policy as well as institutional variables such as good governance and absence of conflict and corruption.

However, Nigeria has made some effort towards achieving economic recovery; the full-anticipated benefits are far from being realized. Various studies such as those by Onoh (1973), Iniodu (1995) and Olakitan (1998) unanimously point to the deviation away from the non-oil sector of the economy to a mono-economy largely dominated by oil, as responsible for the despicable performance recorded by the Nigerian economy over the years.

The near total dependence on a mono-product (oil), which operates on a quota system, has rendered the Nigerian economy vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices of petroleum and its products (Iniodu, 1995). The diversion of attention from agriculture—which was once the mainstay of the economy, came because of the favourable oil shocks of 1970s. This ushered in the era of ‘oil boom.’ As submitted by Adubi (2004), this popular Dutch disease syndrome made tourism activities less competitive and led to insufficient patronage of the tourist centers. Albeit so much has been said regarding the compelling need for Nigeria to urgently diversify its economy, there is paucity of research in this area. More so, inadequate study has been incorporated in tourism—which is a thriving sector in Nigeria, as an option for diversifying the economy.

Despite abundant natural and human resources, Nigeria remains a poor country. Up to the end of the 1960s, the country was self-sufficient in food production and even a net exporter of agricultural produce. Since the early 1970s however, as oil became a major foreign exchange earner and contributor to GDP, other sectors of the economy especially agriculture and tourism, have been relegated to the background. The result is that the non-oil sector of the economy has stagnated, while crude revenues have not been managed effectively to stimulate desired growth levels and sustainable economic development (Sunday, & Eteng, 2013).

The objective of the study was to examine a sector of the Nigerian economy (tourism) which when applied into practice will boost the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the economy rather than depending on the oil sector alone. Therefore, using the descriptive approach, this study aims at filling this research gap by taking a sweeping look at the tourism sector that is critical for diversifying the nation’s economy.

**Literature Review**

**Conceptual Framework**

Diversification implies “movement into new fields, stimulation and expansion of existing traditional products.” Diversification does not discourage specialization but requires
that resources be channeled into the best alternative uses (Ayeni, 1987; Iniodu, 1995). In macroeconomic planning, diversification promotes growth and development through the mobilization of savings from surplus sectors for use in the development of deficit sectors of the economy. Options for diversifying an economy abound, such as agriculture, entertainment, financial services, industrialization, information and communication technology, tourism, etc. However, it is worthy to note that country-specific circumstances ought to as a matter of necessity, be considered. This is cogent, since due to structural differences, a model that fits an economy perfectly well may prove irrelevant in another. With a major objective of diversifying the productive base of the Nigerian economy with a view to reducing dependence on the oil sector, this study zero in on 'agriculture' and 'tourism,' as imperatives. The choice of this dual approach is informed by the huge successes recorded by some Asian countries—which are collectively referred to as 'Asian Tigers'—in applying these imperatives, as well as the fact that these countries were basically at the same level of national development with Nigeria, at the time of their respective take-off and still share certain similarities with Nigeria. The effects of diversification in an economy (if properly carried out), is represented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Schema showing the effects of diversification on an economy

**Source:** (Sunday, Clement & Eteng, 2013).
The above schema paints a picture of possible effects of diversification on an economy. It is explicit as shown in panel A that dependence on a single commodity, for instance, oil, in the case of Nigeria, the economy is prone to both internal and external shocks, which ultimately result in structural defects. As posited by Ayeni (1987), the reason for such defects is anchored on the fact that in the event of any deficit, there will be no other sector(s) to mobilize surpluses for use by the deficit sector(s). Given the shift (total or partial)—but in most cases partial, away from a single item to other sectors of the economy (i.e. agriculture and tourism) as reflected in panel B, the economy tends to be insulated from shocks. Assuredly, the economy becomes devoid of structural defects and ceteris paribus, this brings about an appreciable level of progress. An in-depth analysis of the two sectors heretofore mentioned is presented in the ensuing sections.

