

## An Assessment of the Impact of Culture and Tourism on International Public Relations Practice: A Study of Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC)

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### Abstract

Effective international public relations practice has steadily placed most nations of the world on the path of growth and universal acceptance. It has literally opened a window through which the world can see, appreciate, admire and identify with the prospects and progress of a nation. Just like well packaged products, international public relations programmes need some virile media of communication to convey them to the desired destinations. Two of such reliable but unconventional media that are fast attracting universal recognition and adoption are culture and tourism. Owing to the immense goodwill and favourable publicity enjoyed by different countries of the world through these media, it has thus become imperative for the government of each nation to establish an agency that will directly manage and subsequently put them to maximum use.

In Nigeria, the agency saddled with this responsibility is the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC). Many international relations analysts have had the cause to ask at different fora if the duo of culture and tourism actually have a role to play in the favourable portrayal of a nation's image. Similarly, some people had expressed doubts as to the effectiveness of culture and tourism as media of international public relations aside from the commonplace conventional media of communication like Radio, Television, Print media etc. This study literally finds out the authenticity or otherwise of these varied views and also assesses the effectiveness of the various cultural programmes of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation in crystallizing the country's international image.

**Keywords:** Culture and Tourism, International Public Relations, Media, and Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC).

### Introduction

Culture is one language locally spoken but universally understood. For instance, one doesn't need to gain a mastery of the Chinese language before understanding and appreciating their culture and way of life. Culture has been identified by experts as one unique medium that conveys messages through feelings and emotions; and that has made it both potent and strategic to human interaction and integration. Sociologists are of the opinion that culture erects a virile platform upon which people relate and order their daily social intercourse. The way we greet or exchange pleasantries, respond to situations and address issues generally have direct bearing on our cultural orientation. The sub-media of culture, as revealed by culture enthusiasts include signs, symbols and other forms of non-verbal communication. So, getting acquainted with various cultures is a necessity for effective human interaction, smooth integration and world peace.

International public relations is a menu prepared locally but consumed universally. It is variously described by experts as a vehicle that conveys a nation's virtues, prospects and success story to the international arena. Some have conveniently described it as an information superhighway where knowledge and understanding are being freely shopped. Akande (2002: 6) revealed that in the contemporary society, anything that is not known and appreciated is simply consigned to the oblivion. And no organization or country would like to be relegated to irrelevance. That apparently informed the huge investment in various international public relations programmes across the globe. As most people would say, no amount is too much to invest in polishing a nation's image if it is certain that at the end, it will be loved, admired, accepted and appreciated. Seitel (1989: 499) opined that ours is an interdependent world, and in order for such activities as trade and commerce to prosper, the problems of communicating verbally and symbolically across national and cultural borders must be overcome. This indeed is the challenge of international public relations.

International public relations initiates deliberate efforts at enhancing the diplomatic status of a country among comity of nations. It presents a country as a commodity worthy of patronage. In Nigeria, core international public relations has not really been practiced nor encouraged by the government and even corporate organizations. It is in view of this glaring failure that we cannot really pinpoint the existing media or agencies that have directly championed the crusade of promoting the virtues and assets of the nation abroad. Nevertheless, the activities and accomplishments of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation in recent times have largely plugged into the yawning loophole. Through the corporation, Nigeria has begun to enjoy a seamless two-way communication flow with the global community. Even though a variety of both traditional and unconventional media are freely engaged in international public relations exercises the world over, the two most outstanding ones that the NTDC has skillfully deployed to positively market the country to other climes are

culture and tourism. How well this twosome media have impacted on the operation of the NTDC vis-à-vis Nigeria's image abroad is what will engage our attention in this study.

The study has as its objectives to, evaluate the positive effect of culture and tourism on international public relations practices with a special focus on Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), assess the role of culture and tourism in the promotion of a nation's image abroad, identify some challenges in the realization of the full potentials of the media in the international arena, identify some major achievements, prospects and challenges of NTDC, and thereafter offer useful suggestions on the way forward.

In addressing these objectives, some salient questions will have to be answered in the course of this discourse: Is culture such an easy product to exhibit in an international forum? Apart from attracting foreign currency to the country, how well has tourism promoted the image of Nigeria to foreign tourists? Do the duo of tourism and culture actually offer a veritable platform for international public relations operators? How viable are culture and tourism as media of international image management? Has the Nigerian Tourism industry played any direct role in the economic development of the country? Has the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation lived up to the expectations of an average Nigerian, judging by the huge fortune immersed in the tourism sector?

