Tourism and Economic Values of National War Museum in Nigeria: The Experience of National War Museum Umuahia

By

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Abstract

This paper, "tourism and economic values of national war museum in Nigeria: the experience of national war museum" examines the multilateral factors militating against the hope of National War Museum Umuahia on tourist attraction. Umuahia war Museum like other museums in Nigeria is significant in enhancing the economic status of the nation. This is based on the fact that in spite of the value of storing artifacts for research purpose, it serves as social agent in the development of the citizenry. The researcher's visit to the museum has generated some level of economic value to the museum and the country at large. The paper posits that tourism and museum if well managed, could add wealth to the economy of the nation. The work contends that there are a lot of challenges confronting the museum and recommends positive remedies to the challenges such as regular maintenance of the infrastructures, found in the museum and that government should include museum management specifically in its budget in order to aid its development. The paper adopts the development and modernization theory as the theoretical framework. The paper in its findings reveals that, the National War Museum, Umuahia is where war equipments that were used during the Nigerian Civil War are kept. The paper concludes that if more attention is given to the museum, it will help in generating revenue for the country and that government should give more attention to help develop the institution.

Keywords: National War Museum, Tourism, Economic Development.

Introduction

Museum simply defined is an institution that collects artifacts, cultural heritages, tangible and non-tangibles, preserve them for the purpose of educating the public. Museum according to Wateren (1999) springs from passion for collection of objects rooted in human nature. The word museum etymologically comes from the Latin word *musea*. Historically, the word museum originated from the ancient Greek as *mouseion* meaning a place or temple devoted to the muses (the patron divinities in Greek methodology of art) (Wikipedia 2019).

The purpose of establishing contemporary museum is to collect, and preserve; artistic, cultural or scientific objects, artifact and other relics in other to educate the public. Museum act as storage place for the preservation of artifacts and other historical relics and tourist centre to entertain people and as well serve as an education centre among others. Notably the national war museum Umuahia was established to house some of the armaments that were used during the Nigerian civil war of 1967 to 1970.

The war museum enhances economic development in Nigeria through tourism and visits. Museum visitors generates economic activity which is related not only to the museum, but also to enterprises in the tourist industry, personal business and many other destinations in the locality of museums. In the same vein, Hannu and Otto (2014) notes that Often, trips to museums or other recreational centres have many advantages such as: meeting friends, visiting a fun park or a theatre, and, relaxing in a different environment. Hannu and Otto (2014) adds that even though the motives for the trip are numerous, museum visits are most often connected with leisure time.

They stated further that the central motives of leisure tourism are the desire to experience something new and different and the need to detach from daily routines and surroundings. Tourism has broad economic, social and

political influence in all societies of the world. According to Guðbrandur (2014) in the past decade, cultural tourism has become the fastest growing aspect of tourism and it is predicted that in the coming years it "will only continue to grow as tourists become more sophisticated and as more people can afford to travel globally. Tourism entails a sort of sumptuousness spending, by means of exchange, buying and selling of other commodities. No doubt the saying that "Tourism is a tool which museums uses to make it contribution on economic development of the country.

Therefore the prospect of Umuahia war museum on tourism as a vehicle for economic development in Nigeria, is rational. The challenges stand as obstacle and thus depriving her from meeting her sets goals. Tourism is an integral part of cultural heritage studies and management. Museum operation is also part of cultural heritage management that shares some of the same basic ideology. They are all connected to tourism studies, because heritage studies have certain aspects in common with tourism and museum, especially when it comes to cultural tourism.

Theoretical frame work

Tourism and economic values of national war museum in Nigeria the experience of Umuahia is best explained through the modernization theory by Max Weber (1864–1920). The modernization theory emphasizes on the process of modernization within societies.

The theory considers internal factors of a country while assuming that "traditional" or undeveloped countries can be developed in the same manner the developed countries have been with assistance. Modernization theory uphold that traditional societies will develop as they adopt more modern practices. The theory attempts to identify the social variables that contributed to social progress and development of societies and seeks to explain the process of social evolution. (Wikipedia 2019)

The theory stresses not only the process of change but also the responses to that change. According to Emile (1970) it provides cohesion in the social order by promoting a sense of belonging and collective consciousness.

