



Archaeology Education in Igbo-Ukwu, South East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

An outcry for the inclusion of archaeology into school teaching curriculum has been on for over six decades. Yet, Nigeria is one of such countries in West Africa that have experienced a slow growth in archaeology education at both tertiary and pre-tertiary schools. In a bid to addressing this issue, a public awareness and community archaeology project was conceived in Igbo-Ukwu to create awareness on the relevance of archaeology in preserving cultural heritage and enhance skill acquisition. 93 secondary school pupils and 12 community residents in Igbo-Ukwu participated in classroom educational seminar and archaeological field training, respectively. The participants were exposed to learning soft and hard skills. Results from the assessment of the participants showed that at a time when Nigeria and many countries in Africa are troubled with loss of traditional histories and oral traditions, archaeology education is a vital tool for addressing the problem.

Résumé de recherche: Une demande pressante en faveur de l'inclusion de l'archéologie dans le programme d'enseignement scolaire s'est exprimée depuis plus de six décennies. Pourtant, le Nigeria fait partie de ces pays d'Afrique de l'Ouest ayant connu un développement lent en matière d'éducation archéologique tant dans les établissements d'enseignement pré-tertiaire que tertiaire. Dans le cadre d'un effort pour remédier à cette question, un projet d'archéologie communautaire et de sensibilisation du public a été créé à Igbo-Ukwu afin que la pertinence de l'archéologie pour la préservation du patrimoine culturel et l'optimisation d'acquisition de compétences soient mieux perçues. 93 écoliers d'une école secondaire et 12 résidents de la communauté à Igbo-Ukwu ont participé respectivement à un séminaire éducatif en salle de classe et à une formation archéologique sur le terrain. Les participants ont été exposés à l'apprentissage de compétences techniques ainsi que de compétences sociales et de

communication. Les résultats tirés de l'évaluation des participants ont mis en évidence qu'à une époque où le Nigeria et de nombreux pays d'Afrique s'alarment de la disparition des récits traditionnels et des traditions orales, l'enseignement archéologique constitue un outil essentiel pour remédier au problème.

Resumen: durante más de seis décadas se ha producido Un clamor por la inclusión de la arqueología en el plan de estudios de enseñanza escolar. Sin embargo, Nigeria es uno de esos países de África occidental que ha experimentado un lento crecimiento en la educación arqueológica tanto en las escuelas terciarias como pre-terciarias. En un intento por abordar este problema, se concibió un proyecto de arqueología comunitaria y de conciencia pública en Igbo-Ukwu para crear conciencia sobre la relevancia de la arqueología en la preservación del patrimonio cultural y para mejorar la adquisición de habilidades. 93 alumnos de la escuela secundaria y 12 residentes de la comunidad en Igbo-Ukwu participaron en el seminario educativo en el aula y la capacitación arqueológica de campo, respectivamente. Los participantes estuvieron expuestos al aprendizaje de habilidades blandas y duras. Los resultados de la evaluación de los participantes mostraron que en un momento en que Nigeria y muchos países de África están preocupados por la pérdida de historias tradicionales y tradiciones orales, la educación arqueológica es una herramienta vital para abordar el problema.

KEY WORDS

Igbo-Ukwu, Public archaeology, Secondary school, Cultural education

Introduction

Going down memory lane almost two decades ago now, in one of my classes as an undergraduate student, our professor told us a story of his personal encounter during the 1981/82 academic session field training school in a local community in southwestern Nigeria. A mother was seen forcing her reluctant son to go to school. While they went along, she pointed at the fieldworkers and said “see those labourers that refused to go to school” (S. Ogundele, personal communication, 2020). Suffice to say that the mother was explaining to her son that if he fails to go to school, he will end up like the archaeologist whose work is meaningless. In a simi-

lar way, during a recent fieldwork exercise in southwestern Nigeria, my team of archaeologists and I were ignorantly described as ritualists because of the recovered potsherds we carried back to the camp site after excavation, while others thought we were surveyors as we went about with our fieldwork tools. Elsewhere in the northern province of South Africa, Esterhuysen (2000) reported that despite on-going archaeological excavations in the area, archaeologists have been mistaken for municipal workers who installed toilets and electricity. Mistaken identities leading to erroneous descriptions of archaeologists as surveyors, due to similarity in fieldwork equipment, or architect, due to semblance in spelling, is a common occurrence. These scenarios only demonstrate low level of awareness of archaeology in these local areas where archaeological sites are located, resulting to mixed understanding of the discipline and the need to popularise it.

