

Cultural heritage management and education in Botswana: Exploring integral management strategies for structural change

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Abstract

This research proposes an analysis and assessment of cultural heritage management practices and existing education initiatives in Botswana, Southern Africa. It is crucial for key organizations, national and institutional policies or mandates that influence perspectives of cultural heritage management and its sustainable growth in the country. These organizations include government ministries, departments and their partners which currently face the mammoth task of managing Botswana's heritage resources. This research aims to present issues and opportunities for the heritage management system and existing underlying causes of compromised performance stemming from gaps within the education system of the country. In my previous master study, context-related factors were identified as having a strong impact on the performance of Botswana's cultural heritage management system. With a young and emerging economy the government of Botswana continues to search for ways to diversify its diamond mining dependent economy. This focus has however left most cultural heritage concerns at the bottom of the list of priorities. The existing lacking practical training for professionals in the field is an example. These challenges show the need for integrated management projects which should render effective and sustainable efforts. This research aim at producing an in-depth analysis of the current situation as well as proposing new strategies for structural change. Using a critical paradigm approach the purpose and goal of the investigation is to improve and transform Botswana's current cultural heritage management system through education and practices that should promote greater community participation and cultural appropriation, based on social justice and respect for diversity by international standards.

Background and research questions

The Department of Museums and Art Galleries, linked to the Ministry of Sports Youth and Culture, Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism as well as the Botswana National Commission for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which falls under the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, in the case of this country, are responsible for the general management of cultural and natural heritage in Botswana. These ministries, departments and their partners face the enormous task of managing Botswana's cultural heritage. Relevant to this research in 2013, UNESCO held the International Congress on Culture: Key to Sustainable Development, in Hangzhou, China. The meeting developed the Hangzhou Declaration in this way placing Culture at the heart of Sustainable Development Policies which was then subsequently presented to the UN General Assembly. The Hangzhou Declaration describes the elements of sustainability with particular emphasis on concept and action which is an approach that could assist the management of cultural heritage in Botswana.

One of the main recommendations of the Hangzhou Declaration is integrating culture within all development policies and programs, using this approach as one that is equal in terms of measure with that of human rights, equality and sustainability (Hangzhou Declaration, UNESCO, 2013). This approach towards the placement of culture, cultural heritage in this research is a critical starting point for this research. With a young and emerging economy, only gaining independence in 1966, Botswana is a developing country that has a lot to learn. As there is a prominent need to relieve the economy of the country from its heavy reliance on its diamond-mining sector (Maruatona, 2013; Sekwati, 2010; Bidpa, 2009). Although other mineral extraction activities have recently begun to grow, this sector currently contributes approximately 40% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (Maruatona, 2013). As the government of this country continues to search for ways to diversify the economy of the country this focus has left most cultural heritage concerns at the bottom of the list of priorities from an effective management strategies standpoint. Although gaining momentum slowly, funding remains one of the most prominent challenges for cultural heritage management in Botswana (Molefe, 2016).

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At local level, both cultural and natural heritage are protected by the Monuments and Relics Act (2001). This act consists of condensed definitions for monuments, institutional responsibilities and penalties for damage of specific sites. Ironically, no prominent emphasis is given to the current value or significance of education endevours geared towards cultural heritage management. In addition, the National Policy on Culture (2001) states objectives that aim to create a conducive environment for cultural preservation and participation by all Botswana citizens. The policy defines procedures to preserve and protect cultural heritage by caring for and expanding historical monuments and sites, museums, archives and library collections, artistic and intellectual property. There are however no specifications with respect to the role of education towards mobilization of initiatives or as a means of empowerment towards the achievements of related goal and inclusiveness of site custodians from a management perspective (Molefe, 2016). Furthermore, to some extent the Environmental Impact Assessment Act (2010) can be associate with archaeological remnants of cultural heritage is primarily concerned with identifying and evaluating the environmental impact of developmental activity with particular reference to only he archaeological, aesthetic, cultural or sanitary conditions of the environment. The National Human Resource Development Strategy (2009) mentions that it calls for an explicit, strategically focused and sustained approach which seeks to link social, cultural, political and economic strategies in a more holistic and integrated manner around human capabilities and opportunities. It makes no mention of cultural heritage management but the relevance of this strategy for this paper delineates the need for an integrated approach to develop sustainable cultural heritage management in the country. Similarly, the Botswana Federation of Trade Unions (BFTU) Policy on Education in Botswana (2007) defines education as the foundation of any modern society. It clearly states that in order for Botswana to achieve sustainable development education is needed. This is an entry point for this research in developing a sustainable management structure for cultural heritage which should be informed by or work hand in hand with the education system of the country. Citing Botswana's Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) of 1994 Tabulawa (2009) defines this policy as the country's response to globalization. He explains that education in the country is under pressure to produce the learner-equivalent of the self-programmable worker. This self-

programmable worker being one which he describes as characterized by such psychosocial traits as independence of thought, innovativeness, creativity and flexibility. The relevance of this to this paper is that indeed this learner is needed within the realms of cultural heritage management in Botswana to ensure its sustainability at site management level.

