

Archaeotourism and Archaeological Heritage in Igboland, Nigeria

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Abstract

The economic and conservative values associated with archaeotourism have drawn limited academic attention in developing nations like Nigeria. This form of tourism bridges the gap between archaeology and the public; draws public attention to archaeological sites and as well generates funds. This study reviews some archaeological studies in Igboland, document potential archaeotourism resources/sites in the area, and discusses the challenges and prospects of archaeotourism in Igboland in south-eastern Nigeria. Secondary sources and in-depth interviews were used to generate data. The archival study of archaeological studies in the area reveals Archaeotourism as a neglected tourism niche worthy of exploration by tourism stakeholders within the study area and beyond. It, however, offers mutual and collaborative benefits to archaeology and tourism scholars, income to host communities, government, and archaeology and tourism stakeholders. Although there are some limitations, these can be surmounted. The implication of the study is that archaeotourism designed to align with the socio-economic cum socio-cultural milieu of Igboland seems a probable path for sustainable archaeological heritage management in the 21st Century, and an opportunity to boost tourism.

Keywords: Archaeo, tourism, archaeological heritage, potential, Igboland, Nigeria

Introduction

The concept of archaeotourism is one of the new subsets of tourism, with the capacity to generate funds for archaeological researches and conservation, jobs and as well boost economy (Srivastava, 2015; Verkerk, 2017). Archaeotourism attracts visitors and tourists to archaeological resources such as historic places, abandoned settlements sites, caves, among others, with the purpose of appreciating and learning about cultures and history (Cahyadi, 2016). Ekechukwu (2002) suggests that tourism can help in developing archaeological sites, but studies linking archaeological sites and tourism seems scarce. Therefore, a study on tourism and its value or relevance to archaeological heritage in Igboland with emphasis on Anambra and Enugu State has become necessary. Archaeological studies are usually embedded with archaeological jargons that are not easily understandable to an average reader (Ogundele, 2014), and similar studies in Igboland are no exception. What happens to archaeological sites after an archaeological study is rarely the interest of archaeologists except where the site holds some socio-cultural values to host communities; examples are Odinaso in Opi (a deified location filled with slags) and Otobo-Dunoka in Lejja (a sacred place with many socio-cultural



values) both in Enugu State. These two communities preserve the sites as a result of the values they hold; unlike the Igbo-Ukwu sites in Anambra State which are hardly recognized or maintained.

We are theorizing that adding tourism to archaeological sites in Igboland will aid in the conservation of archaeological sites, generate traffic via tourists/visits and invariably popularize the sites; the visits will yield income for communities, government and archaeologists. This study is set to review archaeological studies in Igbo land *vis-à-vis* tourism, list potential archaeotourism sites in Igboland (Enugu & Anambra) and discuss the challenges and prospects of archaeotourism in Igboland. Archaeological heritage in Igboland was brought to limelight with the discovery and excavation at Igboukwu, Anambra state by Thurstan Shaw in 1959-1960 (Odum, Onyemechalu & Oji, 2018a). Other excavations have been carried out in the area by different scholars in different locations: examples are Lejja by P. I. Eze-Uzomaka (Eze-Uzomaka, 2009), Okigwe-Nsukka cuesta by A. M. Ibeanu (Ibeanu, 2006; Ekechukwu, 2002) to mention but a few. Other studies on archaeology focused on public archaeology. For example, Eze-Uzomaka (1996) did a study on archaeological communications in Nsukka area (Odum et al., 2018a) and highlighted the need to involve the community where archaeological studies were carried out by communicating the result of the research to host communities.

Literature review

Archaeotourism

Archaeological data abound in Igboland but due to poor or no knowledge of the term, the people that occupy the area have little or no interest in it. Archaeological inquiry in south-eastern Nigeria gained prominence with the excavation at Igboukwu, Anambra State by Thurstan Shaw (Anozie, 2002 in Odum et al., 2018a). While within the Nsukka culture area, Donald Dean Hartle was credited to have carried out extensive excavations in the area (Nzewunwa, 1983). The early 60s and 70s saw to extensive archaeological investigations in Igboland: Isi Ugwu Obukpa, Agric farm - University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Okpe Igara I&II (Hartle, 1964 cited in Nzewunwa 1983); Igboukwu (Igbo Richard - burial chamber of Eze-Nri, Igbo Isaiah - store-house of regalia, Igbo Jonah - series of disposal pits) (Shaw, 1960; 1965a) ironworking technology in Lejja and Umundu (Anozie, 1979) among others. Excavations are still being carried out within and around Nsukka axis and beyond by National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM), Staff and students of Archaeology and Tourism Department, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The latter do that mainly as part of the academic requirements for students and academic engagements.