Tourism

Hunziker & Krapft (1994), defined tourism as “The sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, insofar as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity.” Similarly, the World Tourism Organisation (2008) defined tourists as: “People who travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty-four hours and not 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.”

The history of tourism according to Adigun and Awe (2009) dates back to the beginning of civilization. During that time, wealthy people travelled great distances to great buildings or other works of art, to learn new languages, to experience new cultures, and to taste new cuisines. Chief among these travelers were the Romans, who are said to have travelled to a particular resort called 'Baize.' Tourism has gained prominence in recent times, with 17 countries of the world today, using it as their major source of income. As reported by the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2008), there were over 922 million international tourist arrivals in 2008, with a growth rate of 1.9% compared to 2007.

The report also presented the following ten countries as the most visited from 2006 to 2010 by the number of international travelers: France (312.2m), Spain (226.1m), United States (219.8m), China (208.5m), Italy (170.7m), United Kingdom (119.7m), Germany (97.1m), Turkey (91.6m), Mexico (86.9m), and Malaysia (84.2m). Tourism accounts for one-third of world service trade and employs one in ten workers worldwide (i.e. 10.7%) of the global labour force (WTTC, 2002).

Like some other countries, Nigeria has made tremendous effort towards tourism development. As contained in the official website of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), states that are at the forefront of tourism development include Cross River, Lagos, Bauchi, Plateau, Ogun and the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). Cross River State, for instance, was able to, during Donald Duke's administration identify tourism as holding great potentials for driving other sectors of the economy. Accordingly, since the inception of that administration in 1999, the sector began to receive
unprecedented investments. Some of the achievements of the administration include:

i. Upgrading to international standards, the Obudu Ranch and Marina Resorts respectively, situated in Obudu and Calabar;

ii. Installation of a cable car at Obudu Ranch Resort;

iii. Construction of the Bebi Airstrip in Obanliku L. G. A.; and the Tinapa Business/Holiday Resort in Calabar; and bringing on board the popular Calabar Christmas Carnival.

Types of Tourism

Various forms of tourism abound in the world, but for more clarity, the various types are further classified into two sub-types depending on either 'purpose' or 'location' and 'nationality' of those engaging in it.

Classification Based on Purpose

i. Pilgrimage Tourism: Pilgrimage tourism is associated with travelling for religious purposes. Pilgrimages create a variety of tourism aspects that exist such as bringing back souvenirs, obtaining credit with foreign banks and making use of spaces available on existing forms of transport.

ii. Pro-poor Tourism: The pro-poor tourism aims at helping the very poorest in developing countries. It has been receiving increasing attention by those involved in development and the issue has been addressed either through small-scale projects in local communities and Ministries of Tourism attempting to attract huge number of tourists. Successful examples of this, where money reaches the poor include mountain climbing in Tanzania or cultural tourism in Luang Prabang, Laos.

iii. Educational Tourism: Educational tourism developed because of the growing popularity of teaching and learning of knowledge and the enhancing of technical competency outside of the classroom environment (Adefala, 2003). In educational tourism, the main focus of the tour or leisure activity includes visiting another country to learn about their cultures, such as Students Exchange Programmes and Study Tours, or to work and apply skills learned inside the classroom in a different environment.

iv. Niche Tourism: This includes physical activity or sports-oriented adventure tourism such as mountaineering and hiking (tramping), the back paper tourism, the sports travel for golf and scuba diving and extreme tourism for people interested in risky activities. There are many variants of Niche tourism such as dark tourism, free independent tourism, pop-culture tourism, shopping tourism, sacred travel or metaphysical tourism and space tourism.

Classification Based on Geographical Location

In 1994, the United Nations in its “Recommendations on Tourism Statistics,” classified tourism into three forms, namely:

i. Domestic tourism, involving residents of the given country travelling only within the country.
ii. Inbound tourism, which involves non-residents of the given country travelling only within the country.

iii. Outbound tourism, involving residents travelling to another country.

