



The importance of collaborative curation of indigenous artefacts in Ditsong national museum of cultural history

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ABSTRACT

The researcher believes that we are at a space in our society where we find the importance of repatriation and restitution of African material culture to restore the dignity of the communities the objects represent. The importance of co-curating artefacts has become vital as many scholars (MuseumNet, 2020). The researcher observed through this research that museums struggle to make sense of objects and their meanings. In order to better understand the role communities play in the presentation and curation of their artefacts in museums, the researcher acquired information regarding this matter of discussion from museums, institutions of higher learning, and an indigenous community in the Blouberg region of Limpopo.

The researcher engaged with the Blouberg communities (Makabeng and Bahanawa communities) that exhibited their collection at the Museum of Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History and learned of their challenges as communities working with institutions and their contributions in the exhibitions of their artefacts.

An interpretive approach was used as it is a case study involving only one museum; however, the researcher also had conversations with curators from Iziko Museums to better understand their approach and how they managed to involve indigenous people in their exhibitions and the curation process of indigenous artefacts. To facilitate this topic and start a new conversation among institutions and communities, the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History has allowed the researcher to ask questions openly and connect the researcher with the appropriate community members.

Keywords: Indigenous communities, education, indigenous knowledge Systems, museums, new/indigenous museology theory, researchers, curation, exhibition

Chapter one

Introduction

1.1 Background

State Museums as observed by the researcher are institutions known for their massive collections collected over many years from different cultures all over the country and sometimes from other countries. A museum is defined as a long-term, non-profit organisation committed to helping society that carries out research, preserves artefacts and intangible history and interprets it for visitors (ICOM, 2018).

Museums encourage diversity and sustainability by being welcoming, inclusive, and open to the public. They involve communities, operate and interact responsibly as professionals while offering a variety of education, entertainment, reflection, and knowledge exchange possibilities. (Etges & Dean, 2022). Museums have been slowly moving from their colonial past and trying to be more inclusive. In South Africa, this began through different museums changing their names.

The researchers observe that preponderance of colonial elements and names, define the South African heritage landscape and the lack of indigenous voices in exhibitions and museum spaces. This has required name changes in some state museums to move away from colonial representation into an inclusive society with diverse languages and inputs. As a recent a complete institutional makeover regarding structure, ethos, and philosophy were proposed making the Transvaal Museum into Ditsong Museums. Therefore, name changes can be considered essential to the institution's broader transition and the South African heritage landscape (Reddy, 2004). This transformation process began after 1994 when national museums underwent structural changes.

By 1994, the sheer number of heritage institutions and the organisation of national museums posed a significant obstacle to the development, transformation, and good governance of these institutions. Nearly 40 national museums that each needed a council put the national museum sector in an unworkable situation by 1999. The governance and structural complexity of national museums was further increased by the new national heritage institutions continuously being developed to reshape the national heritage landscape (Goodnow *et al.*, 2006).

Many institutions started to revisit old collections and discuss rewriting and re-curating artefacts that represent more than the science behind the artefacts but also their origins and the people behind these objects as observed by the researcher through the interviews she had conducted with various museums over the years. Although this is a new phenomenon as stated by scholars (Faculty of Science, 2023), many institutions are seeing the importance of indigenous interruption and curation

of indigenous artefacts to also play a part in the political transformation of South Africa and also to heal the past.

Museums acquire Indigenous Knowledge through donations, purchases, and acquisitions. Before beginning any IK collection, museums now aim to think about how it will be collected and for what goals. When undertaking fieldwork and performing research on indigenous knowledge, museums respect the rights of communities and are mindful of their perspectives (ICOM Code of Ethics, 2001). Museums support indigenous peoples' right to consult on using and acquiring IK. (Museums of Applied Arts and Sciences, 2016).

1.2 The rationale of the study

The researcher believes that indigenous participation in artefact curation is critical for museums' decolonisation, significance, and long-term viability in the face of unavoidable globalization and deforestation. The systematic exclusion of local communities as custodians of IKS, including philosophies, worldviews and languages by colonial and apartheid curators, has also motivated the researcher to embark on this audacious study (Onciul, 2015).

The researcher's earlier work, *The Promotion of IKS in the Mphe batho Cultural Museum*, in which she discovered the underrepresentation of indigenous groups in museums, inspired the current study. Indigenous communities often do not see the need to protect their artefacts and how it is exhibited and curated. Many assume that their opinion does not matter, which is untrue. Seeing this kind of style or manner in local communities made the researcher study the behaviour of national museums. The researcher aimed to investigate and critic if necessary how the policies and laws protect Indigenous people and whether communities knew their rights and responsibilities pertaining to their artefacts, not only that but to critic the policy validity in the protection of indigenous rights. Indigenous communities need people like scholars to educate them on their rights and policies concerning their artefacts.

1.3 Problem Statement

Through much recollection of the researcher's studies and museum observation the main issue seem to be a lack of curation in African indigenous historical artefacts in museums. Descriptions of artefacts, such as sculptures made from wood or metal, are vaguely explained. African metallurgy and the cosmological explanation are rarely correctly displayed by curators. Indigenous artefacts not only have an archaeological and anthropological significance but also include IKS currently negated and marginalised. Indigenous artefacts, sculptures and paintings are often misappropriated

and are not appreciated or interpreted to reflect local knowledge, language, cultural context, worldviews, and philosophies ((Mafukata et al., 2019).

The research aimed to investigate the phenomenon of collaborative curation as a concept of communities being directly involved in the curatorial process of their artefacts in curating indigenous artefacts in museums, regulatory frameworks, active participation of indigenous communities in exhibitions and the issue of commensurate benefit sharing from the curation of their artefacts. Furthermore, the researcher aimed to identify the problems museums have in curating indigenous artefacts. Museums have undergone a dramatic reform in their colonial paradigm, yet indigenous knowledge in these museums has been taken for granted and misrepresented (Mairesse, 2018). The researcher also intends to investigate the prospects and challenges museums face in putting policies of IKS into practice by involving communities in exhibitions.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The study looked at the importance of the collaborative curation of indigenous artefacts in the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History and the function of indigenous communities in preserving their treasures in the Makabeng community and the examination of laws that protect the study and exhibition of indigenous artefacts.

1.5 Research questions

- What role does the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History play in protecting indigenous artefacts?
- What role do indigenous populations play in displays and artefact curation at the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History?
- What are the problems that Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History curators have when engaging with indigenous populations?

1.5 Research objectives

The research's objective is to explore the role of collaborative curation in Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History in the integration of IKS.

- The second objective to this research is to identify the role of Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History in the preservation, curation, and promotion of indigenous artifacts.
- The second objective is to explore the role of indigenous communities in the exhibitions and curation of their knowledge at Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History.

- The third objective is to identify and analyse the challenges and prospects of integration of IKS at Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History.
- The fourth objective is to underpin the role of government in the integration of indigenous communities in museum.

1.7 The Importance of the Research

This research advocates the development of better and culturally appropriate policies interpreted in the local indigenous languages and creating awareness programs that educate local communities about these policies and their rights as indigenous communities to protect the identities of their artefacts and their origins.

The research encourages scholars to develop improved curation methods for indigenous artefacts for a common national standard of practice that is more accessible and understood by indigenous communities; in turn, they become partners with museums in curating their indigenous artefacts and broaden the opportunity for communities to bring the living in indigenous artefacts (Scheermeyer, 2005).

Indigenous knowledge is increasingly diminishing together with its cultural practices. This research will launch a movement or campaign to raise awareness of indigenous communities and stimulate academics' interest in indigenous artefacts since it is crucial for the protection of IKS to be accompanied by growth and promotion. (Subramanian & Pisupati, 2010). Indigenous knowledge is presently not properly recognized and valued, and its holders are not sufficiently rewarded when their knowledge is used (Bell, 1979).

Indigenous awareness such as these may help achieve society's social development goals, such as preserving indigenous traditions, eradicating poverty in communities, sustainability of cultural identity, education, and innovation of preserving artefacts that are placed in museums (Correa, 2001). Through this research, museums will learn to involve indigenous people in different ways to manage their artefacts and represent their language in their cultural context (Arinze, 1999).

1.8 Personal Orientation of the Researcher to the Study

Ditsong National Museums are museums the researcher was exposed to while growing up when it was called Transvaal Museum, and she learned a lot of scientific and cultural information from these museums. The researcher followed a direct approach which entailed exposure to the research by living among the community of Makabeng in Bochum to understand their lifestyle and their understanding of knowledge. The researcher conducted the research following the indigenous principles when approaching the community and used Western ethical approaches when interacting with the museum staff. As indicated earlier, this case study involving one museum and participants

in both the museum and the community was found through a snowballing approach as many participants identified others suited to participate in the study.



Fig. 1 Blouberg Mountain

Chapter two

Introduction

- **2.1 The historiography of museums in Africa**

Museums in Africa hold a bitter history as many of them were built by previous colonial occupiers, and the narrative behind every artefact ever collected where a representation of Western superiority that did not acknowledge the communities of those artefacts as stated by (MuseumNext, 2020).

The researcher realises through this research that many African children raised in small communities and villages do not know about museums or their importance or controversy in our countries. The artefacts were curated for the Western gaze, and the indigenous communities did not identify with it.

Museums originated as custodians of indigenous nations' cultural possessions, but through the effort and vision of the earliest curators, institutions quickly evolved into significant educational centres committed to research, publication, preservation, and presentation of culturally historical and modern African artefacts (Leakey, 1990).

(MuseumNext, 2020: How selfies are changing the way we interact with art) believes that those that know about museums see them as a space to take selfies or seem cultured/ intelligent, but hardly anyone or a select few invest in knowing about museums, their artefacts, and these buildings in society. At the time of independence, museums were the only places where indigenous material cultures could be found, and thus organisations that initially represented colonial purposes became representations of national solidarity, demonstrating and recognizing the diversity and dynamism of newly independent countries.

Despite claims that the institutions mostly catered to the wealthy, visitors from abroad, and students, Museums have played and still play a significant part in developing modernity, the nation-state, and international relations. Ardouin (2000) highlighted the importance of museums' engagement with history, particularly recent history, because they are the only entities accountable for imparting and increasing knowledge, thereby influencing society's perceptions of past African communities' relationships with one another.

The researcher discovered through her interaction with the youth of the bahananwa community that museum studies are not even a field many Africans consider because many see it as a luxury course that does not lead you to employment, resulting in a short-staffed African museum scholar. The

researcher believes that it is so important for Africans to take the initiatives to study museums because of their history and current place in our society.

Today, the researcher also argues that African countries recognize museums' critical role in disseminating knowledge about cultural history and their potential to encourage cultural diversity and heal ethnic divisions. As a result, exhibitions are increasingly aimed at pupils, families, and tourists. Furthermore, African museums are attempting to distance themselves from the colonial past; they were frequently constructed by colonial governments, were largely visited by European elites, and frequently exoticized indigenous cultures by excluding them from their historical context.

The researcher believes national museums constitute some of Africa's largest heritage organisations as they are legal entities with the authority to manage archaeological and anthropological sites and monuments and act as national repositories of cultural and biological remains, and they play an important role in maintaining the value of human curiosity.

2.2 Definition of concepts

2.2.1 Indigenous communities

They are ethnic groups that are descended from and identify with the indigenous inhabitants of a territory, as opposed to those who have only recently moved into, engaged with, or occupied the area in question. (Secretariat, 2018). In this study, an indigenous community is one living in a particular area and region with a common history, language, and way of life. The researcher acknowledges that although these communities migrated to the Blouberg mountains and are not natives of the area, by the time these communities were that of Bahananawa, they had found the mountains with no resident people living there, and the only known people who could be identified through Rock paints are the San communities, and they had migrated further from the mountains. We can conclude that the Bahananawa are also indigenous to the Blouberg mountains.

2.2.2 Education

It is a deliberate action with certain goals, such as knowledge transfer or developing skills and personality traits. These objectives might include enhancing understanding, logic, compassion, and integrity. (uia.org, n.d.).

Communities and institutions must define education in a way that makes sense to them. In the context of this research study, education is described in two ways: informal education, such as oral traditional and cultural practices, and education designed in a Westernized or modernized system that formulates ways of preserving cultural heritage in museums and archives.

2.2.3 Indigenous Knowledge Systems

They are the customs and behaviours a local indigenous culture has developed over many generations of habitation in many environments. Anyira (2010) describes this as all types of information, skills, know-how, prowess, norms, and values that enable a community to foster environmentally sustainable livelihoods.

It is the knowledge that has not been written down or is not accessible through globalized mechanisms such as libraries, archives, formal education, and national societal norms. This knowledge is only available in previously marginalised and indigenous groups worldwide. This knowledge includes basic life skills, husbandry, farming, cosmology, medicine, midwifery, spirituality, rites of passage, traditional cuisine, and customs (Gilliland, 2008:209).

The knowledge that the Bahananwa has of rock painting, storing food and farming in the mountains and the ability to live in the mountains with its harsh conditions are some of the IKS they possess. Museums are non-profit, permanent institutions that study, collect, protect, explain, and present tangible and intangible history. Museums promote diversity and sustainability by being public, open, and accessible. A range of learning, fun, reflection, and information exchange opportunities are provided through their ethical, professional, and community-focused operation and communication (Mahmood, 2010).

These are buildings of pain and reconciliation. The communities find them useful and necessary to ensure their cultural heritage is preserved for future generations, as they do not have the means to conserve their artefacts without having the risks of their artefacts decaying or being disregarded by disinterested youths who do not know the importance of such important objects. The Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History curators gave the community a platform for open expression and even to share memories of the objects with which they associate.

A curator mentioned that these initiatives are especially important to the communities because very often, when community members visit museums, they feel uncomfortable and do not express themselves, and through bringing the collections to them during cultural events and the heritage month of September, community members can participate and openly communicate on the artefacts they relate to, how they were made and the importance of the collections in their society.

New/indigenous museology theory is a discourse focused on museums' social and political dimensions, in opposition to conventional, collections-centred museum models, encouraging new dialogue and new forms of expression. (Mairesse & Desvallées 2010).

It is a novel method of displaying, researching, and curating indigenous artefacts. This theory was developed and implemented by indigenous groups in North America and the Pacific, including European groups such as the Inuit and the Sami. The concept is to create a space in museums where indigenous communities can participate in documenting, curating, and exhibiting indigenous artefacts. (Alia, 2010:211)

This applies to the Bahananawa as a group that also desires to play a critical role in the artefacts in museums, not just the sharing of their knowledge with researchers but also a play a role participating in the formulation or building up of exhibitions. As well as allowing students from this community to work in the museums on behalf of the community and help the community eradicate poverty through researchers helping them build their information centres and government programs helping them develop a cultural centre or museum to store their knowledge and attract tourists to the area.

2.2.4 Self-determination theory

Focuses on people's innate tendencies for growth and psychological needs. It offers a wide view of human drive and personality. It is interested in the factors influencing people's choices when there are no outside influences or distractions. (Niemic, 2009: 212).

Bahananwa has a rich history and is slowly depleting due to many challenges. This theory helps suggest a way to safeguard their cultural identity and improve or evolve their livelihood.

2.2.5 Repatriation and restitution

Restitution is the process of returning cultural artefacts to a person or a community. Repatriation is the process of returning cultural artefacts to a country or state upon a government's request. (Cornu, 2010: 213). This is a system where communities demand their artefacts back to their territories. The Bahananawa do not hold this belief as they feel their culture is much safer in the museum. However, they wish to have their artefacts returned to them in the future when they have established their own cultural museum.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) often discusses repatriation with the various museums to return objects to other countries; however, curators feel that the obsession with doing things “right” without involving the communities can get out of hand as some communities might not even remember or need those artefacts.

Researchers- A researcher is someone who conducts research, which is an organised and systematic inquiry into anything. Researchers are another term for scientists. (Newing, 2011:214). These

include scholars, curators and museum staff researching communities about their artefacts or oral traditions.

