

## **Heritage Resources and Tourism Development: Issues in Management of Heritage Resources for Tourism Development in Nigeria**

### **Introduction**

**Tourism is a major item of international trade and, perhaps the biggest international business activity after all. International tourism is the largest single item in the world's foreign trade and for some countries; it is already the most important export industry and earner of foreign exchange (Aremu, 2014). Domestic and international tourism continue to be among the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange, providing a personal experience, not only of historic cultural expressions, but of the contemporary life and society of other cultures and people (Ruoss and Alfore 2013). Every year substantial percentage of the world population travel in unrestricted movements both within the country and outside (Attahiru et al, 2020). Indeed, this growth has brought I about high employment worldwide, increasing wealth of nations, improving balance of payments and as a veritable tool of human development (Ndajiya et al., 2014). The link between culture and tourism is the most visible contribution to local development. According to Ruoss and Alfare (2013), 37% of the global tourism has a cultural motivation. When tourism is identified as part of an overall development strategy, the identification, protection, and enhancement of heritage resources is vital for any sustainable effort.**

**Heritage resources promote tourism and they are considered to be likely more viable in Africa owing to its rich cultural and natural heritage. (Raji and Agbu, 2020). Therefore, heritage resources are significant drivers that have the potential to develop and promote tourism, with significant impacts on environmental, social and economic life of the community (Donovan, 2008; Ezenagu, 2020) as such, it has become a commodity aimed to fulfil the needs of the contemporary tourist. Thus, heritage tourism has the ability to create employment; serve as a mechanism for protecting natural environments; preserving historical, archaeological and religious monuments; stimulating the practice of local cultures, folklore, traditions, arts and crafts, and cuisine; and, the generation of foreign revenue, financial returns on investment, taxation on tourists and tourist products, and, linkages to other local industries such as agriculture and fisheries.**

**African countries such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Angola and Zambia, for one reason or another, have limited tourism development, but have considerable potential for future development. Though this assertion was made some years ago, Nigeria has not made much progress in**

**tourism development as the same gap was observed in the 2005 Tourism Development Plan, especially the aspect of heritage development for tourism. Given the enormous tourist potentials that abound in the country, Nigeria's tourism sector is performing below**

**expectation. This abysmal performance is proven by the world ranking of tourism which ranked Nigeria 116th position in 2013 and slip further to 129 out of the 136 in 2017; while other African countries like Ghana, Cameroun, Angola, Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Africa were ranked higher than Nigeria (Akighir and Aaron 2017).**

**Despite the abundance of tourist sites and destinations in Nigeria, evidence suggest that the country has not fully realized the benefits that the tourism sector has to offer (Oloyede, 2020). The capacity of these symbolic representations of people's values, identity, and heritage to earn Nigeria substantial revenue is not in doubt but not much of these have been mainstreamed and harnessed into the global tourism industry (Bankole, 2013). Today, some cultural festivals such as the Argungun Fishing Festival in Kebbi State, Osun Osogbo Cultural Festival in Osun State, Tiv Puppet Show (Kwag-hir) in Benue State and Durbar Displays in Northern Nigeria, Atilogu Dance in Anambra State, Awon Mass Wedding Festival in Shoo, Kwara State, Eyo Masquerade Festival in Lagos State and Bakor Yam Festival in Cross Rivers State, which originally started as local activities have become, national and international tourists delight (Aina and Olatuni, 2017).**

**Heritage tourism in Nigeria is acknowledged as one of the fastest growing and important industries that can enhance economic growth and development at both urban and rural areas. If the growth potentials imbedded in Nigeria, heritage resources could be harnessed through proper utilization and management; Nigeria stands to benefit a lot in heritage tourism development. Therefore, certain factors that are critical to effective heritage resources management for tourism development in Nigeria are considered and discussed in this paper.**

### **Nigerian Heritage Resources**

**Nigeria is a country endowed with outstanding and diverse heritage resources such as arts, crafts, sports, parks, cultural and historical heritage, good tropical weather, lush vegetation, and variety of wildlife, cultural practices, indigenous knowledge and technology, tribes and ethnicities among others. These resources do not only possess intrinsic beauty and value, but are also one of the key assets of tourism. (Ezenagu, 2020). These**

**heritage resources manifest as natural, cultural and built heritage; and are both tangible and intangible. Numerous among the intangible ones are Osun Osogbo festival in Osun State; Eyo festival in Lagos; Durbar festivals Kano, Katsina, Maiduguri and Kaduna;**

**Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi State; Mmanwu, and Calabar festivals in the south eastern Nigeria among others. While the tangible ones include Dye Pits of Kano State, Sukur Kingdom, Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove, Esie Stone Sculptures, the Great Kano Wall, Old Residency, Calabar, Old Katsina College, Bilikisu Sungbo Shrine, Dufuna Canoe, Water House, Ita Yemoo, Ogbunike Cave, Agbele Rock Formation and Ikom Monoliths.**

**The management of these heritage resources dates back to the pre-colonial era when heritage management was the sole responsibility of the communities. Cultural heritage were preserved in royal palaces of tribal kingdoms and empires by kings, heads of families and kindred, deity priests in charge of shrines and sacred grooves among others (Fasuyi, 1973; Onyima, 2016). Towards the twilight of Nigeria independence, the intervention of some foreigners who saw the need to preserve Nigerian cultural heritage propel the then colonial government to conserve Nigerian heritage, but focus was more on the preservation of the fabrics, development of museums, declaration of monuments, inclusion of teaching of Nigerian arts, culture and history in schools (Onyima, 2016; Fasuyi 1973).**

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**In 1979, National Commission for Museums and Monuments was established by decree 77 of 1979 now NCMM ACT Cap 242 Laws of the Federation 2004 with the mandate to manage the nation's heritage. Nigeria joining in the ratification of the UNESCO 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the establishment of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments brought about a more inclusive approach to heritage management in the country. There are however, other public institutions, aside from the NCMM, that are statutorily charged with the responsibility of managing Nigeria's rich, diverse and huge heritage resources. A few of them are Ministry of Culture and Tourism at the federal and state levels, the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), Nigeria Film Corporation (NFC), Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC), National Gallery of Arts (NGA), National Copyright Commission (NCC), National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) at national and state levels, Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) and the Institute of African Studies in Nigerian Universities.**

Nigeria heritage resources in status can be categorized into community, state, regional and national using a set of criteria. At the national level, heritage resources with intrinsic outstanding

national value and significance beyond the community, states and regional appeal where they are located are recognized as national heritage. As a result, about 65 have been officially gazetted in the National Register and declared as national monuments by the Federal Government. While two (Sukur Cultural Landscape and Osun Osogbo Sacred Grove) which have been proved of having outstanding universal value have been enlisted as UNESCO World Heritage Sites with 13 other sites on the UNESCO tentative list. Presently, over a hundred sites are going through the process of declaration as national monuments. There are also artistic heritage of great cultural significance from ancient communities of Igbo-Ukwu, Benin, Ife, Nok and Esie and other parts of the country that are kept in over 35 national museums. There are some that are also kept in private and institutional museums across the country and beyond.

### **Factors Relevant to the Effective Management of Heritage Resources for Tourism Development in Nigeria**

The desire to promote the values of heritage resources and the realization of the possible impact of heritage tourism in their economy has propelled countries to increase their effort to develop them (Onyejegbu, 2014). Tourism development in Nigeria is encumbered with many systemic problems (Bankole, 2013) and good heritage management practice ensures that conservation and tourism are complementary factors in the management of heritage sites (Okpoko and Okonkwo, 2005).

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Raji and Agbu (2020), contend that the problems that hinder heritage tourism development in Nigeria are lack of awareness of the public, communication on the significance of preservation of these heritage sites, negative human activity due to absence of strong legislations, infrastructural and funding problems. While Emeghara (2015), posits that the most prominent of the impediments that are associated and connected with effective heritage resources management are improper funding, lack of proper collaboration amongst professionals in the field of heritage resources management, dearth of qualified and trained manpower and lack of public appreciation and awareness of the value of cultural resources. Others include absence of a comprehensive inventorization (register) of all cultural resources or property in Nigeria, absence of effective legislation on the prevention of destruction of cultural resources by developers and poor policy implementation.

The interplay of some of the heightened challenges are expressed in this paper using some of the topical issues that can contribute to effective management of heritage resources and tourism development in Nigeria.

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## **International Regulatory Framework**

Nigeria is linked to the international community through bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements and has ratified some international conventions among which are conventions and regulations relating to environment and heritage resources management. These international conventions have formed the foundation for most national laws and regulations. For instance, the 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage requires state party in article 5 to take effective and active measures which could be legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage situated on its territory. It also requires that State Party in article 6 not to take any deliberate measures which might damage directly or indirectly the world cultural and natural heritage situated on the territory of other States Parties. In 2015, UNESCO developed a policy to ensure coherence with the UN sustainable development agenda as enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which recognizes the protection and safeguarding of the world cultural and natural heritage as a specific target of one of its 17 'Sustainable Development Goals'.

