

# Architecture and Tourism: The Case of Historic Preservations, Human Capital Development and Employment Creation in Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism in Nigeria is still in its infancy. For the tourism industry as a sector of the Nigerian economy, it is not in dispute that it has abundance of resources that can be diversified to transform the socio-economic lives of the populace yet, the sector's performance is nowhere in tune with turning the economy into a foreign exchange earner. Poor impression and attitude to tourism in Nigeria resulted in, most Nigerians, not considering tourism as good career or lucrative income generating enterprise. The present work aims to evolve modalities for sustainable tourism development programmes in Nigeria, capable of remedying the dwindling tourist attractions to sustainable standards. The authors investigated the causes of failure of tourism development in Nigeria and solutions to improving it. They were careful with analytical instruments and tools used. The disciplinary areas of focus are, architecture and tourism, or better said, tourism development through architecture. As such, the authors adopted content base analysis, qualitative research method with data from secondary sources. Nigeria offers a wide variety of tourist attractions such as extended and roomy rivers and ocean beaches ideal for swimming and other water sports, unique wildlife, vast tracts of unspoiled nature ranging from tropical forest, magnificent waterfalls, some new rapidly growing cities and climatic conditions in some parts particularly conducive to holidaying. Other attractions include traditional ways of life preserved in local customs; rich and varied handicrafts and other colorful products depicting or illustrative of native arts and lifestyle. Nigerians need to immediately realize that there are lots to gain from an environmentally friendly eco-cultural tourism business than the current over dependency on mineral exploitation and exploration for export earnings. The various challenges and constraints facing tourism sector must need to be eradicated or ameliorated. There should be a sub-regional and regional collaboration to establish economically viable monuments and heritage sites in the country. In order to checkmate the security concerns of tourist and the tourist centers, well-coordinated tourism security committee compromising of all security agencies and host communities should be set up.

**KEYWORDS:** architecture, employment, festivals, tourist centers, population, investments

## INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian economy is lacking, lacking in many areas especially, in eco-cultural tourism resulting in severe unemployment of the people and foreign exchange earnings. According to Munzali (2011), tourism in Nigeria is still in its infancy considering the large accumulation of resources which are yet untapped and the institutional structure which is yet to be regulated to compete favorably with other fast growing tourism destinations. Successive governments in Nigeria have tried in their very best to put the industry in the national economic map, but the sector could not meet up with the exclusive listing. Even though rich in ecotourism and business tourism potentials and constrained by figurative and factual analysis to plan development, the political will and legislation are far from regulating the

industry to keep abreast with both the national tourism policy and master plan implementation program in line with the United Nations Framework on sustainable tourism development efforts.

For the tourism industry as a sector of the Nigerian economy, it is not in dispute that it has abundance of resources that can be diversified to transform the socio-economic lives of the populace yet, the sector's performance is nowhere in tune with turning the economy into a foreign exchange earner. The country is mono-economy based in petroleum oil generating over 80% of the nation's foreign exchange and employing very low labor force as the agricultural sector which is the predominant occupation of Nigerians (Munzali, 2011).

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The country has many cultural centers and museums that could employ a lot of people, but because of poor development of the cultural and museum centers, agricultural, on a very low scale and low income generating capacity, employed a lot of people. In accordance with that, Ukpere and Wabah (2018), indicated that, various museums and potential historical sites across Nigeria are veritable centers for tourists' attraction. They are good sources of revenue and employment generations. In Western countries, visits to museums and historical sites are a regular activity and a big enterprise. Thousands of people spend their hard earn monies in scrambling for tickets to enter museums or buy some artifacts for home and office decoration. Thus, in countries like the USA, Brazil, India, China, Israel, Egypt, France, Italy, Germany, Costa Rica, and Saudi Arabia, eco-cultural tourism is striving very well due to the contributions of museums, cultural fiestas and historical sites (Adebayo, 2009; Okey, 2005).

Tourism sector contributes maximally to the national economy as a major export earner like the petroleum and the agricultural sectors of the economy. This is to be achieved through the appraisal of the tourism resources of the nation and the combination of both natural and human capacities to transform the industry into a job creating and foreign exchange earner that will meet the socio-economic wellbeing of the nation at large (Munzali, 2011).

Several cultural festivals (social and religious, including folk tales and dance) in every state of the Federation, is a strong motivator to the use of eco-cultural tourism to generate wealth, create employment and promote sustainable peace and development, if well-coordinated and packaged. Already, cultural festivals (e.g. the Eyo festival of Lagos, the Dubai festival of Katsina, the Argungu Fishing festival in Kogi state, the traditional wrestling and dance festivals of the Ijaws of Niger Delta, etc.) are well appreciated and accepted by all ages of Nigerians and even foreigners. Both the print and electronic media especially, the television stations are doing a lot in showcasing these festivals especially, local wrestling, traditional music and dance to entertain, educate and inform both local and international viewers and listeners (Ukpere and Wabah, 2018).