On a Global scale management planning initiatives for existing World Heritage sites pose as an important benchmark for this research as they exemplify paramount attempts geared towards heritage product development which could contribute as lessons to be learnt by Botswana's commodity dependent economy. 'World Heritage' stands as a concept which consists of key characteristics which are viewed as exceptional in their universal application (UNESCO, 1972). Therefore, in order for a heritage site to be listed by UNESCO as a site that possess 'Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)', would have as an advantage having UNESCO's technical and managerial support. There are currently only 2 listed World Heritage sites in Botswana out of 2000 registered heritage sites in the country.

The concept of World Heritage is unfortunately not currently fully utilized even though the country urges the development of management approaches that entail strategies and policies for proper protecting of heritage. Botswana's institutions responsible for developing policies and managing heritage are currently following guidelines that are embodied in two international UNESCO conventions: the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO, 1972) and the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003). The aim of adopting these principles is to ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and promotion of Botswana's tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage. This management based on international standards contributes to build management strategies adopted by the national government that consequently, are the basis for community grassroots management level. Acknowledging that community groups are defined as those who identify, enact, recreate and transmit living heritage (Keitumetse, 2011; Keitumetse & Nthoi, 2009). Keitumetse (2014, p.61) explains that in most developed countries, a more prevalent focus on the cultural heritage and sustainable development link has been placed on urban spaces while developing countries and emerging economies such as Botswana, cultural heritage is readily available and opportunities for education on natural and cultural resource conservation remain open. She points out that community residents are endowed with knowledge and skills relating to both tangible and intangible cultural resources. Building on to her view it is apparent that rural communities therefore provide readily available personnel to be educated and empowered towards modern management purposes for sustainable heritage management based on the Botswana's Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE) of 1994 as well as The National Human Resource Development Strategy of 2009 which calls for a strategically focused and sustained approach which should integrated human capabilities and opportunities. This could be viewed as a community based approach which should be however synchronized with the desired end state of cultural heritage management in the country.

Although Botswana subscribes to internationally accredited conventions as mentioned above there remains a gap within the incorporation of cultural heritage resources towards development or notable economic gain. Although funding has been identified as an issue,

the identified gap needs to be addressed from a strategic planning point of view. Currently there is no comprehensive or streamlined approach for valorization of cultural heritage resources in Botswana. The heritage management remains at basic level in the country; there is a need to find relevant means of effectively localizing the international approach to local heritage management level. Within the cultural heritage preservation context, current initiatives held by the Department of Museums and Art Galleries, do not seem sufficient in their day-to-day management. Cultural initiatives are demonstrating lack of innovative approaches to sustainable heritage management an example of this being the random rock paintings and rearrangement throughout the country with the colours of the Botswana flag in preparation for independence day, 30th September 2016 as the country turns 50 years. Some have viewed this as a disturbance to nature amongst the social network community in the country. Current fundraising initiatives for the management of heritage in Botswana are ad hoc and need a more professionally structured management approach (Molefe, 2016). There is also a need for a community engagement approach, which requires their empowerment and relevant training; this could allow local communities - those who hold significant indigenous knowledge - with the opportunity of taking part in the management and defense of our heritage resources, current under rapid deterioration (Keitumetse, 2014).

Heritage managers at grassroot level are affected by economic, social and education discrepancies. This research aims to investigate context-related factors impacting on the development of cultural heritage management in Botswana. The idea is to identify risks, potentialities and strategies that can improve heritage management and education initiatives in the country. By inquiring into the institutions responsible for cultural heritage management, current policies as well as their relevance to heritage managers at site level, the research seeks to identify opportunities for making the heritage management system function effectively. The causes of poor performance of cultural heritage initiatives in Botswana are to be outlined in order to recommend relevant sustainable strategies required for the improvement of political, educational and managerial action for socio-economic betterment of local communities.

This study will be led by the following **research questions**:

- How effective and relevant are the current heritage management policies employed by the Botswana government and other concerned institutions?
- Why do current training initiatives seem to not be sufficient for contemporary cultural heritage management within the country?
- What can be done from a and participatory engagement viewpoint to improve the current local managerial stucture of cultural heritage site management in Botswana?
- How can the Botswana National Comission for UNESCO play a more effective role within the cultural heritage management arena of Botswana?

