

SUSTAINABLE HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

Tourism has demonstrated its economic viabilities in the growth and development of the human society through economic impacts on the national economies. Heritage resources have been discovered to be among tourism potentials of a destination if well managed and packaged for tourism purposes. Many economies have failed in the use of their indispensable heritage resources for tourism growth and productivity due to managerial incompetence of heritage resource managers. This paper however studied heritage management in Nigeria towards increasing tourism options for tourists to Nigeria. The study identified three keys to sustainable heritage management in Nigeria; significant assessment, stakeholder identification and public participation. This expository study has functioned as one of the solutions to sustainable heritage management in Nigeria for tourism development by unveiling efficient managerial skills to heritage resource managers in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Heritage Management, Significant assessment, Stakeholder Identification and Public Participation.*

Introduction

Defending ones culture is defending ones land in all ramifications. Culture have been found to be the bedrock of development of most nations more especially, third world or developing nations. Culture holds the truth to the historical movement of any society from generations to generations; it gives groups, individuals or communities, identities hence we say this is a Yoruba man, this is an Igbo man, etc. Having seen the role of culture in defending ones land and identity, interest is now on how to safeguard this culture through protection and preservation of heritage resources which forms the basic aspect of a peoples culture. (Clifford, 2004; Hall, 2000; Canclini, 1995)

Heritage resource management can be seen as the act of inventory, conserving, preserving and sustaining of heritage resources of a people (Andah, 1990). It also "involves those practices that promote preservation, conservation and enlightened use of archaeological resources for research and educational purposes...is the professional practice, the methods and philosophies of dealing with archaeological sites and data, including artifacts" (Wesler, 1990:81). However we can succinctly define heritage resource management as the application of management skills in the use and upkeep of our rich cultural heritage to ensure their sustainable protection, preservation and conservation for the benefit of the society. Benefit to the society in the sense that culture holds the identity of any society and its proper management promotes and projects the society where the culture belongs (Bennett, 1998; Poulot, 1997). However, participatory management is seen as fusing together of ideologies and skills in a management system by the parties that are either directly or indirectly

involved or interested in the project in question. This is to ensure a sustainable, effective and efficient project management (Umeh et al, 1997).

Moreover, a stakeholder can be defined as any individual, party, group, agency, etc, that is either directly or indirectly going to be affected by a proposed project in any area. Primary stakeholders are those that are directly affected by the proposed project, while secondary stakeholders are those that are going to be indirectly affected (Umeh et al, 1997)). More on "stakeholder" would be discuss later as we progress. Also Cultural impacts assessments are changes to the norms, values and beliefs of individuals that guide and rationalize their cognition of themselves and their society (Burdge, et al, 1992, in Ajalla, 2005). Often it is expressed spatially through culturally significant sites, sacred groves, wells, springs, holy sites, buildings, old battlefield, Aboriginal song lines, etc. These places may seem unremarkable and of little value to the culturally ill-informed, but can have very important religious, historic or folkloric significance (Dickens et al: 1978, in Ajalla, 2005: 9). However, cultural impact assessment can succinctly be defined as the general assessment and determination of the totality of impacts of any proposed project in a given area. These include both negative and positive impacts. A quality cultural impact assessment tries to balance up both negative and positive impacts and possibly suggest ways of mitigating or eradicating the negative impact or on the other hand recommend the suspension and abandonment of the proposed project if the negative impacts on culture of the area looks uncontrollable or non-compromisable and detrimental to the sustainability of the project in the area.

However attempts have been made by so many cultural resource managers towards the protection and preservation of cultural resources of a people either at the community, local, regional or national levels, mostly at the local levels. But the performance level has remained below average. Most of the time, the community are the people that do cause major harm or some other persons who are either directly or indirectly affected by the proposed project, to the proposed project irrespective of the fact that their cultural resources are to be protected and preserved. Most times these heritage resource managers lack effective approach to their protection or even decide to abandon some viable heritage resources out of fear of hostility from the local community. Looking at these problems of cultural resource management in Nigeria, do we then say that those heritage resource managers do not know the effective approach towards ensuring sustainable heritage resource management? Or that we do not have competent cultural resource managers?

