CONSERVING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH HERITAGE TOURISM IN NSUKKA URBAN AREA.

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.33281/JTHS20129.2023.1.1

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Abstract
Cultural heritage is one of the ways through which people can be appreciated and seen as having a sense of belonging and identity in the territory they occupy. Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical materials and the intangible attributes of a given group of society inherited from forefathers, preserved, and appreciated by the present generation to be passed on to future generations. In this study, we reflect on the benefits of heritage tourism and its roles in conserving intangible cultural heritage among communities. We highlight how tourism interfaces with cultural heritage to benefit local communities while preserving it. The study relied on the intangible cultural heritage of the people of Nsukka urban in Enugu state, which includes, but is not limited to, festivals to interrogate this phenomenon. It employed ethnographic observation and interview methods to collect data and used descriptive and interpretive approaches to analyse the evidence. It concludes that although tourism benefits cultural heritage, the adverse effect of tourism could have an adverse impact on heritage and the community that owns it.
Keywords: Intangible heritage, conservation, culture, heritage tourism, Nsukka urban

Introduction
Culture is the way of life people acquire in a given society. This can be the way we talk and dress, the things we produce, what we eat, what we do, how we think, and relate to one another and to our environment at large, which are unique to us. The totality of who we are, what we do, and what we are known for distinguishes us as individuals or a group from the rest of the world.

When we talk about cultural heritage or resources, we refer to the products of our culture. They are the rich material and non-material, tangible and intangible attributes acquired within the society and transmitted from generation to generation. Culture is dynamic and not static; it changes as members develop new ideas through diffusion, acculturation, and innovation. That is to say that products of culture change along with it. In most cases, these changes lead to the emergence of a new

culture (i.e. the traditional way of life going extinct) or the modification of the traditional culture to reflect newly acquired ideas.

Africa is rich in tangible and intangible culture as a continent and a people. But it has suffered significant changes in its cultural values and properties since its contact with the Western world (Europe). This contact has led to the disappearance of most of its cultural heritage, which is a cultural process (cf. Smith 2006). Nigeria, as a pluralistic state, is one of the African nations on the verge of losing their traditional ways of life since this contact, especially in intangible heritage. With the introduction of English as her official language, for instance, this aspect of her culture is suffering. This informs why studies like this are very important in our time, at least to take inventory and document disappearing practices, stories or narratives for future reference.

Nigeria is rich in cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible), which can be harnessed for tourism development and promotion. The product of its heritage resources can be sold to the global market as heritage tourism, but this can only be realised with proper conservation of these heritages. By conservation, we mean how we preserve the material and non-material evidence of human and natural history. Conservation is a synthesis of knowledge from the arts and sciences which involves a combination of skills used to protect objects from the past from the destructive tendencies of man and the environment. It has been defined as an operation aimed at prolonging an object's life while preventing its natural or accidental decay for shorter or longer periods (Coremans, 1988).

This study emphasises the various ways through which the intangible heritages in the study area can be conserved through heritage tourism. Conservation has two main aspects, namely preservation and restoration. While preservation is a preventive "exercise which has as its objective to keep the objects in good condition even after several years of its existence; to prevent any form of decay or deterioration..., restoration is a "curative" exercise and its objective is to bring already damaged objects back into good condition; to revive the original concepts or legibility of the damaged objects"(Dawodu, 1981).

As already noted, Nigeria is rich in natural/cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible). Still, most of these heritages, notwithstanding, are on the verge of extinction. At the same time, some are neglected due to several problems: colonisation or westernisation, western education, foreign religion/beliefs or mode of worship, globalisation as well as acculturation. In light of the above situation, this study aims to explore the intangible cultural heritage in Nsukka Urban Area. Particularly, it seeks to identify, document, and examine some of the conservative methods that can be employed towards preserving heritages for posterity. In carrying out this study, questions were asked to direct the course of the research. These questions include:

1. What are the non-tangible/intangible cultural heritages in the study area?
2. How has tourism helped to conserve them for posterity?