Preservation of Nigerian civil war weapons is capable of promoting tourism and collective consciousness in terms of unity, oneness, nationalism and fostering peaceful co-existence among Nigerians. Take for example; tourism has to do with traveling within and outside the country, therefore if one leaves his/her destination for another for the purpose of research or leisure, he/she must open a very good rapport with those around the current destination. This is because, from the 1960's, tourism industry was, and still is, seen as an effective developmental growth-pole. Tourism has been used by many countries to improve their economic development. (Wikipedia 2019)

However, the processes that produce this development in tourism are affected by economic, socio-cultural and political forces. This further gives a deeper explanation of tourism as a tool for economic development in Nigeria. Here development is considered as a multidimensional process that brings about major changes in economic growth, opportunities for all and individual aspirations, and the eradication of poverty at regional and national levels.

Historical Background of the National War Museum, Umuahia

The establishment of the National War Museum, Umuahia was initiated by the then Military Government of Nigeria, in 1977. The national war museum Umuahia is located in Ebite Amafor in Isingu autonomous community in Umuhia North Local Government Area of Abia State.

The initial idea for establishing a National War Museum in Nigeria was first debated after an official visit of Lt. General Theophilous Danjuma to Yugoslavia in 1977. Chijioke (2016) notes that the idea was thoroughly debated and approved by the Supreme Military Council of the Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo administration in the same year. Originally, the project was planned to be executed in three phases in the main site of Ugwunchara, a hilly part of the Ebite Amafor area of the Isingwu Autonomous Community of Umuahia North Local Government Area in Abia State.

The three thousand seven hundred and seventy eight (3,778) hectare site prior to the Civil War, served as the premises of the former Eastern Nigerian

Television Relaying Station. Major- General Tunde Idiagbon, Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters launched the project officially in 1985, under the leadership of General Muhammadu Buhari, which coincided with the 21st anniversary of the first military coup in Nigeria and the 15th anniversary of the end of the Nigerian Civil War. ‘’’’’ In September 14, 1989 the first phase was commissioned by the then Minister of Defence, Lt. General Domkat Bali. Onuora” adds that the former residence of Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara, former Premier of Eastern Nigeria region, was also located at the Government Reserved Area (GRA) at the heart of the Umuahia capital city, served as an annex of the museum at Ugwunchara. It has three galleriesn namely; traditional warfare, the armed forces and the Nigerian Civil War weapon galleries.

The civil war was a watershed in the history of Nigeria as a country. The civil war lasted for a very long time and various weapons were used. Some of these deadly weapons were fabricated due to the exigencies of the war. Outside the appurtenances of war, civilians were also involved in the process of not just fighting, but psyching up the minds of the people to forge ahead despite the deprivations that came with war. (Wikipedia 2019)

Different media of mass communication were used. The experience, many agree, is such that made people to resort to arms as a means of conflict resolution which is not good-looking option. It is this fact that led to the establishment of Nigerian War Museum, in Umuahia. The various weapons that were used in the civil war were consciously preserved in National War Museum, Umuahia. Eluyemi, (2002:.2) cited in Blessing (2014) defined preservation as “the promotion and storage of cultural property whether concrete or non-concrete in nature, past or present, written or unwritten/oral in a museum. He further posits that preservation involves the identification, documentation (appropriate registration) and proper storage of cultural objects whether in private hands or in museums.

However, the preservation of the Nigerian civil war items in National War Museum, Umuahia is facing a lot of challenges ranging from funding, technological developments and nepotism which can also in simple terms

be classified into human activities and natural forces. According to Okpoko (2011) preservation of Nigerian cultural heritage, made "the little success over the years which has been attributed to conscious, systematic and scientific efforts. Researches conducted by professionals in the disciplines of Archaeology, Cultural Anthropology, Linguistics, Ethnography, Palynology, Paleontology, Geology, Geography, Museum Studies, among other cultural resource management studies contributed enormously to the preservation of the civil war weapons and equipments.

Some scholars have questioned whether those items found in Umuahia war museums were truly the civil war weapons and have doubted the method of acquisition. But the importance of those war items if properly managed will in no small measure contribute positively to the economy and the Nigerian society at large.

However, one of the importance of history we would never forget is that; it helps us to know the problem of the past, thus, knowing the problem of the past and how well they were solved helps to identify the present as we plan for the development of the future. Thus, the past becomes essentially the key to the present and future platform.

