

# Management Challenges of Cultural Property in Nigeria

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## Abstract

The thrust of this article is to fill the lacuna in extant literature on the need to appraise the management of traditional/cultural properties in Ile-Ife (historical source of Yoruba race) in Nigeria and the need to ensure sustainability in order to register the values of the cultural identity for global appreciation. To accomplish the aim, questionnaires were administered on the stakeholders: traditional royal stools, museum staff and families of ancient priests (owners of sacred sites) to elicit information. The data obtained were analyzed using simple descriptive and inferential statistics. The study confirmed that the special properties' (sacred heritages) owners and royal stool (traditional rulers) are the most participating stakeholders in the management of cultural properties in Yorubaland. Also, there are three most influencing factors; lack of effective management plans/strategies, lack of continuity in the cultural heritage sustainability and lack of full participation of all the stakeholders in the sustainability of cultural heritages. It implies that the posterity, sustainability of cultural heritages is anchored on effective management strategy and the gradual neglect of special properties such as cultural heritages is tantamount to the loss of value and economic returns which could really create wider opportunities in the emerging economies.

**Keywords:** Cultural Properties, Heritages, Management, Challenges, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

## Introduction

In Nigeria, most recent research concentrates on the display of cultural artifacts for tourists' attraction and trace of historical antecedents. Much has not been yet deeply emphasized on management practice for posterity and sustainability purposes. The enormous and diversified heritages of Nigeria have not received adequate management attention that commensurate with the size and variety of heritage resources, nor their historical and aesthetic values which are of global significance beyond Nigeria (Olorunipa and Eboreime, 2000). Culture is a prestige

which has traditional pedigree attached to it. Culture can be a strong link to trace the lineage of an individual. Customs and traditions continue to be an invaluable source of information for historians of the African past. Oyeniyi (2008) posits that a vast amount of information and explanations in complex African issues can be found in these aspects of African culture. Culture refers to all customs and traditions, socio-economic and political groups of people who can be a minority or majority. These entail all institutions and structures which gave expressions to a people's entire way of life, their worldviews, etc and how these are transmitted from one generation to the other.

Cultural heritages have been examined as a major hallmark to assess the identity of ancient city in Nigeria (Osasona, et al, 2009). Every city is known to possess its own history which expresses an identity, a symbol and an image. In a country of 350 ethno-linguistic groups, only 61 monuments have been officially listed in the National Register and only one site enlisted into World Heritage List (Olorunnipa and Eboreime, 2000).

Today, the pace of land development and neglect of ancient heritages is perceived to influence the efficient management of the heritages. The location, conservation and preservation of cultural and natural resources of archaeological sites are of paramount importance to the level of success for a given area in attracting cultural heritage tourism (Olukole, 2007). Aside posterity, cultural heritages have been viewed as an avenue for attracting tourists in Nigeria. Olukola (2009) posits that tourism involves the 'sum of phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents in so far as they do not lead to permanent residence and are not connected with any earning activity to meet their bills (Marguba, 2001).

Effective management of tourism resources focuses on a spectrum of subjects, from archaeology and heritage sites to resorts and places of natural beauty. Setback sustained from management can also be traced to the movement of early settlers which consequently brought about a change in the culture of the people. Thus, the latter settlers appear to have had very little or no contact with the earlier occupants due to the hastily and unplanned departure of those earlier social groups as a result of regional conflicts.

In Southwestern Nigeria, Ile-Ife is an ancient city which presents several paradoxes. It is a traditional capital of Yorubaland, during the Golden Age of its evolution (i.e. 1086-1793) (Obateru, 2006). The survey confirmed that there are four hundred and one (401) sacred shrines in the legend city of Oduduwa (the progenitor of the whole human race (Fakinlede, 2005; Johnson, 2001; Obateru, 2006).

This study emanates from the perceived gradual neglect of cultural heritage, seeks to identify the influencing factors and pro-active management approach for future general documentation.

