

The Application of Management Principles and Theories to Cultural Resources Management in Nigeria

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Abstract

Culture, is said to be a state of high development in art and thought existing in a society and represented at various levels in its members. It is also said to be the arts, customs, beliefs, and all the other products of human thought made by a people at a particular time.

1.0 Introduction

Nature of management principles

The aim of this paper is to discuss Management Principles and theories in relation to cultural resource management in Nigeria. Principles of management are guides for managerial action. A management principle is a statement of a general truth about organizations or management. Principles of management may be thought of as the laws of fundamental truths of organizations and management. Principles usually prescribe a particular course of managerial action. Inherent in a principle of management is the implication that if the principle is followed, improved organizational performance likely will result. Similarly a management principle implies that if the principle is not followed, organizational performances probably will suffer. Although management principles are generally valid, they sometimes fail to indicate the best course of managerial action. Principles of management, because they have to do with human behaviour, are not so exact or infallible as principles of the physical sciences. Principles of management are important features of management thought. The most effective organizational performance is attained when all persons or units of organization work towards an objective that is harmonious.

Management in itself is a more subtle word and has as many definitions as there are books on the management share a common idea, that management is concerned with the accomplishment of objectives. There are four processes of management namely: planning – to determine what is to be achieved; organizing – to

allocate resources and establish the means of accomplishing the plans; directing – to motivate and lead personnel and controlling – compare result achieved to the planned objectives. From the above explanation, management will be defined as the process of planning organizing, directing and controlling to accomplish stated goals through the coordinated use of human and material resources. Culture, is said to be a state of high development in art and thought existing in a society and represented at various levels in its members. It is also said to be the arts, customs, beliefs, and all the other products of human thought made by a people at a particular time, therefore culture connotes tradition, while cultural resources is defined as tangible expression of culture, The tangible (materials) aspect has to do with artifacts in the broadest sense (namely tools, clothing, food, utensils, housing, etc.).

From these definitions, the expectations of this essay would be to develop cultural heritage as one of the means of addressing effective developmental options that will keep her country and regions abreast of the trends in the modern age. The need for cultural development of every nation has become one of the most acknowledged issues in recent times. Looking closely at the development of the concept of Cultural Resource Management in Nigeria, this will enable us recall and appreciate certain important functionalities in the history of Nigeria cultural heritage engineering and management. This will then be followed by examining the effect of our country's period of transformation on cultural resources and their conservation and development. It is hoped that with deeper understanding and appreciation of what has been done so far, and the enormous problems ahead, a more sympathetic, meaningful and acceptable attitude will be developed by the citizens of this country and the organs responsible for funding the cultural institutions responsible for the

protection and preservation of Nigerian cultural property.

The scientific concept of archaeology and cultural resource management in Nigeria came into being in 1943 with the establishment of the Antiquities service through the effort of E. H. Duckworth and K. C. Murray who were then officers of Education Department. Their request to the colonial government to set up a museum to preserve indigenous works of art that were in danger of being stolen out of Nigeria and those that were fast deteriorating in poor environment was a stitch in time.

The then Federal Department of Antiquities was established with museum being established with museum being established in different localities such as Esie, Jos, Lagos, Oron and Ife. This was followed in 1965 by the establishment of archaeology as a discipline at the University of Ibadan, Nsukka and Ife. The range of cultural resource in Nigeria covers the entire heritage of humanity including work of art, library and archival materials, pre-historic and historic sites and monuments, and natural landscape. In other words it could be said that our records of holdings include cultural, colonial and natural heritage. Many years of archaeology in Nigeria has given us the opportunity to reflect back on the past years of hard work on ethnography and archaeological discoveries and now usher in a more meaningful sense of direction in conservation and development of the resources at our disposal.

1.1. The Establishment of Federal Department of Antiquities; Museums (Colonial).

The concept of museum as seen in Nigeria and in Africa as a whole is closely linked so far as the aim of that phenomenon for a very long time was to assimilate to Western models the indigenous peoples of the countries in which it appeared. The first museums of the European type were set up in centers of colonial influence such as schools, churches, and colonial administrative towns. In these centers museum were created for the purposes of conservation and ethnological study and research from purely European view point and were put at the disposal of the administrative and mercantile, colonial aristocracy which they served, as instruments of pleasure and recreation. For people other research workers, the collections held in the museums were of value and interest only because they enabled the

colonialist, not Africans, to discover the “exotic” and “fantastic” aspects of what were referred to as the ways and customs of the natives. The colonial museum-like most European museums of that time-because of the artificial role that devolved upon it, was rather a sort of warehouse in which exhibits were deprived of their true essence in a totally inanimate setting. As it were, the colonial museum was completely out of touch with the native environment which was not even aware of its existence and on which the museum had absolutely no positive impact.

