Zimbabwean Museums of the Future: Engage, Empower and Experience



Papers and presentations at the Mutare Museum Golden Jubilee Symposium, October 2014

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National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe

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Zimbabwean Museums of the Future - Engage, Empower and Experience: an introduction.

Paul Mupira and Njabulo Chipangura

In the year 2014, the Mutare Museum celebrated its golden jubilee. The Golden Jubilee Celebrations served as a reflection point on the museum's activities for the last half century and sought to inspire its continuous existence in the face of current and future challenges. Museums have historically been keystones of their communities, sources of credible information, safe places to explore important issues, keepers of cultural memory, mentors of life-long learning and bringing together diverse groups. The Golden Jubilee Celebrations afforded the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), custodians of museums and heritage in the country, an opportunity for continuous interaction with and education of the communities on the work of museums in society. To make the event an unforgettable experience, NMMZ through the Mutare Museum lined up a week-long list of activities that covered the various aspects of the museum's core business of research, education programming and exhibitions.

The celebrations were held under the theme *Zimbabwean museums of the future: engage, empower and experience.* Mutare Museum organised an academic symposium on 2 October 2014 during the jubilee week to deliberate on this theme the objective being to generate discussion and ideas about what future Zimbabwean museums should be. As we commemorated the Golden Jubilee, it was time to reflect upon changes that have occurred within the broad spectrum of museum work nationally, regionally and internationally. In conceptualising the celebrations' theme and symposium, we noted that museums are moving away from the object-based approach to the contextual approach advocated in the 'new museology'. Whereas in the past museums were defined by their relationship to objects with curators as 'keepers', today they are defined more by their relationships with visitors. This shift takes the spotlight from objects to the visitors and how they experience the museum. The world over, emphasis is now on community engagement, empowerment and excellent visitor services that satisfy the needs of museum clients or audiences at the expense of excessive attention to collections and curatorial research.

Once the theme was developed, we assigned the prospective presenters topics to focus on so that we could cover broader issues affecting museums in Zimbabwe today. Some contributors sought clarification on what we meant by the three key terms engage, empower and experience. It was difficult to answer this question as we did not have ready definitions of our own and precisely wanted the contributors to exercise their minds on the meanings. Reading the papers in this volume it comes out that these terms have various meanings depending on context and academic learnings. However here are the key phrases that we picked from the presentations that would help us understand these terms in their broadest sense.

Engage	Empower	Experience
• Community needs assessment • Participatory decision making • Shared goals and long-term relationships • Making old stories accessible	• Managing change for social inclusion • Inclusive participation • Democratisation of museum practice	• Visitor/clients needs assessments • Interactive museums • Appeal of museums a • Contexts

for use in addressing modern issues • Museums as meeting places • Providing social resources to the communities. • Capturing oral histories around issues • User-generated content in exhibitions - museums and the social media • Providing open access • Addressing issues of multiculturalism. • Collaborative events and activities • Mechanisms for feedback • Co-creation	• Promotion of community ideas, arts and talents • Representation of majority and minority cultures • Cultural equity • Addressing needs • Sharing benefits • Listening to community • Using indigenous knowledge in museums • Keeping public records • Giving skills, resources, authority and opportunity • Access to museums collections and records • Community involvement in interpretation and education programming	• Public images of museums • Visitor perceptions • Application of information technologies in museums • Visit motivation - leisure versus learning • Communicating messages • Museums without walls • Virtual museums • Involvement vs passive gaze • Role play • Emotions • Memory • Interactivity

In the 20th to the 21st centuries many museums have progressively shed the idea of being repositories and are increasingly becoming social spaces. In our reflection on the jubilee theme, we argue that this self-conscious shift in orientation opens doors for community engagement, empowerment and enhanced experience involving the senses, emotions and imagination. Thus engagement, empowerment and experience imply a shift away from a scenario where the community passively observe museum work and visiting to gaze at exhibitions created by curators, who are sometimes unfamiliar with cultures being displayed, to interactive participation, co-creation of content and satisfying diverse needs. To move away from a monolithic past, museums must facilitate multi-vocal interpretations by creating opportunities for several voices to be heard - that is combining insider and outsider academic and cultural perspectives. They should encourage community participation in their programmes and be seen to be motivating and empowering the community to actively participate in these programmes by transferring skills and providing opportunities for them to present their own points of view. Arising from this are key questions: What are the prospects and challenges of attaining this paradigm shift in the Zimbabwean context? How are museums in Zimbabwe responding to the empowerment and indigenisation national debate and policy thrust? If museums are indeed important community anchor institutions, how are we poised to address the big challenges of the 21st century society such as environmental (e.g. climate change), financial, health and information literacy; global and cross cultural understandings and civic engagements and the importance of civic discourse? How can museums transform the nature, quality and impact of museum experiences?

Apart from papers by Mashizha and Mupira and Ruzive and Mupira the rest of the articles in this volume arise from the symposium but all seek to answer some of these questions that today's museums are faced with *visa vis* the ever changing needs and demands of audiences and the general public. We have also decided to publish all the slide presentations that were made during the academic symposium for the benefit of colleagues in the museum profession as well as students of museology. Although not all presenters could develop their presentations into full

papers or have since published elsewhere their ideas as presented at the symposium were well thought out and have far reaching implications on museum theory and practice locally and internationally. The symposium was officially opened by the late Local Committee of the Board of Trustees Chairperson Mr Kenneth Saruchera and attracted professionals from national universities as well as National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) practitioners. We hereby give a brief review of the full papers that were submitted after the Golden Jubilee celebrations.

It is common knowledge that National Museums in Zimbabwe were created during the colonial period. Mupira's paper looks at how this happened in the context of Mutare Museum. The major aims in setting up museums was to provide library services and as centres of study particularly of the natural and geological history of the country – the latter being an area of interest for early mineral prospectors. Secondly the aim was to create `order´ in the understanding of pre-colonial societies. Most of the individuals who became early collectors of objects which later spurred the establishment of museums had in fact come to the region as explorers with various antiquarian interests. They were curious about `mysterious´ ruins, exotic artefacts and local history. While many writers content that museums were solely set up to celebrate European conquest, achievements, culture and tastes and were open to the privileged few for personal aggrandisement; Mupira's paper shows that is some cases these claims are too generalised and need to re-evaluated.

These museums have somewhat transformed since the attainment of Independence in Zimbabwe in 1980 in an attempt to shed off the colonial legacy. However, it is apparent from a number of papers in this volume the transformation achieved so far is not far-reaching and academics and the public would want to see something radical. Looking at Zimbabwean museums today of course it is disappointing to say that we have not been able to transform museum institutions so that they become truly indigenous and decolonised, engaging and empowering to our communities. We need ideological refocusing in order to dismantle the lingering vestiges of elitism and ingrained professional practices adopted and borrowed from a traditional and colonial museology.

The urgent need to "Africanise" as well as democratization of the museum space is highlighted by several contributors in this volume. Chikozho observes that local communities in post-colonial Zimbabwe continue to witness their heritage being subjected to various alien forms of management and programmes being imposed on them by cultural heritage agencies without their sanction and or understanding. Giving the case of the Batonga Community Museum Chikozho asserts that putting people at the centre of museums by empowering and engaging them leads to the attainment of fundamental qualities such as ownership, imagination, creativity and sustainability thereby guaranteeing the future of museums. Sagiya outlines some of the steps that the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe is taking to address the issues of ownership, community benefits and sustainable relationships at Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site. Despite the numerous hurdles Sagiya shows that there is no other viable route that excludes engagement and empowerment that can sustain the world class heritage site and other heritage places for that matter. From this case study it emerges that heritage organisations should play an active role in providing benefits, whether they are material or experiential, and in addressing some of the social issues faced by communities.

Visitors no longer identify the museum as a bastion of high culture but as a place to interact and engage with the objects and learn in a relaxed atmosphere. Chipangura boldly declares that the days when a visitor enters a museum for meditations and contemplations are gone as most now seek experience and spectacle. To understand visitor needs in terms of experience and spectacle Ruzive and Mupira exhort museums to conduct regular visitor research and surveys as well as evaluation of programmes. It is crucial that museums know their clients so that they come up with programmes that meet their needs. As Katsamudannga says the public audiences or alternatively communities provide the basis upon which museums are important. As such engagement between the professionals and communities in the interpretation of some of the collections is no longer avoidable. This engagement is manifest in museums the world over, but specifically in Australia, New Zealand and United States, thriving to relinquish their power to influence and to shape the thinking of the public, especially indigenous communities on the specific subject related to the objects on display.

The domination of museum specialists as the only sources of information, making the critical decisions on what to display, how, where and even when is also challenged and severely under threat in this age of unrestricted access to knowledge offered by the World Wide Web. The emergence of alternative narratives about any subject on this planet on the internet takes away the authoritative voice from museums. However, what the alternative voices on this internet-based platform cannot take away from museums are the real objects. Mashizha and Mupira acknowledge and encourage Zimbabwean museums not to feel threatened by the information technology age, but to embrace it in order to provide a new suitable paradigm of knowledge construction and transmission. The various information communication technologies available today constitute familiar communication experiences that resonate well with the young audience who are the majority of museum visitors. Ultimately, what the museum offers should be the product of an active information sharing and development process. The use of information communication technologies adds to visitor experience and enables museums to tap into what visitors are thinking, how they are engaging with museum-specific content, and why they enjoy certain cultural experiences over others. Mhlanga weighs on the positive responses that interactive and immersive displays afford to visitors. By studying visitors' responses to live animal displays in museums Mhlanga concludes that this kind of connection to a message in a museum should not be overlooked, nor wasted, as feelings will stay with people longer than facts and information.

It is our contention that at a time when the public is inundated and overwhelmed by information from diverse sources, museums remain as credible repositories of authentic records about past societies. Thus, on another note Chaterera demonstrates that while most museums look after their objects reasonably well the accompanying or related paper records are often ignored. She emphasizes that museum records and information management promote the availability and accessibility of object related data that is critical for research, interpretation and exhibition. In line with the growing trends of adopting information communication technologies it is our opinion that museums in Zimbabwe must digitize components of their collections and records to increase access while creating greater audience engagement. Some of these records and collections must be made accessible through online data portals to enrich visitors' experiences and reach out to virtual visitors thereby encouraging wider public engagement and benefit. At a time when museums seem to be overwhelmed by written and

printed records, Karadzandima and Murambiwa highlight the deficiency of the oral record specifically the liberation war archive. More importantly they highlight the difficulties of engaging communities in gathering archival data because of the different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, geographical locations and interest or identity. Hence, they ask key questions that permeate our museum work: Who documents what and where? What motivates the documentation? Should there be institutional monopoly to collection and custody of Oral History? Within the broader themes of this publication these questions can only be fully addressed if we understand what engagement and empowerment mean in theory and in practice.

In conclusion the papers in this volume underscore the necessity of a paradigm shift in museums in order for them to remain relevant in contemporary society. Community engagement and empowerment are the fundamental transformative forces that the authors in this volume reckon will improve museum experience, help museums to build partnerships and increase participation and provide better service to the publics. Museums of the 21st century must strive to make meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and communities in their broadest sense. Such re-direction is then expected to ultimately transform museums in Zimbabwe into preferred destinations of choice in the public's quest for lifelong learning and leisure activities, as is the case in some other parts of the world.

Mutare Museum and community engagement – looking back, looking forward.

Paul Mupira

Abstract

Mutare Museum stands out as being the flagship museum in collecting, preserving and presenting the national transport and antiquities heritage. It officially opened to the public on the 13th of September 1964 and despite the collection being national in character most of the displays cover the eastern parts of the country known as Manicaland Province. In 2014, the Museum celebrated its Golden Jubilee and this paper looks at the Museum's historical development in terms of infrastructure, collecting, exhibition building and public programming and community engagement in fulfilling the museum's mission and mandate. The trajectory of the museum's future developments in these areas is also examined in line with the Golden Jubilee and symposium theme: Zimbabwean Museums of the future: engage, empower and experience.

Introduction: The development of the museum

The idea of a museum was mooted on the 22nd of October, 1953 when the Manicaland branch of the Southern Rhodesia Hunters and Game Preservation Association set up a committee to investigate the possibility of the establishment of a museum in the then Umtali now Mutare. Early in 1954 Councillor H. T. F. Went offered the use of the old Fairbridge homestead 'Utopia" to accommodate the new museum but these premises were considered unsuitable because of the difficulty in providing security, the limited space available and the distance from the centre of the city. The Umtali Museum Society was established in August 1954 and would be instrumental in fostering interest in the idea of a museum as well as its development.

In November 1957 the Municipality of Umtali made available to the Museum Society the dining-room and kitchen section of the old Silver Oaks Hostel, a wood and corrugated iron building in Victory Avenue just above the present Museum siting. However, the Society had no funds for development and was hard pressed to maintain the Museum. It therefore approached the Trustees of the National Museums of Southern Rhodesia in August 1958 to ask them to take over the Museum. At a meeting held on 31st August 1959 the Trustees of the National Museums formally agreed to take over the Mutare Museum as the third Museum under their control. The take-over was effected on 1st September 1959.

The Trustees, in assuming responsibility recognised that the existing building was quite unsuitable for Museum purposes, and with the co-operation of the Umtali Museum Society, immediately took steps to launch an appeal for funds for a new Museum building while negotiations with the Municipality for a site upon which to rebuild the Museum also began. In November 1959, the Municipality agreed to donate land with a frontage on Victory Avenue and title to this site was given in February 1961. Planning for the new building was done by Key and Evans Architects of Mutare and building operations commenced in November 1961.The foundation stone was laid by Sir Edgar Whitehead on 7th April 1962.

On the 20th September 1962 Sir Alfred Beit officially opened the Beit Gallery in the Mutare Museum and the move from the old building was completed on the 11th October 1962. For the Mutare Municipal Jubilee Week celebrations beginning on 8th June 1964 the Museum (with the exception of the Eastern Districts Gallery) was opened to the public and was officially opened by Sir Alfred Beit on 13th September 1964.

It is noteworthy that when the National Museum in Mutare was inaugurated other National Museums in Harare (the Queen Victoria now Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences) and Bulawayo (the Natural History Museum) were also being established. The National Museums sprouted at a time when the then Rhodesia was contemplating and negotiating its independence from Britain. There was an upsurge in white Rhodesian nationalism and the desire to create an identity of a progressive civilisation based on principles of Western democracy, responsible government and moral standards. The museum as is illustrated was thus a key political and ideological tool in this endeavour as well as in advancing Western science.

In August 1974 a proposal to establish a cultural centre for use by various community clubs at the museum by Museum Society was tabled before the 49th meeting of the Museum Local Committee by Mr Jackson. The construction would have three components *viz*: a re-development of the Transport Gallery, the auditorium and a two-storey cultural centre block. The idea was accepted but never implemented due to insufficient financial inflows from donors. Instead, a proposal to convert the Whitehead Gallery into a lecture hall (the present auditorium) was tabled, accepted and subsequently implemented, the conversion being completed in 1975.

In 1977 the Umtali Round Table donated diamond mesh fencing and supports for the establishment of an aviary for livestock displays. Construction of the roof over the Transport Gallery commenced in 1980 and was completed in January 1982. A major exercise to insulate some of the display galleries that were excessively hot in summer was undertaken in 1986. The ceilings in the Beit and Mezzanine Galleries were covered with a layer of vermiculite and asbestos fibre-glass wool was installed beneath the Transport Gallery roof. The fibre-glass wool was installed at a time when some developed nations had begun banning asbestos because of its harmful effects to human health. This health issue would surface in the early 2000s when staff started complaining of itching skin after being exposed to falling fibre damaged by rats. Thus, the museum roof in the transport gallery will require safer insulation in the future.

In April 2000 the Museum decided to repartition the garage space at the back of the Museum to create storage space. The development, viewed as a cheaper and secure option could now turn out to be a permanent solution as up to now the Museum has no funds to construct a purpose-built collections store. Discussions on the establishment of snake pits and a fresh water aquarium began in 2004. Detailed designs of the snake pits and sketch plans of the aquarium were produced in 2005 but the projects failed to take off due to lack of funding. These projects together with the restoration of the aviary need to be completed in the near future once funding becomes available.

As already indicated, the other major infrastructural development that has been on the cards since 1973 is the expansion of the museum building to incorporate a two-storey wing or cultural centre dedicated to the community. Dubbed the Community Arts, Crafts and Science Centre and equipped with space for storage, working reference and exhibition facilities it was envisaged that it would provide a focal point for scientific and cultural activities in the city. A fundraising effort was launched from then on until the 1990s when the idea was abandoned due to insufficient funds. Instead, it was decided to opt for the rehabilitation of Kopje House (1897) and convert it into an Arts and Community Centre. Although the Kopje House was fully restored by 2006 it has never succeeded as a focal point for scientific and cultural activities in the city for various reasons, some of which will be discussed later. The extension of the museum needs to be brought back on the agenda as we move into the future as there is inadequate storage, office space, conservation laboratories and public functions area/auditorium.

Mutare museum's foundation statements

Mission

The museum started without a clear stated mission and only attempted to establish one in the late 1990s. The mission statement was "to offer our visitors delight and enjoyment of our region's *cultural and natural heritage* through an exciting research, conservation and exhibition programme with particular emphasis *on science and technology* and carried by a highly motivated and enthusiastic workforce"

The museum indeed has huge collections of cultural and natural heritage importance. However, the cultural history collections reflect the history of the collectors more than the history of the country as will be seen later. The reference to science and technology is a bit curious. Science at Mutare would probably be linked to the Natural sciences covered by the Department of Zoology and to a little extend Archaeology although I doubt that there was/is much of "archaeological science" going on. The other side of scientific orientation can only be linked to automotive engineering as the museum tried to focus not only on the history of transport but the science of it. Likewise, the emphasis on technology was probably largely motivated by the Transport collection where the focus would be not only on the history of transport but, I guess, the technologies of automotive engineering. The emphasis on science and technology has never been pursued as it was not supported by a shift in research orientation or staff training and recruitment.

The National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe has developed a new mission since 2013. The mission is "*to provide excellent heritage management services that promote an understanding and appreciation of that heritage within Zimbabwe and beyond".* The Mutare Museum should develop a mission that relates to the national mission as well as its collection.

Mutare Museum's mandate: a museum of antiquities or antiques?

The museum usually derives its mandate from legislation. The establishment of National Museums was originally based on the 1936 National Museum of Southern Rhodesia Act. At the

time the only National Museum in the country was the museum in Bulawayo (National History Museum). Then the National Museum referred to the Natural History Museum and any other museum that would be established in the country. However, the Act did not spell out the mandate of such National Museums. As already indicated earlier the Mutare Museum began as a community museum but became a National Museum after the Museum Society could not sustain it. Nevertheless, the Mutare Museum was setup as a regional museum, covering the eastern districts of Zimbabwe that are known collectively as Manicaland. Thus, its mandate was mainly defined by geographical range rather than academic discipline, chronology or specialisation. Despite the stated focus on Manicaland the initial displays featured a large collection of objects that had been brought from outside the country for example firearms brought from England and wagons from South Africa. There was however a sizeable collection of local mounted natural history specimens as well as ethnographical material.

The mandate of Mutare Museum did not change significantly until the amalgamation of Museums and the Historical Monuments Commission to form the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe in 1972. This resulted in the centralisation of research collections at the four National Museums in the country. Mutare Museum became the custodian of all cultural history material as well as thematic collections covering road transport, firearms and edged weapons. The centralisation of collections saw the mandate of the Mutare Museum being redefined in 1979 making the Museum the holder of the national transport collection.

Mutare Museum is today commonly referred to as the Museum of Transport and Antiquities. The transport component is not problematic as it has always been integral and clearly defined from the beginning. On the other hand, the antiquities component is imprecisely defined. The department of Antiquities was established in 1972 with the appointment of an inspector of Antiquities to among other things study ethno-archaeology and ethno-history so as to obtain a clear picture of the prehistory of the Eastern Districts. At that time at the National Museum in Bulawayo the Department of Rhodesian Antiquities was well established and focused on archaeology, history and ethnology and the Mutare Antiquities followed a similar inclination.

The common online/web definition of Antiquities makes reference to "the ancient past, especially the period of classical and other human civilizations before the Middle Ages. Antiquity may also mean "an object or relic, building, or work of art from the ancient past". Antiquities commonly originated especially from the civilizations of the Mediterranean (Greece, Rome, Egypt and the other Ancient Near Eastern cultures).

The Antiquities at Mutare Museum somewhat fit into these categories. Altogether there are 14513 items classified as Antiquities. The term Antiquities covers various prehistorical and historical periods from around the 4th century BC (specifically a few Roman coins) to the 19th century and includes most of the cultural history materials as well as the thematic collections. The majority of Antiquities cover much later periods from the 18th to the 20th centuries. The term is therefore imprecisely applied and there is need to define what antiquities are in the heritage legislation in order to clarify the Museum's mandate. It would appear that because of the absence of a clear mandate the museum ended up getting whatever could not fit into the other

National Museums' mandate. The proposed definition of "Antiquity" in the new National Museums and Heritage Act of Zimbabwe is:

> *"any object, whether detached or fixed, or work of art which was made by man and which is older than 150 years, including anything subsequently added thereto which forms an integral part thereof, made in or imported into Zimbabwe".*

This definition will still be inadequate in clarifying the mandate of the Mutare Museum as it leaves out a sizeable number of the objects.

There is little reference to antiques at Mutare Museum although some of the collections would suit this description and warrant the term's prominence in the Museum's mandate than Antiquities. An antique is a collectible item valued for its age, rarity, condition, function, or other unique feature and originated in a previous era of human society. Antiques can be antiquities if they are old enough but items as new as being from the mid -1900s can be antiques if they are rare enough and in good enough condition. Although many antiques appreciate in value and purchased and sold as investments, other antiques hold no monetary value except to the person who owns them, the value being more nostalgic or personal.

Given these uncertainties the museum can therefore be described as a general museum in the sense that its collections and public galleries cover many disciplines of museological nature.

Whose heritage? Collection forming and care at Mutare Museum

The Museum is a repository for large collections that were accumulated by white individuals and antiquarian societies. At Mutare Museum the most influential individuals in collection forming include Captain E.F. Boultbee (Firearms), Prof D.G Broadley (Herpetology), Mr H.D. Jackson (Ornithology) and later Peter Locke (Transport). For example, Captain E.F. Boultbee who had a military background contributed the magnificent collection of firearms that he had brought out to the then Rhodesia from England. The initial interest in firearms was largely responsible for the establishment of a museum in Mutare. Professor Broadley brought with him from the National Museum in Bulawayo the National Herpetological collection of 6000 specimens in 1961. When he transferred back to the National Museum in the context of the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe's centralisation programme the collection (which he took with him) had grown to 30000 specimens. Some of the collections are former property of the wealthy and the powerful, for example Col. A.J. Metheun's gun collection. The collecting works of societies was spearheaded by the Southern Rhodesia Hunters and Game Preservation Association, Herpetological Association of Rhodesia (Manicaland Branch) and Umtali Society.

From the 1970s to the 80s the Museum actively sought specific items for donation or purchase to fill gaps in collections such as numismatics and transport. Today individuals still come forward with donations or offer for purchase. The museum is accepting limited collections but has no capacity to buy due to financial constraints. The most significant collections in recent years have been received from Mr John Lancaster of Nyanga (a magnificent collection of pharmaceutical objects and Mr Darrel, H. Plowes (cameras and personal X-rays).

Collections are the backbone of museums and constitute the unique and primary resource of museums. Therefore all collection requirements must be sensitive to qualitative issues such as the mission and mandate of the museum. Arising from its imprecise mission and mandate the Mutare Museum has a diverse assortment of natural history, archaeology, ethnography and history collections, nonetheless of high local and international value. This is compounded by the absence of a clearly defined collection policy that has resulted in the museum continuing to collect despite severe storage problem. There is need for quality oriented collecting and deaccessioning policies to enable the Museum to acquire valuable objects and shed off some of the objects that are no longer needed. This requires proper strategic acquisition and deaccession planning that meets today as well as future needs.

Although the museum still accepts collections active collecting or solicitation for objects have been curtailed due to space restrictions and inadequate physical plant for storage and preservation. The major challenge is therefore to establish proper storage and building order in the existing collections, especially Antiquities. These have been moved around for a long time seeking suitable storage space and most lack proper preventive conservation beyond periodic basic fumigation. The museum environments are not monitored for elements such as temperature, humidity and light and air quality.

One area that has not been reviewed constantly is who uses the collection. Apart from the Natural History collections that are often used as a reference collection by colleges most of the objects at Mutare Museum are black-boxed, rarely used as research, education or exhibition resources. The bulk of the 14513 antiquities collection at Mutare Museum has little or no relevance to the Zimbabwean context. In some cases, such as the Royal Armouries collection the museum is being asked to pay insurance and loan costs for keeping the collection without realising value out of it.

In terms of staffing requirements to manage collections the museum has qualified but relatively inexperienced curators. However, as all scientists the world over our curators do not have the specialised technical knowledge to properly care for collections. If the collections are to be preserved for future use, their care and management has to be carried out at a professional level by persons trained in the theory and techniques of collection management to maintain an equilibrium between current use and preservation for future use. This is an area that will require national attention so that in the future we may have professional collections managers fully trained in collections care – i.e. preventive conservation, materials science, storage environment, integrated pest management and collection management policies.

Experiencing Mutare Museum

The displays at the Museum were naturally strongly influenced by the principal interest of the individual collectors. Most of the original exhibits were mounted by the owners of the individual accoutrements. The Boultbee Gallery (gun collection) in Mutare Museum is named after the collector, while the Mezzanine and Eastern Districts are largely influenced by the interests of the first two curators of the Museum. Although there have often been claims that the colonial government

discouraged the presentation of indigenous cultures in museums in an effort to enforce marginalisation and a culture of inferiority (Munjeri 1997), it is clear at Mutare Museum that local cultures have always been represented initially in the Whitehead Gallery and later in the Beit Gallery.

However, the early history of man as presented in the Eastern Districts currently is curious for the inconspicuous coverage of the Manyika in the sequence such that one may posit a deliberate attempt to undermine this culture. The first showcase on Early History depicts the San (labelled as Bushmen in the display. See Figure 1) and from that the story jumps to early European settlement, including the Portuguese and Pioneer life. Whereas the San and European presence is given prominence in the Early History narrative, the Manyika are mentioned parenthetically in single word labels of a mere two objects. This would seem to belittle the contributions made by the ancestral Shona groups in shaping the landscape in Manicaland. In contrast the history section is covered altogether by six showcases covering the introduction of the Europeans into the Zimbabwean landscape, implying that history begins with their arrival. The omission or low emphasis on indigenous cultures would seem to fit the ideology then that the Shona groups were recent arrivals in Zimbabwe and could not claim rights to land. While critics may buy this version of experience the Beit Gallery leaves no doubt of the inclusive nature of the early displays by dealing comprehensively with cultures of eastern Zimbabwe from prehistory to the present.

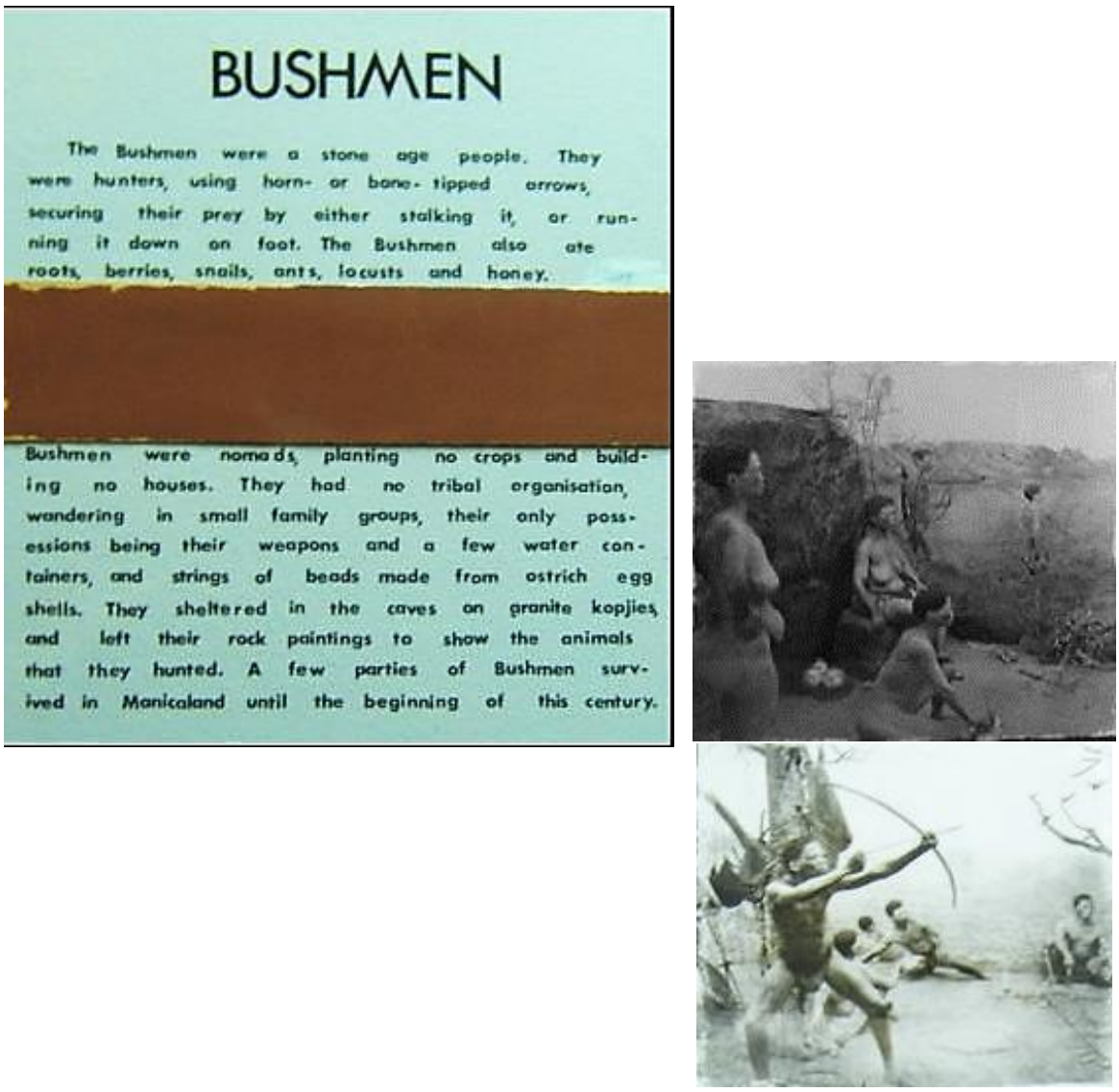


Figure 1. The "Bushmen" display in the Eastern Districts gallery. Offensive text in the panel has been covered by a brown plaque.

Most of the exhibitions in Mutare Museum are very old having been put up between 1962 and 1964 (e.g. the Eastern Districts, Boultbee and Mezzanine Galleries) with only minor structural and thematic adjustments being carried out subsequently. Most of the exhibitions mounted in the 1960s still occupy the same space, with the same limited content, context and explanation. Although some of the displays are still visually impressive their meanings and messages could be viewed as biased, dated and anachronistic as in the case of Eastern Districts.

There has been some mild resistance and conservatism when it comes to making radical changes to existing exhibitions as some quarters believe that alterations will endanger traditional values. The advent of Independence and growing criticism by modern scholarship (see Mazel and Ritchie 1994) have not resulted in any fundamental changes. Since independence Museums in Zimbabwe have been under scrutiny, but so far they have been `lucky´ that this has mainly been

from a very tiny academic fraternity - often external critics, and university students (in dissertations). Thus, we haven't seen much concerted public pressure for change in the way the past and cultures are presented in museums. As there hasn't been any outside pressure most of the `modernisation´ efforts have been internally driven, at own (rather slow) pace, principally as a result of exposure to the international community through visits, exchange programmes, membership to organisations such as ICOM, participation by staff in conferences, seminars and professional development in museology. However there hasn't been much internal methodological and theoretical debates on museology such that much of the changes do not reflect `local content´ and are heavily influenced by the western conceptual frameworks of display.

Soon after independence the response by museums to the colonial dominant ideas was to remove the offending displays and labels glorifying European domination. However, the displays were not replaced by something imaginative, instead there were cosmetic changes to labelling and texts of the dated displays and inclusion of hitherto excluded objects. In the Mutare Museum the denigrating and thematically out of context 'Bushmen' display has not changed and the offensive text has been covered up (see Figure 1), while 'Rhodesians at War' changed to `Zimbabweans at War. New museological thinking has therefore done relatively little to address some of the major areas which are the focus of outsider critical analysis.

The largely archaic displays in permanent galleries however mask the good work exhibited by the temporary exhibitions programme. The Mutare Museum, in collaboration with Swedish counterparts have initiated the concept of a `hot spot´ which comprises of some space in the museum or in the public domain to be used when opportunity arises at the museum for either the museum personnel or members of the public to quickly respond to contemporary issues (Mupira 2002). This has seen a relatively active and innovative programme of temporary exhibitions being implemented (for example hot spots on HIV AIDS, Diamond Mining in Chiadzwa and Road Traffic Accidents in Manicaland). Despite the Hot spot idea the turnaround of museum exhibitions is still very slow such that when the displays are finally mounted they would already be historical.

Permanent exhibitions are the backbone of a museum and its core offering to the public. They constitute a distinctive product other attractions or organisations cannot provide. Therefore, the first priority for museums is to maintain and manage the quality of permanent exhibitions. Most of the original exhibitions are about fifty years now and clearly need changing at whatever cost. This could entail simple and cheap processes such as acquisition of new objects, redecoration, rotation of objects and updating interpretation. The more expensive tasks of redesigning of exhibitions and galleries and reaching new target groups need to be strategically planned and implemented in timed phases.

In the future the museum plans to embark on a phased programme of changing some of the permanent displays. The major changes will see the Beit Gallery being re-organised and interactive displays being introduced. The early history exhibits showcases in the Eastern Districts will be moved elsewhere leaving the gallery dedicated to fauna and flora only. There has

been very little development in audience research to determine what people would want to see. The only visitor survey conducted in 1998 guided the planning of some of the proposed improvements. The survey (of 305 people) revealed that most visitors are interested in the Shona culture displays (21.3%), preserved animals (21.1%) and live animals (19.5%). The re-organisation the Beit Gallery will strengthen the Shona Culture displays while other developments will restore the live animals displays (see Mhlanga this volume).

The firearms collection was voted the least popular display most respondents, with a disapproval vote of 20.3%, followed by outdoor transport (17.4%) and automobile collection (10.2%). These displays of static objects without a social context do not fulfil the museums' codified functions of education, entertainment and making the past accessible to the public and need to be enlivened. The enlivening process has already started with selected automobiles being restored to running order. The restored vehicles will be used in demonstration rides as well as educational programmes.

Contrary to what Munjeri (1997) says the scenario in our permanent displays has not changed largely because of lack of resources. Thus, it is not entirely a case of "not knowing what to present to who" (Munjeri 1997:119). Plans to revamp displays in the national museums have been put aside for the past successive years because of lack of money. For example, the project to revamp the Beit Gallery displays at Mutare Museum started in the 1970s and only got financial backing in 2014. The training of designers to embrace the new concepts and skills in museum displays is essential if the museum is to come up with innovative state of the art exhibitions.

Whose museum is it? Public programming and engagement

It has been argued that the Euro-centric approach to the establishment of museums in Africa excluded the indigenous people and did not give them room to express and articulate their own views and opinions regarding their culture hence they were forced to be passive observers of events around them (Ucko 1994). The other popular misconception is that museums have always not been popular among the black majority as they are foreign institutions. However, available literature informs us that from the beginning "persons of all races" were visiting the Mutare Museum each month (National Museums and Monuments of Rhodesia, 1973) and "many classes of school children, teachers and other bodies of all races regularly used the museum facilities" nationwide (National Museums of Southern Rhodesia, 1962). The specialist knowledge of the scientific staff was made "freely available to anyone seeking deeper knowledge of the objects within their scope of study, although it was acknowledged that "formal education has not been enjoyed by everyone and that mental and physical horizons are often limited" (National Museums of Southern Rhodesia: 1962: 9). Museums thus provided "keys which open the door to a fuller life and deeper intellectual pleasure" (National Museums of Southern Rhodesia: 1962: 9).

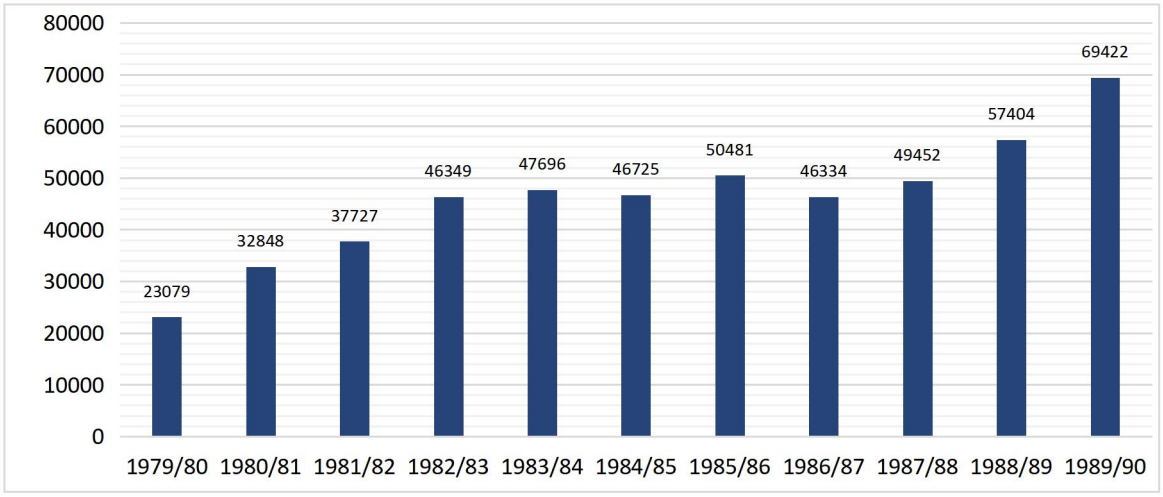


Figure 2. Visitor figures between 1980 and 1990.

Visitor figures from Mutare Museum show a growth trend sustained between 1980 and 1999 when the average visitorship to Mutare Museum was 43277 per annum, most of them being local indigenous communities (Figure 2). Visitorship only started declining in 2000 at the beginning of the country's economic and political woes. From 2000-2014 average annual visitor figures were 13455 although there is a slow but steady recovery since the introduction of the multi-currency system and stabilisation of the economy (See Figures 3 and 4).

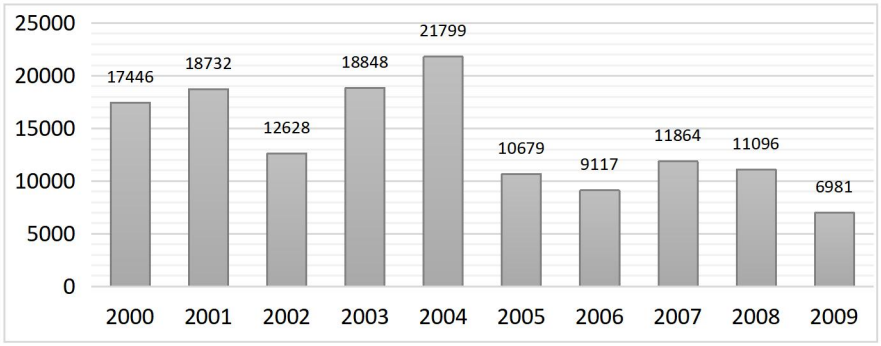


Figure 3. Visitor figures between January 2000 and December 2009.

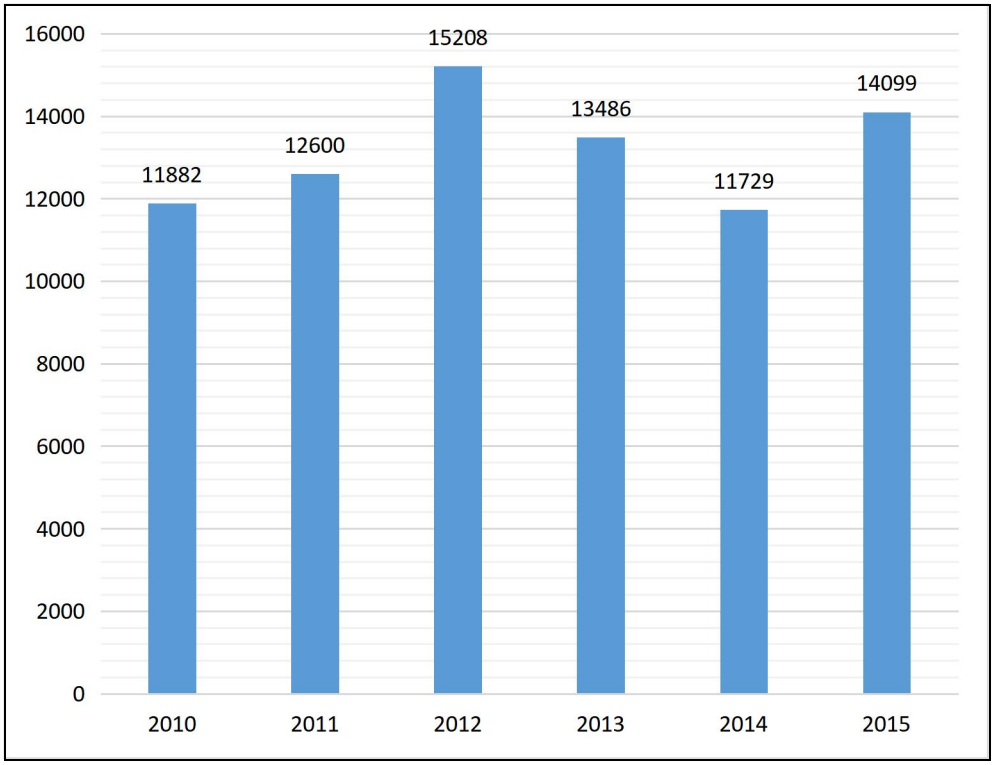


Figure 4. Visitor figures for Mutare Museum between January 2010 and December 2015.

The worrying trend though is that we are turning away many visitors due to unaffordable entrance fees. This structural barrier affects different social groups but mainly local school children, youths and adults. In the course of a year from March 2014 to February 2015, 1164 people failed to gain entry into the museum explicitly due to unaffordable admission charges (Figure 5). 778 of these were adults while 386 were children. This corresponds to an average of 97 people being turned away on a monthly basis during the period under review. As can be seen from Figure 5 these refusals contributed significantly to the decline in visitorship in 2014.To show that people would come if entrance fees were affordable, 416 adults and 350 children visited the museum free of charge on International Museums Day in 2014 and during the same event in 2015, 794 children and 237 adults enjoyed free entry. It is noteworthy from these figures that many adults who are usually restricted by the entrance fee of US$3.00 come during this free entry day. In these hard economic times people are weighing the value, costs and benefits of every transaction. It would appear from the above refusals that museum visiting is now considered as an out of reach luxury when compared to the multifarious bread and butter issues confronting the public. Compounding the matter is the fact that the benefits of visiting are declining as the museum remains static and the quality of displays is deteriorating due to age.

