



HERITAGE RESOURCES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ASSET VALUE OF HERITAGE SITES IN IBADAN, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Heritage resources play a vital role in fostering sustainable development by preserving cultural identity, supporting economic growth, and promoting environmental stewardship. This study examines the asset value of heritage sites in Ibadan, Nigeria, with a focus on

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their contribution to sustainable development. A purposive sampling approach was employed to select five local

INTRODUCTION

Heritage resources refer to cultural assets that carry historical, architectural, or cultural significance Kronenberg & Andersson, (2019), Labadi et al (2021). They include both tangible (such as buildings and monuments) and intangible resources (such as oral traditions and customs). The intersection of heritage preservation and sustainable development emphasizes the need to balance the economic potential of heritage sites—especially through tourism—with their conservation Lai & Lorne, (2019). This framework is particularly relevant for cities like Ibadan, where historical richness and rapid urbanization must be managed together for long-term benefits.

Sustainable Development aims to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, incorporating

government areas (LGAs) in the city's core: Ibadan North, Ibadan North-East, Ibadan South-West, Ibadan South-East, and Ibadan North-West. A structured questionnaire was administered to 385 respondents, yielding a return rate of 366 (95%). Findings reveal varied opinions on the condition of heritage buildings across the selected LGAs. In Ibadan South-East, 52.4% of respondents reported that heritage buildings were in poor condition, highlighting significant neglect and decay. Conversely, higher proportions of respondents in Ibadan

North, Ibadan North-West, Ibadan North-East, and Ibadan South-West described these structures as being in good condition, suggesting varying levels of maintenance and conservation efforts. The study further identifies the economic, social, and cultural significance of these heritage sites, emphasizing their potential to drive tourism, community engagement, and local development. The research underscores the urgent need for targeted preservation strategies to address the disparities in the condition of heritage resources. It advocates for

inclusive policy frameworks that integrate heritage conservation into broader sustainable development goals, ensuring that these cultural assets are preserved for future generations while contributing to the economic vitality of Ibadan. The findings serve as a resource for policymakers, urban planners, and stakeholders in heritage management, offering actionable insights to harness the value of heritage resources in achieving sustainable urban development.

economic, social, and environmental sustainability (United Nations, 1987). Heritage sites contribute to sustainable development by creating jobs, promoting cultural tourism, and conserving biodiversity (Pereira et al., 2022). Ibadan, one of Nigeria's oldest cities, is home to significant cultural landmarks. The heritage value of Ibadan's sites can be considered in various dimensions, including history, culture, architecture, and environment.

Old Oyo National Park in the state is a key conservation area that links biodiversity preservation with heritage tourism. Studies have noted its significance in promoting ecological sustainability while preserving archaeological traces of the Oyo Empire (Akinyemi & Oloruntoba, 2023). Mapo Hall built in 1965, is a prime example of Ibadan's colonial-era architecture. The building's significance as a community gathering place reflects the merging of indigenous Yoruba cultural practices with Western influences (Ayotunde, 2021). The University of Ibadan (UI) established in 1948, UI is Nigeria's first university. As a heritage site, it represents educational, architectural, and intellectual development. It has also been recognized for its role in shaping modern Nigerian society (Bamidele & Oluduro, 2022).

The asset value of heritage sites encompasses both tangible and intangible factors. Heritage tourism generates revenue, creates jobs, and boosts local economies.

According to recent studies, tourism in Ibadan's historical sites, like the Adebisi House, Irefin Quarters, Oyo National Park and Mapo Hall, has significant potential for economic growth (Ogunniyi & Adebowale, 2021). Heritage sites foster social cohesion, community pride, and the preservation of traditions. Studies have emphasized how the local population's connection to heritage sites, such as the Mapo Hall, strengthens cultural identity (Akinmoladun, 2022).

Many heritage sites, such as the Cocoa House, Irefin Quarters, Mapo Hall, Adebisi Idikan House, contribute to environmental sustainability by protecting landscapes and fostering ecological education. This dual role of heritage and environmental preservation is integral to sustainable development (Sulaimon & Adebayo, 2023). Several challenges undermine the full realization of heritage resources in Ibadan: Rapid urban expansion often leads to the encroachment of heritage sites, as newer infrastructure developments threaten to displace or damage historical assets. A lack of integrated urban planning has been identified as a key issue (Eze & Igboke, 2021). Effective preservation of heritage resources requires funding and institutional support. Inadequate financial and administrative resources continue to hinder sustainable heritage management in Ibadan (Olajide & Adediji, 2022).