1.2. True African Museums

One of the aspirations engendered by independence was that the museum became a privileged place where the treasures of African culture would find the ideal setting in which to express what they have symbolized throughout past millennia and centuries from the point of view of history, art, science, technology and ethnography.

As an institution in Africa, the museum is still holding on too strongly to its colonial heritage. It continues to function, and to be seen in many African countries as an instrument for a social elite, a place where the wealthy few go to, especially visiting foreign dignitaries and foreign embassy staff.

Museums were and are meant to be in the forefront of efforts to protect and develop the material values of African culture as well as to integrate these into the total ideological orientation adopted for development by each country of nation.

1.3. Nigeria’s Museums

Looking at the definition of museum as institution (publicly or privately owned) which collect, preserve and display objects (both natural and cultural) with the basic aim of entertaining, educating and providing materials for research on aspects of man’s heritage and development. In terms of enlightenment, museums are comparable to schools, university, libraries and other agencies of knowledge and culture. Museums preserve the tangible evidence of man’s history, creativity and physical aspects of the world he inhabits. They also give information about the past environment of the materials displayed such materials then attract, entertain and arouse curiosity amongst the people. Museums therefore

give people opportunities to rediscover themselves (including their natural resources) and to identify their place in the past and the role they can play in the contemporary world.

The history of museums in Nigeria can be said to date to pre-Arab and European times. During those periods various cultural materials of ritual, religious and political importance were fashioned, conserved and preserved in temples or traditional shrines and in the palaces of kings and chiefs, apart from having such cultural materials like ivory, bronze and carved wooden objects, these institutions (temples, shrines and palaces) were preserved as monuments in their own right. Some natural features like caves were also maintained as monuments.

The persons responsible for organizing and preserving the cultural materials included the head of the household, priests of various shrines and any of the kings or chiefs' officers. In Southern Nigeria, for instance a head of the household was in charge of his family's temple. In the temples cultural materials like iron or bronze amulets, wooden statues or images of deities were kept. The head of the household or priests took care of ritual objects like iron gongs, ivory trumpets, drums as well as stone or clay images of deities kept in the shrines. These heads priests acted more or less as curators, taking care of these objects. Wooden and iron/bronze staffs, statues and thrones, ceremonial regalia of past kings kept in the royal palaces were taken care of by any of the king's officers. Before the establishments of colonial museums in Africa, there were pre-colonial museums, objects were preserved because of their utilitarian or symbolic value. For instance, the cultural objects found in king's palaces were useful in displaying the political structure and ritual significance of the kingship system. Some of the objects found in the shrines helped to concretise the deities. In Igboland, a pot (like ite-ike) a very large pot which can contain about 105 litres of wine, was kept in the shrine house, and was reserved and used during the initiation of new members into the masquerade societies while the wooden statues and the wooden symbol of authority (ofo) were useful for administration of oaths.

Nigeria's cultural heritage also includes features like stone and pottery artefacts and bronzes from Daima in North-eastern Nigeria, rock paintings and rock-gong of

Birnin Kudu (Northern Nigeria), the Igbo-Ukwu (9th century AD), Ife and Benin 12th to 15th century AD) bronze, the various art in woodwork and calabash found in many parts of Nigeria, traditional woven mats and cloths, musical instruments and masquerades found in different parts of Nigeria.

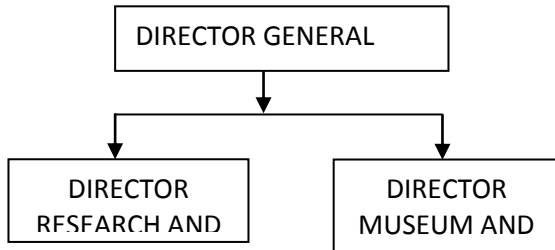
Cultural material in Nigeria date to the early stone age period which dates back long before 100,000 years ago, by about 11,000 years ago, late stone age hunter/gatherers would seem to have been exploiting most of Nigeria upto, at least, the forest fringes e.g the Iwo-Eleru finds which include microlithic tools, pottery and skeletal remains). People making and using pottery were already present in parts of Nigeria (e.g. the Jos Plateau, Northern Nigeria) at about the 5th millennium B.C. From the 5th century B.C technological and cultural entities like the Nok (mainly terracotta figurine and sculptures) with sites like Laruga contain evidence of iron working. Terracotta objects were also recovered from Ife in South-western Nigeria.

