

## CHALLENGES AND REMEDIES OF ANJIDA DAY FESTIVAL

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explored the challenges of Anjida Day Festival and identified some potential remedies to overcome the challenges. Employing a mixed-method research design. The study surveyed 221 randomly selected community members and conducted in-depth interviews with six community members out of the total population of 2059 inhabitants in Anjida, Akwanga Local Government Area of Nasarawa State to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. Data analysis involved using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative data, which was presented in percentages, frequencies, and tables, and applying a descriptive thematic method to transcribe and analyze qualitative data. The research found the following to be the challenges faced by the festival in question that threaten its sustainability and impact which are; financial constraint, poor management, misappropriation, lack of clear vision, lack of unity and family sentiment. The research also recommended the below as remedies to the festival in question; sponsorship and collaboration,, membership registration and annual dues, the need engage visionary persons to pilot the festival to the promise land.

**Keywords:** Festival, Cultural festival, Development, Challenges and Remedies.

## Introduction

The Anjida Day Festival is a momentous occasion that brings together the people of Anjida communities, uniting sons and daughters of the mother nation in a celebration of their shared heritage. This annual festival has a rich history, dating back to the formation of the Palace Meeting association in 1958. In an interview with Jonathan Galadima on history of Anjida Day festival he said:

to the best of my knowledge Anjida Day Festival started with what the used to call Palace Meeting (miti re takpa) and is dated back to 1958 where only the elders or house owner were the eligible members and the mostly meet at the chief palace (takpa chon) discuss as a people, do financial contribution and share among themselves as loan and they redeem it during their next annual meeting and so it continues. The name was change in 1985 to Anjida Progressive and Cultural Association (APCA) so as meet up bank requirement for account opening, when the come for this annual meeting , the perform cultural dances etcetera. Again it was changed to Mada Development Association (MDA) Anjida Branch in 1987 when the mother association gave an order that all associations should adopt a unifying name as Mada Development Association and that is why that of Anjida has now become MDA Anjida Branch. Series of meeting has taken place and is mostly accompany with music and dance as well as other cultural activities well organized and staged.

The association called Palace Meeting was innovatively initiated which brought the elders of the Anjida community to discuss matters of unity and progress. As a collective, they sought to foster a sense of community and cooperation, laying the groundwork for the vibrant festival that exists today. The association's annual meetings served as a platform for members to share ideas, address challenges, proffer solution and work towards the betterment of their community.

In agreement with the above, Hon Benjamin S. Waziri, the district head of Anjida said:

this Anjida Day Festival started with the name “miti re takpa” in Anjida where Anjida gida, Nintabi, Ntaki, Shon, Koto and other Anjida settlements in other places turn up for meeting, and it developed, the people said what are we going to do with money? They decided that the money should be given to Very Reverend Narchu T. Gyoja of blessed memory as he was one of the early enlightened persons in Anjida as at that time for investment. Later the people agreed that they should buy plot of land at Akwanga town with the money, but I can't really tell if the land was bought or not. Later on the association now decided to loan out the money realized instead. The loan was given based on community to individual for them to repay with interest in the next meeting as it is done continually.

One of the most distinguishing aspects of the Palace Meeting was its financial system. Which the members would contribute funds to a collective pool, which would later be distributed among them as interest-bearing loans. This ingenious system allowed members to access capital, boosting economic growth and development within the community. The loan would be repaid with profit or interest at the next meeting, and the cycle would repeat, providing ongoing financial support to the community. According to Bubo (2013) in his book title “A Brief History & Culture of Anjida People in North Central Nigeria” has it that the idea to form cultural association in Anjida was initiated by V. Rev. Narchu when he contacted the elders of the land and sold the idea on the need to form an association which would help to bringing ideas that would facilitate development of the community and was accepted by the elders and 8<sup>th</sup> February

1958 was fixed for maiden edition of the meeting and election was also conducted. The meeting was named Palace Meeting (Miti re Takpa)