Though archaeology is hardly taught as a separate subject in schools, it has gradually become incorporated into the certificate examinations at the secondary school level in the United Kingdom (Planel 1990). On the contrary, archaeology has not yet been introduced in Nigeria's primary and secondary education based on the new curriculum subjects (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council 2020). This has contributed to the unpopularity and high misinterpretation of this subject in Nigeria and other parts of West Africa (Ogundele 2005). Poor awareness about the archaeology discipline has automatically relegated it in the backwater with assumed lack of relevance to human capacity and national development. Archaeology has a role to play in contributing to national economic growth through, for example, cultural tourism. Archaeology can also equip individuals with certain skills and knowledge which can enhance self-identity and appreciation of their history and heritage. This paper discusses measures undertaken to revitalise the knowledge of archaeology in Nigeria. This is done within the context of archaeology education at Igbo-Ukwu, an important cultural site in south eastern Nigeria. The paper also offers some comments on the relevance of this important discipline to national sustainable development when properly harnessed. The focus of this paper is not to clamour for more people taking up archaeology as a career. This is because just as we have many people who are interested in the discipline, there are others who are indifferent about it. Instead, this paper seeks to promote what the National Science Foundation calls an 'informed citizenry' about the archaeology discipline (Fagan 2000). However, this is not to downplay the need for more archaeologists in the Nigerian space. More trained archaeologists undoubtedly, will be an added advantage to the popularisation of the discipline.

Background

Igbo-Ukwu town is notable for harbouring the phenomenal world's famous archaeological site situated in the Nigerian state of Anambra in the south eastern part of the country. Anambra is an Igbo speaking state and one out of the five south eastern states (Abia, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo) in Nigeria. The area is endowed with vast cultural heritage resources evident in their rich arts, customs, festivals, sacred sites, folklores, cuisines, attires, monuments and indigenous technology. It has been argued generally that Nigerian cultural heritage resources are challenged by iconoclasm, artefact trafficking, developmental projects and civilisation (Onyima 2016). This is not far from true at Igbo-Ukwu. Some festivals such as *Iwa ogo* (ceremony done to show that men have come of age), *ahia mbibi* (fattening ceremony to prepare a bride for marriage) and *okpensi* (annual festival in honour of the ancestors) are no more in practice at Igbo-Ukwu, arising from modernity and Christianity (Okoye 2016). However, the New Yam festival (*iri ji*) remains one that is globally celebrated by the Igbo both home and abroad till date.

Three archaeological sites were identified from the pioneering work of Thurstan Shaw who carried out archaeological investigations in the area between 1959 and 1964 following accidental discoveries in the 1920s of unique bronze and pottery objects with exquisite workmanship (Shaw 1977). The site was pivotal to acceptance that ancient African societies created complex social frameworks and partook in early forms of technological advancement about a thousand years ago. Six decades after the work of Shaw, not much has been done to conserve the sites from which those invaluable objects were retrieved. The community has also been poorly engaged to equip them with some skills as benefits of hosting these renowned sites. This engagement will create in them a sense of ownership of those sites and a stake in decision making on how those sites are preserved. The only revisits made to Igbo-Ukwu after Shaw's pioneering work were hinged on archaeological reconnaissance and traditions of origin targeted at identifying new sites for future works (Anozie 1993; Akinade 2010). In 2005, a cultural group known as the Mbido Igbo Association (MIA) was formed which was targeted at helping Igbo-Ukwu develop culturally. Their activities were mainly tailored towards organising cultural festivals, conferment of chieftaincy titles and they participated in discussions towards setting up the Shaw Institute for Cultural Arts (SICA) in honour of Professor Thurstan Shaw and the new building for National Commission for Museums and Monuments (NCMM) (Okafouzu 2018). Another group in Igbo-Ukwu is the Igbo-Ukwu Development Union (IDU). The group is a town assembly vested with political powers and

involved in the physical development of Igbo-Ukwu community. Despite the setting up of these groups and their many agendas towards promoting Igbo-Ukwu, none has been directed at grassroots education of the residents about the significance of their cultural heritage resources, especially the 1959/60 and 1964 excavations, to the general understanding of the wider Igbo historiography. The only group in Igbo-Ukwu that had a well aligned agenda for promoting the knowledge of archaeology in the community was a research and philanthropic organisation called 'Igbo Anozie Archaeological Association'. Unfortunately, this organisation went into extinction not long after its establishment without any executed project (N. Anozie, personal communication, 2020). In response to these challenges surrounding archaeological heritage development in Igbo-Ukwu, a public awareness and community archaeology project was then conceptualised by Dr Pamela Jane Smith (Shaw's widow) and commenced in 2019. As a preliminary phase of the project, archaeology education seminar was conducted for secondary school pupils and archaeological field training for selected residents of Igbo-Ukwu. This approach is focused on developing knowledge and wide range of skills in relation to heritage management.

Igbo-Ukwu has a general population of over seventy five thousand people (<https://www.mindat.org/feature-2338640.html>). The area is made up of people from different religious backgrounds including Christians and traditional worshippers with Christianity being the dominant religion. The major age group are dominated by people under the age of fifty five years old. The town of Igbo-Ukwu is divided into three quarters: Obiuno, Ngo and Ihite. For an even representation of the larger community for this study therefore, one secondary school was randomly selected from each of the quarters; Christ the King Secondary School (CKSS) at Obiuno, Community (boys) Secondary School (CSS) at Ihite and Girls Secondary School (GSS) at Ngo (Figure 1).