Data were collected to achieve the objectives of this research, which are to identify intangible heritage in the study area and propose ways to preserve it for future generations. For this reason, an ethnographic method of data collection was adopted. Interviews were conducted to gather oral information from knowledgeable people in the area of the research interest. Field observation was used to cross-check and reconcile what was told during the interviews. These were complemented with secondary information sources, including a review of written literature on the subject of study and internet materials.

Study Area

The name Nsukka identifies the descendants of *Nsuka Asadu Ideke Alumona*, which comprises three quarters, namely *Nkpunano*, *Nru,* and *Ihe/Owerre* communities, in the order of seniority. These three communities are sub-divided into nine principal communities, namely Nguru, Isiakpu, Echara, Umakashi, IheAgu, Ezema/Edem, Umuoyo, Ihe, and Owerre which represent the nine warheads of the town (*Ishi Aya Nateg'na*), (see fig. 1 below). They have festivals and traditional dances through which they interact with one another. These include the "*Ikorodo* dance" used for entertainment during marriage and funeral ceremonies, traditional wrestling matches known as "*Ote-Nkwo,*" and the *Omabe* masquerade festivals and new yam festival (*Ifejioko* or *Fijioku*), among others. Their cultural activities also reflect the areas of arts and crafts. They are noted for their ingenuity in various arts and crafts, from pottery manufacture to basket making, cloth weaving, blacksmithing, woodwork (carving of various types), etc.

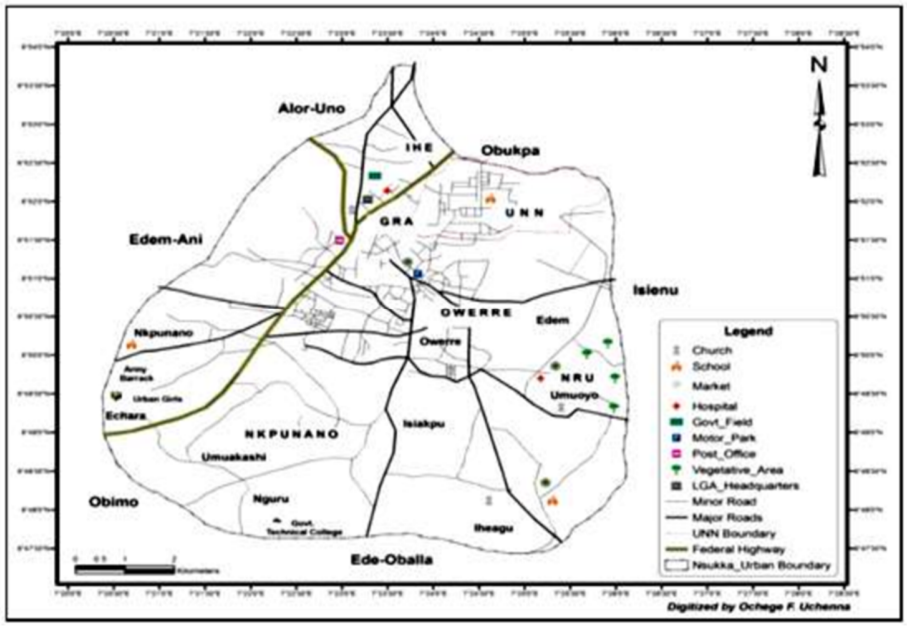


Figure 1: Map of Nsukka Urban
Source: Adapted from Ugwuishiwu *et. al.* (2016)

Literature Review

This section pays attention to the works of scholars on the research topic. According to UNESCO Meeting (2003), heritage was defined as "the legacy of physical artificial (cultural property) and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed to the benefit of future generations". Heritage is unique and irreplaceable and places the responsibility of preservation and management on the current generation. Heritages are studied so that meaning can be extracted from them. This is because they are seen as containing reflections or saying something about the people who produced or used them. Cultural heritage generally consists of the products and processes of a culture that are preserved and passed on through the generations. Some of these heritages take the form of cultural property, formed by tangible artefacts such as buildings or works of art.