Eventually, the Palace Meeting's activities changed into the Anjida Day Festival, a joyous celebration of community spirit, unity, and cultural heritage. Today, the festival serves as a testament to the community's resilience and commitment to their shared values. It is a period where the people of Anjida come together, reflect on their history, and look towards a brighter tomorrow. The members of the association typically convened annually in the fourth quarter. One of the standout features of their annual gathering was the vibrant display of traditional dances, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the Mada people of Anjida community. The highlight of the festival event includes variety of dances, such as Glo-ku, Glo-ri, Vrengba, Bwan, Sengba etc.. The event vibe was further enhanced by the presence of local cuisine (food) and drinks, which attendees enjoyed in the festival. In a relevant development in 1985, the association took significant step forward by opening a bank account. As part of the account opening requirements, the bank instructed the group to adopt a formal name. After deliberation, the members agreed on the name "Anjida Progressive and Cultural Association." With this name, they successfully opened the account, enabling them to securely save their funds and further solidify their financial cooperation.

So, the cultural dance performances became a part of their meetings after the association's name change to Anjida Progressive and Cultural Association. The dances, such as Glo-ku, Glo-ri, Vrengba, Bwan, and Sengba, are now an integral part of their gatherings, adding to the festive atmosphere and showcasing the community's rich cultural heritage. The cultural performances during the meetings eventually evolved into the Anjida Day Festival in its current form. However, in 1987, the Mada Development Association (MDA) issued a directive that all cultural associations of Mada people, regardless of location, should rebrand to include "Mada Development Association" in their name, followed by the specific community's name. Consequently, the Anjida Progressive and Cultural Association was renamed to Mada Development Association, Anjida Branch.

Initially, the annual meeting was held in the fourth quarter of the year, but the date was later shifted to March or April. This change allowed attendees to coincide their celebration with the Easter holiday, therefore increasing participation and festivities. Anjida Day Festival, under the umbrella of the Mada Development Association, Anjida Branch, continues to thrive, showcasing the community's rich cultural heritage and promoting unity among the community people. A significant milestone was achieved in 1987 when the Mada Development Association, Anjida Branch, opened its doors to women and youth participation in the event. This marked a new epoch of inclusivity, exiting from the earlier Palace Meeting and Anjida Progressive and Cultural Association models, which were predominantly male-dominated with no female.

### **Socio-cultural Festivals**

A cultural festival is a gala or event ordinarily staged by local community in a unique way in honor of a particular cultural belief. Such gala can be done annually or as when necessity calls for. Festival and dance are observed for religious and socio-cultural purposes. Kerinja (2016). Socio-cultural festivals/dances play a great role in the social fabric of every community. These events give an avenue for people to come together, share their joy, and strengthen relationships with fellow community members. Festivals have a unique ability to bring and unite people, fostering friendships, romance, and even intercommunity marriages. As individuals from different backgrounds gather to celebrate, they develop lasting ties, promoting mutual understanding and cohesion. These shared experiences aid break down barriers, cultivating a

sense of belonging and social harmony. According to Tungon and Shekeh (2016), festivals are vibrant programs that showcase socio-cultural and religious performances, celebrations, or entertainment. These events are carefully organized by individuals, persons, groups, committee, organizations, or associations to commemorate significant occasions, honor notable figures, or reflect on meaningful experiences. At their core, festivals serve as an avenue for communities to come together, share their heritage, and strengthen social ties in spirit of one people.

### **The meaning of Anjida day festival**

Anjida day festival is seen as a celebration of cultural heritage, a time for community bonding and unity as well as a platform for showcasing traditional practices and customs and as a platform for socialization and entertainment. In the words of Hussaini Labani:

Anjida Day Festival to the best of my understanding is a period where sons and daughters of the land come together in unity as they embrace each other and to discuss way forward for the purpose of progress, promotion of the festival and the community as a whole. Again there are importance attach to Anjida Day Festivals, which are: it helps in shaping our culture, bringing people to air out their views, letting people know the need and important of staying together, checking by going back to the past so as to iron out our differences and embrace each other in unity under one umbrella.