Archaeology and Education in West Africa

Whilst the inclusion of archaeology into school curricula has been clamoured for as early as the 1940s in the United Kingdom (Clark 1943; Fox 1944), Africa experienced a wave of this outcry in 1957 at the Third Congress of the PanAfrican Archaeological Association (PAA) championed by Miles Burkitt who advocated for archaeology not only to be taught to children but as a subject to be recognised in Teacher's Training Colleges and in their curricula (Burkitt 1957). This advocacy was re-echoed by Merrick Posnansky at the seventh PAA congress in 1971 but with a refocus on archaeology as a university discipline effective in training professional archaeologists and as service subject for other disciplines (Posnansky 1976).

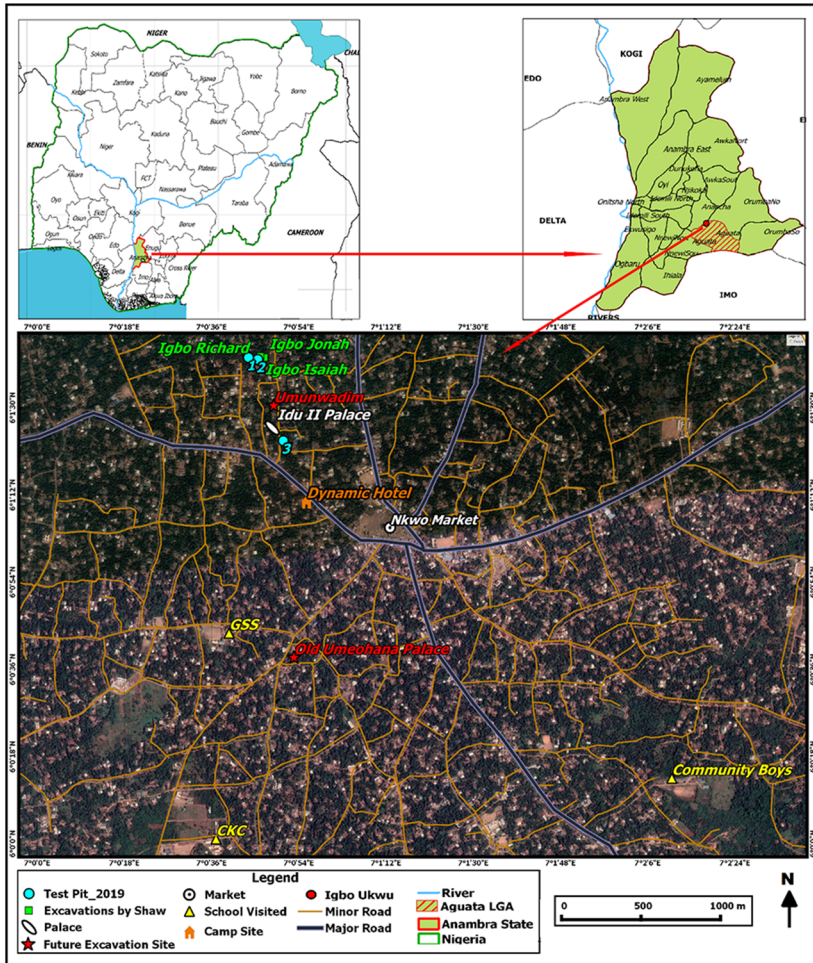


Figure 1. Site location

University teaching in archaeology experienced a slow development in West Africa just like other parts of Africa. West African countries such as Guinea Conakry and Guinea Bissau have no professional archaeologists in the universities or government offices (McIntosh 2017), not to talk of teaching it at elementary levels. The same applies to Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Gambia which have no indigenous archaeologist nor related infrastructure (DeCorse 2014). Countries like Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Mali, Ghana, Benin, Niger and Togo have universities which graduate archaeology students. The first university department of archaeology in West Africa was established in 1951 at the then Achimota College

(now University of Ghana, Legon) while the first full degree courses began in 1968 (Anquandah et al. 2014; Posnansky 1976).

In Nigeria, the department of archaeology started as a small research unit in the Institute of African studies, University of Ibadan, in 1963 but later became a full department in 1971 with the introduction of postgraduate studies in the mid-1970s (Folorunso 2011). However, scientific excavations had earlier started in Ghana (Bosumpra rock shelter) and Nigeria (Ife) in the early 1940s (Anquandah et al. 2014; Folorunso 2011). Nigeria presently has over one hundred and seventy federal, state and privately owned universities (Varrella 2020). Out of this number, there are only five universities with full-fledged departments of archaeology, constituting less than 3% of total universities in Nigeria that offer archaeology degrees, with the pioneer department of archaeology being domiciled in the University of Ibadan, southwestern Nigeria. Other universities include University of Nigeria in the eastern part of Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello University in northern Nigeria, while University of Jos and the most recent, Federal University Lokoja, are both in north-central Nigeria. Although Kwara State University in southwestern Nigeria does not have a full-fledged archaeology department, they started awarding Bachelors in History with an archaeology option since the 2018/19 academic session. This underrepresentation of archaeology in tertiary institutions in Nigeria contributes to making public awareness and dissemination of archaeological knowledge low. Consequently, it is evident that the under-representation of archaeology in Nigeria's educational system is a direct reflection of the poor knowledge of archaeology within the wider public.