Clear cut legislations to prevent the indiscriminate acquisition and exportations of Nigerian cultural materials was instituted in 1953 when the Antiquities Ordinance No. 17 was passed. This bill provided for the creation of the National Department of Antiquities and charged it with the responsibilities of exploration, care and preservation of antiquities or works of art, and provided also for the control of exportation of works of art from Nigeria. Subsequent laws such as the Antiquities (Export Permits) Regulations of 1957 and the Antiquities (prohibited transfers) Decree of 1974 were enacted to check the illegal exportation of cultural objects from Nigeria. The Department of Antiquities, however, saw to the establishment of museums in Nigeria to preserve these cultural objects.

In 1979, a comprehensive review of the legislation concerning cultural resources in Nigeria was undertaken with the promulgation of Decree No. 77. This decree dissolved the National Antiquities Commission for Museums and Monuments which was designated as a corporate body with powers to generate funds and enter into contracts. It also made fresh provisions for the designation of national monuments and ensured stiffer penalties for the destruction, unauthorized alteration and removal of monuments in Nigeria. The then Department of Antiquities and the present National Commission for

Museums and Monuments saw to the establishment of museums in different parts of Nigeria to preserve Nigeria’s cultural objects.

1.4. National Commission for Museums and Monuments.



1.4. Museum Centres in Nigeria

National Museum, Lagos, established 1956, Headquarters of National Commission for Museums and Monuments. It functions as the major National Museum with all facilities. As at 1990 there were 29 Federal Museums in Nigeria, and at least one in each state. At Sokoto, Yola and Owerri there are as yet museum centres. In eight towns (Port-Harcourt, Ilorin, Markudi, Mina, Maiduguri, Akure, Abeokuta, Uyo and Katsina) there are fledging museums with exhibition galleries.

The museum situated in Jos, Plateau State, was one time headquarters of the defunct Federal Department of Antiquities. It is the largest and most comprehensive museum complex in Nigeria, and include a zoo, museum of traditional Nigerian Architecture and houses the centre for museum studies. Other important museums are located in major historic towns (e.g Benin, Kaduna, Calabar, Kano). Such National Museums have galleries and render comprehensive services in addition to reflecting the history of the locality. For instance, the museum in Benin has a collection centred in Benin and related antiquities, that in Kaduna was established in 1975 and holds important collections of NOK Terra-Cottas. At Calabar (Cross River) the museum is housed in the old residency building which is itself a national monument. At Aba (Abia State) the commission has a museum of colonial history while the National Museum complex in Umuahia, functions as the Nigerian Museum of traditional and modern ware-fare. Although existing since 1977 it was opened in 1985. The museum in Ile-

Ife was opened to the public in 1956 and is centred on the antiquities of Ife and environs.

The National Museum in Oron (Akwa Ibom State) is centred on the sculpture of the Oron sub-region, whereas that in Kano occupies Gidan Makama which is itself a national monument. Its collection is centred on Hausa culture and the Nigeria Islamic heritage. Another museum of colonial history (still in its incipient stages) is located in Lokoja (Niger State). At Esie in Kwara State, there is a national museum of antiquities centred on the Esie Stone Images, while in Oshogbo (Oyo State) is located a museum of natural history linked with the Osun sacred grove and other monuments in Oshogbo. In Owo (Ondo State) the Commission’s museum of antiquities is centred on the arts and antiquities of the Owo sub-region. Ibadan (Oyo State) and Enugu constitute seats for Museum Centre and Research Base, and modern Museums of National Unity are nearing completion. At Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, there is an incipient National Museum which when completed, will serve as the new headquarters of the National Commission.

Apart from the National Museums owned by the Federal government, there are other state and privately owned museums which are open to the public. These include museums of the various State Arts Councils, the Igbo-Ukwu Museum and Ofo Nri Museum (owned by Igwe Osita Agwuna of Enugu-Ukwu) both in Anambra State and that of Emir of Yawuri in Yelwa, Sokoto State. In the palace of several kings and chiefs in parts of Nigeria there are mini museums in which paraphernalia associated with the crown and other objects of cultural significance are displayed. Museums are also found in or higher institutions of learning, mainly the universities. Examples the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, University of Ibadan and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife have museums. At Ibadan and Nsukka there are museums at the Institute of African studies and at the Department of Archaeology. Zoology and Geology Departments at these universities also have museums. At Ife there is a museum at the Institute of African Studies and a Natural History Museum. There is also the Odinani Museum at Nri, Anambra State with local collections but sponsored by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.

