



An Ethnographic Museum and its Contribution to Tourism Development: The Case of Aksum

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Abstract

Among the various functions of museums are the notions that they attract, entertain and arouse curiosity in visitors, which leads to questioning thus promoting learning. This 21st century shows many new needs and preoccupations of contemporary society relating to museums. Although there are many, access to museums, professionalism, the nature of museums, issues of collection and management are all highlighted as being particularly significant. Running across all these issues is the recurrent theme of the relationship between a museum and tourism. Therefore, the main objective of the study was to assess the condition of the Ethnographic Museum (Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic House) in Aksum and its contribution to tourism development. For the methodology, a descriptive research design inculcating quantitative and qualitative aspects was used. Samples were drawn from tourism service providers, targeted professionals, church and local community representatives and visitors by applying both probability and non-probability sampling methods. Finally, the major findings of the study show that the Ethnographic Museum of Aksum is the custodian of immense private heritage, inter alia the building, clothes, crosses, pottery, wood items, clay items, artifacts, and gifts to the Afterari, etc. The museum also has excellent tourism potential, however because of its mismanagement and lack of promotion from both the owner and the concerned tourism bodies it is not visited as much as it could be.

Keywords: Aksum, Ethnographic Museum, museum, tourism, Ethiopia.

Introduction

Background of the Study

If tourism and museums are not consulted and coordinated in their development, there may be plenty of negative outcomes (McLean, 1997). For tourism, it can result in many lost opportunities, since museums offer experiences, ideas, and satisfaction not found in other places, notably the enjoyment of rare and authentic objects, the sensory experience of encountering items of beauty and interest, and knowledge deriving from research and scholarship behind collections and exhibitions. On the other hand, if museums fail to accept tourism as an important stakeholder and consider its needs, the consequences might be lowered visitation levels and decreased satisfaction, which is a loss both for the host community as well as for the museum concerned.



Ethnography makes reference to the living, present and transient culture. Ethnographic museums are centers for education, research, intercultural exchange and communication where community members, researchers, local residents, students, volunteers, and tourists are provided with the facilities to meet, interact with others and learn (McLean, 1997).

Aksum is a living museum, a museum of the ancient Aksumite civilization and present Aksum. This is clearly reflected especially at the historical Aksum, and especially old Aksum. It is an ideal place to reflect on the intersection between archaeology, material culture and identity in the world (Tekle, 2008). Ethnographic artifacts can be the bulk of an exhibition, given the enormous richness of Aksum. Ethnographic collections include complex objects that are often made from different materials like leather, skin, grass, wood, fur and feathers. Pottery, gourds, adornments, agricultural implements, recent objects and other artifacts belonging to the ancient and current Aksum can also be displayed.

Aksum old town is located to the west and northwest of present Aksum, possessing different impressive typologies of traditional rectangular and circular stone buildings with multi-storey and underground rooms. Such buildings are not constructed today and can have architectural importance as they represent the traditional Ethiopian architecture in general, and that of the Tigreans in particular (Tekle, 2008). However, most of them are threatened due to old age, new construction and evacuations for archaeological excavation. Aksum Old Town also preserves the residential, administrative and industrial centers of the Aksumite kingdom which existed between the 5th and 7th century CE. The route of Aksum old town can be best experienced by allowing visitors to explore, stop for a chat and engage with shopkeepers and crafters so as to absorb the unique atmosphere. Such activities help one to experience a taste of the everyday way of life of the residents of the precinct in what is essentially an open-air museum.

Statement of the Problem

Aksum, especially its Old Town exists outside of the current era. In line with promoting the town as a place of authentic experience of Aksum's culture, some parts of Aksum old town are continuing as living areas adapting to the needs and aspirations of the local folk. The concept of a living heritage town creates a win-win situation between heritage conservation and urban regeneration. If some development and management activities are performed on the old buildings of Aksum Old Town, many visitors would be curious to understand how people live/d in such a town and it can be an opportunity for them to understand that such buildings and structures have formed the basis of settlements from the earliest times. The old houses can become museums which tell the story of life in Aksum and Aksum Old Town can then be devolved into an ethno-museum. Other compounds, once upgraded and with proper sanitation in place, can become small guest houses and accommodation areas through the living traditional culture of the residents and this will allow visitors to get the most authentic accommodation experience while they are visiting Aksum.