Along the same line, Munzali (2011), indicated that, tourism industry's various sectors are yet to have adequate, quality and standard development efforts including the building of its capacity in the areas of natural resource of the national parks, game reserves, beaches, plateau, forests and other natural spots; transport (either air, land and water); the accommodation with hotel, hostel, shared apartment, guest houses, camps, etc.); the catering services (i.e. Restaurants, Cafes, fast food shops clubs, bars, etc.); entertainment (i.e. museums, cultural shows, night clubs, drama and dances); souvenir providing works of carvings, weavings, sculptures and various art works including managers and operators of attractions i.e. parks and events i.e. conferences, fairs, exhibitions, festivities among others.

Ukpere and Wabah (2018), indicated that, the geo-spatial alignment of museum/monuments, historical sites/tourists centres and artifacts/cultural festivals, is very crucial; because they are the driving force for sustainable eco-cultural tourism business in Nigeria (Mowforth, *et. al.*, 1998). However, one is worried that till now, Nigeria is yet to come

to limelight in terms of real investments on eco-cultural tourism. Till now, there is yet to be a clear defined road map for tourism development. Most of our museums and historical sites are either under lock and key, or poorly managed and underutilized or has completely gone moribund. Also, our cultural festivals, folk and dance are fast eroding away with no sign of immediate relief.

It is understandable that, because tourism is not fully developed in Nigeria, the people, even the managers of the industry are not able to classify the divisions of tourism sectors. According to Ukpere and Wabah (2018), eco-cultural tourism is sometimes used interchangeably with cultural heritage tourism. It is the economics of our cultural heritage that can be turned into haven of tourists' attraction as a vibrant economic venture, in other words, eco-cultural tourism is tourism based on the cultural environment and which take into account, the economic and social viability of such enterprise to boost social integration, national revenue and employment generation. The NWHD (1991) cited in Adewale (2012) defined "cultural heritage tourism as travel concern with experience cultural environments including landscapes, the visual and performing arts, museums and special lifestyles, values, traditions and events". Thus, cultural tourism in this paper is tourism involving museums, historical sites, monuments, cultural festivals and the likes.

Ukpere and Wabah (2018), further stated that, in its meaning, a 'museum' is a building in which certain objects of historical, scientific, artistic or cultural interest are stored and exhibited for posterity. The International Council for Museums (ICOM) in 1951 defined museum "as any permanent institution that converse and displays for the purpose of study, education and enjoyment, a collection of objects of cultural and scientific significance" (Navgri, 1980). By 1974, ICOM modified its definition of museum as a non-profit making permanent institution, for the services society and its development. And that a museum's primary role is to acquire, conserve, researches, communicates and exhibits for purpose of study, education and enjoyment, and to provide material evidence of man's culture and his environment. Though, ICOM traditionally prescribe museums to be non-profit making however, for the benefit of posterity, efficient management and continuity of ideas, museums should be economically buoyant and should be seen as a big enterprise. This is because, since it renders services, these services should be paid for by the consumers of such services. This is the only way to boost quality service delivery and solve the problem of underfunding and under-utilization. It is the modern view of museums (Adewale, 2012; Adebayo, 2009).

According to Ukpere and Wabah (2018), historical sites are specially designated sites or locations with very keen historical interest. For posterity, these sites are specially selected, preserved and conserved in order to keep us in touch with our past, present and future. They are therefore the very legends of the migration, settlements, economic and cultural struggles and survival of our historical past which is needed in order to keep us in the right track. They can be turned into very good tourists' centers and an impetus to viable eco-cultural tourism business as seen in China, Brazil, France, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Israel (Adewale, 2012).

In Nigeria, many historical sites have been preserved for posterity. Included in that, is the late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu's bunkers that resulted from the Nigerian civil war in 1967. The Nigerian civil war, commonly referred to as the Biafran War, was fought between 6th of July, 1967 to 15th of January, 1970. The purpose of the war, was to quell the secession of Biafra from the original Nigeria. Biafra is a part of Nigeria covering the old eastern region of the country. This part has now been divided into the South-South and South East regions. The leadership of the old eastern region came to the conclusion that they just could not continue to coexist with the rest of Nigeria, especially because of the ill treatment meted out to people of the old eastern region in the Northern part of Nigeria by northern military men, especially during the

counter coup of June 1967, in which many eastern military officers were murdered (History of Nigeria Civil War: Retrieved April 11, 2019).

During the civil war, the Biafran soldiers locally manufactured their arms and ammunitions used in defending their territory. The engineering involved in the production of the weapons were challenging to both the federal side and international bodies, as a result, needed to be preserved. The leadership of Biafra had undictated underground bunkers in different areas of Biafra land that were, their hideaways, concealed the Biafran war planes and heavy artillery. These sites are now, tourist attractions (plates 1 to 6).