As an avenue for community relationship, the Anjida Day Festival provides a rare opportunity for people to come together, share experiences and strengthen social bonds. The festival's ambience is alive with laughter, music and dance, creating a sense of belonging among the participants via traditional performances and communal activities, Anjida Day festival offers countless ways for individuals to connect with each other and celebrate their shared heritage.

### **Methodology**

The research design for this study employs a survey method to address the research problem, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Surveys are effective for measuring characteristics, opinions, or behaviours of a population by examining a sample and generalizing the results (Abacigil et al., 2019). This method is particularly valuable for capturing opinions and trends from a large population through systematic data collection via questionnaires. The mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research, allows for a comprehensive understanding of the topic by validating findings through multiple data sources (Kothari, 2004). The study focused on Anjida community of Akwanga Nasarawa state, which the total population of inhabitants is two thousand and fifty nine people (2059). The research utilized a sample size of 221 respondents, selected randomly to ensure representativeness and minimize bias. The probability sampling technique, specifically simple random sampling, was employed to provide each individual an equal chance of selection, thereby enhancing the accuracy and reliability of the data collected (Kothori, 2004). Data was collected using a structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews (IDI). The questionnaire was designed to collect information on participants' social characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs (Bulmer, 2004). In-depth interviews, involving individual conversations with six selected community members, provided qualitative insights into their perspectives and experiences (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Data analysis involved using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative data, which was presented in percentages, frequencies, and tables, and applying a descriptive thematic method to transcribe and analyze qualitative data

### The meaning of Anjida day festival

	Frequency	Percent
A celebration of cultural heritage	58	48.0
A time for community bonding and unity	47	38.8
A showcase of traditional practices and customs	8	6.6
A platform for socialization and entertainment	8	6.6
Total	121	100.0

The table sheds light on how people construe the meaning of the Anjida Day Festival. A large portion of respondents, specifically 48%, view the festival as a celebration of cultural heritage. This indicates that for nearly half of the participants, Anjida Day holds deep cultural relevance, serving as a way to honor and preserve traditional values, stories, and identity.

Following closely, 38.8% of respondents see the festival as a time for community bonding and unity. This perspective highlights the social importance of the festival in bringing people together as one, strengthening communal ties, and fostering a sense of belonging and solidarity. Little but equal segments of the population—each comprising 6.6%—interpret the festival as either a showcase of traditional practices and customs or a platform for socialization and entertainment. These responses propose that while some people focus on the performative or festive aspects of Anjida Day, such views are less common. Festivals play a fundamental role in fostering community cohesion and promoting cultural exchange. These event often attract visitors from neighboring communities, fostering cross-cultural understanding and exchange.

The festival serve as a means of preserving cultural identity, promoting social unity, and creating lasting memories. By celebrating shared experiences and values, festivals aid to strengthen community ties and promote a sense of belonging among participants.

Festivals are an essential part of our cultural landscape, offering a platform for communities to come together, celebrate, and share their rich heritage. Through their vibrant performances, ceremonies, and observances, festivals promote cultural exchange, social cohesion, and community engagement, making them an essential aspect of our collective human experience. Festivals play a major role in various cultures, serving as a means to achieve specific objectives. One of the main purposes of festivals is to commemorate important events or express gratitude for blessings received. These celebrations are often marked by joy, revelry, and merriment, bringing people together in a shared experience. In addition to their commemorative or thanksgiving purposes, festivals also offer entertainment, which is particularly valuable for local communities. They offer a platform for showcasing local talent, creativity, and cultural heritage, thereby enriching the community's social fabric. Festivals are an essential part of human society, fostering community cohesion, promoting cultural exchange, and providing a much-needed break from the routine of daily life. By celebrating festivals, individuals and communities can reconnect with their heritage, strengthen social bonds, and create long-term memories.

### The Challenges of Anjida Day Festival

Festivals are intricate events that require careful planning, precise implementation, and a deep understanding of the intricacies involved. Despite their popularity and cultural significance, festivals often face numerous challenges that can impact their success. This essay will explore five key challenges faced by festivals: financial challenges, poor administration, embezzlement, lack of good vision, and lack of unity.