### Major Tourism (Attractions) in Nigeria

Tourist attractions abound in Nigeria. Some of the major ones are classified hereunder.

**a. National Parks**

i. Yankari National Park, Bauchi State;

ii. Cross River National Park (made up of two sectors situated in Akampka and Boki Local Government Areas) of Cross River State;

iii. Kanji Lake National Park, Kwara/ Niger States;

iv. Old Oyo National Park, Oyo State;

v. Chad Basin National Park, Bornu/ Yobe States;

vi. Kamoku National Park, Kaduna State;

vii. Okomu National Park, Edo State;

viii. Gashaka Gumte National Park (made up two sectors; Gashaka and Gumte lies between Adamawa and Taraba states and the North-East region of Maiduguri, Jalingo, Yola and Republic of Cameroon).

**b. Waterfalls**

i. Erin Falls, Ekiti State;

ii. Kwa Falls, Cross River State;

iii. Owu Falls, Kwara State;

iv. Agbokim Falls, Cross River State;

v. Gurara Falls, Niger State;

vi. Farin Ruwa Falls, Nasarawa State;

vii. Kura Falls, Plateau State.

**c. Beaches and springs**

i. Lamuda Hot Spring, Adamawa State;

ii. Ikogosi Hot/ Warm Spring, Ekiti State;

iii. Badagary Bar Beach, Lagos State;

iv. Lekki Beach, Lagos State.

**d. Others**

i. Tinapa Leisure/ Business Resort, Cross River State;

ii. Obudu Ranch Resort, Cross River State;

iii. The Annual Calabar Christmas Carnival, Cross River State;

iv. The National Theatre, Iganmu, Lagos State;

v. Olumo Rock, Abeokuta, Ogun State;

vi. Argungu Fishing Festival, Kebbi State;

vii. Some 5-Star Hotels e.g. Sheraton Hotel (Abuja and Lagos), Transcorp Hilton (Abuja), Federal Palace Hotel (Lagos); and various museums in Ife, Benin, Lagos, Jos, Sokoto, etc.
Efforts towards Tourism Development in Nigeria

Over time, Nigeria has made tremendous effort towards developing tourism. Not left out in this drive are the various states and local government areas. The hallmark of these efforts was the putting in place a tourism policy in 1991, with the primary aim of making the country a prominent tourism destination. In addition, the policy aims at helping the operation of tourism activities in order to make the industry more attractive to both local and foreign investors. In a bid to ensure that Nigeria's tourism works out well, certain institutions were set up. These institutions include:

i. The Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC): This is the apex tourism body which is responsible for promoting and marketing tourism in Nigeria. Through the publication of certain books and brochures, information on the industry is given out both locally and internationally. The corporation also gives general guidelines for the smooth operation of the industry. It works with private organizations and other tiers of government in carrying out policy directives and executing tourism projects.

ii. The Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism: The institution relates with state governments and international agencies and is headed by a minister.

iii. The National Council on Culture and Tourism: Ensures the coordination of national planning and development of tourism in the federation. The council meets every year to discuss and perfect modalities for tourism management and is headed by the Federal Minister of Culture and Tourism.

iv. The State Ministry of Culture and Tourism: Each state institution carries out policies and directives from the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism. They also organize projects for tourism development in different states.

v. The State Tourism Board: The board operates in every state of the federation. Such bodies in each state help to identify, preserve, protect and develop tourism resources in their various domains.

vi. The Local Government Tourism Committee: This projects and promotes tourism at the grassroots level. Their job is to locate and identify those places that can become tourist attractions in their areas. The committees also serve as information centers. They preserve and maintain monuments and museums in their areas. They also provide tour guides and escorts for attraction areas in their localities. A Chairman heads each local government tourism committee.