A collection is put together, organised and displayed through the **curatorial** process. For instance, curators of art museums and galleries carry out research, choose and purchase artworks for their institutions' collections, and supervise interpretation, displays, and exhibits. (Children, 2003: 215). It is a general term for preserving indigenous artefacts, which includes researching, recording, conserving, repairing previously damaged items, and displaying indigenous artefacts.



Fig2. Bahanawa grain storage bags and cultural material from inherent obsession exhibition 2022.

In its broadest sense, an exhibition is a deliberate presentation and display of various items. **Exhibitions** frequently occur in museums, art galleries, parks, libraries, exhibition halls, or former World's Fairs. (Falk, 2005:216)

Exhibiting artefacts in a museum or gallery for the exhibition is more detailed because the objects on display must be ethically and thoroughly researched and represented. (Karp, 1991:217). Communities want to participate in exhibitions because it allows museum visitors to ask the community questions about their artefacts in person, and communities can help curators present their artefacts in a presentable manner.

2.2.6 Benefit sharing

It is the practice of giving a portion of the gains made through the utilization of traditional knowledge or nonhuman genetic resources to the resource providers to achieve justice in exchange

(Schroeder, 2007:218). This is a bitter taste to researchers and sometimes communities, as it refers to researchers and organisations compensating communities for their knowledge or objects. This is either through the means of monetary payments or helping through food parcels or small offerings. Communities express their grievances that there is no academic benefit sharing when research has been conducted in their communities, and their knowledge is not referenced in academic knowledge.

- **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

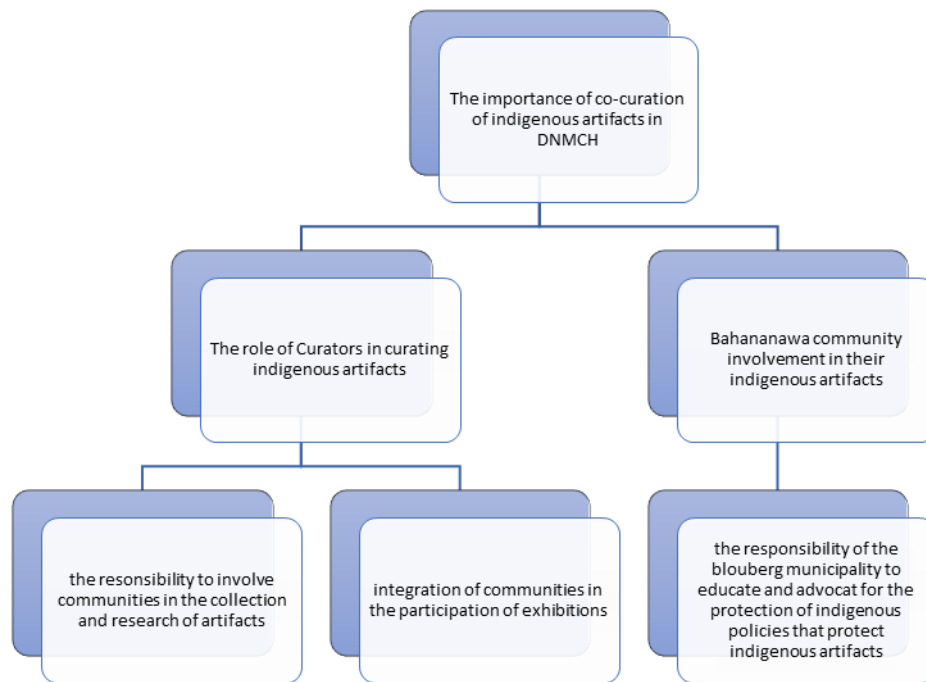


Fig. 3 Conceptual Framework

Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History is a state museum of the Republic of South Africa. It is one of the oldest museums, widely known to have many artefacts in the South African region. However, it is also grappling with a modern way of maintaining IKS (Ditsong 2021 webinar 21 March). The researcher also contemplates how Indigenous artefacts are exhibited and handled and the participation of indigenous communities. Also, the struggles of government policies' implementation of community involvement in museums are among the challenges the museum face (First, 2018). Curators must involve communities in curating indigenous artefacts to make sense of the origins of certain artefacts, the meanings of set artefacts and the artists or an ideal in the era it was created.

Based on the research conducted, the researcher was made aware that policies are well-written for the protection of indigenous communities, and it is the responsibility of the local government and local municipalities to create awareness and educate communities, in this case, the community of Bahanawa of their rights as indigenous communities to protect their artefacts. The Blouberg plays a

role in evaluating research projects before conducting research in the community; however, the community does not know their rights or what to do when they are violated.

- **2.4 History, historiography of museums and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in RSA**

In South Africa, almost 400 museums get public funding. Many of these museums are supported by municipalities in the provinces. However, some get national funding through DAC, particularly the larger ones. South African museums perform distinctive research and service activities, particularly in taxonomic and forensic sciences (Zuma, 2018).

Generational transmission of oral IK is dangerously disappearing because of Westernization and technological development. Mechanisms for locating and archiving oral IK forms should be created in order to add to the national archive. The National Archives and the Oral History Initiative are working together on this. The Department of Art, Culture, and Recreation plans to research, create, and promote issues relating to oral forms of IKS as a component of South Africa's intangible heritage. (Session, 2012).

This research showed that many policies are being implemented to introduce indigenous knowledge in museums. There is a division in the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History responsible for knowledge management in the museum which includes IKS also contributing such knowledge in the educational sector through outreach programs in schools and communities.

Battiste & Henderson (2000) Oral storytelling and experiential teaching are two tools indigenous people use to preserve and express their traditional knowledge solely through traditional cultural teaching methods such as apprenticeships, rites, and customs (Zimu-Biyela, 2016).

On the other hand, many indigenous people, especially young people, no longer have access to traditional indigenous knowledge transmission media in many places. The youth do not currently have regular access to experiential learning in their communities; they are less proficient in indigenous languages that would enable them to communicate with the elders; and they spend a large portion of their time in school systems that socialize them to writing dependence, though this is gradually changing as more indigenous knowledge is incorporated into the curriculum. (O'Connor, 2010)

Seniors who still possess the cultural and theological understanding and recognize the value of critically examining scientific findings run the major risk of copying their forefathers without passing on what they know (Mokgobi & Dance, 2014) (Castellano, 2000, 32).

Other obstacles to the preservation of indigenous knowledge include healthcare systems that downplay the importance and effectiveness of traditional healthcare, educational programs that

promote new values, science, language, and history, and, most significantly, the disappearance of land or plants, which uproots communities and separates them from the environment that supports their knowledge. (Tobin 2004, 25).

Identifying and addressing the core causes of indigenous knowledge loss is critical to fighting to protect land rights and implementing legislation, policies, and initiatives to preserve, foster, and improve IK and cultural traditions. (Tobin 2004). Adopting these methods takes time, though, and some indigenous people might see value in recording, maintaining, and disseminating their information in non-traditional ways to prevent its loss.

There is widespread scepticism regarding the legitimacy of indigenous knowledge that has been documented and isolated from its original environment (Mazzocchi, 2006). Books, pictures, maps, and digital assets can be used as tools in a database and included in upcoming informational or educational materials.

This shows that preserving indigenous knowledge should not be seen to replace the traditional educational systems in indigenous communities but as a way to complement or use another tool in this process. (Messerli et al., 2019)

Preserving indigenous knowledge might have advantages beyond just conserving it for future generations. Making traditional knowledge available digitally could make it more appealing to young people or others who might find traditional knowledge to be out-of-date. (Francesca, 2016).

Another advantage is the increased likelihood that indigenous needs, interests, and experiences will be considered in the formulation of policies and the management of resources, as well as the incorporation of indigenous knowledge into development projects, thanks to the preservation of traditional knowledge in an accessible format for limited use by governments, non-governmental organisations, and other organisations. (Mkapa, 2004).

According to Ngulube on the article called Managing and Maintaining Indigenous Knowledge in the Era of Knowledge Management: Challenges and Opportunities for Information Practitioners, that libraries were not particularly involved in managing indigenous knowledge because they historically concentrated on managing registered and codified material. (2002). Indigenous knowledge management requires non-indigenous researchers to completely rethink their tools and techniques and how they approach information and knowledge in general because indigenous knowledge is fundamentally different from Western knowledge. (Ngulube, 2002).

To further develop this theory, technological development is predicated on "specific cultural and historically based assumptions about the nature of the environment and the essence of knowledge;

what it is, and how it can be retained and renewed." (Maina & Review, 2012). IKS applies structure to knowledge that, through the structuring of facts, expresses philosophies. According to Christie, a database must reflect and promote context-specific indigenous ways of being and knowing, as well as the control of individuals over their own information, to qualify as an indigenous database. This comprises its design, organisation, search methods, and user interfaces (Christie, 2004:5).

Many libraries view IK as an essential source of information about development. According to Nakata and Langton (2005), the library and information profession still has a lot to learn about managing IK and providing for the information needs of indigenous people. According to Nakata and Langton (2005), Libraries and museums must consider the serious issues surrounding the preservation of Indigenous Knowledge. They contend that rather than just being a part of the past, libraries should consider IK as a present body of pertinent knowledge. Information communication technologies, such as computers, the Internet, digital cameras, camcorders, and more, are required to make Indigenous Knowledge available to libraries (Okore et al., 2009). According to Anand (2009), IK management's main problem is communication. IK is also passed on through family members from the older to the younger generation. It disappears or is lost because of racial homogenization and the deaths of indigenous people. (Nakata et al., 2005a).

• 2.5 Brief review of museums in Africa

It is important to consider the notion that museums are not African. Although this statement about museum structures is largely accurate, indigenous practices remain consistent with conventional Western museological procedures. All individuals practice museum-like ideas of preservation, heritage and continuity, as well as storage and conservation techniques (Kreps: 2003). In West Africa and Egypt, for instance, there is a long history of heritage preservation and repair of burial sites. (Manetsi, 2011)

IKS in South Africa largely use performance and placement in eulogies, stories, songs, healing rituals, and settings like altars, where ancestors were called and served as the foundation of memory and lineage, to record history. (Genis & Today, 2019). There are documented instances of material objects being utilized to preserve, protect, and advance ideals. Examples include drums played in the Ngoma Lugundu style, headrests passed down to the oldest son or buried with their owners, and beads repurposed for children's protection. (Vollgraaff, 2015). However, major variations exist between local cultural traditions and museums of the Western type.

Although most civilizations preserve their own memories and artefacts, not those of other cultures, the Western imperial authority is known to have gathered and displayed the entire world's material culture for reasons of showing the western exploration and supremacy. South Africa and other

African countries continued to apply and uphold the universal museum model even after the end of colonialism (Hunt, 2019).

• 2.6 Introduction of Curation

Curation is frequently about knowledge and learning, with the output of a curator's learning being carefully designed to prompt and facilitate the learning of others. (Wolff, 2013: 219). Curatorship may be the most popular job in the world of art and museums. Idolized by many and reviled by many, its duties and functions remain a perplexing problem for those attempting to define it. In fact, the curator may be the embodiment of museums, to the point where understanding this career requires researching the entire artefact sector, its history, and its progress. (Rubantseva, 2020:220)

The long history of exhibiting art to the public undeniably aids us in retracing the steps curatorship must take to achieve its current position. The researcher hopes to get a greater knowledge of the intricacy of challenges facing curators by relating them to significant historical events by adopting a genealogical approach to the evolution of curating. When she examines the term "curator's" roots, we find that the Latin word "curare," which means "to take care of something," is where it originates. (Stretton, 2018 :221)

The term "curator" initially appeared in the middle of the 14th century to indicate "attendant," "keeper," or "guardian." At that time, collecting various artefacts became popular, and the first collections in the form of cabinets of curiosities, *Kunstkameras*, and *Wunderkammern*, were founded. (Bouquet, 2013:222). Over time, these collections evolved into the first museums, and the jobs of curators, keepers, and directors became inextricably linked, even though a curator was originally intended to be an attendant of museums and other sorts of collections. (Reidla, 2018:223). Since the 18th century, the curator's role in a museum has expanded to include an increasing number of duties such as heritage conservation, selecting new artefacts and artworks, scientific research, and educational activities, not to mention the organisation of exhibitions. (Stanley, 2008: 6)

Through training and experience in curation, it is underlined how crucial documentation is because a museum specimen without supporting information is meaningless. However, due to the thorough attention that recording demands, curators often overlook or put off the time-consuming work. As a result, incomplete or missing records are a typical occurrence at museums, except for situations where prudent management has applied the resources and pressures to ensure extensive, accurate, and ongoing recordkeeping. (Kammen, 2012:226)

Like all other material artefacts, museum specimens degrade and are eventually destroyed. The process can be sluggish and scarcely visible, or it can be quick and obvious. The damage is caused

by environmental elements or inside the specimens themselves. Environmental factors also include water in all of its forms, common energy sources like light and heat, air as a mixture of chemically active gases and a carrier of abrasive or reactive dust, and biological agents like insects, fungi, bacteria, small mammals, and people, whose careless hands frequently hasten injury. (Fricker, 2016:227)

Museums must continue to fight against decay even though they will never fully succeed. Since they know that appropriate care may greatly extend the life of artefacts, curators must always try to protect them from deterioration agents, lessen the effects of these agents, and compensate for any damage that does occur (Graham, 2009:228). It became more obvious what the destructive chemicals were specifically made of, how they attacked, and how intricately they interacted with one another. Techniques for spotting danger and shielding specimens from it coevolved simultaneously. Equipment and procedures became more sophisticated. (Clarke, 1994:229).

Building protection, appropriate storage equipment, environmental controls, and expert care were shown to be essential prerequisites. Museums paid little attention to specimen keeping since they routinely showed the artefacts, they collected up to the 1890s (Burcaw, 1997:230). Museologists eventually realised that some specimens were better suited for study than display. A research series required a location where the samples could be carefully stored and kept close by for examination. When national parks began building museums in the 1920s, the specifications for including collection storerooms were not clearly specified, making it challenging for long-established institutions to allocate space for research storage. (du Plessis: 231).

- **2.7 Legislation and Museums in South Africa**

The first museum in South Africa opened its doors in 1825 when British colonial power over the continent and the activities of the local scientific and museum communities were both quite active. Before a formal museum was founded, however, Dutch settlers began collecting South African natural sensations. (Arinze, 1998:232).

According to research by the South African Cultural Observatory on the supply side of museums, South Africa's cultural history can be divided into three periods: colonial, which was characterised by British Imperialism and the promotion of English heritage; apartheid, which was characterised by Afrikaner nationalism; and democratic, which was characterised by a multicultural society and inclusive cultural representation.

According to MacKenzie, the first non-zoological items (natural stimuli other than animal carcasses) were amassed by collector Joachim Nickolaus von Dessin, whose last collection was purchased by the South African Museum in 1861. (Tietze, 2017:233).

After Lord Charles Somerset published a notice for a museum, Andrew Smith's collections of ethnographic and natural history specimens resulted in the founding of the South African Museums. The museum was intended to be a general museum with collections of natural history artefacts and other random artefacts related to "items of human making," but it was only accessible to elites and academics. (Webb, 2015:234).

Apartheid was codified in South Africa after the National Party (NP) won the election in 1948, and the Minister of Education, Art, and Science (formerly the Minister of Interior) was given authority over museums. At that time, all permanent employment required government clearance since museums were supervised by it (Jibril, 2015:235).

The publication of Aron Mazel's "Apartheid Child's" in the 1950s and 1960s led to the creation of the South African Cultural History Museum (SACHM). Mazel asserts that the acts of the Apartheid administration directly influenced the development of SACHM. Former SACHM employees, on the other hand, believe that the group was created exclusively to preserve the heritage of white culture, particularly Afrikaans culture. (Mazel, 2013:236) As democracy spread, various cultural histories (black people, people of colour, Indian descent, and Asian descent) were included in museum collections.