Effective community involvement in heritage conservation ensures the long-term sustainability of cultural assets. However, a lack of awareness and understanding of the economic and social value of these sites remains an obstacle (Oluwaseun & Oyewole, 2023). Climate change poses a significant risk to the structural integrity of heritage sites. Additionally, environmental pollution and resource depletion undermine the sustainability of these resources (Akinmoladun, 2024).

The heritage resources of Ibadan, Nigeria, offer significant opportunities for sustainable development. Through effective management that integrates heritage preservation with economic and environmental goals, these resources can contribute to both cultural enrichment and long-term economic prosperity Li & Tang, (2024). However, addressing challenges such as urban encroachment, funding deficits, and environmental threats is vital for achieving sustainable outcomes. Further research and policy development focused on heritage conservation within the broader sustainable development framework will be crucial for Ibadan's future.

Literature Review

Heritage resources are indispensable for achieving sustainable development, playing a crucial role in fostering cultural identity, promoting economic opportunities, and enhancing environmental stewardship Khalaf, (2020). In Ibadan, Nigeria, iconic sites such as Bower's Tower and Mapo Hall underscore the intersection of cultural preservation and socioeconomic advancement. These sites, representing Yoruba culture and Nigeria's colonial history, offer insights into how heritage assets can contribute to sustainable urban growth Lee & González (2020).

The intersection of heritage and sustainable development is grounded in their shared focus on intergenerational equity and resilience El Asri et al, (2022). Sustainable development entails addressing current needs without endangering future resources, while heritage management ensures the conservation of historical and cultural assets Khan et al, (2020). In the African context, heritage serves dual purposes: as a conservation priority and as a community development tool. This dual role has shaped discussions about integrating local knowledge systems into global sustainable development frameworks (ICOMOS, 2024; Taruvinga, 2020).

Heritage sites are critical for economic revitalization, especially in urban centers like Ibadan. Research highlights that such sites draw both domestic and international tourists, stimulating local economies through hospitality, crafts, and events Kostakis & Lolos, (2024). For example, the potential of Mapo Hall as a center for cultural festivals has been noted as an untapped economic opportunity. Studies emphasize the need to formalize tourism activities and integrate them with broader urban economic strategies to maximize revenue generation. Additionally, economic models show that investing in heritage conservation yields multiplier effects, improving urban infrastructure and creating sustainable jobs (World Bank, 2023; ICOMOS, 2024).

Heritage sites in Ibadan are more than historical landmarks; they are centers of cultural identity and social cohesion. They provide communal spaces where histories are shared and identities reinforced. For example, Bower's Tower serves as both a historical monument and a symbolic link to the colonial and postcolonial narratives of Ibadan. Community-oriented heritage management fosters inclusivity, ensuring that development projects align with local aspirations Egberts & Riesto, (2021). Moreover, the role of cultural heritage in promoting peace and understanding in multicultural cities like Ibadan cannot be overstated (ICOMOS, 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

Heritage management also intersects with environmental sustainability Kraatz et al, (2020). Sites like Agodi Gardens in Ibadan highlight how green heritage spaces contribute to urban biodiversity, climate resilience, and recreational opportunities Jock, (2020). However, urbanization pressures threaten these resources, emphasizing the need for policies that integrate environmental conservation with heritage management Taruvinga, (2020), Donaldson, (2021).

Managing heritage resources sustainably in Ibadan faces several obstacles: Limited financial resources undermine restoration and preservation efforts Carter & Bramley, (2002). Public budgets rarely prioritize heritage conservation. Rapid urban expansion and informal development encroach on heritage sites, threatening their integrity Carbone et al, (2020). A lack of comprehensive frameworks linking heritage management with national and municipal development plans weakens implementation. Community Engagement Deficit: Poor local involvement in decision-making leads to alienation and resistance to conservation initiatives (Oxford Research Encyclopedia, 2024; UNESCO, 2023).

To address these challenges, scholars advocate for blending global best practices with local knowledge systems. African heritage management traditions emphasize community-driven conservation, providing a robust framework for sustainable heritage development Butler et al, (2022). These practices, combined with international principles, such as those outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), can foster innovative solutions tailored to Ibadan's unique context (ICOMOS, 2024).

Ibadan's heritage resources offer untapped potential for driving sustainable development Bishop & Boyle, (2019). Their preservation and integration into urban planning can create significant cultural, economic, and environmental benefits Booth, J. (2021). By addressing challenges and leveraging local-global synergies, heritage sites like Bower's Tower and Mapo Hall can become focal points for achieving SDGs in Ibadan. Future research should focus on quantifying their contributions to development and refining context-specific conservation strategies Bertacchini, & Dalle Nogare, (2021).