### **Cultural Properties.**

The establishment of cultural heritages as special properties in the developed nations of the world seeks to make manifest in reality (Starspirit, 2007). For instance, shrine is a sacred place of worship and remembrance of fallen heroes (Olukole, 2009; Starspirit, 2007; Aluko et al, 2008). A sacred site is a place, which is considered holy, and is partially or wholly reserved for magico-religious or ceremonial functions. The shrines were so widespread in traditional society and religious was the *raison deter* (Filane, 2003). According to the author, almost every family and community had some form of ancestral and divinity worship that demanded the use of shrines where the paraphernalia of worship and consecrated images were kept. "Shrines" as sacred site is wholly part of Yoruba real culture from time immemorial. The foregoing studies examined shrines as cultural properties. The sustainability approach which stemmed from the qualitative management is not addressed. If the likes of cultural properties are to be considered special to cultural existence in Nigeria as established by (Oyenyi, 2008; Osasona, 2009; Olorunnipa and Eboreime, 2000), it is important to consider the management responsibility as necessary in the economy. The location of cultural properties also describes the characteristic nature of their peculiarity in the society.

Filane (2003) established that shrines are usually located in sacred groves in secluded parts of family yards. The custodian ship of the shrines is the responsibility of family or community elders, who also serve as priests for each of the numerous divinities. The author further opined that the shrines artifacts were not seen as artworks; rather, they were family or communal objects of workshop that were consecrated to the spirit of the ancestors and the divinities. It never mattered who the artists or designers were, as individuals, they were anonymous and

responsible, not to themselves, but to the community.

The recognition of the centrality of shrines to traditional Yoruba worship, and its significance as a vehicle for the transmission of cultural heritage that led Susanne Wenger, an Austrian born, but naturalized Nigerian woman, to develop the traditional groves of Osun – Osogbo deities into an open-air shrine (James, 1994; Eboreime, 2000). Yet all the studies are description and explanation of cultural heritage, not the management issues which is the core subject of the study. In the research work of Aluko et al (2008), valuation of Yoruba sacred shrines, monuments and groves was empirically examined. The study which adopted a survey technique and simple descriptive statistic revealed that valuation process and the attendant problems in the assessment of compensation that fully equaled the pecuniary detriments faced by owners upon acquisition of these sites in the Yorubaland constitute a major challenge. This study strictly focused on the challenges of cultural heritages valuation which are far different from sustainability as the basis for effective management in Nigeria.

Olukole (2009) examined changing cultural landscapes and heritage tourism potentials of Ijaiye-Orile archaeological sites in Nigeria. The study which made use of secondary data, revealed that features of tourism potentials in the area include abandoned settlements of historical significance to the Yoruba people and the traditional industrial sites. The location, conservation and preservation of cultural and natural resources of archaeological sites are of paramount importance to the level of success for a given area in attracting cultural heritage tourism (Olukole, 2007). These studies however, emphasized on the display of artefacts and documentation of natural works of art. It is important to state that management aspects entails maintenance work of appurtenances, surveillance, sustainability of first-old-time identity, apportionment of service duties for effective preservation, proper marketing etc.

Akinade (1999) posits that the rampant loss, theft, and pillage of cultural property in Nigeria are the bulks of the cultural setback.

The study recommended pragmatic approaches on the frantic effort of the museum to salvage the nefarious activities. This study corroborates the fact that management is *sine qua non* to the sustainability of cultural values attached to the properties, yet constraints to the management are not empirically examined.

Olorunnipa and Eboreime (2000) identified and highlighted the immovable cultural heritage within a plural setting in Nigeria. According to the authors, variants of the cultural/traditional properties spreads across the various states of the nation and thus indicate the enormous cultural value that can be found in Nigeria. However, many of them are not yet documented. In Osun state, there are diverse cultural sites which attract tourists annually. Prominent among the sites, documented by Osun State Tourism Board