Origin of archaeotourism

The urge to visit archaeological sites such as places of ruins and historical values is an age-long leisure practice which has been witnessed in archaeological ruins of the Greeks, Maya temple, Egyptian pyramids (Verkerk, 2017) and within Igboland: especially war zones, slave-routes, houses and palaces of wealthy individuals like Chief Odo's palace and Onyema's brick house in Enugu State; Odum's family shrines at Mbaukwu, Ikolo and Chief Adichie's house Eziowelle both in Anambra State.

Benefits of archaeotourism

- (i) Archaeological tourism creates awareness about an archaeological destination that may have been unpopular; this increased awareness generates visitors which will have multiplier effects on the host community;
- (ii) Archaeotourism destinations can attract both local and international communities thereby leading to its conservation and management;



- (iii) Srivastava (2015) added that revenue is one of the major attributes of archaeotourism; tour operators, national and local communities enjoy and share income from entrance fees and taxes on other tourism-related establishments like hotels, restaurants, local crafts and souvenir shops. She went further to integrate other values like educational, conservative and developmental benefits. It helps to educate the public about cultures and modern science, attract public support for preservation initiatives.

This study adopts archaeotourism to mean, the utilization of tourism prospects of archaeological resources to enhance tourist arrivals, generate income for host communities, government and archaeologists; as well as enhance conservation of archaeological resources being used for mutual benefits between archaeology and tourism to ensure sustainability.

Materials and methods

The study used in-depth interview and documentary approach. The latter entails a study of post-graduate thesis written on archaeology and archaeology related topics, journal articles, monographs and book chapters in libraries of Archaeology and Tourism Department, and Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, both in University of Nigeria, Nsukka. These publications comprise mainly journal articles and book chapters of which the latter is more in number; doctoral dissertations, and Masters Theses. These categories of literature were chosen because of the need to ensure authenticity, and credibility which are vital elements when using documentary sources (Scott, 1990). A total of thirty-eight (38) archaeological publications based on the afore-written variables were got and used in computing categories of literature concerning archaeological studies in table 1. The total number, denoted as N-38, was used for working out the percentage (%) representation of different categories of literature concerning archaeotourism and archaeological studies in the study area. The essence of using documentary sources was to review what scholars have done in the area of archaeotourism or related studies within the study area. Semi-structured interview guide was developed for the study to elicit data on the following:

- (i). Use of archaeotourism and as means of propagating, conserving and generating money for archaeological resources;
- (ii). Impacts of developing archaeological sites for tourism purposes;
- (iii). Prospects and challenges of developing archaeotourism in Igboland.

The interviews were conducted with the staff and curators of National Museums in Enugu and Anambra (two curators, two education officers, two archaeologists and two exhibition officers) and five academic staff of Archaeology and Tourism Department University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State. This department was chosen because it is the only department that teaches archaeology in south-eastern Nigeria. The interview sections lasted 45 minutes each. Other correspondences with curators of both museums were via emails and WhatsApp discussion. These means were more convenient for the researchers and curators. The study lasted for a period of six months. Data from the documentary study was presented and analysed using tables and simple percentages while interviews were discussed based on themes that emerged in the course of discussion with interviewees, and literature review. All these were interwoven and discussed from a pragmatic perspective.

Igboland is geographically located in the south-eastern region of Nigeria and is home to the Igbo speaking people of the country. It is made up of five states - Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo. It is divided by the lower Niger River into two unequal sections – an eastern axis (which is the larger of the two) and a western section (Slattery, 2016). Igboland covers a very large expanse of land approximately 40,900-41,400km²(15,800 to 16,000 sq m) (Edeh, 1985; Uchendu, 1965), as a result, it will be difficult to cover the whole area, thus, the purposive

sampling method was used to select two states: Anambra and Enugu States to serve as representative of the study area. The major reasons that informed our choice of the study area were first, the historic and traditional relationship that exists between the two states. Secondly, they were once under one state sharing the same political and administrative structures until 1991 when they became independent states. Thirdly, the states have the largest number of concentrated archaeotourism resources that have the potential for archaeotourism development as well as the diverse nature of the resources.