Many aspects of culture, however intangible, include festivals and traditional celebrations, songs, music, laws, dance, drama, skill, folklore, rainmaking, divinations, religion, oral traditions, languages, myths, legends, knowledge, belief systems, practical values, norms, and proverbs. They are forms of culture that cannot be felt or stored in a physical form, like the things in a museum but can only be experienced through a medium. Indeed, cultural heritage represents a significant part of a people's material and spiritual wealth. Movable and immovable, tangible and intangible cultural objects and natural and cultural environments constitute society's

primary education and social conditioning ingredients. Cultural heritage also has a significant economic impact. According to Usman (2006), it is a basic prerequisite for a prosperous tourist resource and the natural environment. Cultural heritage consists of both the material and non-material art forms, which are testimonies from the past, including cultural landscapes and historical objects since the social, economic, and geographical environment in which the cultural material survived forms an integral part of the heritage.

According to UNESCO Meeting (2003), cultural heritage resources include tangible culture (such as buildings, monuments, landscapes, books, works of art, and artefacts), intangible cultures such as folklore, traditions, languages, and knowledge, and natural heritage - culturally significant landscapes and biodiversity. Hester (1976, as cited in Ugwuja, 2013) also notes that heritage resources comprise items manufactured by the members of the past human society, those items they collected and used. They are those rich non-materials and material attributes of man acquired within societies and transmitted through generations.

To Oji (2004) and Lipe (1984), cultural heritage is the product of collective memories, values, practices, material, and spiritual expressions that regulate lives and guide the actions of past societies. Subsequently, heritage resources can be grouped into two main broad categories, namely cultural heritage resources and natural heritage resources. Cultural heritage resources can be further divided into tangible and non-tangible cultural heritage resources. As mentioned earlier, tangible cultural heritage resources include all assets that physically embody cultural values, such as historic towns, buildings, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes and objects, or items of movable cultural property (UNESCO, 2000a).

The tangible resource, which includes the physical or tangible cultural heritage, can also be subdivided into "movable and immovable cultural heritage". Movable cultural heritage consists of those heritage resources that are portable and can be moved easily from one place to another. They must not be studied *in situ*. Examples of heritage under this category are books, documents, works of art, machines, clothing, artefacts, and antiquities, which are considered worthy of preservation for the future. Some are objects significant to a specific culture's archaeology, architecture, science, and technology.

Immovable heritage is a tangible heritage that cannot be easily transported or moved from one location to another but must be studied *in situ* instead. Examples of immovable heritage are:

i. Abandoned settlement site – a place that a given people once inhabited before migration.
ii. Shrines – a sacred place that harbours a deity
iii. Monuments – any object, natural or artificial, fixed permanently on the soil as an indication, evidence or token of some fact or intended to

commemorate a person, a nation, event or idea (UNESCO declaration).

iv. Sites – a spatial clustering of artefacts, features and ecofacts (Andah and Okpoko, 1994 in Ugwuja 2013), and

v. Architectural or historic buildings.

As previously stated, the intangible cultural heritage that forms the main focus of discussion in this work consists of the immaterial cultural attributes of a given people/society that can be preserved by the present and transmitted to future generations. Unlike the movable tangible heritage, such as artworks and other cultural masterpieces which can be collected and preserved in museums and art galleries, non-tangible cultural heritage consists of traditional skills, beliefs, traditions, oral traditions, music, songs, dances, drama, divinations, and religion which cannot be stored in a museum (except in a recorded form) but are constantly re-interpreted by the people in a particular cultural region. The intangible heritage is something that cannot be accessed, felt, measured or moved because it has no physical substance and cannot be touched (Nwankwo, Nyey, Ejikeme, Ugwuanyi, Obieluem, Omali, Anyanwu, Onyemechalu, Anunobi, Tella, Anozie, Aishat, Oji, Orji, Oloidi & Obochi, 2021).