According to SACO research, this occurred due to the National Legacy Projects being established by the African National Congress' Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP, 1994). Most of their efforts went toward creating new institutions representing the different components of South African culture and contextualising and reinterpreting the cultural legacies from the colonial and apartheid eras maintained and shown in existing museums. (Fareed, 2019:237)

Mdanda (2016) states that despite the different cultures blending as South Africa became a rainbow nation, the effort to create "an inclusive narrative" has only partially succeeded. The cultural heritage of black South Africans is particularly difficult to depict because, prior to colonialism, most African societies "relied on oral tradition to pass on history and heritage to different generations," and it has only recently been used to tell "histories of the marginalised" in museums, according to Ngcobo (2018), who agrees with Mdanda (Crooke, 2005:239).

According to the South African Cultural Observatory, there are currently 327 museums in South Africa, with the Western Cape having the most (83), followed by the Eastern Cape (60) and KwaZulu Natal (59) (Fombad, 2011:240). According to the report, the Western and Eastern Capes have more museums than other provinces because (i) the Western Cape was under colonial rule for a long time and is home to one of the biggest metropolitan areas, and (ii) the Eastern Cape was the

site of colonial-era wars like the Anglo-Boer War and border conflicts between English and Afrikaans groups and Xhosa people (Tassiopoulos, 2008:241).

Patterson (2008: 242) South African museums are supported nationally, provincially, and locally, while others enjoy a mix of public and private funding, as well as money from the sale of tickets to special exhibitions, money from eateries, and money from gift stores. Since the nation was so divided that some groups were denied fundamental human rights, the focus of heritage representations and museums changed after the first democratic elections in 1994 to reconciliation and nation-building. (Beall *et al.*, 2005).

In order to enforce changeover, considerable policy adjustments were made. According to McGregor and Schumaker (2006), state-led commemorations favour the ruling party while disregarding minorities and women. Kratz (2011) emphasised the importance of value rhetorics in museums. Value rhetoric communicates how objects are treated and exhibited throughout an exhibition or museum and generates a variety of experiences. They are also linked to viewers' identities, opinions, and value concepts. (Kratz, 2011).

The current South African administration, which identifies as the "rainbow nation," has committed significant resources to forge a varied national identity. The government has concluded that in doing so, it must not only acknowledge and rectify the horrific past of apartheid but also transcend it. (Nanda, 2004:244).

Their desire to address and move past the past, rather than rejecting or using it as an excuse for greater exclusion, has been most clearly expressed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Institutions like the three museums listed below and other historical and cultural organisations are crucial to this process (Leebaw, 2011 #245). The new South Africa's museums and other cultural and educational institutions must adopt a different strategy than most nation-states, which build national narratives that glorify a glorious past. By displaying suppressed histories and cultures and outlining the history and mechanisms of apartheid itself, museums are reclaiming and reconstituting South African history (Skotnes 1995).

- **2.8 The relationship curators have with indigenous communities.**

Working closely with communities to address challenges that touch all of us is a strong tool for effecting change. This form of activity can help mobilize resources, increase community well-being through collaborations and interactions, alter relationships between museums and the public, and function as a catalyst for changing museum practices and environments. (Head, 2007:246). Additionally, the discourses highlight how human-scale conduct showing concern for another person through our encounters with them can be translated to institutional-level behaviour. This

reflects the growing expectation that museums, as organisations focused on and managed by people, fulfil the same standards of care people pursue daily. (Agha, 2006:247)

Curators and their museums become locations and conduits for the community's voice inside and outside the museum walls (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000:248). The museum becomes a community space where the history of the community is portrayed as it happened, untouched by the sanitizations of institutional hegemonies. Curators of independent grassroots museums can portray a community's perception of itself and historical fantasy as experienced and understood by the local community. They can modify their community and its perceived image, or they can withdraw from any involvement outside of their usual role (Mataga, 2014:249)

The curators of the independent grassroots museums in this study show how curating extends beyond the museum architecture and exhibitions. This type of inclusive museum, its methods, and curatorship play a social and political role that benefits the community, its surroundings, and the country. (Vella, 2020:250).

• **2.9 Indigenous views of self-determination**

According to Shrinkhal (2021: 251), Indigenous peoples have fundamentally rethought this antiquated idea and redefined it from their own perspective. They link identity and self-determination to indigenous sovereignty. Self-determination should be understood as the ability of "peoples" to shape their own future.

Therefore, the defence of indigenous peoples' human rights and the struggle for self-governance significantly rely on those rights. To the greatest extent feasible, the separatist gene pool that the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples carries should be democratically neutralized by upholding the political and social autonomy of indigenous communities and advocating for their human rights. (Kuokkanen, 2019 :252)

Any data gathering and governance on indigenous peoples' actual experiences should be under complete indigenous peoples' authority. Big data, open data, intellectual property rights, access, and benefit sharing are discussed in relation to indigenous self-determination; a ground-breaking declaration of data sovereignty by Canada's First Nations is described; relevant UN and international civil society processes are described; and the emerging movement in Africa is examined (UNESCO, 2022:254).



Fig 4. Gathering place with the indigenous community on Blouberg Mountain

- **2.9 The History of Blouberg mountain and the Bahananoa community**

The information provided in this part is both oral and researched

The Bahananoa community lived near the Blouberg Mountains for several generations and were unrapidly removed in 1894 during the war called the Malebogh War, which was named after their chief who refused to pay land taxes to the Afrikaans government and later refused to leave the mountains after the government threatened to remove them.

The story of the Bahananawa people during that time especially was one that gave a sense of resilience from the local people against oppression from the government. There are many accounts from this era, but the researcher especially loves the accounts from the missionary Christopher Sonntag who, in his point of view, showed how South Africa was not all divided and most people actually got along without racial prejudice. The community respected Christopher Sonntag so much in helping the people after the war that the community still protects his missionary camp and his grave to this day.

The Bahananwa are descended from the Bahurutse branch of the Batswana people. They are a splinter group with roots in modern-day Botswana. They were the Malete people of the Bahurutse before the breakaway (Thotse, 2018:255). According to oral history, this split was precipitated by Kgoi Malete having no kids from his older wife to replace him on the throne. This woman had only one child, a girl named Mmatsela. Mmatsela was the natural successor to succeed her father because he had no sons. However, other individuals vehemently opposed the idea of a woman ruling over them. As a result, there were attempts to assassinate Mmatsela, particularly by Kgoi Malete's son from a junior wife. (Thotse, 2015:256).

After forsaking the springbuck, the people of Blouberg selected a baboon as their totem. They chose the baboon since they were plentiful in the Blouberg area. Mountain strongholds were critical for security during those days of surprise invasions (Thobelafm.co.za, 2016). Christopher Sonntag also references the baboon totem in his journey to the Blouberg mountains, and he could not seem to understand how people lived in such harsh conditions. It was a nightmare climbing the mountain, with all the thorns, rocks, and uneven hills. The community was highly intelligent and could navigate around the mountains, grow grain, and own livestock.

The researcher was also surprised by the community's agricultural knowledge; their livestock is big and healthy. They have a variety of medicinal trees and huge and beautiful hills; however, it was a difficult journey to climb the mountains.



Fig5. Indigenous plant trees found on Blouberg mountain.

During the reign of Kgoi Matsiokwane, missionaries arrived in the Bahananwa nation. In 1868, Reverend Beyer was the first missionary to come. The Bahananwa cordially welcomed Beyer and was even granted a plot of land to establish himself so that he could carry out his duties of spreading the Holy Gospel among the Bahananwa (Rectanus, 2019:20).

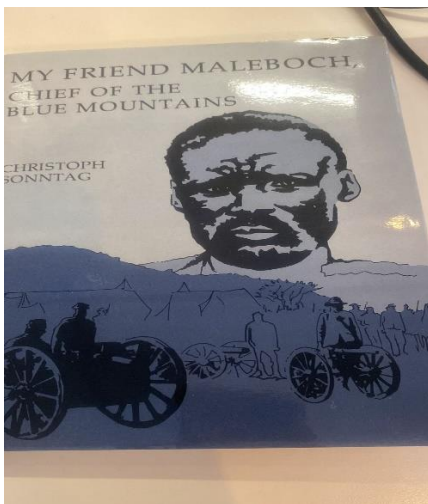


Fig 6. The book collected from the community and gifted by Dr Sonntag, the granddaughter of Christoph Sonntag

The Bahananwa's history is an important component of our national heritage, and it should be identified, developed, and conserved for future generations. Aside from the rich history of the Bahananwa, the neighbouring Blouberg lands are abundant in cultural and natural treasures. The

rock art drawings discovered in the Makgabeng and Blouberg Mountains indicate that the Khoisan people were the area's first residents (Setumu, 2015:258).

Thata Jafer, the community leader, told the researcher how the war shaped the community and their cultural heritage. It helped them value their foods and learn new ways to preserve them in all climate conditions. He stated that the mountains of Blouberg represented them, and after apartheid, many of the descendants went back to the mountains as they could not fit in with any other place. Christopher Sontag also found it irritating that even after the Kgosi was captured and removed from the mountains, many people would always return at the expense of their lives.

Christopher Sontag was a missionary sent to Bahananwa by the church in the 1800s, while there he was faced with interacting with the apartheid government pleading with him to convince the people to leave the mountain, he grew fond of the chief and his people....reference

The government told the community not to return to the mountains, or they will be killed by Afrikaner soldiers or a rival tribe that was also trying to rule over the Bahananawa. The community knew nothing else but the mountains where they were raised. The historical stories and legacy of indigenous tribes have proven to be so tenacious because they were perpetuated, among other things, through oral tradition. They were passed down orally from one generation to the next. As a result, indigenous communities are underrepresented in the broad mainstream of archival and record systems, and most archival papers and materials have colonial and Eurocentric origins (Moonie, 2013:259).



Fig 7.

Statute of Chief Malebog outside the Tribal Office

2.10 National Museum of Cultural History of Ditsong's History

2.10.1 Ditsong National Cultural History Museum

The South African National Museum of Military History in Johannesburg and the Transvaal Museum for Natural History in Pretoria (now the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History) were united into the Northern Flagship Institution on 1 April 1999. (Seabela, 2020:260). In April 2010, Ditsong Museums of South Africa officially changed its name to the Northern Flagship Institution (NFI). The three different museum boards that were previously in place have been replaced with a chief executive and a board that run Ditsong (Harcombe, 2018). The museum's collection includes things like unearthed artefacts and archaeological materials, historical documents, files, and other audio-visuals from the present and past, as well as historical buildings and early domesticated animals. (Smith et al., 2011).

The National Museum of Cultural History presents a variety of ongoing and temporary exhibits that highlight the cultural diversity of South Africa. San people's rock paintings and inscriptions are displayed beside the 1,000-year-old Iron Age figures from Schroda in the Limpopo Province, considered the best examples of ceremonial behaviour from the Early Iron Age. The Art Gallery illustrates a chronicle of South African culture using traditional artefacts, crafts, sculptures, paintings, and a Marabastad show. (Makgolo, 2011).

The establishment of Flagship Institutions includes the Transvaal Museum, currently known as Ditsong Museums, and the South African National Museum for Military History. The Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History was created to carry out the South African Heritage Agency's goals, which include paying subsidies to some cultural institutions, designating some organisations under council jurisdiction as designated cultural institutions, creating a National Museums Division, and resolving issues involving national museums. (Department Of & Culture, 2008).

According to section 10(1), the museum's responsibility is to accept, hold onto, secure, and maintain any objects, collections, or other movable property entrusted to its care. A declared institution does not, without prior authorization, keep, preserve, or safeguard any movable or immovable property of any bonds put in the care, loaned to, or belonging to the declared institution concerned (Hudson et al., 1990).

The National Museums Division, which is made up of the directors and heads of each institution specified in sections 6(1) and (2), must raise money for the organisation (Roodt, 2006). The museum where collections are kept was previously a mint where money was made. The building has its own history giving a person a view of the history of everything around the area. The researcher asked the anthropological curator why the lights were dimmed, and she explained its history that money was made and kept in this area. Many collections are kept so secure in vaults that it is almost as if it is frozen in time. The DNMCH is home to about two million artefacts and collections from different Southern African and international civilizations, including the Egyptian mummy, the Japanese ningyo doll, and kimono, among others.

Chapter three

African Indigenous Philosophical Underpinning

3.1 Theoretical Framework

Numerous museums across the continent are members of the International Council of Museums, which means they adhere to both the structure and the purposes of international standards. Africans and other non-western societies that must participate in the worldwide reevaluation of museum practice have surely affected the move toward social obligations in museological activity (National Museum Policy Framework).

Therefore, a change has been made in the definition of museums to address its purpose as an organisation and include non-European ideas and philosophies to define museums. Museums encourage diversity and sustainability while being open to all. They provide a variety of chances for learning, enjoyment, contemplation, and information exchange through acting and communicating ethically, professionally, and with community involvement.

This revised definition highlights the importance of diversity, community involvement, and long-term sustainability. (Janes, 2019:268) The research is based on the modern theory of museology, also known as the New Theory of Museology, established by Mairesse and Desvallées (2010) and the theory of self-determination and Afrocentric theory (Roberts, 2019) and Cultural Theory (Zabalueva, 2018).

The researcher mentioned self-determination theory earlier in this chapter because she saw it as the core of the research and the community. The community of Bahananawa have gone through many dispositions over the years since the capture of Kogsi Maleboga, apartheid, and now dealing with a mount of deforestation of indigenous trees and researchers exploiting their lands and artefacts. They long for their mountains to remain their home and their plants to still be around for future generations.

Indigenous ways of farming, cattle herding, and husbandry are among many pieces of knowledge they are proud of and wish to keep. McCall and Gray (2019) define new museology theory as the historical shift of museological knowledge to be explored in its historicity by the principle of museological interpretation in museums, the importance of exhibits based on indigenous knowledge, the museological position of critique, self-reflection, and authorship, as well as the interrelated practices and concepts of the artwork, the collection (Ames & Curatorship, 1988).

In this conjunction, the exhibition is not only the site of learning and entertainment but also the site of articulating dynamic political, cultural, and aesthetic nexuses, where curatorial statements often play a part. At the same time, modern museology is also a central term for the development of museology as a theoretical theory and studies of contemporary social, cultural, and art (McCall et al., 2014)

African society has its ways of interpreting and understanding their environments. In conducting research, researchers should always consider their indigenous protocols and general behaviour around indigenous communities and their principles. The researcher learned a saying “you are like a learner who does not know anything, and you are guided by the community.”

3.2 African worldview theory

The idea and viewpoint that Africans can view, research, perceive, and communicate with people, life, and truth from the point of view of Africans rather than from the point of view of Europeans, Asians, or other non-Africans, or the point of view of Africans alienated from Afrika, is what Asante claims is meant by the term "Afrocentric" in this context. (Thabede, 2008).

According to the philosophy of "Afrocentricity," Africans should assert their agency once again to obtain happiness. Mekada (1999) states that the standard of thinking and practice is rooted in the cultural image and interests of African people and that represents African people's life experiences, history, and practices, as well as their cosmology and how they perceive the universe as the centre of the study of African-Cosmological terms (Graham, 1999).

The Bahananwa follow indigenous ways of interacting with others and as well with the outside world. The researcher followed their indigenous ways of living, including how they live, building a relationship with the elders, always having a translated questionnaire whenever she asks questions, and even using her native name *Kelebogile* to relate to the African ways of thinking and learning. The community often give foreign researchers names in their languages to humanize the researchers, so they are a part of their people and are not strangers. They did not change the researcher's name because the name is close to Northern Sotho/ Pedi, which is their language.

3.3 Museology theory

In contrast to conventional, collections-centred repository models, the "new museology" could be defined as considering museums' social and political roles in fostering new forms of expression and communication. (Mairesse and Desvallées 2010). It has developed into a theoretical and philosophic movement that has diverged from museums' primary function in favour of other focus areas and change in goal. One of the areas that were encouraged for reconsideration within the new

museology was the role of museums in conservation, the philosophical standing of the objects on display, as well as the nature and goals of repository scholarship that also includes endemic communities to play a role in the formation of their data show (Smith, 1989).