One of the most significant challenges faced by festivals is monetary constraints. Insufficient financial support can lead to cutbacks, reduced quality, or even cancellation of the event. Festivals require substantial funding to cover expenses such as venue rental, talent fees, marketing, and logistics. Effective budgeting and cost control are essential to ensure that expenses are managed efficiently and funds are allocated wisely. Without a robust financial plan, festivals risk facing financial difficulties that can compromise their overall quality and success. In addition to financial challenges, poor management is another significant obstacle that festivals face. Inexperienced festival organizers or organizing committee may struggle to manage the complexities of festival planning, leading to mistakes and poor decision-making. Inadequate planning can result in logistical issues, communication breakdowns, and other problems that can impact the festival's accomplishment. To lessen these risks, festival organizers must prioritize effective planning, communication, and problem-solving. Misappropriation of funds is another challenge that festivals face. Financial mismanagement can occur when festival organizers or staff mishandle or embezzle funds, leading to financial difficulties and reputational dent. The lack of transparency in financial records and processes can add to misappropriation and undermine trust among stakeholders. To prevent misappropriation, festivals must prioritize transparency, accountability, and good governance.

A clear vision and objectives are crucial for a festival's success. Without a well-defined purpose, target audience, and programming, festivals can struggle to attract and maintain attendees, sponsors, and talent. Inconsistent branding can also make it challenging for festivals to establish a strong identity and distinguish themselves from other events. A strong brand identity is critical for building a loyal audience and attracting sponsors and talent.

Finally, festivals often involve several stakeholders, including organizers, organizing committee, staff, volunteers, and vendors. in-house conflicts can arise when there are differing opinions, communication breakdowns, or contending interests. The lack of collaboration among stakeholders can lead to duplication of efforts, inefficiencies, and a lack of cohesion in festival planning and execution. To triumph over these challenges, festivals must prioritize effective communication, collaboration, and teamwork among all stakeholders.

### Challenges faced by the festival

Items	Frequency	Percent
financial challenges	54	44.6
poor management	14	11.6
Misappropriation	16	13.2
lack of good vision	8	6.6
lack of unity	21	17.3
family sentiment	8	6.6
Total	121	100.0

The challenges faced by the Anjida Festival are fundamental issues holding back its full potential. These challenges are not just logistical, they reflect deeper structural and cultural concerns that need to be acknowledged and addressed for the festival to succeed.

#### Financial Challenges (44.6%)

By far the most significant issue, almost half of the respondents point to financial difficulties. This suggests that the festival is grappling with a lack of constant funding — which likely affects everything from planning and programming to logistics and outreach. Without

sufficient resources, growth remains stunted, and the festival cannot deliver on its wider aspirations.

This is supported by Wakili Anjida Adamu Audu, who said:

*one of the challenges faced is finance, for there is no development without finance, finance facilitate development easily, and it is a major challenge that if it is overcome we will have a very good festival that would help in bringing development.*

#### Lack of Unity (17.3%)

The second most familiar challenge reveals internal fractures. A lack of unity among stakeholders, organizers, or the broader community can lead to incoherent decision-making, conflict, and missed opportunities. Unity is the spine of any collective endeavor, and its absence weakens the foundation of the festival.

The District Head of Anjida Hon. Benjamin S. Waziri has also added his voice on what he thinks is the major challenge faced by the festival:

I will say there is no specific person to blame on this lack of unity, we are all to blame, this is because for instance I am claiming that am a king, this one is claiming he is politician, the other person is also claiming he or she is the most educated while some claim to be successful business men therefore his or her opinion should be final or no other, if we are not united how do we mobilize politicians that will help in facilitating development in our community? When we are united we can delegate some members of the community to go seek assistance from government but when we are divided we will not progress, this unity that is lacking in Anjida is the reason for our underdevelopment.

