

TOWARDS PROPER CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The place of proper management of cultural resources in the overall developmental process of a multi-ethnic and heterogeneous country like Nigeria cannot be underestimated. This study stresses the compelling need for proper harnessing and management of cultural resources in Nigeria for sustainable development. It posits that Nigeria is yet to make desired progress in the sphere of cultural transformation, notwithstanding her possession of rich, diverse and varied cultural potentials and resources. A principal reason responsible for this unsavory situation is the country's inability to harness and exploit the potentials and resources. These resources, if optimally tapped, harnessed and managed, are capable of launching the country on the trajectory of sustainable national development by increasing her economic fortunes. This is by making her one of the leading tourist havens in the world. The paper adopted the thematic, critical and analytical methodology. The position of the paper is that in view of the crucial role of the cultural sector in Nigeria's overall developmental scheme, proper harnessing and management of her cultural resources ought to be accorded adequate attention. The paper concludes by proffering suggestions and strategies on how to enhance proper exploitation and management of cultural resources in Nigeria.

Keywords: Proper, Cultural resources, Management, Sustainable development, Nigeria

Introduction

The central importance of the cultural sector through proper exploitation and management of cultural resources in the overall developmental process of Nigeria, as it is the case in most multi-ethnic and heterogeneous countries, is no longer a matter of conjecture. This is especially so with regard to promotion of economic growth and development through a robust tourism sector and foreign exchange (forex) earnings, preservation of cultural heritage, promotion of cultural education, identity and awareness and fostering of national integrity, image and cohesion.

Yet, regrettably, despite its vital contributions to the socio-economic transformation of Nigeria, the cultural sector is yet to be accorded the attention it rightly deserves. Extant available evidence tends to show that successive governments, their agencies and private entrepreneurs in Nigeria, have thus far paid lip service to the sector. In this regard, Ekechukwu (2005:9) has noted that "there is near absence of strong tourism culture amongst Nigerians". According to him, "the Nigerian public is yet to be sufficiently sensitized and properly educated on the values of cultural resources as indispensable components of a robust

tourism sector and the urgent need to protect them". The net effect of this scenario is that the intended impact, particularly with respect to promotion of a vibrant tourism sector is yet to be made. Consequently, Nigeria's attempt at cultural transformation, particularly in the sphere of tourism, like such places as United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Kenya, Ethiopia, Caribbean, Asia and Pacific States may well remain a forlorn hope or mirage. This is notwithstanding, the existence of amazing cultural and tourism potentials and resources in the country. This poor state of affairs is chiefly attributed to improper harnessing and management of Nigeria's rich and wide array of cultural and tourism resources. As noted previously, these resources, if properly harnessed and managed can endanger rapid and sustainable socio-economic growth and development in the country. This is by serving as alternative sources of sustainable revenue to the government, especially now that it is becoming evident that the country's almost sole dependence on oil, a non-renewable resource, as a source of revenue appears worrisome and no longer positively impacting her economy.

Hence, there is a compelling need for cultural resource experts and planners, especially archaeologists, archivists, anthropologists, sociologists, curators, museologists, economic historians, amongst others, and the various agencies responsible for cultural resource management in Nigeria to rise to the challenge of coming to grips with vexed issue of improper management of her rich, diverse and abundant cultural resources. This is by proffering apt and workable solutions in this regard. Prominent amongst such solutions is adequate sensitization of the government and the public alike on the urgent need for proper tapping and management of Nigeria's rich and enormous cultural resources. This is essential for promotion of a viable, robust and sustainable tourism sector, capable of facilitating the overall socio-economic growth and development of the country via sustainable revenue.

This paper, therefore, seeks to emphasize the imperative of proper management of cultural resources in Nigeria's overall developmental scheme. It interrogates why there appears to be a marked disparity between huge and varied cultural potentials and resources in the country and what has really been achieved in the direction. Amongst the key issues the paper seeks to address are: agencies responsible for cultural resource management in Nigeria, Nigeria's cultural resources and their socio-economic importance and factors militating against proper cultural resource management in Nigeria. Apart from filling the lacuna in literature, the article also provides a guide for policy options towards enhancing cultural resource management in Nigeria. The paper adopts principally the thematic, critical and analytical methodology.