([www.osunstatetourism.org](http://www.osunstatetourism.org), [www.blacknationalities.org/tourism](http://www.blacknationalities.org/tourism)) are the following: National Museum in Ile-Ife (Plate V), Ooni's Palace (Plate VIII), *Agbonniregun* Temple(Plate XI), Oranmiyan Staff . Oranmiyan's staff which is about 5.27 meters high and made of granite and fastened with iron, is located at his grove. By tradition ever since, a newly crowned king of Ile-Ife (Ooni of Ife) is given his staff of office from the *Oranmiyan* grove. Ipetu-Ijesa Forest, Imesi-Ile Mysterious Carves and Rocks, Olumirin Waterfalls in Erin-Ijesa – The Erin garden is a substantial forest where waterfall is located. Water from the waterfalls is collected by locals and tourists also cherished its medicinal values. The waterfalls can boast of the state of the art recreational facilities and access to the waterfalls has been recently upgraded to accommodate for ever increasing tourists to the site. The Statute of *Owa Obokun*, Mineral Spring, The Ancient Wall Clock, *Ibodi* Forest Reserves (for Monkeys) – This reserve popularly known as "Igbo Edun" by the locals is in Ibodi town. *Ogedengbe* Cenotaph, Natural History Museum, *Baba Sigidi* Burst, *Igi-Nla* (a Mysterious Tree) – This tree can be found in Iwara.

The chief celebrant of the deity is the King, known as Awara of Iwara. The festival for the tree is held in a fallow thick forest where the tree can be found. It is locally believed

that the tree is a sacred tree in the whole of the South-West of Nigeria. Mineral Spring, Embroidery Works (Local Industry), *Odududwa* Shrine (Plate IX) and Grove, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), *Oluorogbo* Temple, Resorts De Paradise. Zoological Garden, Akalako Monument, *Eko-Ende* Water Front (Oore Dam), Oloku Festival, *Kiriji* Memorial Battle Field, Museum of Arts and Archival Materials (Ile-Ona), Nike Art Gallery, Genesis Art Gallery, *Dokun-Dosa* Lake, *Timi Agbale* Monument, *Ayikunnugba* Waterfall – The Water Falls was discovered by a hunter who after shooting a rare and bizarre animal known as “Nugba” looked for the animal to pick it up. But the animal had already rolled down a hill, the hunter decides to follow the traces of the animal and found the Waterfalls and named it *Ayinkunugba* meaning where the animal “Nugba” rolled and died. The Waterfalls can be found in a substantial forest but requires a descent from the hill. Waterfalls set in spectacular landscape of mountains, caves and trees. Susan Wenger Gallery, Warm Water Spring, Twin Seven Seven Art Gallery, Talking Drum, *Osun Osogbo* Sacred Gove and World Heritage Site, Ancient Palace of *Ataoja*, National Museum Osogbo, *Jimoh Buraimoh* Art Gallery, Oke Baba Abiye, Late Oyin Adejobi's House, *Oke Maria* (Mary's Mountain) - A spiritual site in Otan Ayegbaju that is a pilgrimage to Catholic faithful all over the world started through a vision from God. Carved Poles, Late Duro Ladipo (Mbari Mbayo), *Ori-Oke Ikoyi* (Prayer Mountain) – The late founder of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) Apostle Ayo Babalola founded this prayer mountain in 1927. It was on this mountain the clergyman prayed fervently before the CAC revival in 1930 in Ilesa. The mountain has since become a prayer place for people looking for spiritual enlightenment. *Oke-Iragbiji* Shrine and Caves, *Orangun* Palace Museum, Naturally Carved Foot Prints, Cenotaph Memory of Captain Bower, *Ipole* an ancient Palace of *Owa Obokun*, *Ogiyan* Shrine, *Atamora* Cave and Bird Watching Centre, Artist Co-operative Gallery, *Onirese* Calabash and Antiquity Centre, *Ope Olori* Meta (Three Headed Palm Tree), St. Joseph Arts and Crafts and Natural Museum (OAU) (Plate XII).

It is important to state that the focal point of this study is not to provide the historical records of cultural properties but the management of the structures or shed which house them. This concept is well discussed in the course of literature review in this study.

### Management of Traditional Sacred Institutions

Management is the art of making effective use of resources to achieve stated goals. It concerns planning, coordinating and implementing all aspects of an organizations operation in a matter which fulfills the organization's aim (Thorncroft, 1967). Lynn and Schenck (2008) described management as a way of getting work done through the effort of others. It is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives. Mitch (2004) examined management as a process of forming a strategy and the implementation and executing the strategy. Two principal management model are formed namely; industrial organizational approach which entails competitive rivalry, resources allocation and economies of scale and sociological approach which entails human behaviour, rationality and profit sub-optimally. However, two basic theories underline the concept of management; efficiency and effectiveness. Again management can either be 'bottom up', top bottoms or collaborative process. It could be autocratic consultative and democratic.