Table 3 gives GDP and employment levels of travels and tourism industry in some selected countries of the world. Of the various countries surveyed, Nigeria had the lowest value of 1.7% as share of total GDP (in real terms) and ranked 20th out of 25 countries with a value of 2.5% as contribution to employment. The highest GDP-values of 16.8 and 6.3% were recorded by Antigua and Barbuda and Thailand respectively. Out of the 25 countries surveyed, 7 were from the African continent; Egypt recorded the highest GDP value of 5.5%. Given Nigeria’s present unemployment situation, which stood at 18 million people in 2011 (NBS, 2011 cited by Ekpo, 2012), it behoves the various stakeholders to key into the enormous opportunities that abound in the tourism sector, to boost employment in that sector and ultimately the economy.
Table 1: World tourism indices (some selected countries) in 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Travels and Tourism Industry GDP</th>
<th>Travel and Tourism Industry Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>US $ (Million)</td>
<td>%of total GDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antigue and Barbuda</td>
<td>117.0</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>18,669.2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brasil</td>
<td>17,467.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>210.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>30,796.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>27,387.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curacao</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>5,544.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>68,159.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>61,556.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>374.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>11,334.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>5,431.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>3,195.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>13,049.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>734.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>187.8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>4,198.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>5,146.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>8,421.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>70,228.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>496,358.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Factors Militating against Large-scale Tourism Development in Nigeria

I. Problem of Funding: Establishment of facilities and infrastructure such as roads, hospitals, hotels, potable water, electricity, airports, etc., in and around tourism sites have been inadequate in Nigeria, owing to very meager resources often voted for tourism development. This has a negative impact on the overall development of tourism in the country.
ii. Problem of Acquiring Tourism Visa: Acquiring visa (especially tourism visa) is associated with certain stringent conditionality. The problem of acquiring tourism visa affects the smooth running of the tourism industry.

iii. Poor Publicity: Inadequacy of efficient publicity to keep both national and international tourists abreast of existing tourist destinations, keep prospective tourists away.

iv. Tourism can bring about increased competition for limited resources these include water and land, resulting in land degradation, loss of wildlife habitats and deterioration of scenery.

v. Many jobs in the tourism industry are poorly remunerated. This is a peculiar problem in Nigeria, where tourism experts move to other areas in pursuit of greener pasture, and where the local workforce lacks the skills to fill available positions.

vi. Fear by tourists (especially foreign tourists) of infection by some tropical diseases e.g. malaria and sleeping sickness, also militates against tourism development in the country.

Empirical Studies
Studies and mathematical models have shown that maintaining a well-diversified economy will yield the most cost-effective level of risk reduction and economic growth in a country. Samuelson (1968) in describing economic diversification as an act of investing in a variety of assets mentioned its benefit as that which reduces risk especially in the time of recession, inflation, deflation etc.

Economic diversification strives to smooth out unsystematic risk events in a portfolio so that the positive performance of some investments will neutralize the negative performance of others. An empirical example relating economic diversification to risk reduction and economic growth was a research carried out by Elton and Gruber (1977). They worked out an empirical example of the gains from economic diversification. Their approach was to consider a population of 3,290 securities available for possible inclusion in a portfolio and to consider the average risk over all possible randomly chosen n-asset portfolios with equal amounts held in each included asset, for various values of n. Their result shows that most of the gains from diversification come for n≤30 which indicates continuous economic growth.
Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Stocks in Portfolio</th>
<th>Average Standard Deviation of Annual Portfolio</th>
<th>Ratio of portfolio Standard Deviation to Standard Deviation of a Single Stock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>49.24%</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>37.36</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>29.69</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.64</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>24.98</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.93</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>21.68</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>20.87</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.46</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>20.20</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>19.29</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>19.27</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>19.21</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Oliner and Sichel (2000), Jorgenson and Stiroh (2000) and Whelan (2000) used endogenous growth model to study the implication of growth rebound in the US economy. Their findings support the assertion of improving economic diversification through other means like information technology which they see as the main sources of the rebound; hence the role of technological progress in agriculture cannot be underestimated.