Moreover, due to the growing dissatisfaction with the nation's educational system, the National Policy on Education was birthed after the National Curriculum Conference in 1969 but first published in 1977 (National Policy on Education 2004). Five decades after this important policy document was conceived, one begins to query if the Nigerian educational system has become any better nor have the philosophy and objectives surrounding the conception of this policy met the needs of the individuals and society at large that it was targeted at. There is no doubt that the Nigerian government has continuously made attempts at improving the educational curriculum. The beginning of Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) as a teaching subject at the basic curriculum level (primary to junior secondary) is a step in the right direction. Based on the new curriculum, pupils are expected to be taught in this subject the importance of preserving cultural heritage and fostering creativity (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council 2020). Yet, the discontinuation of this subject at the senior secondary level only reflects the poor importance attached to this subject. Interviews with teachers of CCA reveals that the course content focuses on fine art, music and performing arts (e.g. drama,

bead making and object moulding), with nothing on archaeology. In the senior secondary (S.S), S.S I pupils in the arts are meant to choose between Visual Arts and Music as options. As from S.S II the subjects become optional for pupils in the arts. Whilst for the science pupils, it is not on the list of subjects to be offered all through the senior secondary class. This lopsidedness in the curriculum gives one the impression that cultural studies is only relevant to primary school pupils and not the much older secondary school students. Thus, as an approach to addressing this problem, public awareness about the discipline of archaeology is executed through archaeological field training and secondary school education for residents of the Igbo-Ukwu community.

Importance of Archaeology Education in Nigeria

Archaeology in education is aimed at teaching about the past in order to create an awareness of its significance for the present and the future (Nzewunwa 1990). This framework guided the focus of the archaeology education seminar in secondary schools and field training, an aspect of the 2019 community archaeology project at Igbo-Ukwu. Due to lack of archaeology education in primary and secondary schools curricula, it therefore became imperative to stimulate interest of the discipline from the grassroots. This is achieved by engaging young students about the importance of their indigenous cultural heritage and ancestral past. It is only when they are caught young and the foundation of education is laid much earlier in their lives that we would be able to achieve a better cultural harvest (Nzewunwa 1994; Esterhuysen and Lane 2013). In addition, the teaching of archaeology in schools, captures the attention and imagination of children which enables them to appreciate the moral and temporal dimensions of human cultural developmental history (Afigbo 1976, 409; Afigbo 1986, 157).

There are several instances where archaeology education has benefited the community. A good example is what is obtainable in the United Kingdom. Access Cambridge Archaeology (ACA) designed in the University of Cambridge, developed the Higher Education Field Academy (HEFA) programme intended to develop educational aspirations, enthusiasm and attainment amongst teenagers through involvement in archaeological excavations (Lewis 2014). This strategy inspired pupils to apply for archaeology programme at the university. In line with this, it is believed that by introducing pupils to archaeology early enough in their career journey, it will stimulate archaeological interest in them. Elsewhere in Canada, the Hope-dale Archaeological Project (HAP) was designed to engender knowledge of the history of the Labrador region of north-east Canada and to provide transferable job skills for high school and university pupils (Arendt 2013).

Such archaeological training exposed pupils to acquiring some critical thinking skills which prepared them to take up employment that may avail itself in a wide range of opportunities.

There is no gainsaying that Africa has been wrongly conceptualised by the international community over time. Africa has been described as a “hopeless continent” by an influential British weekly magazine, *Economist* (Oguh 2015). This disparaging description of Africa is made explicit by Michira (2002) who opines that the low opinion about Africa not only portrays Africa as a region without a history but also with backward traditions and practices, superstitions, and weird outdated beliefs, and a place where repugnant rites are prevalent. These views about Africa is in absolute contrast to areas in Nigeria where archaeological research at sites such as Igbo-Ukwu, Ife, Benin City, and Old Oyo provide testimonies to African technological, cultural, and sociopolitical complexity long pre-dating European contact (DeCorse 2014:10). Similarly, Anquandah et al. (2014) has critically questioned western ideologies based on their written documentation about Ghana’s past which gave the erroneous impression as a country of utter darkness in pre-European times. Thus, teaching of archaeology to pupils is strategic for equipping and expanding their knowledge about their unwritten African and Nigerian ancestral past in order to contend with the derogatory image associated with the Black race. This knowledge when gained exposes the prejudices and lapses in Africa’s written records compiled by few selected literates during the historic times (Esterhuysen 2000).