Conceptual Analysis

For the purpose of conceptual clarification and to limit the degree of ambiguity often encountered in academic exercise, it is necessary to examine the four key concepts or terms that are contained in this paper, namely, culture, cultural resources, management and sustainable development.

Culture has been defined so variously that it is hard to come up with a single working definition. The controversy regarding the actual definition of the concept notwithstanding, for our purpose, we shall adopt the anthropological and sociological definition of culture which is deemed more appropriate and germane to this study. To this end, culture is referred to as extra-somatic or non-biological actions and behaviours of man such as winking of the eye in communicating to show appreciation or social disapproval and shaking of hands. These and other ways of behaviour which are modified from time to time and passed from one generation to another constitute the culture of a given people. In line with this understanding,

Myers (2005:172) states that “culture is the enduring behaviours, ideals, attitudes and traditions shared by a large group of people and transmitted from one generation to the next”.

Most people conceptualize culture as encompassing the totality of the way of life of a given people. Essentially, culture is a way of life acquired within society and transmitted through generations. The above definition is in tandem with the Nigerian Cultural Policy, which defines culture as:

the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization, thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours.

Consequently, culture is a mark or symbol of identity of a people as there are myriads of cultures in society. It is a pan as well as superorganic phenomenon involving all persons and being more than one single individual. Apart from differentiating humans from animals, culture is unique, stable and dynamic.

There are two aspects of culture namely, material (tangible) and non-material (intangible) components. The former consists of all man-made objects such as tools, weapons, food items, clothing, utensils, housing or architecture, works of art, crafts, etc. As Otite and Ogionwon (1979:45) opine, material culture “consists of the objects which people have learned to make and use to satisfy their needs in society”. Non-material culture, on the other hand, according to Goldthorpe (1989:9), “comprises aesthetics of all kinds - ideas of right and wrong, belief systems, rules and norms, cultural expressions appropriate to rules, moral and artistic values”.

Cultural Resources

Before defining cultural resources, it is pertinent to first define resources. According to Okpoko and Okpoko (2002:38), resources “consist of the wealth and materials available to an individual or nation which can be used to achieve desired objectives”. A resource can also be said to mean something reserved or kept aside by man to which he can fall back on in times of need. With specific respect to this study, there are basically two kinds of resources – natural and cultural resources. Natural resources are those resources made available and ready for use by nature. They include mineral ores, forests, wildlife, lakes, streams, mountains, petroleum, gas, etc. From these natural resources, cultural resources can be produced. For example, from clay minerals, pottery can be produced; from iron ore, iron implements can be fashioned and from hides and skin, leather products can be made. It is, however, the latter, that is cultural resources that this paper is concerned with.

Cultural resources, on the other hand, are the material and non-material, visible and invisible evidences of man’s interaction with the environment. In the words of Lipe (1984:1), cultural resources refer “to those rich non-material and material attributes acquired within society and transmitted through generations”. These include *inter alia*, the diverse beliefs, festivals, architecture, dances, drama, folklores, technology like iron-working, wood and stone carving, which are characteristics of a given society. Some of these resources may remain in actual use as do some historic and ethnographic materials or they may consist only of partial remains and the traces of past use as with archaeological sites (Lipe 1984:1). As Lipe (1984) points out, “because human beings generally modify the landscapes in which they live and because they attach names, myths and effective values to features of the

territory they inhabit, the landscapes of past cultures may also qualify as cultural resources. In this case, places like the Olumo Rock in Ogun State and the Ogbunike Cave in Anambra State both in Nigeria, Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania and the Olorgesaille in Kenya, can be classified as cultural resources. This is owing to their utility to the past inhabitants of the areas and the values attached to them by the present society. These cultural resources are of tremendous political, social and religious importance. They are preserved for symbolic and utilitarian purposes and rarely for aesthetic purpose. We shall return to this later with particular reference to Nigeria.

