

# International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

[www.journalijar.com](http://www.journalijar.com)

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-57065

Title: RELIGION, TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT,

### Recommendation:

**Accept after minor revision**

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓,		
Techn. Quality		✓,		
Clarity	✓,			
Significance	✓,			

Reviewer Name: Abdul Haseeb Mir

### Detailed Reviewer's Report

The paper titled "Religion, Tourism and Development" provides a thematic exploration of the symbiotic relationship between sacred sites and regional economic progress. The author posits a central hypothesis that religious tourism acts as a significant catalyst for development, primarily through investment in infrastructure, community empowerment, and the preservation of socio-cultural heritage. By utilizing eleven case studies—ranging from the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams in India to the Vatican City and the Buddhist Circuit—the study attempts to illustrate how faith-based travel transcends spiritual boundaries to become a formidable engine of secular growth.

The primary strength of the manuscript lies in its broad geographic and denominational scope. By including diverse sites such as the Golden Temple at Amritsar, the Jagannath Temple at Puri, and international locations like Mecca and Jerusalem, the author demonstrates that the phenomenon of religion-driven development is a global reality. The article successfully argues that religious authorities and government bodies often collaborate to invest in "temple-centric development expenditure," which in turn generates employment, enhances local communications, and bolsters national integrity. The narrative effectively shifts the focus from purely theological considerations to the tangible "expenditure-led growth" that these sites facilitate.

However, from an academic and peer-review perspective, the manuscript requires significant refinement in terms of its analytical depth and methodological rigor. While the case studies are illustrative, the analysis remains predominantly descriptive. The author identifies that "religious tourism increases economic development," but the paper would benefit from a more nuanced discussion of the "leakage

### REVIEWER'S REPORT

effect" or the potential negative externalities of rapid development at sacred sites, such as environmental degradation or the "commodification of the sacred." A truly comprehensive review must account for the tensions that arise when spiritual authenticity clashes with the commercial requirements of the tourism industry.

The discussion on the "Buddhist Circuit" and "International Cooperation" is a highlight of the paper, as it underscores how religious tourism can serve as a tool for "soft power" and diplomacy. The author notes that such circuits encourage international visitors and enhance regional development across borders. Yet, the paper lacks a rigorous quantitative framework to support its claims. While it mentions "increased government revenues" and "business and employment," the inclusion of specific economic data—such as GDP contribution or employment statistics from the cited case studies—would provide the empirical weight necessary for a high-impact journal.

A critical scholarly concern involves the bibliography and the use of sources. The manuscript relies heavily on broad conceptual works, such as Amartya Sen's "Development as Freedom," to frame its argument. While these are foundational texts, the author needs to integrate more contemporary research specifically focused on the "Economics of Religion" or "Sustainable Pilgrimage Management." Furthermore, the narrative flow is occasionally hampered by repetitive phrasing regarding the "facts of increasing number of tourists" without a deep dive into the demographic shifts or changing motivations of these modern "spiritual tourists."

The author's conclusion that religious tourism spreads "religious education" and "spiritual upliftment" while increasing revenue is a valid summary of the descriptive data provided. However, to elevate the paper to a standard suitable for a specialized journal in development studies or tourism management, the author must transition from a "case-by-case" report to a more integrated "thematic synthesis." The manuscript should explore how different governance models (state-managed vs. trust-managed) affect the efficiency of development expenditure. For example, comparing the administrative efficiency of the Tirupati model with the decentralised management of other international sites could offer valuable insights for policymakers.

Ultimately, "Religion, Tourism and Development" serves as a useful survey of the field but currently functions more as an introductory overview than a deep analytical inquiry. The potential of the paper lies in its ability to connect spiritual practice with the "human development index" (HDI), but this connection needs to be articulated with greater precision and supported by primary data. With revisions focused on theoretical framing, empirical evidence, and a more critical evaluation of the "sustainability" of religious tourism, this work could contribute significantly to our understanding of the intersections between faith and the modern economy.

# International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

[www.journalijar.com](http://www.journalijar.com)

---

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

### Recommendations:

- Incorporate empirical data or statistical evidence for at least three of the primary case studies (e.g., Tirupati, Mecca, or the Vatican) to quantify the "development" claims made in the abstract.
- Balance the narrative by including a section on the "Challenges of Religious Tourism," addressing issues like carrying capacity, environmental impact, and the potential displacement of local communities.
- Update the bibliography to include more recent peer-reviewed articles from the last five years that specifically address "Sustainable Religious Tourism" and "Pro-Poor Tourism" in the context of sacred sites.
- Refine the central hypothesis to explore the conditions under which development *does not* follow religious tourism, as the author briefly alludes to the fact that this association is "not always happened."
- Ensure a consistent academic tone by avoiding generalized statements about "spiritual upliftment" unless they are linked to specific social capital indicators.
- Clarify the "Methodology" section; if this is a qualitative review based on secondary data, the criteria for selecting the eleven specific case studies should be explicitly stated to avoid selection bias.

**Recommendation:** Recommend for publication with minor revision.