Archaeology Education in Secondary Schools at Igbo-Ukwu

Educating people about archaeology is a complex exercise (Henson 2017) and so, there is no single perfect way of doing this. In fact, in public or community archaeology projects such as the Igbo-Ukwu project, Moshenska (2017, 8) notes that education can take many forms: sometimes visitors will get informal talks and guided tours; in other cases they will acquire basic training in archaeological skills. Good teaching is meant to develop skills in three areas: thinking, feeling and doing (Henson 2017). The acquisition of these skills were considered during the archaeology education at Igbo-Ukwu: thinking- the analysis and interpretation of the archaeological materials involves some skilful thinking; feeling- engagement of pupils with the past through those materials is an effective way of connecting with the past and; doing- excavating the sites involves some technicalities which the trainees are exposed to. All these skills could be acquired through archaeological engagement with the pupils.

In education, there are the formal and informal teaching methods. One of such strategies of bridging the gap between cultural education in pri-



Figure 2. Ongoing test at GSS

mary and secondary schools with archaeology education in the universities is through formal teaching method in the classroom (Agbelusi 2015). Therefore, classroom archaeology education, which involved interactive formal teaching method, was conducted in three secondary schools in Igbo-Ukwu (Figure 2). This method was preferred for two major reasons: limited time available for engagement with the pupils for outdoor field practical demonstration and to test run an early phase of public awareness on the possible challenges of archaeological knowledge acquisition in Igbo-Ukwu. The method entailed electronic power point presentation of the seminar with good photographic illustrations. Pupils were allowed to ask or answer questions after the seminar. The seminar was conducted at the school premises during school hours at break time for pupils in senior secondary I-III and between the ages of 14 and 19. A total of 93 pupils from the three schools participated in the seminar comprising 31 pupils at CKSS, 32 pupils at CSS and 30 pupils at GSS (Table 1). While selecting pupils for the seminar, it was ensured that both science and art pupils were represented in the seminar.

The one hour seminar was organised by a team of trained archaeologists from the NCM and University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The seminar was structured into pre- and post-seminar assessments. The short pre-seminar test was conducted on the pupils to assess their knowledge of the various terms such as archaeology, artefact and Thurstan Shaw. The pupils were asked to respond if they have heard of any of the aforementioned terms

Table 1 Assessment of secondary school pupils at Igbo-Ukwu

| Schools | No. of SSI pupils | No. of SSII pupils | No. of SSIII pupils | Total no. of pupils | A (%) | | | B (%) | | | C (%) | | | D (%) | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------|------|-----|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|
| | | | | | Yes | No | Nil | Yes | No | Nil | Yes | No | Nil | Yes | No | Nil |
| <i>Pre-seminar assessment result</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CSS | 13 | 18 | 1 | 32 | 34.4 | 59.4 | 6.3 | 15.6 | 71.9 | 15.6 | 12.5 | 71.9 | 15.6 | 53.1 | 21.9 | 25.0 |
| CKSS | 3 | 6 | 22 | 31 | 51.6 | 48.4 | - | 41.9 | 48.4 | 9.4 | 48.4 | 51.6 | - | 97.0 | 3.0 | - |
| GSS | 10 | 10 | 10 | 30 | 53.3 | 46.7 | - | 33.3 | 66.7 | - | 6.7 | 93.3 | - | 90.0 | 10.0 | - |
| <i>Post-seminar assessment result</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CSS | 13 | 18 | 1 | 32 | 96.9 | 3.1 | - | 96.9 | 3.1 | - | 96.9 | 3.1 | - | 96.9 | 3.1 | - |
| CKSS | 3 | 6 | 22 | 31 | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| GSS | 10 | 10 | 10 | 30 | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - | 100 | - | - |

A = Have you heard of the word 'archaeology' and what does it mean? B = Have you heard of the word 'artefact' and what does it mean?
 C = Have you heard of the name 'Thurstan Shaw' and what do you know about him? D = Knowledge of some heritage or cultural materials from Igbo-Ukwu?

and state where they heard it and what they could say about them. Their responses were categorised under ‘Yes’, ‘No’ and ‘Nil’. ‘Yes’ meant they had heard the terms, ‘No’ meant they had not heard the terms and ‘Nil’ was the category for those who were indifferent or did not answer the question. They were also asked to list heritage or cultural materials from Igbo-Ukwu. The education session began with an explanation of the geographical location of the study area. It proceeded to introduce Prof Thurstan Shaw as being instrumental to the first archaeological investigation conducted in the area. The session continued with explanation of the meaning of archaeology, excavation as one of the principal techniques in archaeology and artefacts as material remains used and abandoned by humans. All these were done with electronically projected images which were then contextualised with the example of Igbo-Ukwu excavations by Shaw. The meaning of cultural heritage was discussed and using materials from Shaw’s excavations, the importance of heritage to preserving the integrity, shaping values, beliefs and aspirations of a people was buttressed. Mid-way into the seminar, to ensure the pupils were following the class, we had to pick their brains with questions bearing options to choose from. This include, what is an artefact? What should you do when you encounter an artifact or cultural material protruding from the ground? The class ended with a short test to record the success or impact of the seminar on the pupils. It should be noted that the pre-and post-seminar assessment questions were elementary form of assessment which were targeted at testing the waters at this first phase of our archaeology education seminar at Igbo-Ukwu. Since the interaction with the pupils was a beginning class, the most important ingredients were brought to the subject of discussion. This is in tandem with Fagan (2000, 190) who described these ingredients as “an infectious enthusiasm and passion for the past, a belief that archaeology has great relevance to the contemporary world, a deep-felt interest in students as individuals and human beings, and above all electric story telling skills, the ability to explain eloquently how archaeology works”. Results from these assessments will guide the building of a suitable curriculum for young pupils at the state level and by extension national level. Results of the responses obtained from the pupils during the pre- and post- seminar assessments are presented in Table 1.