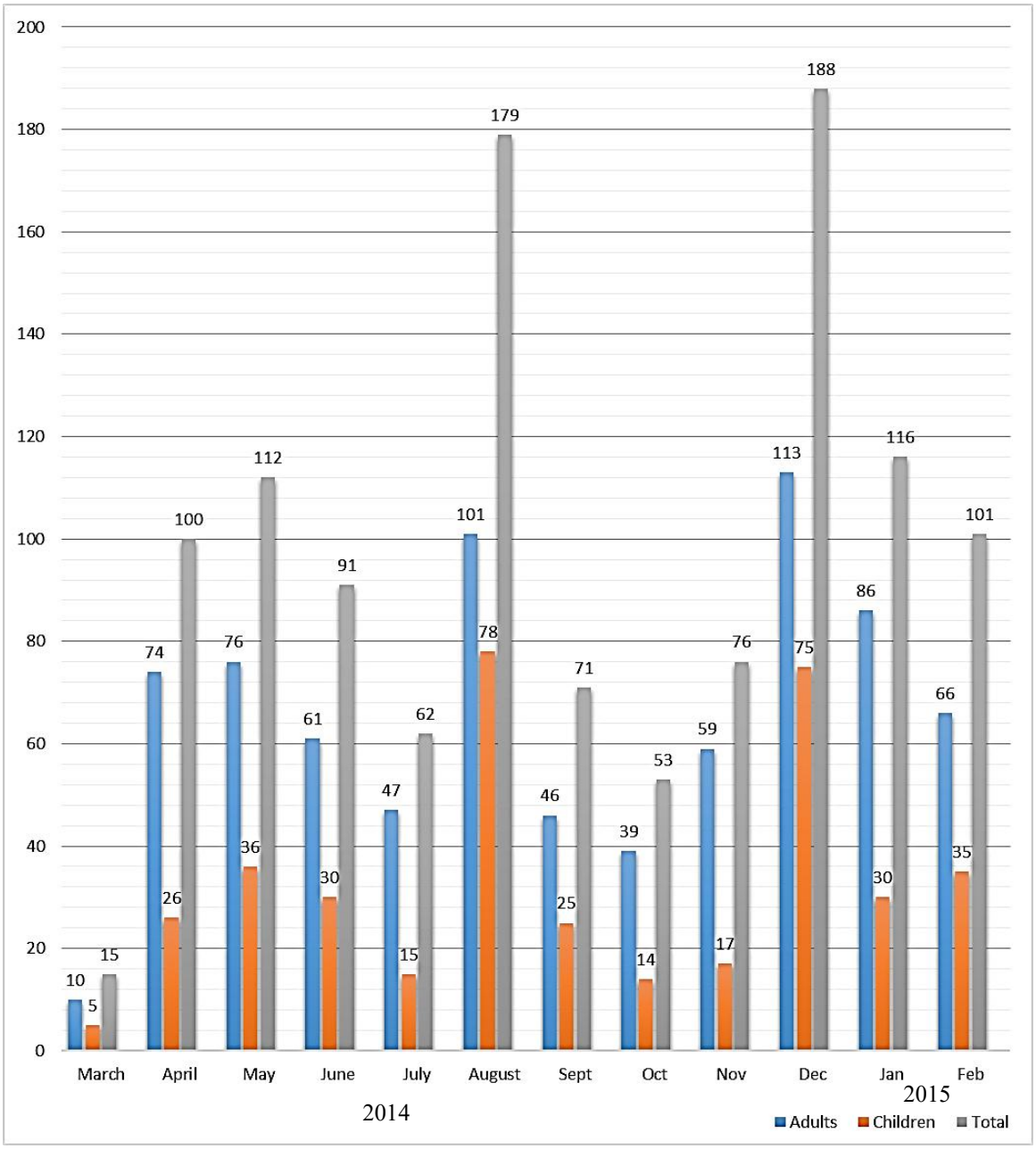


Figure 5. Visitors who could not afford entrance feed from March 2014 to February 2015.

It goes without saying that the future of museums lies in indigenous people's patronage and measures should be put in place to ensure that this is achieved. Although some serious thought has been given to revamping some of the exhibitions concrete steps must now be taken to implement the ideas seen in various project proposals. Only then can the desired effect of popularising the museums among the black majority be realised. Otherwise museums will continue to depend on the tax payers' money to serve their own closed scientific and professional agendas that constitute a big disservice to the nation. As already indicated, this may not be easy given the current economic recession and the international sanctions or restrictive measures on Zimbabwe that have lasted for two decades. But change must come whether radical or incremental. As a museum of the 21st century Mutare Museum must strive to be more than a repository of valuable objects. It must be a social centre for the community engagement

providing varied emotional experiences. The museum as an empowering institution meant to incorporate all should become part or a shared cultural experience.

Community engagement

For all their weaknesses museums in colonial Zimbabwe were successful in building communities around them. This can be seen from the number of societies that were affiliated to Mutare Museum (twenty in 1978) something that is no longer visible in the post-Independence era. Although the community derived mainly from the minority white membership, the black majority was not totally ignored in the museum's activities as demonstrated by the presence of some chiefs at the official laying of the foundation stone in 1962 as well as official opening of the museum in 1964. Figure 6 is quite revealing as it shows that chiefs were given prominent front seats at museum events a sign that they were given some respect by museums either genuinely or as a political statement.



Figure 6. Left - Chiefs attending the official opening of Mutare Museum in 1964. (Photo from Mutare Museum Archives). Right – Chiefs attending a function at the Natural History Museum in the 1960s (Temporary display photo commemorating 100 years of the museum).

The Museum owes its existence to the Museum Society formerly called Umtali Museum Society and later Museum Scientific and Cultural Association (MUSCA). Until recently, the history of the Mutare Museum was inextricably interwoven with that of MUSCA. One of its objects was "to assist Mutare Museum in elucidating the natural and cultural heritage of Manicaland and in creating an awareness and understanding of this heritage within the community". As already seen the Society gathered the first collections and put up the first exhibitions. It was involved in various activities aimed at furthering the growth and entrenchment of the concept of museums as centres of social dialogue and interaction.

The Mutare Museum policy on community involvement was spelt out clearly in 1974 by the then Curator Mr H.D. Jackson who stated that:

> *"…Mutare Museum be promoted as the focal point of the Scientific and cultural activities of Manicaland playing an active part in the affairs of the community and encouraging the community to involve itself in the affairs of the museum… the Mutare Museum encourage (sic) the formation and growth of scientific and cultural societies in Manicaland by providing*

secretarial assistance, meeting facilities and monthly newsletter service.". (Mutare Museum Files).

At a national level the National Museums viewed the modern museum as occupying an important part in the country's cultural life and thus stressed community outreach. However, the post-Independence era saw the Mutare Museum being on a collision course and perpetually estranged from the erstwhile friends who were racially predominantly white. The trigger for this was the assertion by the new black management that MUSCA was not representative enough of the arts community in Mutare and that it was racially biased. It would appear that MUSCA was increasingly being perceived as an un-progressive, racially closed association with a largely white membership. This exclusive nature was perceived as a remnant of the colonial era and left out a number of artistic communities in Mutare not affiliated to MUSCA.

Thus, in November 1999 the association was asked by Mutare Museum to amend its constitution and broaden participation by artists in the whole of Manicaland and to reserve the position of Secretary to the museum as some of the conditions for MUSCA to receive preferential treatment from the museum especially in the allocation of space at the refurbished Kopje House. NMMZ was prepared to accommodate MUSCA cultural groups provided they were prepared to transform their membership into a modern, broad based, vibrant association. On 17 August 2001 Traude Rogers wrote: "Clearly the path for the future lies in welcoming new members to the Claycraft Club and increasing and expanding membership and I have confidence that this is possible and desirable". On the other hand, MUSCA appreciated that "time changes and progresses" but believed that "some of the old ideas" were still valid. The association maintained that its constitution already catered for artists in the whole of Manicaland and that its aim was to encourage local artists to be part of MUSCA.

The fall out over how the community centre at Kopje House should be utilised eventually led to the breakup and demise of the long-standing relationship between Mutare Museum and MUSCA. The following quote leaves no doubt that the disagreement had taken explicit abrasive racial overtones:

"The core members of MUSCA have extremely old-fashioned attitudes and in no way formally and informally can we entertain national level liaison with Zimbabweans who have not embraced the idea of a cultural centre for indigenous artists. Their attitudes are unacceptable and I would therefore not wish to formally or informally be associated with such outdated viewpoints". (Traude Rogers 2002: corresp.)

In the latter parts of the struggle it is clear that some divisive tactics were being used against the societies. Manicaland Society of Artists, whose membership was mainly black and emerged into the limelight and was being propped by Mutare Museum as suitable model for moving forward. The museum claimed to have forged good and active relationships with a number of constituent groups of MUSCA. The Regional Director for Mutare Museum wrote on 24 June 2002 that: "We have formally detached ourselves from MUSCA but have fruitful relations with those groups who want to help the museum rather than 'demand' *(sic)* concessions from us". The

seemingly inevitable formal ending of the relationship with MUSCA came in November 2003 when the Local Board of Mutare Museum at its 127th meeting resolved to do away with MUSCA and replace it with Friends of the Museum. Ironically the association was Mutare Museum's long time 'friend' that had helped in mobilising resources for the museum for years - some of them withdrawn during the crisis. This signalled the sad dissolution of the longstanding links between NMMZ and MUSCA.

The concept of Friends of the Museum serves a similar purpose to that of the museum society. The purpose of the friends is to give practical and financial support to the Museum so that it can enrich its collections, aviary, library and other properties, and to promote scientific research and education related to it. The role is help to ensure the continuance and growth of the Museum. The concept works very well in several museums throughout the world. However, the attempt to replace MUSCA with Friends of the Museum has not succeeded since 2003. An attempt to launch the Friends in 2006 failed due to low response from the (wholly black) stakeholders and subsequent meeting were also lowly attended. The Museum is now currently reviewing the situation to see where it would have gone wrong given that the Natural History Museum in Bulawayo has successfully re-launched the concept. The problem with the Natural History Museum case though is that the new "Friends" are again predominantly white and the sustainability of the friendship could be threatened should the associations remain racially oriented. It would appear that once the black communities try to move in the white friends take a back seat or withdraw. For some reasons yet to be established the black friends at Mutare have failed to establish a vibrant membership. This scenario is also common at the other three National Museums.

The envisaged refined community engagement at Mutare Museum sees the museum as a social institution which should be closely integrated with multi-cultural groups especially those previously disadvantaged and excluded. Our Hot spot "*Living in hell – testimony of witchcraft"* of 2010 fits into this vision. The Hot spot session was meant to highlight the prevalence of the problem of witchcraft and how it affects the social harmony and integration of individuals and families. A talk show/discussion was convened at Mutare Museum and involved direct extensive collaborations and partnerships with rural communities. It focused on the story of Ms Tsitsi Matimbe of Zimunya, who had been fingered in society and the media as a witch. The outcome of this Hot spot presentation was that Ms Matimbe was able to get moral, spiritual and material assistance that helped her pull through her trauma and misery.

The museum should cater for different opinions and community needs in display, interpretation as well as management. It should also encourage community participation in exhibitions programmes. They should be seen to be motivating and empowering the community to participate in exhibition programmes by transferring skills and providing opportunities for them to present their own points of view. The New Zealand Art empowerment project at Mutare Museum between 2002 and 2004 run by Mrs Audrey Garrat – Volunteer Service Abroad fits into this perspective. Three workshops for artists from disadvantaged backgrounds including those from rural backgrounds like Nyanga were held at the museum. The museum thus wishes to

transcend the historical boundaries and definitions of a 'museum' to become more of a community and cultural centre for learning and social renewal and healing. The long-term desire is that the museum should be an important means for the development of mutual understanding, co-operation and peace among peoples.

Conclusion

To be sociologically relevant the Mutare Museum and other museums in the country must quickly respond to the varied contemporary needs of the society. There should be fundamental changes in the outlook of displays as most of them are old and historically out of context. The development of museums in Zimbabwe requires a strategic orientation so that attempts to modernise their outlook are approached systematically. The Museum should find modes of interpreting, presenting and promoting the cultures of Zimbabwean people in a manner that enhances understanding of the past and the present. There is no way it can continue to ignore the socio-political context in which it operates; otherwise it will remain unknown and irrelevant. It must be involved more in its communities' lives, become a tool for improvement in its communities and have a positive impact on national life. By so doing the distinction of a museum and any other social institution should increasingly become blurred.

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Community museums in Zimbabwe as a means of engagement and empowerment: challenges and prospects

Joshua Chikozho

Abstract

Museums have a long history in the African continent and it is Africa's responsibility to Africanise them at any given time. The need to give museums a human face and draw humanising value from our culture remains urgent. Local communities in post-colonial Zimbabwe continue to witness their heritage being subjected to various alien forms of management and programmes being imposed on them by cultural heritage agencies without their sanction and or understanding. For local communities, culture is not one of life's luxuries; it is life itself (DANIDA 2000). While people seem to appreciate the value of culture and heritage, we, all the while, seem to pull our efforts away from communities that we purport to serve; at the expense of the same heritage, we seek to salvage. Who are we doing this for? Admittedly, many different forms of museums have been adopted, in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe particular, but the key question of the role and place of the community (creators of culture) as opposed to the role of curators persistently eludes us. We need to take stock if museums are going to have a place in the future. Today, community museums have come into the fray as panache with the agenda of acknowledging, engaging and empowering communities. A museum in harmony with its community enriches the museum experience and community life. Putting people at the centre of museums empowers them, an element necessary for sustainable development. Empowerment and engagement lead to the attainment of fundamental qualities which include; ownership, imagination, creativity and sustainability which guarantee the future of museums. In Zimbabwe, the establishment of the Batonga Community Museum in the north-western part of the country in the year 2000, has provided important lessons and opened a window of hope for cultural equity and the appreciation and celebration of cultural diversity. The museum is purely a community-initiated project. This paper unflinchingly interrogates the history of museums in Zimbabwe and goes on to gauge the extent to which community museums are a major paradigm shift in pursuit of the rehabilitation of African culture and in essence African identity.

Introduction

In Africa, the institution of the museum has undergone many transformative modes, emerged and re-emerged assuming different names in pursuit of relevance. Community museums are a fairly new phenomenon in Zimbabwe and there are only two classical cases in point at the moment; the Batonga Community Museum in Binga and the Nambya Community Museum in Hwange. This paper will give a working definition of a community museum and also emphasise on key distinguishing characteristics that set them apart from traditional national museums that constitute the bulk of Zimbabwean museums and African museums at large. This discussion ventures into the delicate relationships of museums and local communities. Can museums be

appreciated in isolation of communities? Are communities and museums separate entities or simply that the latter is an extension of the former? Whatever the case, who is National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) in this matrix? What do we mean by community and by museum? While the role of museums remains largely uncontested, the museum institution has continued to face a plethora of challenges in an attempt to deliver dignity to the local communities for whom and by whom these institutions are established.

Again, while it is generally agreed to all and sundry that the concepts of engagement and empowerment are central to culture and heritage management, it is clear that we may be guilty of assumption one way or the other. Who engages who and who empowers who? While engagement and empowerment maybe mutual processes, we need to be very clear on the levels of engagement if we want to guarantee that our culture and heritage define us and continue to carry authentic meaning in the future. How stakeholders relate and interact has a bearing on engagement and empowerment and all this shapes the experience of the museum. The paradox lies in the fact that the creators and owners of culture are not being entrusted with their own culture, on the contrary, external institutions (NMMZ) which should be playing the advisory and or interventive role have assumed centre stage thereby relegating communities to the periphery. This paper contends that the museum is neither the structure nor the objects therein, the community is the museum hence community museums. The objects on their own have no value, significance is a human artefact, and communities make and are museums by themselves. We have overplayed the burden placed on us by the colonial museums that we inherited, it's time to be ourselves through our own museums, that is, community museums.

Understanding museums in Zimbabwe

Varied as the definitions of a museum may be, the consensus of the many definitions with the International Council of Museums (ICOM) definition is to insist upon the functions of a museum that makes it different from other institutions; preservation, research and communication. For Weil (1990) and Moore (1997), collection, preservation, study, interpretation and exhibition of material evidence for the public benefit have been components which lie at the roots of all definitions of what a museum is. This paper subscribes more to the definitions given by Mertz at the Commonwealth Association of Museums held in Gaborone;

> *"--- they are dynamic democratic and representative public institutions that both shape and manifest the consciousness, identities and understanding of communities and individuals in relation to their historical, cultural and natural ecology. They do this through the values they attach to things (both tangible and intangible) they choose to collect, document, research, preserve and make available" (Mertz 1995*)

The above definition is ideal because it is people oriented. Cognisance must be taken of the fact that museums differ and some of these differences are not merely differences of degree but may also be differences of kind.

In itself, the idea of a 'museum' is a curious one. Etymologically, the word is from Greek, *mouseiom,* that is, "seat of the Muses", the nine goddesses in Greek and Roman mythology who were the daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, inspirers of poetry, music, and drama among other things (Boniface and Fowler 1993). Historically, the earliest known museum has its roots in the classical past. Interestingly, the earliest known museum of which we can speak of was in actual fact a library, the mouseiom of Alexandria, the institutional sibling of the famous library that flourished three centuries before Christ (Bradburne 2000).

Museums in Africa are creations dating back from the colonial era. However, it needs to be emphasised that although material culture has always formed part of African life, it was never organised in the western sense of display as we find in museums today (Abungu 2000). The problem affecting African museums today arises from the way they were introduced and consequently administered. It can safely be argued that the majority of the museums share a common history as products of the colonial era. Indeed, the idea of a museum itself is foreign to Africa. Museums were imposed on the continent according to Western taste without taking African communities into account. Most if not all museums came into being as a result of colonialism (Miers 1928). Europeans set about exposing to the outside world what they saw as the hidden 'treasures' of Africa and it was that which they used to show what they termed the 'primitive' of the peoples of the continent, that constituted the origins of museums in Africa as they are today (Abungu 2000). Through the years, the growing settler community in Africa wanted places of entertainment, and the display and consumption of African cultural and natural heritage provided such venue. As a result, many of the museums created during this era were deliberately meant to capture the natural and cultural heritage of the various parts of Africa as a sort of pastime for an elite group of Europeans (Abungu 2000). The bulk of the collections were gathered by missionary collectors, administrators or rich white families, for example, National Museums of Kenya was started by nature enthusiasts with little significance and benefit to the local people since these museums sought to attract the outside world (Abungu 2000).

Indeed, Zimbabwean museums are also a product of colonialism. During colonialism museums were clearly biased towards the white settler population. Local communities were not only sidelined from museum activities but were deliberately discouraged and limited from visiting these institutions. In fact, the indigenous black people were not allowed to enter the museums except on certain designated days (Munjeri 1997). Collection methods were either forced acquisitions or grabbing of abandoned cultural material resulting from evictions (Mattes 1994). So, while their material cultural objects were on display, communities were never consulted and involved in the mounting of displays. Communities were simply regarded as objects to be studied and acted upon. This resulted in the local communities shunning museums and their activities. It can therefore be safely asserted that museums in Zimbabwe prior to independence were monologuing or speaking to a limited clientele (Mubaya 2004 unpublished).

The negative attitude by the local communities in Zimbabwe towards their own cultural and natural heritage emanates from this alienating legislation, which unfortunately has not undergone significant changes to accommodate local aspirations (Muringaniza 1998). This however,

demonstrates the inability of National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe to accommodate public opinion in presenting cultural heritage. However, it can be noted that to a certain extent, the origins and development of museums prior to independence even many years after still tends to influence the relationship between the museums and the visiting public.

Traditionally, museums have relied almost entirely on tax revenue for their support and as a consequence believed themselves to be immune from changes in the community that gave birth to them. For a long time, museums were guided by ICOM's definition of a museum as a *'non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public which acquires, conserves researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment' (*Ambrose 1987). The idea of non- profit making has led to museums insensitivity to local communities. Recently however, there has been a move away from the complete subsidising of museums, which has meant that museums must now compete for and raise additional funding by providing new services. Museums must now come to grips with the fact that the key function of the museum must change with the time. They can no longer be content to be temples where the fruits of culture are laid on the altar. The time for mere display and celebration has passed. It is time to learn, to investigate, and to innovate, and the museum is the informal learning environment par excellence (Bradburne 2000).

Administration of museums in Zimbabwe

National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ) is the national culture and heritage premier agency established by the National Museums and Monuments Act of 1972. Realising the invaluable nature of cultural heritage, NMMZ was deliberately placed under the Ministry of Home Affairs and is the legal custodian in Zimbabwe. It needs to be noted that both tangible and intangible heritage played a fundamental role in the liberation of Zimbabwe from colonial bondage which explains why the country has committed this department under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

While the national consciousness to the significance of culture is clear, it needs to be noted that legislation mandates NMMZ as the legal custodian without any specific mention of local communities. This obviously empowers NMMZ more than communities and as such in some cases community consultation becomes optional and this creates conflict or disharmony between NMMZ and communities. The law needs to clearly empower communities – there cannot be museums or heritage without communities. As a matter of fact, communities must be acknowledged and empowered by the law because the culture and heritage we are talking about is theirs. So, while the creation of NMMZ is noble, the acknowledgement of it as the sole custodian has created an imbalance that inhibits implementation and good practice in the management of cultural heritage. The current situation is such that NMMZ does *favours* to communities by consulting them. This paper categorically states that it is not a favour, rather the role of NMMZ should be to advise and or assist communities manage their own heritage.

Communities need assistance in heritage management owing to the changing research and scientific trends and technological influence on heritage management.

Sadly, not much positive change has been made in museums. As Mazel and Ritchie (1994) observed, the attainment of independence in 1980 brought no significant changes in the way NMMZ operates. The colonial legacy is still inherent with the publics still sidelined and marginalised in its activities. No wonder Mupira (2000) observed that, "the main challenge of Zimbabwean museums today is how to attract local visitors". Thirty-eight years after Zimbabwe got her independence museums have generally continued to substantially alienate communities from their culture and heritage. National independence needs to cascade and impact positively on our museums. To date, almost all the museums are an urban phenomenon and are strategically positioned for 'tourists' (foreigners). There is an enduring elitist character which is discriminatory. While some positive changes have been realised, it is the position of this paper that major shifts to ensure that our museums are home grown have not been persistently pursued. As a result, the colonial 'gift' of museums has continued to haunt us; leading to substantial loss of significance of heritage to its communities. The question becomes; do African societies really need museums? (Ayari 2000).

The way museums operate has steadfastly remained the same; imperialist curatorship which emasculates local communities has also taken artefacts hostage. Indeed, museums have been reduced to elitist confinements and curators to imperialists. At the same time, museums continue to be perceived as "…an island of scientists, an artificial perimeter of accumulation, a disquieting entity, an environment devoid of meaning for its society" (Ayari 2000:48). In the current set up, curators are bestowed with imperial power to authenticate artefacts, displays and in fact sanction the interpretation of culture. This colonisation and monopolisation of culture interpretation by curators demands a decolonisation exercise to be effected with a view to empowering communities: the owners of culture. It should always be borne in mind that the cultural currency of artefacts is derived from communities where from they (cultural objects) are created and valued. As such, instead of prescribing the 'song' and 'dance' to communities, curators should dance with communities the 'song' the communities have chosen (UNDP Zimbabwe 1998). Often, communities are only considered at implementation stage of programmes and projects. The engagement of communities at this stage is even void considering that they are simply treated as recipients. This smacks of the impression that local communities are unqualified to initiate, design or plan programmes. On the contrary, functional museums are those that entail letting the beneficiaries identify their needs and plan interventions. Museums by the people and for the people extend to communities monitoring and evaluating their programmes.

The core business of what happens in NMMZ is confined to and follows the administrative flow illustrated as follows: Minister of Home Affairs – NMMZ Board – Executive Director –Regional Directors – Curators. Clearly, the administration is elitist - communities are not visible in this chain and board members cannot be representative of communities because these are engaged based on technical capacity. In this structure communities are only there to be investigated and consulted when need be. Planning, programming and implementation is a prerogative of the

(curators) mainstream management chain. Hence communities only exist as objects and not as subjects. This is what has frozen our culture and heritage as we have underestimated the power of communities in breathing life into culture and heritage.

While the curator may consult with communities, he or she is not bound to do so. In most cases, when NMMZ consults with communities it appears more like a favour than an obligation. As a matter of fact, NMMZ is not bound by law to give primacy to communities except may be by implication. The law by now should have been amended to clearly empower and emphasise on the centrality of communities in culture and heritage management. Indigenising museums entails indigenising our legislation first. As long as the law is still mute on the primacy of communities, museum directors sanction these activities with very little if any, participation of communities. Likewise, the implementation and evaluation of programmes and activities shows no appreciation of the value of community participation.

Communities, families and traditional chiefs are not only users of tradition but also experts of their own cultures yet they continue to be disregarded or get minimal regard (Ayari 2000). Museum exhibitions are also guilty of this offence. It is largely a museum professionals affair to determine what to exhibit and communities only come in at the end to 'appreciate' the exhibition. Communities rarely participate in the mounting of exhibition or in explaining an exhibition most probably because they are considered ignorant and or naïve. Such an approach is counterproductive and unforgivable. Communities must always be allowed to take charge of their lives. With the attainment of independence local experts in almost all museum fields have emerged and there is no justification to perpetuate the objectives projected by colonial museums. As Konare (1991) aptly prescribed, we need 'to eliminate the western model for museums in Africa so that new methods for the preservation and promotion of Africa's cultural heritage can be allowed to flourish'. We need to break away from dependence and exclusion and embrace dialogue (Abungu 2000).

The birth of community museums in Zimbabwe

In the framework of this discussion a community museum is perceived to be a people-oriented cultural public institution, of the people, by the people and for the people, which preserves and promotes cultural cohesion and community development. As aptly captured by Arinze *et al* (1995) it is *'a corporate venture, with ownership vested in the entire members of the founding community, irrespective of class, age, sex, religion or belief, it is a project of consensus and common will'.* Stewardship, ownership and empowerment are central pillars of community museums.

Ideally, museums are products of their context and it is proper that they be so. Museums need sensitivity and responsiveness to social environment and to remain relevant to changing social needs and goals (Bradburne 2000). The need for communities to protect and preserve their culture gave birth to community museums. These are institutions deliberately created and owned by communities as they try to answer challenges that seek to undermine their very existence, that is, their culture, dignity and identity. The concept is well demonstrated by the Tonga people

who live in the Binga District, north-western part of Zimbabwe. The Batonga Community Museum is a result of the processes and development triggered by the community. It is a community innovation, an institution showing resilience and consciousness to attendant problems. Instead of museums that celebrate imperial identity, in community museums we see museums that trumpet new national identities.

The richness of Tonga artefacts and crafts has not only been appreciated nationally but internationally as well. As a result, Tonga crafts have gained significant value and are highly priced. The irony, however, is that while the artefacts have gained value unabated, the Tonga people have continued to suffer stereotypes and to be looked down upon. The period around 1980s-2000 saw the unprecedented illicit trade of Tonga artefacts on the international market (Batonga Community Museum File). While the artefacts drew national and international attention and appreciation, the human face behind these artefacts (humanity) was being mocked. It is this skewed appreciation of culture that this paper seeks to expose and, in the process, restore the dignity of the creators of culture.

Given the overwhelming demand for Tonga artefacts, the trade in artefacts became a source of livelihood for most Tonga families. This has to be understood against the background that Binga District is generally not agriculturally vibrant owing to poor rainfall and soils. As a consequence, the sale of artefacts became an alternative to support livelihoods to the extent that a Community Craft Centre was established in 1989 in appreciation of the business and also to ensure that communities are not exploited or shortchanged on pricing. However, the creation of the Community Craft Centre revealed that the Tonga people were shipping their artefacts/culture *en masse* at the expense of its preservation and promotion. Thus, in spite of the vibrancy in artefacts trade, they still effectively suffered from stereotyping marginalization and were looked down upon.

The community realised that the vibrancy of their culture, self – esteem, pride in their identity and self-actualisation were the imperative ingredients to development and came up with the idea of a community museum. Hence the idea of a Tonga Community Museum was an offshoot from Binga Craft Centre (Batonga Community Museum File). The museum would serve to provide information about all aspects of modern and rural life, while at the same time giving value and context to indigenous Tonga lifeways, history, environment, culture and language. The museum institution became a critical spring board in pursuit of equal opportunities and cultural equity.

The community through BRDC got the support of Non-Governmental Organisation MS-Zimbabwe which supported the establishment of the museum financially and provided human resources and advice to complement community efforts in 1998. As part of MS – Zimbabwe support, they identified NMMZ as a key technical player to assist the community in setting up its museum. From the on-going discussion, it is clear that NMMZ did not initiate the idea of community museums. Of utmost significance is that when the Batonga Community Museum project was presented to NMMZ, the national heritage agency embraced and rallied behind the

idea. Given the positive impact of community museums NMMZ should come up with a policy document for community museums.

Most of the workshops that were held at the Batonga Museum were designed by community, for instance, skin curing, batik, drumming and drum making and project management workshops, are meant to guarantee the continuity of traditions, indigenous knowledge systems, skills and carry the aspirations of the community.

Engagement and Empowerment: Who is who?

Community museums, by their very nature, thrive on engagement and empowerment. In fact, engagement and empowerment are hallmarks that sustain community museums and from which they draw their life blood. Nevertheless, the key question here is who engages who? Who empowers who? Whose museum is it? Key assumptions have been made in this regard and it is now time to unpack them. The roles of entities in culture and heritage management are also brought to the fore. For example, what is the role of NMMZ at the Nambya Community Museum and what is the role of the Nambya community? Who has the authority and mandate to engage and empower the other? It is a cliché that museums engage and empower communities. Engagement can be defined as: 'initiatives and processes through which the expertise of an institution in the areas of education and research are applied to address issues relevant to its community' (UNDP Zimbabwe 1998). Thus, engagement ideally is the concept of community benefit. It is a two-way process of learning through interaction. Indeed, dissemination, generation and reconstruction of knowledge are practically outcomes of engagement.

Engagement in the context of this discussion is viewed as participation - the hallmark of sustainable development. Participation in this perspective means letting the beneficiaries of development projects and programmes identify their needs, initiate and plan interventions and seek assistance from interested partners (UNDP Zimbabwe 1998). Community participation/engagement extends to the monitoring and evaluation stages of activities. People in communities are the ones most familiar with their area and life situation and therefore can design activities that best suit them.

On the other hand, empowerment is based on giving skills, resources, authority, opportunity; motivation as well as holding one responsible and accountable for the outcomes of their actions. It is a process through which individuals transform themselves and become self-reliant in developing their economic and social well-being thereby increasing control over their life (UNDP Zimbabwe 1998). Empowerment is a process by which people gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives. At community level empowerment is achieved through a collective and continuous process of seeing what the need is, thinking about what to do about it, and collective acting by all the segments of community. People or an institution can only empower itself by acquiring more of power's different forms. In other words, people are their own assets and the role of the external agent is to catalyze, facilitate, or "accompany" the community in acquiring power. Cultural empowerment is an indispensable tool for any given community. Cultural empowerment maybe expressed as the ability of a culture to maintain itself

in a world of rapid social and technological change (Chikozho 2004). Instilling stewardship and ownership of museums by communities is the museum's most imperative task today. All appreciation of cultural heritage should start by appreciating people as illustrated below;



This is the ideal chain of appreciation of culture and heritage leading to the establishment of a museum. Granted this chain of importance, it becomes clear that communities should create and own their culture. For that reason the obligation or responsibility for that culture fully lies in these communities. The same communities took care of culture well before conventional museums and modern cultural heritage conservation and preservation methods. Indigenous Knowledge Systems played and continue to guide and define who we are. Communities are functional in this respect, nonetheless we appreciate the effectiveness and efficiency brought about by modern conservation and preservation techniques. It is the contention of this paper that before the creation of such organisations as NMMZ, communities were in harmony with themselves and their culture. Communities fully appreciated the essence of their cultures. The creation of external agents (NMMZ) is only an additional benefit to ease the responsibility task. Essentially NMMZ is a skills or expertise pool to be tapped by the community for the betterment of lives. Thus, communities have a responsibility to engage external organisations. For example, NMMZ is a government arm deliberately created to assist communities, country wide, manage their culture and heritage. NMMZ can also engage communities by way of intervention because of the knowledge, modern skills and expertise that it harbours and its ability to give advice on best practice, new legislation or conventions governing heritage management. Engagement and empowerment processes are mutually beneficial (to both communities, culture and heritage institutions) but it needs to be categorically acknowledged that these creators (communities) are behind all that we find in museums.

Challenges of community museums in Zimbabwe

Community museums have their inherent problems. The word community itself is a cliché; it is overused and can be interpreted in ways that can foster or hinder progress. More importantly, Zimbabwean community museums in their current form have taken a tribal bias. While it is appreciated that disadvantaged groups in Zimbabwe have largely been marginalized to the extent that they really need these community museums, it is the contention of this paper that they should not be confined to ethnic or tribal lines. Community museums should supercede racial, tribal orientation. In Mali, a community–based Dogon Museum in the village of Fombori illustrates this point. The community established a Cultural bank project which aims to develop cultural activities in close relation to the present needs of a rural people (Gueye 2000). The Nambya Community Museum in Hwange best demonstrates the pitfalls of taking a tribal approach. There is a general assumption that Hwange is about Nambya people so when the community tried to establish a community museum deep tribal divisions emerged. The attempt

to establish a museum ignited hidden tribal conflicts and divisions to the extent that the donor who wanted to assist on structural developments gave up. The Tonga and Dombe who are in Hwange thought naming the museum 'Nambya' would be tantamount to giving political power to the Nambya tribe. It was also felt that it was going to be an unfair claim to the land by the Nambya people at the expense of the many tribes that constitute Hwange. Hwange is a mining town with many groups of people including; Dombe, Nyanja and Tonga and as such, elevating the Nambya by naming a museum after them created community imbalance and friction.

Related to the above is idea that heritage belongs to humanity. While the Batonga museum is about the Tonga people, it is an institution in the interest of humanity. Communities need to realise that culture and heritage belong to humanity and as such the task of taking care of that heritage requires collaboration nationally and internationally.

From the ongoing discussion, it is clear that community museums thrive on their communities. The fact that these museums are depended on communities means that the economic state of the community also determines the state of museum. The state of the economy, for example, in Zimbabwe has negatively impacted on standard of life of communities especially from the 1990s to date. When communities struggle to support livelihoods, it becomes difficult to run community museums. Owning museums carries responsibility with it and this responsibility is difficult to dispense when communities hardly afford basic needs. As they find themselves hard pressed economically and struggle to fend for their lives communities can destroy or sell their cultural heritage. In Binga families sold their beads associated with long family traditions to fend for families. Thus, the economic situation of a country has a bearing on the sustainability of community museums.

In most cases, community museums are established with the help of external agencies (NGOs) and partnerships come with conditions. As a result, communities either end up fulfilling the objectives of NGOs or lose the power and grip of the institution and they end up disowning it. The dilemma is between fulfilling community objectives and or losing funding because the prospective donor feels that communities are not aligning to their (NGO) needs. Politics can also stall the viability of these institutions. In politically volatile areas it is difficult to bring polarized communities under one umbrella in the form of a community museum. Politics is about power and so different political groupings may want to show their political muscle through control of these community museums. Subsequently this will affect neutral agencies who may be interested in supporting and assisting such community-initiated endeavors. It also creates a difficult working environment for museum professional attached to such institutions.

The problem with most communities is that they do not know their rights. As Chinamasa correctly observed in Africa Community Publishing and Development Bookteam (2007): "The widespread ignorance of rights and responsibilities is a major impediment to a good social process. The more people are educated of their rights and obligations, the more they will be ready to demand and present their wishes or needs, and the more they will interact with the state". The appreciation of rights is generally low especially in the rural communities which make these communities helpless even when they find out that their heritage is being exploited. In

Africa, and Zimbabwe particularly, there is real need to empower communities about the laws of their country as well as their rights.

Some communities do not fully appreciate that ownership goes along with responsibility. Rather they think ownership just goes with benefits and such mentality/approach is retrogressive in the running of community museums. Responsibility is key and assistance should be as minimal as possible. Communities should understand and appreciate ownership to the extent that they organize themselves in the interest of the museum. The other challenges faced by community museums are a result of legislation that recognises NMMZ as the sole custodian of culture without including communities in clear terms. Community museums are administered under NMMZ and therefore receive grants from central government. How can museums ever claim independence when they are subordinated to a political agenda? (Bradburne 2000). It becomes very difficult for communities to benefit directly from these institutions. The interest of NMMZ to the Batonga Community Museum could easily be interpreted as a gesture of appeasement to marginalized minority cultures in Zimbabwe.

The future: Zimbabwe community museums

There are high prospects of both the success and future on community museums in Zimbabwe especially considering that the country espouses indigenisation policies and the empowerment of citizens. In 2013, Zimbabwe adopted an economic blueprint dubbed Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIM ASSET) which is "crafted to achieve sustainable development and social equity anchored on indigenisation, empowerment and employment creation which will be largely propelled by the judicious exploitation of the country's abundant human and natural resources" (ZIM ASSET 2013). The mission of this blueprint is "to provide an enabling environment for sustainable economic empowerment and social transformation to the people of Zimbabwe". Such policies are rich ground for the growth and development of community museums all towards an empowered citizen.

A progressive community derives its fullness from its past, present life and future aspirations. A community museum in this regard, if it is to secure its own future and that of the community, should work to reconcile the three elements. Community museums draw their greatest strength from the fact that they invest, emphasise and focus on people (creators of culture); not on collections per se. These museums create synergetic and symbiotic partnerships with the community. This is cardinal in the sense that cultural significance is wholly a human artifact or concept; as such it is as fluid, complex and dynamic as society's multilayered and changing value system. Cultural heritage belongs to community that values it (Pearson and Sullivan 1995). What it effectively means is that as long as there are communities, the existence and future of museums is guaranteed. It is therefore critical that communities are empowered and are in control of their lives. Allowing people full cultural expression is an important development end in itself (Human Development Report 2004). By investing and giving primacy to people, community museums effectively acknowledge and give dignity to African people hitherto denigrated and denied space for self-assertion. For this reason, community museums are a handy

tool for the rehabilitation of the African identity and dignity. The community museum shall play its inalienable role as a tool *par excellence*, a means *sine qua non* for sustainable development (Nkrumah 2000). This explains why community museums have generally been embraced in most African countries, for example, the Choma, Nayuma and Moto Moto community museums in Zambia.

There is high prospect for the preservation, use and enjoyment of our culture through community museums given that the very affected communities are the ones who take the forefront in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes and activities run by the museum. To a large extent, this means that museums will remain focused and germane to their communities, which gives them a permanent lease of life. In community museums we witness a situation where programmes are not imposed on communities; rather communities know and prioritise what is best and urgent for them. This way, museums are bound to be popular in communities since they own the programmes. As communities implement their own programmes the impact is bound to be high and yields positive results. At the same time, if the desired results are not being achieved, communities are better placed to notice this early enough and effect corresponding adjustments. This can easily be done because communities own both the programmes and the implementation. As Jenkinson argues, 'We have to involve people in our museums and be prepared to release some of our professional power by giving space for people to represent their perspectives in 'our museum'' (Pearce 1989).

With community museums artefacts inherently carry their cultural currency; heritage is enriched by use. That is, artefacts in a community museum are not 'untouchable' because they are often taken into the community for use thereby retaining their significance. Above all, the way community museums engage communities on artefacts, for instance, through community exhibitions is such that there is always community education on the value of culture. This is important because communities themselves become museums as a result of high consciousness with regards to artefacts and the importance for preserving them. The involvement of communities in exhibition plan, mounting and explanation ensures that communities on their own pass culture from one generation to another which is what characterizes African tradition. The elderly have an obligation to bequeath culture to younger generations, museum professionals will assist at the request of the community. This is fundamental because only then do we see communities in charge of their own affairs and forging a future for themselves. Community museums depend and thrive on communities that created them, not tax-revenue. As such, their sustainability is easier and guaranteed since they are communally owned. Communities harbour vast talents, skills and resources which can be directed towards the sustenance of community museums. Chances of abusing resources are also minimal since it is communal responsibility to ensure good practice and success.

Once it is fully acknowledged that communities own this heritage which has become our 'business' / 'occupation' today, then we must treat them accordingly and that shall go a long way in saving humanity's culture. Community museums do not just document artefacts in the museum but also *in situ*, that is in the communities and in homesteads. Communities begin to

appreciate culture not just for its own sake but also as a resource – an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, co-operation and peace among peoples. Thus, apart from raising the consciousness of communities this approach enables communities to take stock of their culture and probably take necessary steps to sustain it if need be. A community approach used in setting up these museums goes a long way in decentralizing museums that are generally a phenomenon of major towns. Community institutions are normally rallying points for community development, image and dignity. The development of communities inherently means a balanced development of the nation at large. Continuity of programmes and activities can only be guaranteed when communities are in charge of museums. Museum professionals are not permanent in the communities they serve; they can move from one museum to another; one job to another. This way, communities become the only record that has a better story.

Conclusion

Decolonizing and indigenising museums is a process that is replete with success, mistakes and failures. The most important thing is that the commitment to and appreciation of heritage by all parties involved is abundantly clear. It is the 'how' question that we continue to grapple with. The many models of museums that we have had up to now are not failures per se but rather important lessons from which we should build a better future through community museums. The empowering capacity of community museums in filling up the void created in Africa by imperial powers can never be underestimated. Community museums are critical in forging a future that espouses cultural equity, dignity, self-actualisation and sustainable development. In light of this, it is imperative on communities and all stakeholders to continue to improve on the community museum model. It is fallacious to think that community museums come as a perfect package answer, they also have their own shortcomings that we must address. Nevertheless, the focus, emphasis and benefits of community museums are so invaluable that they guarantee the future. It is important to note that "the right to culture obliges public authorities to create the social and economic conditions which permit the effective exercise of this right" (Schmidt 1996). The need for legislation to clearly emphasize and position communities is integral in this endeavour. Culture is made by people and appreciated by people. As such, there is no way culture can be appreciated and enjoyed when its creators are relegated to the periphery because it is the same communities who breathe life and attach significance to cultural objects.

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Giving back to communities: engaging and empowering communities at Great Zimbabwe.

Munyaradzi Elton Sagiya

Abstract

Great Zimbabwe is a World Heritage Site as well as a cultural heritage resource which is surrounded by historical communities that seek to benefit from it. The National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), a government department that manages the site is implementing strategies to provide socio-economic benefits to the host communities. Through the Great Zimbabwe Local Community Representative Committee, the relationship between the monument and local communities continues to improve. NMMZ launched the Great Zimbabwe school fees assistance programme in 2011 and to date, more than 40 school children from the Nemanwa, Mugabe and Murinye communities have received bursaries. This paper explores NMMZ's mechanism of engaging with local communities around Great Zimbabwe. The paper also attempts to interrogate these strategies so as to identify aspects of the engagement that need to be improved.

Introduction

Great Zimbabwe, administered by the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), is not only an archaeological site which belongs to the remote past; it is a shrine and cultural resource which local communities have endeared. Contestations over its traditional custodianship reflect the emotional historical relationship with the site. There are four main historical communities of Mugabe, Nemanwa, Murinye and Charumbira settled around Great Zimbabwe. Regardless of the existing complexities of the relationship of the communities and the management of the monument, the site has been regarded as one of the success stories of local community engagement and empowerment (see Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Fontein 2006). This paper will examine various strategies that have been designed by NMMZ to involve the local communities in the management of Great Zimbabwe as well as benefitting from it. It is based on the observations, interviews and the author's personal experiences through interaction with the local communities at Great Zimbabwe since 2010. The archival material at the Great Zimbabwe Conservation Centre and published literature were consulted to establish the chronological development of the engagement process between NMMZ and its surrounding local communities.

Great Zimbabwe: Who are the local communities?

Defining a community within the heritage paradigm has generated debate and discussions among heritage practitioners and scholars (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Chauke 2003). Underpinning the complexities of defining a community is the existence of numerous communities with diverging interests. Discussing the intricacies of the debate is outside the scope of this paper. For the purpose of the study, the term local community refers to the group of people that are bound by their common ancestry, norms and values and resides close to a heritage site. A local community in this work broadly includes the local traditional authorities as well as their subjects or group of followers. The people that make up the local community should have a special connection to a

heritage place and as such affect and/or are affected by the way that property is being managed. Thus, there are four recognised traditional authorities that make up the immediate communities surrounding Great Zimbabwe. These four include Chief Charumbira (current President of the Chiefs Council), Chief Mugabe, Headman Nemanwa (under Chief Charumbira) and Chief Murinye. The population of the local communities settled around the monument has been estimated to be around 20 000 people (Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site Management Plan 2012: 106).