**Plate 1. Late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu bunker's gate, Uli, Anambra State, Nigeria**  
Source: <https://thenationonline.net/visit-ojukwu-bunker/> Retrieved April 11, 2019



**Plate 2. Late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu bunker's entrance, Uli, Anambra State, Nigeria**  
Source: <https://thenationonline.net/visit-ojukwu-bunker/> Retrieved April 11, 2019





**Plate 3. Late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu bunker's war planes storage facility, Uli, Anambra State, Nigeria**

Source: <https://thenationonline.ng.net/visit-ujukwu-bunker/> Retrieved April 11, 2019



**Plate 4. Late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu's Bunker, located at Late Chief Michael Okpara Avenue, Unuahia, Abia. View of the bunker, showing the slop into the bunker and the pictures of the Biafrican heroes.**

Source: <https://hotels.ng/places/museum//341-ujukwu-bunker>. Retrieved: April 11, 2019



**Plate 5. Late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu's Bunker, located at Late Chief Michael Okpara Avenue, Unuahia, Abia.**

Source: <https://hotels.ng/places/museum//341-ujukwu-bunker> Retrieved: April 11, 2019



**Plate 6. Exhibition area at late Chief, Chukwuemeka Odumegwo Ojukwu's Bunker, located at Late Chief Michael Okpara Avenue, Unuahia, Abia.**

**Source: <https://hotels.ng/places/museum//341-ojukwu-bunker>. Retrieved: April 11, 2019**

In line with the classifications of tourism centers, Ukpere and Wabah (2018), indicated that cultural festivals' (social or religious) are the very joyous celebration or occasions displaying certain attributes of our rich cultural heritage. They are very entertaining, educative and informative. They are often held monthly, annually, bi-annually or after five to seven and even ten years, depending on the specific 'message' or ritualistic underpinnings. They include the various carnivals, traditional music and folk dance, wrestling, FESTAC, fishing and yam festivals, the war canoes and Boat Regatta of the Ijaws. These cultural festivals are specific and at special periods that are set aside for celebration, especially of religious feasts, organized series of events, performance etc. usually in one location. They are therefore, cultivation of nature and celebration of history and also the very tools for the promotion of peace and unity among certain people. They are the right platforms and channels for the appreciation, revivals, sustainability, propagation, promotion and protection of our rich cultural values.

In Adazi-Nnukwu, Anocha Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria, every year, the town celebrates her new yam festival. In the process, almost all the titled men and women, majority of the people of Adazi-Nnukwu would come home for the occasion. It is a time of joy, peace and unity in Adazi-Nnukwu. Outsiders from neighboring towns, Adazi-Nnukwu people in diaspora, foreigners, friends and well-wishers would attend. It has become a time of joy and mass-return for the Adazi-Nnukwu people. The festival takes place every year at the end of August and at the beginning of the occasion, the Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu and his chiefs would assemble in front of the town's, Town Hall at 12:00pm (plate 7).



**Plate 7. The Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu, Igwe Prof. Augustine Obiekezie and his Chiefs in front of Adazi-Nnukwu town Hall**

**Source: Obiadi (2018).**



Plate 8, shows Igwe Prof. Augustine Obiekezie, the Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu and his Chiefs proceeding to the new yam festival ground at the town's Afor market square, Adazi-Nnukwu, Anocha local government, Anambra State



**Plate 8. The Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu, Igwe Prof. Augustine Obiekezie and his Chiefs heading to the New Yam festival ground.**  
Source: Obiadi (2018).

The Afor market square has its architecture. It is an open area surrounded with buildings of different architectural characters. Each of the building has the capacity of sitting up to three hundred people (figure 1).



**Figure1. Afor Market Square, Adazi-Nnukwu, Anocha local government area, Anambra State, Nigeria (the masquerade festival arena).**  
Source: Obiadi (May 7, 2019)



Panel 1 and 2 show the Adama, the chiefs, special guests, Iyoms and the wives of the chiefs at the festival, seated at the Udoka Pavilion, one of the buildings at the market square (architecture of a festival arena).

**Panel 1. Pictures of the 2017 New Yam festival opening prayer by, the Most Rev. Jonas Benson Okoye, the Auxiliary Bishop, Catholic Dioceses of Awka, Anmbra State, Nigeria and the seated Chiefs.**

Source: Nwogu (August 2018).



**Panel 2. The Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu, Igwe Prof. Augustine Obiekezie and his Chiefs, seated for the New Yam festival**

Source: Nwogu (August 2018).





Panels 1 and 2 show Igwe Prof. Augustine Obiekezie, the Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu, his seated chiefs, the Clan Chiefs performing their “Iwa-Ij” rituals, the seated Iyoms and ndi-Enyi (titled women) in Adazi-Nnukwu, the wives of the chiefs and the glorious and glamorous entry of the “Okwesilieze” women led by Oche-Eze, Dr. Mrs Eucharia Obiekezie, the wife of the Adama (King) of Adazi-Nnukwu, Igwe Prof. Augustine Obiekezie.