The purpose of museums in Aksum can be to help residents and visitors to enjoy and to understand Axum, by telling the story of the town and its people (Gebre, 2011; Mehret, 2011). To meet such objectives, in addition to the Aksum Archaeological Museum and Aksum Tsion Church Museum (Abbink, 2003), there are numerous private ethnographic museums in Aksum, although they are not properly functioning. One of these is Fetewari Belay Private Ethnographic Museum. The museum is simply serving as a store rather than



becoming a means of facilitating multiple interpretations and interaction with customers both local and from abroad.

Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic Museum is a private museum in a private old compound which is located north of the northern stele park within Aksum old town where there are old household ethnographic materials made up of different materials like clay, woods, metals and bronze used by the people around two hundred years ago. This was once used by the noble person's father Fetewrari Belay, but it is now owned by his family. The museum is a bigger version of a traditional round stone house with a decorated interior which is highly typical to Tigrian building. As per the data from the Aksum Culture and Tourism Office, the great majority of foreign visitors to Aksum are currently coming on package tours, and stay for only one night (UNESCO, 2008). It will be an important task of the ethnographic museum to draw visitors' attention to the variety of things there are to see locally, and thus to encourage longer stays, with consequent contributions to the tourism development and the local economy which needs visitors.

Therefore, in this paper the researchers assessed the Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic Museum in Aksum with its collections and the contribution it can most likely provide for tourism development.

Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this project was to assess the performance of Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic Museum in Aksum and reveal its possible contribution for the development of tourism in Aksum.

Specific Objectives

- ✓ To conduct an inventory of the Ethnographic Museum of Aksum and its collections;
- ✓ To reveal the status of the museum and its collections by means of a SWOT analysis;
- ✓ To assess the contributions of the museum for tourism development;
- ✓ To forward possible recommendations for the survival of the museum and to maximize its contribution for tourism development.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted in Aksum town and was designed to: carry out an inventory of the Fetewrari Belay's Ethnographic Museum and its collections; to reveal the status of the museum and its collections (SWOT analysis); to assess the contributions of the museum for tourism development; and to forward possible recommendations for the survival of the museum and to maximize its contribution for tourism development and sustainability. Hence, the study did not look into every aspects of tourism attractions / resources of the town but was rather selective based on their priority of the touristic value.

Methodology

Research Design

This study focusing on Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic Museum of Aksum and its contribution for tourism development was mainly descriptive in its design as its main rationale was to describe and interpret existing situations and effects that are evident in



relation to the museum, its collections and its contribution to tourism growth. What was observed and understood by the researchers' is described in the study. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods was used to answer the questions of the study mainly through interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions and repeated physical observations. The quantitative research was used to measure the answers for the questionnaire and the qualitative for interviews, focus groups and observations.

Target Population

The subjects of the study were limited mainly to owners of museums, tourism service providers (tour guides, travel agencies and managers of hotels), targeted professionals in tourism, heritage and related fields (from the Culture and Tourism Office Aksum, ESTDP Aksum Site Management Unit and scholars from Aksum University), church representatives, local community representatives and visitors.

Sampling Design and Sample Size

To take a representative sample from the target population, both probability (stratified and random) and non-probability (convenience and purposive) sampling designs were used. Probability sampling was used to take representative samples from the targeted population, which can help to develop representative findings; whereas non-probability sampling was used to select informants who have deeper knowledge about the issues under consideration and who are likely to provide a thorough discussion.

Samples were randomly and conveniently selected for the questionnaire (quantitative data). Simple random sampling was used to avoid bias and to develop representative findings. The researcher developed and distributed questionnaires to visitors and targeted professionals (Aksum Tourism Office, ESTDP Office and Aksum University).

There were 64 artisanal crafts, 29 standard hotels, 50 licensed guides and 26 targeted professionals (from the Culture and Tourism office, and ESTDP office and Tourism Management and Archaeology lecturers at Aksum University) (Aksum Culture and Tourism office and own survey, 2016). The researchers approached these respondents until data saturation was reached.

To take sample from tourists', convenience and random sampling methods were used at different appropriate areas (hotels and at the museums) based on their willingness and considering convenience factors. As per the data from Aksum Cluster Culture and Tourism Office, the total number of visitors who visited Aksum for the year 2015/16 was 49305 for both international and domestic tourists. A sample was taken based on Goom's formula of an estimate of a dichotomous variable in a population, accurate to $\pm 5\%$, with 95% confidence about being right (Gomm, 2008); $n = N / (1 + N(\alpha)^2)$ Where; 'n' is expected sample size, 'N' is the size of the target population and 'α' is the level of confidence interval (0.05). Hence, 396 visitor samples were taken for this study. However, due to time and financial limitations the researchers collected data from only 200 visitors who visited Aksum during the study period.