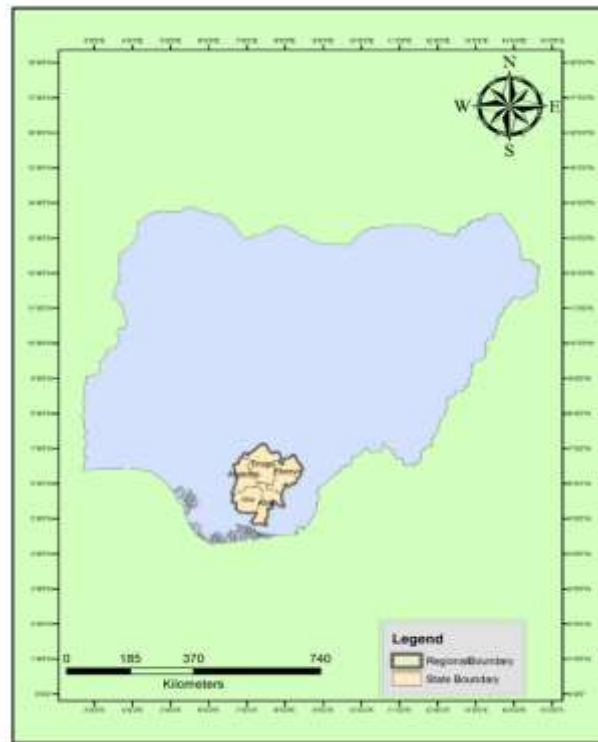


Figure. 1 Map of Nigeria showing Igboland

Results

Archival study of archaeological studies within Anambra and Enugu states as documented reveals the following: 21% were doctoral theses, 18% Masters Theses and 61% constitute (N-38) journal articles and book chapters. The topics discussed in each category with the authors are detailed in table 1. Archaeological studies in Igboland are focused mainly on iron workings within Nsukka axis and archaeological values of Nsukka-Okigwe cuesta. Other archaeological studies in Igboland have paid little or no attention to the tourism dimensions of archaeological sites which form archaeotourism resources in the region. The dearth of archaeotourism discussion in archaeological studies prior to the year 2000 till now might not be unconnected with the interest and core content of archaeology as a discipline in Nigeria.

Archaeological studies in Igboland after Thurstan Shaw were probably championed by scholars from the University of Ibadan and University of Nigeria Nsukka. The growth of archaeology in eastern Nigeria is credited to Professor Donald D. Hartle, an Archaeologist in the University of Nigeria, although archaeology was domiciled in the Department of History before it became a full-fledged department in 1981 (Department of Archaeology and Tourism Student Hand Book (2016). The core interest of Nigerian archaeology over the past fifty years aims at studying living traditions not only by focusing on cultures and societies of the past 3000 years (Ogundiran, 2016), but extending the horizons of known history (Eluyemi 1989 cited in Ogundiran, 2016).



The background above showed that lack of archaeotourism in archaeological studies was necessitated by the objective(s) of the discipline which has no tourism focus. Archaeological relics are, however, potential archaeotourism resources which can be harnessed for both archaeological and tourism interest. This appears to be a global trend, because, it has become a booming tourism sector in Egypt, Mexico, Italy, Peru, Cambodia, and India (Srivastava, 2015), South Africa, with associated benefits.

Table 1: Some archaeological related studies in Igboland from 1960-till date

S/no	Topic	Year	Author	Status
1	Afikpo excavations: Ugwuagu rock shelter (site I) and the abandoned habitation (site II)	1976	Chikwendu, V. E	Ph. D Thesis
2	Ethnoarchaeological investigations in parts of Anambra Valley	1982	Okpoko, A. I.	Ph. D Thesis
3	Early Iron smelting in Nsukka-Nigeria: information from slags and residues	1992	Okafor, E.E.	Ph. D Thesis
4	Ethno-archaeological investigations in the Beginnings of Agriculture and metal working in Nsukka Division	1998	Ezike, J. N.	Ph. D Thesis
5	A contribution to the archaeology of Okigwe and its environs	2000	Ibeanu, A. M.	Ph. D Thesis
6	Land use and the spatial distribution of archaeological sites in the Nsukka-Okigwe cuesta, South-Eastern Nigeria.	2001	Ezeadichie, E. U.	Ph. D Thesis
7	Tourism potentials of archaeological sites in Igboland: Nsukka-Okigwe cuesta as a case-study	2002	Ekechukwu, L. C.	Ph. D Thesis
8	An archaeology of Onyohor, Ekwegbe and Obimo of the old Nsukka division	2012	Itanyi, E.I.	Ph. D Thesis
9	A study of Iron-working in Orba-Nsukka	1984	Okafor, E. E.	Masters Dissertation
10	Traditional iron smelting and blacksmithing in Idoha	1988	Ekechukwu, L. C.	Masters Dissertation
11	Inyi: probable center for Igboukwu pottery	1984	Ibeanu, A. M.	Masters Dissertation
12	Iron technology in Igboland: a case study of Aku	1989	Ezike, J.N.	Masters Dissertation
13	Early Iron working in Obeagu-Awgu	1987	Ezeadichie, E.U.	Masters Dissertation
14	Techniques of yam cultivation and preservation and their implications for archaeological reconstruction in Igboland (Igbo-etiti Local Government area as a case study) an ethnoarchaeological approach	1990	Itanyi, E. I.	Masters Dissertation
15	Archaeological Communications in the Nsukka Area	1996	Ezeuzomaka, P.I.	Masters Dissertation
Journal articles/ Book chapters				
16	An archaeological survey of eastern Nigeria	1965	Hartle, D.D.	Journal Article
17	Archaeology in eastern Nigeria	1967	Hartle, D.D.	Journal Article
18	Igboukwu:an account of archaeological discoveries in eastern Nigeria	1971	Shaw, T.	Journal Article
19	Excavation at Umuekete Aguleri: A preliminary Report	1976	Anene, J. C.	Journal Article
20	Contributions of archaeology to the understanding of Igbo culture	1977	Anozie, F.N.	Conference Proceedings
21	Excavation in Aguleri	1977	Anozie, F.N.	Journal Article
22	Discovery of a major prehistoric site at Ugwuele, Uтуру Okigwe	1978	Anozie, F. N. et al.	Journal Article
23	Early Iron Technology in Igboland: Lejja and Umundu	1979	Anozie, F.N.	Journal Article
24	Local sources of raw materials for the Nigerian bronze/brass industry: with emphasis on Igboukwu	1979	Chikwendu, V. E. & Umeji, A. C.	Journal Article
25	Settlement archaeology in the Anambra River Valley	1979	Okpoko, A. I.	Journal Article
26	The occurrence of 'wasted' stone axes/Adzes in Eastern Nigeria	1979	Chikwendu, V. E.	Journal Article



