

# MANIFESTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE OLD TOWNS OF KENYAN COASTAL REGION

## Abstract

The study examined the current manifestation of intangible and tangible cultural heritage of old towns of Lamu and Mombasa in the coastal region of Kenya, with a view of evaluating management efforts by heritage managers in the region. An exploratory research design with a mixed method approach was used to generate new ideas and assumptions regarding how cultural heritage is manifested. A sample size of 110 participants from both towns was selected through multistage cluster sampling, out of which 15 heritage managers, 40 community household leaders and 55 community elders were selected using purposive and snowball techniques. The study utilized semi structured interview guides, photography and observation as data collection methods. Descriptive analysis, content analysis- specifically attribution and designation analysis were used to analyze data. The study established that cultural heritage in the old towns is manifested through symbols, values and artefacts and architecture. Among the most evident manifestations in both old towns are in the form of wedding ceremonies, burial rituals, and limited cultural festivals especially during key religious practices. Manifested architectural heritage undergoing shocks is restored for tourism purposes. However, intangible heritage is preserved, not for tourism purposes but as part of local's way of life and as dictated by cultural values such as religion. Most organizations concerned with management of cultural heritage recognize its importance and have adapted reconstruction and restoration methods of tangible heritage especially old architecture. Among preferred recommendations were that tourism as the main economic activity in the region should be developed to benefit cultural heritage. The article advocates promoting resilience of heritage through gainful economic activities such as tourism to promote its posterity.

Keywords: Manifestation, Cultural heritage, sustainable development

## **1. Introduction**

Most ethnographers ascertain that Cultural heritage is an essential tool for sustainable development. Communities living in proximity of heritage places have been prompted on the benefits of cultural heritage as a stimulator of sustainable development whereby, resources and products related to culture and heritage are used as means for development. This has been achieved by using cultural heritage places and objects as sources of income generation and sense of community belongingness.

Community participation in cultural and heritage management processes, whether through entrepreneurship ventures such as tourism or ownership, is a way of implementing sustainable development. This approach of community participation has long been advocated as an integral part of sustainable community development. For example, there is a correlation between community participation in heritage ownership and management and pro-poor tourism (PPT). Connecting Pro-poor tourism and cultural heritage, Apleni (2012) states that Pro-poor tourism interventions aim to increase the benefits for the poor from heritage tourism and ensure that tourism growth contributes to the wellbeing of the surrounding local communities' heritage places and hence, community development. Development is catalyzed by cultural heritage in many African counties. Eboreime (2019) states that heritage sites in Africa offer a unique opportunity for community empowerment through integrated rural development, and it also has the potential to mobilize resources for cultural tourism for the benefit of communities. A case in point is that South Africa, through the National Heritage Resources Act, has been a considerable realization of the development of communities from cultural heritage (SAHRA, 2014). An excellent example of such a case is the Ismangaliso world heritage site, where community development is at the heart of its management system. Such best practices help communities to realize both economic and non-economic benefits of cultural heritage use. Cultural heritage can provide opportunities for social and cultural beneficiation and sustainable development. Communities are realizing that cultural Heritage can benefit them in many ways. The benefits may outweigh most industrial sectors than currently perceived. For example, Macheke (2013) states that communities tend to derive a number of benefits from the cultural and heritage-related sites such as economic, cultural, educational, social and environmental benefits. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), an entity that deals with cultural heritage policy worldwide, states that cultural heritage helps protect local and national identity and pride. It increases well-being, especially when there is a specific place that they feel deeply connected to. These benefits are even outweighed by the economic benefits of cultural heritage such as increased tourism and local jobs related to destinations culture and heritage.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Concepts of Culture and Cultural Heritage**

Cultural products derived from heritage or some form of legacy that denotes cultural objects and images. Therefore, the concepts of cultural tourism cannot be complete without underpinning the

terms culture and cultural heritage. This is because; most cultural products fall in the categorized cultural sector. To begin with, culture and cultural heritage are interrelated. Researchers such as Lustig and Koester (2014), Hofstede (2011), Spencer-Oatey (2012) define culture as something that can be touched or the way people behave. Nonetheless, Salzaar (2016) reports that the word 'culture' has multiple connotations in that it is used to describe the means, the process, and the state of people. It includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, moral law, customs, and many other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Taylor, 1924). Goeldner& Ritchie (2012) describe culture as the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of the destination population. In many societies, and especially in Africa, people are defined, directed and in many ways governed by their culture. In its charter for African Cultural Renaissance, the African Union states that any human community is necessarily governed by rules and principles based on culture; *"and that culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive linguistic, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of the society or a social group which encompasses art, literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs"* (AU, 2010). UNESCO (2012) states that the above set of cultural features are intangible cultural heritage elements. But as Skeates (2000) notes, whether tangible or intangible, heritage can be defined as the succession of the past, what has been left behind, or something inherited from the past.

It is therefore important to note that cultural heritage, being an expression of identities, must be respected as it defines who we are based on our valuable past. **The most important element of cultural heritage is its ownership and how the owners manifest their heritage. Communities are deemed the owners of cultural heritage, how they manifest it may vary across communities but ultimately, the levels of manifestation especially for intangible elements may be the same.**

#### 2.1.1. Manifestations of Cultural Heritage

From the definitions given in the foregoing sections, it can be inferred that culture is a system of symbols, customs, ideas and feelings that are constantly being negotiated and redefined by members of a society as they contact and communicate with one another. It is this dynamism of culture that made Crapo (2012) states that culture change over time. In this sense, cultural change refers to a shift in the traits of a given culture. However, even in the face of changes and

its dynamism, cultural heritage manifests itself in various ways such as symbols, heroes, rituals and values (Figure .1).