The Afor market square equally has a museum center (plate 9), housing among other things, the town’s ancestral collections, a library facility, tourism and education center, masquerade storage facility for the preservation of the town’s retired masquerades and a facility for a restaurant.



**Plate 9. The Afor Market Square showing the town’s library, the Pavilion and the viewing post (building).**  
Source: Obiadi (April 2019)

**Plate 10, shows the town’s Omekagu masquerade performing at the New Yam festival, a public attraction.**



**Plate 10. The Omekagu masquerade of Adazi-Nnukwu performing at the New Yam festival**  
Source: Nwogu (August 2018)



**Panel 3. The Ifeadijo age grade women wing and a bird masquerade performing at the 2018 New Yam festival.**  
Source: Nestor Nwogu (August 2018).



The town of Adazi-Nnukwu has systematically sustained their new yam festival and it has become a cultural attraction in the region, socially and economically. Equally, earning opportunity for the region. Hundreds of merchants, hawkers, commercial vehicle, commercial motorcycle operators and big corporations (panel 4) come there every year for their earnings. It has become a safe haven for yam, fish, poultry and fruit farmers. A lot of visitors to the occasion come for their appetizing roasted yam, chicken and fish. Deliciously broiled chicken and fish are on major demands at the festival. The new yam festival in Adazi-Nnukwu has come to stay and its sustainability if not doubtful.

**Panel4. Adonko Bitters marketing their products and entertaining children at the occasion.**  
Source: Nwogu (August 2018).



According to Ukpere and Wabah (2018), sustainable eco-tourism is tourism business that is not just pleasurable but is economically viable and that is sustainable for the benefit of future generations, through the protection of our cultures and the environment. It is tourism plus business aimed to generate revenue, create jobs and contributes to national development through the use of museums, historical sites, potential tourism sites, and cultural festivals, without undermining basic principles of environmental protection and resources conservation. Sustainable development is development plus environmental sustainability. It is all

round development with a real increase in wellbeing and standard of life for the average person that can be maintained over the long term without degrading the environment or compromising the survival of future generations (Ukpere, Babatunde & Mathew 2008).

#### **Aim of Study**

The present work aims to evolve modalities for sustainable tourism programmes in Nigeria, capable of remedying the dwindling tourist attractions in Nigeria to sustainable standards.

## Research Methodology

This paper investigated the causes of the failure of tourism development in Nigeria and solutions to improving it. The authors were careful with the analytical instruments and tools used. The disciplinary area of focus is architecture and tourism development, or better said, tourism development. As such, the authors adopted content base analysis, qualitative research method with data from secondary sources. According to Mayoux (2005), qualitative method investigates the *why* and *how* of decision making, not just *what*, *where*, *when*, or *who*.

## Findings

Nigeria offers a wide variety of tourist attractions such as extended and roomy river and ocean beaches ideal for swimming and other water sports, unique wildlife, vast tracts of unspoiled nature ranging from tropical forest, magnificent waterfalls, some new rapidly growing cities and climatic conditions in some parts, particularly conducive to holidaying. Other attractions include traditional ways of life preserved in local customs; rich and varied handicrafts and other colourful products depicting or illustrative of native arts and lifestyle, and the authentic unsophisticated but friendly attitude of many in the Nigerian population. However, many of these attractions are still largely untapped and even at their raw states, they are still being enjoyed by few outsiders, either very rich visitors in quest of exoticism or adventurous people in search of new challenges and experiences (Munzali, 2011).

To sustain tourism development in Nigeria, Munzali (2011), indicated that the interest in tourism by the Nigeria's government started way back in the 1960s with the Obasanjo's regime in 1976 establishing the Nigeria Tourism Board (NTB) now Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) via Decrees No Decree No. 54 of 1976 reviewed to Decree No. 86 of 1991 and giving it a 'preferred sector' status respectively. Master Plan on tourism development in Nigeria started way 1982 with a tourism development policy first rolled out in 1990. To further consolidate the quest for quality service delivery in the tourism industry, the government created the Federal Ministry of Tourism and Culture to actualize the dream of catching up with the global train in tourism development. However, with all the government efforts in tourism development in Nigeria, the industry still suffers economically, socially and psychologically. The problems of the industry would include, but not limited to the following:

- Poor impression and attitude to tourism. Most Nigerians are not well informed and never considered tourism as good career or lucrative income generating enterprise.
- Basic among the problems of developing tourism industry in Nigeria would include:-- low level of awareness by the citizens of tourism and its benefits:-- lack of regulatory legislation:--low disposable income to pursue tourism activities:--Niger Delta and Boko Haram Militancy (Munzali, 2011).
- Maintenance and ignorance of the people. Most of the tourism centers in Nigeria are ignored and not maintained resulting in their deplorable conditions, even extinction.
- Orientation of the people. Most Nigerians are not exposed and knew nothing about tourism and do not take it serious or considered it important in the growth

of human capital development. This has resulted in private sector and philanthropists not investing in tourism and the government has not seriously preserved historic centers, monuments and places of cultural importance in the communities.

