

Research Article

Cultural Heritage Resources and Their Implications for Tourism Development in Cross River State: A Case Study of Yala Local Government Area

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Abstract

The objectives of the studies are to identify cultural heritage resources of the Yala people, the potentialities of those identified heritage resources for tourism development and the challenges of these identified cultural heritage resources for tourism development. This research adopted an ethnographic method, which applies qualitative and descriptive approaches. Therefore, the qualitative method adjudged useful for this research is the descriptive qualitative method. This method offers the researcher the opportunity to collect non-numerical information through an in-depth and insightful understanding of cultural resources of Yala LGA. Qualitative approach is not concerned with the number of events but more interested in how and why it happened. The qualitative techniques used are interview guide, and field observation. The study documents cultural heritage resources of the people of Yala Local Government Area with a view to assessing their potentials for Tourism development in Cross River State. The findings reveal cultural heritage such as masquerade, new-yam festival, deities and shrines, and ceremonies. When properly managed, it can be used as community-based tourism, which can also foster unity among communities as well as create employment, and generate income for the local, which can therefore revitalize the community. However the challenges were identified to be theft, bush burning, looting, communal crisis, poor management.

Keywords

Cultural Heritage, Heritage Resources, Community-based Tourism, Tourism Development

1. Introduction

Cultural heritage has an important role in ensuring local and regional development. Studies have shown that first the sustainability of heritage sites needs to be ensured. Public policies often introduce specific cultural creative industries measures to stimulate regional or local development. Cultural heritage ensures employment impacts tourism development and entrepreneurship, which in turn influences

an increase in income for the local population and the generation of tax revenue for the government. Furthermore, on its importance in ensuring social cohesion, inclusion, participation, and local community well-being [7, 25]. It is projected that cultural heritage (tourism) accounts for 40% of European tourism, four out of ten tourists choose their destination based on its cultural offering [6] and it is safe to

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presume that many tourist attractions and destinations in the world today are based on the elements of cultural heritage [23]. The relevance of cultural heritage for sustainable development has been widely recognized and advocated for by leading international organizations. Attempts to incorporate cultural heritage into development discourses have occurred in parallel with the concept of sustainable development. Beginning in the 1970s, the notion of development has gradually shifted from a mono-dimensionally economic-focused and Western vision of development toward a multi-dimensional, co-evolving, equitable, human-rights based and context-dependent approach [24]. The tangible focus is archaeology, finding monuments, collecting objects, and others. UNESCO Convention 2003 for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage outlines five areas that cover its scope. Oral tradition and expression such as language-storytelling, performing art such as dancing, singing, theatrics, and feasting, social practices, rituals, and festival events, Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, Knowledge and skills used to produce traditional craft.

According to [13] posited that there are different variations used locally in some countries which include games and traditional plays, animal husbandry, traditional culinary places of worship and pilgrimage. The intentional art of keeping cultural heritage for posterity is referred to as preservation and is used in historical museums, cultural centres, scientific research, education, and others [11, 13] which is in line with this study. The people of Yala decided to practice the art of keeping their cultural heritage from present to future, which is known as preservation which is used for scientific research and education purposes. The people of this axis hold a unique cultural heritage that will serve as a catalyst for tourism development including masquerading dance, festival rituals, monoliths, and events.

1.1. Problem Statement / Justification

The Cultural heritage in Yala has not witnessed proper documentation from available literature. It is interesting to note that, Cultural heritage resources in Yala have existed for hundreds of years and Elders who are skilful in the Tradition and philosophy of Preserving and conserving as well as some indigenous Knowledges are passing away with valuable knowledge. Therefore, there is an urgent need to make information on their cultural heritage resources readily available for posterity in view of its declining state. This research work is an attempt to study the cultural heritage resource and philosophy as a way of preserving the arts and tradition of the people. It will add to the body of the existing literature, and researchers could be grateful of the distinctiveness of cultural heritage resources in Yala Local Government Area, in terms of the philosophy/myths. Also, scholars who wishes to study contemporary African art will equally have knowledge into how African artists proceed to

draw upon their cultural history regarding the current research that solves contemporary problems. On the contrary, the higher demand for cultural tourism provides an opportunity to commercialize cultural heritage. For example, in the Wogada Kingdom, the commercialization of sacred activities of the Etor masquerade constrains the spiritual healing of the masquerade associated with it.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify available cultural heritage resources in Yala LGA.
2. To evaluate the potentialities of the identified cultural heritage resources for tourism development.
3. To examine the challenges of the identified cultural heritage resources for tourism development.