1.5. Conservation:

Conservation is a means by which cultural properties are protected from decay and damage. This could be by way of inhibiting or correcting problems of decay, and protecting it from the external agents of destruction. The two classes of materials are organic which constitute wood, bone, ivory, animal skin, textiles, and inorganic such as metal, ceramics, stone and glass. Cultural materials can be categorised into movable, that is objects that can be acquired and preserved in the museum and immovable, that is those that cannot be taken, to the museum but can be preserved in-situ, in other words preserved in their original place.

In Nigeria, legal protection of monuments and sites come under federal jurisdiction where it concerns the national property but is believed that cultural property protection could be more assured if the state and local government are incorporated under state properties protection. There is need for complementary laws for the states and local government. Local governments should enact legislation to meet preservation of monuments and sites including historic places in their area while meeting with urban development rather than neglecting the others to the total loss of their past historic evidence.

Building, road and mining firms, even the Ministry of Works will need to be educated about the employment of archaeologists to assist in the task of protecting our heritage. Conservation and development of cultural resources does not end with systematic excavation or ethnographic collection.

The recent development in cultural policy has put to rest the doubtful situation about conservation in Nigeria. The policy inaugurated on August 29th, 1988 made provision for the preservation of culture, promotion of culture, presentation of culture and the establishment of administrative structure and provision for funds for its implementation but unfortunately not for its production. Development of our cultural resources, can only be achieved by the provision of realistic budgets, appropriate skills from experienced and trained museum professionals. Clearly defined projects can only be successful when there are funds, total commitment and strictly imposed deadlines. Some of the present generation of Nigerian cultural experts do not show

enough curiosity to know more about cultural materials from ethnic groups other than their own.

The primary objective of conserving sites is to protect it from the rigours of nature-erosion, weathering and destruction by man or animals. It is usually important to protect sites and the surrounding land in order to maintain the landscape setting and the original condition of sites for future excavation or indefinite retention and reclamation as an open air exhibition. In this respect design methods for planning the protection of sites, work out policies for a systematic management to avoid multiplicity in policy regarding who should handle the responsibility of preserving archaeological sites have to be made.

Attempts have been made by some professionals to record archaeological sites in Nigeria. As it stands now there are more than two hundred and fifty excavated sites and numerous prospective sites gathered all over Nigeria. The national commission for museums and monuments has the sole authority to excavate or authorise archaeologists to carry out excavation. It has been maintained that the provision made in Ordinance 17 of 1953 prehistoric research remains unaltered by /decree 77 of 1979. This unaltered ordinance is to check and strengthen the policies of research and preservation of monuments and sites.

1.6. Problems and Prospects in Conservation and Development of the Cultural Resources

A major problem is lack of funds. This has brought hardship to cultural experts who were once equipped to meet with rescue and emergency cases in archaeology and ethnography construction firms engaged in roads, mining and building construction should be mandated by government to employ archaeologists to monitor, excavate, rescue finds, report on exposed or discovered sites and at the very least provide the requisite funds to universities or the museum to carry out such work.

Disaster planning and conservation of all monuments and sites must be considered along with their development, not until there is earthquake or as the aftermath of fire disaster. There should be more conservation legislation to correct or fit in with urban planning, and thus check the uncompromising attitude of leaders who want to neglect or destroy old things for new ones. Deconsecration of monuments and sites

through theft, politics and sentiments etc. is a major problem thwarting efforts in conservation and development. International syndicates specialising in theft of Nigerian antiquities have brought setbacks in conservation of these resources. Natural rulers, chairmen, councillors and leaders of local government areas will have to be enlightened on the need to preserve historical materials and keep watchful eyes on historical materials in their area of jurisdiction, so they take up the responsibilities of advocating their subjects and preventing theft and destruction.

Decentralization, and the setting up of museums in the state, local and rural areas are essential if rural dwellers are to have the opportunity to appreciate their own cultural prowess and those of their neighbours and other related groups as expressed through rich material cultural items. It is also necessary to embark on a systematic programme for training high level staff on conservation.

1.6. Conclusion

Looking at the development of the concept of resources management in Nigeria, it enables us recall and appreciate important functionaries in the history of Nigerian cultural heritage engineering and management.

This will be followed by examining the effect of our country's period of transformation on cultural resources and their conservation and development. It is hoped that with a deeper understanding and appreciation of what has been and the enormous problem ahead, a more sympathetic, meaningful and acceptable attitude will be developed by the citizens of this country and the organ responsible for funding the cultural institution responsible for the protection and preservation of Nigerian cultural property.

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