The "new museology" has been reduced to regularly reevaluating the authenticity, authority, control, and significance of museums. Additionally, this involves the 'curatorial redistribution' of power to countries of origin and the sharing of power across museums (Vergo, 1997). Co-curation is a new concept that museums in South Africa are trying to implement. It is so new that the researcher happened to witness and communicates with the leading pioneers in the team to collaborate with indigenous communities and through the new museology theory. The conversation and development to reevaluate indigenous exhibitions are starting to take place.

3.4 Cultural theory

Contemporary cultural theory covers various topics, from books, clothing, and motion pictures to soap operas, comic books, and hairstyles (Warshow, 2001:261). Like most contemporary art and film, the cultural theory has evolved past the hierarchical separation between a high and low culture that characterised previous literary and creative modernism (Mason, 2006:262).

Many modern museums, particularly in social history and contemporary collection programs, share this rejection of the usual division between elite and popular culture (Findlen, 1994:263). Davis (2007). The museum phenomenon is best understood as the outcome of a complex mash-up of loosely connected motives and concerns, including, among other things, the mixing of many cultures.

Anxieties about "culture amnesia," which ignores historical aspirations for truth, "the real thing," and "antidotes" to throwaway consumer society, aim to address the collapse of identity and individualization, as well as chances for lifelong learning (Robins, 2008).

Nonetheless, while addressing the changes in museums in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries was not a specific aim for most authors, almost all reports on it provide a broad, multidisciplinary view of its existence, relevance, and ramifications. (Mulder, 2005:266). The contemporary cultural theory argues that we inhabit a culture because we share a certain amount of knowledge and understanding about our environment with others. (Hall 1997: 18). Museums materialize values and throw meaning processes into sharp relief, which is why they interest cultural theorists and museum researchers. In this research, the cultural theory becomes difficult to define as many museum curators describe museums as a Westernized institution displaying indigenous culture.

- **3.5 Museums and Legislative Frameworks**

3.5.1 IKS Policy 2004

IKS policy must be integrated with other policies while preserving its security and place within the larger intellectual property (IP) framework. The IKS should view human capital as a national asset. Links to the National Innovation Strategy (NIS) should be made, and IKS should be made more widely known and understood. Oral tradition, libraries, museums, databases, labs, and IKS centers can all be considered study and information infrastructure. (Green, 2007).

3.5.2 S. A Museums Act

(van Graan, M., 2013) remarked that although there were numerous publicly financed regional, national, and municipal museums, resources were not allocated. Museums were inaccessible to many communities. Funds were required to support new museums and those that were not part of the national network because cultural collections were sometimes skewed. Intangible culture's significance has just come to light, creating new opportunities for public programs, research, and collection. A museum is no longer just an exhibition housed inside a structure.

The new way of thinking gives museums additional functions, including those of memorializing African ancestors, claiming history, forums for debate, and locations where communities and curators may bring things to life via study and display. (The White Paper Fourth Draft, 2017).

3.5.3 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (No.108 of 1996)

The Constitution states that everyone has the right to (a) a fundamental education, including adult basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state must gradually make available and accessible through reasonable means. (2) Everyone has the right to receive instruction in public educational institutions in the official language or languages of their choice, if doing so is practically practical.

The state is required to consider all appropriate educational choices, including single-medium institutions, to ensure effective access to and implementation of this right. Cultural, religious, and linguistic communities. (1) People who are part of a community that practices culture, religion, or language may not be denied the following rights: (a) to enjoy their culture, practice their religion, and speak their language; (h) to establish, join, and maintain cultural, religious, or linguistic associations and other organs of civil society. (2) It is forbidden to exercise the rights outlined in subsection (1) in a way that conflicts with any Bill of Rights clause.

Access to information. (1) Everyone has the right to access: (1) all information kept by the state; (2) all information held by another person and necessary for the exercise or protection of any rights;

and (3) all information held by the state. (2) This right must be implemented through national legislation, which may also include appropriate measures to lessen the state's administrative and financial burden.

3.5.4 Department of Arts and Culture 1996 white paper.

By fostering circumstances for the knowledge of other societies, museums in South Africa work to foster national unity, reconciliation, and the development of a shared identity. This helps the country's economy and job market contribute to creating a knowledge society through historical tourism and the creative industries by gaining knowledge, disseminating it through educational programs and other media, and providing community members with opportunities to express themselves through programs (National Museum Policy Framework).

3.9 Cultural Institutions Act 199 of 1998; By museums accumulating knowledge, disseminating it through educational programs, making it available through various media, and giving community members access to programs that will allow them to express themselves, heritage tourism and the creative industries can contribute to the growth of a knowledge society.

Establishing a council further regulates the council members' leave of absence, permits the council's dissolution, and empowers the minister to act. Establish the terms for paying out compensation and paying back costs paid by council members.

3.5.5 National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) - With the help of this legislation, communities will be able to protect and preserve their legacy and pass it on to future generations while also promoting proper management of the national estate. Our heritage is one-of-a-kind and priceless; it cannot be replaced.

It assists us in defining our cultural identity, which is essential to our spiritual well-being and has the potential to strengthen our country. It can support the diversity of our cultures, and so mould the character of our country.

Our legacy honours our accomplishments and helps make up for earlier injustices. It informs, broadens our comprehension of society, and nudges us toward comprehending the plight of others. It stimulates fresh and formerly underutilized research into our extensive oral traditions and practices, and it helps with healing and practical and symbolic reparation.

3.5.6 Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Act (No. 28 of 2013, gazetted December 2013).

The Law aspires to develop a new system of intellectual property rights tailored to traditional knowledge in South Africa and procedures for protecting indigenous knowledge. It modifies the Performers' Protection Act of 1967, the Copyright Act of 1978, the Trademarks Act of 1993, and

the Designs Act of 1993 provisions that deal with indigenous knowledge. Regulations that were published in the Government Gazette on June 2, 2000, by the SAHRA. Following section 25 (2)(h) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999), the SAHRA has made the regulations listed in the Schedule.

3.5.6 The Copyright Act of 1978 (No. 98)

This Act defines "adaptation relation to a literary work" as, unless the context clearly states otherwise, a version of the work that is transformed from a non-dramatic work into a dramatic work. The term "arbitration" refers to arbitration following the terms of the Arbitration Act 1965 (Act No. 42 of 1965), while "creative character" refers to the modification of an artistic work in a way that preserves its original or essential characteristics. Regardless of their creative quality, works of art include paintings, sculptures, sketches, engravings, photographs, and works of architecture, which can be either actual buildings or models of buildings.

• 3.6 Indigenous Philosophical Underpinning of the Study

3.6.1 Ontology- Addresses the essence of being and how the worldview of being is involved in realities' social construction. In the case of national museums and the protection of indigenous information structures, the 'Ubuntu' world sums up this definition of fact (Hirschman, 1986)

Ontology is the community of Blouberg and their relationship with researchers. The communities realise the fascination the world has with them and their artefacts, indigenous knowledge, and their rock arts, therefore establishing a reality with those interested in their area but also protecting their resources through gatekeepers, those who are known as gatekeepers of the communities are Dr Tlou Stemu, Mr Felix Mosebedi and Mr Jonas Tlouamma.

The Ubuntu philosophy conveys ontology, which examines connections between individuals and living and non-living things and a spiritual existence that promotes harmony and love between social groupings (Jolley, 2011). Statements about the nature of existence and being are the focus of ontology. The existence, or lack thereof, of God or some other higher being, is one of philosophy's oldest ontological issues. (Cordeiro-Rodrigues, 2022)

Thinking about ontology in the more practical context of social research refers to convictions on the fundamental nature of reality, particularly social reality. These views are frequently contrasted with an objective reality that exists independently of the observer and reality as it appears subjectively or, more generally, negotiated within communities (e.g., Bryman 2001).

The latter is an anti-positivist or anti-foundationalist ontology influenced by constructivism or interpretivism, while the former often falls under the category of objectivist, realist, or

foundationalist ontology. In our experience, the anti-positivist viewpoint is more prevalent among social theory enthusiasts, although this generalization may not apply to all nations, academic fields, or even historical periods.

Ontology may seem very abstract, but it is essential to the social research questions we ask, the ideas we employ, and the actions we perform. Many researchers bury discussion of both ontology and epistemology by only aligning with a methodology or method: "this is a quantitative study; this is a case study; this is action research; or this is grounded theory."

However, research that does not take ontology into account frequently becomes illogical since it appears to start in one ontological stance and end up functioning inside the logic of another. In an article geared toward beginning researchers, Grix (2002) discusses this in a helpful manner.

3.6.2 Relational epistemologies emphasise subjects or communities as knowers more than traditional epistemologies do on the knowledge's objects. (Thayer-Bacon, 2003). According to relational epistemology, knowledge is something that people acquire via their interactions with others and the environment. However, in this study, it was discovered that museum curators also have a body of knowledge related to curating artefacts that are based on Western epistemology.

Museums are still Western institutions, and their exhibitions should adhere to Western standards even when local information is vital. People refine the concepts that have been created and communicated to them by others. They accomplish this by expanding their perspectives and further establishing their theoretical foundations in order to live fresh interpretations of their experiences (Thayer-Bacon, 200 3:9)

African perspectives define relational epistemology as personal understanding. Language, habits, rituals, proverbs, cherished customs, myths, and folktales all contain the general benefits, principles, and beliefs of a person. This information is applied in several fields, such as psychology, education, childbirth, agriculture, and medical science. (Peng, 2001:271)

This epistemological connection has preferred ways of acquiring new knowledge and evaluating authorities in matters of information, whether people, organisations, or documents, which are often institutionalized in society (Kaphagawani & Melherbe, 2000)

In research, epistemology is a subfield of philosophy that focuses on the sources of knowledge. The potentials, nature, sources, and limitations of knowledge in a subject of study are the focus of epistemology. Epistemology, conversely, is the study of the standards researchers use to categorize what counts as and does not count as knowledge. Epistemology, in a nutshell, is concerned with what is understood to be true. It is a different way of thinking from ontology (Muis, 2006).



Fig. 8 Mountain trail to where Rock Art could be found.

Essentialism, historical perspective, perennialism, progressivism, empiricism, idealism, rationalism, constructivism, and other schools of thought are among the various disciplines of epistemology. The two main epistemological construction arguments that pertain to business studies are empiricism and rationalism.

According to Ferrer (2008), empiricism depends on empirical discoveries obtained through legitimate and trustworthy measures, whereas rationalism relies on human experiences related to observation, sentiments, and senses as valid sources of knowledge.

There are various types of epistemologies, including essentialism, historical perspective, perennialism, progressivism, empiricism, idealism, rationalism, constructivism, and others. As Ferrer (2008). While rationalism depends on empirical findings derived through reliable and rigorous measures, empiricism views human experiences related to observation, feelings, and senses as valid sources of knowledge.

3.6.3 Ubuntu relational ontology and axiology

The Bantu people of Southern Africa explore a relational **axiology** based on the ideas of “the I am we are” philosophy because we are in relationship with living things and non-living things as well as our faith, love, peace, and efforts to establish communities.

From these principles emerges an ethical structure that emphasises the responsible roles of museum staff and researchers, and cooperative relationships between indigenous communities and

researchers, considering the investigated system of relationships with the living and the non-living (Chilisa & Tsheko, 2014).

The Bantu group explored here is the indigenous community of Blouberg, and their relationship with their artefacts is sometimes non-existent; therefore, Ditsong plays a role in bringing objects alive with the community's help.

3.6.4 Cosmology

The study of the sense and existence of the being, which treats the world as an ordered structure governed by a supernatural force, can be described loosely as that branch of metaphysics.

Nwala (2012) defines the word as the set of concepts and relationships that people consider cosmos to fulfil a certain emotional or intellectual drive to bring coherent order into the universe, including itself as one of its components.

Hence the resulting cosmology will be expressed as the sociological, metaphysical, or scientific interests of the person and his party (Nwala, 1985). Both cosmology and myths are related as they both aim to narratively answer the problems bordering on the origin and essence of the universe, man, and creation in general. These cosmogonic theories refer to the treatment of "the creation of the universe and other phenomena" found within (Fieser, 2016).



Fig 9. Tata Jafta (middle) community leader and gatekeeper with the youth

In a nutshell, axiology is concerned with what is valued in research. Values affect how research is conducted and what is valued in study outcomes; therefore, this is significant. Participants in qualitative research should express their opinions and report their values and prejudices when discussing the axiology section of the research philosophy. The value-laden nature of the data acquired in the field should also be considered (Biedenbach & Jacobsson, 2016).

3.6.5 Teleology- African teleological interpretation of nature is used in this analysis to investigate the study's significance in understanding life and phenomena. In certain instances, attempts to clarify and understand why a specific phenomenon arises by showing that Africans have a teleological or purposeful idea of being (Rosenblueth et al., 1943)

Teleology is most used to refer to the belief that some occurrences can best be described by referring to their purposes.

Instead of providing a causal explanation for the phenomenon, the process is explained in terms of the goals, objectives, or intents of the observable phenomena or behaviour. (www.qualityresearchinternational.com, n.d.)

Therefore, Animal behaviour is driven by a need to survive, with food as an intermediary goal. A gamer's actions can be seen because of trying to win, among other things. Unsurprisingly, there is a great deal of disagreement among positivists in general, but notably among sociobiologists and philosophers of science, on how effective this kind of approach to explanation is. Some positivists tend to assign teleology unhelpfully and overly rigidly to social scientific thinking. This has progressed to the point in certain works where the word "teleology" has acquired a negative connotation (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

The somewhat less common definition of teleology refers to the idea that everything in the world was created by a supernatural being with humanity in mind.



Fig 10 location of where community artworks are found.

Chapter four

Methodology

4.1 Research Approach

A mixed-method research approach was used to conduct this study with graphics and pie charts to draw up estimations of the recorded artefacts through observation and captured details. The interpretive and multi-method approach will be used to investigate museum staff, indigenous community, and government staff (Merriam, 2015). Using qualitative and quantitative approaches or procedures in a single study, the researcher gathers and analyses data, integrates the results, and draws conclusions (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007:4).

The use of a variety of research methods yields a complete and more comprehensive picture of the study phenomenon and the use of digital means because of the pandemic and the effects it caused, as opposed to research being restricted to using traditional approaches to data collection (Creswell, 1994). Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) mixed techniques give a wider range of instruments to achieve the goals and objectives of a study and answer research problems that cannot be addressed by quantitative or qualitative approaches alone.

An action, person, group process, or other aspect is the topic of a case study. Interdisciplinary approaches are used to create case studies, which allows for the emergence of a wide range of theories and concepts for case study interpretation (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). This case study approach was used on the Importance of Collaborative Curation of Indigenous Artefacts in the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History. The case study approach is the in-depth study of the case group, which is the museum and its curators and other staff members, field researchers and indigenous communities, specifically the knowledge holders with whom they work.

Data were collected during such interviews, focus groups, observation, oral tradition, and voice records and registry records in the museum of the artefacts it holds, as a detailed explanation of indigenous knowledge and the challenges museums face in curating indigenous artefacts.



Fig. 11 Community members building rondavels for accommodating visitors project participated by Wits University and Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History

- **4.2 Research Paradigm**

4.3 Indigenous Paradigm

It is referred to as a ceremony in the Postcolonial Indigenous Research paradigm (Wilson 2008), and each activity in the ceremony is distinguished by acknowledging the connections people have with one another and the environment, as well as the moral and spiritual obligations they have for one another, the community, and the environment.