2. Literature Review

According to [20] in their paper entitled *Tourism Potential Index for Cultural Heritage Management through the Ecosystem Services Approach*. Posited that, In the 21st century, the built cultural heritage faces the challenge of its restoration and re-adaptation as a tourist resource. The interweaving of historical, economic, cultural, and symbolic factors makes them perfect supports for new cultural and recreational functions. This is why, in many historic centers or old city centers, residential, religious, tourist, administrative, commercial, or cultural functions coexist in permanent tension.

According to [9] in his article entitled *Assessment of the Cultural Heritage Potential in Poland* posit that Cultural Heritage Potential Trends in monument protection and conservation demonstrate a growing interest in uncovering historical and cultural heritage. It is of particular importance not only for the preservation and promotion of the heritage but also for the spiritual and material development of societies. Culture and cultural heritage are often covered in general debates regarding the development of social capital and its impact on socio economic growth. It is not only individual heritage objects that are protected and preserved. Many phenomena and cultural heritage components are noteworthy, including the idea to establish protected historical-cultural sites.

In the work of [14] In their articles titled: *Cultural heritage tourism as a catalyst for sustainable development; the case of old Oyo town in Nigeria*. The research seeks a paradigm shift that balances the debacle and creates a sustainable physical development and cultural identity. His paper utilises the case study approach by presenting examples of the regeneration of the historic city in Fez, Morocco and the Kano ancient area in Nigeria. The findings show culture-led urban regeneration as a viable strategy for place making and sustainable development. It has the potential to drive the needed heritage development in Old

Oyo while contributing to its environmental, economic, and social sustainability. In addition, the project's archeo-tourism potential is essential for socio-cultural sustainability and the revival of indigenous urban solutions and practices. He concluded that the few heritage remnants in the locale will disappear if schemes to ameliorate, conserve and adaptive reuse are lacking.

In the research carried out by [19] titled *The cultural and heritage tourist, SEM analysis: the case of The Citadel of the Catholic King*. This research used Warp-PLS 7.0 software with a structural equations model to evaluate the 8 proposed and validated hypotheses. A questionnaire was given to a sample of 499 tourists who visited the Citadel of the Catholic King in Córdoba and the statistical study of the replies gave results about the loyalty of visitors to a destination which includes cultural heritage. This study shows that visitor loyalty to The Citadel of the Catholic King depends on the visitor satisfaction with the cultural heritage, it also analyses how the quality perceived by the tourist modulates to varying degrees the relationship between perceived value and tourist satisfaction. Areas which can be improved at cultural heritage sites have been identified and these include the professionalization of tour guides specialized in cultural heritage sites, improving and showing the cultural importance of the heritage, the information available about the heritage and the access to the heritage. The study concluded that the findings are important for city managers when preparing projects to increase the loyalty and competitiveness of the city compared to other similar destinations with cultural heritage. conclusions regarding the theoretical implications this research demonstrates, supports and verifies how variables in tourism affect each other.

According to an article published by [21] in a paper titled: *Research on global cultural heritage tourism based on bibliometric analysis*. This research employs the bibliometric method with Cite-Space 5.8. R2 software to visualize and analyze 805 literature items retrieved from the SSCI database between 2002 and 2022. Results show, first, scholars from China, Spain, Italy have published the most articles, and Italian scholars have had the most influence. Second, Hong Kong Polytech University, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Jinan University have had significant influence on cultural heritage tourism research. Third, *Annals of Tourism Research* is the most cited journal in the field. Influenced by politics, culture, and technology, sustainable development and consumer behavior have become key topics in this field over the past 21 years. Fourth, tourist satisfaction, rural development, and cultural heritage management are the key research frontiers. Fifth, in the future, cultural heritage tourism should pay more attention to micro-level research, using quantitative methods to integrate museums, technology, and cultural heritage into consumer research. It was concluded that the results offer a deeper understanding of the development and evolution of the global cultural heritage tourism field from 2002 to 2022.

