

**THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM CALABAR:
AN ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS IN ITS PATRONAGE**

BY

FIDELIS E. INYOKWE(PH.D, CLN)

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CALABAR - NIGERIA
Inyokwefidelis@yahoo.com

AND

MARGARET S. UMOH (CLN)

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CALABAR - NIGERIA
umohms64@gmail.com.

ABSTRACT

The main thrust of this study was to investigate factors that affect museum patronage in the national museum, Calabar. To carry out the study, two research hypotheses were formulated based on the variables of level of educational attainment and public enlightenment programmes. Related literature was reviewed based on the two variables of the study. The research design used for the study was the survey research design. The major instrument used for the study was a 23 item structured questionnaire constructed by the researchers and validated by statistical expert. This instrument was used on 700 stratified and randomly selected respondents from the museum. The two hypotheses formulated were analyzed using One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The result of the analysis revealed that: Level of educational attainment of the people, and public enlightenment programme significantly influence museum patronage. Based on the statistical analysis of these hypotheses, it was recommended among others that public enlightenment programmes should be constantly carried out by the museum so as to make the public aware of the need for museum patronage.

Keywords: Museum, Patronage

INTRODUCTION

Museum is an institution dedicated to helping people understand and appreciate the natural world, history of civilizations, and record of humanity's artistic, scientific, and technological achievements. Museum collects objects of scientific, aesthetic, or historical importance, cares for them, studies, interprets, and exhibits them for the purposes of public education and the advancement of knowledge (Charles, 2007).

The idea of public museum in Nigeria emerged during the colonial period. The actual establishment of public museums can be attributed to the efforts of the British expatriates, namely. K. C. Murray, otherwise referred to as the founder of Nigerian museums. E. H. Duckworth and B. E. B. Fagg. These three men had in common the interest of preserving the material and cultural heritage of the peoples of Nigeria (Afigbo, 2003).

One prominent factor that influences museum patronage in Nigeria is the level of educational attainment of the people. According to Tolayemi (1999), most visitors to Nigerian museums are educated persons. Similarly, a good number of visitors are students who visit the museums for educational or tourism purposes. Recently, educational departments have been established in Nigerian Museums to help educate visitors visiting the museums.

Public enlightenment is another factor to consider when talking of museum patronage. The public needs to be enlightened with programmes such as jingle on radio, display of the different exhibitions in museums on television, seminars and public lectures and camp fire need to be constantly organized by museums to create awareness about the existence of museums and the different exhibitions found in them (Cameron, 2001). The unfortunate situation is that most of these programmes mentioned above are hardly carried out by Nigerian museums to the public. As such the general attendance in Nigerian museums is relatively low compared to attendance recorded in Museums of the western world (Afigbo, 2003).

Statement of the problem

The Nigerian government has since independence till date increased the number of museums in the country to help educate the public about the different cultures in the nation. In spite of the fact that each state has at least one museum opened to the public, the number of persons patronizing these museums are relatively small (Izuakor, 2003).

Different attitudes such as level of educational attainment and public enlightenment seem to be prominent factors affecting museum patronage in Nigeria (Afigbo, 2003). The researchers therefore investigated factors that affect museum patronage, taking the national museum of Calabar as case study.

Objectives of the study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate factors that affect museum patronage in the national museum, Calabar. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate if:

- i. Educational attainment of persons influences the rate of museum patronage.
- ii. Public enlightenment programmes about the exhibition in museum have any influence on the rate of museum patronage.

Research questions

The following research questions were proposed to guide and direct the study.

1. To what extent does the education attainment of a person influence the rate of museum patronage?
2. How does public enlightenment programme about the exhibition in museum influence the rate of museum patronage?

Research hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between educational attainment and museum patronage.
2. There is no significant relationship between public enlightenment programmes about museum exhibition and museum patronage.

Significance of the study

The findings of this study will be of benefit to museums directors' administration in the Ministry of Culture, students and researchers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education and museum patronage

Abungu (2002) noticed that the highest number of persons who patronize museum in Kenya do so for educational purpose. Bennett (1999) discovered in South Australia that out of the 510 visitors that visited 3 museums in South Australia, 410 of them indicated that they had at least attended secondary school and as such concluded that education attainment is one of the factors that influence people's attitude toward the patronage of museum.

The finding of Bennett is also in corroboration with the work of Darbel (2001) whose study in England revealed that one of the major barriers to museum patronage is education. He discovered that people's level of education influences their attitude toward museum patronage.

Abinga (2005) in his study to investigate attitude of visitors towards museum patronage in Kenya discovered that one of the major factors that hinder museum patronage is the level of education of the visitors. He discovered that most of the people that visit the museums in Kenya are of higher educational background. The author also observed that people with low educational background that visited the museum were doing so just to entertain themselves unlike people with higher educational background who go there for educational purpose.

Anina (2005) in her study of the National Museum Ilorin-Nigeria discovered that more than 70% of the total population of visitors that visited Ilorin National Museum between January 2004 to December 2004 were educationally motivated to visit the museum. 30% had other reasons than educational purpose but were well educated persons. The writer therefore concluded that if all the people were well educated, the number of visitors to the museum will increase.