Management

Like culture, the term management is difficult to define in a simple and precise manner. This is due to its subtle, complex and pervasive nature, ranging from a field/area of study or discipline, profession and a group of persons entrusted and charged with the responsibility of looking after an organization. For our purpose, we shall define management as effective utilization of an organization's human, physical, financial and other resources to achieve set goals. Accordingly, Graffin (1996:5) states that "management involves a set of activities including planning and decision making, organizing, leading and controlling directed at an organization's resources". This means that management is a process by which scarce resources are combined to achieve specified goals or objectives. Beach (1975:5), appears to corroborate the above view by asserting that management "is the process of utilizing material and human resources to accomplish designated goals".

Management, therefore, is "the art of using man's best endeavours (skills, expertise and knowledge) to organize the resources available to man with the aim of optimizing their use in the attainment of the objectives of an organization. In this case, the resources available to man could be cultural resources.

From the foregoing, it is evident that management performs four basic and key functions in every organization, namely, planning, organizing, leading/directing and controlling. Planning is the most important and involves setting an organization's goals and deciding how best to achieve them. Organizing involves developing structure and assigning tasks necessary to attain organizational goals. Leading/directing, which is the heart of management activity involves providing necessary guidance for people to work together to further the interests of the organization. Controlling, which is the final phase of management process, has to do with monitoring and comparing the organization's progress *vis-a-vis* goal attainment.

Therefore, cultural resource management can be defined as the process of planning, organizing, leading/directing and controlling of cultural resources to accomplish stated or laid-down goals or objectives through the co-ordinated use of human and material resources. It can also be regarded as the application of skill or care in the exploitation, use, treatment or manipulation of cultural resources in order to conserve, protect and rehabilitate them within an environment.

Sustainable Development

The concept, sustainable development, was brought into popular or common use in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development, also known as the Brundtland Commission. However, since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and the subsequent one in South Africa in 2002, the concept has been continuously adopted to other facets of human life. Hence, today, almost all aspects of development considerations are prefixed with the term "sustainable" – "sustainable cultural resource management", "sustainable economy", "sustainable democracy", "sustainable agriculture", "sustainable

environmental management”, etc, (Okpoko 2006:236). According to the Brundtland Commission, sustainable development refers to “development that meets the need of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Bank 1992). Thus, as Okpoko (2006:237) opines, “development actions become sustainable if they are environmentally compatible, socially acceptable and economically beneficial to present and future stakeholders”.

Agencies Responsible for Cultural Resource Management in Nigeria

A number of public institutions are statutorily charged with the responsibility of managing Nigeria’s rich, diverse and huge cultural resources. These organs help to galvanize archaeological, ethnographic and other activities of cultural nature in the country. Notable amongst these institutions is the National Commission for Museums and Monument (NCMM), which was established by Decree Number 77 of 1979 (Andah 1988:122). Amongst its various functions include the establishment, maintenance and administration of national museums, antiquities and monuments and the responsibility of making recommendations to State Governments or individuals concerning the establishment and management of museums and the preservation of monuments and antiquities. The Commission also conducts researches in ethnography, archaeology and other related fields either alone or in alliance with University-based Institutes or Departments. Other institutionalized cultural resource management agencies in Nigeria are: Ministry of Culture and Tourism at the federal and state levels, the Nigerian Films Censorship Boards (NFCB), Nigeria Film Corporation (NFC), Centre for Black Arts and Civilization (CBAC), National Gallery of Arts (NGA), National Copyright Commission (NCC), Council for Arts and Culture at national and state levels and the Institute of African Studies in Nigerian Universities.

It is germane to point out here that apart from the above-enumerated institutionalized cultural resource management agencies, there are also non-institutionalized bodies that manage some of Nigeria’s cultural resources. Deserving mention in this regard are community shrines priests, heads of households, lineage heads, heads and patrons of age-grade societies and traditional festival managers. Others are leaders of drama, dance groups and other custodians of the peoples’ cultural heritage, prominent amongst whom include praise-singers, chroniclers and knowledgeable community heads and elders.