Assessment Outcome of Archaeology Education at Igbo-Ukwu

The study conducted at Igbo-Ukwu provided insights into appropriate steps to tackle the problem of archaeology education in Nigeria. From the study, it is noted that prior to the visit in Igbo-Ukwu, there was poor

knowledge about the concept of archaeology and Thurstan Shaw who pioneered excavations in the area over six decades ago. This is partly due to the non-inclusion of archaeology teaching in the school curriculum. At community (boys) secondary school, the population of pupils assessed was dominated by S.S I pupils constituting over 40% of the total number of pupils compared to Christ the King secondary school and Girls secondary school where they occurred in low population of 9% and 33%, respectively. The dominance of the S.S 1 pupils is deciphered to have been responsible for the low archaeological knowledge noted in the assessment results. This point is scored on the grounds that the S.S I pupils are new arrivals who are still in their First Term as at the time the study was conducted. At the First Term, pupils have not yet been exposed to adequate teaching on cultural studies which expectedly makes their knowledge on those cultural/archaeological concepts moderate. This argument is supported by the significant improvement in the assessment results on the knowledge of archaeology, artefact and Thurstan Shaw in those schools with lower representation of S.S I pupils. In another instance, out of the 53.3% of pupils (16/30 pupils) who stated that they have heard of the term 'archaeology', only a fraction of them (10/16 = 62.5%) gave correct or near to correct answers about what they understood by the term. The other fraction (6/16 = 37.5%) gave answers that were off point. Similarly, only 4/10 of the 33.3% (10/30 pupils) who said they have heard of the term 'artefact' gave correct meaning of the word, the remaining 6/10 could not describe the term correctly. Lastly, none of the 6.7% (2/30 pupils) of the pupils who stated that they have heard the name 'Thurstan Shaw' gave accurate answer regarding who he is or where they read about him. It should be made clear that the fact that some of the pupils who stated that they have heard of a term but could not describe the term or explain where they heard it does not debunk the fact that they have heard about it. It only points to the fact that they never understood or knew the meaning of what they heard.

To address this problem absolutely would not be done by the indoor classroom teaching method using the power point presentation adopted in this study. Instead, the teaching of pupils with illustrations and organising practical demonstrations will help to drive home significant understanding of what those archaeological concepts mean. The importance of this recommended method of instruction is underscored based on the responses of the pupils who got the answers correctly. They got their knowledge mainly from reading visual arts textbooks and attending visual art, tourism, cultural and creative arts classes which most of the times are practical classes. To better enhance knowledge of archaeology in pre-university school curriculum therefore, archaeological studies should be gradually introduced in virtual and creative art classes. However, there is a need to teach this course as a full subject for a grounded understanding of its prin-

ciples and concepts. Additionally, it is surprising to know that the school which presented the poorest data on knowledge of Thurstan Shaw is GSS, which is located in Ngo, the quarter where the 1959/60 and 1964 excavations were conducted. Again, the reason for this is not clearly understood since it is expected that through oral tradition, the people of this area should have the greatest knowledge about Thurstan Shaw who pioneered the excavations in the area. This phenomenon buttresses the point that knowledge of archaeology in Igbo-Ukwu needs to be resuscitated especially from the foundation.

Archaeology Field Training for Selected Igbo-Ukwu Residents

There have been reports of accidental discovery of archaeological materials from peoples' farmlands and compounds but there was little or no effort at documenting those finds. Although the Igbo-Ukwu people are aware of the archaeological sites that dot their landscape, they lack training in site and object management as well as full knowledge of the archaeological potential of the region. The main objective of this aspect of the project was to engage members of Igbo-Ukwu community with rudiments of archaeological fieldwork in order to gain an understanding of simple fieldwork techniques. Archaeological field training was conducted for twelve members of Igbo-Ukwu community (Figure 3). The participants were drawn from the Anozie family and other members of the community. The Anozie family compounds (Igbo-Isaiah, Igbo-Richard and Igbo-Jonah) host the three sites from which exquisite materials were recovered. Consequently, archaeology education was deemed necessary to begin from these three compounds. Each of these compounds was required to nominate candidates for the training. Those trained were within the ages of 18 and 70. The participants were divided into three groups, according to the number of test units, with four participants per group. Three areas were selected for 1 m x 1 m mock excavations in the hope that they would yield meaningful stratified deposits for understanding the cultural sequence and chronology of the settlement. Participants were prepped on safety measures before excavations commenced. Also, participants were assessed during the excavations to see their level of compliance with the instructions given before the commencement of the exercise. The trainees were required to respond to some feedback questions after the field training. Archaeological field training within the vicinity of the 1959/60 and 1964 excavations was very effective in interacting with artefacts that have similarities with materials from Shaw's excavations in the 1960s. This interaction with actual artefact in a specific context, as noted by Esterhuysen (2000), is an effective