The history of the above-mentioned communities is layered and all four communities are inextricably bound with each other from a historical perspective. Each and every community has created and continues to remake their own histories in order to position itself as rightful people to benefit from Great Zimbabwe. In terms of who came first to the cultural landscape, a number of written sources point to the Nemanwa clan (Aquina 1965; Matenga 1998; Matenga 2011, Fontein 2006). However, the claim by the same clan that they 'germinated' from the Great Zimbabwe landscape is treated as oral histories steeped in mythology. According to Mtetwa (1976; 185), the Nemanwa clan broke away from the Mutoko – Budya Shumba Nyamuziwa dynasty in the late 17th or 18th century. From Mutoko, the clan is believed to have moved southwards and settled at Great Zimbabwe around the same period (see Mtetwa 1976; Ndoro 2005:56; Fontein 2006). But this is now beside the point because the communities now live near the site and have a valid stake to the cultural resource.

Of all the local clans around Great Zimbabwe, Nemanwa is very small territorially and numerically, a situation that is further made worse by the expansion of the Nemanwa Growth Point (see Fontein 2006; Sagiya 2014). Nemanwa Growth Point, which is in Nemanwa's territory, is a melting pot with residents originating from many places outside the Great Zimbabwe locality. With regards to traditional leadership, this community is under Headman Nemanwa who is under Chief Charumbira. Both Nemanwa and Charumbira are of the Shumba totem though of different types. The former is the Shumba *Muguriri* whilst that of the latter is *Sipambi*. Although Charumbira was the last of the clans to reside within the Great Zimbabwe cultural landscape, this community has become the most powerful in terms of territory and influence. Chief Charumbira is the President of the Chiefs Council a post that he has held close to a decade now. The issue of chieftainship has continued to be a contentious matter between the two clans. Nemanwa feels it's high time he should revert to his Chieftainship that he used to have prior to colonisation.

Mugabe and Murinye are two other local clans that are settled around Great Zimbabwe. These two clans share the same totem of *Moyo - Gono*. According to tradition, Murinye was the second to arrive after Nemanwa, and later he was joined by his two sons (brothers in some versions) Shumba – Chekai and Mugabe (Fontein 2006). Mtetwa (1976) has referred to these groups as part of the Duma Confederacy. Mugabe drove Nemanwa from the site before Rhodesian occupation. Mugabe occupied the same area up to around 1902 when they were also driven away by the British South Africa Company that had annexed Mashonaland (Ndoro 2005). The basis

of Mugabe's claim is that he was the last of the pre-colonial residents of Great Zimbabwe to claim the custodianship of the site (Fontein 2006; Chauke 2003). Some prominent figures of the clan Chipfunhu and Manunure were buried under the boulders on the summit of the Hill Complex. 'Elders' of the Mugabe clan periodically seek authority from NMMZ to make ritual visits to the graves of these ancestors situated on the northern parts of the Great Zimbabwe Hill Complex.

In the past, Chief Murinye and his cohorts were not vocal with regards to the traditional custodianship and related local claims attached to Great Zimbabwe National Monument. Even during the July 2000 Chisikana ceremony that was sponsored by NMMZ, this clan did not participate (Matenga 2000). However, since the installation of the current Chief Murinye (Ephius Mudarikwa), the clan is increasingly becoming a key 'stakeholder' in the management of the site. The present traditional leader of the Murinye community (a student of law at the University of Zimbabwe) has personally made the Murinye clan an influential voice to the historical ownership claims of Great Zimbabwe. It is interesting that the current Chief Murinye is positioning himself as the direct descendent of Munhumutapa whom he attributes to be the last ruler at Great Zimbabwe. Due to his influence, the Murinye community are raising their stake on the site.

Local communities around Great Zimbabwe have an attachment to the site by virtue of descent as well as proximity to the monument. However, each of the local communities has its own views about the history and significance of the site basing on oral traditions and oral histories (Ndoro 2005: 76; Chauke 2003). It is interesting to note that traditional leaders around Great Zimbabwe in particular Chief Charumbira has repeatedly argued that they should be recognised as 'owners' of the site not 'stakeholders'. Although, this argument holds much sense, this claim is not legally supported and not tenable in the current formal heritage management system as a result the ownership of the heritage site remains largely the state affair. Surprisingly, the same local traditional leaders around Great Zimbabwe are still locked within a long dispute on who owns the site among themselves. This dispute is so serious to the extent that the traditional authorities have agreed to suspend the discussion on the subject as well as the chiefdom boundaries around the site (Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site Management Plan 2012: 104). The complex web of local community interests and stakes have not deterred NMMZ on engaging and empowering the same people whom at times have diverging interests and perceptions on the way the site has and continue to be managed.

Approaches to Community Engagement and Empowerment at Great Zimbabwe

Great Zimbabwe is a resource on its own right. Intentionally or by default, NMMZ has a social responsibility to develop suitable approaches for engaging local communities that resides around the site. Some of the approaches that the institution has implemented include the establishment of a community representative committee. The Strategic Business Unit (SBU), a department in charge of running the tourists' facilities at Great Zimbabwe has put much effort in promoting

local craft industries as well as hiring members of the local communities on seasonal jobs. The following paragraphs provide details of main approaches to the engagement of local communities.

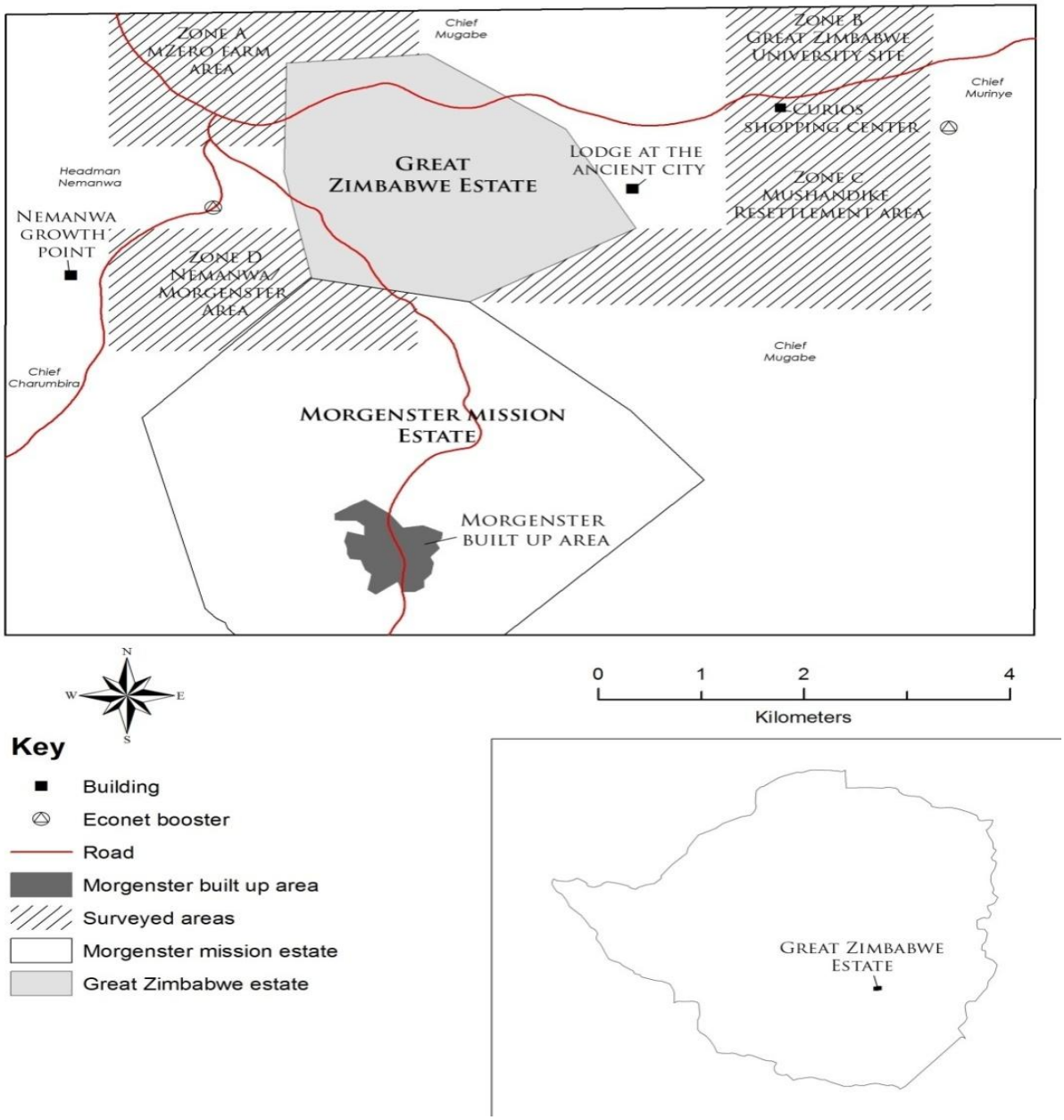


Figure 1. Map of Great Zimbabwe showing some of the areas referred in the text

Great Zimbabwe Local Community Representative Committee (GZLCRC)

The NMMZ has developed numerous strategies designed to engage and to empower communities at Great Zimbabwe. Key among these strategies was the formation of the Great Zimbabwe Local Community Committee in August 2010. A meeting was held at Great Zimbabwe by the local traditional leadership that included Chief Shumba - Chekai, Chief Murinye, Chief Charumbira, Headman Nemanwa (under Chief Charumbira) and Chief Mugabe. Present also at this meeting was the Executive Director of the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe. After a protracted debate, the traditional authorities agreed to form a

community representative committee that comprised of eight village heads from Mugabe and Nemanwa communities. Later on, the traditional leaders from these communities seconded four people from each community. However, it was then realised that it was important to include representatives from Chief Murinye and in 2013, two village heads from Murinye joined the GZLCRC, which is now a ten - member community representative committee.

The establishment and operation of the GZLCRC can be described as the epitome of the institution's effort to engage the surrounding communities in the management of the site. Since 2011, the community representative committee has been conducting monthly meetings with the site's formal NMMZ management team based at Great Zimbabwe. Periodic meetings deliberate on matters of mutual interests between the NMMZ and the local communities. Some of the key issues that are discussed in these meetings include communal sharing of benefits that are derived from the site, the religious use of the site, conservation and protection of national monument.

In May 2013, two members of the GZLCRC took part at the Anglophone Risk Preparedness Training Workshop jointly organised by the Centre for Heritage Development in Africa, African World Heritage Fund, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and NMMZ at Great Zimbabwe. The participating members representing the local communities were imparted with knowledge, risk preparedness skills and mechanisms for protecting, conserving and managing World Heritage Sites, and Great Zimbabwe in particular. Such training to the representatives of the local communities created a sense of belonging as well as involvement in the key management issues of the site.

School Fees Assistance

Since 2011 the NMMZ has established a fund to cover school fees for pupils from the local communities as one of the strategies implemented to engage and empower them (See Figure 1). To date, more than 40 pupils from Mugabe, Nemanwa and Murinye have benefitted from this scheme. The selection of the children is done by the GZLCRC in consultation with their traditional leaders as well as the local school heads. This educational fund is currently covering those underprivileged children at secondary level. The NMMZ monitors the selection process in order to ensure that the selection criterion is adhered to and avoid any abuse. In addition, to school fees, NMMZ is also sponsoring examination fees for students who will be sitting for their national (ZIMSEC) examinations. For 2014, beneficiaries of the Great Zimbabwe Educational Fund included 6 pupils from Morgenster High School and 14 pupils from Chirichoga High School, as illustrated in the table (1) below.

Thus, for the year 2014 including the examination fees that had already been paid, the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe invested US$ 2 580.00 towards assisting children from the local communities. Five children set for their 'O' level ZIMSEC examinations in 2014 and the registered number of subjects of the beneficiaries of the Great Zimbabwe Educational Fund ranges from seven – nine subjects.

Table 1. Community beneficiaries of the Great Zimbabwe Educational Fund.

Name of the School	Number of Pupils	Sex		Total Amount of the Fees (whole year, 2014)
		Male	Female	
Chirichoga High School	14	4	10	$1 680.00
Morgenster High School	6	1	5	$ 900.00
	20	5	15	
Grand Total				**US $ 2 580.00**



Figure 2. 2014 Beneficiaries of the Great Zimbabwe National Monument's School Fees Assistance

Approaches to empowering communities at Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site are not only confined to the establishment and operations of the GZLCRC, but they manifest in various ways. One of such ways is the Shona Village concept whose origins can be traced to the 1960s.

The Shona Village Project

The concept of a 'Shona village' at Great Zimbabwe was created to add an extra attraction to the site by depicting the Shona 'traditional' lives for tourists through performances of traditional healing, pottery making, smelting and traditional dances (Ndoro and Pwiti 1997; Chirikure and Pwiti 2008). The current Shona village at Great Zimbabwe includes 29 members from the Nemanwa, Mugabe, Murinye, Charumbira and Shumba – Chekai communities. The first model of a village at the site was built in the 1960s near the present-day site museum and it was known as the Karanga Village (Ndoro and Pwiti 1997). Interestingly, the village was once relocated to a site outside the centre of the site but the new site was not popular with both the community and the visitors. Hence the Shona village concept continues to be reviewed. The current village is still under reconstruction after being relocated from the northern side of the Hill Complex around 2008. Even though it is still incomplete in terms of the desired infrastructure, the village is already active and various activities such as traditional dancing are the major tourist attraction to

the village. A curator of ethnography coordinates the activities within the village and plays an advisory role to the day-to-day operations of the Shona Village.

Fontein (2006) has described the Shona Village at Great Zimbabwe as one of the profound and long running efforts by NMMZ to involve the local communities in the presentation and management of the site. The village also offers an opportunity to generate income through selling of products and services to tourists such as clay pots, baskets, traditional healing and fortune telling, sculptures, and performing traditional dances. Frequently, the NMMZ facilitates the hiring of traditional dancing groups at state and other functions. Such outings enhance income generation as the groups are handsomely incentivised for their participation. In addition, the SBU department runs the Great Zimbabwe curio/souvenir shop and also purchases on regular basis certain sculpts from artists that are operating at the Shona village for sale.

The Shona village also provides a direct link with the present-day communities residing around the site. However, this community-based enterprise for the empowerment of local communities does not have a business plan. Such a plan is necessary for enhancing economic empowerment of the local people who are involved in the Shona village project.

Nemanwa Craft Centre

NMMZ has also extended its assistance to the Nemanwa Craft Centre whose operations are almost similar to those of the Shona Village. The Nemanwa Craft Centre is a community-run business that has been in existence outside the boundaries of Great Zimbabwe from as early as the 1970s. Currently, 66 local traders operate at the craft centre which is a cooperative venture whose mother ministry is that of Small and Medium Enterprises. Although the Nemanwa Craft Centre is not located within the monument, NMMZ has developed strategies to promote and engage the centre. At the craft centre there is a wide range of crafts from clay pots, stone and wood sculptors, basketry and java print cloth. Since 2010 NMMZ has been purchasing curios that are then resold at its curio shop as a way of supporting business at the Nemanwa Craft centre. Since there are times when business will be low at the Craft Centre, such periodic purchases by NMMZ go a long way in sustaining the livelihoods of 66 local community families.

Employment

The NMMZ seems to have an unwritten employment policy at Great Zimbabwe which offers first preference to the local people for any vacancy that arises. As such, people from the local communities are employed as stone masons, curatorial assistants, curators, tourist guides, cashiers, among other permanent jobs. As of August 2014, Great Zimbabwe National Monument has a staff compliment of 83 people of which 49 workers are from the local communities, in particular from Nemanwa, Charumbira, Mugabe and Murinye (see pie chart below).

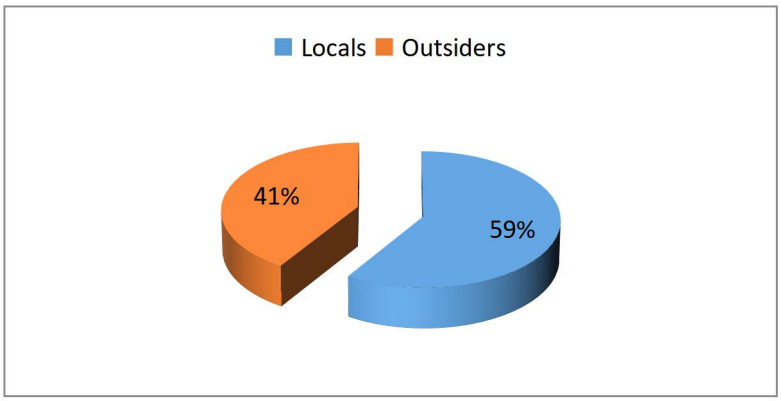


Figure 3. Great Zimbabwe National Monument Staff Compliment (August 2014).

Furthermore, people from the surrounding communities are also contracted for a series specific tasks/work within the monument such as fireguard clearance, major restorations of dry stone walls and maintenance of the grounds. For example, in October 2011, 20 people from the local communities were engaged as assistants throughout the restoration project of the Balcony wall at the Hill Complex. The participants were being paid $5 per day, a payment made after consultation with the relevant office of the Government ministry that deals with the hiring of casual labour.

Access to natural and cultural resources

A designated monument as well as a World Heritage Site like Great Zimbabwe is intertwined with people's lives (Ndoro 200; Edroma 2004). In this regard, one of the key management issues at Great Zimbabwe is to ensure benefits for the local communities through sustainable use and access to the site. Besides employment opportunities, Great Zimbabwe is also endowed with both natural and cultural resources which host communities seek to access for their socio-economic benefits. Numerous resources such as firewood, thatching grass and grazing lands are increasingly becoming scarce among the communities surrounding the site. he NMMZ management team has developed ways in which the communities can access these resources within the protected area and to do so in a sustainable way. For example, harvesting any of the forest products (firewood, thatching grass, manure, gum poles) at Great Zimbabwe is permissible after one gets a clearance letter from the NMMZ administration offices that are located within the monument.

Great Zimbabwe is still a revered site that is home to the departed and living spirits of Zimbabwe. Thus, NMMZ on its own cannot run Great Zimbabwe as a shrine without the active involvement of the local communities (Fontein 2006). The site is therefore used by the local communities for spirit appeasement ceremonies and other related traditional rituals related to the socio-economic plight of the local people (Ndoro 2001; Great Zimbabwe World Heritage Site Management Plan 2012:45). The most notable and publicised ritual that has taken place at Great Zimbabwe in the post-colonial era is the *Chisikana* ritual ceremony held in July 2000 (Matenga 2000; Ndoro 2001; Fontein 2006; Sagiya 2009). This ceremony that was sponsored by NMMZ was meant to reopen a sacred spring that had been sealed by concrete in the 1950s.

The local people from Mugabe, Nemanwa and Charumbira were allowed access to the site to perform the ritual.

It is important to note that the 'official' use and access to the site for religious practices in the post-colonial era did not stop with the *Chisikana*, instead up to this day local as well as people from other parts of the country do access the site. However, there are some control measures that ensures that there is sustainable use of the site for religious purposes. Some of the measures include but are not limited to the clearance for carrying out rituals from the respective Government ministry (Rural Development, Preservation and Promotion of National Culture and Heritage) and other concerned stakeholders. Approval for religious use of Great Zimbabwe from other relevant stakeholders is necessary since the site is also an international heritage and other values should be respected.



(a) (b)

Figure 3. Religious paraphernalia left by some religious group at (a) the backside of the Gold Furnace Enclosure in the Hill Complex and (b) at the Chisikana sacred water fountain in July 2013

Access to Great Zimbabwe National Monument by the local communities is critical not only because the heritage is theirs but as observed by Ndoro (2001; 22) such access helps to restore damaged self-confidence in their heritage. Colonisation had for over a century denied indigenous communities ownership and pride of their heritage, a situation that has made them lose confidence and influence to the management of heritage in Zimbabwe. There are current plans by the management authorities in partnership with the community representative committee at Great Zimbabwe to provide free entry and guided tours of the site to members from the local communities on a weekly basis. Besides cementing the relationship between NMMZ and the local communities, such an arrangement (if it succeeds) shows the extent to which a heritage site can benefit the communities who are the owners of these resources.

Discussion

Central to the idea of engaging local communities around Great Zimbabwe is the need by NMMZ to retain the confidence of the local people in their heritage. Approaches to this

endeavour should ensure that the formal management team at the site works with the local people in ways which they feel included, confident and influential. Great Zimbabwe, like other designated national monuments in Zimbabwe, is legally owned by the state as such the NMMZ manages these properties on behalf of the Government. Regardless of ownership issues, engaging local communities is imperative for the sustainable management of Great Zimbabwe. As stipulated in the site management plan, the management practices at Great Zimbabwe should allow communities to access spiritual, economic and social benefits from the cultural landscape (GZWHSMP 2012:50). However, empowering local communities to an extent of restoration of their pride is still a challenge at Great Zimbabwe.

The area surrounding Great Zimbabwe has been recognised by some scholars as contested cultural landscape (Ndoro 2001; Fontein 2006). These contestations stem from the local clans' long-standing rivalry over ownership of the site. The political nature of these local disputes among the Mugabe, Nemanwa, Charumbira and now Murinye communities presents many management problems to the site. This socio-cultural matrix in which Great Zimbabwe is located makes it even more challenging to engage and empower local communities. There is, therefore, need for continuous dialogue and negotiation between the NMMZ and the local communities that surrounds the monument. Engaging and empowering local communities at Great Zimbabwe can be understood as a modus operandi that demands negotiation skills, and like any other skill it has to be learnt. As such, there is need for capacity building for both NMMZ and local communities so that all parties operate on the same footing. NMMZ needs to initiate more platforms of conducting workshops or meetings with the broader local communities as a way of sharing ideas and confidence building. In such platforms NMMZ should continue to conduct itself as a neutral arbitrator in the local communities' disputes.

While the establishment and expanding of Great Zimbabwe Local Community Representative Committee can be applauded as a noble approach of engaging the local communities at the site, there are still some grey areas that need to be addressed. Since its inception, the GZLCRC is operating without any written agreement or formal terms of reference. The terms of reference have been drafted but are yet to be approved by the NMMZ Board of Trustees. The lack of such a document represents a stumbling block for the effectiveness of the GZLCRC in executing its duties. On the other hand, it remains a challenge for the NMMZ team at the site to make certain decisions with the committee in the absence of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Information gathered prior to the preparation of this paper revealed that the GZLCRC is being received with mixed feelings in some parts of the local communities. Mr Jairois Haruzivishe (a local village elder under Chief Mugabe) for example, argued that the committee is just a nominated group of individuals who are not holistically representing the broader local communities. He further argued that the GZLCRC is composed of 'young' people who do not really understand some of the 'traditions' and 'cultural' aspects associated with Great Zimbabwe (Haruzivishe 2014; *pers.com*). On the other hand, a focus group discussion held with elders from

the Nemanwa clan in March 2014revealed that the clan is satisfied with the way their members are representing their community. Thus, there is need to ensure that the broader local communities understand the idea behind the community representative committee. For the committee to be more effective, it requires the support of all the people from the surrounding communities. They should feel proud of this committee as being formed by them, to represent themselves in the management of Great Zimbabwe.

Certain approaches such as employing individuals from the local communities cannot necessarily be regarded as empowering the local communities around Great Zimbabwe. Instead, community empowerment should result in a change which improves the quality of life for the broader local communities and perhaps their environments. To this effect, NMMZ may need to reconsider some of its approaches of community empowerment. Approaches to local community empowerment should be more inclusive. Examples of approaches that will came into force include drilling and equipping of community boreholes, construction of clinics or schools, among other related developments.

Achieving a holistic empowerment of local communities around Great Zimbabwe is negatively affected by the lack of a guiding legal framework or policy in Zimbabwe. Currently, the NMMZ has a written policy on community engagement but not being referred to with regards to implementation. The National Museums and Monuments Act Chapter 25:11 is silent on community engagement and empowerment. In actual fact the phrase 'local communities' is not even mentioned in this Act. This is in contrast to what is pertaining in some neighbouring countries. South Africa, for instance, the National Heritage Resource Act of 1999 chapter 1 section 5 sub-section 2a stipulates that 'skills and capacities of persons and communities involved in heritage resource management must be developed'. The South Africa heritage legislation allows local communities to benefit from their heritage sites (Chirikure and Pwiti 2008; Chauke 2003; Siyahamba 2011). This was done maybe after realising that the apartheid era had resulted in the disempowerment of local communities with regards to the access and control of their heritage properties. Therefore, there is need for reviewing the NMMZ legislation for it to recognise communities as the owners of heritage. As such, the same communities should benefit from heritage within a legally supported environment. Meanwhile there is need to come up with a policy that recognise that the local communities who permanently reside close to heritage sites should benefit more as they are key to the management of these irreplaceable properties. The local communities should not just be merely involved but empowered.

Although, the concept of a Shona Village at Great Zimbabwe has remained a subject of debate and discussion among heritage practitioners, academics and the general public at large (Ndoro and Pwiti 1997; Fontein 2006), the venture has a potential of economically empowering members from the local communities. To this day, the Shona village at Great Zimbabwe is operating without any business plan, such an aspect of a haphazard operation does not result to economic empowerment. One of the strategies to enhance the performance of the current village is to come up with a comprehensive business plan. There is need for NMMZ to consult business

experts so as to develop a business plan that will guide the operations of the village as a way of enhancing its income generation to the local communities. With regards to the Nemanwa Craft Centre, NMMZ can as of now market their artworks globally through its national website. This will go a long way in boosting the sells at the craft centre. As a long-term objective, there is need to integrate the Nemanwa Craft Centre and the Great Zimbabwe Shona village to operate as one entity within the monument. This will solve the feud that exists between the Shona village sculptors and those of the Nemanwa Craft Centre over manipulation of clients. The former had an advantage of operating from within the site, hence more exposed to tourists, than the latter who operates from outside. An integrated Craft Centre and the Shona Village if well executed can be regarded as one of the sustainable approaches of engaging and empowering communities around Great Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

Great Zimbabwe is a World Heritage Site that should not only be known for its past, but also for the local communities that resides round it today. As part of its recognition of the local communities that live around the monument, NMMZ has increasingly come up with various engagement and empowerment approaches at Great Zimbabwe. However, the research presented in this paper shows how complex the network of local communities that surrounds the site is, and the challenges that such a situation poses to both the NMMZ and the local communities. Despite the efforts put forward so far, there is still a need for more collective strategies that enhance community benefits. The engagement and empowerment approaches at Great Zimbabwe should be grounded on the firm understanding of the combination of values of the past and present local communities. Failure to do that, Great Zimbabwe will become irrelevant to its host communities which it is expected to serve. NMMZ should come to the realisation that there are intangible benefits of giving back to communities. Besides, contributing to the common good, engaging and empowering the local communities is central to the effective conservation and management of Great Zimbabwe and other heritage sites in Zimbabwe.

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Mutare Museum's visitor needs redefined by education and experience

Njabulo Chipangura

'My voice changes and finds a level that is a little louder than in church but much quieter than it sounds in daily life. Soon I no longer know what I've come to do in this solitude which has something about it of the temple and the saloon, the cemetery and the school…'1

Introduction

The museum should be a flexible institution that has to adapt to changes over time. During the past two decades, the museum field has paid increased attention to the nature, quality and impact of museum visitor experiences (Falk and Dierking 2013). Questions have been raised on the changing needs of visitors who walk in and out of museums across the world. Education has for long been held as one of the most significant gains derived from a museum visit - however we have seen the emergence of visitors who are yearning for some form of disneyfied experiences in museums. Such experiences go beyond the traditional accustomed view that visitor interaction with museum objects should go no further than visual observation (Chipangura and Mandizvo 2014). We see that museums are seeking to engage a more diverse range of visitors by moving towards collaborative projects and activities designed through dialogical and inclusive participation (Karp and Kratz 2012). This paper seeks to analyse how Mutare Museum intends to invoke dynamism in its stagnant displays by prioritising visitor needs through offering educational services that are blended with spectacular experiences.

Essentially, rethinking the relationship between education and the spectacular experiences means taking museum exhibits as contested, debatable, and move on to respect the agency and knowledgeability of audiences when we develop and design exhibits. There has long been a temptation by visitors to dichotomise the reasons for visiting museums (Falk and Dierking 2013). The binary has been between recreational related reasons which have become the precursor for visiting relative to educational related reasons. Although people have leanings towards one of these reasons for visiting a museum, rarely do they see these values as mutually exclusive. In fact, virtually all individuals visiting a museum understand that museums are educational institutions and consequently expect to learn something during their time there. In this paper I will consider the museum experience in its totality from the moment the thought occurs to someone that visiting a museum might be a good idea, through the visit itself (Falk and Dierking 2013). By closely analysing the new displays in the Beit Gallery as part of an attempt to invoke dynamism by this museum - I argue that technologically driven displays were introduced as a means to reinvent the museum as a place that can offer both educational and leisure experiences at the same time. This is because, today visitor experiences in museums are underpinned by a combination of education and spectacle. In other words, visitors no longer identify the museum as a bastion of high culture any but rather as a place of to interact and to engage with the objects and learn in a relaxed atmosphere (Chipangura and Mandizvo 2014). Museums used to be institutions designed to curate, collect, classify, conserve, preserve, and display objects, and

[1] Views of K. Leeroy from the Mutare Museum Visitors Comments Book, 2000-2005.

through that work to educated visitors and preserve heritage. The days of meditations and contemplations when visitors enter in a museum are gone as most now seek experience and spectacle.

Experiencing the museum building at Mutare Museum

Museum architecture provides a useful point of entry into the discussion of the visitor experiences because it stands metaphorically as well as physically for the structure that defines the boundaries between inside and outside (McPherson 2006). The first impression that visitors have upon arriving at Mutare Museum revolves around the architectural make- up of the building itself. The Mutare Museum building is designed in a commanding rectangular boxlike shape with one main entrance. From the outside the building looks like a sealed match box and I suppose such kind of a design was considered as a function of conservation - to limit exposure of sunlight to objects. It is usually an exciting feeling to most visitors when they walk in into the building having seen it from the outside. However, to some the museum building invokes solemnity coupled with feelings of anxiety as it appears like a revered space (Fogan 2006). The visitor comment quoted at the beginning of this paper reflects how one visitor to Mutare Museum related with the serine and solitude set up of exhibitions in this museum that resembles a grave yard. For a long time now the museum building has been perceived as purposely designed for the objects they imprison rather than the public that visit (Lumley 2007).

Artefacts were thought to be safer in the clean, bright, protected environment of the museum building under the aegis of knowledgeable scholars (Classen and Howes 2006). The museum building was also a site of surveillance and public order as body discipline was required from museum visitors who were expected not to touch, eat or speak loudly (Bennett 1995). The museum building therefore became an empire of sight which colonised artefacts through the gaze of spectators. This old museum was an ideological construct with regimes of knowledge and constructed taxonomies - an exhibitionary complex that constructed its visitors and regulated their behaviours (Bennett 1995). For this reason, Hooper – Greenhill (1992:5), "questions whether museum taxonomies and documentation practices gives preference to particular ways of knowing and at the same time excluded others". The old museums of "…. the past were more than repositories of precious objects; they were bastions of authority and tradition that represented social norms, cultural capital to be acquired by all citizens, memories to be preserved for the future generations, and public displays demonstrating what society valued most" (Bautista 2013:1). However, the new museum of the future has been progressively changing and has become a place for visiting exhibitions, eating, studying, conserving and restoring artefacts, listening to music, seeing films, holding discussions and meetings (Lumley 2007).

The museum used to be regarded as a clear and irrefutable sender of messages and this has progressively changed as calls are being made for the inclusion of multiple voices and the push for them to adopt social missions. Our auditorium at Mutare Museum has been opened up to be used as a space where a variety of activities can be freely conducted by our visitors and the communities we serve. This includes social meetings, church services, workshops, conferences and school science exhibitions. In fact, our museum is no longer just a building or institution but

a potent social metaphor and mode of representation of societies, their history and relationship with our cultures (Rassool 2010). This expression of cultures is further articulated well in the traditional aspects of the eastern Shona, a theme which the Mutare Museum pursued when re - arranging old exhibits in the Beit Gallery (Mareya 1999). This re-organisation of the Beit Gallery came out partly from the realisation that interactive exhibitions are the soul of museum education and experience. The act of showing within the museum building brings with it an inherent dialectic between the intentions and the experiences of the visitor (Mclean 2008). The Mutare Museum building was purposely designed to allow for both object displaying and conservation of those objects from various elements of the weather. Visitors experience this when they enter the hallways of our five galleries (the eastern districts, mezzanine, Boultbee, Beit and transport galleries) which all show a closed up design custom made to prevent sunlight from entering the exhibits on display.



Figure 1. The architectural make up of Mutare Museum. Picture by P. Mupira on July 31 2014.

The post museum and the invention of interactivity in new museology

The concept of the post museum calls for a movement away from traditional object-oriented approaches in museums into becoming spaces of interactive interplay between various cultures (Bruce 2006). The notion of the post museum has indeed helped many museums to transform by aligning themselves to the demands brought about by the global information age. It has also helped us to look at how our museums can accommodate community understandings that define some objects as living beings, connected with ancestral spirits, or in need of regular propitiation or feeding (Gimblet 1991). Collections in dioramas of such museums have remained static, ritualised and have not been changed since their inception. By removing artefacts from their cultural setting and inserting them into the visual symbol system of the museum, their dynamic web of physical and social meaning was broken (Classen and Howes 2006).

Today, the ever-changing expectations of the public are pushing museums to look at the historical connections between their collections and source communities to ensure continued relevancy with the populations that they serve (Chipangura, 2013). This social practice is a part of a process that can potentially help museums to shed off elitist proprietary modes of thinking and inspire reconciliation between museums and communities (Marstine 2013:154). This is because within their cultures of origin, the visual appearance of artefacts usually accounts for only one and often not the most important part of its sensory significance (Classen and Howes, 2006). The sensory value of an artefact does not reside in the artefact alone, but in its social use and environmental context (Smith 2006). More often than not, collections stored and displayed by museums have deep socio-cultural meanings that transcend our expert judgements as curators and collections managers. At Mutare Museum, ethnographic collections were once exhibited in the Beit Gallery in a manner that conforms to the traditional practice of presenting objects exclusively for visual observation.



Figure 2. Ethnographic objects displayed on the floor for the visual gaze in the Beit Gallery before the rearrangements. (Picture by the author).

Yet, this type of scenography did not do justice to the social biography of the collection, which cannot be understood in terms of a single unchanging identity, but rather, by tracing the succession of meanings attached to the objects as they move through space and time (Edwards, Gosden and Phillips 2006). The artefacts were displayed on the floor in an almost derogatory way, presenting the objects as if they were strange and exotic, and devoid of any social and historical significance.

When examining some of the changes that have been implemented in the Beit Gallery it is clear that experience, education and the spectacle are at the fore of what our visitors are going to benefit. Moreover, as Karp and Kratz (2000) have argued, museums are liable enough to be able to change their purposes and practice in relationship to societies of which they are a part. Thus, museums are taking on new roles as brokers of culture with a shift of focus from the conservation material culture towards becoming forums for negotiating social knowledge. Attempts are also

being made by most museums to include members of the community in galleries by making their stories part of exhibitions. We used a similar approach in redesigning displays in the Beit Gallery - we embraced the new museology concept which is community focused with an emphasis on community needs (Watson 2007). Thus, new museology entails that museums are no longer working for their community but with their community where there is a participatory culture in which technology facilitates user generated content (Bautista 2013). Similarly, (McCall and Gray 2014) talk of 'new museology' as transformation of museums from being exclusive and socially isolating institutions to places of engagement. This concept encourages collaboration with the local people even in making decisions in the running of the museums projects. Therefore, for the Beit Gallery new museology was embraced in order to encourage new ways of communication and expression which was in contrast to a collection-based model of the old displays. Ultimately, within the new digital display of the Beit Gallery - the old set up which was set out in such a way that curatorship was central to the museum practice was repudiated. This paved way for transforming the audience from being passive recipients of curatorial narratives into being active agents through hands on participation.

One section of the new set up in the Beit Gallery depicts the traditional music of the eastern Shona and the musical instruments that they use during leisure time performances. This is where the invention of interactivity is situated as visitors are now allowed to have a high degree of association with the musical instruments both on display and on the LED screens. The visitor is able to see and touch these musical instruments and use them in the real time as they will be illustrated on the display. This is fundamentally different from the classical approach in the traditional museum where there is no contact between the object and the visitor. This deconstructs the notion of a diorama that represents the idea of a separation between a collection and the audience. Instead of understanding objects as possessing an unproblematic concrete existence that can be apprehended visually, the exhibitions in the revamped Beit Gallery afford a multisensory interaction with the visitors thus aiding their experience.



Figure 3. An artistic impression of the interactive nature of the Beit Gallery, graphic designs by Munyaradzi Mashamaire.

Therefore, in the Beit Gallery - visitors have excess freedom in using the interactive computer interfaces that were absent in the traditional Mutare Museum set up. The spectacle itself gives visitors a maniac sense of freedom to jump into the fray and participate in a way that they have not been able to do in the past (Bruce 2006). The interactive element of the post museum applied to the case of Mutare Museum implies that visitors are consistently active participants as opposed to being passive recipients of information. It is this focus on the proactive engagement of the visitor that defines the post museum (Bruce 2006). Thus, it can be further argued that introduction of interactive LED screen and flip books in the Beit Gallery aided the reconceptualization and rethinking of the old museum practice of simply collecting and exhibiting for educational purposes. In essence electronic technology does in the museums opens the crack in time beyond what would otherwise be an array of static, silent artefacts with interpretative text (Bruce 2013). Museums today are embracing the latest technologies in their continued attempts to better serve their visitors. Digital technologies have significantly contributed to a democratic distributed experience which is allowing museums to more efficiently serve many of their different communities. Using digital technologies in museums also gives visitors agency in their own experiences and learning. Elsewhere, the other museums which offer digitised information on portable devices include the British Museum's Collection Database (Compass), the virtual museum of The Louvre on the iPhone and the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Timeline of Art History. The common feature of these digital technologies is that they enable visitors to receive information quicker and easier without time and space limitation (Yu-

Chang et.al 2012). In future, it seems inevitable that museums will become 'hybrid places, combining recreation and learning, allowing visitor's diversions from the intense stimuli of strolling through galleries and viewing multitudinous objects' (McPherson 2006).

Realism and the museum experience

The term realism is notoriously difficult to break down (Falk and Dierking 2013). However, I argue here that the pursuit of the real thing or what has been termed hyper reality has become an important tendency in contemporary cultures such that museums have been forced to adopt and display the real thing. At Mutare museum for example, visitors have been yearning for the reintroduction of live snake displays which were removed at the instigation of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) in 2006. The dilapidated aviary that used to house a variety of live birds and was rendered dysfunctional by a lack of constant maintenance is also another area of spectacular interest that used to give our visitors a real experience. The reintroduction of real experiences underpinned by live displays can help to transform this museum by giving it an alternative look to the static cultural displays. (Chipangura and Mandizvo 2014, see also Mhlanga this volume). Live animals are the most effective way to communicate animal behaviour to museum visitors.

Unlike stagnant cultural displays, a live animal can demonstrate exactly how it feeds, seeks shelter, regulates its body's temperature and reproduces (Legene 2009). Thus, a provision of live displays at Mutare museum will be fully and meaningfully connected to the fabric and real needs of the visitors. As noted by Mhlanga (this volume), the re -introduction of live animal displays at Mutare Museum will aid the reconceptualization and rethinking of the old museum practice of simply collecting and exhibiting stagnant cultural objects. The fundamental goal is to make personal experiences between the collections and the visitors, thus providing opportunities for people to get involved. Live animals offer multi-sensory experiences as they can be seen, heard, smelt and touched. This is a useful approach when presenting programs for visitors who may not be able to fully see or hear from other forms of museum interpretation. Museum visitors want to find "the real thing" in museums in the forms of authentic specimens and knowledge and live animals certainly qualify as "the real thing" (Masters 2003). The majority of people's responses to live animals are unlike that of static displays. The response is emotional, filled with fascination and amazement. The use of role plays, working exhibits, real locations, smells, sound and experience is part of this new terrain that museums have adopted to remain relevant and real (Lumley 2007).



Figure 4. Live snake display in one of the galleries at Mutare Museum, picture by author

The spectacle, education or a fun house?

Here I will grapple with three issues that undergird the sort of experiences that visitors envisage to have when they come to a museum. I look at whether such visits bring out the expected spectacular experiences, educational benefits or a probable reduction of a museum to a mere fun house as a result of excesses. Far from making the museum obsolete, multi-media displays have ensured that the once sole scholarly use of the museum has largely been replaced by the idea of a museum as a means of communication. Many museums have become curious hybrids that combine education and spectacle by using interactive participatory devices. Historically, the idea of an exhibition had to be conveyed by either the objects themselves or the accompanying written labels. Today, there are many more tools at a museums' disposal to convey information and key ideas (Bruce 2006). Drawing from our example at Mutare Museum, we have realised that most schools are reluctant to embrace the museum and its collections as a mode of instruction that relates with their curriculum (pers. communication with the Heritage Education officer at Mutare Museum). The reason being that these schools are tired of non-changing exhibits that they have described as drab and boring and can only entice excitement on the first visit and thereafter it diminishes. With the inception of re-arrangements in Beit Gallery – the introduction of multi-media displays has going regenerated the interest of schools in Mutare who used to shun visiting the museum. Most visitors today recognise that the addition of technology and multi-media into museums has opened up opportunities for both varying degrees of depth of information and options that facilitate individual flexibility and choice. This is because digital technology enables easy browsing of information about objects. Moreover, browsing helps

visitors to navigate without prior knowledge of subject content as well as offering simple and convivial form of access to information sources especially for occasional and inexpert users (Frost 2002). However, digital surrogates may lack texture, size, colour and smell of the original object. Viewing an original object in its physical environment is a distinctly different experience from the stationary viewing of surrogate objects on a computer screen. In spite of this shortfall, digital representations have their own advantages unique to digital information formats. Information in digital form can reach far wider audiences, can be accessible anywhere, anytime and provides contextual information that can enrich and inform the viewing experience. Thus, the power of digital technologies can be used to stimulate interest in a broad array of viewers and result in greater levels of engagement with the real objects in museums (Frost 2002). Overall, digital technologies in museums make it possible for learners and users in general to have easy access to many objects. They also make it possible to surround the objects with rich sets of contextual information that can inform the appreciation of the object, suggest analogies from other experiences and objects and stimulate thinking on related topics.

The ever-improving capabilities of digital technologies enable more and more of the public to achieve levels of participation and engagement that historically were reserved for the few. The public wants to play a role in co-creating content and being active participants in the museum experience itself. Education is not the only benefit the visiting public perceives that museums afford. Increasingly, the visiting public now sees museums as social settings, as places where families, couples and other social groupings can comfortably recreate. Most visitors to the museum come as part of some social group and social benefits are amongst the strongest motivations for visiting museums (American Alliance of Museums 2013). In the case of Mutare Museum, most people have expressed enthusiasm when they view cultural objects that they relate and associate with in their different social settings. Moreover, working with different groups has enabled the museum to address the deeply entrenched view of many communities of the institution as an elitist urban space that powerfully contributes to social exclusion. According to Watson (2007: 29), 'social exclusion is both about individuals being excluded from society and thus from relevant communities, and also about groups that find themselves isolated and excluded from a range of opportunities and benefits that accrue to most people living in society'. In our case, most communities felt marginalised and many were deeply aggrieved by the fact that some of the ethnographic objects with which they had strong connections, were displayed in the museum devoid of their social context and meaning (Chipangura and Chiripanhura 2017) Increasingly the museum is now redefined as an open public space that addresses topical issues within community settings in which the role of the curator is conceived as facilitator rather than a figure of excluding authority (Witcomb 2007). Therefore, in the new displays the story of the eastern Shona is told in such a way that our visitors experience the museum both in terms of education and entertainment by finding a certain degree of affiliation within their properly presented cultural objects. Their story is comprehensively told in a way that removes the element of the 'other' that previously existed in the old Beit Gallery set up (Chipangura 2017).