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the asset value of heritage sites in Ibadan. A cross-sectional survey design was employed to gather data from respondents across selected heritage sites in the core center of Ibadan city. The research focuses on understanding the role of heritage resources in sustainable development, with specific attention to their economic, cultural, and social asset value.

The study was conducted in the core center of Ibadan, Nigeria, one of the oldest and most historically significant cities in West Africa. Five local government areas (LGAs) within the core city—namely, Ibadan North, Ibadan North-East, Ibadan South-West, Ibadan South-East, and Ibadan Central—were purposively selected based on the concentration of notable heritage sites.

The target population comprised residents, local stakeholders, and individuals knowledgeable about or associated with the selected heritage sites within the study area. A purposive sampling technique was used to identify specific heritage sites and recruit participants with relevant insights into the research objectives. This method ensured that respondents were directly connected to or had a vested interest in the heritage resources. To achieve a representative sample size, 385 questionnaires were administered across the selected LGAs, as determined using Cochran's formula for sample size determination in large populations. The distribution of questionnaires considered the relative prominence and visitation levels of heritage sites within each LGA.

Data collection relied on a structured questionnaire designed to capture quantitative and qualitative information. The questionnaire included sections on demographics: age, gender, education level, and occupation. Perceptions of asset value: economic, cultural, and social significance of heritage sites. Sustainable development indicators:

insights into the role of heritage resources in local economic development, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation. Additional qualitative data were collected through key informant interviews with site managers, local historians, and municipal officers responsible for heritage conservation. The questionnaire was administered over a period of six weeks with the assistance of trained field enumerators. Out of the 385 questionnaires distributed, 366 were successfully returned, representing a 95% response rate. This high return rate was attributed to direct engagement with respondents and follow-up visits to ensure completion. See Table 1

Table 1: Selected Population of the Study

Sn	Heritage Site	Location	No. of Respondents
1	Mapo Hall	Mapo Hill, Ibadan, Oyo State	35
2	Ile Adebisi Giwa Idi-Ikan	Idi-Kan, Ibadan, Oyo State	30
3	Odua City Mall	Dugbe, Ibadan, Oyo State	20
4	Cocoa House	Dugbe, Ibadan, Oyo State	25
5	National Museum of Unity	National Museum Road, Ibadan, Oyo State	35
6	Alli Iwo Palace	Alli Iwo Compound, Ibadan, Oyo State	25
7	Bower's Tower	Manor House, Iseyin, Oyo State	35
8	Olubadan's Palace	Oke-Aremo Street, Ibadan, Oyo State	25
9	Odua Museum Hall of Fame	Dugbe, Ibadan, Oyo State	35
10	Cocoa Mall Cinema	Dugbe, Ibadan, Oyo State	25
11	University of Ibadan Zoo	University of Ibadan, Oyo State	40
12	Irefin Quarters	Oje, Ibadan, Oyo State	25
13	Agodi Gardens	Agodi, Ibadan, Oyo State	30
Total			385

Source: Fieldwork 2024

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Quantitative data, responses from the questionnaires were coded and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores were calculated to summarize respondents' perceptions of heritage sites' asset value. Inferential analyses, including chi-square tests and correlation analysis, were conducted to explore relationships between demographic factors and perceptions of asset value. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative responses from interviews and open-ended survey questions. Recurring themes were identified to provide deeper insights into the socio-cultural and economic roles of heritage resources in sustainable development.

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant authorities. Informed consent was sought from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation and confidentiality. Participants were assured that the data collected would be used solely for academic purposes. Potential limitations included the reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases. Additionally, the purposive sampling method, while effective for targeting specific heritage sites and knowledgeable respondents, may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions or less prominent heritage sites in Ibadan.

Discussion of Findings

The research was carefully designed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the asset value of heritage sites in Ibadan and their role in sustainable development. By leveraging both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study aims to generate robust and actionable insights for policymakers, urban planners, and heritage conservationists. The result of findings from the survey conducted on selected heritage sites within the Ibadan metropolis are hereby discussed as follows:

Fascinating Sights of Heritage Buildings

Table 2 presents results on frequency distribution according to the architectural design of the heritage building in locations of the study. The responses indicate a consistent appreciation for the architectural designs in the local government areas of Ibadan North, Ibadan North-West, Ibadan North-East, and Ibadan South-West. A significant majority of respondents—89.2% from Ibadan South-West, 97.7% from North-East, 98.6% from North-West, and 69% from North—agreed that the architectural designs of the heritage buildings in their respective local governments are captivating. However, more of the respondents 50% in Ibadan South-East LGA disagreed that the architectural design of the heritage building is fascinating. It could therefore be deduced that while Ibadan South-West, North-East, North-West and North has fascinating architectural designs of heritage building, Ibadan south-east LGA do not have much of architectural designs of the heritage buildings.