27	Encouraging national development through the promotion of tourism: The place of archaeology	1990	Ekechukwu, L. C.	Journal Article
28	New C ¹⁴ ages from Nsukka Nigeria and the origins of African metallurgy	1992	Okafor, E.E. & P. Philips	Journal Article
29	Archaeological surveys of Okigwe and its environs, Eastern Nigeria: A preliminary report	1993	Okpoko, A. I. & Ekechukwu, L. C.	Journal Article
30	Ethnoarchaeological investigations in Ihube, Okigwe Local Government Area, Imo State, Nigeria	1994	Okpoko, A. I. & Ibeanu, A. M.	Journal Article
31	Economics and Politics: Factors of technological changes in Nsukka Bloomery Iron smelting	1995	Okafor, E.E.	Journal Article
32	Information from slags and residues from Nsukka bloomery iron smelting sites	1998	Okafor, E.E.	Journal Article
33	Inyi: probable center for Igbookwu pottery	1989	Ibeanu, A. M.	Journal Article
34	A new furnace type from the North of Igboland	1989	Ekechukwu, L. C.	Journal Article
35	Archaeology of Igboland: The early pre-history	2000	Anozie, F. N.	Book Chapter
36	Okigwe sacred caves: Human use and tourism potentials	2006	Ibeanu, A. M.	Book Chapter
37	Iron and its influence on the prehistoric site of Lejja	2013	Eze-uzomaka, P. I.	Conference Proceedings
38	Archaeological investigations and the need for a new approach: Insights from Dunoka	2018	Odum, C. J. Onyemehalu, S. & Oji, C.	Conference Proceedings

Fieldwork 2020

Table 2: List of Archaeotourism sites in Anambra and Enugu State

S/no.	Potential Archaeotourism site	Nature of site	Location	State
1	Odinaso-Opi	Iron working	Opi	Enugu
2	Otobo-Dunoka	Iron working	Lejja	Enugu
3	Umundu iron smelting site	Ironworking	Umundu	Enugu
4	Isi-Ugwu Obukpa rockshelter	probable ancient settlement	Obukpa	Enugu
5	Obimo rock-shelter	probable ancient settlement	Obimo	Enugu
6	Affa Cave	probable ancient settlement	Affa	Enugu
7	Ugwu-ama-ugwu (Mt. Calvary)	probable ancient settlement	Awhum	Enugu
8	Ogba-Onu alor (cave)	probable ancient settlement	Ukehe	Enugu
9	Eva-Cave	probable ancient settlement	Ukana	Enugu
10	Awhum caves	probable ancient settlement	Ukana	Enugu
11	Mmaku caves	probable ancient settlement	Mmaku	Enugu
12	Ikpo-ehuru (Slag dump site)	Iron working	Egede	Enugu
13	Chief Onyeama's house	Historic monument	Eke	Enugu
14	Chief Nwodo's house	Historic monument	Ukehe	Enugu
15	Old Eastern House of Assembly built in 1917	Historic monument	Enugu	Enugu
16	Public Works Department built in 1928	Historic monument	Enugu	Enugu
17	Institute of African Studies Museum	Museum	Nsukka	Enugu
18	Old premier lodge	Historic monument	Enugu	Enugu
19	Nsude Pyramid	Historic monument	Nsude	Enugu
20	Chief Adichie's house	Historic monument	Eziowelle	Anambra
21	Obu-Gad	Settlement site	Aguleri	Anambra
22	Eri-Aka	Settlement site	Aguleri	Anambra
23	Ukpo-Attah	Historic site	Aguleri	Anambra
24	Dege's house	Historic	Igboukwu	Anambra
25	Igbo Isaiah-Jonah-Richard sites	Burial chamber	Igboukwu	Anambra
26	Old Oye market ground (Yam Dome and Anya n'ano	Monument	Igboukwu	Anambra
27	Umejiego Umeodinigwe		Ezinifite	Anambra
28	Eze Nri Obalike's forest	Natural heritage	Nri	Anambra
29	Pottery sites	Archaeological site	Awgbu	Anambra
30	Blacksmithery in Amaenyi	Iron smiting site	Awka	Anambra