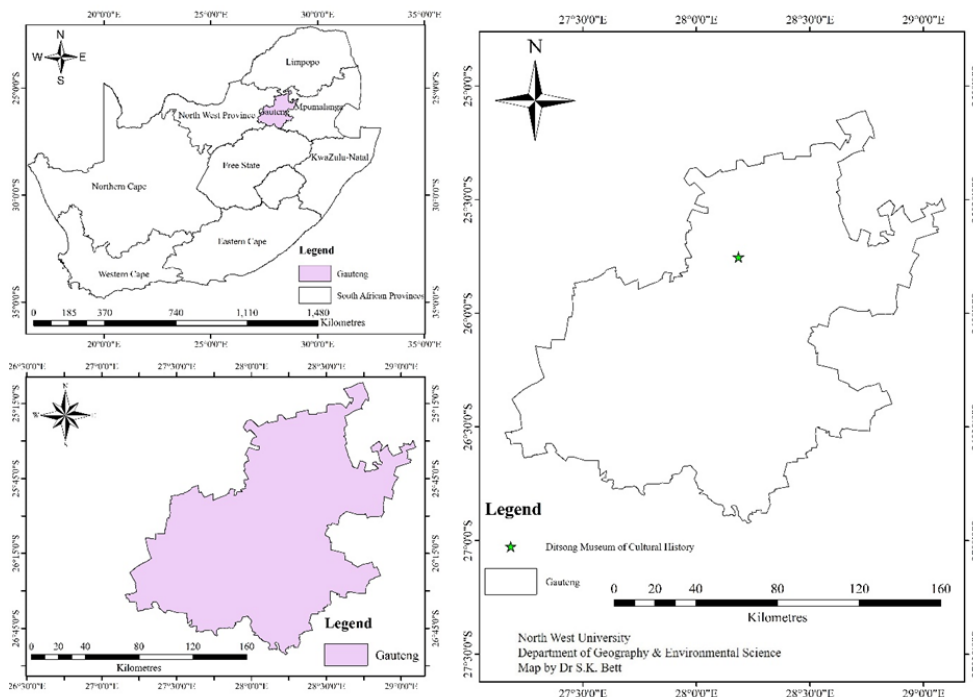
Decolonising and indigenising Euro-Western research methodology is what Postcolonial Indigenous Research promotes {(Hart, 2010). The process of "indigenisation" entails both a critique and resistance of Euro-Western methodological imperialism and hegemony as well as a call for the adaptation of traditional methodologies to take into account viewpoints and techniques drawn from indigenous knowledge, languages, metaphors, worldview experiences, and philosophies of formerly colonized historically oppressed and marginalised social groups. (Wilson, 2001)

Modern critical theory, postcolonial theory, critical race theory, feminist theory, and ideas of decolonisation, resistance, struggle, and emancipation enrich this process (Wilson, 2008). In order to define concepts and new theoretical frameworks for research studies, develop data collection tools, and expand the body of literature, researchers are challenged by an indigenisation process to draw on indigenous knowledge. This means that we must rely not only on written texts but also on the largely unwritten texts of the formerly colonized and historically oppressed peoples. (Hindle, 2005)

Cultural references are included in the elements of indigenous research. By mentioning a country, it is possible to quantify how much the research is influenced by the culture in which it was done. Its traditions, values, and behaviours differ from those in the West. (Adair et al., 1993). The conceptual basis of the research will be evaluated based on how much the language, metaphors, IKS, community stories, legends, and folklore of the study's region are incorporated into its conceptual framework.

The degree to which the local language is used in the development of research instruments, such as questionnaires and test interviews, the research process in general, and the methods, concepts, and variables originating from IKS, as well as developing relationships with the community and consulting with the royal family before conducting research, are all examples of how the indigenous paradigm is displayed. (Chilisa, 2019).

4.4 Setting, location of the study



Reference Bett (2020)

Fig. 11 Location of Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History



Fig. 13 Indigenous trees on the mountain trail

- 4.5 Study area

The Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History is housed in the former South African Mint structure, west of and behind Pretoria City Hall. All regions of the Gauteng Province may reach there by road with ease. The entrance to the Museum grounds serves as a drop-off location for inner-city buses operated by Gautrain. Pretoria, 0001; 149 Visagie Street GPS 25° 45' 09.7" S 28°11' 05.7" E.

The Blouberg-Makabeng-Senabarwa is the region in which the indigenous community of Bahananwa are located, and they worked and continue to work closely with the museum to preserve their culture. The researcher visited four areas, and the municipality of Blouberg was not mentioned on the map; however, she first went to the municipality to ask permission to meet the community before approaching the community. The researcher went to the Bahananwa Tribal office to consult with community members before conducting the research, and she was later taken to Kgosi's office together with Dr Quixiei Sonntag, the granddaughter of Christopher Sonntag and Dr Tlou the local

historian and community gatekeeper to present her case and the reasons for her visit. With the guidance of the community gatekeeper and spokesperson Mr Felix, the researcher presented her first data collection of the community in the Blouberg mountains with the community's elders. The researcher stayed at Bochum, a small village near the town. She experienced the people, cuisine and language as difficult as it was and embraced the community and their culture.

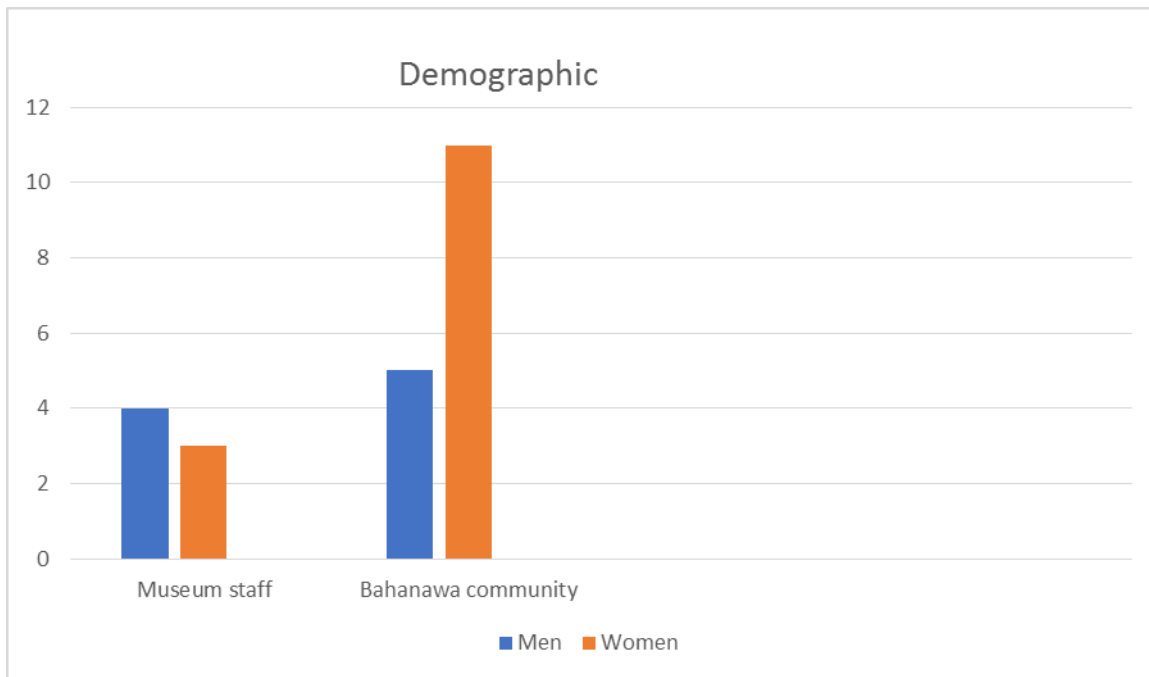


Fig 14. Bar graph of research participants

- **4.6 Population**

In terms of research, the phrase "population" refers to an extensive collection of people, organisations, things, etc., who share a researcher's interest. The intended audience comprises museum employees, indigenous community members, and South African Heritage Society government representatives. Only seven museum employees were present and willing to give information due to the coronavirus and the limited number of staff members who could assist with the study. While the community elders came in, almost seventeen people showed up and gladly participated in the research.

- **4.7 Sampling approach**

Purposive (expert) sampling, a tool for participant selection, was used in the research to sample the population using non-probability approaches (Chilisa, 2012). Nonprobability sampling approaches include samples accessible to the researcher. Not everyone is equally likely to be picked, and it is

unclear who will be included in the final sample. Focusing on those who contribute to artefact collection and curation. Different non-probability sampling approaches include ease, purposive sampling, and quota sampling. Probability sampling is usually used in quantitative research, while non-probability sampling is used in qualitative research (Rao, 2000).

- **4.8 Data collection**

The data was recorded using in-depth interviews with the museum curator, known for curating, exhibiting, and collecting artefacts and other staff members who work with indigenous artefacts, have interacted with communities, and exhibit indigenous artefacts. As well as in-depth interviewing with Indigenous knowledge holders of indigenous artefacts and perhaps hosting focus group discussions with both museum staff and the indigenous knowledge holders; however, this was impossible due to two main reasons, firstly when the researcher went to the community, the museum staff had other commitments, and secondly only a select few knew about the community. There are 2 million collections, and some collections have different disciplines; only one is Miss Gertrude Mostane, the curator of the Bahananwa collection.

In-depth interviews in both virtual and present form due to Covid 19 (the novel coronavirus) were conducted, but for the community, the researcher had to wait until the lift of lockdown in order to visit the area due to the high risk of the elders being sick or the unavailability of community leaders.

Focus groups are somewhat close to interviews, but many of the criteria for conducting interviews also often apply to focus groups. The researcher found it was the only way to get community members together all at once, and therefore a focus group was the approach she used when conducting research with the community. This helped in many ways, as some members were shy to speak; thus, being in a group gave them the confidence to express themselves.

A focus group does not exceed six or seven members (maximum eight) and should not be fewer than three. If the group is too wide, people are likelier to break off talking in subgroups and cut others out of the conversation. If it is too little, the researcher must keep the discussion going in sufficient detail for the participants not to feel overwhelmed by the situation (Gibbs, 1997). It is also better for a focus group to have a homogeneous group of participants since they find it easier to speak to each other (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996).

- **4.9 Data analysis**

Thematic analysis was used, as well as observation. Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data; even though this is mixed-method research, the Thematic Analysis helped gather data because most of the data was qualitative for several reasons. Community members had similar views, and artefacts are dated in different methods that will be mentioned later in the research.

It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as interview transcripts, pictures, records, and people's views. The researcher closely examined the data to identify common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly (Gavin & Psychology, 2008). The research used the recording, videos, past documents and in-person interviews to find common themes and topics. The researcher analysed the transcripts to see the direction of the research and use the more relevant themes and topics to go with. Thematic analysis is a tool to systematically define, organise, and give insight into meaning trends (themes) across a dataset. Focusing on meaning through a dataset helps the researcher to see and understand common or shared meanings and experiences (Harrison et al., 2012).

Six-phase approach to Thematic Analysis

There are six phases of approaching Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) which are summarized as

1. The researcher familiarizes the research data by transcribing data, reading and re-reading, and noting initial codes and common phrases or opinions.
2. Generating Initial codes- coding interesting data features relevant to each other.
3. Searching for the themes- collecting codes into potential themes and gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Involved reviewing themes-checking if the themes work concerning the coded extracts and entire data, set generate a thematic 'map'.
5. Defining and naming themes- Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme generation of close names of each theme.
6. Producing a report- Final opportunity for analysis selecting appropriate extracts, and discussion of theme analytics related to the research question.

• **4.11 Ethics consideration**

The ethical theory for the Postcolonial Indigenous Research paradigm begins with assumptions about the research participants as co-researchers; thus, it assumes some level of involvement, which may require training of the researcher by the research participant or vice versa. Ethics considered include the following using (Munhall, 1988) rust and ethics: In this research, the researcher had first to approach the municipality and present to the tourism office coordinated by Mr Jonas Tlouanna on her interest in the area. After it was reviewed, she had to go to the royal/ tribal office to ask the indigenous community to allow her to conduct this research project, and she gave informed consent

to participants' right to withdraw from the project at any time, enhancing trust through question and questionnaire design before and after editing.

Privacy and ethics: confidentiality, anonymity, sensitive use of information. If the participants wished not to be named or discontinued, they did; however, almost all the participants freely gave consent. The participants were issued with the following form of informed consent before conducting the research, which indicated the following aspects: Respecting the rights of communities and being sensitive to the views of communities when researching collections and conducting fieldwork, as well as in how they depict their culture.

The researcher respected their traditional practices and professional practices that limit access to artefacts. The researcher was aware that research exists to serve society and should, whenever possible, prioritise areas of social responsibility, community consultation and transformation. The researcher respected the museum's staff and operated professionally, and the code of ethics should include personal codes of conduct and processes to resolve conflicts of interest.

- **4.12 Summary**

Chapter four is the body of how the research was conducted. The methodology, sampling, and ethical considerations of the research proceedings will be followed to conduct good research. The chapter highlights the important characters throughout the research and the elements that influenced the findings.

- **4.13. Organisation of the study**

- Chapter one provides the introduction, background, statement of the problem, motivation, significance, aim, objective, and research questions.
- Chapter two is about literature review
- Chapter three describes the philosophical underpinnings of the study
- Chapter four is the research methodology and methods of the study
- Chapter five is the findings and discussion
- Chapter six provides the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Chapter five

Research Findings and Discussions

5.1 Ditsong National Museum description as a national flagship of the RSA

This museum skilfully displays the diversity of South African civilizations with displays of pre-historic rock drawings, Iron Age figurines, contemporary art, and handicrafts. The National Museum of Cultural History showcases a plethora of works of art and artefacts honouring the cultural variety of South Africa (Swart, J., 2019).

A thousand-year-old Iron Age figurine from Schroda in the Limpopo Province referred to as "the best-known artefacts indicating ritual behaviour in the Early Iron Age," is also on display, along with San rock paintings and engravings. An exhibit on Marabastad is a real representation of a multicultural, harmonious nation before apartheid.

The researcher further asked the museum staff individually about the museum's description and role in society as practitioners of the institution and carers of our history. The researcher when asking this question was passionate about the role these individual play in protection our artefacts.

- *It is a resource centre where we have indigenous and historical objects in our storerooms, and we strive to share that information with the public, and it is a place where we manage assets of the country. - Terence Nkosa (Educational officer)*
- *The Museum collect, preserve, interpret, and display objects. A Museum consists of the following sections:*
 - *Collections Management – Staff in this division is responsible for the documentation (numbering, photographing, cataloguing, and conducting research).*
 - *Conservation: Preservation (mostly cleaning) and restoration of broken objects.*
 - *Education Department: Staff helps with educational programmes for learners.*
 - *Marketing and Communication: Market events and new exhibitions in the Museum – Mr Jan Van den Bos (curator of military collection).*
- *We access information that was collected by the museum, we explain the cultural history and what it is all about. We are a cultural history museum, we are one in seven museums, others being in Johannesburg and the others in Pretoria. Cultural museum was originally started in a building known as the Transvaal Museum in top street in Pretoria. The Transvaal- Mr Nelulavhani Mashudu (Educational officer)*

- *The Ditsong Cultural Museum's mandate is set out in the national resource act and, it requests us to set out cultural, historical, and national artefacts to help them be kept safe for the state. Ma'am Tersia Perregil (Heritage Assets Manager) of Ditsong National Museums*
- *We are a national museum, we deal with everything to do with cultural archaeology, anthropology, historical so that is basically what we do in the museum so we have exhibitions, upstairs we have collections, housing I don't know it can be said as an object from pre-history, history and cultural groups. -Frank Teichert (Curator and Archaeologist)*
- *part 6: Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History is a national museum that holds all objects, artefacts to be specific, that are significant that are with the people of South Africa. It is a national museum, and it doesn't focus on a specific group of people but everyone. - Museum staff Julia Montlha (Curator of Philately (postcards) and Numismatics (coins))*
- *The Ditsong Museum of Cultural History is concerned with the preservation of the different cultures in South Africa and other places so it is for that reason we have different collections so although I am curating the anthropology collection, which consist of ethnographic fragment material there are also other material, textile, catenary, flags, doors..etc it is about preserving culture. We are the custodians for preserving that culture so that the next generation can enjoy it. - Ms Gertrude Mostane (Curator of anthropological collections)*

5.2 The purposeful existence of the museum today

The organisation's "mandate is as follows: Collection, conservation, and safe management of national heritage collections on behalf of the South African nation," the organisation's website state (Museum Act, 1999)

The museum claims to conduct research and disseminate this data for local and global cultural, social, and economic benefit. Create, carry out, and oversee public programs and exhibitions that promote the government's other socioeconomic goals and the national educational curriculum.