Extant available evidence shows that Nigeria has taken certain important measures especially the enactment of relevant laws aimed at protecting and preserving her cultural resources. Also, globally, most, if not all, member countries of international cultural organizations and agencies, notably United Nations’ Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), have put in place legislations and regulations in order to protect their cultural treasures. Example of such regulations is denial of access to certain endangered monuments and the provision of replicas of them in the immediate vicinity. This is for the purpose of avoiding pollution, vandalization and destruction of these endangered relics from the past.

Nigeria’s Cultural Resources and their Importance

As noted earlier, Nigeria is richly and amazingly endowed with a whole range of cultural resources which are yet to be fully, tapped, harnessed and managed. As Ekechukwu (2005:1) aptly opines, “these resources can form the basis of a flourishing tourist trade if and when properly harnessed and managed”. It therefore, suffices to state here that proper management of cultural resources ought to be accorded adequate attention in the overall developmental process of Nigeria. For convenience, these resources are discussed under three major categories, namely, archaeological, ethnographic and historical.

Archaeological resources comprise the cultural materials especially artifacts of extinct societies. In Nigeria, they include the important archaeological sites and their discoveries such as the Nok Culture, Igboukwu, Ife and Benin. Others include Owo, Ugwuele, Daima, Lejja and Opi in Nsukka area of Nigeria. As Okpoko and Okpoko (2002:59) rightly note, “apart from the tourist potentials of these centres, their remarkable styles reveal the artistic ability and inventiveness of their makers”. To this end, Andah (1988:188) asserts that “culture areas like Nok, Ife, Igboukwu and Benin are still fresh in our memory as early famous centres for the development of sophisticated casting traditions in copper, bronze and brass and sometimes silver.

Ethnographic resources, on the other hand, consist of the cultural materials of extant (existing or living) societies. Ethnography, according to Beals *et al* (1977:78), is “the study of the cultures of living peoples through direct and indirect observation of behaviour”. Ethnography adopts the exploratory and descriptive approach and tends to emphasize virtually all aspects of the culture of the people being studied. There are innumerable ethnographic resources in Nigeria. They include, essentially, museums, shrines, traditional arts and crafts and myriads of festivals. All these constitute integral and essential components of a vibrant tourism sector.

In Nigeria, there are altogether thirty-five National Museums located mostly in State capitals and in few ancient towns. With the exception of nine States, namely, Yobe, Kebbi, Taraba, Jigawa, Bayelsa, Nassarawa, Gombe, Zamfara and Ekiti States in Nigeria, all the others have national museums. All the National Museums in Nigeria are under the aegis or control of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM). Also, there are other museums owned and managed by States and Local Government Councils as well as private individuals. These museums are primarily the repositories of Nigeria’s material cultural legacy (Akinade 2005).

Shrines are places of traditional worship and they make up very vital cultural resource centres in man’s history. An important shrine in Nigeria that has continued to attract many adherents and admirers is the Osun-Oshogbo Shrine, located approximately 112 kilometres northeast of Ibadan. This Shrine is the venue for the celebration of the Osun-Oshogbo Festival, an annual festival that takes place during the month of August. People from far and near usually converge in the town during the celebration to watch the Osun worshippers descend on the banks of River Osun to offer sacrifices to the goddess of the River at the Osun-Oshogbo Shrine (Ekechukwu 2005). Another centre worthy of note in this regard, is the Omo Ukwu Temple in Ohafia, Abia State.