In the work of [17] titled: *Community Participation in Conservation and Management of Cultural Heritage Resources in Yoruba Ethnic Group of South Western Nigeria*. The objectives examine the effective participation of local communities in the conservation and management of these resources. Multiple research methods were employed for this study including Key Informants Interview and administration of structured questionnaires to the purposively selected respondents. A sample of 768 respondents was selected from the total population of 895,406 using a sample determination method. The selection of respondents was based on their proximity to the resources, their local knowledge, communal ownership, disposition and willingness to participate in the study. The data collected was rated on a 5 point Likert scale and then subjected to the weighted mean analysis. Spearman correlation and linear regression were used to test hypotheses in order to establish relationships between socio-demographic characteristics and level of community participation. Output from this research emphasizes the need to improve the state of heritage properties through effective conservation and sustainable management practices and increasing community involvement and participation. The research concluded that the result will serve as a blueprint and developmental framework for policymakers in heritage resources conservation and management with the intention of linking these resources to increase direct economic benefits to local communities.

According to [4] titled: *Cultural Tourism: A Sustainable Development Strategy for Nigeria Rural Areas, Regions*. The objectives are to examine a sustainable economic development tool in Nigeria, heritage features. A survey carried out in some rural communities revealed that these cultures are rooted essentially in the history of each community but is disheartening to note that as the rural communities are aging, these cultural heritages and crafts also suffer either partial or total neglect and abandonment. A survey carried out in some rural communities in the Ekiti Local Government area of Kwara State revealed that, as richly blessed as these communities are in terms of cultural tourism resources endowment, physical and socioeconomic development is almost stagnant due to neglect or non-exploration of the various distinctive and unique resource embedded in their domain. Further findings revealed that as a sustainable economic development tool in Nigeria, heritage features have economic values that can sufficiently contribute to economic revitalization, especially in the rural areas if effectively developed and marketed. Aina et al concluded that since tourism exposes, develops and market culture of the people, the paper thus recommends a holistic approach to cultural heritage conservation in Nigeria rural areas to include comprehensive cultural plan, packaging and exposition, partnership of stakeholders all providing an inclusive and integrated approach to cultural heritage development through tourism.

In the work of [3] in an article titled: *The impact of heritage resources on community livelihood in Namibia: A case for Oshikoto*: This study explored the impact of heritage resources on community livelihoods in the Oshikoto region, Namibia. The study employed a Sustainable Livelihoods Framework for a theoretical lens. A qualitative approach guided by an interpretive phenomenological design provides opportunities for heritage practitioners to share perspectives on the phenomena of heritage resources and community livelihoods. The sample of 20 participants was drawn from a population of 58 heritage practitioners using the purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using in-depth interviews, a focus group discussion, and document analysis. The findings showed that heritage resources positively impact community livelihoods. Through heritage tourism and the creative sector, heritage resources and creative products can generate income and create employment opportunities that contribute to the improved well-being of the local communities. Heritage resources can provide scientific and educational information for teaching, learning, research, and community engagement. The findings concluded that heritage activities can preserve local culture and unite people from diverse backgrounds. The findings concluded that heritage resources can be applied during counselling, therapy, and healing processes.

According to [2] *Tourism a Strategy for Sustainable Economic Development in Cross River State Nigeria*. The main thrust of this paper is about adopting tourism as a strategy for sustainable Economic Development in Cross River State, Nigeria. Being a theoretical work, secondary sources of data were explored to enhance the accumulation of relevant data for this work. By doing so, visits were made to Cross River State Tourism Bureau Calabar, University of Calabar Library. Also, online (Internet) materials were also used. The major findings made were, tourism is one of the cardinal employers of labour in Cross River State; tourism plays a significant role in sustainable economic development of the state; and that tourism could help in the attainment of millennium development goals. The conclusion made were, tourism plans should be prepared with specific objectives, development of micro and medium-scale enterprises should be encouraged in the state; and the government should provide adequate security.