### **Multi-Perspective Analysis of African Tourism Development and the Universal Influence of Culture and Tourism**

Today, knowing, understanding, and embellishing a country's name (brand) or reputation is essential to her success. With current technological changes, restructuring, realignment, and globalization, the political assessments of a nation are no longer pertinent. In today's world, it is the emotional viewpoint of the media and public opinion that predominates and influences changes in corporate reputation. The media, in no mean term, play a significant role in the building and nourishing of a country's image and reputation both locally, nationally and internationally.

Culture and tourism, being the principal media engaged by the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation in promoting Nigeria to the international community, have been quite outstanding in their reach and influence. Like it is commonly said, a good product needs no hard sell. Nigeria is a vast country with about 932,768 59km land mass, located wholly within the tropics. The country, aptly described as the 'Giant of Africa,' is richly endowed with ecological and cultural resources.

Organized Tourism in Nigeria dates back to 1962 when the Nigerian Tourist Association was formed by a group of private practitioners to project the tourism potentials of Nigeria and encourage both domestic and international tourism activities that will showcase the rich cultural heritage of the country. The efforts of the association led to the admission of Nigeria as a full member of the International Union of Official Travel Organization (IUOTO), now rechristened World Tourism Organization (WTO) in 1964, and the promulgation of Decree 54 of 1976 (now an Act of Parliament) establishing the Nigerian Tourism Board (NTB). In a bid to meet the challenges of the times and in line with the Tourism Policy, the decree was amended to give birth to the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) Decree 81 of 1992, now an Act of Parliament. This new development conferred the status of apex tourism regulatory body of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the Corporation. With this, it is now charged with the responsibility of promoting, marketing and coordinating tourism activities in the country with the following objectives:

- a) Creating the enabling environment for tourism activities to flourish through the promotion of good standards and efficient service delivery in the hospitality industry and to facilitate investment sector.
- b) Making tourism a major revenue earner by harnessing the country's rich cultural heritage and other viable tourism assets with an efficient, proactive and highly motivated work force.
- c) Standardizing and sanitizing the industry through registration, inspection, classification and grading of the Hospitality and Tourism enterprises to meet international standard and ensure customer satisfaction.
- d) Publicizing and promoting Nigeria's endowments through print and electronic media/internet, production of quality brochures, flyers, guide maps, documentaries and active participation at local and international fairs/exhibitions.
- e) Ensuring the provision of reliable and up-to-date tourism Data Bank and implementation of Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) to assess the impact of tourism on national economy.
- f) Liaising with other government agencies such as Immigration Service, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), National Population Commission, etc, to produce Annual Tourism Statistical Data and Tourism Statistical Account.
- g) Identifying, assessing and documenting tourism sites and attractions for investment and promotion purposes.
- h) Establishing and enforcing codes of conduct for travel, trade and business operators.
- i) Liaising with relevant government Ministries, Departments and Agencies to ensure the provision of necessary infrastructures to tourism sites.
- j) Providing technical and advisory services to public and private sector operators in the tourism industry.
- k) Planning, coordinating, and assisting in the development of tourism sites throughout the country.

- l) Ensuring the maintenance of standards within the industry.
- m) Ensuring the establishment of Tourism Development Fund (TDF) to provide financial assistance to practitioners and developers.
- n) Ensuring the promotion and marketing of the tourism products and services within and outside the country.
- o) Facilitating and encouraging private sector and local community's participation in the development of the tourism industry.
- p) Promoting technical and professional tourism services.

The Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation is a statutory body under the Federal Ministry of Culture, Tourism and National Orientation. The services rendered by the Corporation are largely in the areas of regulation, coordination and promotion of tourism activities in the country. These include:

- i. Regulation, classification and grading of Hospitality and Tourism Enterprises (HTEs) to ensure standardization of facilities and efficient service delivery in line with international standards.
- ii. Coordination and promotion of major tourism/cultural events such as festivals to promote tourism and attract international tourists to events like Osun Osogbo Cultural Festival, Calabar Annual Street Carnival, Argungun International Fishing and Cultural Festival, Durbar Festivities in the North, Riv-fest in Rivers State, Eyo Masquerade Festival in Lagos, Ojude Oba Festival in Ijebu Ode, etc.
- iii. Provision of technical and advisory services to state, local government and the organized private sector (OPS) on tourism development matters.
- iv. Identification, documentation and promotion of major tourist sites and attractions in each of the 36 states of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) with a view to creating awareness on the potentials and investment opportunities of the Nigerian tourism sector for domestic and international tourism purposes.
- v. Provision of assistance in the rehabilitation, upgrading and development of important tourist sites in various parts of the country.