Some cultural expressions, representations, skills, and practices that individuals, groups and communities recognise as their cultural heritage include festivals, crafts, cuisine, handicraft skills, music, and even songs. Others are dance, beliefs, folklore, language, foodways, oral histories and traditions, familial relations and social mores, and identity (Nwankwo et al., 2021). Oral traditions, a form of verbally transmitted information from one generation to another (Ogundele, 2012, as cited in Nwankwo *et al.*, 2021), are also part of a people's heritage. They contain the society's wisdom and achievements in arts, science, technology, health, law, politics, origin, beauty, and history. This aspect of culture can be recorded but cannot be touched and interacted with. The non-tangible cultural heritage consists of non-physical aspects of a particular culture, often maintained by social customs during a specific period in history; it includes the ways and means of behaviour of a society, and often the normal rules of conduct in a known cultural area. These include social values and traditions, customs and practices, aesthetic and spiritual beliefs, artistic expression, language, and other aspects of human activity (UNESCO, 2003).

Non-tangible cultural heritage also means the practices, presentations, expression, knowledge, skills, and cultural spaces associated with communities, groups, and in some cases, individuals. It has to be recognised as part of their cultural heritage or popular culture that is performed or practised with close ties to "place" and with little complex technological accompaniment (UNESCO, 1998, in Ugwuja, 2013). Non-tangible or intangible cultural heritage, also known as "living heritage", is according to UNESCO (2003)the practices, representations, expressions,

knowledge, and skills transmitted by communities from generation to generation. It provides these communities with a sense of identity and continuity while promoting creativity and social well-being, contributing to managing the natural and social environment, and generating income (UNESCO, 2003 Convention).

The preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, according to Boccardi and Duvelle (2013, as cited in Olalere, 2019), have become a central topic in international cultural policy, and one such example is the inclusion of cultural heritage in the sustainable development agenda by UNESCO. Generally, the intangible cultural heritage, also known as the living heritage, has received less attention for decades. This is due to some reasons, including globalisation and the changing and dynamic culture; these have made interest in sustaining and practising preservation begin to wane. Also, many believe that intangible cultural heritage is primitive and has no economic benefit, showing little or no concern towards the extinction of these valuable assets (Olalere, 2019).

According to Ugwuanyi, Itanyi, and Obieluem (2021), in pre-colonial Igbo land, the responsibilities of conserving or caring for these heritages rested on the shoulders of such leaders as the priests of palace, clan, or village shrines, kings or heads of families, villages, or kingdoms who cared for materials in their palaces, public arenas, and shrines. Their views are in line with that of Ugwuanyi, Agu and Ugwu (2014), who posit that before contact with alien religion and rule, the inheritance of the people was preserved in palaces and shrines, while monuments were protected with taboos, sanctions as well as other means. But heritage preservation in present-day Nigeria is a colonial invention (Ugwuanyi, 2018).

During colonial rule/time, with the use of legislation, cultural heritage materials collected by early Anthropologists like K.C. Murray and Bernard Fagg were used to create a national heritage narrative to serve the interest of the new state. These, with associated legislation, were used to create museums to house the people's national heritage. Using legal backing, heritage was removed from the community level to where it lives to be secluded or enclosed in museums or secluded from its utilitarianism. But as Ugwuanyi *et al*. (2021) pointed out, one of the major reasons for abandoning or appreciating any heritage is its utilitarian value, that is, what the heritage is used for, the purpose it served/serves in society, and this determines its conservation, that is, whether it has to be conserved or abandoned. Indigenous conservation approaches conservation from a utilitarian value position, while national heritage conservation (in the museum introduced by colonialism) approaches it from a static perfection which national heritage policy encouraged. Intangible heritage can be best conserved through the "use" or employment of the "utilitarian value" approach, i.e. by continual use through living practices.