In many ways developing museum experiences that are entertaining and enjoyable does not mean trivialising the experience or mission of the institution. However, some have argued that multi-

media has reduced a museum into becoming a high-tech futuristic institution with no linkages with the past, they have rather become fun parks (Bruce 2006). The main concern that museums face as they become more 'recreation-focused' is that they will lose what has long been believed to be their 'integrity', and thus stray from their original missions to preserve and educate, with critics suggesting that they may simply become arenas for pleasure rather than education. To add on, some curators are happy to allow visitors to temporarily act as curators and some are critical about the way in which being an expert is portrayed in these activities – feeling that their expertise is being trivialized.

Conclusion

I have argued in this paper that the museum visitor experience is only complete when the dimensions of education and recreation are fulfilled. Drawing from numerous examples at Mutare Museum I have shown that from the very moment when one walks into a museum building the impulse will be centred on looking for education blended with real experiences. The concepts of the post museum and new museology were also critically analysed in relationship to the re-arrangement of the Beit Gallery. Here I argued that the classical museum characterised by visual observation, preservation and presentation of objects has been supplanted by a new approach that focuses on interactivity. The search for the real was also presented as a major driving force that underpins the visitor experience to a museum. Mutare museum has reintroduced back live snakes displays which are hugely popular with the public because of the real effect. The last part of the paper questioned the educational function of the museum relative to its entertainment function as seen in the eye of a visitor. An excessive use of interactive devices and models was viewed by some as having the potential of reducing a museum into fun house and thus obliterating it's all other known functions.

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Visitor research as community engagement: an investigation of visitor trends at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences.

Atanas Ruzive and Paul Mupira

Abstract

Visitors have become a very important integral part to museums. The 21st century museological practices call for museums as public institutions to transform from being sticklers to tradition, where the visitors are passive consumers of collections, exhibitions and interpretations into visitor oriented public institutions. Museums cannot continue to concentrate on collecting and exhibiting ignoring visitors, neither can they continue to turn a blind eye to the non-coming visitors. Visitors and non-visitors may have opinions, feelings and concerns about the museum which make them visit or not visit respectively. Visitor trends have a direct impact on the total fulfilment of the mission of the museum, revenue levels and the scaling of museum activities. This study sought to establish the visitor trends at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences in Harare and to unravel the cause factors behind the fluctuation of visitor numbers. The findings of the research revealed that the low level of awareness about the existence, functions and relevance of the museum is a contributing factor on the behaviour of non-visitors. It also emerged that national socio-economic challenges and political factors affect visitorship. Most importantly, the research found out that there is no visitor management policy and trend monitoring culture. This was evidenced by the nonexistence of records of visitor studies. Like any other museum, the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences needs to manage its visitors in a satisfactory manner so that they do not walk away. The museum also needs to find ways to attract non-visitors to fill the negative vacuum in visitor trends. To be relevant in society and for their sustainability, museums in Zimbabwe have to apply proper professional visitor management frameworks and policies. It is crucial that the museum knows its visitors and their respective categories so that they come up with programmes that meet their needs.

INTRODUCTION

The heartbeat of public institutions is determined by the behaviour of the publics that they serve towards them. While it may not have been clearly defined and premised in the traditional roles, functions and missions of museums, visitor studies have been taking place silently and indirectly since the beginning of museology. As long as the purpose of cabinets of curiosities of the 16th and 17th centuries and temple of muses were to satisfy people, though of a distinguished class, there was concern for the visitor in an indirect way. With time, as the numbers of museums and diversity of thrust increased, the need to attract more visitors made it indispensably necessary for museum professionals to understand their visitors more and come up with innovative ways of attracting them and for sustaining museums. However, many museums have been inward looking regarding themselves as self-contained and hence evaluation of museum programmes was and is considered to be time consuming and not cost-effective. As a result, many museums have

travelled a long path without relevant information on which to anchor managerial decisions. Today the museum as a public institution has to learn and understand its visitors in order to satisfy them and in the end achieve a reciprocal relationship. Schafer (2007) indicates that visitor studies have concentrated much on the visitors or patrons while turning a blind eye on the non-visitor. She underscores the need to investigate the non-visitor as well:

> *A good businessman or businesswoman does not concentrate on his or her regular customers alone. He or she works hard to persuade the chance or occasional customer that it is worthwhile to return. He or she tries to convert patrons who come irregularly to become regular customers. And foremost, he or she thinks about ways to activate people who have never entered the shop. In my considered view, we have to include non-visitor research in our public relations strategy. After all, every non-visitor is a potential visitor. Without non-visitor research we base strategic programming and marketing decisions on unrealistic assumptions, especially because museum experts often tend to be highly educated specialists, who are not able to communicate successfully with "everyday persons. (Schafer, 2007: 195).*

In essence, visitor studies provide information for current and future planning, leads to improved practice and facilitate dialogue with visitors. The fact that many museums are not fully seized with adequate knowledge about their visitorship might be costing them in terms of losing customers and misdirecting resources. Museums in the UK and USA have made an early wake to embrace the idea of visitor studies as a measure of accountability and performance. They have taken a more audience focused approach where studying visitor trends is essential in their day to day running of museums.

Museum visitor trends are characterised by fluctuations in visitor numbers, the times which they visit, categories of visitors and the purposes for which they visit the museum. Traditionally the main concerns of visitor studies are on the fluctuations in visitor numbers. Many researchers and museums have taken these statistics as an end in themselves. Statistical data in Zimbabwean museums shows a downward trend in the number of people visiting for the past 22 years (data collected up to 2015). At the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences, one of the largest and earliest museums in the country and our focus in this paper, the expected community is not satisfactorily and consistently visiting. It is our assumption that there are some causal factors and reasons that are repelling the potential new visitors and causing the attrition of existing visitors from the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences.

While rises and drops in visitorship appear normal and anticipated in traditional museum practice where the focus is on collecting and exhibiting, the 21st century museum is faced with a situation where the visitor is the customer or client. In the business world understanding clients is crucial in providing goods and services that meet their interests, needs and address their problems. Museums can only improve their services, client satisfaction and viability by engaging their audiences through visitor research to acquire knowledge about who visits/does not visit and

why, what does he/she want or does not want and what are the visitor patterns etc. There is need for museums to understand and to develop strong relationships with their audiences.

Visitor studies and trends analysis is important in that it generates vital information which is relevant for strategic marketing and management planning of the institution. The ways people understand, appreciate and acquaint with museological phenomena are not cast in stone, they variably change. The need for visitor studies is not only necessitated by the change in the scope of museum practices but also because audiences and the ways they experience the museum have changed over time. Advanced literacy levels and acquisition of different models of human intelligences call on the museum to research on the best ways to engage, appeal and make sense of these different types of human intelligences.

To date, there has not been any published research focusing on visitor trends done at any of the National Museums or site museums in Zimbabwe. The absence of a proper system for visitor trends analysis can be a breeding base for low visitor turnouts, attrition and dissatisfaction. For example, according to the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences (ZMHS) accounts records, the year 2009 received only 1567 paying visitors and this was the lowest number of local adult visitors recorded in the period covering 2009 to 2014. The highest number of local adult visitors over the same period was 2551 recorded in the year 2012. Despite this, no systematic studies have been carried out to interrogate and understand these trends. The prevailing scenario might have serious ramifications on the financial status of the museum since visitors inject a lot into the financial bowl through entrance fees, purchases of books and paraphernalia and research fees. Ultimately, the fluctuations affect the museum in that it will not be able to fully carry out its mandate. Besides visitors' financial contribution, it is disturbing to see that the public is not visiting a public institution, a heritage custodian, visual entertainment centre and a library of collections deemed important judging from partial Government funding from the taxpayer's money.

This paper uses the case of the ZMHS to reawaken the system and promote the idea of visitor studies as a way of engaging, empowering and improving museum experience. It seeks to establish what is known about visitor trends in Zimbabwe in order to have a solid standpoint from where to look into the causal factors behind those trends. In essence the paper interrogates how the internal frameworks of the ZHMS affect visitors and also the perspectives of the museum management on visitor management mechanisms. This will help the museum to know how they can develop sustainable engagement with visitors. In addition, the paper unravels some of the factors that are repelling prospective visitors from visiting the museum. In the data analysis the paper looks at the demographic distribution of visitors and non-visitors to the ZMHS; factors influencing the decisions and actions taken by visitors and non-visitors and assesses the visitor trends monitoring frameworks at the museum and the interventions it can take to improve visitorship. ZMHS was found very suitable for this kind of research being in the capital city Harare where millions of local and foreign visitors pass through and a fair sample could be naturally netted in as research participants.

Museum visitor studies concept and implications for museums.

The ways in which people behave including visiting or not visiting museums is a complex matter. The quantification of visitor demographic categories alone will not adequately give insight towards a clear understanding of why visitors come to the museum and why non-visitors do not come (Falk, 1998).

> *"The makeup of the museum visitor is perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of museum history for historians to uncover. Historians of museums have often noted that before the field of Visitor Studies grew to prominence, museums often envisioned their audiences as nameless, faceless masses. Historians have either painted this public as composed of members of the privileged elite or as those receptive to being shaped by the elite cultural institutions." (Redman, 2010:1).*

Henningsson (2010:1) defines visitor studies as a multi-disciplinary field of scientific research, with the interest of consulting users in various museums, galleries, heritage sites, science centres and similar informal learning settings. According to Henningsson, the essence of visitor studies is to get feedback on what the museum wishes to communicate. Museums should not take the number of visitors as a wholesome response to mean visitor satisfaction or lack of it. Numbers do not speak hence the need to get the real word expression on whether the visitors are actually responding to the museum initiatives by visiting. Lang *et al* (2006:8) justify visitor studies as a branch of marketing through which organisations can map the vision and forward planning for the museum. They suggest that, researching and debating on the significant attributes of the organisation should assist in matching the needs and interests of different audiences.

While visitor studies may have been done since the beginning of museology it was not considered as key and important function hence it might have been done indirectly for its own sake and treated trivially. Henry Higgins, the founder of the British Museums Association introduced visitor studies 131 years ago. In 1884, Higgins offered one of the first visitor survey reports in the transactions of the literary and philosophical society of Liverpool. McManus (1996) made a study of the work done by Higgins and he derived the conclusions that this might have marked the birth of the museological concern to get the views of visitors. The early strand of visitor studies was descriptive focusing on who comes to the museum and why? The second strand was mainly behavioural and knowledge gain studies. The central theory to both dimensions was the psychological emphasis on stimulus and response. The focus was on the experience of visitor inside the museum and little or no care was taken to look at how we can make the visitor come to the museum (Falk 2011). The third strand took into account the exhibitors and visitor interests, experiences, motivations and autonomy (McManus, 1996). This strand tried to pull together the ideas of those who make the exhibition and the visitors who see the exhibition so as to come up with a visitor-oriented museum (McManus, 1991).

Liu (2008) also divided museum visitor studies into three categories, namely; visitor evaluation studies focusing on the evaluation of museums, activities and exhibitions conducted according to

the results of done events; visitor market studies, mainly collecting visitors' reactions and probing into visitors' views and emotions and exploratory studies of theoretical validation involving precise academic research upon different subjects, such as psychology and sociology. Housen (1987) suggests that a museum can also know about her visitors from three angles which are demographic data, attitudinal information and developmental situations (logic and level of comprehension).

There appears to be an unquestionable agreement on demographic studies as the entry point to visitor studies. However, Falk (2009) argues that although museums are entitled to create visitor profiles based on visitors' identities, museum staff should look beyond demographic and psychographic statistics that are entirely based on age, gender, ethnicity, education, occupation, lifestyle, attitudes, and personal values. This is because these fixed characteristics of visitors' identities do not reflect the motivations, needs, and interests of a museum visitor on any given day. Meluch (2014) demonstrates that visitor studies should assist in answering the question 'how can we know how the experiences we design are impacting visitors?' Guided by the above notions of various authorities, this study adopted the visitor demographic approach as an entry point and adapted Liu's third dimension of visitor market studies and McManus's third strand of visitor focused studies because the intention was to probe the views and realities of visitors, non-visitors and museum personnel on the cause factors behind the observed visitor trends at the ZMHS.

One of the aims of visitor studies is to establish visitor trends. While there is not yet a distinct definition of what museum visitor trends is, traditional practices and beliefs have implied visitor trends to mean the variability of numerically expressed phenomena such as increases and decreases in visitor numbers. In an annual report on visitor attractions and trends in England of 2010 that was prepared by BDRC continental and published by Visit England (2010) visitor trends were classified under different categories. The Visit England publication of 2010 was able to portray visitor trends as the dynamics of visitor volume, geographic location, place of origin of visitors, classes of people visiting different visitor attractions and admission types (i.e. free or paid). In the contemporary studies researchers and museum professionals imply visitor trends to mean demographic statistical data covering who visits the museum, their gender, age and educational level, nationality, when do they visit and what do they want to see in the museum. In identifying a missing link to this, Housen (1987) suggested that visitors' attitudes need to be studied also (see also Chieh-Wen Sheng and Ming-Chia Chen, 2011). Attitude surveys allow the visitor to 'talk' for themselves and 'tell their own story', that is leading to attitudes, behaviours and visiting and not visiting the museum. Thus, demographics alone are not adequate as indicators of what causes certain visitor trends. There is therefore a chance to unravel the real underlying substance and information that would help museums in planning and decision making.

Visitor studies in Zimbabwe

Museums are regarded as a very significant component of the cultural tourism sector of Zimbabwe. As reflected in the NMMZ annual records since the colonial era, museums have

received foreign and local visitors of different categories which include children and adults. Although there has been an indirect visitor study insular to the day to day running of the museum business, the information obtained cannot be regarded as professionally researched visitor information. The problem of not carrying out visitor studies is not peculiar to Zimbabwe alone but other African countries also. Chaterera & Nyawo (2013:214) say Museum professionals in Africa lament the lack of audience research to determine what people would want to see and argue that this has resulted in gluing national museums in Africa to the western ways of thinking. While the above statement by Chaterera and Nyawo stands true, it does not mean the absence of visitor concern in museums. The annual reports of the NMMZ from pre- to post- independence epochs reflect some trends in visitor patterns and also try to give in an abstract manner, socioeconomic issues such as droughts and political reasons as explanations behind phenomena. The implication of the reflections in the annual reports is that visitors matter to the museums. Although the reports do not give much description on visitor contexts, they clearly portray that visitors are determinants of observable developments in overall museum operations in Zimbabwe.

Although not much ground has been covered with regards to visitor studies in Zimbabwe, there are some unpublished visitor surveys which National Museums undertook. For example, the Museum of Transport and Antiquities in Mutare has on record two important surveys that were carried at the museum and Ziwa Site Museum in Nyanga. The visitor survey at Mutare Museum was carried out in 1998 and aimed at finding out what visitors thought of the museum Murambiwa (1999). The information was intended to help the museum in designing and providing better services. 305 people were surveyed using a self-completion questionnaire asking on demographic statistical data covering gender, age, race and educational level, nationality, place of origin, sources of information about the museum, how often people visited and with whom, motives for visiting and what they wanted to see in the museum (Katayi and Mupira 1999). This survey has been instrumental in the changes that were made recently in the Beit Gallery displays (see Chipangura 2013)

The purpose of the Ziwa visitor study conducted in 1999-2000 was to evaluate the desirability of various activities and attractions for visitors to Ziwa National Monuments and site museum. The information was needed for designing the right products and facilities for visitor enjoyment at the Ziwa National Monuments. 176 people were interviewed in the Ziwa visitor survey. The results of the survey provided essential information regarding existing visitor profiles, as well as presenting a clear picture of visitor awareness levels and perception of Ziwa and the greater Nyanga district and were used in developing of a marketing plan for Ziwa (Mupira 2001).

Besides the Mutare and Ziwa visitor surveys, the ZMHS carried out a mini market research survey during a Swedish Africa Museums Project (Mupira pers.com) in the 1990s. However, details of this study could not be located at the museum due to staff changes. These surveys are indicative of possible positive movement by Zimbabwean museums towards professional visitor studies and management. The studies however were mainly focusing on visitors who physically visited the sites and did not look at the concerns of non-visitors. The said surveys could be the

only form of visitor studies done and lack of consistency of such practices seems to justify the concern over lack of audience research raised by Chaterera and Nyawo (2013).

Methodology

This research was both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative tools were used to harness the opinions, realities feelings, perceptions and behaviours of participants (visitors, non-visitors, museum professionals). Such data can be best described in detailed narratives than numerically. The qualitative question items stretched beyond obtaining information and opinions to allowing further probing and enabling us to decipher the richness of para-language, emotional expressions and motivations of respondents that could not be expressed verbally. Narrative data also helped us in explaining numerical phenomena obtained through quantitative tools such as visitor statistics and the distribution of visitor attributes.

The quantitative dimension was essential to establish statistical reliability of demographic variables such as age, sex and social classification. This data was obtained through analysing archival documents that included visitor records, accounts records, ZMHS annual reports and conducting visitor surveys. Quantitative research methods were used to find out about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena such as finding out the numbers of museum visitors, their spending patterns and their categories (Leedy & Ormrod 2005:94).

The views, opinions, feelings expectations and experiences of visitors and non-visitors and from museum professionals were harnessed through the visitor survey. Because of the qualitative orientation of the research document study and empirical study methods were used. Data aimed at providing a clearer understanding of museum visitor or customer trends was obtained from museum classified information which included accounts records, annual reports and visitor comments books. Empirical information was sought from selected research participants who were identified from museum visitors, non-visitors and professionals.

Purposive sampling was used to choose interviewees among museum management and officers. Participants were drawn from non-visitors and visitors to the museum using the same strategy. Working class, tertiary students, primary school children, parents and teachers were included in the sample. Due to the limited nature of the study, it was necessary to take a decision about the individual participants who were most likely to give appropriate information, both in terms of relevance and depth. Primary school children who were visiting the museum were not interviewed because their level of comprehension of the subject was considered to be low and instead the teachers who were leading primary school teams were interviewed because they have rich data from their own perspectives as professionals,

In this research, 70 non-visitors, 70 visitors, and 10 museum professionals made up the sample. A total of 150 respondents was therefore targeted. However, only 104 people responded, made

up of 50 non-visitors, 44 visitors and 10 NMMZ officials. The sample though small was found to be adequate for demonstrating the efficacy of visitor studies.

Oral interviews, a questionnaire with open ended questions, observations and document review were used as research instruments. However, setbacks were encountered with document study in that records at the ZMHS were incomplete. The sections that follow give a detailed description of the findings.

The ZMHS visitor trends

The survey looked at available records to establish the patterns and degree of visitor fluctuations at the ZMHS, in intervals of ten years over a period of 30 years beginning from 1984 to 2014. It was also important in this research to capture the ZMHS pre-independence visitorship picture to have a full understanding of the post-independence museum visitorship patterns. This was found necessary because the attainment of political independence ushered in a new dispensation of freedoms and reconstruction of the social strata integrating the black African races and the white races in Zimbabwe. However, the visitor figures data at ZMHS is sketchy owing to missing or unavailable data at the time the research was conducted and hence there are so many gaps in data records.

The ZMHS pre-independence era visitor trends

The table below shows the ZMHS, (former Queen Victoria) Museum visitor statistics for the period 1969 to 1979. Records for the period 1974 to 1978 were not found.

Table 1. Visitor statistics for the period 1969 to 1978

PERIOD /YEAR	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
NUMBER OF VISITORS	23 200	26 020	35 360	37 800	44 840	***	***	***	***	51937

The data shows an upward trend in visitor numbers throughout the ten-year period with the rise between 1970 and 1971 being the most significant when a total increase of 9340 visitors was experienced. While there are four years with no records, it can be maintained that visitor numbers continued to increase because the highest number of visitors (51937) was recorded in 1978. Bell-cross (1974) seems to indicate that the ZMHS was quite conscious of the need to improve visitorship and the museum management was engaging in rigorous marketing initiatives including radio, newspaper and television advertising.

Visitor trends in the post-independence era

While the pre-independence era was characterised by a seemingly consistent incremental growth in visitorship year after year, the dawn of independence saw a sudden leap in the number of

visitors coming to the museum than during the colonial era. For example, in the year 1981, there were 62621 visitors as compared to 51937 visitors for the year 1978. This shows an increase margin of 10686 over a period of two years.

The consistent yearly increase of visitors began to submerge, and fluctuations began to show from 1984 (Table 2). Visitor figures are missing for the years 1988 to 1993. However, In the NMMZ 1988/9 annual report ZMHS stated "a significant fall in visitorship" contributed by a "44% decline in student visitors and … 22% in meeting attendance" (NMMZ Annual Report 1988-1990:39).

PERIOD /YEAR	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
NUMBER OF VISITORS	61263	62621	70486	61780	65728	56728	88460	****	****	****	****	****	****

Table 2. Post-independence visitor trends (1984 to 1993)

The table above reflects the turbulence that characterised the visitor patterns at the ZMHS in the post independent Zimbabwe. The NMMZ annual report for the period 1984 to 1987 shows phenomenal rise of 75% from a drop of 28% in 1982/3 with student visitorship contributing to the growth. The report attributed the upswing in local visitorship to museums and monuments to an increased interest by locals to visit their monuments. The then rise in student visitorship was seen as an indicator of possible good or high domestic tourism. The factors given here were based on probable cause rather than a professional systematic visitor study and monitoring system making the reasons speculative.

The overall positive growth trend in the 1980s could have been triggered by optimism brought about by majority rule and a reflection of independence and freedom for the locals to access their heritage. Independence opened a wider door for more visitors including the locals who were politically restricted and socially disconnected from their heritage. The other strong factor is that in the 1980s to 1990s museums continued to offer free entry to all children and school parties. Nevertheless, this political turn should have been accompanied by visitor studies and an adjustment of visitor management frameworks to understand and meet the needs of a changed and diverse multiracial visitorship.

The ZMHS visitor records for the twenty-year period from 1994 to 2008 could not be accessed. Although, NMMZ has annual reports for the period 1994-1997 these do not give visitor

statistics as in early years. Since 1996 NMMZ does not seem to have published annual reports. The period 2000 to 2008 coincides with the turbulent patch in Zimbabwe's history arising from the Fast Track Land Reforms that resulted in the general deterioration of socio-economic systems. During the period 2007 to 2008 there was hyperinflation which almost grounded business operations over the whole nation. Thus because of the economic setbacks which the country went through, visitorship records should they become available will show a steady decline. The failure by people to visit museums during these periods of escalated economic crisis can be attributed to the fact that people had to stretch far and work hard to put bread on the table hence they could not spare a minute or a dollar to visit the museum where they would be expected to pay entrance fees. Visitor numbers started picking up from 2009 to 2011 a period that saw the introduction of the multi-currency system to replace the Zimbabwean dollar and an improvement in the country's economic system. However, these figures were nowhere near the 1980s figures. In the years 2012 and 2013, the visitor numbers began to fall again. It is interesting to note that after the 1980s visitor bubble the museum has struggled to reach or surpass figures above 25000 or those reached in the colonial period between 1971 and 1978 (compare Tables 1, 2 and 3). It is clear therefore that the museum is progressively being disengaged from its audiences a situation that requires rectification in the future to improve visitation and community support. Why this is the case will be revealed later in this paper.

Table 3. ZMHS visitor numbers (2005 to 2014)

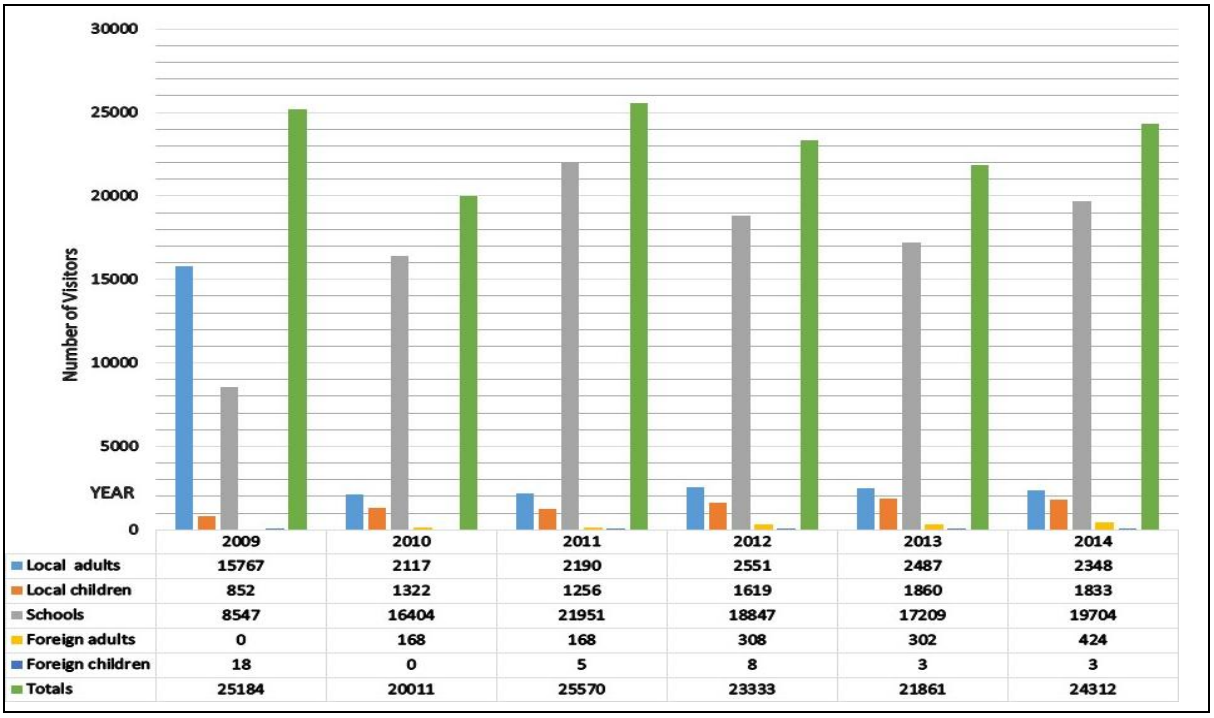
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of visitors	***	***	***	***	25184	20011	25570	23333	21861	24312

Who is visiting the ZMHS?

The research sought to establish who the visitors to the ZMHS are and as well get to identify who is not visiting the ZMHS. Observations made over a period of two months could not be solely relied upon to be a true reflection of who visits the museum and who does not. As such, documents which included visitor records, visitor comment books and accounting records were used to augment the visitor survey.

The museum archival documents that were available for review from1968 to 1987 only gave the totals of visitors but did not give information to do with the categories of those visitors. However, accounts documents covering the period 2009 to 2014 that were found at the ZMHS categorised the museum paying visitors as local adults, local children, schools, foreign adults and foreign children. Figure 1 gives the visitor patterns showing the number of visitors per category per year from 2009 to 2014.

The highest numbers of visitors for the period 2009 to 2014 were school children who visit the museum on school organised trips. This category is followed distantly by local adults and children respectively. As reflected above, the overall number of foreign children and adult visitors is glaringly low. The ZMHS visitor numbers have fluctuated under the different socio-political and economic episodes in the country in a manner that suggests that the macro environment affect the museum activities.



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Local adults	15767	2117	2190	2551	2487	2348
Local children	852	1322	1256	1619	1860	1833
Schools	8547	16404	21951	18847	17209	19704
Foreign adults	0	168	168	308	302	424
Foreign children	18	0	5	8	3	3
Totals	25184	20011	25570	23333	21861	24312

Figure 1. Visitor statistics for the period 2009 to 2014

The visitor survey confirmed the documentary evidence that primary schools constitute the biggest volume of visitors at the ZMHS. School children come as classes on school organised trips and during the period of study schools coming from all over Zimbabwe were encountered. There were also primary school children who were visiting as heritage clubs and these were mainly interested in the museum schools' heritage quiz programme. All the teachers who participated in this study at the museum had visited the museum before, not on their own accord, personal initiative, and personal interest but as a fulfilment of duty, being team leaders of school trips and as patrons of heritage quiz clubs at schools.

The classes visit as organised groups and they come as scheduled by the school as part of curriculum fulfilment. School teachers who lead the visiting teams highlighted that they scheduled on their school calendars at least a single educational trip for each class every year. The heritage quiz clubs highlighted that the quiz competitions that are organised by the museum attracted them most. Teachers responded that the museum visits were very beneficial to their students in that they saw the real and concrete images of what they have read in books and

besides, pupils enjoy educational trips. The teachers indicated that the museum visit was very effective in aiding students' understanding of what they teach especially in history and science.

There were only two secondary schools out of the twenty-four schools that visited the ZMH over the three-week period of the physical visitor survey. There were no secondary or tertiary students who were visiting the museum either as individuals or under school organised educational tour during the period of study. It was very surprising that no tertiary students were visiting the museum over a period of three months when the ZMHS is situated in Harare almost central to the University of Zimbabwe, Belvedere Technical Teachers College, Harare Polytechnic, Morgan Zintec College, Harare Institute of Technology, Women's' University in Africa, Catholic University and other private colleges.

Participants' awareness and knowledge about the ZMHS.

Participants were asked whether they knew the ZMHS and how they got to know about the ZMHS. Ninety percent of non-visitors respondents among them tertiary students (54%), families (20%) and individual adults (18%) did not know about the ZMHS. Fifty-four of non-visitors indicated that they learnt about museums from primary school. Two percent of non-visitors got to know about the about the existence of the ZMHS from national television programmes and 3% from the NMMZ website. However, their knowledge was assumptive, relating the museum as a place that is concerned about the dead people and objects that belonged to the deceased. 85% of non-visiting tertiary students stated that they got to know about museums through reading and they gave an academic description than experiential knowledge of the museum. 80% of visiting adults indicated that they remembered the ZMHS from their primary school arranged educational tours, the rest said they came to the museum out of curiosity (7%) and to do research (13%).

50% of the school team leaders from various parts of the country indicated that they did not know about the ZMHS and they only got to know the place during a visit to Harare.

Geographic location of the ZMHS

The physical location of a public space is very important as far as accessibility and easy identification is concerned. One of the objectives in this study was to find out how the location of the museum could affect visitorship. The location of the museum emerged as one of the factors that de-stimulated potential visitors from coming to the museum. The ZMHS is located on the periphery of the town centre, sharing borders with a tertiary institution and a library. The ZMHS front faces the Rainbow Towers which is the country's biggest international hotel. The museum is along a busy highway. There is no direct road leading to the museum from the highway. There is no signage to alert travellers on the highway which passes behind the museum building. A pair of independent adult visitors said, "We did not know that there is a museum here. We were attracted by the art outside, the animal statues we saw." The outside appearance of the museum building can therefore be a factor that causes people to visit or not visit the museum. The labelling of the building is facing the western side and the back of the museum is on the highway. Only those who know it will turn around to get into the museum.

One of the participants who work across the road behind the museum, in her response to the question on what caused her not to visit the ZMHS responded, "I finish work at half past four and I may want to visit but this road (Rotten Row) is very busy throughout the day. It is risky to cross this road". 40% of tertiary students and 1 family indicated that they would prefer visiting places that are a bit out of town for leisure and amusement. This suggests that the place where the museum is located was best in its early stages but with current developments in its immediate environment, it is no longer easily accessible and identifiable with the public and this may be directly affecting visitorship. It was disturbing to hear 85% of interviewees walking past the back of the museum saying they did not know where the ZMHS was. It was also observed that ZMHS is located on the periphery of the CBD and far from most of the key bus termini in town (1-3km in most cases). Potential visitors who use public transport may consider the museum to be too far to walk to unless they already have a conviction to visit before travelling to the City Centre.

Why other people visit the ZMHS and why others do not?

Apart from the location, it was established that there are many other dimensions as to why some people visit the museum and others do not visit. Visitors added a layer of concerns over what may cause them not to visit again while non-visitors gave suggestions on what the ZMHS may need to do in order to draw them to the museum.

Museum visitors of different categories who responded indicated that there are always pull factors and push factors to their visiting and also to their non-return. It was observed that 4% of the people who visit the museum do so out of own desire to concretise assumptions and discover concrete evidence to theoretical knowledge. 5% visit out of individual curiosity while 10% come to prove what they have heard from school and other sources. The factors that cause people to visit include curriculum obligations (75%), museum public initiatives (18%), leisure (15%) and personal quest for discovery (5%) (Table 4).

Table 4. Visitor's reasons for coming to ZMHS

CATEGORY	MAJOR REASON FOR VISITING
Tertiary students	Discovery, Research, Curiosity, Entertainment.
Independent adults	Own desire to concretise early acquired information, leisure and discovery, inspired by previous visits to other museums
College lecturers/ teachers	curriculum obligations, research, search for knowledge
Independent adults	Inspired by visiting other museums
Teacher (school team leaders)	Curriculum obligations, Response to museum public awareness initiatives

Independent Individual adults	Search for knowledge, leisure and entertainment,
Families	Leisure, entertainment.

86% of adult visitors who participated in the study highlighted that museums are a rich and reliable bank of historical information and evidence, and hence are visited to get reliable and authentic information on own and national history and culture. People still go to the museum to get 'reliable' historical information about themselves and about national issues. It was interesting to note that there were three tertiary students who were looking for information to assist them do their assignment in National and Strategic Studies, a course which the Zimbabwean government has made mandatory for all tertiary programmes. The topic of study was the causes and effects of the 3rd *Chimurenga* in Zimbabwe.

During the oral interview, the Regional Director of ZMHS was asked why he thought people should visit the ZMHS than other museums and he confidently boasted that one of the strengths of the ZMHS is rigorous research by the museum staff, a hard-working spirit and a daring attitude in research. Tertiary students and independent adult respondents found the ZMHS library to be a rich resource for research and they visit the museum to learn about what happened in the past and the material culture of value. 30% of independent adult visitors and 50% of tertiary students visited the museum to experience rare objects and have a view interesting exhibition. School teachers expressed a great appreciation to the museum over the heritage quiz programme indicating that it is the programme that attracts them to visit the museum.

Things that visitors want the museum to improve

For visitors to have a positive experience they should have understood what they viewed in the museum. Interpretation is central to making the audience understand collections and exhibitions. As such, interpretive narratives should be simple for the audience to understand and also in languages that people from different cultures understand. This study established that text narratives accompanying exhibitions are difficult to understand for primary school children. 2 teachers who were responding as team leaders of visiting schools, speaking separately pointed out that use of local languages such as *Shona* and *Ndebele* could help their school pupils to understand better what they viewed in the museum. "The dominance of English over local languages on interpretive narratives does not impress me, particularly knowing that it is my history and culture which is Shona being interpreted", complained one adult after his tour in the ZMHS. Five visitors who participated in the study raised the concern that, "The museum should use different languages which can be understood by different people. They should also make use of Ndebele and Shona to strengthen the meaning". "In some places it (text) is too much for touring and needs a lot of time to go through" said one teacher. "Using local languages will help us to save time because then our students will read and understand on their own, so we will not

have to depend on the pace of the tour guide", said the other teachers leading a school team. 86% of the visitors requested that there should be handouts or flyers of exhibitions and interpretation narratives which the museum can give to visitors for them to carry home. Although it is not easily achievable to give interpretive narratives in every language, an effort should be made to at least cover the language of the origin of the objects being exhibited so that the people who 'own' or originate the objects prove that the interpretive narrative is accurate and mean what it should.

Enlivening the museum is central to sustainability of the museum and also visitor enhancement. Visitors are very concerned by the way the museum presents itself to the outside through the exhibitions and also in collections. "They should improve the appearance of the reception area to be more aesthetically appealing and attracting and entertaining" said one adult visitor. It was established that visitors are not impressed by seeing the same old exhibitions over and over again. 3 visitors complained that they were visiting the ZMHS after five years, but they were not impressed to see the same exhibitions again. "They should improve the section of displays with wild animals because they are deteriorating. They look too old" responded another participant. Most of the permanent exhibitions in the ZMHS have been in place since the 1960s. 50% of tertiary students' visitors expressed that "the museum should also exhibit objects from the 18th century to the present to show continuity of developments that took place until the 21st century. They should cover more about our different cultures and local history. They should introduce new things in the museum."

It deters visitors when they make comments and recommendations which the museum does not listen to. One direct complaint echoed by a visitor went, "I commented that the lighting in galleries is poor and needs to be improved but it seems you just make us write our comments for the sake of it".

To make an emphatic appeal and to give superior experiential value, the museum today should device ways of presenting heritages that are diverse and augment traditional methods of display with modern ones. The young generation of today has a high affinity for technology and hence the digitisation of collections and exhibitions will definitely be the accurate bait for them. Tertiary students (45%) responded that videos and movies of the wars like the 1st and the 2nd Chimurenga are needed to augment the text narratives and graphic representations in the ZMHS.

A disturbing scenario pertaining to visitors who come in large numbers was observed during the study. Visiting groups are normally too large to move as a single group hence tour guides divide them into two or more groups. The groups then take turns to get entry, but the problem is that there is no proper waiting space outside the museum. There were very touching sentiments raised by many visitors about the lack of a suitable facility or pavilion for visitors awaiting a chance to access the museum. A number of school team leaders bemoaned the absence of a proper pavilion where they could rest, refresh and feed their pupils. "There is no place for us to relax and chat while we wait for our turn to enter and also when we wait for our friends who are still touring inside"; "The museum should build shelter or sheds so that visitors can sit and hide from the rains and scotching sun", lamented some visitors responding to the question of how they could

describe the experience they had during their tour of the ZMHS. Visiting school groups have to assemble outside in the open space to do their logistics such as feeding their students and doing roll call. The outside open environment is not conducive under extreme conditions of rains and the scotching sun. Figure 2 shows a group of secondary school students, sitting on the floor at the entrance of the museum awaiting their turn to get into the museum and a group of primary school students who had visited the museum feeding whilst seated on a grassy ground in the open space outside the ZMHS.



a



b

Fig 2. Students seated on a hard floor (a) and on patchy grass (b) outside the ZMHS awaiting their chance to enter the museum.

A place which receives large volumes of school pupils should have convenient facilities for its visitors to be comfortable while at the venue.

The ZMHS has pegged tariffs for different categories of local adults, local children, foreign children, foreign adults and researchers. The ZMHS charges entrance fees of $1,00 for local children, $3,00 for local adults, $20 for local tertiary students doing research, $5 for foreign children and $10,00 for foreign adults. Museum management has conceded that they have turned away some visitors who did not have adequate entrance fees. There are also tariffs that are paid if a visitor wants to access the museum library and to take photographs in the museum.

There were mixed sentiments about the entrance fee of $3.00 for local adults with 15% of visitors saying it is fair while 80% of visitors said the charge was too much for them. 30 % of local adults and tertiary students complained that $3.00 that was charged on local adults was too much. Normally when people visit a place of interest, they would want photographs to carry home. The ZMHS charges a fee for taking photographs separately from the entrance fee. All the schools said they would be happy if the charge for photography is factored in the entrance fees. “The entrance fees they charge us should also cover the use of cameras. It becomes more expensive when they charge us a fee for our cameras. We want photographs of ourselves and of artefacts inside the museum”, complained some 2 tertiary students and 1 independent adult.

There are visitors who spend the whole day at the museum, particularly academic researchers. Such visitors need to have refreshments at the museum. Visitors who come also want to refresh after the museum tour. Like many other local national museums, the ZMHS has a small business unit that sells refreshments but it operates at a very limited capacity. However, it is not a proper kiosk and in most cases under stocked. Visitors have to buy from the receptionist and there is no proper display of what is on offer (Figure 3). There is no clear signage for the kiosk and it is therefore difficult for visitors to notice for themselves. A proper kiosk has the potential to draw more visitors because travellers may just be coming for refreshments or souvenirs but in the end develop interest to tour the museum. Visitors who come to the museum for leisure and entertainment are likely not to visit again if they find no refreshments. Visitors usually prefer where they get a full package of entertainment and refreshments.



Figure 3. The ZMHS kiosk is not properly organised. Drinks are stashed behind the reception desk.

The study found out that besides selling of drinks, which is done like an 'under the desk' agenda, there is a showcase which is meant for displaying artefacts or curios on sale placed in dark hidden corner and with only a handful of socks with rock art prints.

Like any other museum the ZMHS contains volumes of relevant and valuable information that is needed by scholars and even for family consumption. It is difficult for touring parties to make notes adequately for the whole tour of the museum. It was therefore a concern raised by 78% of schools and all tertiary students that the museum should make documentaries of research information and package more organised information on compact discs which people can buy and play for themselves when they go back to their homes or schools. This would enable different categories of visitors to access discs with information they are interested in. Packaging information on compact discs is also a way of marketing the museum and may cause more people to visit the museum and some even coming to buy the packages of information.

The use of ICTs has become the heartbeat of organisations in this modern era as this presents the museum with opportunities to appeal to different categories of visitors. All primary schools team leaders and tertiary students interviewed indicated that there is need for the museum to embrace the use of ICTs holistically. 25% of schools team leaders recommended touch screen galleries and kiosks for young children and also the physically disadvantaged and visually impaired.

Why non-visitors do not come

The non-visitors who are also potential visitors raised issues that are discussed below. The majority of non-visitors interviewed (86%) thought that museums are of historical and cultural importance to society. However, as already discussed most non-visitors did not know about the ZMHS. 85% of non-visitors attributed their non-visiting to lack of knowledge and being unaware of the ZMHS, while 5% gave lack of interest and other reasons. 80% of non-visitor respondents said the museum is not visible on television and not heard on radio. 60% of non-visitors said they now spend a lot of time on the internet and it would be more convenient for them to access museum information from the web. The study established that the ZMHS does not have its own independent website and relies on the NMMZ website which has windows for all the national museums and heritage sites. As a result, the ZMHS does not have a window to do intensive marketing for their own programmes. The ZMHS marketing manager admitted that the education outreach programme which targets mainly primary schools is the only direct public awareness initiative that the ZMHS runs. The museum should conduct marketing initiatives that reach its audiences and potential audiences through the most effective media. Most of the non-visitors indicated that they often receive marketing and advertisements clips from various organisations on social media and also on their cell phones. This indicates that should the ZMHS prefer social media as marketing platform, it would be able to reach some prospective visitors.

There are economic and social factors that lead to people not visiting the museum. Economic hardships appear to be having compressing effects where people have to make a careful selection of what to buy and what not to buy basing on a list of priorities. All non-visiting families and 75% of tertiary students indicated lack of funds as one of the reasons for not visiting the museum. For the past two decades, Zimbabwe has been under severe economic recession and the majority of workers have been earning below the poverty datum line, hence museum visiting is at the moment not a priority compared to more pressing everyday needs such as food, electricity, water, education, and decent accommodation.

There are also cultural factors that emerged as cited by 55% of non-visitor tertiary students who believed that museum objects are effigies of the dead and that they reflect the western colonial white race culture. Museum professionals indicated several issues which they believed contributed to visitor fluctuations. The issues raised included cultural beliefs of local people, economic hardships, political factors, economic sanctions, lack of awareness in the public, inadequate resources in the museum, limited marketing capacity of the museum, lack of training of personnel on visitor management and customer care. If the museum must embark on visitor improvement initiatives, there is need for sound financial resourcing of programmes. The

museum management at ZMHS pointed out that while they may have viable ideas that can boost visitorship they were very much financially incapacitated. The norm is that the museum runs on a grant from the Fiscus but due to the national economic setbacks, the financial supply has shrunk. Under normal circumstances, 80% of the museum's core business is oiled by the fiscal supply from Government treasury while entrance fees cater for 20%. This has forced the museum to rely heavily on entrance fees to fund operations. It also emerged that the museum is not able to carry out all the planned awareness and outreach programmes due to lack of finances and inadequate vehicles to facilitate mobility.