Under the current leadership of Otunba Olusegun Runsewe, and in strict compliance with the Board's mandate of developing and promoting tourism in Nigeria to its full potentials, the corporation has put in place machinery to ensure that Nigeria becomes a preferred tourism destination in Africa. This is being done alongside other ancillary activities geared towards the achievement of these mandates and creating conducive atmosphere for the evolution of a sustainable 'practical tourism'. President Kikwete of Tanzania gave the world an important message when he said the western media need to focus more on success stories in Africa. "We are doing so many good things out here which do not get enough publicity," (Kikwete, 2009). From the situation on ground, there is nothing farther from the truth in this statement. Africa, particularly the black race has been underrated, misrepresented, sidelined and maligned for centuries. To the average western media, nothing good comes from the 'dark' continent of Africa.

As public relations practitioners will always say, when all efforts at communicating the truth through press releases, articles or news features fail, then advertise. There is no better advertisement than showcasing your successes, accomplishments, potentials and prospects. The plethora of natural endowments in Africa is enough advertisement to the world. It is enough force to pull the entire world to the shores of Africa. And the African Tourism Association, an umbrella tourism body for African countries has been doing impressively well in this respect. Giving Africa a global attention and recognition through Culture and Tourism is the best public relations to ever emanate from the shores of the continent. Public relations experts are of the opinion that public relations is good deed publicly acknowledged. Sir Alex Akinyele, a former Nigerian Minister of Information and National Orientation once said if you don't blow your trumpet, someone else will seize it and blow it against you.

There is no better way of blowing the African trumpet than exhibiting her rich cultural heritage, the aquatic splendor, the dense forest of the Osun Sacred Grove on the outskirts of the bubbling city of Osogbo, Osun state, Nigeria; the abundant physical attraction ranging from hills, waterfalls, springs, caves, lakes and mountains across the length and breadth of the continent. Through culture and tourism, Africa has begun to command high profile attention in global affairs. Apart from the economic advantage accruable from tourism management and promotion, world peace has been vigorously pursued and largely achieved through this industry and the pivotal role of the NTDC in Africa tourism promotion. For instance, the First Africa Peace through Tourism Conference was celebrated in Mpumalanga Province of South Africa in December 2003. At the conference, delegates from 22 countries tackled an ambitious agenda focusing on Africa and building of peace through sustainable community tourism development.

Worthy of note too was the event of March 2002 in Nelspruit, South Africa where a dramatic torch-lighting ceremony accompanied by parade of young people carrying the flags of Africa's 53 countries, heralding the formal opening of the First International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPTT) African Conference on March 3-7 in Mpumalanga's capital, Nelspruit, South Africa. The international conference with the theme: "Building Bridges of Peace through Sustainable Community Tourism Development," was presided over by the

Hon. Valli Moosa, South Africa's Minister of Environment Affairs; Lou D'Amore, President and founder of the International Institute for Peace through Tourism; Dr. Noel Brown, Chairperson of IIPTT's Advisory Board; and Mira Berman, Executive Director of the Africa Travel Association.

Discussions touched on positive and negative tourism challenges and issues impacting the promotion on both domestic and intra-Africa tourism. It was observed at the conference that tourism has been effectively used to bring some degree of peace and stability in part of the continent, thus encouraging other parts to learn (even emulate) by example. However, excitement greeted the announcement of trans-border cooperative efforts to open wildlife preserves, which will not only restore natural migratory paths, but encourage growth in multi-visa tourist traffic between countries (e.g. the Greater Limpopo Frontier Part between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique) and the Okavango Upper Zambezi International Tourism (OUZIT), Spatial Development Initiative (SDI incorporating game parks in: Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and potentially coastal areas in Mozambique); and CEAC (Congo, RDC, Gabon and Angola).