Museums today provide accessibility, establishing a place for learning, pleasure, and transformation that is available for public enjoyment and criticism (.Black, G., 2012). The researcher asked them individually on the thoughts on the matter as this were their response

- *Part 1: We are a place where we store heritage assets of South Africa through cultural and historical objects.*
- *Part 2: As a museum, we collect and preserve objects for future generations.*
- *Part 3: The purpose of the museum is to restore culture of the public.*
- *Part 4: Basically, to document the cultural history of South Africa in particular.*

- *Part 5: The purpose of the museum is to inform the public about history or pre-history, also as a place where important historical, cultural objects are stored for future generations.*
- *Part 6: To ensure that the heritage of the national culture is protected and preserved for future generations and communities also.*
- *Part 7: It is about preservation of the national estate, which are the collection so there are a national estate because that is what they were declared as such by the National heritage resource Act, that is what they are called we are just the custodians of looking after the cultural properties of this country.*

5.3 The Role of Indigenous Communities in the Museum

By establishing new venues and public spaces, museums may act as a catalyst for regeneration and serve as a place where various community organisations can come together, assisting in defining local identities and helping people in those communities build their confidence and abilities.

Museums are addressing social issues through their distinctive collections and offerings. They want to be spaces where all facets of the community can speak up and have their perspectives represented in the collections and exhibits of a museum. They are proven to be an invaluable resource for developing fundamental and specialized employment skills through volunteer programs, internships, apprenticeships, and work placements (Kadoyama, M, 2018).

The researcher believes that is crucial to eliminate the contentious nature of national museums, indigenous groups must continually participate in classifying collections, including the ethnographic collection, restitution and repartition of human remains in the museums and further conversed with the museum staff about this matter and this were their response.

- *Part 1: Our role is to preserve and showcase all our indigenous artefacts for future references for future generations. The role is for curators to make sure that all artefacts are properly preserved and are also exposed to the public through exhibitions. I can't say yes or no. it depends on the research as curators, we go to the communities and ask questions maybe they do research that the community based on artefacts that find in that area. I think the role of indigenous communities is just to make sure that they give us the correct information on these indigenous artefacts that we have collected in their community. They only participate when we do research, we interact with them, and we get those artefacts from them.*
- *Part 2: The last project at Gamotlhe building (now our head office\)) focused on the old pass law and how it influenced certain communities (an oral tradition project which included donations such as pass books). This project extends over a period. If I remember correctly,*

the project started in the early 2000. The donors were part of the process, giving, for example, historical information on the objects that were exhibited.

- Part 3: What we do when we construct or start research mostly it comes from the researchers, and then it is passed on after being installed, then it is handed over to the educational department whereby as a department, we will be able take people around the museum and educate them about it. So, the role is engaged with institution to exhibit their artwork. Is to express themselves, we give them guidance on how exhibitions work but their voices are the greatest importance.*
- Part 4: Not from a management we perspective, those who work with these communities are specifically through archaeology and the studies they entail. They play a massive role because if they are not involved in the exhibitions, or we have a pottery exhibition to just put the pots without having communities to represent them, the worth and significance of the objects becomes useless. The communities help us explain the materials used to create these objects and its indigenous knowledge. So, we have not done, in the past, for communities to play roles that we are starting with a project to co-collect and to co-curate so that communities curate their collection with use because it will create an academic viewpoint and human viewpoint, and it will help communities to be involved.*
- Part 5: There are no communities that can tell us how to exhibit. No communities have a say in archaeology.*
- Part 6: I would say it starts even before the exhibitions, it starts when the information on the object is constructed or it is developed because you need to target that community in the engagement of their artefacts and, with that, also brings awareness to the museum. They are contributing to their knowledge that will be collaborated with the scientific knowledge to create context behind the object, e.g. What the object is and what it was used for, how it was manufactured and why it was manufactured.*
- Part 7: we are now entering a phase of co-curation, and the only community we have worked with was the community of Mamelodi for the exhibition of the mamelodoi massacre, and there was constant consultation with the community, and they attended the exhibition, and they helped in their exhibition hosted by Ditsong and freedom park.*

6 Community Answers

le bona gole bohlokwa goka thusa go tshireletsa disomiswa tsa setso tseo dibego dile gona mo gae naa.

- Interviewee: go bohlokwa godi tshireletsa.*
- Translator: they say is very important to protect those.*

- *Interviewer: Does the community check on how the artefacts are really reserved and how they are represented in the museum.*
- *Translator: bjalo ka Sechaba lena lego tshwenyega goba lena lego tsea karolo gore di beiwa ka mokgwa wa maleba naa.*
- *Interviewee: goya kanna, site tsa mowe go dutseng dilotsa bohwa baya. Gona le mowe dilo tseo di humanego tshireletso. Bana gabono fihla baya. Gona le batho bao ba rutilego go hlokomela dilo tseo.*
- *Translator: she says that we are having some local people who we may say they are our local custodians to our artefacts and other things.*

7 The benefit sharing procedures or agreements the museum signed with the community.

The researcher realises that museums are a place of storage and restoration of artefacts. The issues we are currently struggling with are the issues of benefit sharing between the communities which hold the knowledge of these artefacts at museums and wonders if communities benefit from exhibitions and the curation of these artefacts. The researcher asked the museum staff and the community members if they benefited from their artefacts being displayed in this museum.

- *Participant 1: The only benefit sharing they get is getting their community exposed to the public and their information has been shared with a lot of people that visit the museum.*
- *Participant 3 of the museum staff: What I do know when engaging with communities there must be a signed document by the institution.*
- *Part 5: We hire communities on our field works or excavations.*
- *Part 6: Yes, through information sharing between the two museums and share research as well.*
- *Part 7: Yes, the community wanted indigenous houses to be built for their usage and are allowed to research their indigenous knowledge. We also do outreach projects to help create awareness of these houses.*

In galleries and museums, the collection classification is often unnamed, untitled and often have no provenance, the researcher explains to the community this challenge in the museum, and they shared their thoughts on the forms of benefit sharing they acquire.

Community Answers

- *I am not sure there is benefit sharing, is just for now, like you are buying an object and you put it in display for your own benefit, and what is left in the community is a gap of knowledge. - Felix (community leader)*



Fig 15. Community project

The Socio-cultural protocols the museum curators follow in collecting and researching artefacts.

The researcher exclaims that in the age of political and ethical awareness in academia and research, many topics are being debated on how research has impacted indigenous communities and the proper procedures to collect research and artefacts. The museum staff gave their own protocols in their respective fields.

- *Part 1: I think we firstly find information on that community, if it exists or not and where we get to do research on the existing communities and find artefacts based on those indigenous communities.*
- *Part 2: I believe negotiation starts with the leader/s of the community.*
- *Part 3: As a museum, we are guided by policy.*
- *Part 4: Our research policies speak to ethics and protocols that we need to be followed when interviewing when undertaking research in the community, and even when we are engaging with communities, we also have stakeholder engagement strategies that also lays out*
- *Part 5: No applicable to me. I am dealing with pre-historical communities, so most of the communities have evolved to other cultures or have changed over time so the link between modern cultures or pre- historical they don't remember, so it's easy to find communities that can find the meaning of the objects we find. Anthropology on the other hand links historical cultures with present cultures.*
- *Part 6: In terms of loaning objects to museums, we approach the museum guidelines between the two museums.*
- *Part 7: So the first step is to write to the chef to say this is a project we are approaching, this is reason we want to do the research and we also inform the municipality the political*

aspects of it is important because the municipality is responsible for different wards that helps us navigate this forces and speak into different community leaders who also lies between us and the community and they usually organise meetings and include consultative meetings so they are no projects we do without consulting process in a form of meeting until the community has proposed this project. Letting them know we are partners and not just researchers, so we guide them, and after that, we ask for consent. Recording the meeting and their participation if they agree to be a part of the project.

The role of government in Ditsong National museum of cultural history in the integration of IKS in museums

In previous pages, the researcher listed and considered the different government departments that play a role in the initiative to introduce indigenous knowledge in museums, and with that knowledge, the researcher asked the museum staff if there is some truth to those documents.

- *Part 1: I do believe we do have, because of the Department of Sports and Arts and Culture promotes indigenous knowledge system, we follow all other polies that has been put out there for all heritage institutions. Sports, Arts and Culture and Recreation department, I think the support that government has been giving is making sure that heritage institutions operate and make sure that all these indigenous artefacts are preserved as part of our cultural heritage.*
- *Part 2: Yes, I believe so because our APP addresses it. We currently fall under the Department of Sport. I am not aware under the Department of Sport, but when we were under the Department of Arts and Culture.*
- *Part 3: Strategic plan: is a plan that the institution has had for the last 5 years, and in that plan added by institution and the Heritage Act and the constitution to preserve knowledge in the institution. They support us in our outreach programmes.*
- *Part 4: The government offers grant opportunities, but the difficulty is that every museum competes to get them as they are limited, and we are not always successful in achieving the grants. There is a government initiative known as the Knowledge Management, and it is a new department that supports IKS, so what we are trying to do from that department to capture the knowledge that is not on paper, such as oral traditions, histories, and knowledge from communities.*
- *Part 5: The Department of Arts, Sports and Culture and Recreation, although archaeology is better suited in Department of Science and Technology. The Heritage Act of 1999 that governs archaeology and all archaeological studies of South Africa. They pay for our salaries, but not for our research or studies.*

- *Part 6: The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture. I won't know a government policy; we formulate our own policy as a museum that does support IKS, for example, the development of the knowledge management department where they look at living knowledge and document it. I wouldn't say no but for now, I am not aware of any initiative that has been by the department in the integration of IKS in museums.*

Answers according to the South African Heritage Agency (SAHRA)

- *A government official from the South African Heritage Agency- Dr Philip Hine*

How has the agency ensured that museums participate in introducing indigenous knowledge systems?

- *There is no direct policy that ensures that.*

Do local communities know the importance of the agency in protecting their living knowledge?

- *If permitted, if it is at a national level, we try to do outreaches; however, if it's in a local level, the municipality is responsible for local transmission of raising awareness of the agency.*

How has the agency supported museums in the initiative to ethically redefine museums?

- *In terms of IKS and restitution of artefacts, museums are the ones responsible for that. We used to help communities reclaim their artefacts in museums which was the Repetition and Restitution office; however, we now prefer the museums to report the matter to avoid any conflicts.*

The different ways the museum has decolonised and redefined its methods of protecting indigenous artefacts.

- *New museology theory describes a shift in the way we look at museum, a new way to defining, writing, and displaying of artefacts and with that, what has been done by museums to introduce the idea of museums integrating IKS.*

Some of the conversations the researcher was confronted with were the word "indigenous" due to it being defined by many communities that some might not be considering themselves as indigenous, so some questions the researcher used intertwined words that fall under the IKS ACT 2017 which are previously marginalised communities, persons of colour and traditional communities.

- *Part 1: I think IKS is integrated into museums by ways of making sure that all our indigenous information is exposed to the public by doing public lectures, doing educational outreach programs displaying indigenous information in our exhibitions. I think that's how we get involved as museums.*

- *Part 2: The last project at Gamotlhe building (now our head office) focused on the old pass law and how it influenced certain communities (an oral tradition project which included donations such as passbooks). This project extends over a period. If I remember correctly, the project started in the early 2000. Due to a restriction in the budget, almost all research projects are on hold.*
- *Part 3: We have a museum policy that instruct us to covert or make sure that the information is available to the public in different languages. I know for a fact through educational projects there are some that are offering indigenous languages.*
- *Part 4: So, one of the ways we have started integrating things by bringing IKS is to have exhibitions and working towards creating a different section where we do data analysis which we are on the gaps of initially starting research to building the maps.*
- *Part 5: It's part of the work I do, archaeology, we look at different cultural groups and how they live, how they sustain themselves at times, so it's all part of that through exhibitions.*
- *Part 6: We have since developed a program or another department that deals with all the information that is gathered from the museum, and we call it knowledge Management.*
- *Part 7: Museums are a colonial concept so we cannot get rid of the Western concept of museums, and we can't demolish it so; by virtue of that, with the source communities, we are integrating by moving away from just storing these artefacts according to ethnicities or material we are moving way, and we are merging and integrating the western and the indigenous methods. The fact that we are still storing them in cupboard metal box. So, we now ask communities on their preference in the storage of their artefacts, so we would ask if, eg. They would their mask to be placed next to the necklace, or would you want them to be separated? We are integrating the two we are merging the two.*

How has the museum dealt with intellectual property?

The researcher went to Iziko Museums during her research and discovered that national museum are trying to address this role as a form of reclassification of ethnographic collections and contextualising the collection acquisition to include indigenous communities and their placement in these collections through their descriptions and tour guides and she was curious what Ditsong mandate on Intellectual property.

- *Part 1: If it comes to that, we have our marketing manager, we also have our HR manager who look at the legal aspects of property rights.*
- *Part 2: I believe they enter into an agreement.*
- *Part 3: Memorandum of understanding, it covers everything to do with legal matters. It means that there must be an understanding between the community and institution.*

- *Part 4: We just follow legislation and intellectual property laws, copyright laws, trademark laws. We do come from a viewpoint that knowledge systems that belongs to the communities we don't go in without requesting permission and allow us to present this information.*
- *Part 5: Normally, during excavation, archaeological research in a particular area. So, it more of an educational explaining, people. What was happening in those areas? What we are looking for to try to get them to understand in some cases. They are protected by government, and no exact intellectual property is being targeted except their lands.*
- *Part 6: In terms of loaning objects, other museums must acknowledge the museum when they put the objects in display, and while it is there, it cannot be loaned anywhere else, and if anyone uses the objects for research, they must always acknowledge the museum.*
- *Part 7: They are the custodian of their knowledge, and we only get artefacts they permit us to get.*

The understanding of what Indigenous Knowledge Systems means to the museum and community members.

The researcher explains to the participants that museums worldwide are undressing the elitism, secrecy, and colonial representation they held for centuries and exploring different forms of being inclusive to societies and the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems included in the museum space in the Americas, Oceania, and Australia, to name a few.

- *Part 1: IKS is when people understand their heritage and their culture through objects that we do have and showcase in our exhibitions.*
- *Part 2: In general, it includes objects and oral traditions.*
- *Part 3: My personal understanding of IKS is the way indigenous things are approached by indigenous people and the way we preserve what we have as human beings. It could be food or a way of education how people get their medication when they get sick. How they preserve food, for instead, how they preserve food in dry seasons.*
- *Part 4: It is the knowledge that is unique to a particular community or society, that got the beliefs and the way of life each community subscribes to what they believe and how they do things opposed to another community how they do things. So, it is the knowledge that transit to a community is how I would see indigenous knowledge.*
- *Part 5: Looking at different indigenous people, maybe there is no books that have been written, there is no formal writing at that stage, so most of the things that passed on from generation to generation, even in the cultures today they, still remember some of those stories from the past from their parents and grandparents. Most of the indigenous knowledge are pre-historic and must have been changed or forgotten.*

- *Part 6: My understanding of indigenous knowledge is that indigenous knowledge is that knowledge that is a community like where you grow up, there are things that you know that are different from other communities, maybe say, for example, I know there is certain plants at home that help with swore teeth, swore throat that you chow to relief the pain.*
- *Part 7: In most cases in speaks to the indigenous knowledge has not been recorded that we would need to go to the real custodians who practice the traditions, customs, it is usually what is not written, so oral history plays a big role, and oral traditions have a big role in IKS but it also speaks to knowledge which is not diluted by western methods of doing of practising.*

Community members answer this question.