31	Ogbaukwu cave	probable ancient settlement	Owerre-Ezukala	Anambra
32	Ezera site	probable ancient settlement	Ezira	Anambra
33	Ogbunike cave	probable ancient settlement	Ogbunike	Anambra
34	Ufuma cave	probable ancient settlement	Ufuma	Anambra
35	Ajalli cave	probable ancient settlement	Ajalli	Anambra
36	Obu-Odum settlement	Abandoned settlement	Mbaukwu	Anambra
37	Akpu-Agu forest	Natural heritage	Unubi	Anambra

Fieldwork (2020)

State of archaeotourism resources in Igboland

Archaeological excavations have been carried out extensively in the following towns in the study area: Aguleri, Orba, Lejja, Opi, Umundu, and Obimo while archaeological survey has equally been carried out in several locations in both states. Some of the potential archaeotourism resources in table 2 have attracted little or no attention from archaeologists as a result of lack of fund. Staff of NCMM in both states decried fund as a major setback in carrying out archaeological investigations and excavations. The curators of National museums in both states explained thus: “We [Curator National Museum Igboukwu] cannot do much without funding. Some of the artefacts and exhibitions you see here, we buy them. There are cases where some staff use their personal money”. The entrance fee generated from museums in both states cannot sustain archaeological research in the study area. And the money generated in these museums is remitted to the National headquarters in Abuja on annual basis. In some instance, some staff of NCMM admitted that museums use personal funds in the management of archaeological heritage. For instance, plate 1 reveals the bad state of Chief Odo Nwokolo’s house in Ukehe. The surroundings of this monument are open to bush-burning and one of the authors witnessed this in January 2018; this was equally attested to by an employee of the National Museum of Unity, Enugu. In her response, “We (National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) Enugu branch conduct workshops regularly to sensitize the host community, especially those living close to the monument, of the importance of the heritage, and dangers associated with setting fire close to it”.

Similarly, beyond national museums in Anambra and Enugu states, State and private museums in Anambra state face a similar challenge. State museums are at the benevolence of any government in power, especially in Anambra State. The return of democracy in Nigeria in 1999 saw to the election of state governors. During this period, Anambra state was in a state of political instability, and as such, the state-owned museum was not given adequate attention especially in the area of funding. The museum was poorly managed, burgled three times and its collections were found decaying (Odum, 2007). If museums in the study area cannot cater for objects within museums, it becomes worrisome to what will happen to archaeotourism resources outside museums.



Plate 1: Different views of Chief Odo Nwokolo’s house, Ukehe



Plate 2: Entrance to Chief Odo Nwokolo's burnt house in Ukehe

List of archaeological resources in the study area

Slag Efuru Ututu

Slag is a common feature in the following towns of Enugu State: Umundu, Opi, Ukehe, Obimo, Aku, Egede, Eke to mention but a few. Iron slag (Okafor, 1992) is presumed as waste products by iron-smelters. Oral traditions in most of the communities explain that slag is a type of stone which has many functions such as weapon for hunting, fortification of the base of building foundations, checkmating erosion-prone areas, etc. Farmers are not comfortable with slag due to its obstruction in farm areas and it usually emits of fire when in contact with a farmer's hoe or machete. The people of Ukehe, Egede, Affa, among others, see slag as a mere stone that grows from the ground without much cultural attachment or value to it. There is little archaeological investigation(s) on Udi plateau; recent investigations in the area revealed presence of slag deposits in Egede and Affa communities on the plateau (Chiekpe, 2016).

Slag is seen as nuisance in some communities, while others use it for road constructions (Agu & Opata, 2012). Constant destruction of slags in communities where they are located will definitely have a negative effect on archaeological resources of Igboland and Nigeria at large. It becomes worrisome especially for communities that are yet to be surveyed. Where slag has been found, it holds a lot of promise for archaeo-metallurgical studies. Dates got from such sites can be used to argue for listing of archaeological sites in Igboland as world heritage site. Dates for iron workings in Opi ranges from fifth to second century BC, Owerre-Elu spans from 10th-14th AD, while Umundu and Orba axis yielded 18th century AD (Okafor, 1993); older date from Lejja reads 4005±40BP (Eze-Uzomaka, 2009).

These dates are likely to rewrite the history of iron workings (Eze-Uzomaka, 2009), and these point to the ingenuity of processors in most iron working communities in Igbo land. Histories associated with slag in the region will enrich tourists' experience. Series of dates have been elicited from these slag-laden communities. Agu and Opata (2012) aver that it is time to draw the attention of UNESCO to these sites through extensive publications and media posts, and such publicity should be devoid of archaeological jargons and semantics which may not be easily comprehended by non-archaeologists but woven in semantics that can appeal to visitors.