According to [10] in their work titled: *Community-Based Tourism and Sustainable Development of Rural Regions in Kenya; Perceptions of the Citizenry*. This research sought to establish perceptions of the citizenry towards community-based tourism as a sustainable development strategy for rural regions in Kenya. The study focused on the awareness levels of CBT, and perceived contributions of CBT to the socio-economic and physical sustainability of rural regions in Kenya. A descriptive research design was adopted with a sample of 395 respondents. Data collected were collated and analyzed using SPSS 25 and Nvivo 12. Findings revealed that agriculture and other economic activities can be integrated with tourism and hospitality to deliver sustainable

development in rural regions given the vast resources and attributes ideal for CBT. Most of the respondents were noted to have a fair understanding of what CBT entails and thus calling for more capacity building, training, and appropriate technical support to unlock the full potential of CBT as a sustainable development strategy. Overall results showed favorable perceptions towards CBT as a tool that can contribute to the sustainability of the socio-economic and physical environments in Kenya's rural region.

In the work [12]. *Fostering Sustainable Tourism Development in Merauke through Community-Based Tourism*. This article will discuss Merauke community participation in fostering the development of sustainable tourism through community-based tourism, that is maintaining sustainability of the environment and ecosystem while considering local communities' sociocultural conditions. In doing so, this study uses a descriptive-qualitative approach. Data was collected from document tracking and interviews with Merauke Regional Government, WWF activists, and community leaders. The findings indicated that local communities supported Merauke tourism by developing entrepreneurship in the tourism industry, increasing community social control in protecting the environment and enhancing the role of local customary leaders in supporting the tourism development. The paper concluded that tourism could be a solution to reduce poverty, especially through community-based tourism. Communities reap economic benefits from the tourism industry by the increase of local income, hence the social welfare. On the contrary, poor management may lead the emerging Merauke tourism into environmental ecosystem damage.

3. Methodology

The study cover's Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State where cultural heritage resources are in abundant ranging from oral tradition and expression such as language-storytelling, performing art such as dancing, singing, theatrics, and feasting, social practices, rituals, and festival events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, Knowledge and skills used to produce traditional craft. This research adopted an ethnographic research method using a qualitative approach to elicit information. The researcher adopted this method since; every research is designed to accomplish the researcher's objectives. Therefore, the qualitative method judged useful for this research is descriptive qualitative method. This method offers the researcher the opportunity to collect non-numerical information through an in-depth and insightful understanding of cultural heritage in Yala. Qualitative approaches are not concerned with the number of events but more interested in how and why the event happened. The qualitative techniques used are interview guide, in-depth interviews and field observation. The main instruments used for data collection are interview guide, in-depth interview, pen, camera and

field observation. In this type of interviews, the researcher and respondents are provided with the opportunity to interact face to face, the respondents are encouraged to talk freely of their experiences, beliefs and attitudes as they relate to the research problem. Secondary information was obtained from books, journals and some unpublished materials.

4. Data Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of Finding

4.1. Yala New Yam Festival

The new yam festival predates christianity and english civilization in Wogada land. Before every farming season each four-unit head must make sacrifices with animals to their ancestors. And before the harvest, all the farmers will donate a tuber of yam to celebrate and make sacrifices to the shrines (Ebina) Ebunukpabi. Yala settled in the dark ages for protection around 1940. Wogada people in their uniqueness decided to chart a new course because of their involvement in commercial activities with the Igbos decided to abandon Akpa and invested in Ebina *Ukpabi*. The grandfather of Tony Adoga was saddled with the responsibility of locating the gods and bringing the same to the community. He brought *Ebina Ukpabi* from "Obahe Isielu" to Wogada land around 1940 [1].