Table 2: Architectural Design of the Heritage Building is Fascinating

Sn	Variable	Response	F	%
1	Ibadan south-east LGA	Disagree	21	50
	(Irefin Palace)	Undecided	2	4.8
		Agree	19	45.2
	Total		42	100
2	Ibadan North	Disagree	39	31
	(University of Ibadan Zoo, NTA, Bower's Tower)	Undecided	0	0
		Agree	87	69
	Total		126	100
3	Ibadan North-West	Disagree	0	0
	(Cocoa house & Ile Adebisi)	Undecided	1	1.4
		Agree	71	98.6
	Total		72	100
4	Ibadan North-East	Disagree	0	0
	(Ali Iwo)	Undecided	1	2.3
		Agree	42	97.7
	Total		43	100
5	Ibadan South-West	Disagree	9	10.8
	(Mapo Hall & National Museum)	Undecided	0	0
		Agree	74	89.2
	Total		83	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

The respondents' descriptions of the functionality and value of the heritage sites revealed a widespread appreciation for the architectural design, with many finding it fascinating. This suggests that heritage sites attract diverse cultural visitors and serve as important recreational destinations. The selected heritage sites in this study are among Nigeria's numerous tourist attractions, showcasing significant tourism potential. The findings also suggest that heritage sites contribute to commerce, as

visitors utilize transportation, security services, hotels, and local facilities during their visits, supporting Wang et al.'s^[7] assertion of the economic impact of tourism on local economies.

Heritage Resources' Added Value in the Community

Table 3 presents results on frequency distribution on the extent to which respondents identifies the presence of heritage site to adding value to their community. It is shown that more of the respondents across the five local governments agreed that the presence of heritage sites in their community added value to their community, with the highest level of agreement recorded in Ibadan south-west LGA at 79.5% responses.

Table 3: The Heritage Site Add Value to the Host Community

Sn	Variable	Response	F	%
1	Ibadan south-east LGA	Disagree	13	31
	(Irefin Palace)	Undecided	8	19
		Agree	21	50
	Total		42	100
2	Ibadan North	Disagree	23	18.3
	(University of Ibadan Zoo, NTA, Bower's Tower)	Undecided	27	21.4
		Agree	76	60.3
	Total		126	100
3	Ibadan North-West	Disagree	7	9.7
	(Cocoa house & Ile Adebisi)	Undecided	15	20.8
		Agree	50	69.4
	Total		72	100
4	Ibadan North-East	Disagree	2	4.7
	(Ali Iwo)	Undecided	12	27.9
		Agree	29	67.4
	Total		43	100
5	Ibadan South-West	Disagree	6	7.2

	(Mapo Hall & National Museum)	Undecided	11	13.3
		Agree	66	79.5
	Total		83	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

The role of tourism in fostering economic growth and regional development has long been acknowledged, providing a primary rationale for developing and promoting tourism in destination areas, (Kahan, 2020), Belanche et al, (2021).. An overwhelming 96.3% of respondents agreed that the heritage site was performing its purpose effectively. This was further reflected in the majority's declaration that large numbers of tourists were recorded during festive periods, adding value to the host community. The acknowledgment of heritage sites as income generators for both the government and host communities indicates that heritage sites serve as a significant source of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) for the three tiers of government in Nigeria and globally. This aligns with (Tyslová, 2020), who highlighted the economic benefits of well-managed tourism destinations in the Czech Republic. More so, the overall description of the functionality and value of heritage sites by respondents, with a mean score of 23.7 ± 3.6 and 60.2% giving a good description, implies that communities or nations with heritage sites or monuments typically experience progressive economic growth. This underscores the importance of strategic investment in heritage conservation to maximize tourism potential and foster sustainable economic development.