Marketing the museum

The study established that the ZMHS markets itself through the heritage education outreach programmes and exhibitions at the Agricultural shows, Sanganai/Hlanganani Travel Exposition and the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF). While the heritage education programme is a more direct and effective marketing strategy which has yielded tremendous results for the museum, the other strategies are indirect and have not produced fruits that are seen. The museum has strategized to market itself through brochures and pamphlets but due to financial resources, the last production of free brochures was ten years ago. There are two types of brochures at the ZMHS: the marketing and educative one which is for free and the traveller's guide brochures that are for sale. At present, visitors can only access the traveller's guide upon requesting for it. The absence of information brochures starves the visitors and prospective visitors in that they do not have adequate detailed and accurate information about the museum. An observation made on the reception area of the museum established that there is no single printed information that visitors can take to show the next person whom they will meet and who as well may also be motivated to visit. It was however pleasing to discover that the ZMHS has had its first calendar ever in 2015 and five hundred copies were printed and distributed to the public. This is a very positive development by the marketing department because information can be cascaded to faraway places and to prospective visitors. The difficult and key issue is whether this can be sustained. There is need for the museum to market itself and find ways of keeping the different publics aware of what is happening in the museums. The ZMHS has to prove to the adult community that it just does not exist to serve school children.

Discussion

Emerging from the findings, visitorship and trends are susceptible to knowledge and awareness. Chitima (2013:109) blames lack of knowledge and awareness as a key cause of non-visitation to museums and points out that "Having knowledge about museums is an important pre-requisite for visiting." He is of the view that people will not make efforts to visit places which they do not have adequate information about. When the public is not aware about the existence, location and functions of public institutions which are there to serve them, it reflects a very wide yawning gap in the public image of the museum. The situation may reflect the existence of the traditional and old practice of the museum to say, 'collect and they will come' whereas today museums should reflect 'how should we make them come'.

People from different walks of life will not be motivated to visit public institutions unless they are aware of them and have relevant knowledge of what they do and their significance in their lives. There are some respondents who confused the museums with art galleries to the effect that some thought the ZMHS was the National Art Gallery in Harare. This trend is not peculiar to the ZMHS alone. The public in Zimbabwe generally has a wrong image of museums. NMMZ must therefore unroll public awareness campaigns and education programmes to all categories of visitors and potential visitors in order to improve or change public perception on who they are and what they do. The degree of importance and relevance that one gives to the museum results in an attenuated desire to visit. Many of non-visitors have pre-conceived perceptions and are not being fully appraised about the museums and their functions. Properly devised marketing strategies can influence positive attitude in potential visitors. The communication tools that are used by the museum to reach its audience are very important and cannot be chosen blindly. The validity and authenticity of information communicated relies on the reliability of the tools used to communicate.

There is some discord between the communication media used by the ZMHS and that which most participants prefer and frequently use. The ZMHS uses the Facebook, the outreach programmes and the agricultural shows to market itself while most of the participants indicated that they rely on internet, cell phone and television. It also uses the NMMZ website where the ZMHS is featured among other museums. The Facebook, as said by the marketing manager, is mainly followed by museum personnel and friends of the museum. This, to us is not effective as a marketing tool because it is not open to the wider audience. While Facebook is one of the in-things through which many museums globally are using to reach out to their wider audiences, there is no single respondent who indicated that they got to know about the ZMHS from Facebook. It is used as more of an internal communication platform which the general public cannot access for active interaction. A professionally developed webpage should be able to take account and give an accurate record of how many people have visited the website. Those who visit can also link their friends to the web address and through that the museum would have increased visitor numbers without having all visitors to physically walk to the museum house. The Natural History Museum in Bulawayo website is a good example of a well-functioning stand-alone and active website.

There are a number of options which the ZMHS can pursue to capitalise on its current geographical location and boost visitorship. A high volume of traffic behind the museum can be an advantage. The museum can pitch up a large bill board to advertise itself to travellers. Signage can also be placed along the highway to inform the travellers where the museum is and give directions for physical access. Electronic screen boards can be mounted at the backside of the museum along the highway to advertise special events, exhibitions and programmes that are run by the museum. This may be an effective way of attracting new visitors and also retaining old visitors.

Traditionally museums did not charge entrance fees, but the dwindling government financial support has forced not only the ZMHS but other museums worldwide to introduce entrance fees.

Mupira (this volume) has demonstrated that entrance fees are repelling hundreds of visitors. While some form of cost recovery is necessary, Chitima (2013:100) suggests that it is necessary for museums to revise the entrance fees that are charged downwards. "Museum's entrance fee should bear a relation to those of competitors in terms of the museum's product offerings and should be perceived by visitors as being reasonable". As the marketplace in general becomes more competitive and pricing becomes an even more pressing issue, discounting should be considered more widely.

Economic hardships have serious negative ramifications on museum visiting and militate against any concerted efforts being made by museums in Zimbabwe to boost visitorship. In the same vein, when people do not have meaningful disposable incomes, they do not prioritise museum visits.

There is no framework or template for visitor trends and monitoring at the ZMHS. The visitor statistics record which is designed to monitor revenue generated through entrance fees does not qualify to be used as a proper visitor trends record. It took a period of two months for the accounts personnel at the museum to compile the information on visitor statistics from their accounting records. The absence of independent, detailed and readily available visitor records is clear evidence that there is no clear policy on visitor trends monitoring at the museum and within the NMMZ system for that matter.

A proper visitor trends monitoring, and analysis system should have a template with provisions for the museum to capture important information about visitors which can then be used to improve visitorship. For example, what areas in the museum do visitors recommend change? What times of the day do visitors prefer visiting the museum? We argue that the absence of a proper visitor trends monitoring and analysis template is a key cause factor for downward visitor trends at the ZMHS and in the national museums in the sense that the museums areas not aware of the interests of visitors and prospective visitors. It is difficult and almost impossible to sustainably have a level of control on visitor trends if there is no routine systematic collecting of visitor information. If national museums are to draw new visitors, then there is absolute need for visitor surveys from where information concerning who is visiting and who is not is generated. Such information would then be used for market segmentation and target marketing.



Figure 4. Museum direction sign on the highway

The physical infrastructure of an organisation plays an important role in visitor attraction or lack of it. In this study it was established that potential visitors who were found just near the museum building professed ignorance about the existence of the ZMHS. There were people who do their activities around and near the ZMHS but they remained uninterested to walk in. Some said they did not know what the building was for. This directly translates to poor visual appeal to the public. There is no signage that clearly directs the public to the ZMHS. The only form of indication is an unclear poster at the robot intersection about 80meters from the museum. It is not clear whether the post is directing people to the Harare city library or the library in the museum, (see figure 4).

The signage is also at a very congested place where the public in traffic can hardly notice it. The size of the signage is small for passing traffic to notice and there are many other signs with road names and traffic lights. As reflected in figure 4 there is no signage directing and informing the passing public about the existence of the museum and giving access directions. The Harare City Library which shares borders with the museum has proper signage. The museum visitors' car park is behind the museum building but there is no signage to direct the visitors. Instead, there is a public barricading signage indicating that there is parking space for museum vehicles only and not for visitors, (see figure 5).



Figure 5. Public library sign and sign indicating museum staff parking but there is no sign for public parking.

Besides the museum building itself, the supporting physical structures such as a pavilion outside the museum is a very important factor in visitor management. Such pavilions can be used by organised groups of visitors, such as schools, to have their heritage education lessons. The absence of a waiting place for large groups of visitors at the ZMHS results in school children having to brave extreme weather conditions whilst waiting to enter the museum. This may directly influence the decisions of visitors and non-visitors to come or not to come. It is therefore recommended that a shelter for large groups of visitors be constructed outside the museum.

For museums to effectively market themselves and to be able retain sustainable relationships with the audience, they should go through a paradigm shift. They have to adjust and begin to view and treat their visitors as customers or clients. One of the curators, in responding to the question of how visitor fluctuations affect the core business of the museum, responded that, "our duty is to research, collect and exhibit so whether people come or not, we are not affected". As already stated, this statement is still hinged in the past, when the museum still worked with the 'collect and they will come' mind set. The way we treat a customer at the museum has potential to attract or repel new or repeat visitors.

Conclusion

The ZMHS has experienced its lowest levels of visitorship in the last ten years. Emerging cause factors for non-visitors and low visitorship include very low level of awareness about the ZMHS and lack of appreciation, economic hardships, socio-cultural backgrounds and lack of relevant information. The effects of low visitor turnout to ZMHS include reduced revenue levels and low-level public activity. There is no link between the communication media used by the potential visitors and the methods used by the ZMHS and this might also be contributing to undesirably lower levels of public awareness and ultimately low visitor turnout. Customer service

at the ZMHS needs improvement to include a proper canteen where visitors and potential visitors can get refreshments and a place for groups to rest before and after touring. There is need for formal and professionally compiled visitor studies data and a management policy to achieve sustainable visitorship levels.

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Archaeology, museums and communities: engaging and sharing archaeological knowledge with communities in Zimunya Communal area, eastern Zimbabwe

Seke Katsamudanga

Abstract

This paper discusses the efforts by archaeologists at the University of Zimbabwe (hereafter UZ) and officials of the Mutare museum to provide for participation and sharing of archaeological and heritage knowledge with local communities in south eastern Zimbabwe. The discussion is centred around two archaeology research projects carried out in the area from 2002 to 2012. The paper details what is now known of the archaeology of the area stretching from Zimunya communal area to Madhuku village in Chipinge south and links it to the museum service. As the museum in general provides a context for both learning and entertainment, mediated by both formal and informal structures of learning, the need to engage the public in the interpretation of some of the remains becomes apparent. In addition, by being aware of the archaeological heritage in their area, the community may find ways of utilising it for their own development. Thus, archaeology and museums have to be responsive to community needs, and play a critical role in providing local communities with both knowledge and content that they can use and be associated with.

Introduction

Archaeology and museums have always had a close relationship. The public museum developed from displays of collections, many of them archaeological, owned by noble families and rich private collectors. Some of the cultural collections might have been artefacts ransacked from archaeological sites, especially those classic sites with evidence of earliest forms of 'civilization'. Some were acquired as spoils of war, for example the pillaging of Egyptian pyramids in the 18th century by Napoleon Bonaparte 1 explains the many Egyptian artefacts found in European museums today. The purpose of these collections was to educate noble children and later, the public, on how well travelled the collector was as well as awareness of cultures in other areas. Eventually such collections ended up being publicly exhibited leading to the growth of public museums.

In the early days, a public museum was supposed to be orderly, providing scientific knowledge and offering an educational service, particularly to the middle and upper classes (Bennett 1995). As the development of museums spread from the developed to the developing world, particularly in the 19th Century AD, they carried with them this educational service, often exhibiting and curating archaeological and ethnographic collections from the areas colonised. It can be inferred from this that archaeology and ethnography (as sources of some of the things exhibited in museums) have been the basis upon which many African museums developed. However, instead of educating local communities, most of the African museums alienated them because the collections were either taken from sacred localities or were acquired by brutal force. Further, the

colonial context in which most museums in Africa developed was there to serve the interests of the colonialists.

Due to its history, the role of the African museum today is frequently misunderstood. The same applies to the discipline of archaeology that supplied some of the collections in these museums. Colonial administration and the approaches to artefact collection created the rift with African communities. It was necessary therefore for archaeology and the museum institution to engage local communities to remain relevant. It has also been considered ethical in the archaeology arena to make people be aware of what is happening with their heritage. They can participate in making decisions on archaeological research and can decide on which archaeological sites can be investigated. In addition, the need to engage the public in the interpretation of some of the remains is apparent, especially in the era where multivocality in archaeology is being emphasised. By being aware of the archaeological heritage in their area, the community may find ways of utilising it for their own development. Thus, archaeology and museums have to be responsive to community needs, and play a critical role in providing local communities with both knowledge and content that they can use and be associated with. As a memory institution, the museum provides the context for learning (and sometimes leisure and entertainment).

Against the backdrop provided above, this paper discusses the efforts to engage local communities in Zimunya communal area in archaeological research. This attempt resulted in interesting lessons which may influence future archaeological research as well as museum business. The researcher is aware that museum officials have always been engaging local communities in other matters. However, the tripartite approach involving universities, museums and local communities is rarely analysed. Quite often archaeology is not well understood by local communities.

The role of the museum

Museums have always been associated with exhibiting past natural and cultural objects. This has brought museums into a close relationship with archaeology which supplied most of the remains, or has provided the interpretation of them. Museums have also been associated with *fairs* due to their preponderance to exhibition. The modern museum institution however is now perceived as the opposite of fairs by virtue of being orderly, scientific and not necessarily playing to sensationalism as the earlier cabinets of curiosity (Bennett 1995). Some of the collections in the early museums were frequently archaeological, ransacked from numerous archaeological sites, especially those classical sites that represented earliest evidence of civilization. We can infer from this that archaeology (as one of the sources of things exhibited in museums) and the public audiences (or alternatively communities) provide the basis upon which most cultural and historical museums are important. The museum was supposed to be a public institution that was expected to be orderly, scientific and providing an educational service. Although archaeology provided rare and fascinating objects that could be displayed in the museums, the main purpose of the 19th century museum was educational, distinguishing it from cabinets of curiosities and disorderly fairs of that period (Bennett 1995).

From the origins and definition of the term museum, it is also clear that museums are associated with learning (Dean 1994). It should be expected therefore that the individual who goes to a museum should come out wiser and learned. The original idea of a museum was that it was meant for contemplation by the Greek muses (Alexander E. P and Alexander, M. 2008). Up to the present, the museum institution has continued to uphold this mandate. Although there are winds of change coming into this institution, it is apparent that most museums will remain educational centres for the foreseeable future given that most of the patrons these days are school children. Leisure and entertainment are additional components to the educational service, but are no longer the main purpose.

In the context of a museum, archaeological remains are interpreted and exhibited so that their history is told and their meaning is provided. Unfortunately, due to the value of some of the relics, displaying authentic artefacts in museum galleries has risks. Although artefacts come from specific geographic spaces and may be well understood when presented on site, resources make it difficult to have a museum for every site. This is why it has been necessary to have centrally located museums that display what comes from the surrounding areas, their interpretations weaved, networked and synthesized so that the history of an area, not just of a single site is presented. Larger sites however can have onsite museums.

Most museums that developed in the colonial period did not relinquish their mandate to educate and entertain after independence. However, the post-colonial context did not redefine the content in the museums as they continued to hold ethnographic material and archaeological artefacts (and sometimes human remains). The museum institution has often been criticised for being irrelevant to indigenous communities as the content usually mirrors that in most of the African communities. The museums have however become relevant to a younger generation that seeks knowledge about its past. It is clear that some of the criticisms are now a generational issue. Today, hundreds of school children flock past the museum doors to learn about their African past. This is even becoming more important as time continues to separate the colonial context further and further away from the present, an aspect that is reflected through material culture and cultural life of different communities. This is more valid for the urban communities than their rural counterparts. Supported by the location of most of the museums, the urban population happens to be the immediate consumers of museum education and services. Thus, archaeological material and ethnographic collections in museums suddenly have a huge audience to serve.

Given the foregoing, museums therefore remain important nodes of learning. With reference to Zimbabwe, archaeological research has continued to provide the bulk of the collections in the national museums. However, the practice where artefacts are taken from research areas without the participation of local communities is now being frowned upon. I therefore discuss the two projects conducted in south eastern Zimbabwe which engaged local communities to participate in some of the components of the projects so as to create an awareness amongst members of the

communities on what archaeology is all about, how it is conducted as well as to understand the nature of the material that was recovered.

The archaeology of Zimunya Communal Lands

This paper discusses the efforts by archaeologists at the University of Zimbabwe (hereafter UZ) and officials of the Mutare museum to provide for participation of local communities in south eastern Zimbabwe in archaeological research. The discussion is centred around two archaeology research projects carried out in the area between 2002 and 2012. By the time of their conclusion, the two archaeological research projects had recorded several kinds of information from Zimunya Communal Lands, Chimanimani and Chipinge areas. Most of the sites recorded were Stone Age rock art. A few of the shelters with rock art had stone artefacts on the floor surface; the artefacts belonging to the Early, Middle and Later Stone Age periods, although the bulk were Later Stone Age material (Soper 2005; Mupira and Katsamudanga 2007; Katsamudanga 2007; Bandama 2013, Mudzana and Siyahamba 2015). The Early and Middle Stone Age artefacts were fewer that Later Stone Age material, consequently the artefacts could not be assigned to specific lithic industries (see Katsamudanga 2007, 2015; Katsamudanga et al. 2015; Mudzana and Siyahamba 2015).

The Later Stone Age material was classified as *pfupi* (Soper 2005; Katsamudanga 2007, Bandama 2008, 2013) a Stone Age industry typically represented well in Western Zimbabwe in the Matopos but known in that area as the Nswatugi industry (Walker and Thorpe 1997). Mudzana and Siyahamba (2015) however have identified material that they think is similar to Dombozanga and Pomongwe industries. There are numerous backed bladelets in the material from Zimunya Communal area (see Soper 2005; Bandama 2013).

In addition to stone artefacts, faunal remains, ostrich eggshell beads, and a few pottery remains were recorded and analysed. The faunal remains are mostly of small animals such as the greater cane rat, lizards, small primates such as the optolemus, although the water buck was also identified (see Katsamudanga 2007; Katsamudanga *et al.,* 2015). Most of the animals identified are typical species of savanna biomes although the water-loving greater cane rat and waterbuck may be considered endemic to the region given that the eastern highlands have pockets of tropical rainforests and perennial rivers such as the Save and Odzi. Some of the animals identified in the excavated faunal remains are also represented in the rock art, for example, the warthog. However, the larger animals such as giraffe, kudu and elephant that appear on the rock art were not recovered from the excavated contexts.

The rock art has been adequately described by Nhamo (2007, 2014, Nhamo and Bonyongwa 2015). At Tsvimbanwa site there are geometrics in red and white paint. There are several sites with images of women who seem to be dancing. An immaculately drawn kudu, drawn from the head to the neck only, appears at Chiuya site. The kudu is a dominant animal in the art (Nhamo 2007) while species such as the lion (*leo panthera*) and flying ants are also found, particularly at

sites in Chitora valley. Other important images include the enigmatic labyrinth at Muromo rock site, the 'stork' birds at Manjowe and the formling in Chitora valley.

Pits and stone built structures

In the Vumba mountains remains of pit structures were recorded at three localities: one in the recreational park surrounding the Vumba botanical gardens and the other in farms west of the botanical gardens. One of the farms is *dzimbabwe* named so during the Fast Track Land Reform programme that began in the year 2000. In addition, there are remnants of structures that were either associated with the Portuguese presence before the colonisation of southern Zambezia or were associated with evictions at the time of the establishment of white owned farms in the Vumba area. Some pit structures of the Nyanga type (see Soper 2002, 2006; Mupira 2009) were reported in Nyambeya forest (see National Archaeological Survey Database) although these could not be relocated during surveys for the data discussed here. In addition to pit structures, there are some terraces west of Hwangura Mountains and were reported to exist in Tsetsera mountains. The former are currently being used in crop cultivation. However, there was no detailed investigation to determine their age. Stone built stone structures other than terraces were also recorded in Tsetsera and in the hills along Chitora valley. Most of these are stone walls enclosing small spaces under small shelters. There are also remains of metal processing sites, especially at the foot of Tsetsera Mountains.

Sacred sites: local connections with the past

The Zimunya Communal Lands are now home to people of varied backgrounds but the chieftaincy traces its origins from the breakup of the Mutapa dynasty in the 18th/19th centuries AD (interview with the late headman Munyoro). According to Headman Munyoro, a group of people whose descendants now call themselves the Zimunya or Jindwi moved southwards from the Mutapa core area in northern Zimbabwe and settled somewhere in Svosve near Marondera. Some of their clansmen are still in that area, identified with the *soko* totem. A hunting expedition to the east later brought the Zimunya people to Vumba Mountains an area that was owned by the Mutore people whose totem is the flying ant (*ishwa*). The Zimunya people have a legend of how they became rulers in the Vumba. They claim that it was upon sharing an elephant carcass that the Mutore people refused to take the meat from the side that was in contact with the ground. When the Zimunya people took this meat, they argued that it symbolized connections with the land and hence they got control of the land. This should be seen as a very simplified explanation of what might be complex issues and events over control of the area which today is well watered than much of the Zimunya communal area. Why the Mutore group of people were not aware of such implications is not clear. Whether the land was taken without a fight is also not clear although oral accounts from the area seem to suggest that the Mutore simply decided not to fight because the Zimunya had spears, from which they got their other name, *Jindwi* (interview with the late Headman Munyoro, 2004).

According to oral accounts from the research area, the Mutore people are believed to have subsisted then on uncooked meat as they did not use fire. Why that was the case is again not

clear. However, between 2004 and 2007, the time when archaeological surveys for the *Ancestral Landscapes of Manyikaland* research project were conducted in the Zimunya area, there were people who still claimed to be descendants of this Mutore group. Further south of Chipinge, the Musikavanhu chieftainship claims that their ancestors did not use fire, although they do not claim any connection with the Mutore people. Historians such as Bannerman (1982) and archaeologists, for example, Thorpe (2005) suggest that hunting and gathering in south eastern Zimbabwe might have ended as late as the 15th century AD. These researchers however do not suggest that the hunter-gatherers in the area did not use fire. Archaeological evidence in southern Africa has demonstrated that hunter-gatherers began to use fire more than 1 million years ago (Deacon and Deacon 1999; Mitchell 2002; Berna *et al*., 2012). If there were people who were not using fire in the 15th century AD it should have been by design, not that they could have been hunter-gatherer.

There are sacred places in the Zimunya Communal lands that also have archaeological remains. These include Madzimbabwe, located about 60km from Mutare city along the Mutare-Masvingo road. A detailed discussion of this site and its significance to the local community has been presented in Pwiti *et al*., (2007). According to Mr Muuya (the spirit medium associated with the conduct of this ceremony) the main rainmaking ceremony for the Zimunya area is held at this site (Muuya 2004, *pers. comm*). Although such ceremonies have been conducted at this shrine for a long time (there are six graves associated with this rainmaking spirit), the local community did not seem to know that there were archaeological remains until the visit by archaeologists in 2004 and 2005. At the shrine and in the shelters therein, there are burials of spirit mediums associated with the rainmaking in Zimunya.

Several kilometres to the east of this shrine there are the Manjowe rock shelters which are also in a sacred area. In general, mountains are revered amongst the people of eastern Zimbabwe, which makes much of Zimunya Communal Lands a sacred area as it is largely mountainous. The sacred sites connect the local people with the archaeological remains in the area even though the communities may not directly realise it (Pwiti *et al*., 2007).

From 2007 to 2012, the research shifted to Chimanimani and Chipinge and operating under the title *Archaeology and Tradition in eastern Zimbabwe*. More time was spent conducting surveys and excavations in Chipinge although a few surveys were conducted to the west and east of Chimanimani Township. In the western area some stone structures were recorded while to the east, that is the Outward Bound, the evidence was mostly in the form of rock art.

Engaging the communities

The participation of local communities in the research projects began right from the inception of the first phase in 2002. A trip to seek permission to research and sensitize the community of Zimunya about the archaeology project took the research team to superintendent Musabayana who was acting Chief Zimunya at the time and stationed at Rowa Township. After he was handed the project document a brief discussion followed about what the project sought to achieve. He gave his blessings for the project and even highlighted a few interesting points about

the Zimunya chieftainship. For example, he mentioned that the Zimunya people killed some Nguni warriors in the first half of the 19th century by tricking the warriors to eat a poisonous tuber that the people left cooking on the fire. The idea was to make it appear like the Zimunya people were preparing to eat the tuber when suddenly they were disturbed by the Nguni and left for cover. The Nguni soldiers ate the tuber and perished. Superintendent Musabayana also spoke of sacred things in the Rowa mountain and that the Zimunya chieftancy cannot be manipulated because the ancestors have a way of dealing with those who claim the chieftainship in spurious ways. The story of poisonous tubers was later repeated by other informants, including a descendent of the Zimunya Chieftainship who at the time of the research was staying in the Burma Valley.

Archaeological Surveying with local communities

When the first field survey commenced in the area, the research team visited the four headmen and several village heads in the Zimunya area to discuss the project. Later, a councillor in the area *Bambo* Aaron Zimunya and the chief's messenger *Bambo* Oliver Zengeya took part in the archaeological survey guiding the team to rock art sites in the area. The two elders advised and 'taught' the team on traditional etiquette when moving about in the bushes and forests in this sacred landscape. They performed some of these little rituals such as carrying some snuff and spilling a little of that stuff on the ground, at the same time informing the ancestors about the presence of the survey team and its mission. The traditional leaders were expected to communicate with the rest of the local community and explain the purpose of the project. They were also expected to guide the researchers, and alert the team on sacred areas and some of the taboos to follow.

In subsequent survey visits, other people from the villages participated but mainly on a voluntary basis. While the local community provided local knowledge about the location of archaeological sites, sacred areas and taboos to be followed, they also gained knowledge from the researchers and university students, particularly on identification of stone artefacts, how and when rock art was made and the people directly associated with it, management issues for the preservation of the art and importance of archaeological sites for tourism. The most important aspect of the project for these communities was that it was documenting their heritage as well as leading to the writing of their history. Usually, after the first few days of surveys local communities lose their verve as the rigour associated with systematic surveys sets and becomes monotonous. Unless its paying, participation in the research activities interferes with local activities and routines.

Participation in exhibitions

On 2 April 2004 five schools (two secondary and three primary schools) from the research area in Zimunya participated in a rock art exhibition at Mutare museum. The exhibition was jointly organised by the UZ archaeologists and staff of the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe stationed at Mutare Museum. The school pupils took part in a quiz and a drawing competition to reproduce the rock art frieze at Diana's Vow rock art site found in Rusape (Figure 1). The participating students were selected by the school authorities and the best three in each

category of the competition won prize money and books. There was a prize for each of the schools. In addition to schools, the general public visiting or residing in Mutare city and members of the local traditional leadership from Zimunya were invited to the opening ceremony (Figure 1).

The exhibition provided a learning environment in which both pupils and school teachers learnt more about the development of rock art in southern Africa and specifically in Zimbabwe. The researchers explained using posters and digital media how the art has been interpreted in the southern African sub-region. The exhibition demonstrated why it is important for present generations to preserve this heritage as it has educational value and the capability to inspire people, especially artists. In addition, its economic value through tourism has been abundantly demonstrated within Zimbabwe, for example, at sites such as Domboshava and Matobo World Heritage Landscape. Pupils were given a chance to practise rock art painting on models of rock shelters incorporated in the exhibition an exercise that produced much excitement.







Figure 1. (a) Drawings of the rock art from Daina's Vow that won in the competition, (b) Students enjoying some of the drawing and the exhibition, (c) Students receiving awards.

The whole idea with the competition was to create awareness among the local communities on the importance of archaeological remains, particularly rock art, so that they would help in its preservation. It had been observed during the research that some of the sites had graffiti demonstrating the need for protection. It was apparent that much of the graffiti was perpetrated by young people who should be of school going age. It was therefore important to communicate to the students the message about the importance of the art and the need to stop the graffiti. The exhibition also sought to equip the teachers with knowledge regarding the interpretation of the art and other archaeological remains. This was especially important given that there are very few teachers who were trained in archaeology. Archaeology begins to appear as a separate discipline at university level and training in archaeological research only happens at that level (see Katsamudanga 2015a).

Local communities and excavations

Where permission for excavation was granted, young boys and girls from the nearby villages would come to watch the proceedings (Figure 2). In the first project, excavations at Manjowe were conducted under the watch and participation of the village leader (Mr Muranda) in whose village the site was located. Mr Muranda ensured that every day the excavating team left the forest early enough to avoid breaking the taboos of the area. He also spelt out what not to say or do in the bushes (see Nhamo and Katsamudanga 2005, Makasva DVD). The engagement provided contexts for fertile discussions. The team respected the wishes of their village leaders and the community that he represented. At Gwenzi and Mhandambiri, school children and some school leavers visited the excavation site and engaged with the researchers.



Figure 2. Excavations in progress and village members watching.

Ethnographic studies regarding rainmaking

Later, the archaeologists were allowed to record preparations for a rain making ceremony which involved use of the sacred shelter where there were stone artefacts and rock art (Figure 3). The occasion provided a means to explain some of the pottery remains that are found in rock shelters.



Figure 3. Ethnographic pottery: explain some of the pottery remains that are found in rock shelters

The preparations for the rainmaking ceremony and the ceremony itself demonstrated the richness of the Zimunya heritage. The meanings of some of the songs, dances, gestures and rituals provided an understanding of the important traditions associated with rainmaking.

For the *Archaeology and Tradition* project, similar processes as in the first project occurred. A visit was paid to the late Chief Mutema, alerting him to the research project and later to seek access to the Mutema stone built structures. Chief Musikavanhu was also approached and briefed about the research and permission was sought to work at the stone enclosure near his residence. Permission to view the enclosure was granted while excavations required an elaborate ritual ceremony which the project could not afford (see Pwiti *et al*. 2015). In the end most of the work for this project concentrated on surveys in Chipinge and to a limited extent the forest plantations in Chimanimani. Surveys were conducted west and east of Chimanimani Township where stone enclosures were recorded in the former area and rock art was the major evidence in the latter, particularly in Outward Bound. In Chipinge, the surveys were conducted mainly in the Chikwanda area, Tanganda Halt, Mt Selinda. Excavations were conducted at Chikwanda enclosures (Kapumha, *forthcoming*), Mhandambiri rock art shelter (Katsamudanga 2015b, Katsamudanga *et al*., 2015) and Ndongo site (Shenjere 2011). The village heads and headmen of these areas were briefed and they granted their approval.

A seminar with chiefs

In October 2012, a seminar was organised in Mutare City hosted by the University of Zimbabwe in partnership with National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ). The audience for this seminar included three chiefs (Chief Zimunya, Chief Musikavanhu and Chief Mutema), representatives from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, and other stakeholders. In addition, the seminar was also attended by the Ambassador of Norway to Zimbabwe and members from a number of government ministries. The seminar provided a discussion point for archaeologists, museum professionals and local communities. Although the subject of discussion was archaeology and archaeological heritage, there were other presentations that were of interest to the various stakeholders such as community initiatives in conserving the Ndongo national monument in the Save valley, the tourism potential in the research area and the role that chiefs could play in archaeological and heritage research. Several papers were presented revealing the rich archaeological data and heritage in the area. The thrust of the seminar was to make sure that local communities were made aware of, and get to know and understand the two archaeology projects, why this was important and how that could be of benefit to them. In addition, the seminar enabled the discussion of community perspectives to archaeology and their own efforts to harness archaeological heritage for local development. In respect of the latter, a presentation by Gladman Chibememe dealt with community efforts carried out by the CHIEHA Trust in the area under chief Gudo to create a facility for eco-tourism in the Save Valley (see also Pwiti *et al*., 2015).

Discussion: The museum as a learning centre and information dissemination point

With regard to Zimunya Communal area, results of the archaeological investigations have been packaged in journals and book chapters but these are less accessible to the people of the area. Although the University researchers were aware of this, there were no adequate resources at the time to enable packaging this knowledge in more accessible formats. An attempt was however, made in 2005 to produce a documentary connecting the archaeological research in Zimunya with the extant raining making ceremony. In addition, although Mutare Museum has the record of what was recovered through surveys and excavations, it does not have most of the actual artefacts recovered. People interested in these artefacts have to travel to the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences in Harare. More detail can be accessed in Volume 9 of the ***Zimbabwea*** journal that is in the Library of the Museum and at the University of Zimbabwe.

The exhibition of 2004 mentioned earlier was launched to help spread the knowledge of archaeology (Figure 4). The museum in Mutare became alive to its public mandate, a place of learning, sharing and exchanging knowledge and information. It can be said that in this context; the museum played and fulfilled its traditional role of educating the public. However, the geographical distance between the researchers and the research areas, meant that much of the recovered artefacts, data and knowledge is no longer in the area of research. The researchers may have to think of other strategies to provide feedback to the communities. One way is to go digital. With the enabling environment created by the expansion of telecommunication networks in the country, a virtual portal can be created to provide access to the Zimunya people and the rest of Zimbabwe and the world.



Figure 4. a). Billboard announcing the rock art exhibition and, b) a poster display in Mutare museum about the rock art from Zimunya.

Throughout the research, the officials of Mutare museum were involved in establishing contacts with the local communities, participating in surveys and excavations and the mounting and presentation of exhibitions. The museum was very critical as it linked the archaeological research with the local communities. The museum also provided the space to allow for public learning through exhibitions. The museum was later provided with a copy of Volume 9 of the *Zimbabwea* journal. This was produced as a special issue of the journal to allow for the publication of results of the archaeology research project. In addition, it was also expected to find means to show case the DVD on archaeology and rainmaking (Directed by Nhamo and Katsamudanga and produced by Mo Fun Dot Com studio in 2005). The DVD also presents data from excavations and its interpretation from an academic perspective.

In the second project, similar strategies applied in the Zimunya project were used, visiting the traditional leadership in the area for permission to survey and excavate. An important event here was the seminar that was held at the Holiday Inn in Mutare city. The involvement of the chiefs was meant to provide them with feedback from the research. It was assumed that they had given the go ahead to research within their areas as an expectation although this was never formally said. It was also meant to assess how they viewed the results of the research.

What does this mean to the people of Zimunya?

One of the aims/objectives of the research projects was to build community awareness to archaeology and heritage in their areas. The projects mentioned above, particularly the first one also aimed at developing some of the archaeological sites as destinations for tourism. There was a proposition to have a small site museum at Gwenzi, Zimunya Township or at another business centre in the area. Since this thought came later after the project implementation, it had not been budgeted for and therefore could not be realised. A site or community museum would have been necessary for the local communities to enjoy their heritage and to know the archaeological reconstructions made from their area. Some of the excavated remains, especially animal remains, have important implications to knowledge on climate change that will provide adaptive strategies to present communities as they try to mitigate the effects of modern-day climate change.

Around the world museums have evolved from being built structures to open air ones where interpretive panels are erected at a site for interpretive purposes. The other way would be to erect virtual museums where archaeological remains from the area are displayed online with relevant interpretations. Given the global advances in technological developments one can access such museums through their cell phones. They do not have to travel to a physical museum structure as such. With such a medium, the individual will be able to communicate with the managers of the virtual museum to provide feedback, comment on something or provide their own interpretations (see Storaas *et al.* 2013).

Audio-visual recordings that can then be broadcast are also some of the means to communicate with the local communities concerning the archaeological remains in their areas. Although this can also be done by other institutions that are not museums, a museum can still have such broadcasts as extensions of its services. If possible, the museum can own a broadcasting licence and operate its own broadcasting station. That might be in the distant future though. The viable alternative is to have the museum without walls, online and upload content to interact with the people. The *Archaeology and Traditions in eastern Zimbabwe project* developed a blog (*https://zimarchaeology.w.uib.no/?page_id=204*) as a way of disseminating knowledge about the research area. Earlier, the team had produced a DVD on rainmaking and the connections that the shrine and the people had with archaeological remains. Small film clips are on *YouTube*. There is evidence that people, including university students have been visiting and viewing these clips.

Unfortunately, the platforms created and mentioned above were not interactive, except for the physical exhibition on rock art and a seminar held in the city of Mutare. Efforts are underway to try and make the blog interactive.

Conclusion

Museums expropriate the heritage of local communities but display it to a wider community. The exhibited material becomes more meaningful and important when viewed by a variety of the publics that visit museums. The museum provides a platform for knowing and appreciating the diversity of cultures and recognizing their connections with their departed ancestors.

Archaeological research reconstructs these connections while museums provide contexts for their presentation.

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Live displays: popularity and demand in museums

Netsai Margaret Mhlanga

Abstract

Several museums world over are now incorporating live displays for several reasons. Thus, they have shifted from exhibiting the traditional stuffed animals to live ones. This paper explores the diverse motivations for this shift and how the live displays have become popular, as well as the magnitude of the demand for live displays, using Mutare Museum as a case study. Upon its official opening in September 1964, Mutare museum had live snakes on display among several dead stuffed animals. The diversity of live displays increased over the subsequent years with the inclusion of birds, tortoises, bees and fish, while the stuffed animals remained static. During 2006 snakes and birds were removed and recently snakes were re-introduced. Data for this paper was pooled from visitor's comment books at Mutare Museum and complimented with available literature.

Introduction

According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the definition of a museum is far broader as it includes institutions holding collections of live plant and animal specimens (ICOM, 2015). Some critics however perceive museums as a 'dead place', without life, only displaying objects and animal and plant casts. Recent years have however seen a rise in popularity of live animal and plant displays in museums and their demand for those museums which do not have such displays. This paper aims to assess the popularity and demand for live displays at Mutare Museum. Normally live displays are common in zoos, arboretums and aquariums, but this does not mean that museums cannot display them. In some museums live displays are perceived as "tools" for education that show the "real thing" (Milson, 1990).

From its inauguration in 1964 Mutare Museum had both live snakes (Gabon vipers and vine snakes) and stuffed animals (Figure 1). The variety of live displays increased with time, with the inclusion on display of a forest cobra, bees, fish and birds, tortoises, several indigenous trees in the outdoor aviary. At its peak in the 1980s the aviary had a bird population of 633 representing 58 species. However, it was always difficult to maintain. During 1999 the Museum engaged the Mutare Round Table for assistance in repairing and re-developing the aviary. The redevelopment entailed addition of a walk-through path, restocking and a computerised data base and interpretation of birds. By the mid 2000 the aviary had deteriorated further and in 2006 all the birds escaped through holes that had developed in the fence and the snakes in the indoor displays were removed from display due to economic challenges. Soon after this move the public started demanding that the displays be reinstated. Thus, Mutare Museum makes a perfect case study for the 'popularity and demand for live displays.

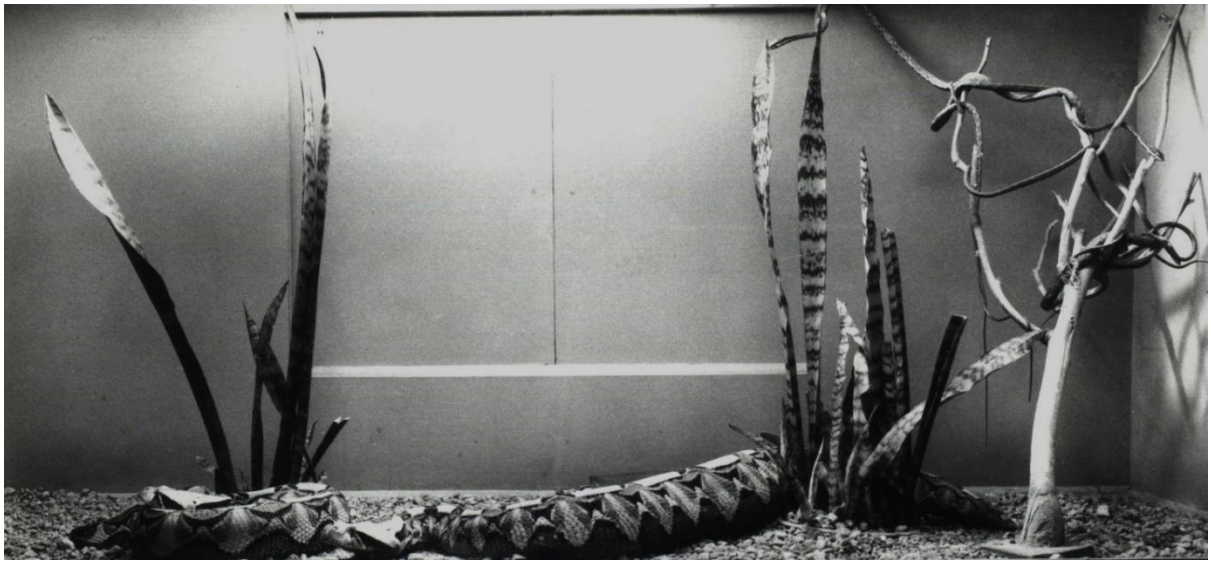


Figure 1. Gabon viper on display at Mutare Museum.

The author referred to visitors' comments book at Mutare Museum from 1964 to date. Each comment was read and records of the number of people who praised live displays (for the period when they were on display), number of people demanding for live displays (when they were taken away) was noted. Interviews were also held with front office staff as some visitors do not write in comment books. Other literature, although limited, was used to assess the popularity and demand of live displays at a global scale. The visitors' comments books used were as follows:

- 2005 – 2006 (when the museum and snakes, bees, birds and fish on display)
- 2006 – 2010 (when only bees and fish were on display)

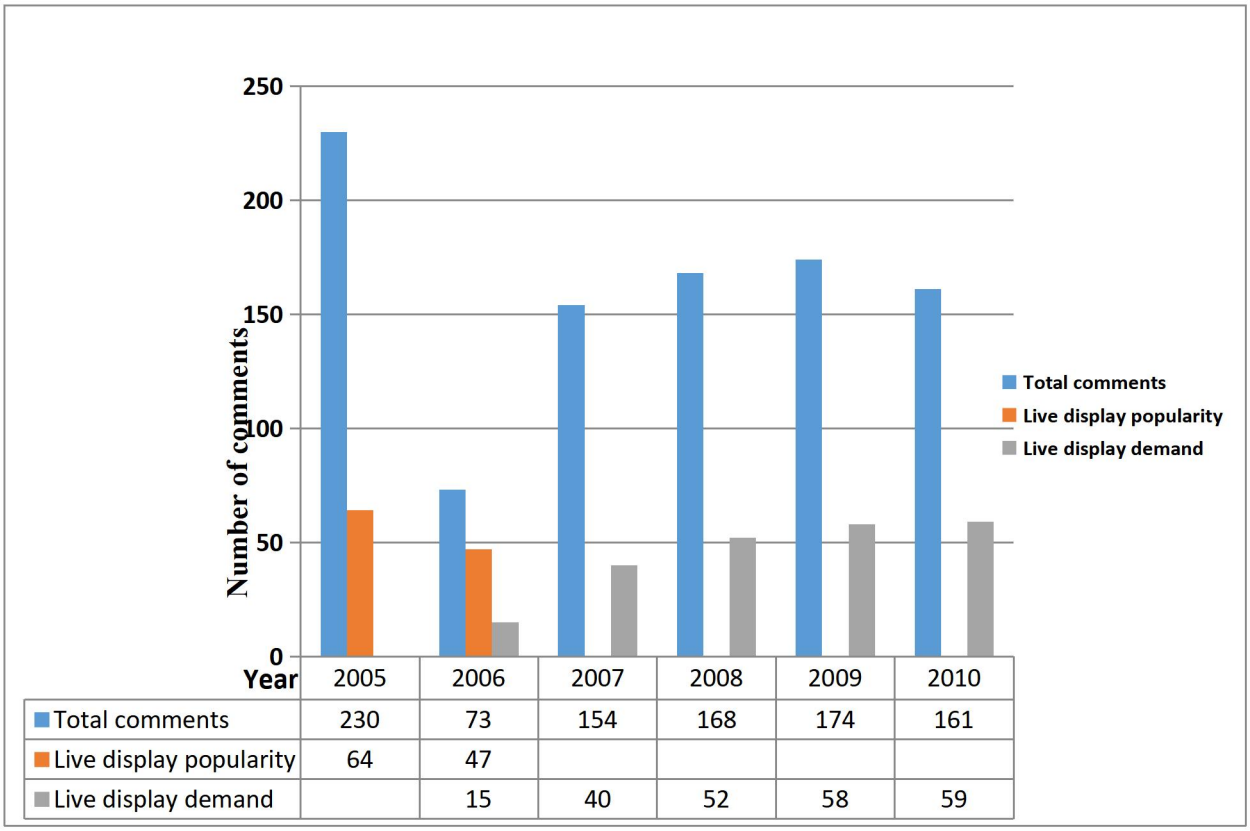
Additional records from the 1960s -2000 were available and these confirmed that the live displays had always been popular. However, focus was mainly put on the periods around the time when the displays were removed to illustrate the popularity of lives animals.

Results

Comments from visitors show that live displays of snakes were popular since the establishment of the Mutare Museum. Records reviewed show that in 2005 and early 2006 the museum had live snakes, birds, fish and tortoises on display and their popularity was significant. However, when these live displays were taken away from late 2006 until 2014, visitors were demanding for them to be included or brought back on display (Figure 2). The most popular and on demand live displays with visitors were snakes and birds. There were very few comments on bees and fish in the books.