Plate 3: Giant slags in Ootobo Dunoka, Lejja.

Caves and rock shelters

Caves abound in south-eastern Nigeria. A cave is called *Ogba* in local parlance among the Igbos. It is home to prehistoric men and was used extensively during the Nigeria-Biafra civil war (1967-1970):- in some communities among the Igbos, it is a dwelling place for the god(s), centre of worship for adherents of African Traditional Religion (ATR) (Odum, 2011) and picnic destinations for tourists and adventurers (Odum, 2017). Caves in Igboland, especially the ones around Nsukka-Okigwe cuesta and beyond have drawn some academic attention (see Ekechukwu, 2002; Ibeanu, 2006; Ibeanu and Nze 2004; Oguamanam & Odum, 2013); while tourism scholars have advocated for the development of caves in Igboland for tourism and geotourism purposes due to their inherent benefits (Oguamanam & Nwankwo 2015, Oguamanam & Okonkwo, 2018).

Studies on caves and rock shelters within the eastern region of Nigeria is very few despite huge archaeological information that is usually embedded in them, such as, human coprolite and fauna deposits which can reveal early human subsistence patterns and changes in vegetation (Ibeanu, 2006), data on paleoecology as well as paleo-climatic fluctuations (Ibeanu & Umeji, 2001). *Isi Ugwu Obukpa* rock shelter excavated by Hartle in 1964 yielded a lot of stone tools similar to the stone tools from *Ezi-Ukwu Ukpa* rock shelter. The excavations in these two rock shelters yielded archaeological evidence, basically, potsherds while charcoal samples from *Ezi-Ukwu Ukpa* yielded different dates, one of which is 3000 B.C. (Shaw, 1968: in Nzewunwa 1983).

Other archaeological related studies in and around caves in the study area are usually carried out by the undergraduate and postgraduate students of Archaeology and Tourism Department, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, related disciplines and probable heritage officers in Museums in Eastern region. Most of the results from these studies are rarely known to the general public. Furthermore, the uses of caves in the study area for tourism purposes might destroy or alter archaeological relics like bat guano that might be cleaned up for development purpose and probably alter the surface of the caves. Defacement of the outer part of most caves in Anambra and Enugu states is a common phenomenon (Odum, 2017). Moreover, there is no record of an archaeologist(s) exploring these caves beyond the surface level. Chances are that petroglyphic writings and cave-paintings exist within these caves, and subjecting them to tourism use will cause defacement but this can be controlled through proper education of tourists, visitors and natives. The possibility of cave-paintings and petroglyphic writings being discovered in these caves can form part of attractions for tourism purposes and enriches tourists and visitors' experiences. Rock arts and paintings can be used to establish cultural continuity and change in a particular environment as the arts and paints might have relationship with the community where it was found or not. Some of the paintings and artwork might have a religious undertone, which might be linked to extant society (Gwasira, Bassinyi & Lenssen-Erz, 2017).



Plate 4 (a). Inyikwe Cave in Mmaku (b). Ogba Ngala Agu Rock shelter in Mmaku.

National museum Igboukwu

The National Museum Igboukwu was established on 21st April 2004 in Umudege village, Igboukwu, while its exhibition consists of pictorial and physical objects. It was formally commissioned on 20th August 2004 by the then Director General NCMM, Chief Dr. Omotosho Eluyemi (Odum, 2007). The main thrust of the museum is to protect, conserve and preserve cultural heritage of the Igboukwu people and educate the indigenous population and other interested people about this cultural heritage. The museum collections are basically ethnographic materials within and outside Igboukwu. Materials displayed in this museum comprise archaeological relics like the pictures of Igbo Isaiah, Igbo Jonah, and Igbo Richard; the ethnographic section has objects of belief systems, social system, music and traditional paraphernalia of the Igboukwu people. There are other archaeological sites, monuments and historic sites that have been surveyed by the curator and staff of the National Museum, Igboukwu such as Ogba-Ukwu, Obu-Gad, Obi-Dege to mention but few.



Plate 5(a). Obugad in Aguleri

(b).Interior of Obugad in Aguleri.



Plate 6: Obi-Dege in Igboukwu.

Discussion

Developing sustainable Archaeotourism in Igboland

Respect for socio-cultural values

Archaeotourism resources, depending on the community, time and space, have acquired some socio-cultural values and functions in different communities. Developing a cave in Ufuma might not be same as developing a cave in Owerre-Ezukala due to associated socio-cultural values attached to it. These socio-cultural values and functions must be respected as some of these values are the natives' conservation measures (Odum, 2019). Such values must be respected if archaeotourism development must be sustainable. For example, Ufuma cave is not open to public visit on *Nkwo and Ori* market days but accessible on *Eke* and *Afor* market days



in Igbo native calendar (Onwudufor & Odum, 2015). Tourism use of such caves must respect these market days of visit, and where such a traditional policy is to be removed or truncated, proper consultation must be made with the host community. This measure is applicable to other archaeotourism resources that are sacred and holds utilitarian values to host communities.