Moreover, the poor condition of heritage resource management in Nigeria as mentioned above which has put rich heritage resources of this great nation in jeopardy, has interested studies on the heritage resource management in Nigeria in the past (eg. Okpoko, 1990; Edet, 1990; Emovon, 1990; Duncan, 1997; Arinze, 1990; Ekechukwu, 1990), formed the bedrock of this study which is aimed at identifying the initial strategies of heritage resource management in any given area, consider the effectiveness of participatory management of cultural resources, and finally, review the stakeholders roles and involvement in the sustainable management of heritage resources. It is expected that the study would contribute immensely towards the sustainable management of the rich heritage resources of Nigeria by way of delineating effective and viable approaches to heritage resource management in Nigeria, reveal the indispensable role of effective participatory management in the

management of cultural resources in Nigeria, and finally unveil the need for stakeholders identification and their roles towards the effective and sustainable heritage resource management.

Finally on the methodology, the study adopted secondary sources of data collection where materials like articles, journals, published books, seminar papers, reading manuals, internet materials, etc, were consulted. Ethnography through qualitative studies was also used to obtain first-hand information from the relevant resource persons and to have a good test of data from the secondary sources. The adoption of this methodology is sacrosanct to the study considering the fact that the study is a suggestion towards ensuring an effective and sustainable heritage management in Nigeria for tourism development.

Brief History of Heritage Management

History of heritage management is a concept that has been tackled in the past by different authors based on their individual bias or rationality. For an articulate synthesis of facts, this study shall be looking at the concept from two aspects; the western dimension and African dimension. From the western dimension, Cleere (1989:1) noted that "...heritage management may be deemed to have began with the Swedish Royal Proclamation of 1666, declaring all objects from antiquity to be the property of the Crown" He furthered by saying that "by the end of the century the ancient monument of most of Europe were covered by protective legislation of varying degrees of efficacy" (Cleere, 1981:1). The use of legislation in the management of cultural heritage then spread to other parts of Europe and America i.e. USA's Antiquities Law of 1906, UK's Ancient Monument Protection Act of 1882, etc. There was no mention of heritage resource management in Africa during this period in the world's development since there was a western belief that development and management of all kinds commenced in Africa during the colonial era (Rodney, 1972).

However, from the African dimension, management of heritage resources dates back to the Pre-Arab and Pre-European times in the world's history. That was when various cultural materials were fashioned, preserved and conserved in temples or shrines. Some were preserved in the palaces of kings and chiefs due to their ritual, political and religious importance to the community. These cultural materials were kept in the custody of households, priests of shrines/deities and any of the kings' or chiefs' officers (Ekechukwu, 2003).

Although during this period in Africa, there was absence of modern and systematic method of heritage resource management and that was why the westerners claimed ignorant of the existence of HRM (Heritage Resource Management) in Africa before their arrival to Africa.

Significant Assessment

Step I: The heritage resource manager is expected to survey all the cultural resources in the area under study so as to have a good knowledge of the rich cultural heritage of the area. These include all the historic/archaeological and ethnographic resources of the area. Andah et al (1994: 45) noted that, "archaeological resources comprise the cultural materials of extinct societies such as artifacts, features, ecofacts, sites and chronofacts". McGimsey (1973) sees archaeological resources as "objects and area made or modified by humans as well as the data associated with these artifacts and features" However, Ekechukwu (2003:9)

“defined ethnographic resources as cultural materials of extant (living) societies”. He furthered by listing these cultural materials as the

“...community and family shrines, monuments, landscape features which can help in reconstructing the cultural history of the people, traditional architecture/building useful for understanding traditional techniques of building, present day workshop like smiting, carving, arts and crafts; oral traditions, folklores, songs, myths, legends, title taking, marriage ceremonies, festivals and other traditional ceremonies”. (Ekechukwu, 2003:9)

Furthermore, heritage resource manager would have a detailed survey of all the available cultural resources in the area under study. This would supply him with quality information on cultural resources in the area and also determine the scope of his study. The survey can be done through ground reconnaissance, archaeological excavation, ethnographic research, on-site observation, even through some secondary means like journals, historical books, articles and other relevant documents that would supply information on the heritage resources of the area (Santos, 2003; Boswell et al, 1999).

Step II: This is determining the cultural significance of the available cultural resources to the community. Having surveyed and have the knowledge of the available cultural resources in the area, the heritage resource manager should through ethnographic survey find out extent of values attached to each of these cultural resources by the community, their level of importance and indispensability to the community. At this level, the cultural resource manager is expected to know the functions or usefulness of those cultural resources to the community. A good knowledge of this would aid the heritage resource manager in knowing those resources that are more significant and those that are less significant to the community. This would aid effective and smooth manipulation of variables during project implementation.