Interviews with Tour Guides revealed that most visitors did not write in comments books, some of them however commented verbally and asked if the museum was going to re-introduce live snakes and birds. During that period some visitors would walk away upon hearing that the museum had not re-introduced live snakes and birds. What the author could not establish was the number of people who did not enter the museum because there were no live displays and

those who would comment verbally praising the live displays and demanding for live birds and snakes because such scenarios are not recorded.



Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total comments	230	73	154	168	174	161
Live display popularity	64	47				
Live display demand		15	40	52	58	59

Figure 2. Statistics of visitors' comments showing popularity and demand for live displays.

Discussion

The comments from visitors suggest that live displays have always been popular and visitors to the Mutare Museum continuously demand for more. It is assumed that the demand would have been significantly higher if all the visitors who demanded for them would write in comments book and if records were kept of people who would turn back upon hearing that there are no live snakes and birds on display.

Most past visitors in Mutare usually remember the live snake and bird displays and have come to associate the museum with them. Therefore, it was not surprising when visitors' requests for the re-introduction of these live displays turned to demands with time. Responding to this public demand the museum in 2010 launched a fundraising campaign to raise funds for the repair of the aviary and construction of outdoor snake pits. Although the fundraising initiative was unsuccessful the Museum re-introduced live snakes in 2014 but the aviary remains closed to the public. The famous Gabon vipers were replaced with Puff adders. Visitors are more interested in seeing live animals they do not frequently encounter, particularly snakes and birds. This contributed to demands for live snakes at the Museum during the time when the snakes were not on display.

An almost similar study was carried out by Masters (2003) who looked at visitors' interests in live animals (bats in 1998 and spiders in 1996 and 1998) in exhibitions at the Australian Museum. The study showed that not only were visitors interested in seeing live animals in exhibitions, but they engaged with them and those exhibits tended to be more memorable. Observations showed that visitors spent more time at live exhibits and appeared to be more interested in the animals than the accompanying text. The Australian Museum displays living animals to help demonstrate the behaviours and adaptations of animals. At the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles, live displays are meant for their visitors to draw out the deep and meaningful connections with the animals on display and to get a better insight in the lives of often misunderstood creatures. The National Museum in Bloemfontein, South Africa, established live displays to showcase unusual animals known only by name to many people and rarely seen. These animals serve as living examples for lessons provided by the Education Department for school groups, helping to stimulate a keener interest.

Zimbabwe does not have zoos and aquariums; it has national parks, botanical gardens and snake parks. Not all towns and cities have these facilities. The alternative for visitors in Mutare is the Cecil Kopje Nature Reserve where wild animals and snakes in pits may be viewed. However, during the study period, the nature reserve was also experiencing its own problems. According to Mutare Museum Tour Guides, visitors use the presence of a living animal as a way to discuss and ask questions, which leads to more informal learning about natural history topics. Live displays receive mainly positive responses. The majority of visitors' responses to live animals are unlike those of any other interpretive device. The response is emotional, either negative (fear or dislike) or positive (fascination and amazement), with very few people being non-reactive.

The reaction to the loss of live animals at Mutare Museum is almost similar to the one at the National Museum, Bloemfontein when it lost the African Rock Python (*Python natalensis*) (National Museum Bloemfontein website, accessed 2014). This nearly 4-m-long female python that was on display for many years and was a great attraction especially among visiting school groups. Unfortunately, in July 2010, she died after refusing to eat for some time. Owing to her popularity with the public, she was replaced with a male and a female Red-tailed *Boa Constrictor* (National Museum Bloemfontein website, accessed 2014).

Visitors want to experience the museum using all of their senses - sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing. What they want from museums are interactive, immersive, and participatory activities (Farrell and Medvedeva, 2010*)*. Live animal displays therefore provide a different kind of experience than that afforded by static displays as the two quotes below made by museum visitors from a study in the USA illustrate:

> *"I want to be immersed in the culture. And when I say immersed—when I walk in I want there to be red clay dirt. I want there to be trees and I want to be able to see how the food is made and I want to be able to touch the animals that live in this area. I want to taste something. I want to be able to smell something." (Farrell and Medvedeva, 2010: 24)*.

and,

> *"I love aquariums and zoos. My favorite aquarium is the one in Atlanta. It just takes me … I love things where I can interact in. Like they have stingrays where you can stick your hand in there and touch the stingrays. Also a school of … sharks in there that you can touch. I just enjoy that type of stuff. So anything interactive I'm right there, interested in." (Farrell and Medvedeva, 2010: 24).*

Each year, the American Museum of Natural History in New York holds seasonal exhibitions displaying butterflies and moths - one of the museum's most popular displays (The American Museum of Natural History, 2014). These are interactive exhibitions whereby visitors can take a walk among hundreds of the colourful lepidopterans. The butterflies and moths are allowed to fly freely and unrestricted among the public in a specially constructed tropical enclosure situated on the museum's east lawn. This interactive live display takes an exhibition to a whole new and exciting level as visitors are able to witness the life cycle of the butterflies and moths, from eggs waiting to hatch, to crawling caterpillars and the elegant flying creature.

At Mutare Museum or any other museums in Zimbabwe these experiences are not possible with the current type of live animal displays. However, the Mutare Museum aviary resuscitation proposal seeks to achieve more immersion and interactivity. The Museum is planning on allowing visitors to walk into the aviary. Small parties of 12 people each will be taken around for a closer view of the birds. The fascinating hand reared birds will be introduced and these perch on the human shoulder waiting to be fed. These improvements if realised will improve the emotional experiences of visitors.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that live displays in museums are increasingly becoming popular and visitors are demanding for them. Live displays have a wide audience; people from all backgrounds, sexes and age groups enjoy engaging with living things. They are interactive and create lasting memories. For visiting school groups, live displays are great educational tools that communicate biological processes and a benefit to scientific research involving experimentation on animal behaviour and living flora. There are therefore many compelling reasons why Mutare Museum should put top priority on the rehabilitation of the popular aviary as well as construction of snake pits.

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Enhancing visitors' experiences: the use of ICTs in National Museums and Galleries in Zimbabwe

Raymond Mashizha and Paul Mupira

Abstract

The paper discusses in detail the convergence of Information Communication Technologies in museums. It assesses the usefulness and effectiveness of the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Zimbabwean museums and galleries in engaging, empowering and enhancing visitors' experiences. Interviews conducted in National Museums and Galleries exposed that technological tools have the potential to completely change the methods of communicating with audiences. Adoption and proper utilization of ICTs in museums and galleries will lead, among other things, to increased visitorship and quality presentation of cultural heritage. The development of ICTs, periodic updating of related policies and the training of information technology personnel are just but a handful of the recommendations put forward by the authors in an endeavour to ensure effective use of these new communication tools in museums and galleries.

Introduction

In the past museums were considered as mausoleums in which artefacts were protected from deterioration as well as from access by the society in general (Witcomb, 2003). Today, most museums do not appear to be like that anymore. Independent of the type of collection or institutional support they carry, museums are becoming increasingly accessible and a greater number of people have interest for this kind of institution. Many museums are now important destinations along with other local or touristic routes, acting as social meeting points for the different groups of visitors, as well as serving as significant research centres. Museums have thus become a significant agent in the local and global economy. For these reasons, these institutions have to seek new improved ways to operate, engage and communicate with visitors to ensure that they enhance visitors' experiences whilst working towards their main mission of producing, protecting and preserving cultural value for the society. This paper explores how Zimbabwean museums and galleries have embraced ICTs in improving visitors' experiences, engagement and redefining communities by empowering them.

While museums have many ways of disseminating information, the influence and possibilities offered by Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in engaging, empowering and enhancing visitor experience have received little attention especially in developing countries like Zimbabwe. ICTs encompass different kinds of technological devices which are used for communication processes, distribution of information, as well as administering and regulating information (UNESCO, 2003). These tools are found in most business operations being used by the work teams and clients. In museums these tools can help internal procedures (preservation, conservation, education, security, presentation and interpretation and documentation),

exhibition design and customer relationship management. However, in Zimbabwe our understanding of the different functions played by ICTs in museum operations, communication and enhancing visitors' experiences is still limited. There has been lack of theory building to improve and implement models of ICTs to ensure cultural sustainability.

Over the years the Government of Zimbabwe has shown its dedication towards the development of public awareness on the significant functions ICT plays in today's ever changing technological environment. Zimbabwe like other nations in the region is exploring ways to develop the ICT industry. The Information Communication Technology Achievers Programme that seeks to educate Zimbabweans about the use of ICTs is one such endeavour. In addition, the Government of Zimbabwe developed an E-Government Framework and Implementation Strategy (2011-2015) aimed at providing a clear direction and focus on the implementation of ICTs. Dubbed, ZimConnect the approach aims to create a strategic e-platform and provide seamless e-services to the citizens, business and government through an interconnected public service integrating people, process and technology. Therefore, in developing countries ICTs are becoming a driving force for socioeconomic development, operational efficiencies, improved services and redefining communities. This paper also explores how Zimbabwean museums have embraced the ZimConnect vision to improve improved service delivery.

The need to attract more visitors to heritage institutions has given rise to the interest in the use of ICTs and a reappraisal of their purpose. Museums are merging the traditional functional purpose with their reinvigorated roles such as edutainment using a range of approaches. Russo *et al* (2006) state that, museums are beginning to use social networks such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and blogs to involve online audiences with new information communication technologies. This represents a change in the methods in which museums act as cultural online institutions, disseminate cultural content and view their responsibilities as guardians of heritage (Russo *et al*, 2006). The paper will therefore argue that ICTs can add value to museum activities in Zimbabwe.

As museums around the world started to use the World Wide Web (www) in the early 1990s, Russo *et al* (2006) note that debates emerged on how visitors would discover their way through a newly attained unrestricted access to cultural content, and what this would mean for heritage organisations. In the late 1990s it was important to take into account the impacts of the www on artefacts especially through the development of meaningful pathways into electronic cultural heritage collection (Russo *et al,* 2006). Russo *et al* (2006) argue that if museums do not consider a controlling role in the set-up of authoritative web-based cultural content sources, their visitors would attempt to find cultural heritage information elsewhere, probably through less reliable sources. Therefore, it is vital for museums to react in order to make cultural heritage accessible to the general public. Currently, ICTs have begun to change the actions of re-enacting and making awareness of history and offer intense capacity for dealing with the new challenges and areas of interest in the cultural heritage field.

On the basis of the foregoing this paper will discuss issues related to ICTs such as their use, effectiveness and appropriateness in cultural heritage institutions. It will demonstrate the

usefulness and advantages of ICTs by providing concrete examples of adoption and suggestions on how they may be used in different cultural heritage environments.

ICT applications and visitor experience in museums

According to Russo *et al* (2006) the area of information communication technologies in museums is still very much in its early stages of development. Few studies (Abungu, 2002; Barbosa 2013; Loran 2005) have been conducted on the subject and while some museums have adopted ICTs into their functions, a discussion of their impacts has just only started (European Commission 2003; Li et al 2010).

Since the late 20th century museums have transformed their role from restricted high-class mausoleums to popular attractions along with other leisure activities for both local and touristic routes (Barbosa 2013). While museums use many ways to disseminate information the implementation of digital technologies (ICTs) in this field has recently received some attention together with the possibilities these tools offer in enhancing visitors' experiences, engaging and empowering the public. These tools can help from internal procedures to exhibition design, customer relationship management, documentation, security of collections, access and educating the public. However, despite recent researches (Stogner 2009; Barbosa 2013; Alwi and Mckay 2011) our understanding of the different functions played by ICTs for the performance of museums is still limited. There has been criticism that museums' use of ICTs has been scattered and incomplete, contributing to lack of accessible content. Rentschler (2002) brings out that, with inadequate and one-sided content, these institutions face challenges of satisfying the needs of their visitors and non-visitors resulting in low visitor turnout.

Both for-profit and not-for-profit, local, national and global enterprises, are facing the challenges of the constantly changing society we now live in. The ability of museums to handle and adapt to the new paradigms and demands while working towards their long-held missions is vital (European Commission, 2003). Museums have to be capable of dealing with change and rethinking their concepts and activities at both micro and macro levels (Lam, 2004). This requires among other things creativity and innovation to come up with technology-based solutions to museum interpretation. Technology is one of the most powerful forces towards growth, productivity, and industrial development (Abernathy and Clark, 1985). It is motivated by many factors such as curiosity, competition, commercial and financial goals, and by the urge to find more appropriate solutions that require less time and effort (Walker and Chaplin, 1997). Technology has gone over one of its primary functionality as a tool to reach and be integrated in social, cultural, and economic aspects of our lives like meanings and relations (Boczkwski and Lievrouw, 2007). As cultural institutions museums must not be left behind in the technological mix as the latter is viewed as a means and an end for development.

ICTs have changed the way in which people access information and communicate, allowing multidirectional stimulus through the massive digital technologies use like the internet (San Martin, 2012; Srinivasan *et al,* 2009). In the past, collecting, storing and conducting researches of cultural objects have been the primary role of museums. The director was the custodian of

culture at the museum given the responsibility of safeguarding collections. Nowadays, running museums involves understanding both the custodial function and the demand to lure more audiences to the museum and generate more revenue (Pilat, 2004). That way, ICTs have the potential to contribute value and improve accountability to sponsors. Museums in Zimbabwe now need to use ICTs in different operational and Organisational areas to enable them to compete with hyper markets in the business environment, hence guaranteeing survival and sustainability. Critically museums in Zimbabwe must come on board strongly to embrace and further government policies aimed at bridging the technological divide.

Interactivity, convergence, customization, collaboration and networks are some of the crucial concepts in the analysis of the influence of ICTs upon technological innovation in general and the creative industries in particular (Cunningham, 2002:6). These ICT concepts are discussed by Barbosa (2013:21-2) in the context of museums and its relationship with the publics. Interactivity allows a two-way communication and serves as an interaction channel between the visitors and institution's own system or platform, with the possibility to be adjustable and stimulated by users (Barbosa 2013:22). Different information communication technologies have led to museum visits becoming more personalized or visitor oriented and not completely managed by curators. The adoption of guided tours on mobile devices which only presents audio information in logical order, the deployment of free-choice mobile guided tours that are able to provide multimedia data (for instance, images, text, audio, images and video) across various device platforms as well as other localizations of suitable constitute some of the early ICT-based interactivity in museums. With more ICT-based interactivity proliferating museum audiences are now more in control of selecting the collections they want to view, which order they want to view them, the extent of content they would like to have for any particular collection and other personalized aspects that are managed by the audience. Today the intensification of the engagement of audiences is being partly achieved through enhanced interactivity between arts organisations such as museums and audiences on social networks and creative websites (Bakhshi and Throsby 2012).

Connectivity permits direct communication between museums and the public, where both parts produce and share opinions and experiences (Barbosa 2013). Lastly, convergence provides access to many of the institution's products whenever, wherever and from whatever device, and for that reason it connects the public, institutions and third parties (Barbosa 2013:22). Audiences are allowed to access cultural experiences any time, any place and in any form or the other (Bakhshi and Throsby 2012: 209). According to Barbosa (2013) the fusion of these three dimensions offers and enables new opportunities to cultural heritage institutions to communicate with current and potential groups of visitors while innovating technologically. In so doing interactivity, connectivity and convergence enabled by ICTs promote deeper engagement of the public before, during and after the visit; using the museum as mediator and permitting the public and institution to co-create complete innovative experiences. The higher the number of diversified people involved in the creative process (audience, other cultural institutions, government, professionals, experts, academics), the more an institution gravitates towards a

culture of informal and interdisciplinary co-creation and sharing (Celaya, 2012 as quoted in Barbosa 2013: 50).

In their interactive experience model Falk and Dierking (1992) content that experience encompasses a series of actions (before, during and after the event) that result in interaction with various contexts (Falk and Dierking (1992). In the museum milieu, the physical environment of museums forms the physical context that interacts and is influenced by two other key contexts: the personal and social contexts which results in visitor experience. Thus, experience is the process (before, during and after the event), which results in interaction with influences of different contexts (Falk and Dierking 1992; Sheng and Chen 2012). Sheng and Chen (2012: 53) add that experience includes visitors' opinions of functions (e.g., food and transportation), sensory stimulation (e.g., attraction of buildings) and emotional description (e.g., bored or interesting). There is therefore now a common consensus that experience should include various emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual elements or basically "a mixed feeling". Regarding the usage of ICTs in museums, this paper argues that the interaction, connectivity and convergence that technological possibilities bear upon visitors affect their learning and experiences. The incorporation of multimedia techniques allows visitors to have both active and passive experiences. The research therefore, examined the extent to which ICTs in museums and galleries in Zimbabwe provide interactive engagement and enhance visitor experiences.

The world over, information communication technologies have begun to have greater impact in museums since the mid-1980s. The majority of museum professionals in the developed world and few in the developing world have fully accepted new digital technologies for their ability to democratize knowledge, to offer contextual information on displays and to increase the number of museum visitors. On their part, visitors to museums especially, young adults and children have embraced technological displays, even coming to expect them as an important factor of the museum experience (see Sheng and Chen 2012). New technological devices can enhance static exhibitions with sound and moving images, encourage and support interaction among people and engage visitors in multi-layered activities (Barbosa 2012).

Russo (2011) states that, in the last decades there has been extensive rise in the number of active ICTs that museums have used to include and engage visitors. Arguably, these networks and strategies are contributing to strong ties between museums and the visitors and enhancing visitors' experiences. While the impact of taking ICTs in the business and public environment is well documented the same has not been explored within museums as measures to assess their usefulness are still in their infancy. Museums should become providers of data and knowledge for different audiences to access on their terms, through their own choices and at any given time and environment. Through ICTs individuals are empowered to contribute their individual perceptions; collect data, analyse it, reach their own conclusions and exchange information. In so doing ICTs break the traditional perception of the museum as an elitist, authoritative institution, because they allow audiences to participate in a shared space of consciousness where they build their own meanings and identities (Pujol-Post, 2011: 64).

ICTs in museums - past and present

ICTs have discovered a place in contemporary museums in the kinds of interactive touch-screens, CDs and videos with different pictures, technological orientation centres; "smart badge" data programs, websites and virtual reality (Von Hippel, 2005). ICTs emerged in museums peripherally in the 1970s mainly as utilities in collections management and research. However, at this stage they were not highly institutionalised but their appearance seemed to depend on individual initiatives. In the 1980s-1990s databases developed at the initial request of museums image libraries to facilitate the follow-up of collections and all the information related to them (Pujol-Tost, 2011). Expert systems were incorporated in the 1990s to provide tutorials to help occasionally with the classification, identification or authentication of collections (Pujol-Tost, 2011). It was also during this period that ICTs entered the exhibition space, usually in separate rooms that separate technology from collections. Later, 'stand-alone' interactive devices entered the museum and galleries spaces together.

Finally, from beginning of the 21st century intranets spontaneously assimilated to the www were established to allow quick communication and exchange of information. High-tech displays began to appear physically blended with the rest of the exhibition, allowing a dialogue between the on-site and the online dimensions (Pujol-Tost, 2011). According to Pujol-Tost (2011: 66) currently, "exhibitions are conceived from the beginning as a digital medium and shaped that way. Visitors are immersed and interact with more transparent and intuitive devices". Galleries and museum displays are using various forms of new technology such as, audio-visuals, interactive devices, 3-D images, 3-D movies, video games and many other new technologies that are found in this digital era (Stogner (2009). For instance, museums in many developed countries are developing and upgrading visitors' experiences beyond their museum walls with the use of websites which provide additional virtual displays and learning subjects. Others are reaching out to the public through social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Exhibitions are being uploaded on cell phones and these are providing much wanted information about cultural heritage sites and other significant sites in the country

In the case of Zimbabwean museums ICTs are still in the early developmental stages despite wide access to computers, the internet and social media in recent years. The peripheral stage was only experienced in the mid-1980s to the 1990s. For example, Mutare Museum acquired its first IBM computer in the 1985-6 financial year and used it specifically for the computerisation of collections databases. At the then Queen Victoria Museum now the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences the first lap top was introduced by an individual who had studied in Sweden between 1990-3. The same personal lap top was used unofficially to initiate the first archaeological database that was later transferred to official museum computer databases in the late 1990s. As will be shown later in most National Museums like Great Zimbabwe, Military Museum and Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences ICTs still largely feature in relation to collections management and research. ICTs are yet to be routinely integrated in exhibition planning.

According to Pujol-Tost (2011) political and social motivation are among the main reasons for the adoption of ICT in museum exhibitions. In order to play a positive role in the communities they serve; museums are seeking innovative ways to reach and communicate with the wider public. Hence interactive and personalised media containing hypermedia information provides a new suitable paradigm of knowledge construction and transmission. This replaces the static unidirectional mass media containing text and images. ICTs today constitute familiar communication experiences that resonate well with the young audience who are the majority of museum visitors. Due to financial difficulties facing museums in most parts of the world the use of ICT is beneficial to them since it may be used to attract paying audiences. The continuous development of ICTs such as the internet as a method of communication for museums in this information period provides greater opportunities of marketing tourism industries (McNichol, 2005). The websites act as a new communication and dissemination channels for important and valuable tourism content. ICTs should be used to attract the attention of non-visitors segments that are very active in the technological sector but who usually do not consider themselves as being museum-friendly. Technology deployed in museums and galleries with the above goals helps to widen economic and social values of the cultural heritage field (Bakhshi and Throsby, 2010; Peacock, 2008). Hence museums in Zimbabwe must not be left far behind as there is a strong case for integrating new ICTs into the production, management, diffusion and consumption of culture.

For museums in Zimbabwe the issue is no longer whether to adopt ICT to enhance museum exhibitions, but how to use it. According to Danks *et al* (2007) there is a need to develop interactivity as well as to build strong links between the implementation of these new technologies and the objects on displays so that technologies can enhance the experience, rather than becoming the experience themselves. The stages of technology development chain are almost similar to the past pipeline of museum activities which include; gathering, preserving, conserving, research and exhibiting to the public (Pujol-Tost 2011). Thus, technology related processes include digital data collection also referred to as digitalization, storage and management, future preservation and ability for re-use and creation of technological exhibits to accompany, merge and substitute original displays. The current exhibits include giving information which can be accessed easily, through the websites and using various telecommunication systems

This paper highlights that museums in Zimbabwe with their diverse collections have the ability to change into dynamic, multimedia and multi-faceted heritage places which connect different people from societies all over the world and add substantial value to the awareness of modern and past cultures. Media technologies will build conversations, create a real society or even sub-communities based on mutual interests, support a new way of interpretation and overall add value in developing dialogues among the visitors.

Approaches used in the study of ICTs use in Zimbabwean museums

The study used four techniques of data collection namely desktop survey, interviews, questionnaires and observations. The triangulation method was used to evaluate the usefulness

and effectiveness of ICTs in engaging, empowering and enhancing visitors' experiences. Using the case study approach, IT personnel, curators, marketing officers and other senior workers on the ground with board level strategic responsibility (either the director or any member of the executive board) were interviewed. As part of the case study research other methods were used to allow triangulation of data sources. Unstructured observations in the form of visits to heritage institutions were conducted aimed at documenting as much the information on the use of ICTs as possible to develop a narrative account. Issues of maintenance costs, updating the software and hardware were also discussed with museum and gallery staff. The research investigated the use of ICTs in National Museums (Natural History Museum in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences in Harare, Military Museum in Gweru, Mining Museum in Kwekwe, Museum of Transport and Antiquities in Mutare) and National Art Galleries in Harare and Bulawayo. In all forty national museums, thirty galleries staff and forty members of the public were interviewed.

ICTS in Zimbabwean museums and galleries

The results of the study show that the use of ICTs in museums has positive benefits as well as obstacles. There are somewhat clear programmes to virtual presence and to the adoption of the web in order to increase accessibility and reach more and different visitors. The interviewees revealed some best initiatives that if combined will produce an interesting range of approaches aimed mainly at involving current visitors deeply in the museum experience but with the aim of attracting and serving potential visitors. The overall outcomes of the research show a clear vision and commitment by museums under study to a significant virtual presence and use of the internet to improve accessibility and reach by both the young and the old audiences.

ICT Policy

The effective use of ICT starts with an influential clear expression of the policies supported by a concise set of consistently used steps that manage and control ICT strategies. An organized and correctly used ICT policy should help to communicate cultural heritage through technological devices. It should encompass functions of the museum, a definition of the purpose of the use of ICTs, its goals and approved methods of ICT in promoting services offered.

The research found out that the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ, the administer of the country's National Museums) in 2016 came up with an ICT policy with the aim "to create and provide a framework that will enable ICT to contribute towards the achievement of NMMZ goals; providing universal services and accessibility to information and communication technologies in the organisation that will inevitably lead towards global competitiveness in output and productivity". The policy clearly defines the museums' use of ICT and its purpose. It describes what ICT includes, what to and what not to communicate. One of the objectives was to "to promote the provision of accessible, universal, affordable, reliable, modern and high-quality levels of ICT facilities and services in NMMZ". However, apart from serving as an internal regulatory tool, the policy is conspicuously silent on the fundamental issues of using the various ICT instruments in NMMZ's educational programmes

like display, interpretation and public outreach, marketing and publicity. Vague references to the use of ICTs for public service may be inferred in section 8.4.11 where the policy says the Internet should be used "to accomplish official NMMZ business consistent with the NMMZ mission", which is, to provide heritage services that promote an understanding and appreciation of that heritage within Zimbabwe and beyond. In section 8.4.13 the policy says "information and services presented via the Internet shall emphasize ease of use to reach the broadest audience and impart a friendly manner which would include clear choices, easy navigation, on-screen instruction".

ICT in the NMMZ policy refers to "any communication devices, applications, network hardware and software and any associated systems". Despite this broad definition the conceptualisation of ICTs in the policy seems to have a narrow focus on the Internet and Email that are given substantial space in the document. By definition ICT refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications (World Wide Web definition). In essence, it means all combined technologies that allow people and organisations to communicate and interact in a digital world. This includes the Internet, wireless networks, cell phones, and other communication mediums. New communication capabilities such as instant messaging, voice over IP (VoIP), and video-conferencing are not considered although the use of social networking sites for NMMZ business is allowed for "collaboration amongst staff members, the community and various stakeholders". However, the policy does not go far enough in giving guidelines on how these tools may be used to further NMMZ's vision and mission. It can therefore be argued that the policy is largely inward looking and pays inadequate focus towards the effective use of ICT in communicating heritage to the public. The policy should therefore be revised to encompass the emerging vast array of public communication capabilities.

83% of the respondents from museums and galleries indicated that their institutions do not follow a structured process when using ICTs. Interviewees from the museums stated that they have an "apply and learn" approach whereby a member of staff is given the responsibility of managing ICTs at the institution and gain more experience in that department. Galleries reflected almost the same picture as museums. However, the institutions find it very challenging to effectively implement ICT policies because of lack of funds to hire and pay IT experts.

ICT tools/strategies

It was found out that the museums and galleries use different ICT strategies which include websites, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blog, YouTube, and Instagram), print media, internet cafes, films and CDs. Out of these ICT strategies, 60% of the targeted museums staff revealed that they were familiar with the website, 90% - Facebook, 45% - Twitter, 30% - YouTube, 20% - Blog, 0% - Instagram, 85% - films and CDs whilst 60% acknowledged the use of print media. On the contrary, the response rate was different from the galleries staff as 80% of the targeted workers revealed that they were familiar with the website, 95% - Facebook, 65% - Twitter, 40% - YouTube, 35% - Blog, 30% - Instagram and 90% - films and CDs whilst 70% acknowledged

the use of print media. However, both galleries and museums personnel suggested that these methods are not effectively used and need to be intensified.

In spite of the hindrance of inadequate resources museums and galleries suggested many solutions that can improve the successful and economic implementation of new technologies. One of the solutions suggested by 45% (50/110) of the respondents was to have a stand-alone ICT department or IT experts within the museums and galleries. Most interviewees (71%) pointed to the necessity of building strong societies and online networks. The other suggestion raised included, managing and attending seminars, workshops and events as the best ways to acquire and distribute knowledge, exchange experiences and discuss possible solutions with other institutions. Dissemination and presentation of the same ideas, views and issues using these networks will support discussion, use of ICTs and best practices. According to one interviewee from the National Art Gallery in Bulawayo "…lessons-learnt, documentations, evaluation reports and feedbacks, use-case scenarios and best-practices can play an essential role to the fluent adoption of ICT." The use of open-source content and collaboration with many Organisations that include colleges and research institutions were suggested as low cost solutions when there is not enough funding.

Uses of ICTs

The public, museums and gallery workers were also asked about the effectiveness of ICTs being used by museums and galleries. 85% of museum respondents said ICTs were used for communication, 90% for marketing, 40% for entertainment, 30% for documentation, 25% for displays, 70% for education and 55% for research. The research had included online ticket sales as another ICT platform but none of the respondents seemed familiar with it hence it had a 0% response rate.

The galleries respondents revealed that 90% used ICTs for communication, 95% for marketing, 60% for entertainment, 40% for documentation, 55% for displays, 60% for education and 75% for research. Online ticketing sales also received 0% response rate as no one was familiar with it.

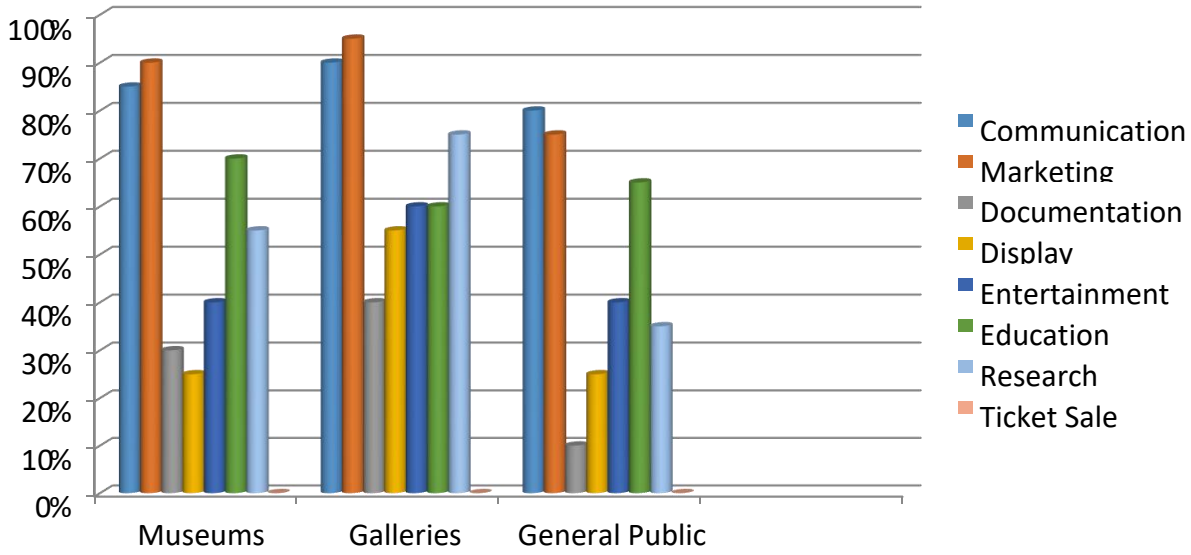


Figure 1. Uses of ICTs in museums.

The general public said museums and galleries could use ICTs for communication purposes (80%), marketing (75%), entertainment (40%), documentation (10%), displays (25%), education (65%) and research (35%). Figures 2 and 3 taken from Mutare Museum National Art Gallery Twitter and Facebook pages show one of the strategies and tools (social media) that are used by museums and galleries in marketing, educational programs and exhibitions.

The National Galleries in Harare and Bulawayo take advantage of the large amount of existing social networks, which includes Skype, Facebook, blogs, YouTube channels, not only to promote some of the exhibitions or events, but also for interacting with visitors, especially young, digital native users. This widespread use is explained by the fact that these solutions are usually easy to be customized and used without very specific skill especially by young adults who have more knowledge and familiar with them. Most importantly, they are low or zero cost solutions. Respondents from the two National Galleries in Harare and Bulawayo revealed that social media has impacted on galleries from three different perspectives which are:

- bringing audiences to performances
- providing a platform to create art and to engage in debate
- giving Organisations tools to listen to the public and build cultural heritage awareness.

Social media has seen online visitors getting education and entertainment in the comfort of their homes as stated by the respondents. The National Art Gallery in Harare has also introduced a digital storytelling approach that has replaced the old set of exhibit-oriented descriptions by cohesive story-centred narratives related to the subject or exhibit.

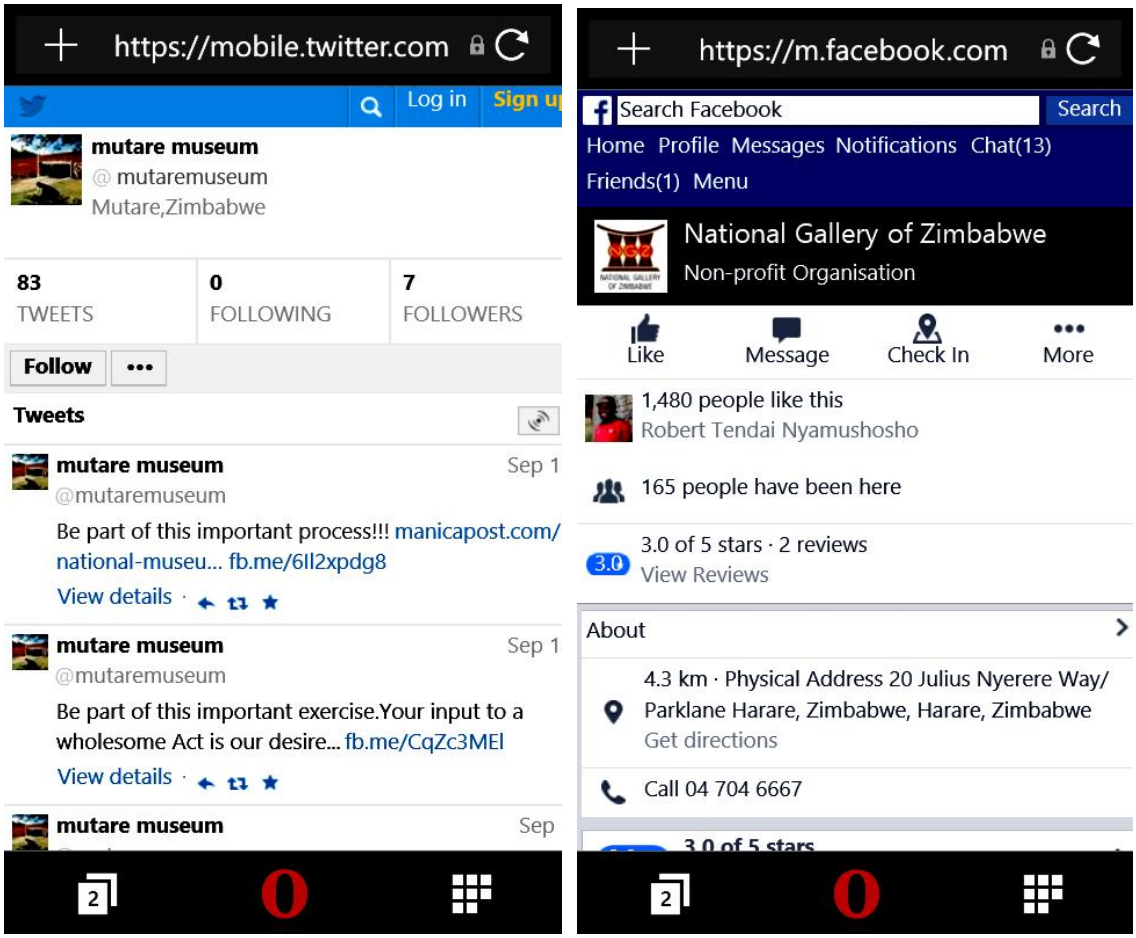


Figure 2. Mutare Museum and National Art Gallery social media pages.

Despite these positive indicators the data collected revealed that overall museums and galleries are not effectively using ICTs in enhancing visitors' experiences. The perception of what ICT implementation means varies and represents different maturity levels for their adoption. It ranges from the most simplified one that considers ICT only as a vehicle for the enhancement of the communication strategy of the institution to the more sophisticated view where ICT is seen as an advanced tool for the enhancement of the visitors' experience. 3 out of 5 museums under study maintained updated websites, for example their websites contained news about events, exhibitions, locations and their history.



Figure 3. The Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe website homepage.

The interviewees also exposed that today, museums and galleries face challenges of low visitorship because visitors have more entertaining choices for their free time compared to the past and expect to have learning and entertainment experiences. Therefore, both museums and galleries revealed that audience development targeting the young generation is an important factor for more sustainable cultural heritage institutions.

Interactive technologies in museums and galleries

Today, the attention in museums and galleries is changing towards the adoption of ICTs in order to provide interactive experiences for audiences. Therefore, many people are visiting museums in numbers expecting to gain more knowledge about collections while at the same time having an entertaining experience. The research therefore, asked the public about the effectiveness of interactive devices in museums and galleries in Zimbabwe.

The underpinning philosophy of interactive exhibitions is that visitors find hands-on exhibits more absorbing and enjoyable than static exhibits in traditional museums and this is demonstrated by the number of people visiting hands-on centres worldwide and by their responses when they are there. From the findings it can be noted that, ICTs have effects within galleries from at least three different views. They help to attract visitors to gallery programs by providing information of artworks to users, providing places to develop art and conduct conversations and debates of societal interest and providing institutions with tools develop public awareness. The interactive device in the Natural History Museum encourages visitors to

explore exhibits more directly. The device simply involves a touch screen which gives the user information about the exhibition and adds more entertainment value to the user (Fig …).

Seventy percent of the respondents revealed that interactive devices have great capabilities of furthering both the education and entertainment roles of museums while 40% revealed that interactive devices allow personalization and contextualization of the content received by the public. This provides positive implications that include visitors learning at their own rate. This is crucial as the audiences to museums have different needs.

Obstacles in using ICTs

Museums and galleries identified lack of funds (cited by 71% of the respondents) as one of the main problems faced in implementing ICTs. The second issue raised by 57% of the interviewees is connected to the risk of investing in high-cost ICT tools that have no potential revenue stream. Fifty seven percent of the respondents cited the maintenance and updating of the ICT tools and strategies after their adoption and implementation while 86% indicated lack of future technical support as key challenges. Museums and galleries need different evolving set of skills, expertise and staff time in order to undertake ICT programmes. Forty three percent of the interviewees highlighted the risk of incompatible technologies as an important barrier. Museums, raised concerns on the reality that the majority of museums do not have in-house IT departments or technology personnel to monitor the tools after the installation and during the phases of maintenance and upkeep. Several obsolete and/or broken down ICT gadgets were observed in the various museums under study.

Copyright and legal issues when it comes to open-source content were also raised by 29% of the respondents as major risks. There is a fear in museums and galleries that making the Organisations' digitized content available online will expose them to difficult to control third party abuse and commercial exploitation. Privacy and security are issues when the programs encompass information which is related to personal data (photos, videos or other information) in situations where the artist adds material or when the curators of art is still alive and active. These issues may be taken care of through appropriate copyright policies and cybersecurity protocols.

A significant percentage (57%) of respondents in national museums and galleries were concerned by the risk of bad usage of ICT, or adopting technology for technology's sake, resulting in poor exhibitions which do not serve the different needs of diverse groups and meaningless representation of information. Surprisingly some interviewees were sceptical on how the ICT tools will meet the needs of visitors and staff members who are not familiar with new digital technologies. The majority (86%) of museums and galleries admitted however that although the action of implementing information communication technologies was difficult and, in some instances, risky it was probably worthwhile and resulted in a number of positive benefits for museums and galleries in Zimbabwe. An interesting point concerning museums is that in some cases they self-rated their usage of ICT higher than their awareness of available ICT tools, indicating the fact that although they use some basic tools, they are aware that there are many more ICT tools to learn about and exploit.

Positives and benefits of using ICTs

Despite the aforementioned obstacles, the study shows that ICTs have a critical role to play in museums' and galleries' progressive efforts and enjoy increased acceptance. Museums and galleries have realised that adopting ICTs is a "matter of survival" and "a necessity" to quote some of the respondents. The majority of respondents (85% of gallery and 65% museums interviewees) think that ICTs create strong communication processes with the audiences and provide opportunities to get effective feedback. In this context, respondents believed that ICTs promote conversations, build a real society or even sub-communities based on mutual interests, and support new methods of interpretation. As succinctly pointed out by one interviewee from the National Gallery in Bulawayo "…ICT gives voice to the visitors." The use of ICT allows more visitors to access museum and gallery content, beyond geographical boarders, visitors' disabilities, and physical limitations as indicated by the 85% of gallery respondents. They also indicated that, ICT contributes to promoting the work of institutions, making them widely known and building a public profile that is current, not static, trustful and sometimes more entertaining. Furthermore, 55% of interviewees in museums argued that the use of ICT in museums facilitates and supports the development of research because researchers can access open-access content on the internet thereby promoting the democratization of knowledge.

Seventy five percent of the respondents from the galleries indicated that new technologies provided important means of solving problems for documentation, archiving and preservation, allowing institutions to implement international standards in digitization and reinforce inter-operability. Hence ICTs have supported the economy of time and resources and reduced pressure on workers' programmes such as electronic cataloguing of objects, museum management systems and strategies for day-to-day activities. Twenty nine percent of the responses indicated that the effectiveness and benefits of adopting ICTs depend on various factors that include the type of the institution, collections, tools or strategies to be implemented and the intended message that museums want to disseminate and the solutions of technology used.

Fifteen percent of museum interviewees indicated that unchanged, traditional methods of display presentation have been significantly changed by adding creativity elements and ideas that promote interactivity and improve visitors' participation and involvement. ICT tools fulfil these requirements through enhancing the creation of immersive and entertaining environments, where the user interacts with diverse sensory modalities. Besides, ICTs can support and enrich the collections and, as a result, supplement and transform the exhibition. Interviewees also indicated that the current, self-controlled and merging of technological information indirectly has benefits for education, especially in situations of complex, abstract or non-visible phenomena.

ICTs, engagement and enhancement of visitor experiences

This study established that National Galleries currently have educational subjects on their websites, presenting modules of education content relating to their objects and works. National Galleries in Zimbabwe are somehow effective in this respect as they have educational

departments on the ground that have been given the responsibilities of developing content that will exploit the ability of ICTs for delivering educational information to all levels of visitors. One of the visitors said, *"…we are not tied to desks anymore when we wish to use computers"*. Therefore, museums should change the way they plan everything from inside to outside environments.

The research observed that the general public have meaningful experience if they are actively involved. The use of websites by National Galleries provides opportunities to enhance the design of virtual learning environments. For example, the National Gallery in Bulawayo in 2014 tripled the number of virtual visits in comparison to the number of physical visits. There was a doubled increase in the number of visitations to their internet café compared to the past years as shown in their annual report. On the other hand, the Natural History Museum website receives about 2000 online visitors per month. This helps the public to access more information about the museum and gain more knowledge about cultural heritage. Other ICT tools which are used by museums to enhance learning experiences which were observed by the research included the use of CDs.

The Natural History Museum has hands-on and interactive exhibits that encourage visitors to explore exhibits more directly. These include simple press-button displays using computer keyboards and engaging in a more complex activities with a multiplicity of results. The ICT-based interactive displays recently inaugurated at Mutare Museum are discussed in a paper by Chipangura (Chapter … in this volume) and will not be reviewed here. Suffice to say that they serve to show the improved sophistication in Zimbabwean museums' application of the various available technological tools to enhance visitor engagement and experiences.

From the above observations visitors to museums and galleries are no longer satisfied by simply looking at worthy exhibits in glass cases. The audience expects to be more involved with the displays in order to be educated and entertained at the same time. Therefore, museums and galleries in Zimbabwe are in the right direction in adopting ICT solutions that emphasize the use of different media to enrich and satisfy their visitors' learning experiences. Due to these pleasing indicators, the capabilities to develop virtual learning environments have become a significant issue for museums and galleries all over the world.