Interviews were purposively conducted with owners of museums, church representatives, local community representatives, professionals of Culture and Tourism Office of Aksum, professionals of ESTDP Aksum Site Management Unit, professionals from Aksum University, Tour operation and Travel agency companies and guides from Aksum Tour Guides' Association based on their knowledge and responsibility to get detail clarification



on the issues. What has been done, what is being done, and finally what might be done in the future were critically investigated. A snowball sampling method was also used as approached interviewees referred other respondents who could have better knowledge on the issues under investigation. The size of interviewees was determined based on the maturity/saturation of data and the level to which triangulated data were found for other data collected through other instruments.

Sources of Data and Research Instruments

To achieve the objective of the study, data were collected from both secondary and primary sources by employing combined research methods of multiple data sources that included different activities. For secondary data, the researchers consulted recent literature from different data sources including books, academic articles, documents of different international organizations, national policy and strategy documents and websites. Statistics of the museums related with visitors and others were also assessed.

Primary data were collected by applying a questionnaire, in-depth interviews, focus group discussion and personal observations with participation of the respondents and informal discussions were also held to obtain first-hand information on-site. The researchers were conducted carefully organized and individual visits to the museums in addition to their frequent informal visits. This paved the way to assess the practical issues related to the status of the museums, their collections and the way forward.

Data Analysis Methods

The collected data were thoroughly processed, analysed and interpreted to get the realized and detailed insights relating to the problem in the study area. In the qualitative instruments of the study, once the data were collected and processed manually, descriptive analysis was used to analyze and interpret the data through narrations and descriptions based on systematic grouping and content analysis so as to describe phenomena as they related to the respective objectives.

Results and Discussion

Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic Museum and its Collections

Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic museum was established in the 1980s. But the age of the building and the objects go back in history to the period of *Atse* Yohhanes IV. The Museum is a privately owned museum with varieties of collections of the past initially belonging to *Fetewrari* Belay but which now are owned by his family. *Fetewrari* Belay was one of the leaders of Aksum *Awraja* during reign of the Emperor Hailelassie I.

The building typology of the house of *Fetewrari* Belay is the same as the other buildings found in the old town but it also has different levels serving different purposes. The house is a circular one-storey building. A small area was used for storage and the immediate floor was used as a sleeping area. But now this room hosts a number of objects of the family. It has an interesting roof and the columns are in good condition. The room is relatively high. The interior wall is pointed and has interesting decorative motifs. The ceiling is also decorated and attractive. Because of its age the house underwent some needed restoration in 2004 supported by the Culture and Tourism Agency.

This museum is an exemplary building and it deserves a thorough visit. The first display on view comprises of a selection of collections which were used as items for inside the

home activities. They consist of handicrafts for the purposes of food and local drink preparation and serving. The museum hosts objects that show the tradition of living and these go back from the current era to the Sabaeen tradition. There are also interesting varieties of objects found in traditional bedrooms, dining rooms, guest rooms and some are also on the balcony area. There are materials use as incense burners and also sophisticated glassware including unique perfume bottles. There are also charming pots which are multi-shaped and which indicate that pottery production was started in ancient Axum as also evidenced in the Archaeological Museum of Axum, and the tradition of pottery production continues today as observed in this ethnographic house. The exhibits are located in three contiguous rooms, essentially dedicated to the grass produced artifacts, hide products, clay and wood products respectively.

Methods of collection: Family contributions have created the selection of objects on site.

Benefits for society: the museum has an economic, social and historical role in the society as well as the country. Economically it benefits by creating job opportunities for guiding, managing, guarding and cleaners. Socially, it is a center of education, research and document analysis. Furthermore, historically, it is a source of political mobilization, pride, integrity and courage for the private museum organizers.

Functions of the museum: it tries to collect, document, conserve and exhibit the ethnographic antiquities emanating from the family.



Figure1: The house interior

Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic House from out side



Figure 2: The Central Ceiling and interior of the House



Figure 3: Collections displayed



Figure 4: Artefact collection items displayed



Figure 5: Further Collection items on display



Figure 6: An item of Clothing in the museum

Status of the Ethnographic Museum and its Collections (SWOT Analysis)

The history of *Fetewrari* Belay Ethnographic museum and its collections, makes the museum an obvious tourist attraction.