The celebration of new yam begins from *Apahi* the last settlement of Wogada on Akpakpa market day, Woleche will follow on *Ogidi* market while Ipoule Ebo are the last to celebrate the new yam at Ikor market day all the last market days to 30th of Aug. All farmers in the community must donate a tuber of yam before the EBINA SHRINE which is prepared for everyone willing to eat, it is an open celebration for all the clans in Wogada. Cassava food is not common these days mentioned anywhere in Wogada. We Christians now do ours by taking our first fruit to the altar on the 30th of Aug before celebration can start but we are careful not to defile our ancestral heritage.



Figure 1. maiden parade during the new yam festival.



Figure 2. New yams display in the market for sale.

The celebration of the yala new yam festival began from Wogada (Ebo) as a means of thanking God and welcoming the new yam as their major source of food crops. Therefore, Onah Oboh (the grandfather of Gab. Onah), deemed it right to extend the celebration to Okpoma (his new abode). He later introduces it to Okpoma, and other communities copied it, but was celebrating it separately from the original celebrant the Wogada (Ebo) people that was celebrating their new yam around the month of September the Okpoma people celebrated a month before July or August. The individual communities continued their celebration until the birth of Yala progressive union (YPU) under the leadership of Late Mr Ogar Okache, an early Educationist, unionist, community leader and a worthy Wogada son [1].

Yala elites were gathered together at Okpoma around early 1960 to chart a united course for Yala growth, unity and development and the idea of celebrating the new yam together was born. Though the celebration could not come to fruition in his life time because of the civil war but his younger generations of Educated elites, like *Ogalama Odey*, *Martin Ochu*, *AB Odey*, *Idea Onah*, *BC Onah* etc. and great farmers and thinkers like *Aburu Ojugdo*, *Ngaji Ebe*, *Idiku Odey* and *Ajah Odey* etc ensure that Yala unification came to be and the Yala new yam festival was fixed on the 30th August since 1970, the new yam festival is called *Ihi Onepepe*. This festival was so sacred to the people of Wogada who held it in very high esteem. Its celebration was second to none until the Advent of Christianity and the introduction of Christmas celebration. Up till 1950's the *Ihi Onipepe*, which is a new yam festival, has spread to Igbeku, Yache and Gabu to mention but few.

4.2. Etor Masquerade and the People of Wogada

Etor is a masquerade of wogada kingdom of yala local government area of cross river state it is also known as *Inyi Wayero* which means 'elephant come to farm', *Etor* masquerade perform in a very significant event such as

burial of an elderly man, king coronation, wogada day celebration. Many times Etor is displayed at the funeral of the cult members. The mask of the masquerade is carved out from wood with horn, in the mask, the mouth carries fresh grasses. The masquerade assumed a very pertinent height, with the advent of modernization, civilization and Christianity, threatening to wear away the traditions passed down to us by the forebearer. In the earlier mentioned festival *Etor* masquerades stage in a very dramatic and colourful costume and the elder of the cult takes the lead followed by the occult members and the spectators. At this point Etor is called into action by several gunshots. The drummer keeps on hailing him with the drum, then Etor in elephant nature continues to display. Because of the huge size of the masquerade, he begins to turn round, move to and fro and majestically toward the direction of the gunshot. At this point the masquerade session becomes dramatic activities which entice the entire spectators and visitors that are involved in the entertainment, the uniqueness of the masquerade pulls the interest of spectators in joining to sing, oh inyi wa yero, oh inyi wa-yero. As the masquerade is performing, the stage becomes interesting and the spectators are lifted with enthusiasm.



Figure 3. Etor masquerade displaying.

4.3. Otabala Traditional Dance

Otabala dance started under the head teacher Mr. Udenyi (late) in 1981 when the head teacher asked us to bring a unique and outstanding dance that can compete with others in children's day. And as a music/games master, I initiated the idea and the head teacher (Mr. Udenyi) raised money for me to purchase 3 flutes at Ogoja. During the process of test

running of the flute, late Ogar Agrinya, a friend, found meaning to the sound of the flute. I gave him one of the flutes and another teacher from Ukelle also picked a bottle and started using stick in beating the bottle, at this time we were three playing, at this stage it was still like *Ogene Jare*, at this process of arousing the interest of other people, Mr. Akpa Okache suggested the idea of using gun and drum with the flute, maybe it may become a dancing group, at that time we usually play every market day which is *Ogbada*, even those of the people asking questions of the meaning of the flute sounding, I had to initiate the idea of using our dialect in playing and blowing of the flute which is tin-tin-tin-tin-tin-tin-tin-tin (meaning Wogada children are brave as lion 2x).