- Lack of modern infrastructural facilities and in some parts of the country, acute conditions of underdevelopment and poverty can be seen which many potential Nigeria bound tourist may not like to be confronted with (Munzali, 2011).
- Tourism in Nigeria centers largely on events, due to the country's ample amount of ethnic groups, but also includes rain forests, savanah, waterfalls, and other natural attractions. The industry, unfortunately, suffers from the country's poor electricity, roads, and water quality (Munzali, 2011).
- The security concerns of tourist and the tourist centers is of primary important for tourism development in Nigeria.
- Meanwhile, most of Nigeria's beautiful beaches' locations are still largely without accommodation facilities, which are targets for investors in most tourism destinations across the globe (Munzali, 2011).
- With the current wave of kidnappings and killings in Nigeria, most travelers as well as Nigerians are not comfortable coming and moving around Nigeria to avoid the risk of being kidnapped or killed and this has tremendously affected tourism development.
- Poor establishment and location of contact and marketing offices for the promotion of tourism is a major challenge for the industry in Nigeria.

The Government of Nigerian, in her quest to diversify the economy and the tourism industry in particular, decided to take some measures towards promoting the travel and tourism sectors. These measures include the establishment of the Presidential Council on Tourism, Federal Ministry of Tourism and its departments and agencies with same at the states level and Local Tourism Committees which falls in line with the provisions of the National Tourism Policy (NTP) of 2005, the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) of 1992 and the Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan of 2006. With the adoption of a Nigeria Tourism Development Master Plan and the National Tourism Council, harnessing tourism resources and diversifying such to compete favorably with other major economic sector given its socio-economic and cultural wellbeing cannot be over emphasized (Munzali, 2011).

A tourism policy was produced in 1990 with the basic objectives to make Nigeria the ultimate tourism destination in Africa. The main thrust of government policy on tourism, is to generate foreign exchange, encourage even development, promote tourism based rural enterprises, generate employment and accelerate rural urban integration and cultural exchange (Munzali, 2011). Yet, the industry in Nigeria still struggles. Nigerians travel abroad in droves for medical tourism and as indicated by Olusola,(2013), the Secretary of the Organizing Committee of the Nigerian Centenary Charity Ball, Dr. Kingsley Esegbe, has said that Nigerians spend an estimated sum of N250bn on medical tourism in a year.



In his article, the Negative Impacts of Old Policies and Older Workers in Development and Growth in Nigeria, Obiadi (2016), indicated that, the older workers are not crossing international borders and attracting lucrative businesses and industries that would create enough and adequate jobs to occupy the youths and young school graduates in their communities. They are crossing international borders for their public paid medical treatments. Obiadi (2016), citing Leader (2014) stated that, Nigeria is not the only third world nation where people travel to the developed countries for specialized medical treatment, if the need arises. But sadly Nigeria ranks high as health tourists compared to other developing countries. Again, Nigeria is the only developing country where overseas medical care has become a fad for public officers and their families, simply because they have access to public funds and spend it as they like. It doesn't matter whether the ailment can be treated locally or not – they jet off to Germany, London, United States and, now, India, simply to help themselves with public money. Those who have no such access bend over backwards to get there or send their beloved ones because the society has been conditioned to believe that to save life, you must go abroad.

According to Obiadi (Obiadi), Leader (2014) further indicated that, it is not impossible that a Nigerian can go overseas to treat malaria, when in fact, foreign doctors don't seem to have a clue about the illness, and treat the patient like a leper – that is, they treat malaria as if they are treating leprosy because leprosy was contagious. Foreign medical treatment is the name of the game now. India is the buzz word – “take him to India if you want him to live!” The corruption and indiscretion of our politicians and top government officials have conditioned the entire country to believe that the only way to save life, cure an illness, treat or properly manage it is to go to hospital in “India”. This trend makes Nigerians the largest medical tourists in the world, patronizing overseas hospitals, shamelessly, as they do overseas schools and colleges (Leader, 2014).

## Conclusion

The poor tourism development in Nigeria cannot be blamed on the government interest alone, but a lot of factors and not limited to awareness, security, funding, attitude of the people and interest in foreign based operations instead of promoting the industry here in Nigeria. These, accompanied by lack of interest and poor maintenance of the existing ones resulted in depreciation and extinction in some areas. The informal existence of some of the centers are partly because of the interventions of some local interest and partly because of special interest groups, who were cut up by cultural implications of losing the centers. The situation is heightened by incessant killings and kidnappings in the country especially, within the past ten years and steady trips of Nigerians abroad for medical services which cumulatively have resulted in greater population having no trust in the Nigerian medical systems.

The inadequacy and poor development of medical centers in Nigeria, coupled with constant killings and kidnappings gave rise to:-

- A. Extensive medical trips abroad. A situation which predominates up till date.
- B. Extensive vacation trips both in the United Kingdom and the United States of America.
- C. Poorly planned and undeveloped museums and tourist centers in the country.