Archaeotourism circuit

Archaeotourism resources in Igbo land appear to have formed circuits. Ekechukwu (2002) advocated for the development of archaeological tourist circuits in Nsukka-Okigwe-cuesta. A circuit in Enugu State can comprise iron smelting sites of Nsukka, museums in University of Nigeria circuits, among others, as archaeotourism circuits. These circuits can be enjoyed independently or in conglomeration of each other depending on the taste, choice and financial capacity of visitor(s). Forming archaeotourism circuits will aid in the marketing and promotion of archaeological resources in a given destination or locality. For example, Nsukka archaeotourism circuit will have the following features: Museums, archaeology kitchen in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN), University farm, Isi Ugwu Obukpa, iron smelting sites in Umundu, Opi, Lejja, among others. Therefore, a tour operator can market archaeotourism resources in Nsukka as a complete single package with multiple and varied destinations to explore, except where tourists/visitors say otherwise.

Inclusion

Training locals as pseudo-archaeologists who understand the value and sensitive nature of archaeological resources would aid in any pragmatic archaeotourism development within the study area. These locals trained as archaeologists will serve as tour-guides, information officers and cave-guides who will tell their story better than a hired tour-guide who is not indigenous. Griffith and Griffith (2012), argued that the locals' ethnographic and archaeological informed narratives would enhance the source of tour guide scripts, educational materials at the site, advertorial cum promotional items made for tourists. Furthermore, archaeologists in Nigeria need to loosen-up to allow the public to participate in archaeological exercises (reconnaissance, investigations and excavations). This is as a result of the vastness of Nigeria's landscape *vis-à-vis* the number of archaeologists in the country. It is high time Archaeological Associations in Nigeria (AAN) dropped their seclusion and elitist behaviour, and embrace inclusion and community participation in their practice.

Curriculum

Despite over thirty decades of archaeology as a discipline in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in Enugu State, public appreciation of archaeology is still low and the number of archaeologists churned out yearly is still meagre. Although courses like Cultural Resource Management (CRM) are being taught in the department, it has been advocated that adding tourism will boost the discipline's graduates' opportunity to secure jobs as customs and immigration officers (Okpoko, 1986 in Ekechukwu, 2002), Cultural Officers in Nigeria Tourism Development Commission (NTDC), State Tourism Boards, local government tourism committee and Ministries of Tourism, Travel and Tours agencies, to mention but a few. It is our candid opinion that more tourism courses like tourism marketing and shopping, destination management, tour packaging, among other courses, be developed alongside archaeology curriculum. This will equip students with the ideas on proper management of archaeotourism destinations more than a student who studied only archaeology or tourism. The former has the capability and necessary finesse given their background in archaeology cum archaeotourism, to understand the intricacies of managing archaeotourism than individuals who studied only tourism. Meanwhile, such archaeotourism courses will highlight probable limits and carrying capacity of



archaeotourism sites. This will help in conservation of sites which tourism may likely destroy due to quest for economic gains. Archaeological sites are fragile and irreplaceable when destroyed.

Partnership

Developing sustainable archaeotourism destinations in Igbo land requires collaboration and partnership. Tourism industry in some climes relies on partnership to thrive and some scholars have advocated for it as a means of developing some ecotourism destinations (Odum, Onwudufor & Arene, 2018b). Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) can be beneficial in developing archaeotourism attractions due to the socio-political realities associated with tourism industry reliance on government for development in the region and probably in Nigeria. PPP has helped in the development and management of tourist sites in African nations like South Africa (Odum, et al 2018b). Alternatively, Community-Government-Partnership (CGP) has equally been advocated in order to place host communities at the centre of developing tourist attractions (archaeotourism resources inclusive) within their domain rather than the government's usual top-down approach (Odum, 2019). The peculiarity and circumstance prevailing in any destination will likely determine if PPP or CGP will be adopted for developing archaeotourism resources but we submit that CGP be used in developing archaeological resources in Igboland for sustainability.

Education

Tourism might help in the development of archaeotourism resources but if host communities where these archaeological resources and sites are situated are not educated, they may not appreciate the 'baggage' associated with tourism development which is inevitable. Using Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model, there comes a time when tourists flow will decline, economic activities reduced and profit margin to host community dropped. Chances are that antagonism would be generated and archaeological sites which once laid the golden egg may be destroyed by host communities. The need for proper education in communities with potential archaeotourism sites is essential for archaeotourism development.