However, according to the Johnson *et al* (2012) information development has not been able to keep up with technology in the period where the public expects to receive information anytime and at any environment. Nowadays, it is not enough for museums to provide information on the website and print media. There is need for digital versions of major publications developed for iPad and other technological devices as well as for social network content. The problem for information developers in museums and galleries is to cope with new production workflows and the need for information licenses so that they continuously support possible use. This study found out that lack of training, resources and support for museum educators hinders them form considering some of the technological capabilities. There are insufficient examples of and exposure to actions for the improvement of technology in the educational sectors of museums and the most developmental examples are being employed outside education departments.

An interesting finding of this study was that, although enhancing visitors' experience is one of the justifications or explanations why museums who have not yet adopted advanced ICT solutions would introduce and or support new technologies in their museums, very few who have adopted ICTs pointed this as a potential justification. Among the museums interviewed it seems some are not fully familiar or convinced with the advantages of using new technologies in adding value to the collections or content, especially when the museum is more traditional and managed by older more conservative workers. The feeling especially in the National Galleries is that new technology is not always a one size fit all solution. There is room for contextualization and distribution of available tools so that museums can become aware on how they can meet their needs as well as those of their clients at the same time protecting their image and identity.

To summarise the findings, it can be said that although museums are not effectively using ICTs to their full potential, they were actually undertaking some relevant activities that imply or reflect an IT perspective and awakening. The inadequacy of resources proved to be the main obstacle for using ICTs. Museum personnel and members of the public provided many solutions which could result in the successful and effective use of ICTs. Having an IT department and IT experts within museums, building communities and virtual networks and arranging and attending workshops, seminars and events to exchange data and experiences are some of the solutions suggested throughout the study. When there is insufficient funding the use of open-source content and collaboration with other institutions such as universities and research departments could provide low-cost solutions. Sharing ideas and opinions within networks will support knowledge dissemination and discussions on methodologies and best practices. Lessons learnt documentations, evaluation reports and feedbacks, use-case scenarios and best-practices can play an essential role in the adoption of ICTs in museums. Lastly, the respondents indicated that there is need for support from decisions makers and the government not only in the form of funding but by reducing bureaucracy and developing national strategies that promote the use of ICTs.

Discussion

ICTs have been adopted by museums and galleries as means of increasing accessibility to collections. It was noted from the study that Zimbabwean museums and galleries ICT strategies are diverse consisting of the internet cafes, websites, social medias, films, CDs, virtual galleries and interactive displays. However, museums and galleries have failed to provide adequate ICT strategies of communicating culture. In spite of their abilities, new technologies also bring up deeper issues concerning local goals which developers of ICTs for museums and galleries have not regarded with a critical eye. According to Danks (2007) although museums and galleries have made use of computer-based interactive applications for many years, these attempts have not always resulted in the development of meaningful audience interactions and engagement with different displays. Hands-on in many situations is limited to demanding the audiences to press a button in order for the response to show on the display. Therefore, Danks (2007) stresses that there is need to develop the interactivity as well as to improve the relationship between the use of

ICTs and the collections in displays so that new technologies can improve visitors' experiences rather than becoming experience themselves.

Museums and galleries in Zimbabwe should aim to provide their audiences with more than just transparently-presented data or content. They must provide environments that are able to involve different responses, including a sense of curiosity, emotional connection, amusement and many other feelings which are beyond simply knowledge or a recreation. From the findings the emotional experience among audiences in museums and galleries has not developed much with the adoption of ICTs. Alwi and Mckay (2011) say awareness of the nature of human-computer interaction has new challenges that demand the design and improvement of museums' virtual learning programs. The use of these new technologies for exhibitions in museums demands following proper instructional procedures to ensure the usefulness of visitors' learning experiences. To enhance visitors' experiences successfully museums must design ICT tools that offer experiential and educational benefits to visitors. Therefore, there is need for a reanalysis of the ICT tools currently in use with the view overhaul some of them and to continuously improve others.

Museums must take advantage of user generated information to improve public knowledge of objects. Professional growth and training in ICTs are integral to the development and implementation of museum interpretation goals and empowering and enhancing visitors' experiences. The potential for ICTs is in their abilities to dissolve the barriers of space and time, enabling museums to reach targeted audiences in their homes, schools and business places. Many museums engage visitors with educational content through the use of ICTs so that the visitors' learning does not end after the visit. ICTs can be an extension of the ideas discussed at the museum and an entertaining way for visitor to learn in their own environments at their own pace. The idea of "taking the museum home" is powerful in creating both connections to the institution and to educational information.

Targeting the public is more challenging for museums. It is not everyone out there who may be fascinated by ICTs. In order to develop appropriate tools proper segmentation of the targeted user groups when introducing ICTs is important. Children and researchers frequently visit museums searching for heritage related learning and information. These groups tend to spend a lot of time seeing the displays in search of information and will benefit a lot from enhanced information supply provided using a variety of ICT tools. However, from observations made earlier in this paper currently museums are not well equipped and prepared to offer researchers and schools up to date ICT services that meet their needs.

The world over, more people currently access museum collections online, conduct discussions and learn in an informal and entertaining way as well as contribute to dialogues developed by museums and act as brand advocates. The research observed that online visitors are 91% more likely to visit a museum. Both museums and galleries should monitor online visitors' behaviours and choices in order to connect them with onsite cultural participation.

Museums must use websites, social media, CDs and other ICTs to effectively communicate cultural heritage to online visitors. This is in line with the State E-government strategies seeking

to promote accessible government services and to use new and emerging technologies to support a transformation in the operation and effectiveness of government. ZimConnect, Zimbabwe's E-government platform has a mission to provide seamless e-services to the citizens, business and government through an interconnected public service integrating people, process and technology. UNESCO (2011) states that technology makes it possible to involve the public in widely distributed environments in "virtual learning communities." On line learning environments promote sharing and inclusivity. New technologies can therefore remove barriers of time, geography, age, ability, culture, and social status.

Conclusion

Technological tools are in the process of changing the methods museums and galleries in Zimbabwe use to design some of their displays. ICTs enhance visitors' involvement and learning and create diverse meaningful experiences. The technological era is not static but fast changing. There is therefore need for museums and galleries in Zimbabwe to continuously develop and update their ICT systems so that they remain up to date and functional. Although inadequate resources proved to be the main obstacle for using ICTs in the case study, the public, museums and galleries provided many solutions that can result in successful and effective use of ICTs. Breaking the resource and technical skills barriers will enable these heritage institutions to open up their content in digital format to the public thereby creating value added cultural heritage data for lifelong learning.

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Information and Records Management as tools for engagement and empowerment in museums

Forget Chaterera

Abstract

Museum records and information management promotes the availability and accessibility of not only object related records but also of other administrative museum records. In their myriad forms, museum records are useful in strategic planning, advertising, promotion and public relations. Museum records enable museum management practitioners to make informed decisions, learn which efforts were successful or unsuccessful in the past, and why. The availability of past museum records reveals in black and white which activities were advantageous to the Organisation and the public, hence the need for museums to manage their records and information as strategic assets. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the essential character and value of museum records as a tool that promotes engagement and empowerment. Emphasis is put on museum records and information as an essential and critical part of a country's information resource. Through appropriate records and information management practices, a museum is afforded the chance to accumulate cultural, social, and economic benefits. This paper argues that without records and information management in the museum, there can be no accountability, good governance, transparency and effective service delivery.

Introduction

Museum records form part of the nation's documentary heritage and valuable cultural property whose management should be given due attention. Information and documentation constitute the intellectual capital needed for various museum functionalities and enable responsible authorities to make informed decisions. Records and information generated during museum business transactions serve as a tool for empowerment as it helps the museum as an institution to meet statutory responsibilities and also assist in retaining the nation's collective memory. Museum records and the information they contain therefore play a critical role in supporting strategies that a museum may employ to build sustainable communities, improve governance and accountability (Ouma 2012:34).

An overview of museum records and information management in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's National Museums are public information centres that create and store information on behalf of the society. In the course of museum business, varied types of records are created. These include but may not be limited to personnel records, catalogue cards, accessions registers, minutes of meetings, financial statements, monuments inspection reports, annual reports, strategic plans, site management plans, policy documents, object locations registers, loans in and out registers, visitors comment books, site maps and photographic records from exhibitions (Chaterera 2013). These records inform myriad museum activities. To this effect, it is imperative to note that records and information management should be treated as core business in museums.

Chaterera (2013) laments the lack of research in museum records and information management in Zimbabwe. Her study revealed inadequate records management practices in the five national

museums that are found in Zimbabwe. The museums did not have the basic records management requirements such as a records management policy, records procedures manual, and records retention and disposal schedules. A records management policy is critical as it ensures that records created and kept by the museum provide an authentic, reliable, complete and trustworthy record of museum activities. It also helps to reduce the time and effort spent in locating documents needed for museum operations, hence increasing the museum's efficiency. The registry procedures manual is needed in managing museum records as it enables a systematic and standardised approach to records preservation. It is a guiding document that provides steps of what to do, when and how. The absence of basic records management practices resulted in the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe failing to repatriate objects stolen from the ethnography department at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences which were found on sale in Cape Town as there were no records to support the claim of ownership. Following that incident, Mahachi (2008) urged NMMZ to ensure objects are documented in terms of the ICOM object identity guidelines. Record keeping should equally be given the same attention because failure to manage the data formats generated from objects documentation will defeat the entire documentation exercise(s).

Engaging the public and empowering museum management practitioners and the society through records and information management

The information contained in museum records ensure that museum collections are physically and intellectually available for collections management, interpretation, exhibition and research. They give museum personnel accountability for their collection. Museum records and the information they contain are regarded as tools of empowerment in museums because a museum collection without supporting information is lifeless and meaningless.

Museum records are perceived as a source of empowerment because they serve as a basic tool of administration. They provide museum management practitioners with the basis on which various museum programmes and activities are performed. Records created in the course of museum business are usually of evidential, scientific, research and historical value. These records and the information they contain are essential and valuable in informing museum functionalities. They serve as a source of national history, hence becoming a powerful instrument in fostering a sense of national identity. Additionally, museum records are regarded as a tool of empowerment as they permit museum management practitioners to intelligently plan for the future basing on an awareness of past experience captured in records (Ouma 2012)

The management of records is important, not only because the information contained in a record is in itself a valuable resource, but also because it is a means of introducing efficiency and realizing economies in administration. If museum records are properly managed, they will contribute to the well-being and experience of the nation. The information contained in museum records constitute a priceless national treasure which can be used for the betterment of the people in a variety of ways. Museum records and the information they contain reflect the entire array of significant museum activities thereby serving as the collective institutional memory. To this effect, museum records are perceived as an essential tool of administrative efficiency and

economy as they provide ready access to the institution's past experience. Through museum records, museum management practitioners are privy to past successes and failures and this permits the making of informed decisions when problems and challenges arise that are similar to those faced in the past. In their role as the institutional memory, museum records can also contribute immensely to cultural, social and even economic development. As museums address both past and contemporary issues of the society through their permanent and temporary exhibitions, they generate a unique source of information on earlier developmental initiatives, economic and social information useful in planning and development on a local, regional and or national scale.

The role of museum records as the institution's memory becomes even more important with the passage of time. With high staff turnover usually experienced in Zimbabwe's National Museums, museum practitioners are increasingly forced to rely less on memories of individuals and more on the institutional memory embodied in the records and information they contain (Ouma 2012). This implies that lack of sound museum records management practices may lead to confusion, inefficiency, mismanagement and unnecessary expenses in museum operations.

Museum records and information management is regarded as a tool of empowerment as the information contained in museum records help to ensure the development of national information infrastructures as well as systems that will make the best use of available resources in meeting the information needs of a country. If museum records are properly preserved, organized and described, museum management practitioners would be able to efficiently make available the needed information not only to various museum offices but also to members of the public in need of such information. If information needed for museum operations is readily available and used in decision-making, museum programmes and activities are more likely to be soundly based and successfully implemented. This reduces the likelihood of unnecessary failure that results in wasting scarce resources.

The information contained in museum records serve as a tool of enlightenment and improvement for the society at large. On this note, it is imperative to highlight that museum records are not restricted to documented information of archaeological artefacts brought into the museum. The records even include information about people, places, conservation and preservation activities on both movable and immovable heritage. Such information is essential in research, social phenomena and a variety of other disciplines such as geography, science and technology. This means that museum records in their various forms constitute a major public archival repository of rich source material which may be exploited in the diverse interests of society.

Museum records play an important role as a cultural resource. Trimble and Marino (2003:100) note that for most of the 1990s, the only effort made to save archaeological and museological data was to preserve the artefacts and not the associated documents. The value of good information and records management is beginning to be widely recognised in the museum community. In order for this to become more widely recognized and translated into standard practice, information and records management has to become a core part of museum functions

alongside managing other assets such as finance, buildings and collections. For the museum sector to fully embrace information and records management, it needs to adopt accepted standards.

Demb (2012:27) observed that the importance of records management might not be obvious to everyone yet its impact on the ability of the museum to function effectively is indisputable. The State of Florida (2009:14) emphasised that it is only through the operation of a well-run records management program that a museum retains control of its corporate memory, which allows an organisation to conduct its business. In light of such arguments, this paper asserts that museum records and the information they contain are powerful instruments of both empowerment and engagement. In competitive business environments and strict accountability structures, it is important that museums have the information they need to drive and support their business operations. Informed museum records management practice avoids the retention and clutter of ephemeral records, or the loss or unintentional destruction of significant records and it makes the management of records an asset and information resource, rather than a liability.

Understanding the relationship between sound records management and effective service delivery within the museum context

Good record keeping in museums improves operational efficiency and access to information allowing for more rapid response to issues. It also supports and provides evidence of museum activity, controls the accumulation of paper clogging valuable office space and protects the museum in cases of litigation, investigations and audit by providing complete and accurate information (Neilson 2010:3739; Eriksen and Unger 2009:9; Marty 2010:3718). Unmanaged records systems can make the performance of the museum's duties more difficult, cost time, money and resources, and make the museum vulnerable to security breaches and litigation, hence the need for sound records and information management practices.

The effectiveness and efficiency of services given to the public by the museums therefore largely depends upon the availability of and access to information held in records. Badly managed records adversely affect the broad scope of public service delivery in museums and museum projects are often difficult to implement and sustain effectively in the absence of well managed records. As indicated in earlier sections, museums have a regular need to consult the records they have created to verify past decisions and continuing obligations, to determine precedents, to conduct ongoing research operations and to enhance the overall public service delivery. If museum records are not well managed, they become difficult to access; they will be lost or unintentionally destroyed. When this happens, museum operations and service delivery to the society would be compromised as decisions and actions are likely to be faulty, ill-conceived and erratic.

Museum management practitioners must have information to perform their various duties and records represent a particular and crucial source of information. Museum professionals may not justify making a decision or taking action with little or no reference to past performance or future goals, hence the need for acceptable records and information within the museum environment.

Effective service delivery, excellent execution of tasks and measurable outcomes are increasingly becoming museums' essential obligations. These aspirations all depend on accessible and usable records. Records and the information they contain can only be accessible if sound records and information management practices prevail.

Museums are perceived to be rich information resource centres because of the cultural objects in their custody. The museum objects need to be accompanied by relevant information for them to be as meaningful and valuable as they should be (Fruth 1985:1). Keeping accurate and usable records is the cornerstone to accountability, transparency and effective service delivery (Chaterera and Nyawo 2013). Museum records aid museum practitioners to quickly locate objects and make them available to users when they are needed. Managing the information recorded about objects is vital for the management of collections, responding to public enquiries, publications, research and exhibitions, establishing proof of ownership, locating a specific object, finding out the total number of objects making up the collection, establishing the identity of an object, carrying out an insurance valuation as well as accessing information in an efficient and economical way.

Conclusion

Records and information management in museums contributes to the well-being and experience of a nation. The information contained in museum records constitute a priceless national treasure which can be used for sustaining people in many ways. Museums are called to recognise that records are a valuable corporate asset that promotes an information culture that directly and indirectly feeds into people's lives. Good records and information management practice contributes to critical business continuity requirements. With effective records and information management, museum management practitioners work more productively on projects and other museum activities because key information will be readily accessible. As constantly emphasized in this paper, a properly supported professional records management programme will have immeasurable value in promoting sound decision-making and administrative efficiency and economy in the museum.

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Capturing a fading memory, racing against time: liberation war narratives documentation, preservation and representation in Zimbabwean museums.

Ivan Munhamo Murambiwa and Rudo Karadzandima

"No commodity is more perishable than a speech" Hon Kabwe 1985.

"If it isn't documented, it didn't happen" Sohail Sangi.

Introduction

Most of our liberation struggle memories are under documented. The little that has been documented does not tell the history of Zimbabwe from an indigenous point of view.

Significant liberation struggle historical material was also destroyed during the transition to independence. An ex-Rhodesian soldier explaining the massive destructions that went on in the country in early 1980 (year of independence) said records were being burnt from army camps, government offices and police stations. It is explained that the special branch shredders even worked overtime until city incinerators were full the authorities resorted to the crematoriums for more burning. [2] It was clear that what was being destroyed was certainly the past. In view of this a true story of the liberation struggle is now only recoverable from the minds and memories of those who were involved in the liberation struggle. Unfortunately, many of these are already lost to natural wastage.

At independence the adage, history is written from the perspective of winners, inspired many. Individuals who were aware of how the colonial regime had manipulated and distorted the African past anticipated a rewriting of the Zimbabwean past as seen by Manyanga and Katsamudanga. [3] They further referred to the then newly elected Prime Minister Robert Gabriel Mugabe's remarks that independence had bestowed "a new future and perspective and indeed a new history and a new past".[4]

Oral history has therefore been a key pillar in the foundation upon which historians recover, reshape and correct historical misconceptions. Capturing a Fading National Memory, as described below, is one initiative that has been inspired by the post-independence euphoria for Zimbabweans to be authors and not just actors of our past.

The paper seeks to evaluate post-independence initiatives on documenting liberation struggle memories. Specifically, it seeks to tackler the following questions; Who documented what and where? What motivated the documentation?

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[2] J Frederickse, None but ourselves: masses vs media in the making of Zimbabwe. Harare, Zimbabwe Publishing House, 1982.
[3] M Manyanga and S Katsamudanga, Zimbabwean Archaeology in the post independence era. Harare, Sapes books, 2013 p.2.
[4] Ibid, p 3.

Did results of the project, "Capturing a Fading National Memory" justify the project launch hype? Does such a project expose archivists and historians to political manipulation? Should there be institutional monopoly to collection and custody of Oral History?

Regional and local initiatives

At a regional level much effort has been directed towards documenting liberation heritage. In South Africa, Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA) located in Durban initiated a project aimed at digitally capturing liberation heritage and making it available online.[5] The NORDIC Documentation of Liberation Struggle in Southern Africa project was born out of collaborative efforts between the governments of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark and to a lesser extent Iceland. The project collaborates with the United Nations (UN) and International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF) in upholding documentation and digitisation of liberation heritage. It also sponsors workshops whereby researchers on liberation heritage go and share their experiences.[6]

Another initiative was the ALUKA project, a collaborative effort by scholars, information professionals and museum specialists in Southern Africa to digitise liberation materials. Initially the project was focusing on the liberation history of Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and Zimbabwe and later Angola, Tanzania and Zambia before it prematurely collapsed and the Aluka Archive was sold to (JSTOR). [7]

The Hashim Mbita liberation research project was initiated in August 2005 with the objective to document the history of the liberation struggle of the Southern African Region through collection, cataloguing and compiling oral texts in SADC member states as well as outside. The program was named after Hashim Mbita who was the Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) - precursor to African Union (AU) for twenty years from 1974 until South Africa gained independence in 1994. [8] Principal researchers for Zimbabwe under this initiative were Ngwabi Bhebe and Gerald Mazarire. They carried out extensive oral history interviewing.

The result of the above research is the recently launched Hashim Mbita Publication at the 34th SADC Summit in August 2014 in Victoria Falls. The publication profiles the history of seven countries in Southern Africa namely Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, in the 1990s the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) embarked on an oral history project to document some former trade unionists who had been overlooked in history. The impetus was the realisation that the rise of the liberation struggle led to the destruction of valuable trade unionists historic records. The project sought to highlight the

[5] F Garaba and P Ngulube, Moving with the times in search of permanence in the digitization of liberation struggle archives in Southern Africa, Historia vol 55 Durban, Nov 2010 p 2.www.scielo.org.za/scielo php? Pid accessed 18/09/14
[6] Ibid p 2.
[7] www.aluka.org accessed 17/09/14
[8] P Chitumba, President to launch the Hashim Mbita project. The Chronicle 12 August 2014

importance of trade unionists in the foundation of some liberation political parties to which some outstanding nationalist leaders like Joshua Nkomo and Benjamin Burombo belonged. This Friedrick Ebert Stiftung funded oral history project was coordinated by Julie Brittan and the interviews were done by the three trade unionists Gift Chibatwa, Trust Ngirandi and Freddy Mpofu. The academic interviewers were Brian Raftopolous and Lloyd Sachikonye from the University of Zimbabwe, Ian Phimister (University of Cape Town), Charles Van Onselen (University of Witwatersrand). They collected two hundred and ninety-five oral history interviews on tape and transcripts from this project were donated to the national archives and have been preserved for posterity. The book *Keep on Knocking* resulted from this initiative.[9]

In the last two decades we have seen some very interesting biographies on liberation struggle actors and these include Joshua Nkomo, Arthur Mutambara, Dzinashe Machingura, Ndabaningi Sithole, Verna Sithole, Fay Chung, Simon Muzenda, Josiah Tungamirai, Edgar Tekere, Judith Todd among others.

National Archives and the Oral History programme

The story of the origins of the National Archives of Zimbabwe and the development of the Zimbabwe archival tradition is well covered in Ngulube 2012.[10]

The establishment of an archival service in Southern Rhodesia can be traced to the 1922 discussions on the fate of the BSACo records in the wake of the Responsible Government, and the efforts of Mr Dugald Niven, a librarian at the Bulawayo Public Library. Mr Dugald Niven proposed the establishment of a national archival institution. However, the then recently established Responsible Government of Southern Rhodesia was unable to shoulder the expense of establishing the national archives.

As part of the 1933 40th anniversary of the settler occupation of Matabeleland, Mr V. W. Hiller, who was later to head the Archives, organised a successful national historical exhibition. The interest generated by the exhibition resulted in the formation of a National Historical Committee to work towards the establishment of a National Historical Museum. These efforts were aimed at immortalising the memory of the Pioneer Column. The work of the Committee and the efforts of Mr Hiller resulted in the promulgation of the Archives Act on 12th April 1935 and on 1st September 1935 the Government Archives of Southern Rhodesia came into being. The resultant Archives was mandated to acquire preserve and provide access to documentation in whatever format.

It was not until 1968 that an oral history programme at the National Archives of Rhodesia commenced. This initiative had a European bias as interviews were conducted in English. It was only in 1977 that National Archives began to collect oral history in vernacular languages.

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[9] B Raftopolous and I Phimister, Keep on Knocking a history of labour movement in Zimbabwe 1900-97.Harare.Baobab Books,1997.p xi

[10] Patrick Ngulube (ed**), National Archives 75@30 : 75 Years of Archiving excellence at the National Archives of Zimbabwe, National Archives of Zimbabwe**, 2012

Currently the Oral History team is headed by an Oral Historian based in Harare and assisted by Provincial Archivists in Bulawayo, Masvingo, Mutare, Gweru and Chinhoyi. To date the oral history collection stands at 4148 interviews on sound tapes and audio-visual formats. The interviews span various areas of research such as Liberation history, labour movements, intangible cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge systems, chieftainship, women in politics and cultural values.

Capturing a Fading National Memory project: Phase One

The Project 'Capturing a Fading National Memory' was inaugurated in 2004 by National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) and University of Zimbabwe (UZ) History Department to identify, document and preserve reminiscences on the First and Second Chimurenga (war of liberation from 1893-1979). The project to document Zimbabwe liberation history was in response to a challenge thrown to NAZ, NMMZ and UZ History Department by President Robert Mugabe to record for posterity the facts of the national struggle. Speaking at the launch of the project the Executive Director of the NMMZ Dr Mahachi said so much had happened which had not been documented and this project would lead to the creation of comprehensive databases.[11]

On 15 May 2004 NAZ, NMMZ and the UZ History Department launched this Project. The project set out to collect as much testimony as possible from the survivors of the war, with an emphasis on capturing the experiences of ordinary, low status individuals. Potential informants were identified and approached through their local leadership, in a district-based approach. Several testimonies were collected this way. However, it soon became apparent that the circumstances of today's Zimbabwe meant such a project was unlikely to succeed. Inadequate resources and inherent weaknesses both played a part in its failure. The first phase sought to record the oral liberation history of veterans within Zimbabwe.

The project Capturing a Fading National Memory was launched simultaneously in Tsholotsho and Chiredzi Districts in May 2004. In Tsholotsho the project launch was presided over by Professor Jonathan Moyo. He drew attention to misinformation in textbooks about the outcome of the battle at Pupu in Lupane pitting King Lobengula's forces against the Allan Wilson patrol as one example of how information can be used to corrode a people's dignity and self-worth.[12] Tsholotsho represented an area in which the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) operated from whilst Chiredzi was chosen to be a representative sample of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) operations.

Subsequent to this, collecting trips were made to Gutu and Gwanda Districts in January and February 2006. Of the four field trips the Gutu and Chiredzi liberation narratives were quality and informative whilst the Tsholotsho and Gwanda field trips were not very successful as the personnel was not well trained and not much reconnaissance had been done. The two trips also did not yield as much information as they were viewed as partisan projects aimed at advancing

[11] Herald Reporter, Project seeks to document Zimbabwe's history. The Herald 16 October 2003 p 4.
[12] Bulawayo Bureau, Oral History Programme launched in Tsholotsho .The Herald 17 May 2004 p 4.

ZANLA's contributions at the expense of ZIPRA. In fact, not a single interview was collected from Gwanda. Further collections were later made to other districts as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Capturing a fading national memory phase one statistics (2003-2009).

AREA	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	FORMAT	LENGTH OF INTERVIEW
Chiredzi	233	Sound	291 hrs 25 mins
Mutare	213	Sound	266 hrs 25 mins
Gutu	212	Sound	265 hrs
Harare	139	Sound	174 hrs 15mins
Masvingo	100	Sound	125 hrs
Goromonzi	100	Sound	125 hrs
Mhondoro	86	Sound	107 hrs 5 mins
Gweru	75	Sound	94 hrs 15mins
Buhera	72	Sound	90 hrs
Bikita	50	Sound	62 hrs 5 mins
Mberengwa	43	Sound	54 hrs 15mins
Tsholotsho	39	Sound	49 hrs 15mins
Bulawayo	15	Sound	19 hrs 15mins
Chipinge South	14	Sound	17 hrs 5 mins
Mt Darwin	10	Sound	12 hrs 5mins
Murehwa	10	Sound	12 hrs 5 mins
Chinhoyi	4	Sound	5 hrs
Gwanda	0	-	-
Total	**1415**	**Sound**	**1769 hrs 15 mins**

The first phase of the project was successful in supplementing traditional archival sources. Murambiwa is of the notion that since history is written by the victors, in the Zimbabwean scenario the victors of the second Chimurenga are the Zimbabweans who should be players in

the making of their history.[13] The project's lasting contribution was to empower the owners of the narratives. Announcing the winding up of the project at the Heroes Day celebrations of 2007 the President Robert Mugabe optimistically stated that the project had managed to collect many oral histories concerning the nation's liberation struggle.[14]

To the National Archives's repositories the first phase of the project was able to add 1415 interviews on audio tapes as shown in Table 1. These interviews constitute 1769 hrs 15 mins recording time. The total number of hours worked to conduct the interviews translates to about 196 working days assuming an individual is working 9 hrs a day.

Capturing a Fading National Memory project: Phase Two

The second phase of the Project Capturing a fading National Memory was bilateral collaboration between NAZ and NMMZ. Due to resource constraints the two institutions relied heavily on Treasury allocations to send officers into the field. Despite these challenges these efforts yielded results as ex-detainees registers were compiled and visits to detention and restriction camps such as Sikombela and Gonakudzingwa were undertaken. Useful contacts were made with potential informants. This was made possible as a result of close collaboration with volunteers like Sekuru Raymond Mazorodze. These voluntary efforts helped in identification and bringing together of liberation struggle veterans to visit struggle sites like Khami, Sikombela, Pupu, Lupanda and Gonakudzingwa. This collaboration has seen NAZ and NMMZ specialists carrying out interviews on the liberation struggle at the ZANU PF headquarters with ex-detainees and restrictees identified partly through such excursions.

The interviews are being preserved in digital form and are transcribed by executive assistants and students on work related learning. This collaboration has also seen NMMZ and NAZ carrying out interviews with ZIPRA cadres in Bulawayo a move that has been welcomed and greatly appreciated by these cadres as filling in gaps and correcting perceived imbalances especially with regards the contribution in the liberation struggle by ZIPRA. The team managed to come up with eight very informative interviews on digital audio and video formats of not less than three hours per informant. The interviewees were from different sections - some were involved at fronts, some were trainers outside the country and interestingly a lady was one of the informants who chronicled life at Mkushi girls Camp.

The second phase of the project managed to add 124 interviews to the collection and these are preserved in digital sound and video formats. These interviews convert to 124 hours of testimony (Table 2). This converts to about 13 working days assuming an individual is working 9 hours a day.

[13] Ibid

[14] Live broadcasts of the President R.G Mugabe's speech on the occasion of the Heroes day celebrations, ZTV current affairs Programme 13 August 2007.Audio visual unit NAZ.

Table 2. Capturing a fading national memory phase two statistics (2010-2014)

AREA	NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	FORMAT	LENGTH OF INTERVIEW
Harare	27	Sound/video/still images	27 hrs
ZIPRA cadres	24	Sound/video/still images	24 hrs
Khami prison	18	Sound/video/still images	18 hrs
Gonakudzingwa	12	Sound/video/still images	12 hrs
Chikomba	11	Sound/video/still images	11 hrs
Pupu	8	Sound/video/still images	8 hrs
Altena farm	7	Sound/video/still images	7 hrs
Lupanda	6	Sound/video/still images	6 hrs
Sikombela	6	Sound/video/still images	6 hrs
Gray prison	5	Sound/video/still images	5 hrs
Total	**124**	**Sound/video/still images**	**124 hrs**

The Patriotic History debate

The Capturing a Fading National Memory Project generated a lot of excitement amongst historians. Whilst some lauded this as long overdue there were also significant voices critical of this initiative, fearing it was laying the foundation for patriotic history. T .O Ranger argues that the first pilot project in rewriting the history of Zimbabwe was launched on May 15 in Tsholotsho and was a campaign platform for the Guest of Honour, Jonathan Moyo, who was to stand as a candidate in the general elections scheduled for 2005.[15] He argues that the project was a divisive patriotic history emphasising on division of the nation into races but also patriots and sell outs among the African Population.[16] S. Field also believes that archives do not serve a society in a neutral manner as those in power tend to influence the making of history. [17] This notion supports the scholarly notion that this project was aimed at collecting monolithic memories in this case the ZANU PF version of the liberation and not a national collective memory as the title was coined.

[15] T O Ranger, The uses and abuses of history in Zimbabwe p 11
[16] Ibid p 8
[17] S Field, Memory, knowledge and power: can archives keep people's stories alive? In ISSA Journal No 22, January 2004, p5

Despite such criticism levelled at the project approach Roberts argues that the project and its approach is an extension of collecting that has been ongoing for over thirty years by the National Archives. He further expresses confidence in the expertise and professional integrity of those who were involved and that they would not lend the project into political patriotic history. [18] This notion supports the assertion that this project was never abused by politicians but its failure in some areas was a matter of logistical and perceptions problems. At the launch of the project for instance research assistants were paid on the basis of the number of the tapes produced and as a result they tended to concentrate on quantity rather than quality of the products. Perhaps unbeknown to the critics was the fact that the National Archives had always been in a race against time to preserve patriotic narratives. The colonial state provided space for preserving the memories of a white nation by systematically harvesting public records of historical significance, as well as capturing white oral histories. During this time, there was a consolidation of the white man's memories in this country and a commendable level of investment in archives infrastructure. The legacy of this period included the current purpose-built premises and a thriving oral history programme with a bias towards the memories of the white community.

Murambiwa has dealt at length on the challenges the project faced during this phase in Matabeleland. Of particular concern were challenges with regards to managing ethnic differences.[19] These ethnic differences help to explain why Matabeleland is politically somewhat different to the rest of the country. Attempts to collect oral history were more politicized in the districts of Matabeleland than they were in other parts of Zimbabwe. In Gwanda, very few informants were willing to come forward with testimonies. In Tsholotsho many informants came forward, but the information they gave tended to be very shallow. The ethnic differences partly arose from the infamous *"gukurahundi"* civil disturbances that rocked Matabeleland during the early 1980s. In a number of instances informants confused Second Chimurenga and Gukurahundi testimonies but the more the interviewers sought to steer the accounts from Gukurahundi to the Second Chimurenga, the faster they lost the trust of the interviewees. For these individuals it was impossible to separate the purpose of the Oral project from prevailing power structures. Power, memory and identity were intertwined.

Conclusion

This paper has been able to show various national and local initiatives carried out to document memories of the liberation struggles. The project, Capturing a Fading National Memory, is just one of many such initiatives. The paper also concedes and makes no apologies for having been inspired by political sentiments on the imbalances and biases in the liberation struggle archive. It has also been able to show political inspiration that influenced this project is no different from the patriotic obligations behind the birth of the National Archives as a platform to celebrate "pioneer conquest".

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[18] R.S Roberts, Traditional paramountcy and modern politics in Matabeleland: the end of Lobengula royal family p 37.

[19] Murambiwa IM, "Dismembering or Remembering the "Zimbabwe Archive", Archives: The Journal of the British Records Association, 34, 121, 2009, p31.

Whilst the collection of liberation struggle testimonies is work in progress, that over 1893 hours of testimonies has so far been collected under just one project is no mean achievement. To this we must add results from various other efforts and also consider that this is still work in progress. Questions will be raised as to the wisdom of celebrating collections that may not end up in the National Archives. Desirable as such monopoly of custody might be, this is not practical. For a country so rich in the diversity of black and white, victors and losers, remembered and forgotten, disposed and dispersed versions, Zimbabweans and Rhodesians, vociferous and voiceless, it would be unrealistic to think in terms of a nationalised 'Zimbabwe Oral History Archive'. The National Archives of Zimbabwe does not have the resources, capacity, goodwill or intention to be the sole custodian of the 'Zimbabwe Oral History Archive'. The law allows for a dispersed Zimbabwean archive. Our duty is to encourage these to flourish instead of engaging in unnecessary turf wars over who should or should not be doing what. Is this a race against time? Time like money has been in scarce supply for as long as we can remember.

PRESENTATIONS

State and future of museums in Zimbabwe

Godfrey Mahachi

Introduction

- Importance of the symposium in the context NMMZ's
- VISION
  - To guarantee a secure future for Zimbabwe's heritage that engages people and enriches lives and communities.
- MISSION
  - To provide excellent heritage management services that promote an understanding and appreciation of that heritage within Zimbabwe and beyond.

Functions

- To administer museums and national monuments.
- To provide for the preservation of monuments, relic, specimens and other objects of historical or scientific value or interest.
- To document, preserve and present Zimbabwe Liberation Heritage.
- To investigate and report upon any matter relating to any monument or relic, including the desirability of declaring any monument to be a national monument.
- To compile and keep a register of all national monuments and of any relics that it has acquired or that have been brought to its notice.
- To protect ancient and national monuments and prohibit their unauthorized excavation.
- To hold public exhibitions of museum collections.
- To promote community involvement in heritage management.
- To regulate the impact of development activities on heritage.
- To conduct original research in human and natural sciences.
- To promote heritage awareness, learning and enjoyment.
- To safeguard the intangible aspect of cultural heritage.

Current thrusts: Strategic Plan 2013-2018

- Key Result Areas
  - Preservation and provision of access to national and historic documents, monuments and relics
  - Management of financial, material and human resources, policy formulation and implementation
  - E-Government

- Key strategic goals
  - To improve the preservation of identified national monuments, relics and other objects. of historical and scientific value from current.
  - To improve training and development of NMMZ Staff.
  - To increase the number of heritage places with basic facilities.
  - To improve access to heritage information.
  - To improve tourism infrastructure.
  - To improve the documentation of collections.

- To improve research output.
- To improve customer. Satisfaction,
- To establish e-government structures and systems.

- Strategic Focus
  - NMMZ Act review.
  - Monument nomination of underrepresented heritage.
  - Adoption of new technologies for research, documentation, conservation and presentation e.g. digitisation of collections, online publications.
  - Domestication international conventions – Heritage under water, Intangible Cultural Heritage.
  - Staff training – Forensic anthropology, ICTs, Conservation, Documentation, Tour Guiding.
  - Provision of visitor needs – accommodation, catering, conferences, interpretation and recreational facilities (children play centres).
  - Utilisation of heritage resources (development of education resource centres, tourism activities).
  - Expansion of museum concepts (township, cultural and eco-tourism).
  - Enshrinement of heritage sites (Altena Farm, Nyafaru House and the route, Kamungoma, Chibondo, Butcher Site etc.
  - Embellishment/enhancement of historic buildings particularly those named after historic iconic figures – depict our history, culture, identity and Zimbabwean-ness.
  - Broaden our revenue base,
  - Improvement of the Tentative List (transboundary, transnational, serial nominations).

These are our main thrusts, guided by the available resources. We will broaden them as the resource base increases.

Empowering museum communities: local and international debates

Gilbert Pwiti

Abstract

The traditional museum has been a place where people come to consume knowledge and to be entertained. This comprises walking through galleries that commonly offer displays of archaeological and ethnographic objects as well as specimens of fauna and flora. The displays are accompanied by captions containing information about the objects, information which is factual and basic, but occasionally including interesting interpretations focusing on unusual features and sometimes exercising the mind and imagination of the visitor. This then fulfils the museum's role of educating and entertaining the visiting public. The process of generating the knowledge and information about objects on display is almost solely the responsibility of the museum specialist. Rarely, if ever has the consumer been a part of the process of knowledge creation and interpretation. What to display, how to display and what information to include in the displays remains the specialist's prerogative. The end user/client consumes what is on offer. To this extent, the specialist has the capacity and power to influence and to shape the thinking of the consumer on the specific subject related to the objects on display. Often, the museum specialist is an educated member of the dominant class and because he/she makes the critical decisions on what to display, how, where and even when, he/she enjoys considerable power over the museum client.

In recent years, museums philosophy has been changing towards the thinking that the client/consumer can and must play a role in the knowledge generation and creation process. Ultimately, what the museum offers should be the product of an active information sharing and development process. This paper explores some of the issues involved in the transformation towards empowering communities to becoming an involved and active part of museums and their development. Such re-direction is then expected to ultimately transform museums in Zimbabwe into preferred destinations of choice in the public's quest for leisure activities, as is the case in some other parts of the world.

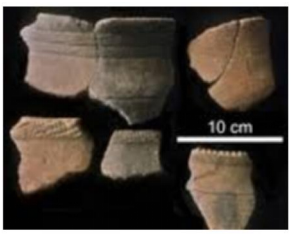
Background

- The traditional museum has been a place where people come to consume knowledge and to be entertained.
- This comprises walking through galleries that commonly offer displays of archaeological and ethnographic objects as well as specimens of fauna and flora.
- The displays are accompanied by captions containing information about the objects.

Museum displays

- The process of generating knowledge, information and interpretation for displays almost entirely the responsibility of the museum specialist.
- Rarely, if ever, has the visitor/consumer been a part of the process of knowledge creation and interpretation.
- What to display, how to display, what information to provide, when to display remains the specialist's priviledge.













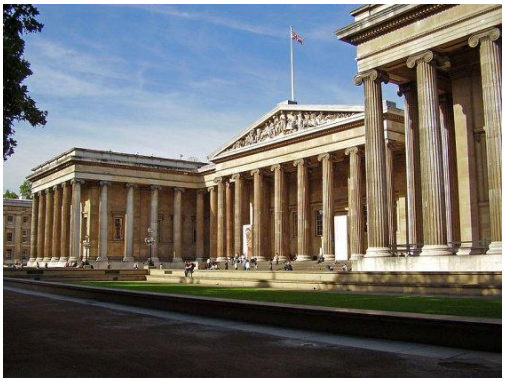
Information and power

- The museum specialist has always had the capacity and power to influence and to shape the thinking of the client/consumer through the display.
- Often, the specialist is an educated member of the dominant class who, through what he/she displays enjoys considerable power over the visitor/consumer.

The new museology

- The New Archaeology era ushered in a new thinking about the role of the past in contemporary society.
- This had significant influence on museum philosophy and practice.
- Questioning of the role of the museum and how information about the past has been disseminated.

Post processual archaeology & museology



- The process of re-direction, re-definition and quest for relevance as well as critical self awareness gathered momentum during the post-processual era.
- Why museums, what museums, whose museums became critical matters for debate.
- Museums were criticised for being institutions for the dominant classes/elite.
- Museums traditionally seen as in the service of legitimising existing socio-political and economic relations.
- Marxist perspectives viewed them as tools of oppression to mask contradictions in society and perpetuation of the domination of the under-classes.
- Against this background, loud calls for change in museums philosophy and practice.
- Calls for development of museums that would have relevance to all.
- Representations of different voices, democratisation of museums:
  - Multi-vocality.
  - Interactivity.
  - Transformation of museums to play a more meaning role in contemporary society.

Museums in Zimbabwe and Africa

- Museums originally established and designed to serve interests of the settler colonial society.
- Most modelled after and reflected the design, philosophy and practice of the mother country.
- As a result, they have been shunned and only visited by very few of the indigenous people.
- Have been widely criticised in recent years for being static, dull and lifeless.

Museums as empowering, learning & leisure destinations in Zimbabwe

- Colonial system offered a variety of social, leisure and learning pursuits, almost all of which became "must do" for most segments of the population.
- System created a demand for education/schools, Christian churches (religion) sport, performing arts (live music shows) etc, all of which caught on like the proverbial bush fire!!
- All non-indigenous/foreign.
- The same did not happen for museums.
- Post-colonial heritage managers have continually argued that this was because museums were elitist colonialist impositions that lack relevance.
- What made other foreign impositions relevant and in some instances for demand for them to outstrip supply?
- Sense of ownership.

- Participation.





- Action and involvement.
- Benefits – social enjoyment, physical gratification, spiritual fulfilment, material returns.









Empowering communities: Let a hundred flowers bloom

- What museums for Africa?
- Conference theme for decades among museum specialists in Africa (and in Zimbabwe 34 years on).
- Calls for creation and development of museums that are relevant.
- Outreach & empower communities to become active and involved players.
- Create demand for museums by offering action and involvement.
- Develop museums of the living, about the living, for the living (away from museums of the dead).
- What museums do they want?
- Transform museums into destinations of choice, alongside the various other pursuits.

Conclusion

- If all else fails:
  "We must educate the African by force if necessary,



leaving him to thank us and understand us later when by our teaching we will have brought him in a position to do so"

"Liiinda, guess whaaat!!!! Tendayi took me to the Mutare museum last Saturday. It was aaaawesome!!!!"

The Politics of community engagement in museums: Zimbabwe and beyond

Munyaradzi Manyanga

Politics implied

- Museums are public institutions and communities by their nature are political entities and therefore any scenario that seek to engages communities in museums becomes a political issue.

Museums and society

- Museums part of Civic society where intellectuals transmit social hegemony by way of indirect cultural persuasiveness of civil institutions. Museums as a civic institution can transform private individuals into public persons.

History of museums

- Looking back into the history of museums, the realities of museums have changed many times. Museums have always had to modify how they worked, and what they did, according to the context, the plays of power, and the social, economic, and political imperatives that surrounded them.
- 19th Century
    - 19th Century concept of a museum as a treasury, storehouse, laboratory and school, with its strong didactic purpose.
- 1920s
    - In addition to collecting for national and civic pride, museums were for: 'research, education and inspiration'.
- 1990s
    - Social inclusion agenda.