- D. Neglect and lack of respect for the staff of the industry resulted in the attitude of the people, that one cannot find greener pastures in the tourism and museum industry.

## Some tourist site in Nigeria

Tourist sites in Nigeria include festivals and cultural celebrations (such as Durbar festival), the nation's national parks (such as Old Oyo, Yankari, and Cross River National Parks), and other geographical sites (such as Aso Rock, Abuja) By far the most outstanding tourist zone is the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba State (Tourism in Nigeria, 2018).

Tourism exist because advanced economies have innovatively created more avenues to employing their people and earning sustainable income. All, to alleviate poverty and increase their human capital development. In most cases, because of lack of interest and knowledge in tourism in Nigeria, a lot of Nigerians who would have being gainfully employed in tourism industry are unemployed and will remain unemployed. Munzali (2011), in his Tourism Development in Nigeria, made a detailed and extensive documentation on some tourist sites in Nigeria. It is out of his presentation that the present authors extracted some tourist sites presented in this section.

## Yankari Game Reserve

The Yankari National Park is the premier game reserve in Nigeria. Yankari Park and Wikki Warm Springs are located around the Gagi River, approximately 1 1/2 hours by road, southeast of Bauchi Town (plates 11 and 12). The beauty and size of the Yankari Game Reserve make it the most popular reserve in Nigeria. The park was set up in 1956 and opened to the public in 1962, the main game-viewing areas of the reserve are open all year round (Tourism in Nigeria, 2018).



**Plate 11. Elephant at Yankari Game Reserve**  
**Source: Tourism in Nigeria (Retrieved April 14, 2019)**

The reserve covers 2,058 sq. km. of savanna woodland and is well-stocked with elephants, baboons, waterbucks, bushbucks, oribi, crocodile, hippopotamus, roan antelope, buffalo and various types of monkeys. Lions are occasionally spotted as well, despite their natural camouflage. The Wikki Warm Springs is one of the best features of the game reserves. Flood-lit at night, it is wonderful after a hot day's game-viewing to relax in the warm water. The spring gushes out from under a cliff, where the water is at least 6 ft. deep,

with a bathing area that extends for 600 ft. to an open area. The park is inhabited by a variety of birds, including the huge saddlebill stork, goliath heron, bateleur eagle, vultures, kingfishers, bee-eaters and more. It is excellent for serious bird-watchers (plates 11 and 12).



**Plate12. African Bush Elephants in Yankari National Park, Bauchi State**

Source: Tourism in Nigeria (Retrieved April 14, 2019)

### Mambilla Plateau

The Mambilla Plateau, in the southeast corner of Taraba State, shares a border with Cameroon. A high grassland plateau averaging about 1800 meters, it is scenic, cool and a pleasant change from the heat and humidity of Lagos. Mambilla has cattle ranches, tea plantations and rolling, grassy hills. It is different from the rest of Nigeria with regards to flora and fauna and it is home to some rare species of birds and animals, especially at the Gashaka-Gumti National Park (plate 13).



**Plate13. Eagle at Mambilla Plateau**

Source:

### Gashaka-Gumti National Park

This is a vast land of spectacular wilderness (6,000 sq. km) in the southeast corner of Taraba State, adjoining the Mambilla Plateau. Mostly mountainous, from 457 to 2407 meters, it contains Nigeria's highest mountain, Chapal Waddi (2409m). It is the most ecologically diverse conservation area in the country and contains swaths of guinea savanna, gallery forest, moist forest, mountain forest and grassland. Many rivers flow through the park, including the Taraba, a major tributary of the River Benue. A wide variety of animal life can be found, including buffalo, roan antelope, chimpanzee, colobus monkey, hippopotamus, hyena, giant forest hog, lion and leopard. The park is a birdwatcher's paradise with a wide variety of species, and there is excellent fishing in the River Kam (plates 14 and 15).



**Plate14. Hyena at Gashaka-Gumti National Park**  
Source: Tourism in Nigeria (Retrieved April 14, 2019).



**Plate 15. Gashaka-Gumti Park**  
Source: Olusola Fabiyi (Retrieved April 14, 2019).

Gashaka-Gumti National Park is located in the mountainous region of north-eastern Nigeria adjacent to the international border with Cameroon, and immediately to the north of Mambilla Plateau. The largest and most scenic of all the seven National Parks, this conservation area lies between latitude 6° 55' and 8° 05' north, and longitude 11° 11' and 12° 13' (Olusola, 2013).

### Cross River National Park

The Cross River National Park was created from two existing forest reserves of Bashi-Okwango and Oban Forest Reserves. It is famous for its unique rain forest vegetation which, according to conservation experts, is some of the richest in Africa. This park contains the last remaining rain forest in Nigeria, which is being preserved with the help of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation. It has a herd of forest elephants, the white-faced monkey (indigenous to Nigeria only), buffalo, leopards and lowland gorillas, besides over a thousand other animal species. The park has a tropical climate characterized by a rainy season between April and October and a dry season between November and April. The moist green vegetation cover makes the forest an excellent place to see birds and butterflies.