The Role of Umuahia War Museum in the Development of Nigeria

Nigeria stands to benefit a lot if her cultural heritages at the national war museum Umuahia are sufficiently preserved. It has what it takes to boost the country's economy through tourism. The heritages in Umuahia war museum are civil war items which if properly preserved and advertized through the print and electronic media, stand a chance to attract tourists from the nooks and crannies of the world.

According to Blessing (2016) this would be a plus to national revenue and GDP, which will in turn provide more funds for the development of the country. The national war museum Umuahia is also capable of promoting mutual understanding and respect among Nigerians since it was established for the glory of Nigeria. For instance, when people attend state or national cultural festivals, they will learn to appreciate the various

cultures exhibited by people in Nigeria and this will engender unity in diversity. Same thing is applicable to the National War Museum, Umuahia, When Nigerian's and visitors outside the country pay visits to the museum, and then see all the civil war weapons and listens to it stories that underlies them, they may rather be infected with the experiences, emotional feelings of pains, and rage that beclouded the people of the past. Hence, they may propose an avenue on the need to harangue against war, in the same vein, advocate the need for peace in the country and the society at large.

The National War Museum, Umuahia contributes to Nigerians' appreciation of aesthetics, relaxation, and leisure, which could go a long way to douse tensions and high blood pressures. However, below are the indirect economic values of museums generally which we consider as an eye "opener" on the economic impact of the national war museum Umuahia to Nigeria:

1. **Museum as a Vehicle for Internal Tourism**
   The national war museum Umuahia and its heritages are motivators for domestic and Scandinavian visits to Nigeria. Museums are well thought-out to be a major pull factor. Research evidence is strongest with regard to museums economic impact via heritage and culture tourism and spending by visitors. Studies highlight the importance to the local economies of attracting visitors from elsewhere in their countries and the potential importance of retaining spending by those who have stayed in the country itself for their holidays rather than going abroad
2. **Procurement:** Manneby (2010) notes that Museums in Sweden tend to favour and support local suppliers by encouraging local and green products from suppliers sourcing and seeking to buy locally as possible which could be an indirect effect of operating environmental and sustainable principles. National war museum Umuahia can emulate the Sweden experience to improve on their operational policy.

3. Internal Revival

In Nigeria, result has also shown that in recent times, local authorities explored the value that accrued from culture and they concluded that economic development will emerge if the museum are funded adequately. Umuahia war Museums can play a number of roles in regional economic development and regeneration and development strategies. In Nigeria, Place-based developments and place- making efforts can provide a sense of place destination to attract visitors. The national museums offers a sense of identity and authenticity which can be considered a key to place-based development projects.

4. Business support

Obviously, significant relationship between national war museum Umuahia and local businesses associated with the provision of local goods and services as well, add imputes to the service one can receive on visitation. Hence, place-based regeneration initiatives are shown.

National War Museum and Economic Development

The following words will be defined in view of examination of its combined and background meaning. The word Economy is derived from the Greek word *oikonomos*, which simply means one who manages a household," just as the word implies, economy was not used in the modern sense of the economic system of a country or area until the nineteenth and twentieth century's. An *economy* is the arrangement according to which the money, industry, and trade of a country or region are organized (Umuaro 2014).

Encarta (2001) sees economy as 1 Thrift, the careful managing of resources to avoid overgenerous expenditure or waste 2 financial dealings, the production and use of goods and services of a community looked upon as a whole. Hogan cited in Omuaru (2014) defines economy sociologicaly to mean that, "economy is the dominant form of economic activities characterizing a society", he added that some examples of economies

include, collecting and hunting economy, nomadic economy, settled agricultural economy, modern industrial economy.h he posits that development is a process that generates growth, improvement, positive change or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social and demographic components.

Development can also be defined by as change from the low class condition to the more and higher and classic condition. Omuaru (2014) agrees to the above definition stressing that it is concerned with human situations and conditions that have to do with their environment; social, legal, economics that produce a better environment to live a godly and religious life. Alon (2018) explained that the purpose of development is a rise in the level and quality of life of the population, and the creation or expansion of local regional income and employment opportunities, without damaging the resources of the environment. Here, it is obvious to agree with Alon that: Development is visible and useful, not necessarily immediately, and includes an aspect of quality change and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change.

It then den implies that the activities of the activities of national war museum Umuahia, when guided through the right channel can cause events to change for progressive development. This will elucidate change and progress in of economy and could generate infracstural developments that could lead to the development of modern museum to aid tourism in Nigeria. For an explicit explanation and understanding, let's look at the view of Rodney (1973). Rodney (1973) holds that, Development in human society is a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being while at the level of social groups, to regulate both internal and external relationships.

