

Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts (ZAJOLA)

Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

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Vol. 11, No. 1, June 2023

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Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts (ZAJOLA) is a peer-reviewed journal, published bi-annually by the Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria. The journal welcomes manuscript of original articles, from scholars around the globe, in the various areas of Liberal Arts. The articles may be product of descriptive or analytical research, field research notes, reviews of publications and printed materials, drawn from, but not limited to Languages and Linguistics; Law; Environmental Sciences, Education; Management Studies; Cultural and Literally Studies; Theatre Arts; Philosophy; Religion; History and Strategic Studies; Archaeology and Heritage Studies; Developmental Studies and Social Sciences.

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

The Editorial Board of *Zaria Journal of Liberal Arts* wishes to announce the new Edition of its esteemed Journal after a short break. This Edition is made up of twelve well-researched articles drawn from seasoned colleagues and academics.

In the first article, Emmanuel Adeniyi examines the comic aspect of COVID-19 pandemic while Hauwa Mohammed Sani, in her article looks at the ethnographic study of language as a tool in resolving conflicts in Kaduna State.

Osakue Stevenson and Edorodion Agbon focus on the alternative paradigm of indigenous language film in Nigeria through *Agbon-Evuebo*, Muhammad Reza Suleiman examines Arts as drivers of African bilateral relations and regional integration. On their own part, Nura Lawal and Muhammad Rabiul Tahir (co-authors) and Isa Umar Al Musawi concentrate on the study of Hausa Proverbs and Hausa/Ganda burial rites respectively.

Participatory approach and sustainable development of world heritage sites in Nigeria retains the attention of Olufemi Adetunji while in their article, Abdulrasaq Oladimeji and Oluwaseun Yusuf Afolabi look at the teachers' perception of the integration of information and communication technology in public and private secondary schools with special focus on Kwara-Central Senatorial District of Nigeria.

In the area of French studies, Peter Akongfeh Agwu, Diana-Mary Tiku Nsan, Ashabua and Derick Achu carry out an evaluation of the influence of Africa in the poetic works of Charles Baudelaire. In a similar way, Babalola Jacob Olaniyi and Adelowo Kayode Olubukola study the contrastive linguistic divergence of nominal verbs in French and Yoruba languages.

Jamiu Saadullah Abdulkareem takes interest in the Arabic novel. In this article, Jamiu brings out the ideational dimensions and stylistic features of Abdul-Aziz Abdulkarim Burhanuddin's novel titled *Jamilah*. To round this Edition up, Nasiruddeen Ibrahim Ahmed studies the pragmatics of deixis in the poem "Independence of exploitation" of Salihu Alagolo.

It is important to note that the view and opinions presented in these articles are solely those of the authors. It is the hope of the Editorial Board that this Edition will enrich your curiosity.

Prof. Abubakar Sule Sani

Editor-in-Chief

31st May, 2023

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Participatory Approach for Sustainable Development of World Heritage Sites in Nigeria: Opportunities and Challenges

Olufemi Adetunji

Abstract

The 2015 UNESCO Policy on World Heritage and Sustainable Development provides a policy framework for developing the potential of World Heritage sites (WHS) in addressing the well-being of society through sustainable approaches. In the African context, however, heritage is not usually prioritised in development discourse, with heritage places facing increasing threats and disaster risk. This could be attributed to both natural and human-induced factors. Given that heritage sites belong to local communities, the active participation of these communities in addressing threats and disaster risks provides opportunities for inclusive decision-making in the management of the heritage sites, unity and co-existence of communities. This study, therefore, examines the sustainable approaches that were implemented in the two World Heritage sites (Sukur cultural landscape and Osun-Osogbo sacred groove) in Nigeria. Primary information was collected through key informant interviews while relevant official documents on the two World Heritage sites were reviewed. The sustainable perspectives implemented forth management of the WHS include the development of integrated management plans, development of research and other educational materials, and addressing environmental threats impacting the WHS. The participants emphasised the preservation of social-cultural connections as well as the conservation of the local knowledge and practices of communities. However, the barriers to the participation of communities in the management of the WHS include poor implementation and enforcement of the heritage conservation laws, exclusion of young people and non-experts, inadequately trained personnel to engage communities and poor visitor management. The findings largely reveal that the WHS contributes to the social, cultural and economic wellbeing of the communities. The study, therefore, encourages the involvement of young people and non-experts in the conservation and management of WHS from the planning to implementation stages.