#### Misappropriation (13.2%)

This points to serious concerns about transparency and accountability. mishandling of funds or resources not only drains the festival's limited finances but also erodes trust among supporters and potential sponsors. It creates a situation where progress is stifled by suspicion and a lack of confidence in festival leadership.

#### Poor Management (11.6%)s

Beyond financial issues, operational inefficiencies are also at play. Poor management might reflect weak planning, uncoordinated efforts, or a lack of experienced leadership. A vision without strong implementation often falls short, and this concern highlights the need for capable, committed organizers.

#### Lack of Good Vision (6.6%)

A festival needs direction/bearing, ambition, and innovation to remain significant and impactful. This reaction shows that some stakeholders feel the Anjida Festival may be missing a clear or compelling vision to guide its growth a roadmap that inspires and mobilizes both the community and external supporters.

#### Family Sentiment (6.6%)

Lastly, the mention of family sentiment suggests that personal or clan-based interests may be interfering with collective advancement. When leadership or benefits become concentrated within certain individuals or families, it can estrange others and limit the festival's inclusivity and reach.

### Ways to Address Challenges of Anjida festival

Items	Frequency	Percent
membership registration and annual dues	30	24.8
the need for expert	8	6.6
sponsorship/collaboration	16	13.2
the need to embrace peace	8	6.6
the need to be honest and corruption free	24	19.8
Investment	27	22.3
to engage visionary persons to pilot the festival to the promise land	2	1.7
there should be platform for creating awareness	6	5.0
Total	121	100.0

The data on Ways to Address Challenges related to the Anjida Festival highlights the community's priorities and strategic perspectives for ensuring the festival's sustainability and impact via the following:

Membership registration and annual dues (24.8%): This is the most cited approach by the respondents, signifying that many see structured involvement/participation and financial commitment from members as the basis for overcoming challenges. It suggests a desire for accountability, constant funding, and a sense of ownership among stakeholders in a community. Investment (22.3%) An important portion believes that financial investment is crucial possibly in infrastructure, programming, or marketing. This reflects the understanding that meaningful progress requires wealth backing. The need to be honest and corruption-free (19.8%): Integrity is viewed as a very important feature for success. Almost one-fifth of respondents stress the importance of ethical leadership and transparent operations, underscoring past or potential trust issues that need addressing. Sponsorship/collaboration (13.2%): Collaboration with external entities be they businesses, government agencies, or NGOs is seen as a key strategy. This reflects a belief in partnerships as leverage for resources, visibility, and expertise. The need for experts (6.6%) and the need to embrace peace (6.6%): These items share the same frequency and reflect two distinct but important dimensions: the need for skilled guidance and the importance of harmony within the community or organizing body. Platform for creating awareness (5.0%): A lesser, yet significant group points out the need to increase public understanding and commitment. Awareness-building could address misconceptions, increase participation in the festival, and amplify impact. Engaging visionary leadership (1.7%): Though least cited, this point touches on a powerful idea ,the need for visionary individuals who can steer the festival strategically toward its full potential.

### Ways to Address Challenges Faced by the Festival:

The study results reveal a range of strategies that stakeholders believe can help address the challenges facing the festival. The most frequently mentioned solution is membership registration and annual dues, highlighted by 24.8% of respondents. This indicates a strong belief in the importance of formalizing participation and ensuring sustainable funding through standard contributions. Closely following is investment (22.3%), reflecting the need for financial backing to support festival operations, programming, and long-term growth. These top two responses underscore the centrality of financial structure and stability. A significant portion (19.8%) emphasized the need for honesty and a corruption-free environment, pointing to concerns about integrity and transparency within festival management. This sentiment indicates that ethical leadership is seen as foundational to progress. Sponsorship and collaboration were mentioned by



13.2% of participants, showing that partnerships with organizations or businesses are seen as a key to unlocking resources and increasing the festival's reach.