The concept, which Rodney highlights here transcends the narrow purview of many literary exercises on development, or some classes of Governments officials' understanding of 'development', as building and construction of roads. He is of the broader ideas of the term 'development', indicating that

certain characteristics possessed by the individual such as increased skills and capacity, freedom to choose, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility to oneself, family and nation and material well-being are indices of development;

Tourism as Journey for Pleasure

In recent times, questions like; "is tourism actually an industry?" Had been asked, and different answer had been given by different scholars of high repute. But the question obviously is still a bane to those people who do not understand the concept "tourism" Tourism is journey for pleasure or business. It is also the practice of touring, possibly for business or attracting, accommodating, and entertaining oneself but basically during leisure or for research purpose depending on the individual. Tourism Organization defines tourism as limited to "holiday activity only", due to the fact that most people are prone to "traveling and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure and not less than 24 hours, business and other purposes.

Tourism is a complex industry that involves a broad range of businesses that intertwines organizations and government agencies (Tourism Council 2020). Each party in the chain contributes to the overall holiday experience of the customer. *Though* Tourist industry has never had an explicit definition as different industries are linked to tourism and its development. However, the diversity of the tourist industry as an object of study states that tourism spending is divided into products specific and characteristic of tourism and ones connected with tourism (Van Hove 2005)

Industries specific to tourism such as accommodation and transport service are totally dependent on tourism and are also vital for the development of the tourist industry. According to Hannu Ottoand Arttu Vainio (2014) Industries connected with and non-specifics of tourism are, *inter alia*, the retail sale of fuels and other retail activities which would also exist without tourism but on which tourism makes a considerable impact. Tourism is, significant and also aid the functions of many industries and ventures. They

posit further that; it is difficult to distinguish tourism clearly from other service industries, hence,(Van Hove 2005) illustration of Tourists' demand for products specific and characteristic of tourism and for products connected with tourism was suggested, thus as it is below:

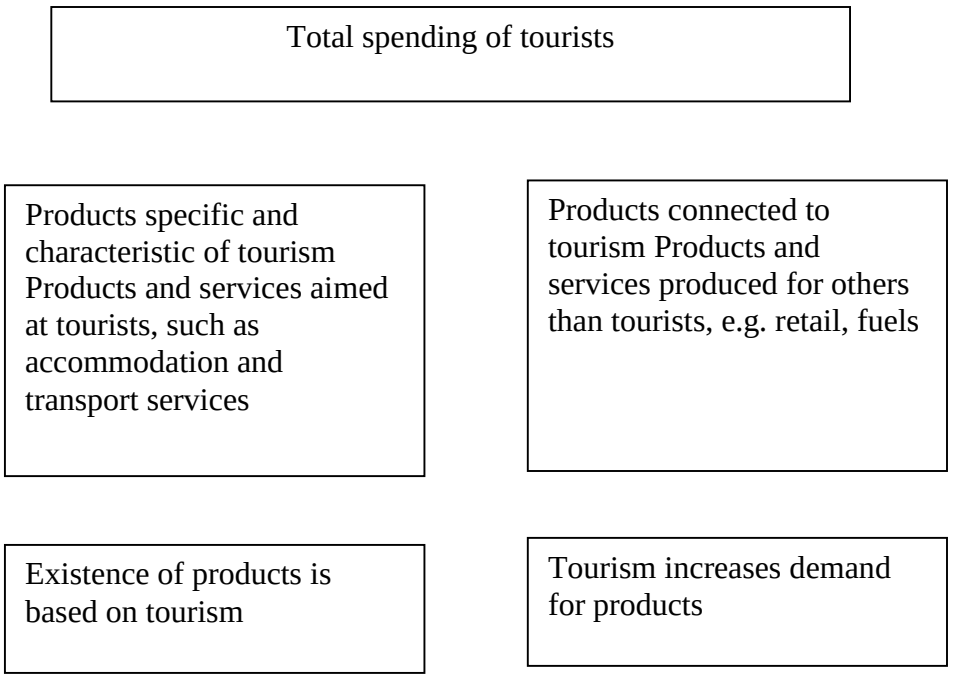


Fig1.: A chart showing Tourists' demand for products specific and characteristic of tourism and for products connected with tourism (e.g. Vuoristo & Arajärvi 1990).