### The Kainji National Park

This Park, is in Kwara State, was established in 1979 and incorporates the Borgu Game Reserve and Zugurma Game Reserve to the southeast in Niger State. The Borgu sector of the park alone covers an area of about of 3,929 sq. km. of savanna woodland, and Zugurma cover an area of about 1,370 sq. km. The Kainji National Park also contains the Kainji Dam, an artificial lake which covers the town of Old Bussa. Here Mungo Park, the explorer, was said to have come to grief in 1805. Now the lake hides the scene of the accident. The lake is 136 km long. The Borgu Sector of Lake Kainji National Park was set up as a Federal Game Reserve and is



one of the largest in West Africa. The area was uninhabited and the idea for the park was conceived in 1960. It is in the Northern Guinea vegetation zone which is characterized by tall grasses and savanna woodland. The park retains a robust animal population including antelope, lion, hippopotamus, buffalo, roan antelope, jackal, baboon, monkey and crocodile.

#### Nekede Zoo



**Plate16. Crocodile at Nekede Zoo, Imo State**  
Source: Olusola Fabiyi (Retrieved April 14, 2019).

Nekede Zoo is located at the old Nekede in Owerri, Imo State and it is a complex, fully-equipped garden (plate 16). The zoo has in abundance and for the admiration of the visitors different types of animals, from Ostrich, Lions and Monkeys to Pythons, Guerrillas and Crocodiles (Olusola, 2013).

#### Some Popular Beaches in Nigeria

##### Coconut Beach

Coconut Beach is a beautiful beach in the coastal town of Badagry, west of Lagos. The beach is attractively set in an area surrounded by coconut trees. About 20 miles towards the border of Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, Coconut Beach is accessible through the Lagos-Badagry expressway (Tourism in Nigeria, 2018).

##### Bar Beach

Bar Beach, also known as Victoria Beach, is the most popular beach among Nigerians. The main beach on Victoria Island is located along Ahmadu Bello Way opposite the Federal Guest House. (Tourism in Nigeria, 2018). Before the Eko Atlantic City development in the mid-2000, Bar Beach was the place almost every Nigerian and non-Nigerians visited over the weekends and most evenings. The activities there included among other things, horse-back riding, picture taking, birthday parties, picnics, musical and cultural entertainments, comedy shows, etc.

##### Calabar Beach

This superb beach, at the mouth of the new Calabar River, is about 2 miles long and 500 feet wide, uninhabited save for a solitary fisherman's hut. The beach is virtually isolated and lends visitors the luxury of privacy in a beautiful setting off the beaten path. Since the beach is flanked by a swamp and can only be reached by boat or canoe, getting there is half the fun and enhances one's fascination with this enchanted locale (Tourism in Nigeria (2018).

##### Lekki Beach

There are several beaches along the Lekki Peninsula, the foremost being Lekki Beach (plate 17), located a few miles from the city center. Lekki Beach is another of Lagos' attractive beaches and remains popular with foreign tourists. Beach shelters made of palm fronds and umbrellas, available for rent, keep the sun at bay, as well as provide a place to enjoy snacks or refreshments sold by local traders (Tourism in Nigeria (2018).



**Plate17. Lekki Beach in Lagos**  
Source: Tourism in Nigeria (Retrieved April 14, 2019)

##### Eleko Beach

Opened in 1989, Eleko is the newest of Lagos' Beaches, down the Lekki Peninsula about 30 miles from Lagos. There are no traders and no distractions on Eleko Beach, just peace and tranquility, ideal for those seeking privacy (Tourism in Nigeria (2018).

##### The Obudu Ranch

The Obudu Ranch is a popular holiday destination for adventurous tourists wishing to explore the remote corners of Nigeria. Situated in the northeast corner of Cross River State, only 45 miles from the Cameroon border, a tourist can enjoy the countryside of both Nigeria and Cameroon at the same time (plate 18). The Obudu Plateau spreads over an area of 40 sq. miles. It is 5,200 feet above sea level. The climate is cool and pleasant with no mosquitoes. The landscape is spectacular, with rolling grasslands, deep-wooded valleys and waterfalls (plate 17). It is best to visit Obudu in the dry season since during the rainy season much of the ranch may be covered in mist and low clouds and there are thunderstorms (Tourism in Nigeria (2018).



**Plate18. The Obudu Ranch**  
Source: Tourism in Nigeria (Retrieved April 14, 2019).

##### Obudu Mountain Resort



**Plate19. Obudu Mountain Resort**  
Source: Olusola (Retrieved April 14, 2019)

The resort has a helipad for access by air. At the base of the hills on which the ranch is located lies a newly built world-class water park (plate 19) with state-of-art swimming facilities and water slides for children, teens and adults (Olusola, 2013).