Archaeological objects consist of items listed in NCMM act of 1979 (herein after referred to Act of Parliament, 2000), section 32 reads: "object" of archaeological interest" means-(a) any fossil remains man or of animals found in association with man; or (b) any side trace or ruin of ancient habitation, working place, midden or scared place; or (c) any cave or other natural shelter or engraving, drawing, painting, or inscription on rock or elsewhere; or (d) any stone object or implement believed to have been used or produced by early man; or (e) any ancient structure, erection, memorial, causeway, bridge, cairn, tumulus, grave, shrine, excavation, well, water tank, artificial hole, monolith, grove of stores, earthwork, wall, gateway or fortification; or (f) any antique tool or object of metal, wood, stone, clay, leather, textile, basket wear of other material, which is (or are) of archaeological interest (National Commission for Museums and Monuments, 1979).

Scholars have argued that Nigeria can tackle poverty merchandising its numerous archaeological sites that dot different locations of the country, through archaeotourism (Abidemi & Philip, 2007). But the perspective of this paper is using tourism to generate funds to conserve archaeological sites in Igboland, generate jobs associated with tourism in archaeological destinations and communicate archaeological sites in the region through tourism marketing. This appears to be lacking in the literature and holds a lot of benefits to archaeologists, policymakers and tourism stakeholders within and outside the study area. Concurrently, the need to engage communities where archaeological studies have been carried



out with the results of the findings has been argued by Odum et al. (2018a) as these can enhance the archaeotourism potential of archaeotourism destination of Dunoka, Lejja.

Archaeotourism is a concept that is not new in literature (Giraud, Porter & Berkeley, 2010) but studies about it are gaining grounds in recent times in West Africa, precisely Nigeria, where the government is interested in diversifying its mono-economy through tourism. Furthermore, income generated from archaeotourism has a lot of benefits within the economy of a host destination where archaeological sites lie. The Jorvik (reconstructed Viking settlement in New York, attracted 14 million visitors. Money generated from Jorvik visitors has helped in funding archaeological research, boosted New York's economy through visitors' spending. This would not have been possible if the archaeological site was not open for tourists and visitors (Holtorf, 2006 cited in Walker & Carr, 2013).

Conclusion

Archaeological resources are potential archaeotourism attractions and these resources abound in Igboland. However, none of them commands tourist-traffic due to neglect from stakeholders. Conversely, the beginning of archaeological studies in Nigeria generally and the study area, in particular, has little or no connection with tourism or archaeotourism. Therefore, the idea of archaeotourism and its benefits have limited scholarship. This does not mean that the people do not necessarily engage in archaeotourism, rather the concept and its meaning in recent times might be new to the people, and nascent in archaeological studies in the area.

Nevertheless, archaeotourism literature has shown benefits associated with archaeotourism in both developed and developing nations. Economic gains to host communities, government and archaeological research funding are the tripartite benefits of archaeotourism development in Igboland and Nigeria at large. Moreover, the study has revealed archaeotourism to be a neglected tourism market waiting for development in emerging economies like Nigeria. Beyond these benefits, poor public appreciation and understanding of what archaeology is in the area can be corrected through archaeotourism. Archaeological pedagogy needs to be evaluated, the inclusion of contemporary concepts like archaeotourism appears important; rather than its current elitist and seclusion approach. Adaptation of tourism into the mainstream of archaeology in Nigeria will be invaluable to archaeology as a discipline and enhance public appreciation of archaeological sites through tourism. Moreover, archaeological resources can be maintained through funding from visitors; income from tourist-traffic has trickle effects on the economy (patronize local markets and shops) of host communities. Unfortunately, communities with archaeological resources are often neglected after archaeological studies (Odum et al., 2018a), and results of archaeological investigations have limited direct benefits to them, instead, archaeologists use their findings to further their personal careers and interests of organizations that fund their researches. It is germane for archaeological resources to be used beyond archaeological boundaries, especially in this era when tourists are looking for a novel, authentic and original experience. Therefore, developing archaeotourism resources for tourism purposes would boost tourist arrivals in the study area, Nigeria and Africa at large. Besides, tourism is competitive and the need to explore areas with authentic and unknown attractions like in the study area is now; and tourism is speculated to be a means of achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

This study is invaluable to tourism stakeholders (academia, government, host communities, policymakers etc.), and a new niche in Nigeria tourism sector worthy of exploration both in theory and practice. Developing archaeotourism has the potential of reviving rural economies as most archaeotourism sites are located in rural areas. Nevertheless, archaeotourism development in the region may face similar challenges tourism sector has in developing nations: poor government attention, lack of professionals, weak policies, among



others. Besides, the samples presented in the study is limited within two states out of five states that represent core Igboland; this implies that it may be hazardous to generalize the results of this study. Rather, the study refers of what use(s) archaeological resources can be put to beyond academic enterprise. The need for further studies seems inevitable.

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