In Nigeria, there are perhaps as numerous traditional arts and crafts as there are different peoples and cultures. As Okpoko and Okpoko (2002:63) have rightly noted, “these numerous artistic traditions of our past are today being modified for economic reasons”. It is no accident, therefore, that the Annang people in Akwa Ibom State produce beautiful and wide variety of cane and raffia crafts such as tables, chairs, beds, baskets, hats, bags, etc. The Awka, Nkwerre, Abiriba and Agbaja-Udi in Igboland are famous masters in blacksmithery, whilst the Akwete and Iseyin in Abia and Oyo States respectively, are noted for their well designed, well priced and durable textiles. In Kano, Sokoto and Borno States, skilled craftsmen produce impressive quality leather goods that serve the needs of various classes of people, including tourists. Similarly, the Benin people of Edo State are famous for their superior quality brass works, whilst the Nupe people of Niger State are widely acclaimed makers of glass products, especially glass beads. In the same vein, the Naraguta and Biron people and Gwari of Plateau and Niger States respectively, excel in pottery. These arts and crafts represent Nigeria’s legacies of a rich past.

Furthermore, in Nigeria, numerous traditional festivals are usually celebrated in different places at various seasons of the year depending however, on the nature and purpose of such festivals. In Igboland Southeastern part of Nigeria, for instance, the most popular festival is the New Yam Festival. According to Okpoko, (1997), this festival is celebrated in different Igbo communities between the months of August and October each year. Yam occupies a pride of place in Igboland, being incontrovertibly the most valued of all food crops in the area.

Accordingly, as Emeghara (1997:21) notes, “the Igbo were more devoted to the cultivation of yams than other peoples of West Africa”. Hence, prominent wealthy Igbo yam farmers took titles like Ezeji, or Diji, literally meaning master of yam growing. This accounts for the various ritual celebrations associated with the cultivation and harvest of the crop in Igbo society. In the opinion of Njoku (2001:12), “this is a reflection of both the prior antiquity and centrality of the crop in Igbo indigenous economy”.

The significance of the festival cannot be overemphasized. As Ayisi (1979) rightly argues, like other festivals, the New Yam Festival draws spectators from distant lands, thus mirroring and confirming the social solidarity of a wide area that may have common interest in certain things but differ and may be mutually opposed to one another in restricted inter-group and parochial matters. What is more, the local economy of the villages is usually boosted, during such occasions. This is owing to the fact that the occasions are often characterized by spectacular displays, enjoyment of music, food and drinks.

Another significant festival in Nigeria is the Argungu Fishing and Cultural Festival held annually in Kebbi State. Field trip by the author reveals that the festival has developed to an internationally accepted yearly socio-cultural event and has drawn tourists from different parts of the globe. Other fishing festivals worthy of mention include the Nwuyo Annual Fishing Festival at Ibi and the Njuwa Fishing Festival, all in Taraba State (Ekechukwu 2005).

Apart from the traditional festivals mentioned above, modern festivals of arts and culture are also organized at the national, state and local government levels in Nigeria. Unlike the traditional festivals, the modern festivals take place at officially designated and approved venues and on specified dates. An example of such modern festivals in Nigeria is the Mmonwu (masquerade) festival, instituted by the government of former Anambra State (Mbaeyi 2000). This was aimed at boosting tourism in the state.

Historic monuments abound in Nigeria. According to Okpoko and Okpoko (2002:59), more than sixty-three of them have so far been declared by the National Commission for Museums and Monument (NCMM). These monuments include buildings of historical and architectural interest, ancient city walls, especially of Kano and Benin and boundary mounds as well as cemeteries. Prominent amongst them are historical building, house and compound at Keffin Madaki in Bauchi State, Ilojo Bar in Lagos State, the Statutes of 19th century Kings and paramount rulers of the Niger Delta like those of King Jaja of Opobo (1821 – 1897), Dappa Pepple of Bonny, (1886), Chief Oshikoya of Nembe (1876), etc. Other important monuments include Chief Ogiamen’s house in Benin City, Obu house at Elu Ohafia, Abia State, Gidan Matama in Kano, the rock paintings in Birnin Kudi in Kano State, the Geji Rock paintings in Bauchi State, amongst others.

In addition to the plethora of cultural heritage resources mentioned above, Nigeria is culturally heterogeneous and this engenders a dialogue between the peoples’ cultural resources and tourism.