### Obudu Mountain Resort

It is a ranch and resort on the Obudu Plateau in Cross River State (plate 20). It was developed in 1951 by M. McCaughley, a Scot who first explored the Mountain ranges in 1949. He camped on the mountaintop of the Oshie Ridge on the Sankwala Mountains for a month before returning with Mr. Hugh Jones a fellow rancher in 1951. Together with Dr. Crawfield, they developed the Obudu Cattle Ranch. Although the ranch has been through troubles since, it has been rehabilitated to its former glory (plate 20) (Tourism in Nigeria, 2018).



**Plate 20. Mini waterfall at the grotto in Becheve Nature Reserve, a major attraction on Obudu Plateau**  
**Source: Tourism in Nigeria (Retrieved April 14, 2019).**

Since 2005, a cable car climbing 870 metres (2,850 ft) from the base to the top of the plateau gives visitors a scenic view while bypassing the extremely winding road to the top. The resort is found on the Obudu Plateau close to the Cameroon border in the northeastern part of Cross River State, approximately 110 kilometers (68 mi) east of the town of Ogoja and 65 kilometers (40 mi) from the town of Obudu in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State. It is about 30 minutes' drive from Obudu town and is about a 332 kilometers (206 mi) drive from Calabar, the Cross River State capital (Tourism in Nigeria, 2018).

### Recommendations

Tourism in Nigeria has the potentials to flourish, but hindered by mostly underfunding, ignorance and security concerns. To solve the problem of underfunding tourism in Nigeria, the private sector and philanthropists should help in funding of museums and the research centers as well as in the establishment of museums, monuments, and historical sites. Government should allocate more funds to the tourism sector so as to give the sector a competitive advantage. To address corruption cases and financial indiscipline, funds allocated for any specific project should be used judiciously. Funds should not be diverted. The law should be allowed to run its course on people suspected with corruption cases (Ukpere and Wabah, 2018).

Cultural festivals in Nigeria should be well packaged and properly coordinated in order to yield expected result. Access roads and basic amenities should be provided to host communities. More personnel's should be recruited to man the various museums and heritage sites and they should be adequately motivated with good remunerations (Ijokpolo, Emeka & Dimlayi, 2008). Local artists and museologists should be exposed to new techniques and information about their trade and professions publicized (Ukpere and Wabah, 2018).

Packaging, organizing and coordination of the cultural festivals across the nation should be encouraged to turn

them into big eco-cultural tourism business that will help to foster peace, unity and development of the country (Olaniyani, 2009; Yomi, 2009; Samuel, 2005; Okey, 2005). According to Ukpere and Wabah (2018), we need to immediately realize that there are lots to gain from an environmentally friendly eco-cultural tourism business than the current over dependency on mineral exploitation and exploration for export earnings. The various challenges and constraints facing tourism sector must need to be eradicated or ameliorated with sincerity and urgently too. It is imperative to reiterate here that, a nation without the knowledge of its history is a lifeless nation. The present is a product of the past, and the past is the foundation of today, while today is the foundation of tomorrow. A society that is not historically conscious is bound to make the same mistakes of the past (Abdullahi, 2008). The government should show more commitment with effective synergy in promoting historic tourism. There should be joined-collaboration efforts by all the three tiers of government, including community and private -sector participation on the establishment of museums at least, one in each local government area.

Ukpere and Wabah (2018), further indicated that, there should be a sub-regional and regional collaboration to establish economically viable monuments and heritage sites. In order to checkmate the security concerns of tourist and the tourist centers, a formidable and well-coordinated tourism security committee comprising of all security agencies and host communities should be set up (Adora, 2010). Again, tourism in Nigeria needs to be fully integrated into the mainstream of the national economy. To this end, a robust national policy on tourism development should be put in place. The policy should clearly define what should be done from time to time. In addition, government should help to establish a national as well as regional tourism research centres. And this, like the national policy on tourism development, should involve the services of historians, archaeologists, planners, cultural and tourism geographers, and other related professionals (Adewale, 2012).

### Conclusion

As noted by Ukpere and Wabah (2018), a variable and sustainable eco-cultural tourism business through the use of museums, historical sites and cultural festivals, is a veritable tool for the logical prosecution of the war against unemployment, youth restiveness and security challenges; poverty; high income disparity; unfavorable balance of trade and payments; rural inaccessibility and underdevelopment (Adewale, 2012; Adebayo, 2009; Mowfort & Munt, 1998; Britton, 1982).

However, for that to happen in Nigeria, the poor impression and attitude to tourism, by Nigerians has to change and the people should be educated on the significance of tourism in the human capital development. The government needs to establish and develop good management and maintenance culture of the tourist centers so that interest of the people will be rejuvenated. Most importantly, the infrastructure supporting tourism in Nigeria, roads, poor electricity supply, water supply and quality must be give utmost attention. Offices for marketing and promotion of the industry strategically located to take advantage of the urban population. Primarily, the security of both the centers and the visitors must be given serious attention and incessant kidnappings and killings put to a stop.



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