In as much as the international organizations have put in place a process that will ensure protection of heritage resources they have their limits within the notional framework as they are not legally binding. For example, regulatory framework on the need to control and conduct impact assessment on heritage resources are limited to developmental projects with which they have direct stake (Awonusi, 2019). Thus a few cultural heritage resources in the country are captured as majority fall outside their jurisdictions. Nigeria as a signatory to the convention has not done enough in this wise; apart from having legal framework and establishing heritage institution, appropriate national guidelines and policies that can leverage on legal and institutional framework to trigger private sector and other relevant stakeholders' participation in heritage resources management have not been put in place. In relevant national institutions where these policies and guidelines exist, there is no adequate consideration for heritage resources protection.

Even the legal frameworks operating in some of the African countries including Nigeria were gazetted in the 1970s or early 1980s before strong links between heritage protection and environmental stewardship were forged (Chirikure, 2013). In the entire sub-Saharan region, only Botswana, Namibia and South Africa have legislation which makes it mandatory for impact assessments (Chirikure, 2013). Therefore, there is the need to review the country's heritage legislation in line with the global best practices.

## **Nigeria Tourism Development Plan**

The 2005 Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan considers that heritage resources are strategic elements in the Nigerian tourism product but that her historical and cultural sites are in

decay; and that with improvements in their development, presentation and packaging the heritage resources can be highly marketable. One of the objectives of 2005 Nigeria Tourism Development Plan is to develop sustainable tourism by capitalizing on heritage diversity as the basis for promoting domestic and international tourism. However, the implementation of the plan was expected to build momentum and raise the profile of tourism in Nigeria amongst the general public, stakeholders, private sector tourism interest, Federal and State Government officials and potential investors but for years of its implementation, tourism sector of the Nigerian economy has not significantly improved (Akighir and Aaron 2017).

Poor policy and plan implementation also negates proper management of heritage resources in Nigeria. Without doubt, several policies especially in the area of tourism have been formulated in the country over the years. Although some of these policies appeared lofty and laudable, they have usually failed at the implementation stage. The Nigerian Tourism Master Plan that would have set the tone for a holistic development of the sector is riddled with discordant tunes from stakeholders, implementing the plan hence, the scanty activities thriving in the sector (Alamai, Hussaini & Fatima, 2018). The implication of this is uncoordinated implementation of tourism activities among the various stakeholders and there seems to be lack of political will on the side of the government to implement the tourism development plan.

### **Community Participation**

Involvement of local community in heritage resources management is crucial because there are so many stakeholders in heritage beyond the practitioners, governments, researchers and developers. The 1972

Convention on World Heritage recognizes that a good heritage conservation strategy requires the active participation and involvement of

understandably limited. Heritage protection is often not given sufficient resources when compared to other endeavours such as defence, agriculture and health. Because of resource scarcity, most heritage institutions are underfunded. Restricted funding can result to inadequate staffing levels, training, and equipment which invariably compromise on delivery. The lack of political will or official neglect, due to non-commitment of enough finance to develop conservation through education and training, has led to progressive abandonment and destruction of our heritage sites. Despite the opportunities presented by heritage resources, funding for their preservation remains anaemic.

There is also the need to fund research in heritage resources management as some of the Nigeria heritage resources have not been investigated due to poor funding leading to inadequate

information on heritage resources for conservation and management purpose. There is therefore the need for the private sector to be involved in heritage resources management through Public Private Partnership (PPP) as reliance on government budgetary allocation is not adequate. Public sectors are therefore encouraged to partner with the private sectors for sustainable heritage resources management. Other sources of funding especially through grant and social responsibility of cooperate organizations should also be exploited. The NCMM has gone into same (PPP) initiatives and MOU's signed. It is hoped that the dividend of these will soon manifest.

### **Responsible Heritage Tourism**

Tourism has always been a tool for economic development, but, for developing countries, it is an increasingly important export as the economic, social and environmental impact remains very uneven between and within developing countries (Oluwatuyi and Ileri, 2016). While craving for the influx of visitors to heritage destination, it must be ensured that it is responsible so as not to impact negatively on the priceless but fragile heritage resources. Heritage tourism offers incentive for preserving and enhancing cultural and natural heritage, since the revenue it generates can be channelled back into initiatives that aid its long-term survival (WTO, 2012) hence, responsible and sustainable tourism must be advocated.