Other regionalization initiatives include SADEC/RETOSA (South Africa Development Economic Community/Regional Tourism of South Africa, currently developing COMESA, a cross-country passport between eastern and southern Africa, including South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana and Namibia; a 20-country, common market for East and Central Africa; the East African Tourism Commission's Total Passport, making it easier for citizens to travel throughout the region comprising Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda); and renewal of its West African counterpart, ECOWAS (a 10-country common market for the West African countries) linking Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Cote d' Ivoire, Liberia, Serra Leone, Guinea, Gambia and Senegal. Africa Travel Association strives to not only promote tourism to the continent, but to stimulate short and long-term sustainable mechanisms for peace through tourism. Another remarkable step taken in attracting positive world attention to Africa was the Zanzibar's "Dhow Countries Festival" in June 2002. A cultural extravaganza, the festival featured cinema, music and arts from all over Africa, the Gulf States, Iran, India, Pakistan and Islands of India Ocean etc.

The NTDC had also successfully participated in the second Global Summit on Tourism in Switzerland on October 14-17, 2002. Through its various promotional programmes, the Corporation has brought a universal recognition to the vast natural assets of the nation. It has equally launched the Satellite Navigation and Mobile Phone planner to facilitate easy travel for domestic tourists as well as in-bound tourists. It has also put the people and culture of Nigeria on the world scale when it attended the Third Annual International African Diaspora Heritage Trail (ADHT) Conference in the Bahamas in October 2007. The conference offered a platform for a diverse gathering of interested, talented and experienced persons from throughout the African Diaspora who are committed to authentic research, documentation, promotion and further development of African Heritage sites/venues, monuments, museums and cultural expressions. The benefits of the conference in the words of the co-chair, Dr. Davidson Hepburn and Actor Danny Glover, must be evaluated in the context of a national search for the identification of a deeper appreciation for the importance that heritage and culture play in the preservation of our identity.

Nigeria on its own, under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Culture, Tourism and National Orientation, with the support of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation for the first time, hosted the Ecotourism conference/symposium in Abuja in 2000. The African Travel Association (ATA) which Nigeria is a member is an international nonprofit, nonpolitical travel industry association established in 1975 to promote tourism to the continent of Africa. ATA is a member of American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), World Tourism Organization (WTO), and an industry partner in 'Green Globe' programme. According to Maurice Archibong, in *The Sun News Online* in March 2004, Nigeria remains a goldmine as far as the tourism potentials are concerned. One of Nigeria's greatest blessings in this regard is her ethnic multiplicity, which translates to uncommon diversity as regards cultural festivals and calendars. Outside the traditional sphere, Nigeria also gains a great deal from her geography, especially with regard to vegetation and latitude or topography, which offers both tropical and near temperate climates within the country.

Ernest M. Littles, President and Director of Tourism in Trinidad and Tobago also shared the same sentiments about his country and by extension, the African continent on August 30, 2007 at a Cocktail reception in commemoration of World Tourism Day hosted in Water Front Esplanade, Hyatt Regency Trinidad, when he said that, "within the Caribbean region, Trinidad and Tobago stands out as a destination with a unique ecology. We are a land blessed with abundance or what biologists describe as a 'high species to area ratio'. Here you will find more than 400 species of birds, 100 classes of mammals, 85 types of reptiles, 30 species of amphibians, 617 butterfly varieties and 2,200 kinds of flowering plants, all presenting a veritable continuing festival of biodiversity".

### **Culture and Tourism as Media of International Public Relations: Emerging Challenges in International Image Management**

For the past two decades now, culture and tourism have played a major role in promoting the image of Nigeria and by extension, the African continent to the world. If anything, the world attention has been drawn to the

continent through regular visits by tourists from around the globe. There is no better way of telling the African story than that. All the negative publicity orchestrated by some Western media about Africa and Nigeria in particular are being dispelled frontally through the effective engagement of the vibrant media of culture and tourism. International public relations is one specialized area of international communication that addresses the image problem of a country while assiduously enhancing its international reputation. Thus effective reputation management is a key responsibility of international public relations practitioners; and incidentally, the NTDC has for many years been discharging this unique function effectively.

A country's reputation management or what some prefer to call corporate international reputation management is one aspect of international public relations practice that many often misconstrue, misunderstand or misapply in their programme planning and implementation template. In simple, unambiguous term, international public relations, just like corporate communications, is a complex and distinct management discipline, which refers to public relations management incorporating all strategic and managerial functions of communication in light of corporate identity, image, reputation, crisis and risk, and marketing communications.