Strengths

The data obtained from interviews, and observations suggests the following strengths:

- ✓ The architectural building of *Fetewrari* Belay House is very attractive.
- ✓ The museum has a long history and tradition (especially linked to the building).
- ✓ The museum has an immense collection.
- ✓ The museum is the only ethnographic museum serving tourists in the town
- ✓ The museum owner has some experience on serving tourists.
- ✓ The museum stores are somewhat good.

These strengths are also supported by the data collected from professionals and tourism service providers provides as follows.

Table 1: Data analysis from Professionals

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|--|----|-----|-----|------|----------|
| Variables | N | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Dev |
| The building of the museum | 30 | 2 | 5 | 3.50 | .974 |
| The authenticity and originality of the treasures in the museums | 30 | 1 | 5 | 3.63 | .928 |

NB: 1=Very poor, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4= Good, 5= Very Good



As table 1 depicts, most the professionals responded that the building of the museum is good. This indicates the building of the museum is in itself attractive. They also that responded the authenticity and originality of the treasures in the museum is good. This indicates the treasures or objects in museum are considered to be both original and authentic.

Table 2: Data analysis from Tourism Service Providers

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|--|-----|----|-----|------|------|
| Variables | N | Mi | Max | Mn | Std. |
| Authenticity & originality of treasures in the museums | 138 | 3 | 5 | 4.49 | .697 |

NB: 1=Very poor, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4= Good, 5= Very Good

As the above table depicts, most the tourism services providers responded by regarding the authenticity and originality of the treasures in the museum as being very good. This indicates the treasures or objects in museum are also considered to be original and authentic.

Weaknesses

The museum has a rather long history and houses original treasures of our Ethiopian forefathers. It could serve as a good tourist site and also as a center for cultural education, however, because of diverse factors the museum is not functioning well. Data obtained from interviews, document analysis and observations showed that the main weaknesses of the ethnographic museum are:

- ✓ The collection of the objects is in poor condition.
- ✓ The objects don't have proper documentation
- ✓ The museum has no appropriate displaying of the objects. There are no highlights in the display of special collections and the exhibitions are not designed with tourists in mind.
- ✓ The museum has no sources of income at all.
- ✓ There is insignificance in awareness and also determination, both inside the museum as well as outside, regarding the museum's role towards tourism.
- ✓ There is no any signage that indicate the museum's location, objects and building.
- ✓ The museum has no official time for visits.
- ✓ The museum has no curator.
- ✓ There is no coordination among the various stakeholders.
- ✓ The environment of the museum is not tidy (the way to the museum is tardy). In addition to this, the museum is not easily accessible.
- ✓ The museum has no clear mission, vision and goals.
- ✓ Some of the objects on display in the exhibitions are presented in a disorganized way that can be identified as inaccessible for visitors.
- ✓ There is a marked lack of determination towards focusing on the ethnographic museum from the concerned bodies.
- ✓ The museum has no policy that encompasses the development of tourism within the town and towards audience development.
- ✓ There is a lack of awareness of the museums existence among residents and tourists
- ✓ The museum makes no profit.
- ✓ There is a lack of focus on the museum's communication strategy.



In addition the following data was collected from professionals and service providers regarding the weakness of the museum and is provided as follows in table 3 below.

Table 3: Data Analysis from Professionals

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|--|----|-----|------|------|----------|
| Variables | N | Min | Maxi | Mean | Std. Dev |
| Objectives, missions and goals of the museum | 27 | 1 | 4 | 2.00 | .920 |
| Quality and quantity of information provided at the tourist information center about the heritages of Aksum and other issues | 29 | 1 | 4 | 3.00 | .845 |
| Capacity development programs for stakeholders by government bodies | 27 | 1 | 3 | 2.15 | .770 |
| The existing relationship between the ethnographic museums and tourism in Aksum | 30 | 1 | 4 | 1.97 | .890 |
| Accessibility of the museum to the public and disabled persons | 27 | 1 | 4 | 2.04 | .898 |
| The way of collection, documentation, and exhibition of the objects | 26 | 1 | 4 | 2.35 | .892 |
| Safety and cleanliness of the museum | 29 | 1 | 4 | 2.28 | .882 |
| Mechanisms to prevent theft and other illicit trafficking in the museum | 29 | 1 | 4 | 1.93 | .884 |
| The museum overall performance | 28 | 1 | 2 | 1.46 | .508 |