Ifejiagwu (2001) also conducted a study in Aba National Museum of Abia State. He wanted to assess to what extent the people around Aba are aware of the exhibition in the National Museum. He used survey research design to carry out the study. A structured questionnaire was constructed to elicit the collection of information (data). He noticed that most of the local uneducated persons who live around the museum were unaware about the function of a museum, talkless of the exhibition in the museum. He also noticed that most of the educated people around Aba had visited the museums and that income was one major factor that limits people from visiting museums.

Public enlightenment programme and museum patronage

Enlightenment is the act of creating awareness about issue (Osuagwu, 2003). Enlightenment could be created through jingles on radio and television, public lectures, seminars and workshops. Abu (2002) discovered in a survey in the national museum in Calabar that the number of people visiting the museum has drastically increased from 6,556 in 2002 to 8,039 in 2003 because of the high level of publicity carried out by museum. According to him, the public relations department has as a duty to enlighten and persuade the outside public to be aware of the different

Questionnaire (PATMPQ). This instrument was constructed by the researchers.

The instrument consisted of two sections. Section 'A' of the instrument was made up of 5 items. Items here were to elicit information on demographic data such as sex, age, educational level and level of income. Section 'B' consisted of 18 items designed on a 4 point Likert scale type questionnaire designed to measure the sub variables of the study. The instrument was ensured to be both valid and reliable.

Administration of the instrument

The questionnaires were administered to the respondents with the help of research assistants. Care was taken to explain the instruction on how to complete the items on the said questionnaire.

A total of eight hundred and twenty eight (828) questionnaires were given out to visitors in the museum during the months of October, November and December, 2015. During coding it was discovered that eighty three (83) questionnaires were not properly filled and thus discarded. 700 questionnaires were eventually used for the study.

Table 1:
Descriptive statistics and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the influence of level of educational attainment on museum patronage

Variables level of education	N	X	SD
No formal education	98	12.74	2.13
Primary education	144	13.82	2.04
Secondary education	228	14.54	1.82
Tertiary education	230	18.89	1.16
Total	700		

Source of variation	SS	Df	MS	F-ratio
Between group	936.34	3	312.11	14.65
Within group	14846.34	696	21.3	
Total	15782.68	699		

$P < 0.05$, $df=3$, 696 critical F-ratio 3.25

From Table 1, it could be seen that the calculated F-value of 14.65 was found to be greater than the critical F-ratio of 3.25 needed for significance at 0.05 level of significance with 3 and 696 degrees of freedom.

With the result, the null hypothesis which states that level of educational attainment does not significantly influence museum patronage is rejected in favour of the alternative.

Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation coefficient analysis of the relationship between public enlightenment programmes and museum patronage N=700

Variables level of education	N	X	SD
Public enlightenment programme	14.26	2.13	0.56
Museum patronage	15.13		

* $P < 0.05$, $df = 698$, critical $r = 0.196$

The result in Table 2 revealed that the calculated r -value of 0.56 was found to be greater than the critical r -value of 0.196 needed for significance at 0.05 alpha level of significance with 698 degrees of freedom. With the result, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between public enlightenment programme and museum patronage is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

Discussion of findings

The finding of hypothesis one indicates that level of educational attainment has a significant influence on museum patronage. This means that people with high educational attainment patronize the museum more than people with low educational attainment.

This result is in corroboration with the findings of Abunga (2005) who noticed that most of the people that patronized museums in Kenya are highly educated persons. Most of these highly educated persons most often go there for educational purposes unlike the low or non-literate persons who do so for entertainment purposes.

This finding is also supported by Anina (2005) who carried out a study in Ilorin national museum of Nigeria and discovered that more than 60% of the total number of visitors that visited the museum between October 1st 2004- December 31st 2007 indicated that they were in tertiary institutions or had attended tertiary institutions. He therefore concluded that level of educational attainment significantly influence museum patronage.

Public enlightenment programmes such as jingles on radio and television should be put in place. These factors significantly enlighten the public about the different exhibitions and products in museums.

The finding of hypothesis two reveals that public enlightenment programmes have a significant impact on museum patronage. This means that, the more public enlightenment (sensitization) programmes are carried out, the more the public is aware about artefacts in museum and patronize them. The result of this hypothesis is in corroboration with the work of Abu (2002) who asserts that one of the prominent ways to reach the public outside museum is to enlighten them through programmes on radio, television, public lectures, seminars and workshops.

The findings of this hypothesis is also in agreement with that of Osuagwu (2002) who noticed that most museums in Nigeria have introduced public relations department in their museums to assist the museum reach the public through newspaper publications, special exhibition programmes on radio and television.

CONCLUSION

The main thrust of this study is to investigate factors that affect museum patronage in the national museum of Calabar. Based on the statistical analysis of the hypotheses of the study, we conclude that museums are patronized by educated persons and public enlightenment programmes such as radio, television, public lectures, seminars and workshops

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