: kweisiso ya lena mabapi le tsebo ya segologolo ke efe.

- **Interviewee:** *setso gasesa swanela go fela se swanetse se tswela pele. Kgale gobe go sena le motho wago hloka ntlo ya rondavel efela lehona diya thubiwa reya go masenke le tile rere mabu rekase sea kgone rea lapa mola re epela setso sa rena.*
- **Interviewee:** *goya kanna, re lisitse dintlo tsa rondavel fela gorile gotla batho ba goba le tsebo ka tsa setso, raba busy ka project yago aga dintlo ke fao ke bonago ele selo se sebotse ka gore renale mengwago ye meraro reena le bolwetsi bo bogologolo bjoo motho mang le mang abo tsebago. Bolwetsi bjo boile bare bontsha gore re swanetse re boele morago godi roots tsabo rena. Gere lebeletse, project yago aga dintlo re lemoga gore re nyakile re hweletse kese gaborene rena le ntlo ya rondvel yeo elego gore badimo ba nyaka go berekelwe gona eseng dintlong tsa masenkere re lebeletse gona ka moso badimo batlo nyaka re somise tsona dintlo tseo go phetha ditaola, ke mowe re bonego gore go bohlokwa gore bana babo rena ba tsebe ka setso.*

Translation- It is very important to keep our indigenous language system. Recently we had a very big shift in terms of how we live and how our ancestors lived in terms of depending on the lifestyle that is currently held, which is very different from the past. The likes of how we eat and how our elders eat are different things. Now we have a project from Wits University trying to build something we totally bring about regarding how our culture was and how our ancestors lived. They are many things that are different from how we have been living.



Fig 16. Community artworks created by a local artist.

- *Iks Holder: On artefacts, I think they are collected, I never came to accordance when I found them collecting around, not knowing about the past few years when I was not a part of this heritage site or when I was growing up I didn't know there was anyone from Ditsong that came to collect Data but from 20002, we had a project or oral heritage project they collected the oral history, Ditsong was part of together with the block municipality, with the information centre to keep record of the history of Blouberg.*
- *For my point of view, we grow up from different places, different backgrounds, different communities, and each and every community has their own ways of living, practising their own culture, their own culture, their way of developing one another, naturing one another like for example in my culture it was that "rite of passage " of every boy to become a man is for him to go to the mountains/initiation school that build us as a culture and community the stages of development, how we live, how we relate to one another, and the ways elders lived because now we follow traditions from our parents so the way we taught to be our selves among others.*



Fig. 17 Group photo with the community members

The museum has formal and legal agreements with the communities when collecting artefacts and researching community knowledge.

One of the things that are not mentioned in the acquisition of collection is the background of acquirement to these communities the researcher observes. The researcher had to understand the museum's process in acquiring collection in the new system of protocols and respect for human rights.

- *Part 3: Memorandum of understanding agreement, which covers that because it is a legal document.*
- *Part 4: We have our national research policy that lays out the ethics and code of conduct policy, which also dictates how we conduct ourselves and these things. The heritage management policy also speaks to sacred and religious objects and how sensitive objects, how do you deal with these objects.*
- *Part 5: Apply for permits from the South African Heritage resource agency Consultation with communities to explain what is happening, why we are there and what we are doing so that they can get a better understanding so that we can ensure that we are not trying to mess up their indigenous lands and to explain why it is important to do research.*
- *Part 6: There are, especially if you send objects to another museum, we must know the objects risks that they can be involved in; for example, if you are sending an object to a museum in Venda, you must know the temperatures of the area. So, it means your object will be exposed to different temperatures, so our agreement will state such. Security of objects is*

very important when they are loaning an object that are at risk to be stolen, it poses a theft risk than you can put a condition on the agreement saying that they must have a security guard or extra security to protect the objects, a security guard at the entrance of the exhibitions. So yes, there are legal agreements. This includes damages if something breaks; they either must repair it or replace it, or reimbursement of the object broken.

- Part 7: No, because we use anthropological methods and indigenous methods. A lot of the time, we let them guide the process.

The role of the communities in the exhibition and curation of artefacts

- Part 2: There are so-called sensitive issues that must be respected and not be displayed in the museum, and these are guided by the indigenous communities. (Such as initiation process and tools used).
- Part 3: What we do when we construct or start research mostly it comes from the researchers, and then it is passed on after being installed, then it is handed over to the educational department whereby as a department, we will be able take people around the museum and educate them about it. So, the role is engaged with institution to exhibit their artwork.
- Part 4: They play a massive role because if they are not involved in the exhibitions, or we have a pottery exhibition to just put the pots without having communities to represent them, the worth and significance of the objects becomes useless. The communities help us explain the materials used to create these objects and its indigenous knowledge.
- Part 5: There are no communities that can tell us how to exhibit. No communities have a say in archaeology.
- Part 6: I would say it starts even before the exhibitions, it starts when the information on the object is constructed or it is developed because you need to target that community in the engagement of their artefacts and, with that, also brings awareness to the museum.

Community answers

- *About how they are preserved, I don't think most communities do check because we just get satisfaction that the researcher is looking for some objects, and we do have some that we are willing to provide, but as to how they are going to use it or exhibit or display them in the museum we don't really bother looking at, but it is important to be checked.*
- **: ke karolo efe yeo e tseyago ke setshaba mo tabeng tsa go boloka ga thoto ye etswago mo nageng.**
- **Interviewee:** goya kanna, ge batho ba tseye dilo tse, ba tseya ka moya wa lerato legodi somisa geele gona ba bona bohlokwa bja tsona. Bjalo rena rebe re rata gore geba tsere dilo

tse, bano boya gabedi bare bontshe gore dilo tse re bona dina le mohola ibile ditlo re hola kua pele go bontsha dinaga tse dingwe. Bjalo rere ka dilo tse tswelang pele le thome gore tlogelela le letseno.

- *Translator: what we need is that we need to benefit from our culture, heritage or whatever is been from here no matter how it is going to be used, but we do believe that those took or those who will be coming to take our things they must involve us in each step.*

The researcher states that the community mentioned that a professor came, and the community was involved in the excavation and so forth. So, the researcher wanted to ask what role they played in the research, whether they were simply helping with excavating, and what challenges the community faces in the relationship between the institutions.

- *Translator: ge nkile la swantshatsa gore go kile gwaba le batho bao ba ilego ba epa ba rwala tse badi rwalago, gona le mo eleng gore le berekisana le bona gabotse ibile le rata goka tseba gore gekele butsiso dipotsiso ko dirang ka tsona goba ka nako ela batho ba ebego ba fata mo fase ba tseya tse badi tsseyang goba batla kamo gae ba kgopela megopo, diroto le maselo naa lena tshomisana le batho ba babego baetla ebe ele bjang afa le tseya karolo.*
- **Interviewee:** *go tloga kua morago go bolela nnete tsebo rebe resana yona motho obe a soma ka tsebo yagwe abe a etswa sekolong sa tsona di rock out tse ebe ele TLOU rebe reno bona a tsamaya le batho ba a bereka le bona go swane lege go ile gwatla professor Karimu mowe goile gwaba le monyetla wago humana gore gobe le batho ba batswago mogae ba bereke le yena. Tsebo goya ka rena rebe resana yona ye re bonago gore rena le yona ye nyane kabo ripana ke batho ba nkano reng ba berekile felo go tee go swana le Wits go swana lebo Catharine lebo Ben Smith. Batho bago swana lebo Ben Smith ba be ba rata go soma lebo rangwane ibile ba kile ba dula dikgwedi ba bona gore dilo tse ba swanetse godi arogana le setshaba. Ben Smith o ile aya go nyaka bus are rwala rele 65 le batho ba new Jerusalem raya Wits rena le baithuti babangwe bare hlaloesetsa gore se ke se. rebe rena le batho ba mafasemg abo Australia le Arica re lebeletse letsa bo rena mo Africa gore ke dife re lebeletse ka maemo a tsona. Le mowe re holegilego.*
- **Translator:** I would like to be short; what they are saying is that we never had any clue about the impotence of the artefacts or other things until recently when we had the likes of the Wits University, the student and the lectures came here where Ben Smith and others who led the team came here to collect some staff and came to show us what we have been doing and why we choose to take these things. They came here on a bus, collected many of the community members, and took us to the centre where they displayed and had a chance to

explain how and why they are like this, and they also had a chance to view other international work like the Asians in terms of how they are living.

Indigenous communities know their objects and preservation methods, so they help a lot and even share their knowledge with researchers. They should be involved every step of the way regarding museums and curations.



Fig 18. Interiors of the current project

Distong's place in the lives and work of the staff members and the community

- *Part 5: It is a place where I can grow and learn, a place where I can do research and a place where I can get an understanding of past cultures, so the museum means a lot to me, and it is my passion.*
- *Part 6: To me, we are making cultures speak in one voice even if they are different; when I am at the museum, I see cultures that are represented in the collections of different groups create a milking pot of cultures speaking in one voice.*

Community answers

- ***bale baka Ditsong babo bolokelo ba dilo tsa setso bo supa eng go lena.***
- ***Interviewee:*** *re bona gole bohlokwa re lebeletse bana ba banyane gore dilo tseo ditlabego di dirilwe mo badi tseya badi beya kadi museum gore bana ba ba kgone go kwisisa setso sabo bona ibile re lebeletse gore ke sesengwe se thlolelago bana ba rena mesomo go swana le thute ye e tsenego kadi kolong e bitswago tourism. Kamo sekolong ba kgona go tseya*

bana goba isa di country tse dingwe ledi museum ba fihla ba bona se ke eng baena le barutisi ba bona ibile re bona ele setso sese botse kudu.

- *Translator: that is a very good thing that we do have some museums around looking at how Ditsong works. It does preserve our culture for future generations, and we hope it will create job opportunities for those interested in museums and culture.*
- *It has special for me because history is there, very rich history of various cultures but some of us we won't be able to preserve if it wasn't for Ditsong and other museums; they play a crucial role in collecting whatever they have gathered together because there is a lot that has been left because our lives are changing so if it wasn't for museums we wouldn't know there was these objects of pottery and hunting.*

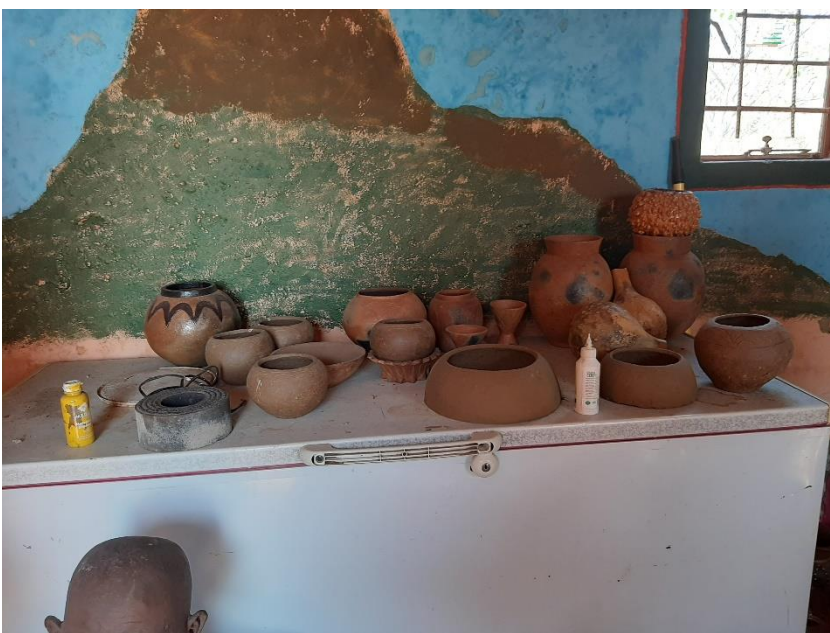


Fig 19. Pottery pots found in the community like those found in the museum.

The dying knowledge of undocumented Indigenous Knowledge in the BMS communities and the important role Ditsong plays in preserving heritage.

- *e rata gore setso sa bo lena se boloke bjang ka kua gadi national museum.*
- *Interviewer: rebe reka rata gore kamokgwa o a tlilego mo re hlathlana le yena le yena are hlahla, rebe reno kgopela lego rata gore kagore rena le batho bao ba tsebago baena le tsebo ka sela le sele go swana le batho bago betla, batho bago loga, elego sethebe, ba gona bakgekolo modimo osare file bona. Nna kgopelo yaka ke gore moithuti wabo rena akare geabe a setse a kwele gore kua ketswago gona gona le batho baelego gore dilo tsa bona di gona tseo baka di somisago mara ka baka lagore gaba tsebe gore naa gere setse re dirile rekafa bo mang ba kgona gore tsentshetsa letsono, kebe kere gokaba bjang gere setse re boledisane le baba golo gotswa masepala goba national gagone gore bakase re direle museum omo botsana reno tseba gore retlare gere dirile megopo goba ditulo re tsebe gore*

redi bolelela gona. Batho bagotsa mafelong a kgole batle ba bona dilo tse di botsana tsa gotswa Thabana nthlaneng le rena ba kgone gore rekela gore letseno le tsene bana ba rena ba kgone go humana dijo.

- *Translator: what she is saying is that we have many skills when coming to building, like we have various wood covers around here, those who know-how to work with wood and those women who can weave the traditional staff like those we can put seoka or traditional staff in general. Our shortage is that we don't have somewhere to put those things we need sort of a museum where we can put our staff there so that we can advertise and benefit from our staff.*

The importance of indigenous knowledge holders in the preservation of indigenous artefacts and indigenous lands

- *It is very important because some other artefacts indicate how things are changing, how our elderly people used tools and objects that we no longer deem useful and some we end up throwing away and in future, our grandchildren won't be able to know those cultural and useful objects such as objects for cooking and other things so it is best to have something for future than educating future generations to know and show their objects our grandparents were using. E.g., using clay for pots. The best way is to preserve it so that we might have some objects, as we have a different level of living.*

se a nyakago gole botsa lego le butsisa kegore naa le a tseba gore tsebo ya lena ya dilo tsa sekgale e sireleditswe mo molaong wa naga ibile e sireleditse ka bohwa le setso le melao yemengwe yeo eleng gore e tshireletsa tsa setso naa.

- ***Interviewee:*** *ee, rea dumela gore dilo tse tsabo rena di tshireleditswe ka gore rebe re kopana le batho ba gotswa Australia, France le gona bjale motho wa gotswa Mahikeng otlile re fana tsebo. Remo molaong ka baka la gore rena mo Makgaba re somisana le national, re ipotsa gore re tshireletsegile mo eleng gore rebe rere mo gongwe resana le thlathla goba mo re bonago bosaedi gwasana le go remiwa ga dithlare tsa meetse ke gano mowe rerego naa ekaba molao wa rena okae ka gore go swanetse goba le baeta pele ba dire gore dithlare tse diseke di remiwa kagore re molaong.*
- *Translator: she says that we do agree that our culture is protected nationally and through various institutions by the likes of those who came here from overseas and Wits University, who are strictly and strongly support us to protect our artefacts and culture, although there is still an ongoing process of cutting off the trees where we still question ourselves is this; a law that we think is protecting us and our natural things where is it when there is killing of living trees.*

- *IKS Holder continues: To be able to access our information at a more accessible place as the community is far from the museum and also to document our knowledge in the community for future generations*

The understanding of cultural history among the community

kwisiso ya lena katsa setso le gore letswa kae kase gologolo ke eng.