NB: 1=Very poor, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4= Good, 5= Very Good

As can be seen from the above table, the professionals responded that the Ethnographic museum's vision, missions and goals are poor. The quality and quantity of information provided at the tourist information center about the heritages of Aksum is only average. A capacity development program for stakeholders by government bodies is considered to be poor. The existing relationship between the ethnographic museums and tourism in Aksum is generally poor. Accessibility of the museum to the public and disabled persons is poor. The methods used in collecting, documenting and exhibiting of the objects is poor. The safety and cleanliness of the museum is poor. Mechanisms to prevent theft and other illicit trafficking in the museum are also very poor. The museum's overall performance is also thus poor.

Table 4: Data analysis from Tourism Service Providers

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|--|-----|------|-----|------|-----------|
| Variables | N | Mini | Max | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| Accessibility of the museum to the public | 140 | 1 | 3 | 1.34 | .583 |
| The information provided at the tourist information center about the heritages of Aksum and other issues | 137 | 1 | 6 | 2.69 | 1.115 |
| your relationship with other stakeholders(government, tour guides, hotels, souvenir shops etc) | 140 | 1 | 5 | 2.84 | 1.075 |
| capacity development programs for stakeholders | 138 | 1 | 4 | 1.91 | .800 |
| Safety and cleanliness of the museum | 136 | 1 | 4 | 2.32 | 1.031 |
| Mechanisms to control theft | 138 | 1 | 4 | 2.08 | .913 |

NB: 1=Very poor, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4= Good, 5= Very Good

As can be seen from the above table the tourism service providers responded that accessibility of the museum to the public is poor. The information provided at the tourist



information centers about the heritages of Aksum and other issues is only average. Lack of practical information for users on the internet, and other on web site is clear. The relationship with other stakeholders (government, tour guides, hotels, souvenir shops etc.) is average. The town's cultural institutions (museums, galleries, libraries and archive) should have closer cooperation between themselves. Capacity development programs for stakeholders are poor. Safety and cleanliness of the museum is poor. Mechanisms to control theft are poor.

Opportunities

As to data obtained from data interviews, document analysis and observations, the ethnographic museum has the following opportunities:

- ✓ Aksum is increasingly becoming popular as a tourist town. Cultural tourism has been growing, and also tourism related to congresses and business is thriving. The tourist season is becoming longer, with a better-balanced number of tourists. Aksum has an international history, relevant to people from many countries. Interest in history could be increased, and there are many interesting perspectives from which to look at the history of Aksum. The numbers of tourism service providers are increasing in the town. There are various activities related to tourism outside the museum area, for instance visit to the obelisks, St. Mary church and the archeological museum.
- ✓ The government is giving emphasis to cultural tourism. The government is working on coordinating the stakeholders to make the sector stronger. There is willingness in cooperation among different organizations to strengthen tourism in the town. There are various opportunities in cooperating with other museums in Tigray as well.
- ✓ The museum is the only ethnographic museum in Aksum, which gives it a unique opportunity to attract tourists. The museum has great objects which offer great potential for tourism development. The museum's location in the historic old town makes it very easy to visit but there are some difficult access points. The building has undergone some restoration which will improve service to visitors. There are plans to restore more buildings in the museum, which will give more opportunity for better service, and various other exhibits to be displayed. The museum has the opportunity to focus on special types of tourism, traditional song is one type that is becoming more popular in the town. The museum's social, education and political role is clear as it houses objects that bring to the forefront the forefathers of the town.

Threats

As to data obtained from the interviews, document analysis, and observations in the ethnographic museum the following threats have been identified:

- ✓ There has been activity of new building taking place in the museum area. Therefore, the museum area has been ignored during the years during which new buildings are erected. If this continues that might damage the museum's image even further.
- ✓ Competition with other sites will grow. A conceivable severe competition might occur as the museum is located near to the obelisks, St. Mary Tzion and others.
- ✓ It is generally difficult to increase interest in ethnographic museum among tourists.



- ✓ Failure in promoting Aksum as a cultural town, whereby tourist instead go out to the other Ethiopian sites is problematic.
- ✓ The museum does not deal with the multicultural nature of Aksum.

Contributions of the Ethnographic Museum for Tourism Development

Museums without visitors would be like lifeless, empty halls with no purpose. This should remind us that the key role for museums is always to serve its visitors. However as the data obtained from visitors below indicates the Ethnographic Museum of the town is not visited by tourists. Many do know where it is situated or whether there is in fact an ethnographic museum in Aksum.