Keywords: *Climate Change, Community Development, Heritage Policy, Heritage value, Sustainable Development Goals.*

Introduction

The State members of African Union (AU) in 2015 approved the strategic framework now known as ‘*Agenda 2063: the Africa we want*’ (refer to Table 1) to proffer the pathways to the sustainable development of African countries. In Nigeria, the localisation of these strategies is through the economic transformation blueprint, *Vision 20:2020* which focuses on: ‘i.) guaranteeing the productivity and wellbeing of the people, ii.) optimizing the key sources of

economic growth, and iii) fostering social and economic development' (World Food Programme, 2019). These frameworks i.e. *Agenda 2063: the Africa we want* and *Vision 20:2020* as well as UN-SDGs emphasised the central role of culture and heritage to achieving the developmental aspirations/goals for the continent. Aspiration 5 of *Agenda 2063: the Africa we want*, for instance, focuses on achieving 'strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics' across communities and countries in Africa. The position paper on the influence of World Heritage on Sustainable Development of Africa(AU, 2018) also recognised the challenges facing sustainable development in Africa and how the World Heritage properties in Africa can be leveraged to address the challenges to create sustainable presents and futures.

Various scholars have conducted studies on the influences of the Africa's World Heritage sites on their neighbourhoods, regions and country. Breen (2007), for instance, concluded that World Heritage sites in sub-Sahara Africa can be leverages to institute community-driven capacity building, and expert and non-expert participation to address the impacts of climate change and other forms of disaster risks and bring about sustainable development of communities. In another study conducted by Teye and Timothy (2004) on slave heritage in West Africa revealed that restoration and conservation of the slave heritage in Nigeria and Ghana can contribute improve awareness to disaster risks facing the slave heritage communities and entrench Pan-Africanism across young Africans and African Diaspora. Adetunji et al. (2018) also identify the importance of cultural heritage education to improve awareness and educate young Africans on strategies for preparedness and resilience of historic communities in Nigeria. This study, therefore, investigates how sustainable practices and principles have been integrated into the management of the two World Heritage sites in Nigeria in view to determine the enablers and barriers to the integration of the practices. The study relies on primary information collected during semi-structured interviews conducted with twelve randomly selected people (*WHS-01 to 12*) that are connected World Heritage sites. Secondary information was collected from the official documents for the two World Heritage sites (WHS) in Nigeria. The documents include nomination files, periodic reports, management plans, conservation reports and other related reports.

Materials and Methods

The study explores the sustainable approaches implemented in managing two

WHS – Sukur cultural landscape and Osun-Osogbo sacred grove – in Nigeria using an interview of key informants and review of official documents of the sites. Twelve (WHS-01 to WHS-12) participants participated in semi-structured interviews to understand the influence of the sites within the local communities and the conservation of heritage in Nigeria. The participants responded to factors influencing involvement of the communities in the management of the sites as well as the development of the local communities. Official documents of the sites such as management plans, nomination file and state of conservation reports were also reviewed to understand the frameworks for conservation and management of the sites. In this context, eight heritage experts and four community members were purposively selected as participants, while official documents were retrieved from UNESCO.

World Heritage Sites in Nigeria: Sukur Cultural Landscape and Osun-Osogbo Sacred Groove

Sukur Cultural Landscape (N10°44'26.016", E13°34'18.984"), in Madagali Local Government Area of Adamawa State, Nigeria, was listed as a World Heritage site in 1999 (see Figure 1). The site is characterised with the Palace of the *Hidi* (Chief), terraced fields, sacred symbols, dry stone structures, stone-paved pathways, extensive remains of the former flourishing iron industry and extensive farmlands (UNESCO-WHC, 2020). Also, the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove (N7°45'20.016", E4°33'7.992"), in Osogbo, a city in southwest Nigeria, was listed as a World Heritage site in 2005 (see Figure 1). The sacred grove is connected to the goddess of fertility *Osun*, one of the pantheons of *Yoruba* gods. The features of the site include dense forest containing more than 400 species of plants for natural herbal pharmacy, shrines, sculptures, artworks created in honour of *Osun* goddess and *Osun* river (UNESCO-WHC, 2020).