Other researchers like Young (1995) applied the same framework and discovered that the higher growth of output in the newly industrialized countries of East Asia than the rest of the world is almost entirely due to rising in economic diversification which increases labour force participation and empowerment in labour quality (through knowledge accumulation) and not attributable to rapid technological progress. Adebayo (1999) noted this when he said that the neglect of agriculture, the rural economy and the concentration of economic activity in the oil sector was the cause of the current scarcity of raw materials, which has led to heavy imports of raw materials and foodstuff. Muttaka (2015) examined the effect of Nigeria’s oil dependency on economic growth. He observed that Nigeria has wasted much of its opportunities to break away from underdevelopment despite its massive natural and human resources endowment due to heavy reliance on her huge crude oil resources, regrettably mismanaged, as the major source of revenue. He identified and discussed some key drivers of economic diversification such as investment, governance and regional dimensions of economic diversification as well as human and natural resources. He maintained that of all the other drivers, good governance remains a prerequisite in building an enabling environment for such diversification.

Onucheyo (2001) earlier predicted the fall in oil prices, when he pointed out that in the 21st century nuclear, solar, and geothermal and other energy sources will be sufficiently developed to meet most of the world’s energy requirements. A situation which, according to Onucheyo (2001) raises fears for Nigeria’s oil-powered mono-cultural
economy. Onucheyo (2001) maintained that Nigeria's position in the 21st century will not depend on its oil, but the development of its agricultural sector and related human resources. Egunjobi (2012) assessed the impact of urban unemployment on economic growth using co-integration and error correction mechanisms. The research was of the opinion that income, government expenditure and investment in human resources had a direct impact while urban-unemployment rate had an indirect impact on economic growth. Hence, he recommended investment in human resources.

Nonetheless, this research has really filled a knowledge gap by studying two important macroeconomic variables: agriculture and tourism management in Nigeria. Other researches already carried out were done with variables like agriculture or human resources separately, but this study has filled a gap by combining the two variables. Hence, agriculture and tourism are needed to complement capital for the inducement of growth in the long run and increase in the standard of living.

**Conclusion**
Nigerian economy has performed dismally since oil was first discovered in commercial quantities. Several attempts aimed at reversing this trend have been made but to no avail. Considering the inroads made during the non-oil era and Nigeria's peculiar circumstances, the authors proposed diversification of the economy—i.e. paying more attention to other sectors of the economy as a necessary first step towards a more robust economy. Two options—agriculture and tourism were considered. It is argued that diversification has the tendency to promote growth and development through the mobilization of savings from surplus sectors for use in the development of deficit sectors of the economy. This is not possible in a monotype-economy.

**Recommendations**
The following recommendations are put forth.

**Tourism**

i. Funds voted for tourism should be scaled up. Infrastructure around tourism sites such as hotels, roads, etc., should be improved to meet international standards. Such facilities should be increased to check the problem of increasing competition for them, which is often brought about by influx of tourists.

ii. The stiff conditionality associated with visa acquisition should be relaxed for tourist visa.

iii. Steps should be taken by the foremost tourism agency in the country, the NTDC in conjunction with the various tourism ministries, councils and boards, to come up with a comprehensive compendium of the various tourism sites and attractions available in the country, which should be given wide publicity both domestically and internationally, using the internet, various Nigerian embassies and high commissions, as well as other means of information dissemination.

iv. Personnel involved in the business of tourism (especially tourism experts) should be well remunerated in order to reposition them for better services in the industry.
v. Using state-of-the-art facilities, tourist attractions and their appendages should be vigorously updated and packaged to meet international standards. Vigorous research into contemporary tourism attractions should be carried out and subsequently incorporated into existing ones, to avoid saturation.

vi. Periodic aerial spraying of tourism sites and their environs should be carried out by government and other stakeholders to help attenuate the problem of tropical diseases such as malaria, etc. This act should be incorporated in the compendium mentioned in (iii) above.

References