Figure 3. Archaeological field training of Igbo-Ukwu community residents

means of identifying with the past. The artefacts themselves provide a communicative medium through which the trainees could connect with the past and appreciate it. This sense of appreciation could be seen in their response after the training exercise.

The trainees generally benefited from the aspect of knowledge of archaeology and field practice. According to the trainees, they learnt basic field techniques at the end of the exercise such as excavation procedures, setting up grids, drawing stratigraphy; identifying, labelling, recording and describing artefacts. They were also fascinated to learn about differences in soil layers as reflected in the colour and what that could mean in understanding site formation. In fact, one of the trainees had this to say about the training in his feedback "... talking of what I learnt is an understatement because it was as if I have acquired the greatest knowledge of my life, like I gained a lot from the training, the excavation stuff [*Sic*], procedures and methods, measurements, the technicalities, difference in soil colour and texture, structures and layers of the soil, ability to identify... cultural materials and all the rest of it". Each of the groups worked as a team and this helped to build the team spirit as acknowledged by the respondents. Similarly, one of the leaders of the three groups admitted that the training helped improve his leadership skills. The common complaint amongst the trainees were that the exercise was stressful and difficult, though fun filled. In addition, they suggested that more personnel be involved in the training and sophisticated machines be used to ease the stress and hasten up the

work. The field training gave the trainees the opportunity to firstly, experience what their fathers encountered during the original excavations and secondly, bond extended family members who barely knew one another before the fieldwork.

The Way Forward

Archaeology education embarked on for secondary school pupils in Igbo-Ukwu was targeted at addressing one of the challenges bedevilling the archaeology discipline in Nigeria. The problem of the absence of 'national benchmark' (Gundu 2008: 4) at the school level for archaeology programmes makes it cumbersome in standardising archaeology education. The first approach to addressing this issue is to carve a niche for archaeology and establish its relevance within the broader Nigerian national education. Continuous educational outreach programmes is one way such a goal could be achieved. It is only when the relevance of this discipline cum profession is recognised that it can be taken seriously. The setting up of Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) (Malone et al. 2000) in our educational system by the ministry of education, will help to refocus archaeology education in Nigeria. Ratings from such assessment will act as a check if the quality of teaching in the schools measures up to the required set standard as laid out in the curriculum.

Furthermore, the primary focus of the stimulation of interest in archaeology for the pupils in Igbo-Ukwu is not to make them future archaeologists but to educate them with knowledge for understanding the essence of their cultural heritage and the value of the archaeological resource within their domain. Seminars of this nature but with practical demonstration should be encouraged as this will help improve the level of knowledge of archaeology of the pupils in the absence of its inclusion in the curriculum. Also, it is important for the teacher to recognise that pupils have different abilities to process and make sense of information or experiences, for example during archaeology education. When this is acknowledged by the teachers, they will better understand differential abilities of pupils to comprehend things when taught and adopt a more suitable method to address this.

Another approach in forging a way forward would be to revise the archaeology teaching syllabus. The inclusion of applied archaeology in archaeology curriculum (Owoseni 2018) will demonstrate its usefulness in our contemporary society. Many of our graduates in archaeology know nothing about the marketability of archaeology or making it an enterprising discipline. This is reflected in their poor creativity as they remain out of job after graduation and look for white collar jobs that have nothing to

do with archaeology, just to make ends meet. The only thing that registers in their memory as graduates is a discipline that studies objects that have been abandoned in the past in order to understand the present. But archaeology is beyond this. In this present era, we should start thinking of the archaeology discipline as a tool for problem solving, for example, in areas of boundary disputes between communities. This way, we can prove to the local community and the world of ignorant elites about the relevance of such discipline that has been relegated for so long. New approaches need to be brought on board to make archaeology education more interesting for teenagers. This will require close partnership with the museums to have access to artefacts on display which will bring to life what is learned in the classroom. Museum learning is self-directed and does not necessarily require a teacher since those exhibited objects themselves provide a central means of instruction (Falk and Dierking 1992).