TABLE 1: LINKAGES BETWEEN ASPIRATIONS IN AGENDA 2063 AND UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

S/N	Aspirations in Agenda 2063: the Africa we want	UN Sustainable Development Goals
1.	A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development	SDG 1 – End poverty in all its forms SDG 2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture SDG 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable SDG 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
2.	An integrated continent politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance	SDG 7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all SDG 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation SDG 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
3.	An Africa of good governance, democracy,	SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower

	respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law	all women and girls SDG 10 – Reduce inequality within and among countries
4.	A peaceful and secure Africa	SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable SDG 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels SDG 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
5.	An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics	SDG 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
6.	An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children	SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls SDG 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive

	employment and decent work for all
	SDG 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
7. Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner	SDG 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development SDG 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss SDG 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Source: adapted from AU (2015)



FIGURE 1: MAP OF NIGERIA SHOWING OSUN SHRINE AT OSUN-OSOGBOSACRED GROVE (LEFT) AND DRY STONE STRUCTURE AT SUKUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE. PHOTO: THIERRY JOFFROY - TOP LEFT AND ISHANLOSENODIAUA – BOTTOM RIGHT

The cultural landscape is unique in its social, cultural and economic characteristics. The built structures and walkways within the landscape are built with dry stones demonstrating the ingenuity of indigenous technology and craftsmanship involved in the construction of the structures. Besides, the combination of intensive and extensive farming practices of Sukur community contribute to the authenticity of the WHS and demonstrates how past generations consider agriculture as an integral aspect of the community. Culturally, the people of Sukur worshipped the deity of the community within the shrines and sacred trees located in the heritage site. Notably, the palace of *Hidi*, also built with dry stones, ceramics and thatches represents the strength of the political structure of the community dating back to 16th century. The community was administered by the *Hidi*, who is regarded as the political and spiritual head and supported by the chiefs within the community. Over the years, the WHS has been used as an educational and research piece by professionals and students in fields related to biodiversity, eco-tourism, linguistics, archaeology and cultural anthropology.

The sacred grove, inscribed on the World Heritage list in 2005, is connected to the creation of *Osogbo* town. The dense rainforest within the site is not only made of sacred trees but also include over 400 species of plants used for natural herbals medicine purposes. The forest is regarded as a part of the protected rainforests in West Africa. The values of the heritage site are inherent in its cultural features such as five sacred spaces, forty shrines, Osun River, two palaces and annual Osun-Osogbo festival. The grove symbolizes ‘the pact between *Larooye* (the founder of Osogbo town) and *Osun* (the goddess of the Osun river), that the goddess would give prosperity and protection to the town if a shrine is built for her’ (UNESCO-WHC, 2005, p. 31). As one of the sacred spaces in southwestern Nigeria, it is believed that *Osun* resides within the grove and gives children to the barren annually during the *Osun-Osogbo* festival. The built structures within the sacred site are ornamented with sculptures and artworks erected in honour of the *Osun* and other Yoruba deities. Since the inscription on the World Heritage list, the sacred grove has been a haven for local and international tourists and filmmakers as well as a hub for the study of Yoruba culture, knowledge system and practices.

Findings and Discussions

Significance and Connections to the Communities

Four participants discussed the influence of Sukur cultural landscape on the materials and technology adopted in the construction of buildings within Sukur

and neighbouring communities. In the past, UNESCO-WHC (1998) revealed that buildings within the communities were built in traditional form using indigenous materials and technologies in the construction of walls, roofs and openings. These traditional technologies are conserved in many buildings in the communities but some of the early buildings have been demolished for the construction of new buildings using contemporary materials such as glass and cement. The palace of *Hidi* located in the cultural landscape was built *with dry stones, wood and other local materials* which in the past influenced the use of local materials in the construction of farmhouses and storehouses. Participant *WHS09* revealed that the palace of *Hidi* is regarded as the *most prominent building* within the community and located at the hilltop signifying the *headship* of the political and social structure of the community. The *practice of terrace agriculture in Sukur* [community] also influences the connections of the community to the cultural landscape. Two participants agreed that the location of the palace of *Hidi* and the walkways allow the worship of the sacred trees and performance of rituals *especially at the onset of harvest seasons*. Other participants, who are experts, revealed that the cultural landscape is not only conserved for tourism purposes but also its educational qualities. Two participants agreed that students from various institutes within and outside Nigeria *visit the cultural landscape to understand the pre-colonial style of building construction and language* of the community.