There are many reasons for the disappearance of heritage in Nigeria. Murray (1942), in his paper, *Art in Nigeria: the need for a museum*, as cited by

Ugwuanyi *et al*. (2021), referred to migration to urban cities/centres, the decline of indigenous religions that utilise artworks, a reduced number of dances and performances that use artworks, and older adults dominating young carvers, showing no sign of continuity, etc. as the major challenges bedevilling heritage and its conservation in Nigeria. Others include theft and smuggling and ignorance on the part of the owners. Notable among these issues or challenges of heritage conservation in Nigeria is the colonial/British punitive expeditions in the early twentieth century which truncated the indigenous cultural heritage knowledge systems and in which most of the cultural heritages were destroyed. For instance, during the expeditions, villages were razed down, human lives were lost, monuments and cultural materials were burnt, and many of the objects were looted (e.g. Benin Expedition, 1897), with the destruction of local heritage practices and management structures and foreign/new values introduced.

Also, during this period, especially in the Nsukka Igbo, as Ugwuanyi *et. al.* (2021) further pointed out, the expedition (1908) dethroned leaders that were knowledgeable in the indigenous cultures and enthroned rascals as chiefs (i.e. the warrant chiefs). Moreover, colonialism brought about the migration from local values to a mixture of values that negate or conflict with indigenous knowledge systems. As a result of these expeditions, with the resultant fears created in the lives of the indigenous people, they loosen up to adopt new values or mixed cultures (i.e. indigenous and western cultures).

Apart from the punitive expeditions, another factor that led or contributed to the acculturation process was the introduction of two other religions into the country: Islam (which arrived in the north in the 11th century through Usman Dan Fodio) and Christianity (which arrived much later). These religions destroyed and continue to destroy indigenous cultural heritage physically and spiritually. The difference between the punitive expedition and the religions is that. In contrast, the punitive expedition was forceful and catastrophic and its destructive effects were immediate. The effects of Islam (though forceful) and Christianity were slow, gradual, but enduring, as they used non-radical evangelism. These two religions dislike figural or sculptural representations that appear in masks and figurines as obtainable in local cultures/beliefs in Nigeria and preach that their use is evil. Still, such representations are essential in African culture and religion. Christianity has continued to teach its adherents not to involve or engage in cultural dances and performances that employ artworks.

Heritage conservation is rooted in the popular notion of anticipated loss or endangerment of natural or cultural heritage (DeSilvey & Harrison, 2019). The idea of "loss aversion", according to Holtorf (2015, as cited in DeSilvey & Harrison, 2019), is a major motivating factor in heritage practice. Heritage management or conservation proceeds from the notion that people's heritage is endangered, so there is a need or attempt to arrest or

reverse the processes of loss and change by activating a counter process that encourages heritage permanence. But it is important to understand that nothing in life is permanent; change/transition from one form/state to another is inevitable.

This work aligns with the views of Ugwuanyi *et. al.* (2021) on the need to recognise knowledge differences about heritage and the importance of representing it in heritage management and discourses. Also, Ugwuanyi (2018) argues for integrating indigenous heritage conservation models into the national heritage approaches to help boost local public interest so that they can connect to national narratives. In addition, he suggested the "in-use" model in which he argues that caring for heritage in its "living community" would elongate its utility rather than waiting until it is about to die or already dead or become out of use(die) before applying conservation.

Very importantly, most literature on cultural heritage management centres more on the tangible aspect of heritage, with little or limited regard for the conservation of intangible heritage. The above situation necessitated this study aimed at investigating the role or place of heritage tourism in conserving the intangible cultural heritage of people in the study area.

Management and Conservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Before the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, several states had already tried to safeguard their intangible heritage. Going by history, Japan is regarded as the first country to legislate on protecting and promoting its intangible heritage (Japan's law for protecting cultural properties in 1950). This law designated and recognised important intangible cultural properties as crafts and performance traditions, known informally as "Living National Treasures" (Kurin, 2004). Other countries, including South Korea, the Philippines, the United States, Thailand, France, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Poland, have since created similar programmes.