S**ource**:

For the reasons described above, there is no commonly accepted and unambiguous definition for tourism. The following characteristics were found to be associated with it (see e.g. Burkart & Medlik 1974, Karppinen & Vähäsantanen 2011): • tourism consists of people's journey – trip – from their normal living and work surroundings to a destination and

spending time in the destination; • tourism spending is short-term and seasonal; • income elasticity of tourism demand is typically high (i.e. change in income creates a greater and parallel change in tourism demand); • tourism is a growth industry (grows faster than total production) and, particularly in developed countries, the tourist industry is labour-intensive in relation to traditional industries; • tourism supply is typically the local service activity of small- and medium-sized enterprises in which the interdependency of tourism products and tourist destinations is considerable and consumers contribute directly to a service event. Most important costs related to tourism are the costs of the actual trip (i.e. journey) and those of accommodation and food and beverages. The part of other goods and services acquired by tourists from the total spending is smaller than those of the above but not negligible (Ottoand Arttu Vainio 2014).

The National War Museum, Umuahia as a Vehicle for Economic Development in Nigeria.

Umuahia war useums has been an important sector that has an impact on development of the country's economy. This is because, income creation and generation through tourism and job opportunities has been the benefits of the museum organization. The main benefits of every museum to its host country are to educate the public and to create income, as such, museums has been the most important source of welfare to regions and countries. This is because it play vital role on tourist attraction. The act of touring is major factor that brings development in almost every region in the world. Therefore, if the Umuahia war museum is properly managed and funded by the government, it also stand the chance of contributing significantly to Nigeria's economy. One of the most popular destinations in Nigeria are the museums. Tourism is a fast growing industry which has also been labour-intensive, it is an important employer. Scholars have also noted that as an

industry, it has grown faster than total production for decades. It creates local jobs and business opportunities which includes those jobs directly related to tourism like hotel and tour services, and those that indirectly support tourism such as; food production and housing construction. That is why it appears to be every museum's target to meet up the standard especially in facilities that may attract tourists from nuke and cronies to its contribution in the development of it host country. The national war museum Umuahia can also play vital roles like making a stable and long running development. As a matter of fact, the national war museum Umuahia among the sectors which plays an important role in development and also generates foreign revenues for Nigeria

Umuahia War Museum and Cultural tourism

The whole issue of cultural tourism and Umuahia war museum needs much more discussion to improve their relationship and to develop cooperation for the benefits of both partners. Though in comparism, some of the basic elements within the field of museums on one hand and tourism on the other, it is possible to understand their existing relationship; to see what are the main differences, what they have in common and where there are opportunities for a fruitful cooperation. In fact," It is also the case regarding the connection between the Umuahia war museum and cultural tourism.

The Relationship Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management, is most likely seen as being an uneasy partnership as every sector has a different disciplinary focus and mandate, which plays different function in society, as well has different political overlords, which is accountable to different stakeholders groups. However the above mentioned can as well bring difficulties in a relationship, resulting in many lost opportunities in providing "quality visitor experiences while managing rare and fragile resources in a socially, environmentally, and ethically responsible and sustainable manner. Non-profit and profit characters, seemed to be a clearer dissimilarity between the Umuahia war museums and cultural tourism,

which fundamentally will make their logics dissimilar. But there are also convinced subjects the sectors have in common. It has been mentioned how both the museum and tourism can contribute to society, for instance by providing and promoting experience, education, recreation and by developing cross-cultural understanding. Back then, the public dimension has been in focus in the museum world, where the audience perspective is one of the main thought. The public dimension is also of utmost importance for tourism, since it addresses the users or consumers perspectives and in that field these two sectors overlap. For tourism and its development, the responsible use of the resources or the assets has been recognized as a major topic in recent decades and that discussion does also address the use of the cultural heritage as a resource. That topic does overlap with the museums interests, since conservation and a responsible use of the cultural heritage is one of their fundamental duties.