The practice of management however, entails the operations of a number of organizations and determining which one is most successful. In relation to traditional sacred institutions, this could be viewed in term of cultural way of administration, covering the non-collective aspects of the museum's operations, like salaries and business dealings, sustaining and maintaining the existence of the deities for posterity, cultural identity, monumental records, tourism attraction and maintenance of cultural values in this industrialized world. Management is often referred to as conservation or preservation of heritage. Zancheti and Hidaka (2011) researched on the measurement of urban heritage conservation. The study which adopted

theoretical approach presented the main concepts used as key performance indicators, which include significance, integrity and authenticity. This opinion however, is narrowly directed to preservation or conservation.

The concept of management extends beyond this scope. Sarah Staniforth (2000) and Vinas, (2005) opined that sustainable conservation entails passing on and maintaining maximum significance of an heritage to future generation. Zancheti and Jokilehto(1997) confirmed that the conservation of urban sites, unlike the conservation of archaeological sites or of works art, deals with objects, their attributes and processes because urban sites are basically living sites, in which the presence of humans is essential for their existence. It is important to state that many of these sites are characterized with some unique identities (Orna, 1994;Smith 2006).According to the authors, the heritage consists of those objects and processes which society recognizes as being important to be passed from the present generation to future generations. ICOMOS (1999) examines conservation as a process of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance. In other word the word 'conservation' is viewed in term of maintaining meaning and values of culture, that is sustainability (Vinas, 2005). Yet, the foregoing studies did not examine any iota of management challenges of cultural/traditional properties. Management responsibilities are normatively the collective roles of all the stakeholders of these special service properties which even extend beyond the concept of mere conservation. However, administration has being the responsibility of a small, select group nowadays. The emphasis of UNESCO today is the need to effectively manage sites (UNESCO/WHC, 2006 and 2007).

In the management of shrines(sacred sites) in Nigeria, some numbers of stakeholders are involved; priest of the shrines, royal stool, original ancient owners (families) and museum (for the purpose of documentation for references).As a natural victim of these cultural heritages, the author of this study identify the following roles as part of management issues of cultural properties;

good protection of the site (in the form of a strong fence),routine preservation, Repair of the gods,/goddesses' house observation of usual praise for sustainable identity, sustaining the cultural/traditional identity of ancient structures, washing/sweeping of the site, repair of the shrine house, observation of annual/seasonal festival, financial commitment of assignment, security of the site, marketing/ public awareness through the conduct of empirical research etc. The foregoing roles provide the basis for this study in one of the areas mostly vulnerable with cultural properties in Nigeria, Ile-Ife-traditional source of all Yoruba race.

### **Neglect of Cultural Properties Management and the Economic Impact.**

The significance of cultural properties towards economic development of Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. It is normatively expected to be a major source of revenue generation. The Centre for Black Culture and International Understanding, Osogbo (CBTU)(2010) realized the fact that despite globalization and its attendant accomplishment, heritage information on Africa are mostly of the dark, colonial days, rather than project the positive of Africa rich culture. The emphasis on tourism as economic boost is now a topical issue that requires a proper attention in Nigeria. Akinade (1999) posits that the carting away of the priceless artworks of Nigeria in the first instance is an economic loss. The act of buying them back by Nigeria is contribution to an economic shortage and is bad business. Only restitution enforced by UNESCO can remedy the always terrible situation (UNESCO, 2006).

Todaro(1993) describes economic development as a multi-dimensional process involving the re-organisation and reorientation of the entire economic and social systems. This agrees with the opinion of Rao and Walton ([www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)) that development economists are concerned with cultural prosperity. Also, Ojimuruaye (2005), Olorunfemi and Raheem (2008) affirmed that there is relationship between economic development and culture in a developing economy like Nigeria. In Osun state, cultural sites have contributed immensely to economic and cultural growth.