Then in 2003, UNESCO adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, effective on 20 April 2006. The Convention recommends that countries and scholars develop inventories of Intangible Cultural Heritage in member states while working with the people to maintain and ensure the continued existence of the ICH. It created avenues for funds to be voluntarily collected among UNESCO members and disbursed to support the maintenance of recognised ICH. In the past, UNESCO created other intangible cultural programmes called "Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity". Starting in 2001 with 19 items, the list grew to 28 in 2003 and 43 in 2005. The original objective of the list was to correct the imbalance in the world heritage system. It excluded many cultures in the global south, which did not produce monumental or other physical, cultural edifices like in the

global north. It was based on this same reason that the 2008 "UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List" was created (Kumin, 2004).

There are things that we regard as important to preserve for future generations. They may be significant not only because they have contemporary economic values, but because they have created certain emotions among us, or because they make us feel as though we belong to something, to a country, a tradition, or a way of life. They might be songs that can be sung, stories told in the form of myths and legends, folklore and divinations. Whatever shape they might take, they form part of a cultural heritage, and this heritage requires an active effort on our part to safeguard it using any form or means possible.

UNESCO, the only specialised agency within the United Nations System with a specific cultural mandate, assists its member states in effectively elaborating and implementing measures to safeguard their cultural heritage. Among those measures, adopting the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage was a major step in developing new policies in the cultural heritage field.

Before addressing the issue of "how" to conserve and manage these intangible cultural heritages in our study area, it is important to understand "why" we need to conserve them. Culture is dynamic; it is always changing, acquiring new ideas, and modifying existing ones. Cultural heritage is a product of the cultural changes alongside culture itself. Because of this change over time, which affects the intangible cultural heritage, there is a need to safeguard or preserve them for posterity so that future generations can understand what their past was like, as the past is the key to the present and future. According to Wole Soyinka (2006), ''forget the past, and forfeit the future''.

In addition, with the growing globalisation, urbanisation, and cultural homogenisation, there is an increasing lack of appreciation of cultural heritage for the present generation. This is demonstrated by the lack of financial and other support for cultural heritage issues in most developing countries (specifically Nigeria). If intangible heritage is not nurtured and preserved, it may become lost forever, or frozen as a practice belonging to the past. Conserving intangible cultural heritage has challenges because it is not concrete like material/tangible cultural heritage such as monuments, sites, historical properties etc. It will require some measures quite different from those employed in safeguarding the tangible aspects of cultural heritage. So for intangible heritage to be kept alive, it has to remain relevant to culture and be regularly practised and learned within communities and between generations.

Findings and Discussions

Following the definition of intangible cultural heritage, below is the list of intangible cultural heritage in the study area:

i. Oral traditions – Folklores, myths, songs, and legends.

ii. Dances – *Ikorodo, Adabara, Atilogwu*.
iii. Indigenous knowledge and skills towards the production of tangible cultural heritages such as iron smelting/blacksmithing, pottery making, traditional farming, wood carving, basketry, textile weaving, traditional methods of palm oil processing, the traditional method of palm wine tapping, traditional medicine, divination (*Igbaeha* or *Afa*), and traditional methods of child/birth delivery.
iv. Traditional festivals – *Onunu Nsukka*, *Egba Omabe*,
v. Traditional ceremonies – Birth, marriage, death, title taking etc.
vi. Language – Nsukka dialect
vii. Performing arts –Drama and wrestling "*Mgba*"
viii. Rituals – This often has religious connotations and connotes people's belief systems.
ix. Rainmaking and the skills involved.
x. Norms, values, and proverbs.

From the above list, it is clear that Nsukka Urban is endowed with numerous intangible heritage resources, especially festivals such as *Nkwo Onunu* and *Egba Omabe*, that can be properly harnessed for heritage tourism purposes in the area. *It is important to note that, despite this list of intangible heritages, this study focuses on festivals, particularly the Onunu festival. Onunu/NkwoOnunu* is an annual ceremony in Nsukka town that enjoys great popularity and attention from the public. The festival is a period used to pay homage to *NKWO,* believed to be the ancestral mother of the town. The event occurs at *otobo Nkwo/Ugwu-nkwo* (i.e.Nkwo square) along Enugu Road, Nsukka, about three kilometres from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Oji, 2021).