Smaller, but still significant percentages advocated for: Engaging experts (6.6%), to present technical guidance and professional input. Embracing peace (6.6%), suggesting that social cohesion and conflict resolution are vital for the event's success. According to Targema (2022):

humility is the quality of being courteously respectful to others. Those who lack humility are proud, arrogant and boastful. Humility entails putting others first. A humble person ensures that everyone around him gets their due irrespective of age. In this way, he is able to maintain good relationship with every member of his community.

That is to say that it is only people who are humble that can be able to stand tall in building a good community relationship even in the midst of division, with humility they work tirelessly to bringing all and sundry to discuss way forward for community development. Creating awareness platforms (5.0%), pointing to a need for improved publicity and community engagement. Visionary leadership (1.7%), highlighting the call for strong, forward-thinking individuals to lead the festival into a successful future.

### **The futuristic prospects of Anjida festival**

Items	Frequency	Percent
It is evolving as a festival of progress and development	24	19.8
It will be among the first class festival in the world	24	19.8
It will be a tool for cultural/social change	30	24.8
It is appealing to wider audience and staying relevant	23	19.0
It will be a tool for boosting local economy	20	16.5
Total	121	100.0

The futuristic hope of the Anjida Festival reflects a vibrant vision of development, relevance, and impact. Based on the distribution of responses, we can see that people hold a various yet positive view of what the festival represents and where it is heading. At the forefront, 24.8% believe that Anjida will serve as a powerful tool for cultural and social change. This indicates a strong anticipation that the festival will not just entertain but inspire and reform values, traditions, and collective identities. Close behind, 19.8% of respondents equally recognize two critical scope: first, that the festival is evolving as a symbol of progress and development, and second, that it has the potential to rank among the first-class festivals of the world. These parallel perceptions suggest a twin ambition to reflect internal growth while gaining external prestige. Moreover, 19.0% observe its strength in its appeal to a wider audience and staying relevant. This speaks to the festival ability adapt to to changing time/nature and potential to cross cultural boundaries, resonating with new generations without losing its core identity and essence. Finally, 16.5% anticipate the festival to be a driver of local economic growth. This practical outlook aligns with the idea of cultural events as catalysts for commerce, tourism, and job creation. In essence, the Anjida Festival is not just seen as a celebration, it is envisioned as an interconnected force. A beacon of change, a bridge to global acclaim, a cultural magnet, and an economic stimulator. The data tells a story of Anjida Day festival gradually carving out its legacy in the future bold, inclusive, and transformative.

## Conclusion

The Anjida Day Festival, a vibrant celebration of cultural heritage and community spirit, faces several challenges that intimidate its sustainability and impact of the festival. This research work has explored these challenges and identified potential ways to address them. The study revealed that financial constraints, poor management, misappropriation, lack of clear vision, and lack of unity are significant obstacles threatening the festival's progress and success.

In spite these challenges, the festival holds huge potential for cultural and social change, economic growth, and community development. The study highlighted the significance of addressing the identified challenges through strategic procedures such as membership registration and annual dues, investment, honesty and transparency, sponsorship and collaboration, and engaging visionary leadership among others.

In conclusion, the Anjida Day Festival is a valuable cultural asset that requires careful nurturing and strategic development to realize its full potential. By addressing the challenges and implementing the suggested and recommended remedies, the festival can become a beacon of cultural excellence, social cohesion, and economic empowerment, benefiting the host community and beyond.

## Recommendations

1. The festival organizing committee should explore different funding sources which should include membership registration and annual dues, collaboration, sponsorship, and involvement to ensure the financial stability of the Anjida Day festival.
2. The festival organizing committee should try as much as possible to foster community involvement and participation by engaging the youths, and women in decision making process and encourage their participation both in the event's planning (Anjida Day festival).
3. The festival management or organizing committee should as well develop a good vision and strategy with clear mission aligning with the needs and aspiration of the host community for the festival thrive.
4. Festival management should promote honest, transparency and accountability in managing the festival effectively.

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**APPENDIX**  
**Oral Interview**

Ali KasimuAnjidaApril 2025  
AuduAdamu. AnjidaApril 2025.  
Benjamin S. WaziriAnjidaApril2025  
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