Objective

The research aims to investigate context-related factors that are affecting the purpose and practicality of public policies in order to develop new approaches that can enhance cultural heritage management in Botswana. It is focused on:

- Identifying and analyzing managerial practices,

- Investigating the progression and effectiveness of existing cultural heritage management projects
- Analysing and proposing ways to improve the role of UNESCO in the country regarding the strong need for sustainable heritage management approaches in Botswana which embrace education.
- Finding ways to promote community participation and education for empowerment,

Significance

This research will be useful for providing basis for the development and implementation of cultural heritage management and training strategies in Botswana. It investigates the impact of economic development focus on cultural heritage management issues. Identifying and analyzing factors impacting on the performance of cultural heritage management is important for local human development. The research is significant to create awareness among professionals on the trends of cultural heritage management, education and community development in Botswana. This awareness should not be sidelined as the country's mineral extraction activities continue to boom in isolation.

The potential benefits of cultural heritage resource management within the development framework as a means of bringing in much needed structural change will be highlighted in this research with reference to existing literature that concerns the objectives of this study. It is prominent that there are ways of empowering communities, through means of local participation and empowerment of heritage managers partnering with the government towards defining a balanced sustainable approach towards cultural heritage management. This research stands to exemplify that community wellbeing and valorization of heritage from a cultural heritage management perspective and economic development are important for diversifying Botswana's economy if the correct approach is employed by managing bodies accordingly.

The significance of cultural heritage management can generate new employment opportunities. These embrace employment opportunities within the areas of education, preservation, conservation, rehabilitation and maintenance of heritage sites (for local craftsmen and construction companies). In this way far from being what could be regarded as an unnecessary luxury in comparison with the basic needs of most African countries, all actions in favor of the cultural and natural heritage in Botswana can actually serve as a springboard for further economic development of the country. The research aims to prove that the government of Botswana has a major role to play in the protection of heritage, and should work most closely with the communities who are the primary beneficiaries of development activities amongst cultural heritage sites in the country (Molefe, 2016).

Methodology and Research Methods

Under a critical paradigm, this study aims to employ a critical ethnographic approach. This critical paradigm will permit a deep analysis of empirical evidence concerning the political, economical and socio-cultural aspects involved in cultural heritage management in Botswana. The research will deal with relevant management approaches within responsible institutions and their stakeholders. Therefore this paradigm is suitable for this investigation as the research can be tailored using different methodological

approaches. There are four government ministries that will be used within the study area. The critical research paradigm should address this research by enabling the researcher to explore, identify and transform obstacles for reasonable social structures, policies, beliefs and practices (Taylor & Medina, 2013) concerning cultural heritage in Botswana. Its primary purpose is to identify, contest and help resolve 'gross power imbalances' in society which fuel ethically questionable profitmaking activities that contribute to systemic inequalities and injustices such as social and economic exclusion of some sectors of society, loss of cultural capital and cultural identity amongst ethnic minorities, and anthropocentric climate change and loss of biodiversity.. (Taylor & Medina, 2013; Barker, 2008; Thomas, 1993). Critical ethnography is the chosen methodology for this research, as a way of applying a 'subversive' worldview to more conventional narratives of cultural inquiry. It does not necessarily stand in opposition to conventional ethnography or even to conventional social science. However, as I intend to identify management issues, including risks, possible causes of the low performance of local institutions by applying ethnographic research methods, such as observations and semi-structured interviews, the associated critical approach can offer a broader reflective style of thinking about the relationships between knowledge and society as well as other social dominations (Barker, 2008; Thomas, 1993).

Data Collection

Qualitative data will be collected through fieldworks. The data gathering will support a situational analysis of current heritage management initiatives in Botswana. This approach will also include documentation investigation and observations.

Fieldwork and interviews

- Heritage managers at all levels and community members responsible for specific sites will undergo semi-structured interviews. Questionnaires will be administered to investigate and outline the current perceptions and understanding of the significance of well-planned heritage management practices.
- Key informant interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted with individuals or groups, such as managers and politicians that have specific knowledge, influence or expertise about the issue being investigated.

Direct observation will involve the researcher observing research subjects for an appropriate amount of time. It can be direct or participant depending on emerging issues and subject under investigation.

Archival research will include literature that may be kept deposited in official or private libraries or archives including publications and annual reports of brochures.

Purposive Sample

Relevant officials responsible for cultural heritage management and education will be interviewed from the Department of Museums and Art Galleries (Ministry of Sports Youth and Culture), the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism and the Botswana National Commission for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) - the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. The management of 4 local heritage sites will be investigated, for the analysis and evaluation

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of heritage management practices within those sites at grass root level. This will give a balanced insight from all management levels. Data will also be gathered from other countries including Australia to bench mark on the best education approaches to heritage management practices.

Data Analysis

The data analysis and evaluation will bring forward some important points about the opportunities and challenges for the development of heritage management in Botswana. The designs used for achieving the aims of the proposed research is the critical analysis and the structural functionalist method (Philips & Burbules, 2000; Ryan & Barnard, 2000).

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