Community

- A community is a situationally based form of identification where putative cultural differences are organised according to social boundaries.

Democracy

- Community participation is a way of exploring democracy, accountability and relations of power.

Inclusion and exclusion

- Community involvement is seen as a vehicle for complex forms of social inclusion and exclusion.

Community of action

- Communities by their nature are political entities and therefore any scenario that seek to engage communities in museums becomes a political issue.
- The idea of community is a complex one that in most cases is created by expediency and purpose.
- Quite often community emerges as a "community of action" .... when there is pressing issue to be resolved or pushed forward. This normally happens when there is a threat to a privilege or right. A community may feel a sense of injustice, economic discrimination and civic marginalisation. In this case community heritage becomes an effort to generate multiple voices and in the process it finds itself entrenched within apolitical context. See old Bulawayo, Batonga museum, South America and the repatriation issue.

Museums as contact zones for community

- Regardless of setting, the museum often becomes the contact zone for where various meanings of community maybe reflected.
- Community and heritage are highly mutative concepts that are malleable, highly emotive. Closely guarded and used to take control and define authority.

Heritage, museums & community

- Museums are repositories and spaces for a people's heritage. In that regard the connection between heritage, museums and the community looks so natural that it does not need explanation or justification.

Rationale for existence

- In fact, if a museum is not connected to its community, the rationale of its existence may come into question.

Changing roles of museums

- Essential that community engagement be on the agenda of museums.
- The ever-changing role of museums has seen them getting more and more involved in the social and economic agenda of public policy.
- In the United Kingdom for example museums reflect a change from a morally questionable approach, which aimed to 'embrace the whole world' (e.g. Gallery 18 at the British Museum) & the Empire.

Social role of museums

- Today's museums justify their existence on the grounds that they play a major role in expressing, understanding, developing and preserving the objects, values and knowledge that civil society values. This makes museums key institutions in the production of social ideas.

Locality and community

- To a more self-reflective, almost introspective concern with locality and community. (e.g. St Mungo Museum of Religion and Art – that seeks to address issues of diversity and plurality – Veil.

Questions for a modern museum

- Today people are asking the following questions with regards to museums and communities:
  - Why should museum professionals' dictate what goes into museums and what gets displayed?
  - Who says that the public should just be consumers of cultures?
  - Why can't communities be creators as well?

District 6 Museum

- Museums and communities in urban setups like District 6 museum represent then real place in the absence of the real thing. Urban set ups are very much cosmopolitan, and the people's convergence at the museum can actually define urban citizenship.

Collecting = Communicating

- The pressing demands to attract visitors especially in British museums in the 1990s brought a reappraisal of the museum's core functions, and a corresponding shift of emphasis from collecting to communicating.

Pluri-vocal community

- Increasing concern of since the 1990s that museums should accommodate and take their place in a levelled pluri-vocal community.

Social inclusion

- Today's museums are compelled to meet social inclusion targets to secure Government funding.
- Crises in political legitimacy and domestic policy had led Western governments to devise strategies which would create new points of contact with their people.
- In Britain, for example, the Government's failure to meet satisfactory targets in education, health care and social work, had prompted it to impose a social inclusion policy on museums, universities and other cultural institutions. While this policy not only shifted the mantle of responsibility on to the cultural sector in exchange for funding, it also problematised the functions of these institutions.

Social engagement

- The task facing museum directors today is to earn and retain the public's trust as a place of intellectual and moral integrity committed to broadening and exploring new forms of social engagement.

The Veil

- The social inclusion agenda is not always easy to implement especially in a society. the involvement of the Islamic community in the exhibition, The Veil (1997-98), at St Mungo Museum in Glasgow. Although the curator had intended to represent a range of positions on the meaning of the veil, the community refused.

True engagement

- National Museum of the American Indian in Washington:

    - American Indians had been consulted to ensure a pure and authoritative interpretation of their history.
    - In effect, they influenced every decision, including the design of the building, the role of the museum, selective conservation and rights of access to sacred objects.
- There are similar museums in Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Inclusion and exclusion

- Originating cultures and their affiliated people today are the only people who can speak to that past . . . 'There is a problem with the argument that certain communities own culture over others; it's premised on the idea that cultural material has an essence best understood by the ethnicity of the originating place of that object'.
- A community in a museum can bring an element of negative experience. Feelings of exclusion, intimidation and insecurity can emerge for those who are on the outside, whether it is voluntary or forced.

Disruption of traditional curatorial practice

- Community engagement disrupts traditional curatorial practice.

Uneasy relations

- Elsewhere the word community brings fear in the museum professional. In most cases the presence of community in museums imply disagreements and contestations especially in America over the repatriation of native American materials in museums.

Zimbabwe

- The pre 1990 museums mostly focused on the traditional role of the museum.
    - Museum of Human Sciences
    - Natural History Museum
    - Zimbabwe Military Museum
    - Mutare Museum
    - Mining Museum
    - Great Zimbabwe Museum

Community to be educated

- By design communities were to be educated in the museums.
- Official history and narratives were imposed on the audiences.
- These were mostly urban based where a sense of community is not clearly defined.
- Urban setups are very cosmopolitan.

Post 1990

- Community engagement is a post 1990 development.
    - Batonga Museum.
    - Ziwa Site Museum.
    - KoBulawayo Site Museum.
- These Museums are built on some model of community engagement.

Museums and social management

- Community participation is generally a grassroots concept and its application is essentially a top-down approach mostly following government/Heritage Institutions priorities.

- In Australia and the US museums and heritage is used as a resource for social management by the state.

The Politics of community engagement

- Revolve around issues of inclusion and exclusion.
- Sense of community is built on a community of action over issues of marginalization, alleged discrimination, Identity.
- Perpetuation of stereotypes about some communities.
- Political correctness, democracy especially participatory democracy.
- Community of action-loss of privileges and rights.
- Social justices especially in countries that were colonised and alienated from their heritage by making museums elite centres.
- A political process during which the state uses the museum for social management.

Responsive community

- Traditionally museums referred to their visitors as the 'audience' (passive) to 'community' (responsive). This movement is part of an assertive community that is talking back to museums and seeking representations in their own terms.
- Museums now seen as having a moral responsibility to transform monologue into conversation and that they must learn to listen as well as speak.

The future of museums

- Museums, in common with all other social institutions, serve many masters, and must play many tunes accordingly.
- Perhaps success can be defined by the ability to balance all the tunes that must be played and still make the sound worth listening to.





Transforming the museum experience in Zimbabwe: of multimedia and ICTs

Godhi Bvocho

Introduction

- The quest for museums professionals all over the world to interpret their researches and findings in the best interest of the museums users is now almost common knowledge.

Why?

- Poor communication has characterised most of our attempts at presentation in our museums.
- The public view some of our museums buildings and displays as:
  - Old fashioned,
  - Static,
  - Dirty,
  - Dull,
  - Imposing and restrictive.
- Presentation in museums should be innovative so as to capture the dynamism and imagination of the diverse potential consumers.
- The use of websites and multimedia CDs as well as stand-alone multimedia computer screens in galleries has been implemented across the world including Zimbabwe.
- Multimedia has the potential to bridge this gap by ushering in a breakthrough towards capturing this diversity into a single component.
- Computer technology can now be found in almost all areas of daily life: at work, in homes, at supermarkets, in hospitals and at airports.

Multimedia: definition

- Multimedia refers to a computer program that allows interactive non-linear navigation through the content of at least three of text, still images, animated images; sound and video (Gill 1995).
- It encompasses hypermedia, imaging applications, digital video, computer graphics, virtual reality and computer controlled interactive displays (ICOM: 7).
- Since internet, in the form of the World Wide Web (WWW) enables the linking of various forms of data such as images, text, video and sound, it is another form of multimedia.

ICT: definition

- ICTs: Information Communication Technologies refer to communication using computer-based enhancements. It is a system that merges computing with high-speed communication links to carry data such as sound, graphics and video. Examples include personal computers, some smart phones, cameras and televisions.
- Internet is a global network of networks enabling computers of all kinds to directly communicate and share services throughout much of the world.
- Globally, most museums have joined the WWW and employed multimedia technology.
- Potential now exists to bridge the gap between museum curators, the public and researchers through the setting up of museum websites that can be accessed internationally.

Transforming the experience: potential

- The rate of consumption on technological gadgets, laptops, an I-pads and smart phones, play stations on him at one go testifies to this phenomenon.
- In the shops, at the street corners, in commuter omnibuses, almost anywhere: people have mastered the art of using ICTs and multimedia technologies to fulfill their quest for knowledge and amusement while going about their business.

- ICTs and multimedia technologies, can enhance virtual and online museum patronage, heritage presentation as well as answering the museum users' ever swelling quest for knowledge by providing self-paced opportunities for learning and enjoyment.
- A number of institutions in Zimbabwe, museums included seem are far from achieving meaningful connectivity to the 'new information economy' so as to benefit from its spin-offs.
- Networking revolution of ICTs and multimedia has unrivalled potential to open up new digital opportunities for museums.
- Acceleration of cultural and social participation and greater inclusion of isolated members of the public.
- Opportunities to revamp the way museums communicate with its various users.
- Transformed lives by posing as ready, fast and somehow reliable source of information.
- While the production industry has made commendable strides in ICTs and multimedia technology use, the service sector, of which museums belong, is still lagging behind.
- The call therefore is for the sector to find its technological bearings, adapt and adopt what would work for it.

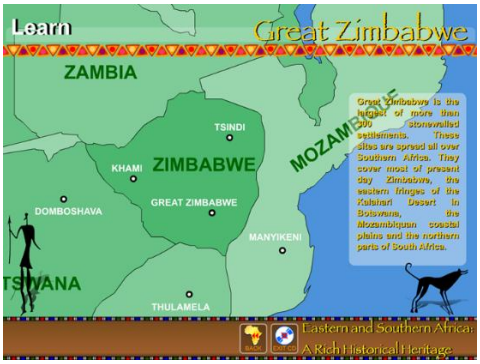
Misconception

- Many people perceive the use of computer technology as to imply a replacement of the traditional presentation mechanism.
- The use of information technology through multimedia complements the traditional systems by bringing with them interactivity and breaking through the physical barriers of the museum walls and geographical borders of countries and continents.
- It also reduces the gap that exists between museum curators and their audiences in which intended users also take part as active meaning makers in presentation and interpretation.

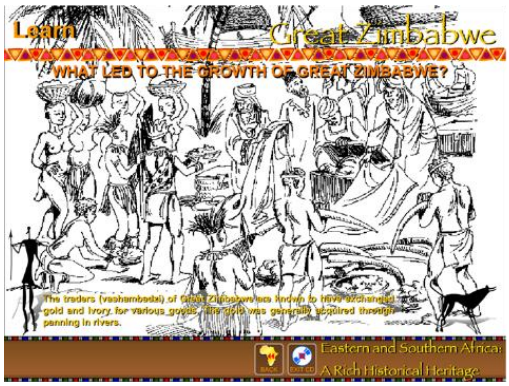
Multimedia: NMMZ cases

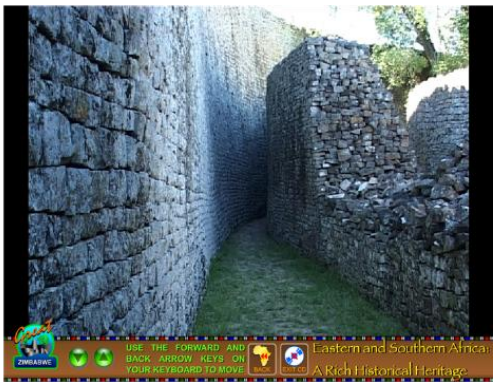
- Multimedia CD on Great Zimbabwe: an educational resource.
  - Learn about Great Zimbabwe.
    - What is Great Zimbabwe? Where is Great Zimbabwe?





Intangible, panoramic ideas, puzzles









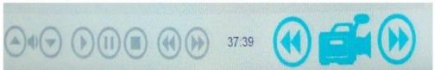
Multimedia:

- Large Storage *space*
- *Interactivity and constructive learning*
- *Flexible Distribution mechanism*





Channel	Rate
Retention after hearing	20%
Retention after seeing	30%
Retention after hearing and seeing	50%
Retention after hearing, seeing and touching	70%



NMMZ Website

- Electronic outreach and access
  - Detailed and well-illustrated information is provided in a single unit with the possibility of reaching many audiences.
  - The website is one of the most effective information dissemination and retrieval systems ever developed. Its ability to combine research and outreach makes it ideal for communication.
- Involvement, Participation and Feedback
  - Another lucrative opportunity that is being exploited by many museums is the flexibility of internet to present the views of the professional archaeologists and those of the audiences together.

NMMZ challenges on the web

- *Under-utilised potential*
- *The audiences and connectivity: lack of marketing and awareness initiatives*
- *Lack of proper maintenance and updating: most section obsolete and out-dated information*

The legal basis for community empowerment and engagement in Zimbabwean museums

Henry Chiwaura

Abstract

The world-over, the identification, collection and preservation of heritage is a preserve for communities. Ideally, for heritage to be successfully protected, communities have to be involved from grassroots level. For community to be fully involved the legal framework for management of museums has to be pro-community. The National Heritage Resources Act, of South African (1999) is a good example of a legislation that is modern and has a legal basis for community empowerment and engagement in Africa south of Sahara. Presently, archaeological, cultural and religious heritages have been shaped and affected by legislations that have excluded communities. The exclusion of communities in museum activities has adverse effect on the preservation and visitation of museums. This study seeks to examine the legal basis for community's empowerment and engagement in Zimbabwean museums. The paper argues that the international framework for the management of museums and heritage and the constitution of Zimbabwe has provision for the involvement of local communities in heritage business.

The study utilised in-depth interviews, observation and documentary analysis to collect data as well as the historical, phenomenological and sociological approaches to describe and analyse the legal basis for community engagement and empowerment. The study established that there is close relationship between enabling legislation and ownership from community. Essentially, communities give meaning to museums activities and without it museums remain selective. It is my conviction that an enabling legal basis for community empowerment and engagement in Zimbabwe can only be achieved by aligning the National Museums and Monument of Zimbabwe and the Parks and Wildlife Act to international management framework for museums and heritage as well as the constitution of Zimbabwe. There is need for national legal frameworks to domesticate international management frameworks, as what happened in South Africa. The South African government has domesticated the World Heritage Convention into a national law titled 'The South African, No. 49 of 1999: World Heritage Act, 1999).

Introduction

- Most African countries, Zimbabwe included have outdated heritage legislation that has failed to meet contemporary realities of integrated development, customary and community rights.
- The legislation as a result is always conflicting with community, traditional and cultural rights and values.
- Zimbabwe museum practice has policies that are pro community but the legislation does not support the policy.
- For heritage to be successfully protected, communities have to be involved from grassroots level.
- For community to be fully involved the legal framework for management of museums has to be pro-community.
- The National Heritage Resources Act, of South African (1999) is a good example of a legislation that is modern and has a legal basis for community empowerment and engagement in Africa south of Sahara.

International legal and policy instruments for museums and heritage management

World Heritage Convention

- The management of World Heritage Sites is supported by the, the World Heritage Convention and UNESCO's Operational Guidelines for the management of world heritage sites, which points to international obligations in this regard.
- UNESCO cultural landscape management framework has six guiding principles of which one of them is relevant to local empowerment and engagement and this is the principle that people associated with the cultural landscape are the primary stakeholders for stewardship.

International legal and policy instruments for museums and heritage management

- The principle is based on the argument that Cultural landscapes have been shaped and valued by people over time and consequently, it is important to renew each generation's commitment to stewardship.
- In most cases there is a diversity of stakeholders, so whoever is responsible for management, it is critical to engage key people during the entire management process. This is particularly important when there is a management entity such as a government agency that does not have a long-term association with the cultural landscape or its communities and traditions.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

- Heritage is becoming a human rights issue globally. Museums by excluding communities in their activities are depriving people of fundamental human rights as heritage.
- The Declaration set out to record the fundamental rights recognized in legal systems across the world.
- It included civil and political rights that are familiar to the western world such as the right to life, liberty and property as well as the economic and cultural rights eminent in the Asian, Nordic and African countries.
- Some of the provisions of the UDHR were given treaty status in two major human rights covenants on the UN's **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (ICCPR) and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR) adopted in 1966 are increasingly recognized to have relevance to the management of cultural heritage.
- The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) categorised human rights issues associated with cultural heritage as one of seven 'new and complex global pressures' impacting negatively on conservation outcomes.
- It is essential for those engaged in heritage conservation projects to understand the broader economic, political and social context of their work and to recognize that official heritage interventions can have many motives, be used to achieve political aims, and, at their worst, can undermine rather than strengthen community identity, cultural diversity and human rights as was the case in colonial Zimbabwe.

Nara Document

- Article 8: *"Responsibility for cultural heritage and the management of it belongs, in the first place, to the cultural community that has generated it, and subsequently to that which cares for it".*

National legal and policy instruments for museums and heritage management

Constitution

- The constitution in section 174 (b) provides for customary law courts whose jurisdiction consists primarily in the application of customary law. Consequently, most museums deal with issues that can be accommodated by customary law. A large number of cultural landscapes also fall under the jurisdiction of customary law courts that are administered by Chiefs hence the need to align the NMMZ Act.

Cultural Policy

- Cultural policy of Zimbabwe (2007) states that Zimbabwean people should have the right to develop, access and enjoy culture and all its manifestations.
- One of the aims of the cultural policy is to come up with programmes that will promote the appropriation, participation and consumption of our arts and culture.
- The policy advocates for decentralisation of museum from towns to rural areas. Museums should not be a preserve of major towns but should be built in all centres be they urban and rural and at significant national monuments in order to fully explain their functions.

Conclusion

- In order to copiously engage and empower communities in Zimbabwean museums compliant heritage legislation must be promulgated and the indigents legally aided. This can be achieved through the alignment of legislation, policies and guidelines by NMMZ through its parent Ministry of Home Affairs in line with Constitution Amendment (No.20) Act 2013.

The Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe in a changing world, catching up with society's needs and remaining relevant

Dorothy C Madamba

Background – Natural History Museum (NHM)

- 1900-1920s ... museum assisting early European prospectors and farmers and concession hunters.
- 1930-1970s ... nationalism taking centre stage...museums as centres of national identity...1953 Rhodes centenary celebrations.
- 1932, purpose was to:
  - Store and collect objects of cultural and educational value in such a way as to render them of interest ... to the general public, to children and adults seeking instruction.
  - Carry out research by their staffs on the collections available and material collected from the region ...,
  - To aid educational service of the territory in which the museum is situated … (***Reay Smithers, 1973),***
- 1980 to date ... mostly static in displays and ...but was all this relevant?

Our changing world

- Socio-political change
- Technological advancement

- Shift of interests

Society's view on purpose of museums

- Care and preservation of heritage
  - This is the most important purpose of a museum.
- Holding collections and mounting displays.
  - Whilst storage for its own sake is a crucial part of preserving heritage, it is important to rotate collections to attract more visitors (whilst keeping high profile artefacts on display permanently) and that displays be as interactive and user-friendly as possible.
- Creating knowledge for, and about, society.
  - Public education, rather than academic or elite research. Museums are about education for everyone in society equally. 'sharing knowledge'.
  - ***Entertaining*** education for all children.
  - Trusted sources of information/learning for all adults.
  - Facilitating academic/expert research.
- Promoting economic growth through tourism, investment and regeneration.
  - Promoting economic growth (esp. attracting tourists).
- Facilitating individual development through education, stimulation and building skills.
- Fostering a sense of community,
  - Helping the vulnerable.
  - Bringing the community together.
  - Protecting the natural environment.
  - Importantly, the role of museums here is to educate, rather than lecture to people or judge behaviour.
- Providing a forum for debate
  - Museums are regarded as places to go to find out factual and unbiased information and for people to subsequently make up their own minds about a particular topic.
  - They should remain neutral in the displaying of information, rather than act as a leader in telling people what to think.
  - The public want to keep their trust in museums by believing they are being given unbiased and non-politically driven information.

Society's needs-now

- Education.
- Climate change & conservation issues.
- Easy access to data and collections.
- Consultancy- (specimen ID, farmers, scholars, researchers).
- Researches that offer solutions to problems.
- Exhibitions- also addressing current issues.
- Publications- one sided, the layman cannot understand the scientific language.

Relevance of the NHM

- Collections-old names, poor and incomplete, not easy to retrieve, documentation.
- Publications.
- Exhibitions.
- Age groups.
- Activities.

Options for catching up

- Online database.
- Digitizing.
- Online publications.
- Online exhibitions.
- Digital displays.
- Interactive and lively displays.
- New content, constant updating.

Is National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe enabled to manage Zimbabwe's cultural heritage?

K.T. Chipunza

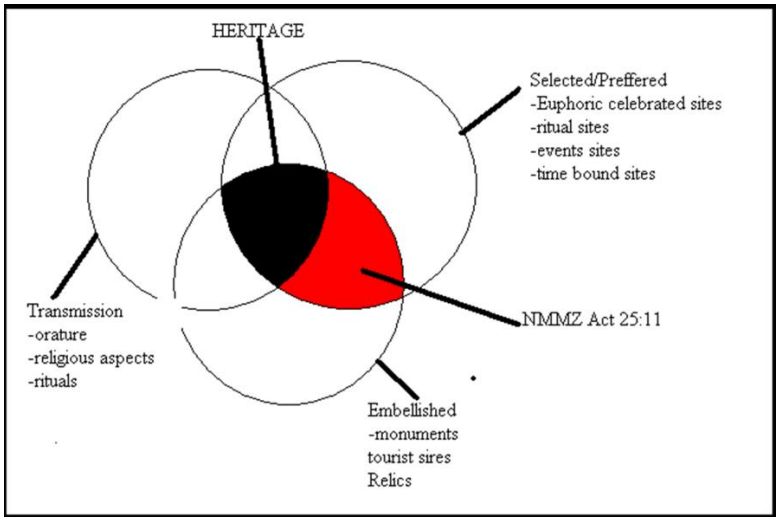
What is Culture?

- A standard academic definition of culture views it as the shared patterns of behavior and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization (C. Damen,1987).
- These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group (Hofstede. 1984).

What is Heritage?

- Heritage is a preferred product of culture that is selected for transmission and constantly recreated by communities and groups in their response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity.
- The UNESCO definition of the same sanitizes the statement by adding a qualification that 'cultural heritage' should be ***compatible with existing international human rights instruments.***
- Thus, cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and their intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

The Heritage Matrix



Let the children come…museum education programmes, learning and entertainment experiences

James Nemerai

Introduction

- Museum - to collect and preserve objects and specimens and to display them for the benefit of its visitors.
- Introduce people to new ideas, areas of interest and motivating them to seek further knowledge through study and return visits.
- Exhibits - provide an opportunity for visitors not only look but to think, to explore, to wonder, and to investigate.
- Museum education erases "heritage illiteracy" and "cultural ineffectiveness".

Let the children come …

- *"Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"* (Matthew 19:14).
- Museums - the future belongs to the children.
- The museum ought to take advantage of impressionable age of children.
- The museums offer lots of space for children to learn away from the formality and familiarity of the classroom's four walls.
- Children meet museum professionals – archaeologists; geologists; herpetologists; ichthyologists; ornithologists; anthropologists; entomologists; curators of ethnography etc.
- Museum collections connect young children with their ancestors.
- Children will be able to tell their own narrative with pride.

Museum Education Programmes in Zimbabwe

- General visit: Lecture is given.

- Guided tours given of the monument or museum.
- Question time at the end of the visit.
- Special Programmes:
  - Structured class visit – attending to a class/children of the same age group.
  - Special interest group –History class; archaeology group; research group.
  - An association.
- Tours: single/group - structured around a theme.
- Touch Collections:
  - Includes natural specimens and cultural objects for demonstration/a lecture can be given centred around a desired theme.
  - used as media; handling.
- Nature trails/Museum trails
  - Children follow a set path as they collect and investigate information on their way.
- Museum clubs:
  - Come for projects from time to time; quiz questions; drawing; children's exhibitions; maps; interpretations; painting; folktales; modelling; collecting objects of interest.
- Outreach Programme:
  - Museums on wheels/Mobile Museum – used to reach out to those not visiting the museum; and create awareness of our heritage.
- Heritage Education Quiz:
  - Create awareness of our heritage through quiz competitions. Five sections for the quiz: History or The Past; Identifying museum objects; Science and Nature; Environment and General Knowledge.
- Heritage Education Awareness Programme:
  - Involves teachers in training.
- Teacher Placement Programme:
  - Involves practising teachers so that they learn how to use museum objects for learning/teaching.
- Adopt-a-site programme:
  - Community involvement and participation either directly or through the school in conservation and management of heritage sites is what the "Adopt-a-site" concept is all about.

Learning and entertainment experiences

- Education in museums is essentially involved with teaching from and learning with objects.
- Archaeological objects and material culture.
- Museum objects give different levels of information that include material, technological, socio-economic, structural, symbolic and the effects the objects have on ideas and behaviour.
- Objects are also sensitive indicators of contact with other societies.
- The use of our five senses in collecting data (Thomas Aquinas).
- "What is actually seen remains faster in the memory than description a hundred times repeated" (Bacon's ideas).
- Watch children playing with objects; you observe little engineers, builders, pilots, farmers and inventors at work (Borich and Tombari).
- A museum visit is a visual experience.

- Conscious of EVIDENCE, a skill which is fundamental to so many parts of the curriculum, to science and the humanities alike.
- Museums encourage scientific thinking in children.

Challenges

- Museums need to keep abreast with new technology to sustain interest in using museums as learning resource centres.
- Need to change their exhibitions to create variety and a reason for return visits.
- Lack programmes and facilities for the retarded and physically challenged.

Giving voice and space to the 'other' stories: the stories of Ngoma Lungundu and Ngomakurira.

Farai M. Chabata

Introduction

- Museums/institutions frame objects as well as spaces.
- NMMZ is mandated "To provide for the preservation of ancient, historical and natural monuments, relics and other objects of historical or scientific value or interest" according to the NMMZ Act of 1972.
- The NMMZ Board of Trustees has the responsibility of ensuring that all collections in its care are adequately housed, conserved and documented. NMMZ is the custodian for many sites of cultural and natural significance.
- Reductionist approach that sounds as 'legalistic' as it is exclusive.
- No conscious and deliberate recognition of IKS and ICH in NMMZ legal mandate.
- Static Institutional structure and mandate.
- Othering of 'stories' vs the fundamental freedom of expression. Who and when, why and where is knowledge or a story generated (rather than produced, like cars or cell phones)? Asking such questions may lead us to a more nuanced discussion in our time.

Exclusive spaces: protecting 'our space and singing our song'



What museum?

- The systematic [traditional] museum…is one based on the belief that the content of the museum should be exhibited so that it reflects the 'true' structure of the subject matter and the content should be presented to the visitor in the manner that makes it easiest to comprehend. (Hein, 1994).

- In contrast, proponents of the constructivist museum would argue that the viewer constructs personal knowledge from the exhibit, and the process of gaining knowledge is itself a constructive act (Hein, 1994).

Appropriating the narrative

- Power of the narrative – 'them' and 'us'.
- Our space, our story.
- Don't worry we know your story, we will tell it our way.
- From coloniality into modernity.
- We are the 'repository'! Are we? Should we be? NMMZ as a platform and a forum.
- We are the technicians and they are mere appliances, we reserve the right to speak.
- This approach to and appropriation of space hinges on coloniality in modernity.
- Exclusive and protectionist rather inclusive and interactive.
- Spatial monologue and monotony.

Acquisition of museum collections

- NMMZ's guiding principles:
  - The object/specimen should be consistent with the collection goals of the Museum.
  - Acceptance of any incoming material must be based on an evaluation of the use and scientific or historical value of such material.
  - Care must be taken to avoid the acceptance of material acquired by unorthodox, illegal or unethical means.
- Witchcraft Suppression Act of 1899.

Telling our story in spite of you

- **We are the hidden, the ignored, the forgotten, the dead -** NMMZ vs communities.
- Emphasis on community involvement and piecemeal approach assumes homogeneity; buttresses NMMZ patronage of rather engaging their stories and hearing their voices.

Ngomakurira: a besieged Heritage?

- Demarcating and Freezing space.
- Outstanding values.
- Vandalism.
- Desecration.
- New narratives and new values.
- Trespassing.
- Entrance fees.









Traditional religious practice vs Apostolic worship at sites



Story of Ngoma lungundu

- Disciplinary processes and procedures frame objects. According to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998), ethnographic objects are created by ethnographers when they define, segment, detach and carry them away.
- Objects retain a potency to define and revalue themselves, influence discussion and acquire several patinas of value ranging from the personal, ethnic, religious, nationalistic and transnational thereby contributing to inclusivity in the museum.
- Collections of special interest include the *ngoma lungundu* (drum that thunders) which has been linked by Tudor Parfitt (2008) to the Biblical Ark of the Covenant.
- Dumbwe Mountains and the voice of God – Lemba.
- Cf Voices from the rocks in the Matobo Hills.
- Cf Ngomakurira Hills narratives.



Patinas of value

- Objects retain a potency to define and

revalue themselves, influence discussion and acquire several patinas of value ranging from the personal, ethnic, religious, nationalistic and transnational thereby contributing to inclusivity in the museum.

Custodianship

- Who should keep a story?
- Does it change or evolve over time?
- What happens when that happens?
- Nature of heritage – dynamic, omits, exaggerates, creates and recreates

Museum Collections & Heritage Spaces Make Connections and Tell Stories

- Museum Collections are an embodiment of the diverse cultural and natural heritage of Zimbabwe and a source inspiration to individuals, groups, communities and corporate bodies.
- Research – various disciplines such as history. Some researches seek to connect or reconnect collections with 'donor' communities or individuals (Provenance)
- Exhibitions – in the museums and outside
- Heritage education programmes – e.g. Heritage Quiz Competitions
- National symbols – a nation's story
- Commercial adverts
- Art and design
- Which voices are speaking and what stories are they telling?

Performing Artists





Taking museums to the people

- Heritage Education Mobile Unit.
- Collaborations with artists and cultural groups.
- Creation of contact/engagement spaces.
- Are we hearing their stories or simply 'othering' them?
- Horse and rider partnerships and collaboration?
- Is this sustainable for future museum viability?

Imagining the future

- Museums that do not give voice to diverse voices will lose relevance and die.
- Monotonous stories will lose their shelf life.
- Museums that fail to evolve from exclusive repositories to community and/or visitor oriented will struggle for visitors.

- Museums that give voice to muzzled and 'othered' stories will flourish.

Conclusion: the need for multiple perspectives

- While museums and heritage sites can be commandeered to broadcast ethno-nationally exclusive meanings and portray particularistic visions of the past, they also retain the potential to reveal alternative shared or pluralistic pasts and encourage shared futures.
- Museums need to be responsive to humanity's issues both historical and contemporary e.g. the quest for knowledge acquisition and exchange; social harmony etc.
- If we can't stop the plane (which is likely) let's just fix it while it flies.
- This is true about life in general.

The traditional aspects of the eastern Shona in Zimbabwe: concept paper on the proposed revamping of the Beit Gallery

Pauline Chiripanhura and Munyradzi Mashamaire

Background to the project

- An agreement of cooperation between Mutare Museum and Varmlands Museum in 1995.
- Revamping of Beit Gallery was part of the Exhibition Personnel Exchange Project.
- Realised that exhibitions were too old, lacked focus, had no clear theme, displays did not follow any particular pattern or theme to educate and entertain the public at large, visitation esp. among youth was low.

Description of the Beit Gallery

- Gallery contains artefacts covering different subjects e.g. transport, natural history, geology, archaeology and ethnography.
- These objects are very attractive and valuable though not displayed in a coherent way.
- Overcrowding of artefacts which lacks labels and readable captions.
- The gallery is badly lit, the desk displays are almost flat and too high making it difficult for small children and wheelchair bound visitors to have access to the displays.

Aim

- To promote cultural tolerance and interaction in communities and an understanding of local cultures that are being threatened by changing socio-political developments.

Objectives of the project

- To educate the youth about the cultures of the Eastern Shona using new mediums of exhibiting.
- To encourage more research and generate more debates among the youth about the topics dealing with our culture.
- To generate interest and appreciation among the general visitor about our culture and identity.
- To produce an entertaining and interactive exhibition that actively engages visitors intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

Description of exhibition themes

- Introduction: Who are the Eastern Shona?
  - Introduce Shona cultural groups found in Manicaland basing on their totems and the respective chieftainships.
  - At the centre of the Gallery-a hut constructed in a traditional way to show traditional architecture of the Eastern Shona people.
- Mode of display
  - High-definition video image introducing Eastern Shona cultures.
- Religion and beliefs
  - Social structure of the Eastern Shona rests on their religious beliefs and that *Nyadenga* (God) the spiritual being is responsible for everyone's destiny.
  - Believe that when a person dies his/her spirit wanders about until it is given permission to come back and protect its children.
  - Believed that drought was a sign of angry spirits thus held ceremonies to appease them.
- Mode of display
  - Short two minute video image depicting a rainmaking ceremony.
  - Audio sounds for cultural songs associated with rainmaking ceremonies as well as thunder sounds associated with the coming of the rains will be part of the display.
- Witchcraft
  - Part of their beliefs.
  - Witches are evil people who use different forms of magic to bring harm to other people.
  - belief in witchcraft still exists and will continue to do so.
  - Believe in traditional healers
  - Some specialize in protective and/or harmful magic; others specialize in casting bones in divination.
- Mode of display
  - Flip book-explain practises of witchcraft, display of animals and artefacts associated with the practise.
  - Practises of witchcraft in contemporary society will also be shown through newspaper cuttings on such stories.
  - The subject will be exhibited so as to attract the visitor and generate debate on issues of witchcraft and traditional doctors *(n'anga).*
- Agriculture
  - Crop cultivation (rapoko, bulrush millet, sorghum, groundnuts)
  - Livestock rearing-sheep, cattle, goats for their protein requirements and for other social and ceremonial reasons.
- Mode of display
  - Ancient agricultural systems in the form of terraces which are a characteristic feature of the Nyanga area.
  - Artificial plants will be planted in between the simulated terraced spaces.
- Hunting and gathering
  - Supplemented the Shona diet.
  - Hunting was mostly done during the spring times
  - Gathered different types of fruits and roots to supplement their diet
- Mode of display

- A simulation will be created and visitors will make their way through the immersive set of environment as they journey back in time to the sights, sounds and smells of the forest.
- Different hunting methods will be exhibited in the jungle.
- Hunting implements and traditional wildlife conservation techniques will be explained on an LCD screen mounted on the wall.
- A variety of fruit trees/fruits will be shown and explained on the LCD screen.
- Flip book –quiz session on hunting and gathering.

- **Traditional music**
  - Songs for different activities/ events e.g. entertainment, funeral, ceremonial songs (installation of chiefs, weddings, rainmaking).
- Mode of display
  - Short videos of traditional musical performances.
  - Videos of the various traditional ceremonies e.g. installation of a chief.
  - Musical instruments will be shown and explained in a flip book.

What museum visitors want: a view from tour guiding experiences at the Natural History Museum, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Paul Hubbard

Abstract

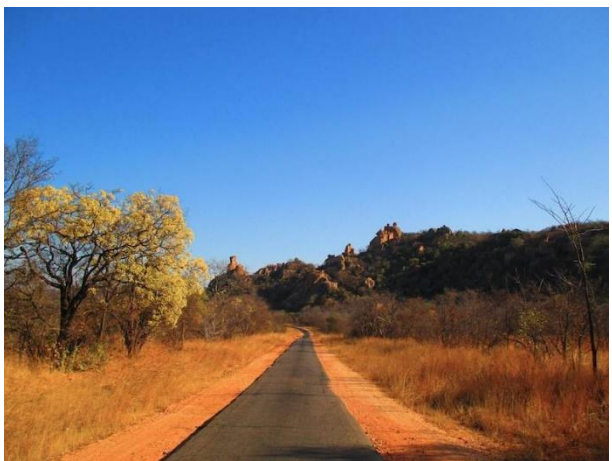
A guide is someone employed to conduct others. Tour guides are an essential yet underrated component of the visitor experience at any museum. Guides are at the "front line" of the museum service since they are the people whom most guests will interact with during a visit. Well-trained and enthusiastic tour guides can take visitors beyond the object and text to provide a compelling narrative which enhances visitor appreciation and understanding of what they are seeing. By being able to question and interact with a tour guide, visitors can interrogate the museum displays in a dynamic manner.

As well as being employed at the Natural History Museum, in the Western Region tour guides are stationed at Khami World Heritage Site and at View of the World (Rhodes' Grave) and Pomongwe Cave in the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site. These different locations provide a valuable opportunity to compare and contrast visitor expectations and experiences at these places and apply lessons learned across the country. The following is a personal account based on six years of regular but informal observations at the Natural History Museum and associated sites in the course of my own work as a professional tour guide.

TALK NOTES

Guide

- A guide is someone employed to conduct others. A guide is also someone who shows the way by leading or advising others and can find paths through unexplored territory.
- This unexplored territory can be the physical environment and/or the cultural milieu.
- As a guide, your objective is providing



entertainment whilst disseminating truthful knowledge to your guests.

- As important as accumulating and sharing knowledge is the need to have a genuine enjoyment of people and an honest appreciation of, and dedication to the many faces that nature and culture have to offer.

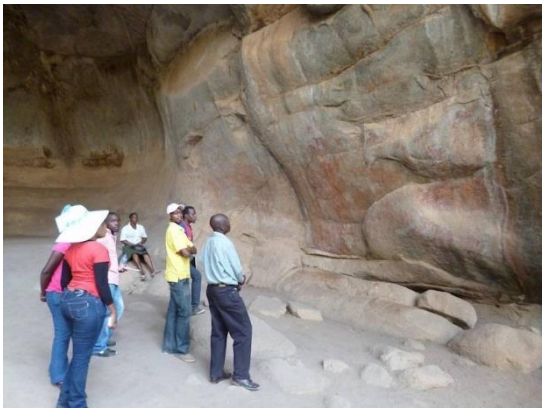
Guiding

- Guides can be employed in the following capacity:
    - *Tourist Guide/Tour manager*: Delivers information in an accurate and engaging fashion, as well as managing a group's movement.
    - *On-Site Guide*: Conducts tours of one or several hours at a specific attraction.
    - *Step-On Guide*: Tour groups coming from other provinces can hire them as freelance specialists who come aboard coaches to give an informed overview of the city / region to be toured. Points out comments on the highlights of a city, usually from coach, minibus or other vehicle, but sometimes as part of a walking tour.
    - *Hop-On Guide*: Accompany self-drive tourists in a reserve or heritage site, in a city or region.
    - *Meet-and-greet Guide*: Meets individuals or groups arriving at the airport. Help visitors get their luggage and may even accompany or drive them to their hotel.
    - *Driver-Guide*: Personal or private guide acting as the driver as well.
    - *Specialised Guides*: Someone whose expertise or skills are highly unique.
    - *Educational Guides*: Acting for Student-Study educational tours Within the Western Region we have both on-site guides and educational guides while externally-based tour managers and specialised guides visit the museum with their guests who are usually defined as "tourists"



Tourism

- Tourism can be defined as "The temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal residence or place of work and the facilities created to cater for their needs during their stay at these destinations."
- Never forget that visitors -tourists as they are legally defined by our Tourism Act – are arguably the lifeblood of our museums. They have desires, dreams, expectations. They bring us their wants and it is up to us to deliver.
- The tourist dollar pays our wages, fuels or vehicles and through a desire to learn about and experience what we have to offer, provide one of the most compelling reasons for conservation and research activities.
- Guides at the museum are a keystone in satisfying the needs of our visitors.



Role of guides

- I consider the guide's ability to impart information and offer sensible interpretations to be their most important functions.
- Most visitors to museums and sites lack any but the most basic knowledge about the place they are visiting. They will have the following typical questions which any guide should be able to easily answer:
    - Who built it and when?
    - Why did they abandon it?
    - Who lived in the area?
    - What did they do here?
    - How did they build it?
- This is where tour-guides, among a host of other potential options, come to the fore. The personal touch gives people a golden opportunity to meaningfully interact and engage with the heritage and displays, providing a rich and lasting experience.

Filling the information gap

- Well-trained guides are a useful foil to the often inadequate tourist literature; they can set the record straight and correct misconceptions.
- Tourist literature often panders to the foreign (Western) visitor, and suffers from a narrowness of presentation and usually incorrect or over-simplified "facts" about a country.
- In Zimbabwe, we have very little tourist literature available so guides should usually be the best source for the tourist on the history, culture, politics and environment. This underlines the need for a guide to be at all times factual and honest.
- It is acceptable to have your own opinions on any subject but never try force your guests to believe your ideas – rather encourage discussion on such subjects while respecting their right to have a different point of view.

Conservation role

- Guides also play a role in conserving both the natural environment and the archaeological and cultural heritage. They prevent people from removing items, from causing damage through various activities (climbing walls, digging holes, etc), from hurting themselves and so on.

Guides in museums

- Museums play the unique role of holding our cultural and natural wealth for all generations and those to come in place in a unique manner, in a way that we can blend in spite of difference and changes over the years. This earns these facilities the unique place and function of being the conscience of our country and the world.
- Digitization of information has affected their place as we knew them through virtual exhibitions, e-books and enhanced resolution images of collections, but museums remain as those facilities that keeps our history alive.
- In my opinion, Tour Guides are an essential component in this, through their interactions with visitors.

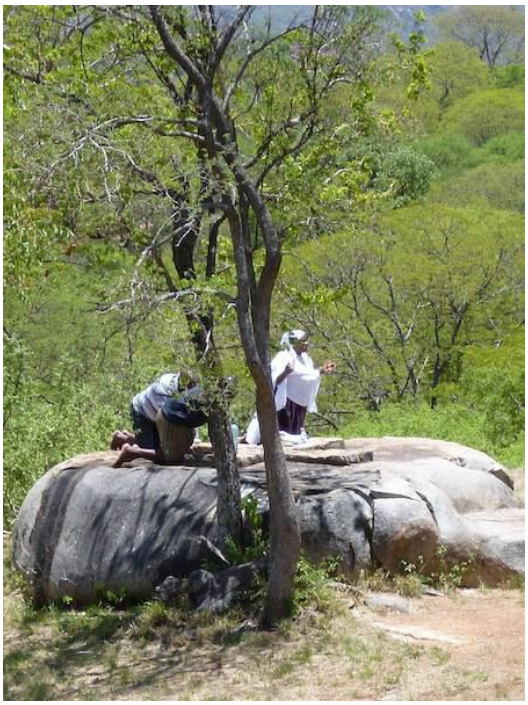
Guides-visitors interactions

- Through providing an interactive experience with guests and tailoring information to suit their needs, guides help the museum beyond being a “crypt of curators!”
- I ask visitors, locals and internationals, about what they think about the museum when walking around by themselves. They comment positively on the displays and the helpful staff but feel that the museum remains a “graveyard for stuff”. “A tomb for inanimate things”.
- One person was particularly eloquent and stated that a museum consisted of “Rooms of dead knowledge. Their cavernous rooms and deep corridors reverberate with the soft, dead sounds of tourists shuffling and employees yawning”.
- Someone else told me that most “museums are like libraries, without the party atmosphere”.

Conclusion

- As a museum, we need to grow and develop and engage with the modern world.
- Why, in places designed to celebrate life and all its variety, is there such a lack of vitality?
- The collect-and-cage policy that defines the visible exhibits, much of which is not even visible most of the time, is anathema to an engaging experience
- We need to stop relying on the supposed intrinsic value of our museum collections. We are answerable to our visitors as much to our fellow researchers.
- We need to stop "presenting" when we should be flaunting.
- Give a story; show, don't tell.
- When I visit a museum, I want to feel like I was there while these things lived or were used, I want to feel the ghosts of the past grab me by the hand and walk me around.
- I don't want a classroom made of cold granite, the only sense of life emerging from the tourists and school-kids.
- This is the value and importance of tour guides in a museum. Properly trained, as we have begun to do, guides fulfil this need.





PICTURES