Factors Militating Against Proper Cultural Resource Management in Nigeria

Nigeria has had to grapple with a multiplicity of problems and constraints in her attempt at cultural transformation particularly with regard to proper management of her abundant cultural resources. These constraints have tended to impede rather enhance her quest for sustainable socio-economic growth and development, particularly in sphere of tourism. This is because the efforts made so far in this respect have hardly yielded the desired and expected results. The identified obstacles here are multifarious and range from economic, political, social to technical issues. On a general note, the most prominent of the impediments are those associated and connected with improper funding, lack of proper collaboration amongst professionals in the field of cultural resource 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 inventorisation (register) of all cultural resources or property in Nigeria, absence of effective legislation on the prevention of destruction of cultural resources by developers, poor policy implementation and corruption. These issues are discussed in turn below.

Improper funding has proved as one of the most serious problems confronting proper and effective management of cultural resources in Nigeria. Admittedly, cultural resource management globally is capital-intensive, but in Nigeria, as in most other developing countries, it is considered within the realm of social services and non-profit making ventures that depend almost solely on subventions or allocations from the government. Not only are these subventions or allocations grossly inadequate, they are also irregularly or untimely released. Worse still, evidence shows that money allocated and meant for some cultural activities in Nigeria, is at times ill-utilized, owing to corruption. We shall return to this issue in due course.

Improper funding results in poor and haphazard co-ordination and implementation and sometimes in total abandonment or failure of certain cultural programmes and projects in Nigeria. It also leads to difficulty in procurement of necessary operational equipment and facilities particularly field vehicles, storage and laboratory facilities. Also, lack of funds is responsible for non-practice of salvage ethnography and archaeology in Nigeria. Currently, in Nigeria, there appears not to be any provision in the national budgets for salvage operations. This is quite in contrast with advanced countries like the USA, where a certain percentage of their budgets is provided for salvage operations (Mbaeyi 2000).

Next is lack of proper collaboration amongst Nigerian professionals in the field of cultural resource management as well as isolation from their professional colleagues in other parts of the globe. Here again, there is problem of funds to sponsor them to attend conferences both within and outside the country or to organize any one locally.

Another problem has to do with dearth of qualified and trained manpower. The critical and catalytic role of qualified and skilled manpower in facilitating a country's rapid and technological advancement is well established. Capital and natural resources are in themselves passive factors of production. Human resources, on the other hand, constitute active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organization and carry forward societal development. In a nutshell, human resources often used interchangeably with manpower are a country's most critical and valuable resources. As Kinard (1988:7) puts it, "they are more important than physical and financial resources". Without the required human capital in the form of stocks of skills possessed by human beings, physical capital in the form of machines and other technologies will not give rise to rapid economic growth and development. Economists (particularly development economists) have tended in their analysis of Nigeria's economic woes to concentrate chiefly on the difficulties arising from paucity of financial resources. Implicit in this line of

argument, is the assumption that if financial resources were available in sufficient quantities, they would be well managed. Research according to development scholars like Emeghara (2006) has however, revealed that problems arising from dearth of skilled manpower, especially in the managerial, scientific and engineering areas are indeed more critical and serious than those associated and connected with mere scarcity of capital. With specific regard to proper management of cultural resources, there is ample evidence that Nigeria lacks adequate number of qualified and competent personnel such as archaeologists, ethnographers, anthropologists, curators, economic historians, museologists, archivists, geologists, geographers, valuers, town planners, ethnologists, etc. Worst still, it is not gratifying to note that at present there is hardly any Nigerian university offering a degree course in cultural resource management or tourism. In the face of this handicap, meaningful and proper management of cultural resources becomes considerably difficult.

Another serious hindrance to proper and effective management of cultural resources in Nigeria is lack of tourism education. As stated already, Nigeria is one of the countries where there is apparent lack of proper public awareness and appreciation of the value of cultural resources. Awarite (2005), has identified about ninety-nine tourist destinations in Nigeria. The pertinent question therefore, is: how many Nigerians are aware of these tourist destinations, let alone visiting them? Reversal of this ugly trend through effective and aggressive public enlightenment is imperative. This is because the measure is bound to usher in the much desired change particularly with regard to improved economic growth via a robust tourism sector and better national integration and cohesion. This is because Nigerians will begin to see cultural resources as their common or shared heritage.