Analysis of the Asset Value of Heritage Sites in Ibadan

Heritage sites in Ibadan, Nigeria, hold significant cultural, social, and economic value, contributing to both the preservation of identity and sustainable urban development. These sites serve as living monuments, reflecting the rich history and traditions of the Yoruba people while offering opportunities for tourism, education, and local economic growth. However, the asset value of these heritage resources is determined not only by their intrinsic historical worth but also by the extent to which they are preserved, utilized, and integrated into modern urban systems Barroso-Hurtado et al, (2022)..

Cultural and Social Value

The heritage sites in Ibadan, such as Mapo Hall, Bower's Tower, and various colonial-era buildings, are pivotal in maintaining cultural continuity. These sites are repositories of local history, fostering a sense of identity and pride among residents. According to ICOMOS (2024), cultural heritage sites contribute to social cohesion by connecting communities to their shared past, which is crucial for fostering unity and resilience Al Rabady, (2024).

Economic Contributions

Heritage sites in Ibadan have the potential to drive economic development through cultural tourism. Visitors to these sites can generate revenue for the city, creating opportunities for local businesses and employment in sectors such as hospitality, transportation, and guide services. However, as UNESCO (2023) highlights, realizing the economic potential of heritage sites requires adequate investment in infrastructure, marketing, and site management Al-Adilee, (2024).

Challenges in Asset Utilization

Despite their potential, many heritage sites in Ibadan face challenges such as neglect, inadequate funding, and urban encroachment. For example, respondents in Ibadan South-East reported that over 50% of heritage buildings are in poor condition, limiting their ability to attract visitors and contribute to development. Effective policies and partnerships are needed to address these issues and unlock the full asset value of these sites Aktürk & Lerski, (2021).

Way Forward

To maximize the asset value of Ibadan's heritage sites, an integrated approach that combines conservation with sustainable urban development is essential. Public-private partnerships, community engagement, and the use of digital technologies for site management are key strategies. These efforts align with global best practices and emphasize the role of heritage as a driver for sustainable development (ICOMOS, 2024; UNESCO, 2023).



Figure 1: Mapo Hall
Source: Fieldwork 2024



Figure 2: Bower's Tower
Source: Fieldwork 2024



Figure 3: Giwa Adebisi House, Idikan
Source: Fieldwork 2024



Figure 4: Irefin Quarters, Oje
Source: Fieldwork 2024

Conclusion and Recommendations

Heritage resources in Ibadan are indispensable assets that bridge the past with sustainable futures, offering cultural, economic, and social benefits. This study identifies stark disparities in the condition of heritage sites across local government areas, with notable neglect in Ibadan South-East and relatively better conditions in Ibadan North and its surrounding regions. These findings underline the urgency for robust interventions to address issues of preservation and neglect Adewumi, A. (2022). Effective management of these resources can significantly contribute to economic growth, cultural identity, tourism, and environmental sustainability while enhancing community pride and participation Agrawal et al, (2024).

Recommendations

- A comprehensive framework should align heritage management with urban planning and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Policies must embed conservation efforts within broader strategies for economic development, environmental stewardship, and social inclusion. For instance, as advocated by ICOMOS (2024), creating guidelines for adaptive reuse of heritage buildings can ensure they serve contemporary functions without losing their historical integrity Adeyemo, O. (2018).
- Collaboration among government agencies, private sector investors, and local communities is crucial. Such partnerships can provide financial resources and technical expertise for restoring heritage sites. Notable examples include tax incentives for private investors and co-financing schemes for public and private entities, as recommended by UNESCO (2023). These initiatives can transform heritage sites into sustainable economic and tourism hubs Adedeji et al, (2020).
- Local communities must play an active role in preserving heritage sites. Through education and capacity-building programs, they can develop skills for site maintenance and tourism management. Community-driven initiatives foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, ensuring sustainability in conservation efforts Abiola, I. M., & Ibrahim, H. A. (2015).
- Leveraging digital tools like GIS mapping, inventory systems, and mobile applications can facilitate the monitoring and management of heritage resources. Dedicated financial instruments, such as conservation trust funds and grants, are essential to provide long-term support for preservation activities (UNESCO, 2023).
- Public awareness campaigns can highlight the cultural and economic value of heritage sites, encouraging collective efforts for their conservation. Schools, media, and tourism initiatives should emphasize the importance of heritage in community identity and sustainable development. Globally, cities have benefited from advocacy programs that promote heritage as a tool for education and economic prosperity (ICOMOS, 2024).

Adopting these recommendations can ensure that Ibadan's heritage resources are preserved and optimized as sustainable assets. Effective management will not only protect these cultural treasures but also leverage their value for economic development, tourism, and societal growth, aligning with global conservation standards and best practices. Abdullah, et al. (2020).

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