Step III: This involves the impacts assessment of the proposed project on the heritage resources of the area. Having surveyed the heritage resources of the area, and their values identified; the heritage resource manager has to assess the total impact of the proposed project on those surveyed cultural resources. Impacts could be classified as thus:

- a) **Pre project impact:** those that might occur before the commencement of the project as a result of pre-project planning.
- b) **Project impact:** those that might occur during the implementation of management plans.
- c) **Post-project impact:** those that will still occur even after the planning and implementation of the project. However, there is need for the quality and efficient assessment of these impacts and their extent or level of antagonism on the heritage resources of the area.

Step IV: This stage involves impact control on the heritage resources. This is the consideration of the destructive extent of the project on those heritage resources and using either elimination or mitigating measures to control the impacts. However “selection of the proposed action from alternatives can be based upon elimination of one or more alternatives

due to their potential adverse effects on cultural resources, or selection of the alternative least likely to cause adverse effects on potential cultural resources ..." (McGimsey: 1973).

Step V: It is sacrosanct to determine the available laws/environmental policies. These can be local, communal, regional or national laws and also environmental policies. This is to ensure that the proposed plan does not in any way be antagonistic to existing laws and environmental policies of the area under study hence it will hamper the sustainability of the project in the area. However, the heritage resource manager should also look for laws and environmental policies which support the program since it would serve as a boost to his plans i.e. the Nigeria Cultural Policy, Land Use Decree of 1978, Decree 77 of 1979, etc, and also if possible some other supportive local or communal laws in the area that supports the programme. A good synthesis and consideration of these two groups of laws and environmental policies in the area would aid the heritage resource manager and also ensure the sustainability of the proposed plan in the area. Neglect on these could be detrimental to the general practice of heritage resource management in Nigeria. For instance in USA, the Centre for Environmental Management of Military Lands (C.E.M.M.L.), works closely with the existing legislations towards ensuring sustainable planning. Heritage manager is expected to liaise with various resource managers towards ensuring that heritage resources are managed in accordance with the requirements of various legislations protecting heritage resources in the area. (Nwankwo, 2008).

Stakeholders Involvement

However, having defined a stakeholder as any individual, group, associations, agencies, etc, who are going to be affected either directly or indirectly by the proposed project, therefore there is need for a clear identification and consultation of these stakeholders in heritage resource management. Stakeholders' consultation helps in sustainability of the cultural resource program since they can make or mar the prospect of the project. They constitute the major custodian of those cultural resources that are about to be managed. The first Step in this aspect of the management is the Stakeholders identification. First and foremost, the heritage resource manager would ask himself 'who are the stakeholders to this proposed project?' This aspect of the programme entails identifying the right stakeholders in the area under study so as to ensure effective stakeholder consultation in the program. There are two major groups of stakeholders:

a) **The primary stakeholder** – these are the people that are going to have a direct impact of the project. They include the local community members, local farmers, socio-cultural organizations, elderly and youths, hunters and food gatherers, chiefs cabinet, and some other individuals or groups that may likely get affected by the proposed project.

b) **The secondary stakeholders** - these include some other persons or groups, etc, that would be affected by the proposed project but not as directly as the primary stakeholders. These categories of stakeholders include NGOs, Donor Agencies (i.e. UNDP, UNESCO, IMF, etc), government agencies like the NTDC, NCMM, State Tourism Boards, etc, Ministry of Environment (Government Environmental Protection Agencies), etc.

Also, the consultation is aim at identifying interested stakeholders from different group of stakeholders with a view of intimating them with the proposed project. This will form the

bedrock for the smooth take-off of the proposed project. The stakeholder identification should be articulately and efficiently done to avoid choosing wrong individuals or groups as stakeholders. However after the identification of the right stakeholders in the area under study, the cultural resource manager should assign or designate roles on each of the either individual or group stakeholders earlier identified. That is allocating the different functions towards ensuring the smooth take off of the program. This would enhance the effective use of stakeholders in the heritage resource management of the area. It is after the heritage resource manager must have assigned roles to his identified stakeholders that he will know who amongst them is to be consulted at any given point in time or for any purpose during the planning and project implementation. Having assigned or determined the role each stakeholder would play, the heritage resource manager should plan a way of meeting these stakeholders through consultations to ensure the effectiveness of the planned program in the area. Any wrong approach in stakeholders' consultation and management might neutralize the entire plan. So there should be a conscious and effective approach at this stage to ensure good use of stakeholders in the heritage resource management. To ensure effective stakeholders consultation and management;

- a) There should be efficient identification and consideration of social profiles of each stakeholder.
- b) The heritage resource manager should identify a convenient place, date and time for the meeting.
- c) He should also make good use of techniques and tools i.e. workshops, seminars, meetings, etc, that best identify with the invited stakeholders.
- d) During the meetings he should give a detailed information on the proposed project with its impact analysis revealed.
- e) It is of note that third parties should be involved, who will have a good influence on the objecting stakeholders.
- f) The cultural resource manager should also try to know stakeholders reasons for objecting and also seek for their own solutions in suggestions.
- g) The heritage resource manager should also involve the key stakeholders at the initial stages of planning process and decision-making in the proposed project.
- h) During meetings stakeholders should be giving opportunities to bring out their opinions, etc.