On 27 May 1981, we went to Mfuma where Ukelle, Izzi and Yahe came for competition at the process of final judgement. Otabala came first, the panel confessed how meticulous the group are and that they have not seen this kind of dance before. Furthermore, we got a patron which is *Ogbor Omlegbe* by name. At this time the *Otabala* dance group got its fame and was invited for local government competition, it does not have a particular song, but it was borrowed across another traditional dance, *Ekpatura*, *Whohi* and *Akataka* with *Olohu*. *Otabala* has been taken to so many parts of this country to mention but a few; Ikom, Enugu, Bayelsa, Ogoja, Delta, Abakaliki, Yache, Igede, Benue State. Igbo people have a similar dance group, the name of flutes is *Ogaku*, *Ihiobo*. *Otabala* idea is borrowed from several communities of Igbo, Mfam dance group to form *Otabla* which is now one of the most award winning as far as traditional dance is concerned in Yala Local Government Area.



Figure 4. Otabala traditional dance.

Otabala dance is a warrior dance, sometimes it involves showing your strength. Today, Otabala is a spectacular dance that interests the majority of people whenever it is performed

either during burial/funeral of a member or marriage, coronation, chieftaincy title or any occasion they are invited to perform. Otabala dances are mainly for entertainment purposes. (see [Figure 4](#))

4.4. Ebina (Ebinukpabi)

Is a god of harvest before the new yam is being consumed by the indigenes, sacrifices are being made to appease the gods for a successful farming season and for a prolific harvest ahead? Ebina is a deity of Wogada Kingdom found within and around the premises of the sacred grove (Ebina) are iroko tree, palm tree, pear tree and some local leaves use in cooking during the ritual rite, also found within the area are stones for cooking posts, there are evident of blood, feather and left-over food around the premises, the deity is fenced with *Oga* (Ironwood) that have lasted for over 50 years.

Materials and items used for sacrifices are goat, chicken blood, feather, yams, palm oil, palm wine and different varieties of roots would be made available on the day of the ritual ceremony. More importantly, on the day of the ritual rite, the community/villagers go out in masses to clean the environment, and around the deities where it is situated. Every household is expected to donate one (1) tuber of yam each to use in preparing food at Ebina for the ritual ceremony. Ebina shrine is linked to the people of Igbo nation, Abia to be precise, where our ancestors acquired it from. Ebina holds a lot of good tidings for her people. The ritual rite of Ebina is carried out twice a year, during the rainy and dry season. (see [Figure 5](#))



[Figure 5](#). Ebina Shrine.

4.5. Udeyin Deities

Here sacrifices are made to appease the gods for granting them a successful planting and farming season. The rite is carried out before the farming and planting season of the year within the community. On no account of any farmer within the village is allowed or expected to plant yam before the ritual rite is done. Items used to carry out the sacrifices are chicken, kola, palm oil, palm fruit, including the head are scattered, heaping it in one place. Before this is done, the maidens of the village are summoned and convened, and are selected either two or three to carry a basket of palm fruit on their heads, behind them are the elders of the community including the chief priest walking around the village jingling bell. The maiden must be a virgin and must be half naked. As soon as they get to the end of the village, the palm fruit on the basket is being thrown to the ground, this is done at all the major entrances to the community. With this their belief that no power from the spiritual realm can invade the community with the mind of stealing the fertility and prolific harvest of the community from their farm produce can prevail. After the ritual rite is done, the farmer can proceed for planting for the farming season. (see [Figure 6](#))



[Figure 6](#). Udeyin deities.

4.6. Hand-axe

Hand-axe is an ancient stone tool that has two faces. It has been used long ago in the prehistory of human existence, it is a cracked stone reduced in this form, and used by the forebearers of the lower Acheulean and middle Paleolithic time, estimated to be at about 1.6 million and used by ancient people. The stone axe was stumbled upon during surface reconnaissance, where the ancient people of Yahe settled previously called Ipoule-Yahe. Oral tradition holds that, this ancient people have spiritual powers to cure various ailment ranging from madness, poison, attacked, snake bite, through

the uses of the goddess of the land in form of giant snake.