The participants also discussed the spiritual/religious significance of the sacred grove revealing that during the annual *Osun* festival, the *Arugba* (a female virgin that carries the sacrifice for the worship of *Osun*) *offers [prayers and] blessings of the fruits of the womb to the barren and everyone that participated in the festival*. Interestingly, all the participants emphasised the roles of *Susanne Wenger, an Austrian, who contributed to the conservation and restoration of the earthen structures, sculptures, ceramics and more than seventy-five cultural goods with artistic representations within the grove*. The conservation of the artworks in the sacred grove was emphasised in the State of Conservation report (UNESCO-WHC, 2018) as the cultural features of the sacred grove that connects the early and younger artists to collaborate in preserving the artworks. The participants also revealed that *tourists from Cuba, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Spain, Canada amidst other countries* usually participate in the annual festival not only for spiritual purposes but also to experience the quality of biodiversity of the *Osun* Forest.

Raising Awareness about and Management of Disaster Risks

Day et al. (2020) revealed that the new realities that WHS need to adapt to include environmental hazards such as climate change, natural and human-induced disaster risk. The official documents for the management of the two WHS revealed an increased awareness of the environmental threats facing the sites and their local communities. The management plans forth, for instance, revealed two categories of environmental threats affecting the sites (see Table 2). The development of disaster risk management plan (DMP) for Sukur cultural landscape was developed in 2017 in response to the decision of the World Heritage Committee in Krakow, Poland ‘to integrate risk preparedness aspect to the main conservation management plan’ (NCMM, 2016, p. 4). The DPM represents significant awareness and development especially amidst heritage experts and community leaders on the need to address disaster risks facing heritage sites through stakeholder engagement approach involving not only the government organisations but also community (such as Sukur Youth Development Association etc) and civil society organisations (Life Saving Grassroots Outreach etc). However, two participants agreed that the stakeholder engagement was largely top-down and expert-driven because the 2017-2021 DMP was the first DMP that will recognise climate change and other natural risks facing the cultural landscape.

TABLE 2: ENVIRONMENTAL THREATS TO OSUN-OSOGBO SACRED GROVE AND SUKUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

	Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove	Sukur Cultural Landscape
Natural	i. Climate change – increased frequency and severity of rainfall ii. Biological – pest attacks	i. Climatic condition: windstorm from North-East and South-West trade winds ii. Pest and rodent attacks on buildings and structures iii. Erosion iv. Climate change: desertification and aridification
Human-induced	i. Fire outbreaks ii. Environmental pollution iii. Damage to physical and natural features due to tourist pressure	i. Fire outbreaks ii. Environmental pollution iii. Tourist pressure on the landscape during festivals iv. Deforestation from slash and burn for agriculture and fuel v. Insurgency, Poaching and Migration

adapted from National Commission for Museums and Monuments (2014), (2016)

One of the participants, who was involved in the development of the DMP revealed that the 2017-2021 DMP improves the quality and availability of information about changes in climate drivers and extreme weather events observed in the local communities. Concerning the sacred grove as well, more information about the disaster risks facing the sites have been provided to the stakeholders involving community groups and non-government organisations (NGOs). One of the participants (WHS12) revealed that the NGOs are involved in addressing the deterioration of some of the built structures within the sacred grove which are as the result of heavy storms that affected some of the trees within the forest.