Finally, an effective use of the above approaches would ensure efficient stakeholders consultation and management in the sustainability of heritage resource management in any given area. This consultation is necessary since it will give room for the understanding of the research; analyze the aim and scope of the proposed project and finally discuss with members of the panel and participants the project's possible opportunities, limitations and risks in the area.

Public Participation in Heritage Management

“public participation variously referred to as public involvement, citizen involvement or citizen participation in an attempt to involve the various publics in the decision making process so that a wider acceptability and support for the particular action can be obtained.”

(Umeh et al, 1997:136). However, “a particular project if implemented may lead to displacement of people although the ultimate aim is to improve their lot. Equity and fairness demand that the people must be made aware of what impact the project will have on them” (Umeh et al, 1997: 1370). Effective public participation also helps the heritage resource manager to appreciate and react to issues beyond those of the immediate project. Finally, it is observed that an effective public participation would ensure a sustainable heritage resource program in their area since “useful information to decision makers may be provided through public participation and this helps to enhance public confidence in the agency and the decision”. (Umeh et al, 1997:137)

Firstly, there should be determination of the relevant public. Like in stakeholders' identification, the heritage resource manager should try as much as possible to identify the relevant public in the area; most of the time the community inhabitants and some other relevant secondary stakeholders. “The identification of these public that may be involved, will aid in focusing objectives for a programme and in the interpretation of results of the allocation of various public participation techniques” (Umeh et al, 1997: 141). Also some

relevant developers might also be inclusive in the project planning and implementation to ensure effective and sustainable heritage resource management in the area. However, in order to ensure maximum utilization of public participation in cultural resource management, the cultural resource manager should determine the methods of participation of the public. That is determining what section of the public is to be useful in the different aspects of the proposed program. Take for instance, the programme should be phased into pre-implementation, implementation and post-implementation stages.

- a) **Pre-implementation stages** – this is the planning stage of the programme. Relevant section of the public should be chosen during this stage to ensure effectiveness. Such as chiefs, chief-in-councils, elders, government agencies, relevant developers, donor agencies, etc.
- b) **Implementation stage** – depending on the nature of the programme, more often the working force of the community i.e. youths, adults, etc, are often useful in this aspect of project development.
- c) **Post-implementation stage** – during this stage, the previous sections of the public might still be useful, also with security operatives and other community or government law enforcement agencies.

Finally, In order to ensure effective implementation of plans, there should be a well constituted joint committee, which would be formed with different categories of stakeholders who are either directly or indirectly affected by the proposed project, more especially the members of the community. The major responsibility of the community is the effective monitoring of the program during the implementation and post-implementation stages, to ensure the security and sustainability of the program in the area, etc. The committee is to be meeting time to time to report feedbacks and proffer relevant solutions.

Conclusion

The problem of abandonment, non-implementation, wrong implementation approach, etc, of heritage resource management in Nigeria is a bane to effective heritage resource management. This study looked at various ways of ensuring effective and sustainable cultural resource management in Nigeria. These include quality significant assessment, stakeholders' identification, and public participation. The study went ahead to discuss better ways of making effective use of the above instruments towards ensuring an effective and sustainable heritage resource management in Nigeria for tourism development.

Conclusively, the exploitation of heritage resources can be controversial particularly where the finite heritage resources of developing countries are exported to satisfy the demand of antiquities market in the developed world. On the other hand traditional crafts can be important elements of income from tourism; performance of traditional dances and music is popular with tourists, and traditional designs can be exploited in the fashion industry. Popular culture can also be an important economic asset. (King: 1998). These are some of the benefits that are expected from a well planned and sustainable heritage resource management programme in any given area. The government and its relevant authorities, should appreciate the indispensable role of sustainable heritage resource management to tourism development in Nigeria which will equally serve as a part way to national development; by way of ensuring adequate funding for relevant programmes on heritage management, ensure vibrant public awareness of these rich heritage resources and make use of professionals in heritage resource management in Nigeria. The general public should equally play their role to that effect since culture is the bedrock of human development by cooperating with heritage resource managers and safeguarding heritage resources in their various localities.

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