- ***Interviewee:** goya ka kwisiso ya rena bama 1960.rekwisisa gore go lema mola ka setso sa bagologolo, pula ebe e hlokege. Bogobe bo rebo jang, ge pula esego boa hlokega. Bjalo ka setso boa lemiwa. Batho baba gologolo babe ba tseya mabela baa beye a dula mengwagangwaga. Ge setse pula esego, bana ba bona gaba robale ka tlala. Baya mola sale ba beya mabele bafa bana ba bona baja. Rena dilo tse rebe resa bone gore di bohlokwa mara gonabjale re kgona go bona gore di bohlokwa ka gore mesomo gaego re bolaya ke tlala. Geke gopola ka 1985 gobe go jewa bogobe bobo yellow barego ke maroyi ebe goena le thlaelelo ya dijo mara ono bona gore go lema mola go bohlokwa nkabe re tseba rebe rekase bolaye ke tlala ge gobe go lemiwa kagore lehumo letswa tshemong.*
- ***Translator:** she says she understands that currently, we are not practising farming, but others still do practice farming and looking at how we survive when coming to food, a long time ago, our grandparents used to practice farming, and they had their own way of preserving the food for future, but now because we are only looking at the shops where we can buy food specifically when it is coming from maize it is something different that we can say looking back at the time of our grandparents, it was better because they knew how to preserve the food for future, but now they stopped that and we have to go and buy even when we had many ways to preserve food without having any difficulties. They could even quote the times when food was very scarce in the sense that people had to eat yellow maize because of a food shortage.*

The strategies the museum has put in place to ensure artefacts represent the people.

- ***Part 1:** We strive by all means to ensure that Ditsong Museum is accessible to all people, either digitally or by people coming to the museum and making them aware of indigenous objects.*
- ***Part 2:** Since the establishment of the Museum in 1896, a collection of indigenous objects was collected. Objects are still acquired according to guidelines in the Museum's Collection Management Policy. After the end of apartheid, in 1994, the Museum specifically identified so-called black communities to donate household objects for exhibition purposes.*
- ***Part 3:** Through the engagement of curators who are responsible for this subject in a matter of this regard. They engage with the community and have strategies to be able to collect and*

engage with the indigenous people of South Africa and indigenising with they have in the community.

- *Part 4: So, we don't have any formal strategies put in place, we are currently working to put in place now only we do through anthropological curator Sandele Sepela. What she is trying to do is to take objects that were taken out of historical context and correct it from communities, and that doesn't exclude indigenous knowledge, which also includes the uses and purposes of the objects. So basically, the purpose is to rewrite or represent objects that were taken out of context.*
- *Part 5: I do research on these cultures, so with all their objects and artefacts all that they use, I study them to understand pre-historical cultures. When it comes to strategies, the Heritage Act that is the most important thing that I follow so, basically, in doing research.*
- *Part 6: We are using research; most of them, we don't have information in terms of what it was used for, its significance, its prominence, so we are in embarking in research to ensure that we capture that object because if the object because if the object in the museum doesn't have information its useless because you don't know anything about it.*
- *Part 7: I will speak since I am here in Manchester in the UK, I will speak to what I am doing now, I am representing Ditsong Museums of South Africa, and I am here to look at the South African collection, and we are doing in collaboration with the Manchester museum, we are doing a comparative study on what we have as Ditsong and what Manchester has, and we are forging a co-creation, co-production with the source communities so at the and I speak of the anthropology collection which is an ethnographic collection, we deal with a lot of people and the collection and the objects that are collected speak to people so right now as part of decolonisation we are dealing with the source communities, when I come back, I will be going to Kwa Zulu Natal to inquire about the bead work that we Ditsong have so are moving towards co-curation and co-production of the collection so that obviously will extend to the purpose of co-curation is so that we can incorporate into our data bases so that the voices of the source community or the real owners are reflected and these will be extended to exhibitions and the different displays whereby it won't be just us as curators as the museums having authority or voice but now we are going to the community. It will also speak to intangible conservation whereby it speaks to the handling of artefacts, the re-organisation in the process of the anthropology collection process in re-organising on how these objects are currently stored so the issue of storage, the issue of handling and us re-organising the whole collection, we are collaborating with the communities, so that is part of our decolonisation strategies also how we write. How we do research so that the community is involved and will be involved in every part and every step.*

What challenges does the museum face?

- *Part 1: Mostly, the challenges that we do get is mostly people not knowing about the museum. They hadn't had information about the museum. The lack of participation from the public and communities*
- *Part 2: With an almost zero budget, research projects are limited. Do as much as possible with as little as possible.*
- *Part 3: A lack of funds to be able to run some of the program which are put in place. They are a lot of communities that are in the state, so it is difficult for them to get to the museum because of the distance, and it is difficult for us to get to them.*
- *Part 4: Lack of resources, we cannot reach communities that we would like to reach. We are limited in what we can do. Monetary resources, human resources and from universities. We also rely on students who have interests about museums to as there is a lack of interest in such fields.*
- *Part 5: Most of the challenges we face are monetary, with lockdown and all that is happening now. We are struggling. Not getting enough in the museum, so is that kind of thing. We are a parastatal institution, so most of the government funding is for our salaries. The rest of our income is made from museum tours and exhibitions. Infrastructure and digitalisation of museums*
- *Part 6: I think the challenges we face is having a lack of people to come to the museum or, let me put it this way like having exhibitions or programs that just don't attract people or that people don't know often leads to fewer visitors, that means we doing something wrong or not targeting the right group. So, I think these are the challenges we face in exhibitions; we need to ensure it brings more people. As a museum, it is also in our plans to bring more people and attract relevant communities.*
- *Another challenge we face is funding, as we depend on most of the museum income from school groups who come to visit the museum and during the pandemic, those programs stopped. It impacted on our public progress, so it means we don't go out and have outreaches in communities as public gatherings were not permitted.*
- *As a public institution, sometimes, we don't have access to enough funds to achieve our goals, such as setting up temporary exhibitions or cultural events and to improve the relevancy of our collections. A lack of interest on museums poses as another challenge as even back then, they didn't have diplomas and degrees that are geared towards the museum studies. You find that you do a primary degree, maybe in anthropology, history or archaeology, and you later have to finish to an advance level to specialize in museums and*

most students want a course they can do for 4 years, and today few students are interested in museum studies.

- Part 7: In term decolonisation, it is unique to Ditsong but on a national level and involving the community. It is not easy to do our work without resources. E.g. Financial and human resources

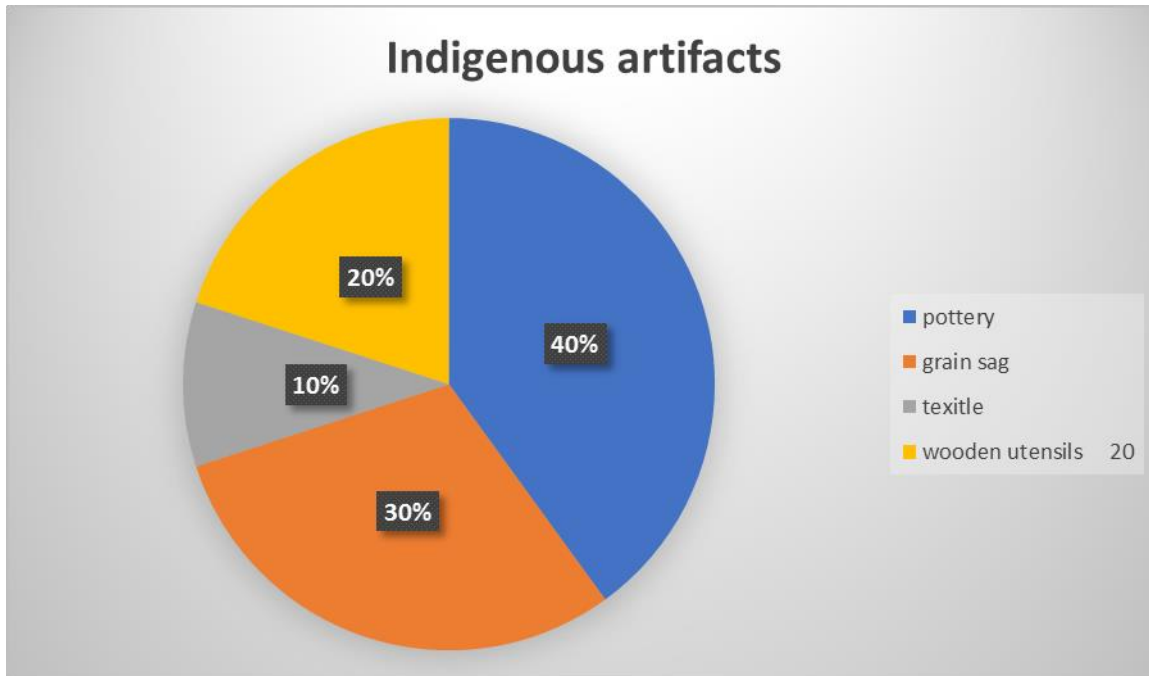


Fig 20. Pie chart of material culture held by DNCH

Based on the observation of the researcher, a lot of the Bahananawa artefacts consists of pottery, the museum holds 30+ artefacts collection from the museum, and the majority are pottery and grain bags.





Fig 21. Top left : Motsane Getrude Seabela

Top Right Julia Montlha

Bottom Left Mr Nelulavhani Mashudu

Bottom Right: Terence Nkosa





Fig 22. Artefacts collected and bequest from the Bahanawa Community by Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History





Fig 23. More material culture collected from Bahanawa Community





Fig 24. Bahanawa cultural material goods found in Ditsong

Community answers about their challenges as a source of community of the museum and their indigenous identity.

- *challenge ekase hlokege gobane re tshwenya ke taba ya madulo meetse le network kage ba tsoga kgole goya meberekong gobsane resena madulo le marobalo mo baka tsogang mo kgwauswi le rena.*
- *Translator: the common challenge that we are facing today, and we believe that it must come to an end. First is a network, and it leads to communication breakdown; the other thing is accommodation and the water challenge.*
- *You know I appreciate what museums are doing because they preserve our culture, our heritage, things of our past, things of the now are safe for future generations. They way they do things I do appreciate it although I have this sour feeling about taking certain things that belong to the culture, e.g. Taking bones from the traditional healer by being manipulated to give to museums where else it does not have to be like that, these bones have been collected in different ways and are used to communicate the future, to help heal sickness and stuff, and they are no longer going to perform their duties and now in the community is still going to need them.*



Fig 25. Community project building new randovels

The researcher learns that community do not trust anyone with their information, and they share little information. The gatekeepers of indigenous knowledge have passed away with the knowledge, and only the young generations are left with the object.

Did you know that your living knowledge is protected by the National Heritage Act and the IKS Act which aims to protect indigenous communities from exploitation by institutions and researchers?

- *IKS Holder and tour guide: Yes, that's why we are hands on with every research project that is conducted in the community. We've also began to build a information collection centre initiative to document previously documented and projects done by different institutions. E.g. UNISA, University of Wits and Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History*
- *For me, I do know our rights are protected, we do know our rights are protected but not for everyone, not even for myself. I do not know much, I think there is still a lot to be done for sort of an awareness sort of educating people that they know that they have protection so that they don't have to hand over their objects to researchers without fully understanding what they are going to do with them.*

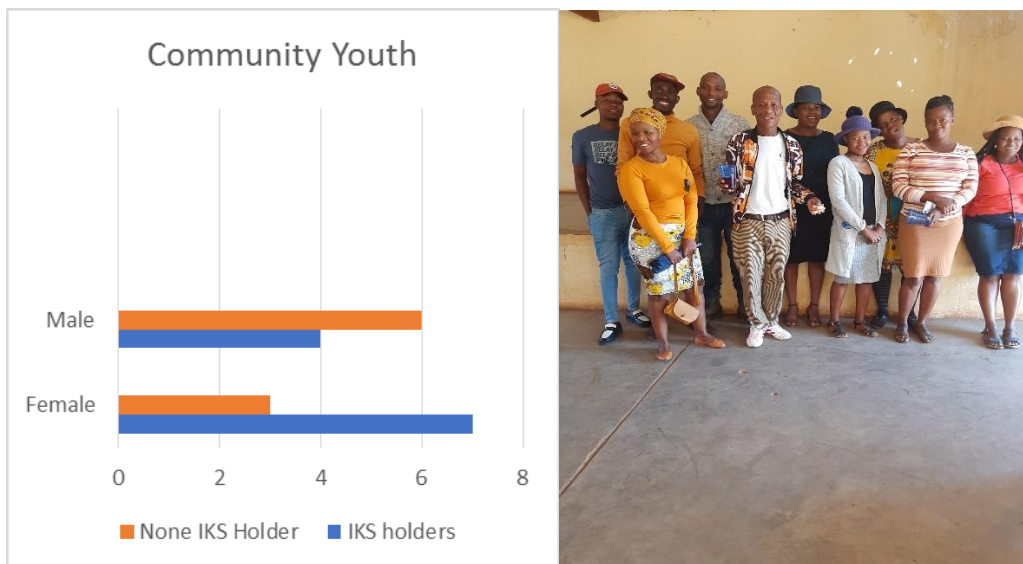


Fig. 26. Bar graph of IKS holders among the local youth (Left) Bahanawa youth (Right)

This is the demographic of the youth the researcher has interviewed at the Bahananawa tribal office. Most of the indigenous questions the researcher asked they could not answer, and mostly females knew a little about their history and traditional culture.

Chapter six

Conclusion and Recommendation

This research provided a critical observation of South African policies created for preserving and protecting museum artefacts. The researcher realises how well-written and protected indigenous peoples are in our policies; however, the problem lies in the lack of awareness of these policies in indigenous communities, and neither are the policies translated into indigenous languages. The policy makers and government organisations such as the heritage agency mentioned that they can only provide awareness at a national level and that the responsibility of municipalities and district to create awareness campaigns about these policies in the languages suited for the communities.

The researcher realised the importance of co-curation based on a variety of factors, such as that many artefacts are dated incorrectly due to the objects being left for a long time without being taken care of or researched and that results in, for example, the artefact being dated on the date the curator or ethnologist started researching on it.



The artefact was dated 2009 but has been in the museum for many years without being curated.

Another reason why the co-curation of artefacts is necessary is to find the origin of an artefact, such as the name of the artist or where in the community it was collected.



This artefact dates back to 1939 and was donated by the Native Affairs in Pretoria. It is just like the previous ones from the Bahananawa community, but it is unclear when and how it was collected. To find out, every single object must be reviewed and checked on the data base and the register, and it might take one year to compile.





There is a need to communicate before deciding on repatriating artefacts as museums. Communities might not even desire some artefacts to return to them due to them being dated or having unnecessary trauma or history to their culture.

The curator of the anthropological collection gave an example of a crocodile skin they previously had on display in the museum. She says the skin represented a process of initiation in the community and felt it should be returned to the community, and after consultation with the community, they told her that the skin is no longer part of their culture and no longer needed it.

The importance of digitalisation of artefacts



Fig 27. Inventory Registry books of collections in the Ditsong National Museum of Cultural History

These two images are some of the registries of every artefact in the anthropological collections; going through it can be very difficult to read, and the paper is slowly decaying. There is a serious need capture and co-curate indigenous artefacts in digital platforms to preserve the dates and even the history of some artefacts.

Documentation accuracy is the key to determining museums effectiveness and should include inputs of communities' oral traditions in both documentations of archives and collections viewed by the public. The researcher recommends that it should become a mandatory practice to preserve and accurately contextualise collections in the museums, and it will help accurately classify the collections in different databases, which are *Artlogic*, *Artwork Archive*, *Catloglt*, *Past Prefect Museum Software*, *Vernon cms*, *e-Hive*, amongst others (ICOM, 2020).

Communities should be allowed to interact with the collections in storerooms and include them in the development of the curatorial practice of exhibitions involving them. It is important for museums to decolonise their minds when dealing with collections and include the communities to expand indigenous communities' interpretation of nature, culture, and history.

The authority and hierarchy of displaying and curating indigenous collections should be re-examined and allow a collaborative exchange in the documentation and exhibitions of collections. This is the responsibility of both communities and museums, communities should acknowledge they have the right to request access to their collections, and museums should always strive to involve communities.

The researcher also recommends communities in the process of renaming acquisition cards and catalogue cards to represent their indigenous knowledge in artefacts. Culture is constantly evolving; thus, researchers and curators cannot represent the communities correctly without involving and consulting with the communities.

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