For instance, Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove is major part of National Tourism development Master Plan that was established with World Tourism Organization (WTO) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The tourism potentials in Osun State, are limitless: it is home to many indigenous towns and villages that boast of existence of more than 500 years and many of them are more than 1000 year old, and these historic legacies come with a rich culture, history, monument, artifacts and legends. There are not less than 63 tourist centres and monuments in Osun State, from which the Osun grove has been designated by UNESCO as a World Heritage (Osun State Tourism Board, 2010). The Grove will also serve as a model of African heritage that preserves the tangible and intangible values of the entire Yoruba race. Osun state as a source of pride, the Grove remain a living thriving heritage that has traditional landmarks and a veritable means of transfer of traditional religion, and indigenous knowledge systems, to African people in the Diaspora. Besides the revival of the sector, the state government's intention is to improve its revenue base by N7.5 billion by 2015. According to deputy governor, Laoye-Tomori (2012), *"Our target is to bring in 4000 tourists from the Diaspora in 2012 from which we hope to realise N1.5billion. In 2013, we hope to increase the traffic to 10,000 and rake in N3.6 billion. By 2014, the figure would jump to 15,000 and our projected revenue would be 5.6 billion. In 2015, we would have hit the 20,000 mark and attain N7.5 billion in revenue. This projection was made on the rate of \$2500 per tourist, but it is hoped that this would increase with improved services and goods. Our unique selling advantage is in packing Osun State as the cradle of Yoruba civilisation and our target market is the Yoruba nation at home and the Diaspora"*.

### Research Setting

Ile Ife, in the Yoruba creation myth is the spot where Obatala (a god) arrived on earth, having climbed down a chain from heaven, charged by God to make the first man (Obateru, 2006). There are many stories

about this episode involving chickens and sand, palm wine and trickery, but what is clear is that whatever happened, *it all began at Ile Ife*. The traditional Ife city, schematically, could be described as a wheel, with the *oba's* palace as the hub, from which roads radiated like spokes, and in relation to which the en-framing town wall represented the rim (Krapf-Askari, 1969). The classical Yoruba town was invariably characterized by the principal market being centrally-located, and in front of the paramount ruler's house – reminiscent of classical Hellenic Greek (Wycherly, 1967) and Middle-Eastern practices (Ismail, 1972)

As the traditional capital of Yoruba-land, during the Golden Age of its evolution (i.e. 1086-1793), Ile-Ife teemed with religious, civil and military leaders (the nobles) and "an assemblage of artisans and skilled craftsmen" (Obateru, 2006: 27). According to Obateru (2006) the city had a population of between 64,000 and 94,000. This figure was put by Obateru (2007) for Old Oyo, during the same period, at between 200,000 and 826,000). Histo-culturally, Ife's prominence hinges on two significant phenomena namely the history and ethnicity. The town is popularly referred to as *orisun* – the source of – Yoruba). The city centre held tenaciously to its cultural relevance, with the *Olojo* (Ogun) Festival being the high-point of the Ifes' annual cycle of traditional religious rituals. For this festival in particular, the cultural axis taking its source from the palace was extra-significant, as the procession that culminated in the actual sacrificial rites at the Ogun Shrine.

According to Fakindele (2005), there are 401 Oosa (gods and goddesses-sacred sites) in Ile-Ife. Though, many of these shrines are still not documented. However, the compressive history of the *source* (*Orisun*) might not complete without proper documentation through effective management. Plates 1 to VIII present the array of cultural/traditional properties (sacred sites) in Ile-Ife. Hence, the deterioration and deplorable state of the properties provides the basis for this study.



**Plate 1: Oke Mogun Shrine and Ife City Hall**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate II: Approach View of Oke Mogun Shrine(god of Iron)**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate III: Oke Mogun Shrine**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate IV: Ile-Oodua (The Monarch Palace Entrance).**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate V: National Museum Ile-Ife (Cultural Property)**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate VI: Ooni of Ife's Palace Residential Apartment (Cultural Properties)**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate VII: Dilapidated Shed.**  
**Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013**

The shed, (Plate VII) is located at the transitional zone of the ancient town of Ile-Ife. It was confirmed in the course of the field work that, the shed is actually owned by a local sculptor, instigated to encourage maintenance of existing cultural properties, but at the annual festival parade of *olojo*, the celebrants do converge at the spot, while the masquerades display power with live dog and cutlass in hand, until the dog

disappears. The performance of this display turns the location to a place of sanctity, a meeting point of action, which is locally referred to as god and goddesses temple. This acronym, however, is not officially documented. The basic reason for displaying this plate is the quest to emphasize the deplorable condition of cultural properties which could be improved beyond this level through an organized and effective management approach.