Bikker & Regt (2001:76) opined that the world has been transformed from a traditional industrial economy to an attention economy, precisely from selling product branding to selling corporate branding (Kitchen and Schultz, 2001) in order to venture into globalization challenges. The Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation has effectively toed this path in selling the Nigerian brand to the world through the media of culture and tourism. In this era of globalization, there have been growing numbers of academic debates regarding the role of international public relations/corporate communications in the public relations marketing and management literatures. Van Riel and Lange (2003) argue that communication management has not yet been posited in the boardroom due to be enhanced at the strategic and managerial level. Grunig and Grunig (2003) also agree with this notion by arguing that relationship management is a key function for excellent corporate communication.

In contrast, however, it has been said that senior management of a country's international image promotion and marketing team values the three emerging functions of corporate communication: corporate image, corporate identity and reputation; as these functions are more likely to be aligned with the development of corporate strategy and corporation's vision (Blamer & Greysen, 2003), particularly top corporate communications involved in formulating and implementing a policy of corporate communication (Van Rid, 1995 and 1997). To successfully build a favourable and acceptable reputation for a country, whether through culture, tourism or any other media of international public relations, the first thing to assess and skillfully package is its image (both local and international). It is the special and unique features identified or attached to this image that will now be used as springboard to launch its international reputation. Thus an understanding of 'image' is germane at this juncture.

Melewar (2003) stated that it is very important to clarify three different concepts which people often misunderstood and misapply in the course of promoting or marketing their organization or country's image and reputation. These concepts are: corporate image, identity and reputation. Close as they may appear, image and reputation are not and can never be the same. However, it is incontrovertible that image management is a prelude to reputation management. Many people are of the opinion that a good image paves way for a good reputation; the very type that Nigeria is currently clamouring for in the face of international condemnation and hostility due to some evident policy somersault.

Image is the perception of constituencies on how an organization actually presents itself (Van Riel, 1995; Argenti, 1998), while corporate identity refers to the self-presentation of an organization through corporate logo, colour, and any signal that can easily be seen by constituencies (Van Riel, 1995). Hoisting the Nigerian national flag depicting green-white-green at international tourism events by the NTDC is one major way of attracting the world to the Nigerian brand via its corporate identity. At the Federation of International Football Associations-organized world cup in 2010 and the recent Confederation of Africa Football-organized Nations' Cup in February 2013 in South Africa, the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation had a stand covering a large expanse of land tagged 'the Nigerian Village' which attracted tourists from all walks of life. Back home in Abuja, the national headquarters of the corporation has successfully established and tastefully furnished what it calls 'the Nigerian Tourist Village'. Even with all these tremendous achievements which have literally etched the Nigerian people and culture on the consciousness of the international community, the NTDC is still making good its plan to establish the 'Nigerian Tourist Radio and Television' which will, no doubt, help to, a large extent, in transmitting the rich cultural heritage of the country, and by extension, the African continent to the entire world.

No better way to tell a nation's story than this. International public relations practice, no doubt, has donned a new toga in the country and this has impressively boosted the efforts of our local conventional media which are also good aides to international relations management. From all indications, the NTDC through its current leadership has done so much in crystallizing the Nigerian image abroad; this has also brought glory and fortune to the nation thus enhancing her international reputation profile. However, it is important we appreciate the fact that reputation just like breeze, could seize for sometimes depending on the mood of the weather, so we have to be more proactive in sustaining the current tempo.

In his contribution to an online Journal published in March 2010, Robert Greene informed that reputation is the

cornerstone of power. Through reputation alone you can intimidate and win; once it slips, however, you are vulnerable, and will be attacked on all sides. Make your reputation unassailable. Always be alert to potential attacks and thwart them before they happen. So more work has to be done in the international public relations practice for Nigeria to sustain the current tempo and also effectively boost the efforts and operations of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC).

In the course of an earlier research conducted to find out the potency of culture and tourism as veritable media of international public relations and the extent to which the NTDC and other related tourism bodies in Africa have utilized them, the following findings were made:

- i. The duo of culture and Tourism has played a key role in the promotion and management of Nigerian image and reputation abroad.
- ii. Through the various publicity programmes carried out by the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) like local and international cultural exhibitions, fares, symposia, etc, a lot of world attention and patronage have been drawn to Nigeria.
- iii. The NTDC has effectively and rewardingly engaged the media of culture and tourism to place not only Nigeria but the entire African continent on the global tourism chart.
- iv. The media of culture and tourism have remained the most potent, reliable and effective in international public relations practice.
- v. Culture and Tourism, especially those from Africa continent have remained attractive and easy products to exhibit with lasting impact at international fora.
- vi. Through the efforts of the NTDC, Nigeria has been getting a boost of between 10 and 15 billion United States Dollars per annum, and the prospects are getting brighter by the day.
- vii. People from different parts of the world have come to know Nigeria; and foreigners irrespective of race, creed or colour are now willing to relate freely with her citizens as a result of the positive things they have seen, felt and encountered through tourism engagements
- viii. Nigeria's image rating among the comity of nations has appreciated tremendously through the medium of tourism.
- ix. The responses elicited from a vast majority of respondents indicate that the NTDC has indeed lived up to the expectations of Nigerians and even the international community by not only showcasing the opulent cultural heritage of Nigeria, but equally mobilizing tourists from around the globe to the country to see and feel the positive things they have heard about the most populous black nation on earth.
- x. It was also revealed by some of our respondents that even though the NTDC has been freely coasting home to victory in its varied culture and Tourism promotional activities, a lot more has to be done by way of opening local and traditional media arteries to sensitize the rural dwellers on the need to nurture and preserve their rich cultural heritage which has not yet been given the desired national and global attention.
- xi. Paucity of fund has equally been identified as a major Achilles hill of the corporation. Direct government funding is still not as it is supposed to be. There are different lofty dreams to realize but the financial muscle is lacking.

### **Conclusion**

International public relations practice, which is designed to give a nation or an organization a pride of place in the international arena, engage different conventional and unconventional media to realize set goals. Among these unconventional media are culture and tourism which present things (or facts) as they are without garnishing or falsification. Inviting people (tourists) from different climes to see, feel and assess the cultural heritage of another group of people takes much more than mere rhetoric and cheap propaganda. There must be physical structures on the ground vis-à-vis a sustainable platform to operate. The NTDC has effectively provided these structures and platform for international and local tourists to see and appreciate the rich cultural landscape and hospitable people of Nigeria.

The activities of the corporation have put Nigeria in the eye of the world. The country no longer needs much introduction in any part of the world. The hitherto battered image has begun to take favourable and attractive shape while her international reputation is on the upward swing. The various media and publicity platforms created by the NTDC have contributed in energizing the much-touted 'Nigerian Rebranding Campaign' initiated by the erstwhile Minister of Information and Communication, Professor Dora Akunyili. Even though the campaign may have lost its steam and vigour, the catchphrase of *Good people, Great Nation* is still being confidently etched on the template of international tourism by the corporation. Virtually all the public relations experts agree with the fact that image and reputation are pursued simultaneously by a country or a business organization. None can actually divorce the other. Once a good image is achieved through effective and proactive public relations campaign, the next in the queue is reputation which offers a nation the desired crown of glory and success wand to attract good fortunes locally and internationally.

### **Recommendations**

From our research findings, it is obvious that the duo of culture and tourism are veritable media of international public relations practice and have impacted positively on the nation's image as demonstrated by the activities of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation, the umbrella body regulating and promoting cultural and tourism programmes in the country.

Be that as it may, all cannot be said to be well with the corporation especially in its effective engagement of these media for optimal benefits and rewards. In the light of emerging challenges, the Federal Government of Nigeria should shore up the annual budgetary allocation to the corporation to enable it function to its full potentials. The NTDC itself should work more assiduously in strengthening these media of culture and tourism to make Nigeria the world's *numero uno* tourism destination.

The Press and Public Relations Unit of the Corporation should be strengthened and adequately staffed to cover the nooks and crannies of the country with a view to sensitizing both the rural and urban communities on the imperative of preserving their rich cultural heritage. The corporation should go further down the hinterland to discover and publicize other latent but fascinating landmarks and historic sites with immense tourism potentials. In addition to the few international cultural fiestas/conferences organized by the NTDC, concerted effort should be made to package more programmes that will attract present and potential tourists from all walks of life to the country.

Nigerian school curricula at both Primary and Secondary levels should be reviewed so that culture and tourism could be incorporated as compulsory subjects in order to start grooming a generation of culture and tourism enthusiasts in the country. The NTDC should continually engage the services of not only the Nigerian media but also the international media with strong editorial contents and repute like the CNN (Cable News Network), BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), VOA (Voice of America), VON (Voice of Nigeria), and of course, the paid satellite television stations like the DSTV group, DAARSAT, STARTIMES, etc, with a view to publicizing the tourism prowess of the country to the rest of the world.

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