Absence of a comprehensive inventorization or register of all Nigeria's historic cultural property, including archaeological sites and objects, works of art of historical value or importance and monuments is another worrisome impediment to proper management of Nigeria's array of cultural resources. The master plan has been proposed in this regard for necessary action, though admittedly, they have hardly been implemented to bring about the intended effect. Inventorization of Nigeria's cultural or heritage resources could form the basis for putting in place stringent legislations for the protection of Nigeria's cultural property. Also, it is capable of serving as necessary and ready guide for quick salvage operations (Mbaeyi 2000). For instance, with the aid of such a register, it is feasible for the NCMM to ascertain where and when a quick salvage or rescue operation can be carried out during construction of projects like roads, dams, canals, etc. Essentially, the register enables a country to know the existence and locations of her cultural resources with a view to protecting and preserving them.

Another problem is ineffectiveness of some of the laws for the protection of the resources. This is by so doing making them susceptible to destruction by people especially developers. Accelerated construction works in Nigeria is having threatening consequences on some of her cultural resources.

Poor policy implementation also negates proper management of cultural resources in Nigeria. Without doubt, several cultural 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 reasons usually adduced for the failure include absence of enabling environment for their implementation and lack of commitment on the part of those involved in the implementation.

Over and above all these problems, is the vexed issue of corruption. Corruption has a debilitating and crippling effect on Nigeria's overall development. The degree of corruption in the country is alarming as it is almost institutionalized. As Njoku (2001:25), rightly states, corruption is "a pervasive cankerworm which has burrowed into the very foundation of the

Nigerian society, virulently sapping its strength and vitality”. Corruption results in diversion of resources (particularly funds) meant for cultural programmes into private use.

Conclusion

This study has been able to prove that Nigeria is richly endowed with a wide array of cultural resources that can support a robust tourism sector if and when properly harnessed and managed. Also, it has been able to demonstrate that a myriad of factors militate against proper and meaningful management of cultural resources in Nigeria. Based on the evidence provided above, it is glaring that the country has been unable to optimally harness and manage her rich and huge reservoir of cultural resources with a view to developing a viable and sustainable tourism sector. It is, therefore, the paper’s considered and fervent view and belief that the nagging problem of improper management of Nigeria’s rich and diverse cultural resources should be adequately addressed without further delay. This measure is capable of improving her level of socio-economic development in addition to enabling her realize her dream of becoming one of the leading economies of the world come 2020. The above discussed strategies or suggestions can be of tremendous assistance in this regard.

Suggested Solutions

The following suggestions are made to ensure proper management of Nigeria’s huge reservoir of cultural resources.

- (i) Improvement of funding of the cultural sector through increased budgetary provision, especially of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and its major parastatal, the NCMM.
- (ii) Ensuring proper collaboration amongst Nigerian professionals in the field of cultural resource management. This is by affording them the opportunity to attend conferences and other interactive for both internally and internationally.
- (iii) Effective public education/enlightenment to create necessary awareness amongst Nigerians on the value of cultural resources and the compelling need to protect them.
- (iv) Undertaking a proper and comprehensive inventorisation of all Nigeria’s historic cultural property including archeological sites and objects, works of arts of historic important as well as monuments.
- (v) Putting in place stringent cultural resource management legislations to curtail destruction and to mitigate loss as well as to provide for salvage operations.
- (vi) Ensuring the cultural policies, especially as it concerns tourism are fully and religiously implemented.
- (vii) Enlargement of opportunities for training and retraining of staff of the cultural sector through in-service courses and establishment of more Institutes for Cultural Studies in Nigeria.
- (viii) Finally is combating corruption through prompt payment of remuneration and allowances of cultural sector employees and imposition of stiff penalties on officers involved in fraudulent practices.

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