**Plate VIII: Core Extension of the Palace (Traditional Building) Ile-Ife.**  
**Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013**



**Plate IX: Oodua Shrine(The Progenitor of Yoruba Race)**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate X: Ifa (god of divinity) Temple, Ile-Ife**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate XI: Agbonmiregun Temple**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate XII: Natural History Museum OAU, Ile-Ife (Cultural Property)**  
Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013



**Plate XIII: Palace Structure Showing Moremi's Edifice**  
**Source: Authors' Field Survey, 2013**

There are other cultural properties which could not be covered in the course of the rigorous field survey.

### **Research Methodology**

The study was conducted among the stakeholders; traditional rulers, shrines family owners, and museum staff. Information was elicited on the various facets of shrine management practice and the implication.

Questionnaires backed up with interview were administered on 10 concerned traditional rulers (royal stools), identified 100 ancient owners of shrine (family) and 122 staff of museums in Osun State, Southern Nigeria. Effort was made to recover the 10 questionnaires administered on traditional rulers to the families of shrine owners. Out of 100 questionnaires

administered on the families of cultural properties (shrines), owners 80 (80%) were returned valid. Out of 122 questionnaires to the museum staff, 100 (82%) were recovered valid. The foregoing feedback supports the reliability of the data collected for the study. However, the reliability of the study anchored on the accuracy of the information convincingly believed to have been supplied in the course of this study being the primary raw data. Also being a grassroot research that upholds culture of the society, there was sampled keen interest from the respondents to response to the study appropriately.

In an attempt to identify the level of participation of the stakeholders in the management of sacred sites, Table II presents the demographic features of the respondents

**Table II: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Features		Shrine Owner- Family	Traditional Rulers	Museum Officials
Sex:	Male	70	10	85
	Female	10	-	15
Educational Background:	Primary	40	2	5
		20	2	15
	Secondary/Modern Tertiary	10	6	80
Religion:	Christianity	-	-	50
	Islam	-	-	40
	Traditional belief	60	-	10
	All	20	10	

Source: Field Survey, 2013

Table II indicates the response rate in the questionnaire survey conducted. It shows that male (87%) dominates the gender status of the research respondents. It also shows that the majority of the respondents possessed tertiary education qualifications (51%) and more of them are attached to traditional religion (37%). The response rate, hence further justifies the suitability of the

data in achieving the stated aim of the study.

#### **Analysis of Data and Findings.**

The level of participation in the management parlance of traditional properties was examined. Table III presents the result of the analysis.

**Table III: Level of Participation in the Management (Administration) of Sacred Site (Shrines).**

Stakeholders	5(%)	4(%)	3(%)	2(%)	1(%)	N	Mean
Shrine-Owners' Family	60(75.0)	10(12.5)	10(12.5)	-	-	80	4.625
Royal Stool	4(40.0)	2(20.0)	2(20.0)	2(20.0)	-	10	3.800
Museum Officials	-	-	5(5.0)	80(80.0)	15(15.0)	100	1.900
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>10.325</b>

Source: Filed Survey, 2013.

Note: Very High (5), High (4), Satisfactory (3), Low (2), Very Low (1)

The result in Table III indicates that the shrine owners' families are more involved the upkeep of cultural sacred sites(4.625) and followed by Royal stools in the land (3.800).The result of the Museum officials confirm that their level of participation is very low. This implies that the maintenance and sustenance of sacred sites in Yoruba land were solely remained the responsibility of the ancient time owners and the *Obas (traditional rulers)* of the land. The study further examined the factors influencing the management plan of the sacred sites in Yoruba land. Table IV presents the result of the analysis. Here, in addition to the descriptive statistics, inferential statistic-Relative Importance Index (RII) is adopted to assess the impact of the identified factors.

Relative Importance Index, RII is determined as given below:

$$RII = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^5 ni - ki}{N - Rh}$$

Where,  
*Ni* is the number of respondents choosing *ki* = 1-n on the Likert scale.