Table 5: Data Analysis from Visitors

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|---|-----|------|-----|------|----------|
| Variables | N | Mini | Max | Mean | Std. Dev |
| Did you get the chance to visit any of the ethnographic museums in Aksum? | 194 | 1 | 2 | 1.73 | .444 |
| Do you get any recommendation to visit ethnographic museum from your guide/s? | 192 | 1 | 2 | 1.78 | .418 |
| How do you rate the quality and quantity of information provided at the tourist information center about the heritage and other issues relating to Aksum? | 193 | 1 | 5 | 2.77 | 1.146 |
| What do you think the possibility is of partnership between museum and tourism? | 191 | 1 | 2 | 1.12 | .320 |
| The ethnographic museum is located in the core area of Aksum. What advantages can this have for tourism development? | 198 | 1 | 3 | 2.76 | .560 |

As the depicted in the above, most of the visitors responded that they did not get a chance to visit the Ethnographic Museums in Aksum. Furthermore, most of the visitors responded that they did not get any recommendations to visit the museum from any of the concerned bodies. In addition to this as can be seen from the table, the visitors rated the quality and quantity of information at the tourist information center as being only 'average'. However, most visitors do not visit the museum despite its great role for future tourism development. Furthermore, the idea of visitors is strengthened by the data collected from professionals presented as follows.

Table 4.9: Data Analysis from Professionals

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|---|----|------|------|--------|----------|
| Variables | N | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Dev |
| the museum's role for tourism development | 30 | 4.00 | 5.00 | 4.8333 | .37905 |

NB: 1=Very Poor, 2=Poor, 3=Average, 4= Good, 5= Very Good

As the above table shows that, most of the professional respondents the museum's role for tourism development is very good.

As can be seen from the above table the visitors responded that the possibility partnership between museums and tourism is positive. In addition to this, the visitors responded that there are advantages for tourism development. This indicates that the Ethnographic Museum can increase the length of stay of visitors in the town and thus increase tourism product diversification.



Conclusions

Tourism and ethnographic museums have a direct relationship as far as they are a pull factor for visitors. The major findings of the Ethnographic Museum are explained as follows:

- ✓ **The collection (Inventory) of the Fetwari Belay Ethnographic Museum of Aksum is rich:** Starting from its building housing the objects, the inner structure and the objects presented are somewhat unique and it is an extraordinary place to visit. There are objects made of wood, skin, clay, grass and others more than 150 years old. The functions of the objects in the museum are different to what they were originally designed for.
- ✓ **The overall status of the Ethnographic Museum and its collections (SWOT) is poor:** it is normally termed as a dormant museum as it is not functioning as well as a museum should be. There is poor documentation, conservation and care, poor exhibition and unsatisfactory maintenance activities. Hence, it can be considered as a museum which is endangered.
- ✓ **The contributions of the ethnographic museum for tourism development are currently insignificant:** As discussed above the Fetwari Belay Ethnographic Museum is dormant now that there is no tourism activity happening. So, the museum's contribution to society and the economy is insignificant.

To conclude, the overall performance of Fetewrari Belay Ethnographic Museum in Aksum is not satisfactory. Therefore, its contribution for the development of tourism in Aksum is insignificant.

Recommendations

Based on finding of this research, several implications for policy makers, owners of the museum, practitioners and the academia may be derived. Below are some of the main recommendations:

- ❖ To make the museum functional, there must be the development of strong coordination and participation among the stakeholders in the collection, documentation, exhibition, and in the drafting strategies on how to make the museum attractive. Also considered should be operating, management, promotion, capacity development and sourcing of needed finance.
- ❖ The museum should have shelves that houses and displays the objects.
- ❖ To make the artefacts sustainable, the museum needs proper preservation and conservation techniques.
- ❖ The museum should have a clear mission, vision and goals.
- ❖ The museum should hire a curator. The government must cover this salary for the time being as the owners have no sufficient income.
- ❖ The museum owner should outline and have clear policies and strategies with the collaboration of the Tourism and Culture Bureau of the town.
- ❖ Each object should have proper documentation and be carefully displayed. Each object should then also be displayed to visitors in a very accessible way.
- ❖ The museum should have an entry and exit time.
- ❖ The museum camp and its surrounding areas should be clean and be attractive for tourists and locals.



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