Impact of National War Museums on Regional Economies

It is observed that the Umuahia war makes an imperative impact on regional economies. The Umuahia war museum also has significant roles in the development of its regional economies, since the Tourists, spend money both in museums and especially outside them. This spending spread across the localities particularly in popular destinations. Even the researchers' visits to the museum had contributed to museum and it localities. This is because, when visits are made to the museum especially those from far, they relax in the local bars, hotels, and locale eateries around the museum. Hence, the impact of Umuahia war museum on regional economy is best described as "multi-dimensional". They also suggest home in the localities that is even full of mangroves and other natural endowments that might trigger the interests of the visitors to set up investments in the area. Laura (2015) states that the alliance's incoming president and CEO, who starts June 1, said the types of travelers who visit museums including institutions such as historic houses, science centers, zoos and the like, spend 63 percent more than other leisure travelers. According to Wikipedia (2018) Linda St.

Thomas, chief spokeswoman for the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., added, that "Many museums are destinations for families, school groups and adults. Sometimes, they will be staying at nearby hotels or motels and certainly they will be eating in restaurants. All of this adds to the region's economic health. "Hence, any money people spend beyond their museum visit would be defined as "indirect" economic impacts. Therefore every host localities of museum are open and sensitive to tourist spending.

Challenges and Prospects

Deregon (2008) advised that, it is good to address a problem with a fresh outlook, with innovation, creativity and knowledge. The national war museum Umuahia is faced with a lot of challenges such as: insecurity, Nigeria's economic downturn, modernization, Christianity, poor advocacy, nepotism, individual antiquarians, looting, and sadly, religious dogmatism and iconoclasm among others. Eluyemi (2002) refers to those religious fanatics as *die-hard* suffering from colonial hangover; and are the religious zealots who burn cultural objects in the name of deliverance.

Aside from this, inability to conduct International events in the area of professional education, also militate against tourist attraction to Umuahia war museum (Colin 2005). The National Antiquities Commission (NAC) now National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) has hoisted up in preserving these endangered heritages. The commission was made to also be in charge of the organization and preservation of museums and for finding of heritage sites as well as ensures the preservation and study of traditional arts and culture.

Their powers also is extended to program monuments and antiquities, control of archaeological excavations and the export of antiquities (Fasuyi, 1973). But the efforts by NCMM have often been slowed down by some challenges ranging from low subventions and funding from government to carry out their tasks. Kidnapping, corruption are deep-rooted in the society and as well, militate against tourism. Blessing (2016) traced this to the

failure of the family system. Parents in their quest for wealth and materialism abandoned their primary responsibility of inculcating right moral values into their children through proper parental training. This affects the society in the long run negatively by leading to chaos and conflict. Therefore, the National War Museum, Umuahia must be perspicacious and pragmatic in the way they execute their project to ensure sustainable preservation of our heritages, in order to boost tourism and its economic values in Nigeria

Recommendations

We therefore recommends the following; the National War Museum, Umuahia should first be revived and take cognizance of the contemporary technological system. Do more advert to evoke people's knowledge of its existence. By so doing the basic essentials and appreciation of Nigerian cultural heritages will be inculcated into younger generations and then increase in tourist attraction. This will attract the government attention on the need to fund the museum with necessary equipments to meet the expected standard. This will also encourage intensive renovation in each of the department to enhance convenience in the premises.

We concur to the following solutions identified by Eluyemi (2002) to the challenges confronting Nigerian cultural heritages namely, public enlightenment, funding, sponsoring archaeological excavations and research, provision of holistic security in museums among others. Proper reorientation of the police and collaboration with international police (INTERPOL) and with UNESCO is also recommended. Cultural resource managers/officers and personnel who are often collaborators with traffickers should be well remunerated, installation of surveillance cameras, proper documentation of items it abodes, among others, before and after the arrival of every visitors should be taken to avoid tale.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the national war Museums is a significant cultural destination. Their economic impact relates both to museums themselves and to regions surrounding them, this is because tourism is businesses to every museum including the Umuahia war museum in its own rights. A central objective of this study was to find out those tourism and economic values of National War Museum in Nigeria Hence. Deregon (2008) advised that, for a refresher, it is good to address the problem with a fresh outlook, with innovation, creativity and knowledge. In doing that, certain challenges were discovered such as; insecurity, the Nigerian economic downturn, modernization, Christianity, poor advocacy, nepotism, individual antiquarians, looting, and sadly, religious dogmatism and iconoclasm among others. The national war museum houses important cultural heritages, items that have made the people unique and sophisticated. Therefore, if more attention is given to the museum, it will help in generating revenue for the country. The federal, state and local government should all give more attention to help develop the museum. Finally, it is believed that the National War Museum, Umuahia and tourism have formidable foundation with inherent economic potentials.

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