Many of the participants support the concerns of the 41st session of World Heritage Committees that ‘inadequate progress has been made on conservation, management and protection since inscription on the World Heritage List, resulting into vulnerabilities identified during the 2015 mission now turning into threats’ (UNESCO-WHC, 2019, p. 202). The 41st session emphasised the importance of strengthening conservation efforts to i.) protect the World Heritage sites against environmental threats (Targets 11.4 of SDG 11), ii.) integrate measures addressing climate change and other forms of disaster risks into urban planning policies at the state level (Target 13.2 of SDG 13) and iii.) improve institutional and communal capacity to adapt and reduce the impact of climate change and disaster risks (Target 13.3 of SDG 13). The implementation of the management plans with a focus on the environmental threats also contributes to the protection of the connections of the communities to the features of the sites, strengthens resilience to disasters and climate change as well as to institutionalize planning for improved environmental quality. The participants also identified weak political willingness, inadequate funding and skill capacity as well as security challenges in northeast Nigeria as barriers to the institutionalization of disaster risk management in the management of the heritage sites.

Involvement of Stakeholders

The stakeholders are involved in three participatory approaches: i.) development of integrated management plans, ii.) conduct of research and development of educative materials, and iii.) addressing environmental threats affecting the WHS (see Figure 3). The management plans for the two WHS sites were developed through the Committee of Stakeholders involving individuals, government and

non-government organisations. The management plan for Osun-Osogbo sacred grove, for instance, was developed by a joint stakeholder committee involving NGOs such as Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council, Adunni Olorisa Trust (AOT), Osun Groves Support Group, Association of Tourism Practitioners of Nigeria and Infogem Nigeria Limited (see Figure 2). The NGOs are involved in the coordination of activities of the stakeholder committee with the community members and raising funds for the conservation efforts of the government organisations. The management plans include vital aspects of the heritage sites such as the state of the conservation of the sites, threats to the sites, legal and administrative framework, visitor management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the conservation interventions.



FIGURE 2: STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF OSUN-OSOGBO SACRED GROVE

Participants WHS07 and WHS10 agreed that the committee of stakeholders is active during the period of preparing formal reports and inactive at other times. This assertion was supported by other participants that involvement of

stakeholders especially community members and non-experts has not been institutionalised in the management of heritage sites due to political, social, legal and economic barriers. The stakeholder committee for the management of Osun-Osogbo Sacred grove excludes young people and a broad range of non-experts such as market women, local business etc. Four participants mentioned socio-cultural connections to the heritage sites as an enabling factor while seven identified economic factors. All the participants mentioned 'outdated laws and difficulties in reviewing the enabling laws', 'poor implementation and enforcement of the laws and policies', 'economic factors', 'loss of traditional skills', 'poor visitor management' and 'inadequately trained personnel to implement advanced conservation practices' as the main barriers to the participatory management and conservation of the World Heritage sites (see Figure 3). The participants agreed that community groups are willing to be involved in the conservation and management of the World Heritage sites in *'having professionals from National Commission for Museums and Monuments [seeking] to deliberate with community leaders and other community groups'* (WH-01). This has helped in bridging the gap between the experts and non-experts. Also, the participants emphasized the vital roles of interest groups such as *Osogbo Modern Artists, Osogbo Sacred Artists and Osogbo Cultural Heritage Council* in the conservation and management of the artworks within the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove. WH-08 noted that *'the artist groups have the skills needed for the conservation of the artworks and can also contribute to the preparation of educational materials on the artwork to educate the public and the tourists on the values and meanings of the artworks.'*