*N* is the total of questionnaire collected, and *Rh* is the highest value in ranking order. Relative Importance Index is a statistical tool used to measure the relative impact or importance or significance of factors as affecting a subject matter. It ranks the impact or significance level of variables on a subject matter. The closer the result to the highest scale, the stronger the relative importance and vice versa. This study adopted 5 point Likert Scale, from 1(Neutral) to 5(strongly agreed).

**Table IV: Relative Importance of the Management Challenges of Cultural Properties in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.**

Factors	5	4	3	2	1	N	Mean	RII
-Level of education	09	28	75	70	7	189	2.799	0.56
-Religious belief	61	79	18	16	16	190	3.80	0.761
-Financial constraint	62	70	20	20	16	188	3.755	0.751
-Lack of continuity in cultural Heritages' sustainability	80	60	19	16	15	190	3.916	0.783
-Lack of full participation of all stakeholders	60	80	19	16	14	189	3.825	0.765
-Emerging urban renewal or redevelopment which erodes important sacred sites	71	61	16	22	20	190	3.763	0.753
-Lack of substantial international involvement in the management of sacred sites in the region	50	60	40	30	10	190	3.579	0.716
-Land conflict and community dispute	62	48	35	35	10	190	3.615	0.723
-Lack of effective management plan/strategies	70	70	21	25	4	190	3.932	0.786
-Poor documentation of existing sacred sites	79	61	20	15	15	190	3.811	0.762
-National economy trauma which erodes concen-								

tration on culture	62	70	20	19	18	189	3.735	0.747
-Effective civilization/ modernism	71	61	16	21	21	190	3.737	0.747
-Hatred for the cultural identity	50	60	40	30	09	189	3.592	0.719

Source: Field Survey and Analysis 2011

Note: strongly agreed=5, agreed=4, disagreed=3, strongly disagreed=2, neutral=1.

The result in Table IV indicates that lack of effective management plan (RII= 0.786), lack of continuity in cultural heritage sustainability (RII = 0.783) and lack of full participation of the stakeholders in the management of cultural heritages are the major factors influencing the management of cultural heritage (shines) in Yoruba land. These factors can therefore be considered as strongly important towards managing cultural properties. It is evident in this study that these results are interrelated; if there is no willingness on the parts of the stakeholders-government, ancient owners and royal stools (Obas/Baale) on the management of these special properties, there would not be any strategic management plan and consequently, the idea of continuity is thrown off. This implies that the continuity and sustenance of cultural heritages is anchored on the management strategies and administration capability of the stakeholders. This perfectly agrees with the opinion of Lynn and Schenck (2008) and Mitch (2004) while examining the concept and significance of effective management. Other factors are poor documentations of existing site (0.762), religious belief (0.761), emerging urban renewal and redevelopment (0.753), financial constraint (0.751), National economic trauma (0.747), effect of civilization/modernism (0.747), land conflict/dispute (0.723) and hatred for the cultural identity (0.719). Hence, the foregoing results indicate that varied factors jointly contribute to the disappearing of the cultural identities attached to Yoruba ancient belief on sacred heritages in Yorubaland in Nigeria.

### Conclusion

This study confirmed that shrine owners' families and royal stool (traditional

rulers) are the most participating stakeholders in the preservation and maintenance of sacred site (shines) in Yorubaland. The study has also confirmed that there are three most influencing factors; lack of effective management plans/strategies, lack of continuity in the cultural heritage sustainability and lack of full participation of all the stakeholders in the sustainability of cultural heritages in Yorubaland. The study further confirmed that the level of education is the least influencing factors among other factors.

Against this backdrop, the following measures are recommended for implementation in order to sustain the rich cultural identities of Yorubaland in Nigeria. The sustainability (i.e. conservation and preservation) responsibility of cultural heritage (shrines) should be spread across multi stakeholders with specific goals. The need for effective regulations to protect the cultural heritages (sacred sites). Proper documentation of known sacred sites in Yorubaland will help to attract international tourists. The need for cooperation among stakeholders – governments, community, shrine ancient owners, and royal stools (Obas/Chiefs). There is a need to link up with the UNESCO convention on safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritages. The scope of operation of national museum should be extended to documentation and overseeing of shrines in Nigeria.

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