Additionally, pupils could be engaged at remaking cultural objects out of raw materials during practical sessions. This way, they will appreciate their ancestors who are the original makers of such objects considering the complexity of the technology associated with its manufacture. Simple archaeological survey could also be organised within the vicinity of the school. This will constitute an exciting expedition for the pupils who will be thrilled at discovering an object to their credit. This strategy will be effective at educating pupils, for instance, at Ngo quarter in Igbo-Ukwu where Thurstan conducted the original excavations. This, no doubt, will arouse a sense of consciousness of the past within their immediate environment. Whilst the pupils come to acknowledge that the legacy of their ancestral past is around them and understand their historical importance, they also come to bear in mind that everything that comes to them from the past constitutes their historical inheritance (Carman 2002).

In addition, another good step to encourage archaeology education in Nigeria would be to begin with teacher education. School teachers need to understand the meaning of archaeology and how archaeological methods can be taught in the classroom (Esterhuysen 2000). It is only when this is achieved through well designed workshops and seminars that the course on revitalisation of knowledge of archaeology can be effective from the grass-roots. Archaeology graduates are also encouraged to take up teaching jobs at schools. There is a need for Nigerian archaeologists under the umbrella of the Archaeological Association of Nigeria (AAN) to begin to petition for archaeological representation on the curriculum development committee. It is argued that the inclusion of archaeology in our pre-tertiary educational curriculum has an important role to play in human and societal development. The wide communication gap between the practitioners of archaeology as well as the government and general public has compounded the seemingly esoteric description of the discipline (Malone et al. 2000;

Ogundele 2005). There is therefore need to close up the gap through constant engagements (e.g. TV shows, workshops/seminars and documentaries) between the practitioners of archaeology, the government and general public at large.

Conclusion

Data obtained from Igbo-Ukwu suggest that pupils learn better with practical illustrations. By engaging the pupils during the interactive session, the use of physical symbols created a lasting memory and understanding of archaeological concepts. Demonstrating the technical complexity of such artefacts will help the pupils to learn the craft of creativity and critical thinking which will be useful in improving their skill in problem solving. Considering the importance of archaeology in our contemporary society, there is a need to engender the future of this discipline and profession. To do this, Malone et al (2000) emphasises that attention must be given to the relationship between archaeology and education because it is this relationship that will ensure the continued existence of archaeology. Archaeology education has proven not only to be relevant in equipping pupils with cultural knowledge and a deep sense of understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage, but also providing them with skills to brace up to life challenges. Bearing in mind the gradual loss of cultural heritage troubling many African societies today, it is of the essence to turn to archaeology as a tool to re-dig, preserve and project that past. The under-representation of archaeology in Nigeria's educational system is a direct reflection of the poor knowledge of archaeology within the wider public. Thus, archaeology education to pupils at the early stages of their lives is an approach to cultural reawakening and sustainability. If such idea is sustained in the curriculum of schools, it will indeed be a right step towards enhancing cultural awareness.

Notes

¹Primary and secondary schools in Nigeria operate on a period of three terms for each academic calendar year. First term marks the beginning of a new academic session which starts around September and terminates in December before Christmas. Second term resumes in January and ends in March or April usually before Easter, while the third term begins in April and ends in July.

²The system of education in Nigeria is structured into three years of pre-primary education, six years of primary education, three years of junior

secondary school (from primary to junior secondary constitute basic education), three years of senior secondary school and four years of higher education. Those in junior secondary begin their first year in junior secondary I (J.S I), progress to J.S II in the second year and then finishes at the third and final year in junior secondary III (J.S.III). After this, they graduate to the first year in the senior secondary I (S.S I), proceed to S.S II in the second year and then finish at the third and final year at senior secondary III (S.S III). The age group of pupils at secondary schools in Nigeria is between 12 and 17, though some individuals start much earlier at age 10 or 11 and finish at 15 or 16. On many occasions there are pupils that are older than 17 still in secondary school probably owing to poor academic performance or late commencement of education.

³Charles Thurstan Shaw was a professor of archaeology invited by the Nigerian Federal Department of Antiquities in 1958 to investigate the Igbo-Ukwu sites because of the accidental discoveries made there in the area some decades earlier. He investigated the sites between 1959 and 1960 at the urging of the antiquities department. He returned to the site in 1964 under the auspices of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan where he was a Research Professor of Archaeology.

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Appendix 1

Short assessment for Secondary School Students

1. Have you ever heard of the word archaeology?
2. If yes, what do you understand it to mean?
3. Have you ever heard of the word artefact?
4. If yes, what do you understand it to mean?
5. Have you heard of Prof Thurstan Shaw?
6. What do you know about him?
7. List some heritage or cultural materials in Igbo-Ukwu.

Appendix 2

Post fieldwork appraisal questions for the field trainees

1. What did you learn from the training?
2. Did the training benefit you generally?
3. What did you like about the training?
4. What did you NOT like about the training?
5. What would you like to see done differently in the next field training?
6. What would you like to add or change in the training?
7. Has the training impacted your career and professional development?
8. Did you learn new skills?
9. Did the training help you get a job?
10. Did you learn about your own Igbo history?

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