Unregulated tourism can threaten the very asset it relies upon. In what is known as the "tragedy of the commons." Tourism operators and developers use heritage assets and resources for which they do not have to pay, causing environmental changes and deterioration. They do not always consider overuse in business decisions. Some heritage sites sometimes suffer from

being a "common good," belonging to everyone and no one. Open access to heritage resources often leads to overharvest and overuse. Even when they are regulated, there is the need for tourism management plan. When it was observed that there are influx of tourists into some of our fragile heritage sites and its attendant challenges tourism management plan were proposed for some of our sites. In 2015, the National Commission for Museums and Monuments had to prepare Tourism Development Plan on Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove to take care of the challenges pose by tourism especially during the annual Osun-Osogbo festival. There are also management plans for same sites.

### **Heritage Resources and Land Use Development**

Heritage resources land use, especially the immovable ones do not exist in isolation; they co-exist with other land uses and activities on both the rural and urban landscape. In many developing countries, there is a drive for economic transformation which takes along with it

related changes in land use population distribution, and income levels. Modernization often wins out over that of heritage resources preservation, and even national-level heritage protection does not guarantee that a major cultural asset will survive. These developmental pressures are seen as a driving force of heritage loss in many developing countries and effective strategies for sustainable development based on a holistic conservation of sites and the environment are often lacking (Florian 2020). Developers often see heritage as an obstacle to development and somehow in opposition to the process of modernization. Thus, the long-term worldwide benefits of cultural heritage are often discounted against opportunities for short term domestic economic development (GHF, 2010).

Heritage sites and landscape are gradually giving way to urbanization in Nigeria in the form of residential and office building, roads construction, and other economic activities (Ekundayo, 2015). Rapid urban change overwhelms city centres, neighbourhoods, farms, forests, landscapes, landmarks; on the other hand urban decline leaves these resources stranded. Nigeria is one among the many African countries where heritage properties have not enjoyed adequate protection in the face of factors such as construction works and urban renewal (Folorunsho, 2020) because heritage sites have not been appropriately integrated into physical development action plan at the local level of planning in Nigeria (Awonusi, 2014); one non-compliance with the established procedures, rules, regulations and guidelines in the planning and execution of development projects (Ugwu, et. al., 2018).

Due to the absence of conservation plans for most of the heritage sites in the states of the nation, these historic cores are physically disrupted by insensitive modern development (Sanusi, 2002). Instead of being conserved for future generations, ancient cities, public squares for gathering and socio-cultural interaction and buildings are torn down to make way for modern infrastructure. Where Impact Assessment is done, due consideration is not given to impact on heritage resources. Even the listed monuments are not spared. Kano City wall, Benin moat among others is faced with serious threat from development activities. In 2016, Ilojo Bar was lost out rightly to unregulated development activities. There is therefore the need for the enforcement of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as well as Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) on developers before development permits at all levels of government are issued; as there is the need to properly integrate heritage sites and spaces into land use planning.

## **Technological Tools**

One of the greatest challenges facing heritage conservation is lack of critical baseline assessments, monitoring, and measurement of conservation progress. New models such as Building Early Warning and Threat Monitoring Systems, Creating Internet-Based Expert Collaboration and Training Platforms as are needed to better define the economic and cultural



value of heritage sites, and to guide effective and efficient conservation investments and practices. For instance, proper mapping of cultural sites will bring to the fore easy location, maintenance and attraction to cultured tourism sites as it will help government agencies to know the state of every cultural cum historical sites within their domain (Lawrence- Hart and Hart, 2019).

Africa's lack of risk management protocols for its heritage assets has exposed them to conflicts and other unforeseen disasters. Robust risk management frameworks require the establishment of up-to-date inventories and GIS databases for management purposes and are crucial for saving heritage during disasters and conflict. According to (Lawrence-Hart and Hart, 2019), remote sensing and geospatial technology will provide the tourists with the location of interest and other associated characteristics prior to their visit and also help them to preview the location in either 2 or 3- dimensional view.

If we must enjoy the gains of tourism, it is important to apply the use of remote sensing technique in monitoring the state and status of the various tourist sites. The application of remote sensing and geospatial techniques.

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