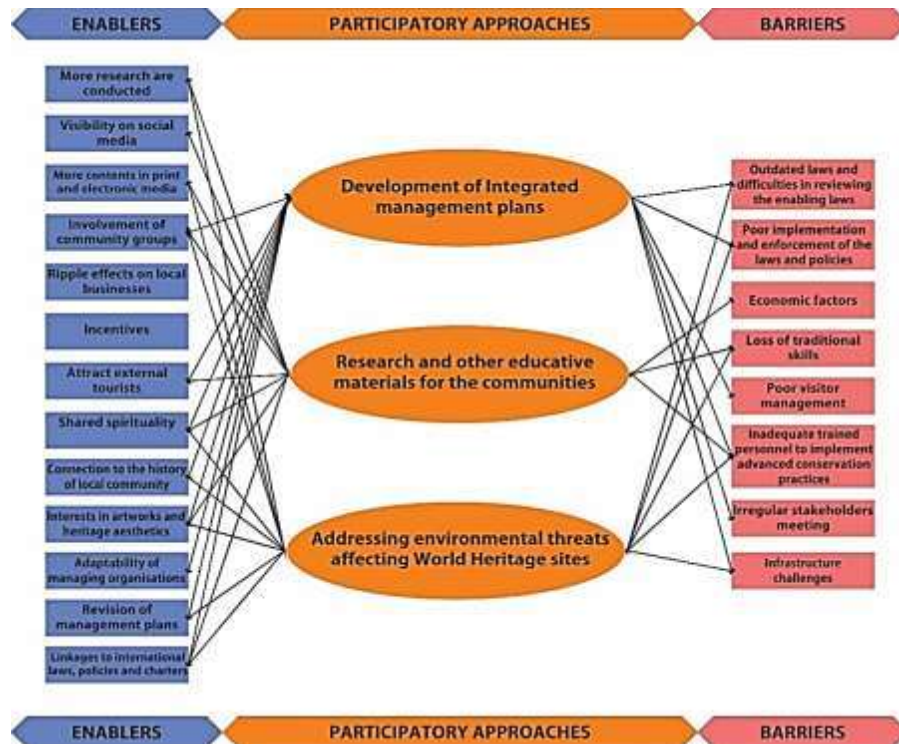


Figure 3: Cross-matching participatory approaches, barriers and enabling factors

In the context of the sacred grove, the participants noted that inscription on the World Heritage List improved the quality of infrastructure such as road, electricity and water within Osogbo town. One of the participants, a community member, noted that the national and state governments improved the quality of infrastructure within Osogbo in preparation for the nomination of the site for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2015. Other participants identified the increased influx of local and international tourists to Osogbo contribute to increased economic activities within the town. But three participants questioned that the development interventions are mainly physical while other forms of development such as improvement of educational curriculum and healthcare were excluded. Two participants, however, argued that the development of the heritage sites needs to be integrated into the comprehensive urban development plans for the towns to achieve inclusive development of the communities.

Conclusion

Integration of sustainable development perspective into the conservation and

management of WHS will not only enable stakeholders to be involved but also ensure that they act with social responsibility. In this study, two WHS were studied within the context of their local communities to reveal the shared connection and identity of the heritage to different communities. However, more studies are needed to examine the significance and impacts of other heritage sites listed on the national and state heritage lists to their local communities. The study, therefore, demonstrates that WHS in Nigeria can be leveraged to proffer solutions to the environmental threats facing local communities. It is vital to ensure that the integrated management plan is developed through collaborative approaches where stakeholders, experts and non-experts, are involved and the management plans need to be included in the urban development framework at national and state levels.

The changing demographics and climate which are resulting in growing inequalities and diminishing resources make it urgent to leverage World Heritage to address various social, environmental, economic challenges impacting the population. Nigeria as the largest economy in Africa but still faces challenges of gender inequality, poverty and increasing out-of-school children. These challenges are exacerbated due to natural and human-induced disasters affecting sources of livelihoods and identity of people within the communities. Therefore, increasing awareness of disaster risk management is vital at this period for Nigeria to make appreciable progress in achieving her targets in sustainable development goals.

Also, addressing the environmental threats facing the management of the heritage sites through prompt review and enforcement of the enabling laws through less-bureaucratic processes and improved quality of training available to heritage experts will result in improved awareness and preparedness to impacts of climate change and disaster risks within the communities. The study, therefore, concludes on five principles to guide the development and implementation of the participatory approach are:

- i. involvement of non-experts, community members, traditional leaders and non-government organisations in the development and implementation of management plans for the World Heritage sites
- ii. involvement of primary and secondary schools as key stakeholder and representative of future generations in the management of the World Heritage sites

- iii. supporting research focusing on issues relating to the World Heritage sites and development of collaboration with relevant international organisations
- iv. integrating heritage and disaster education into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in view to engaging young people in conservation and management of heritage in their community
- v. leveraging World Heritage for intercultural learning and dialogue to foster communal peace and coexistence

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