At this point, one might wonder what value these intangible cultural heritages have for the people. First and foremost, we must recognise that culture, in and of itself, is not for sale. Its primary goal is to restore a society's way of life. Culture in itself is identity and identity has to go with history. It has been generally accepted by scholars in history and other related disciplines, such as Archaeology and Anthropology, that a man without history is like a man who has lost his senses and hence has no culture.

Intangible cultural heritages are not for sale but serve as the primary means of socio-cultural, economic, and political development of the Nsukka and Igboland. Intangible cultural heritage can also be preserved by capitalising on its potential and marketing it as heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is the "use" of cultural heritage resources (tangible and intangible), visiting heritage places or viewing historical resources (Dallen, 2011). As earlier pointed out, there are diverse definitions of heritage, but one common thing is that we inherited from the past and use it in the present day. It is the modern-day use of the past for tourism and other purposes such as education and community development. Tourism is believed to be

one way the past (heritage) can be used and re-used in the present. This is because it can revive the lost or declining elements of culture, such as dances, certain musical traditions, and architectural styles. Moreover, it helps to boost societal esteem and a sense of cultural pride, especially in the less developed world.

Heritage tourism encompasses all elements of the human past and the visitor experiences and desires associated with them. Scholars maintain that tourism is an economic justification for heritage preservation while heritage is tourism's main attraction. Heritage tourism encourages an exchange of knowledge and ideas. It increases awareness of the importance of preservation and management of cultural heritage as many tourists visit cultural attractions. Heritage can bring increased tourism to an area with positive and negative impacts. Tourism benefits the local economy but can also disturb the residents' quality of life. Also, if during the development process, the heritage attraction is not properly managed, this may lead to a loss of authenticity of that attraction and thus its attractiveness to visitors in the long run, which is the major driving force pulling tourists to the destination (Doganer & Dupont, 2013).

It is estimated that cultural or heritage tourism represents 35-40 percent of tourism today (UNWTO, 2006, as cited in Doganer & Dupont, 2013). Cultural heritage tourism's economic and social benefits are workforce, income, and infrastructure development. It boosts regional and local pride, constitutes a good source of revenue for the community, and creates jobs. It also has sociopolitical and economic values (Doganer & Dupont, 2013). It leads to the preservation of living cultures, while cultural heritage tourism helps promote cultural tourism in the given area and preserve the heritage resources for posterity (Gbadege & Osaghale, 2014).

Conclusion

This paper has tried to identify and document the intangible cultural heritage in the study area. It further established that one of the ways to conserve the intangible heritage resources of the people, especially their festivals, is by harnessing them for heritage tourism. Intangible cultural heritage, as noted, is an aspect of cultural heritage that cannot be touched, handled, or moved from one place to the other but can be expressed. They include oral tradition, which encompasses language, myths, legend, customs, tradition, laws, language, proverb, idioms, riddles, folklores/folktales, as well as traditional knowledge and skills (e.g. traditional farming systems, traditional crafts, carving, smelting/ blacksmithing, pottery production, palm oil and wine production/tapping among others). It also includes but is not limited to traditional events/ceremonies such as birth, marriage, and death ceremonies, title taking, festivals, divination, and rainmaking. Intangible cultural heritage is traditional, contemporary, and living simultaneously. It represents

inherited traditions from the past and contemporary rural and urban practices in which diverse cultural groups participate.

The benefit of developing a relationship between tourism and culture includes the enhanced image of the local community, social cohesion, support for the cultural sector, increased innovation and creativity, opening up opportunities for partnerships and collaborations, preservation of the local traditions and culture, building the community's pride in their cultural heritage, and increased awareness of the site or area's significance beyond the region (OECD, 2009). In other words, heritage tourism brings about a resurgence of cultures, stands as a unique vehicle for cultural propagation, and serves as an excellent source for broadening the limits of human knowledge (Heritage Tourism Notes, n.d.).

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