It could be the presence of stone axes found in the area, for tearing, choking, cutting of wood, animals and some domestic work or activities. The hand axe has flakes and is symmetrical in nature. Perhaps, the work of [5, 8] Opined that hand axes used mainly for tool cutting. The studies of [18, 15, 16] saw hand axes as a multipurpose tool also describing it to be Acheuleans Swiss Army knife while [22] and referred to it as a weapon or spiritually used. (see Figure 7)



Figure 7. Hand-axe.



Figure 8. Cinder.

4.7. Gravesite

It is a place where families of dead people are interred or buried. In the olden days, each family had an assigned place where the remains of the dead once or people would be interred. It can be referred to as a memorial site, it depicts a social fact of the past and present of a living community or family within and around them. (see figure 9)



Figure 9. Grave-side.



Figure 10. Grave-side.

According to an oral tradition the cemetery is particularly for the family of late chief Ogalana of the blessed memory. The informant reviews that place of interment of such is no longer in existence again. Elder Odey Chilo further explain on how certain death led to be buried in a reserve area such burial could be as a result of one died in accident, drown, fell from tree, died in the bush, he gave an instance that led to the abolishment of such burial in a reserve area, how five members of their illustrious family travelling to abroad died in plane crash and was to be interred in such area, brought a significant change to the history of the community which is been practiced till date.

5. Implications of Tourism to the Host Community

There are various direct impacts of cultural tourism to the host community linking to employment and income generation resulting from the activities associated with conservation and preservation of cultural heritage consumed by the tourist, items purchased as souvenir, tax on food and accommodation and other services offered are evident of indirect impact of tourism to the community. Through tourism the cultural heritage of the people of Yala will be safely guided for future generations. Tourism can also bring about community vitality. Here vitality is also used to help understand the strength of a communities, it could be seen as the ability of a community to sustain itself into the future as well as provide opportunity for its residents to pursue their own life goals and the ability of the residents to experience positive life outcome, cultural heritage tourism will provide positive economic outcome for members of the community

ranging from, job creation, revenue generation, support system, through the sales of souvenir. Economic opportunity that provides for the needs of individuals and the families such as household income. The interview revealed that if the identified heritage resources are developed by NCMM, NGO, destination developer or management, the community itself will benefit from the infrastructure, such as road, electricity, pipe bone water, hospital, school. NGO's can also get involved in developing and training some villagers, thereby renewing the hope of the people.

Challenges of cultural heritage

Cultural heritage of Yala Local Government is faced with the following short-coming such as bush burning, wildfire, vandalism, theft, and communal crisis. I witnessed how community deities were destroyed by pastors in the name of deliverance, in another instance I also saw where deities' resources were thrown into the river and immediately the river rises up, which causes uproar within the community.

6. Conclusion

Yala new festival which is the highest heritage in the history of Yala is celebrated every 30th of august following the sequence of activities such as cleaning and clearing of footpath, compound and the religious center of the communities. Families sow clothes for their children, football competition with political ward. Ritual rite is carried out to appease the gods of harvest, for prolific harvest of the year. At this time new yams are not taking to the market, but can be sold beside the market. On the 30th which is the celebration proper, pounded yams are cooked and eaten by family and friends with different assorted delicacies, preferable melon, afan soup. Guns are shot as traditions demand. The relevance of heritage to a place promotion is invaluable. As such efforts should be put in place to develop the cultural heritage of Yala people. The study reveals that, if the aforementioned cultural heritage resources are properly preserved and managed will result in community-based tourism, that will enhance the livelihood of the host community. The study also reveals some challenges of cultural heritage resources in Yala Local Government Area such as communal crisis, theft, vandalism, bush burning etc. Despite the cost brought by the tourism industry, the communities are willing to support the development of community-based tourism.

Abbreviations

Ebina Ebunukpabi
YPU Yala Progressive Union

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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