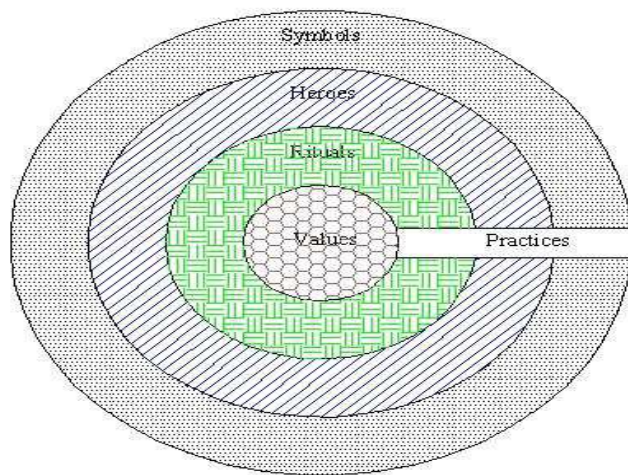


Figure .1 Levels of manifestation of cultural heritage (Hofstede, 2012)

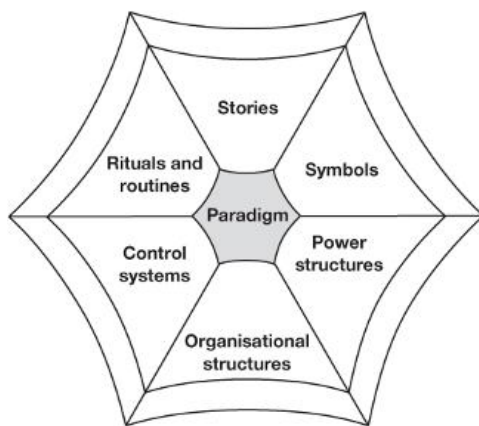
According to Hofstede (2012), *symbols* can be in the form of words, pictures, objects, and gestures which are understood by a group of people who have similar symbiotic characteristics. They are the basis of culture. For example, within the Mijikenda community of coastal Kenya, the performance of ‘Chakacha’ is the symbol of their traditional feminine heritage.

*Heroes* are persons or characters, who may have lived in the past or present. In most traditional African cultures, heroes may be fictitious characters who are adapted as children narratives and serve as educational models for a good deed. In Kenya, there are different examples of heroes based on different tribal associations. For example, the Mijikenada have their own MnyaziwaMenza also known as Mekatilili, a female leader who led a battle against the British colonial rule.

*Rituals* refer to a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order. Each ritual has its meanings and symbolisms. In most African ceremonies, rituals have continued to be used in weddings, funerals, healing and childbirth. As they are known to be resistant to changes, Erdogu (2019) states that rituals, act as a symbolic medium for creating and maintaining social ties and dependencies to the community. For example, in the Maasai community, the ritual of sharing meat in every ceremony is believed to be an important event which brings the participants closer to God.

**Values** are the core of any culture including the good/evil, right/wrong and natural/unnatural. Many other values remain unconscious to those who hold it. This is because; some values are cherished by some communities while they may not be very important to other communities. To many communities, they define what is right and wrong.

**Cultural practices**, according to Hofstede (2011) are a shared perception of how people routinely behave in a culture. The practices could be complemented by the objects, events, activities, social groupings and language that participants use, produce and reproduce in the context of making meaning in everyday life. On the other hand, Johnson and Scholes (1992) developed a cultural web analysis (fig .2) that many use to describe the cultural norms and practices of an organization for better structural management.



**Figure 2 Paradigm Shift: Source: Adapted from Johnson, Whittington, and Scholes (2016)**

Using web analysis, Johnson and Scholes illustrate how the web can be used as a tool for analyzing and altering assumptions that drive organizational culture. Like Hofstede (2011), Johnson and Scholes list various elements that are manifested in an organization and that may form a paradigm shift to the way organizations are understood and managed. However, in a cultural heritage management scenario, cultural web elements are also manifested in a cultural heritage environment and can be used to highlight specific beliefs, practices and symbols of a community. Contrariwise, the web analysis is mostly used to understand and alter an organization's assumptions and working norms. In the case of this paper, however, this may differ as there may be no intentions of altering how the elements are manifested but to appreciate

those elements, determine whether they have been altered or gone through changes and ascertain alternative management strategies.

### **2.1.2. Management of cultural heritage**

The management of cultural heritage has been entirely influenced by western countries. In fact, terms such as cultural mapping, cultural auditing and cultural systems stem from organizations mandated to oversee the management, preservation, conservation, and safeguards heritage. These efforts have been enforced through outlining principles and practices of cultural heritage as seen in the proposed cultural heritage charter by international bodies such as UNESCO, ICCROM and ICOMOS (Wijesuria, 2003; Nodoro, 2004; Mumma, 2005; Bryne, 2008; Jopela, 2011). These forms of cultural heritage management system normally tend to observe certain forms of *modus operandi* that have been embraced by cultural enterprises throughout the world (Carman, 2002). This often comes with some limitations in that heritage attraction are situated in different destinations with varying socio-economic, ecological and cultural environments. Even while Smith (2006) applauds these management principles as they it defines and approves what should constitute heritage, the cultural managers recognize that the nature and the meaning of heritage should be left to the actual owners- who are the local and who are deemed as the actual caretakers (Smith, 2006).

Cultural heritage scholars agree that recent cultural heritage management efforts began in the 19th century movements. (Kristiansen, (1989; Carman, 2015, 2015; du Cros&Mckercher, 2015 (Smith, 2006). Such efforts include the practice of caring for the past or certain aspects of the past that has a deep history in different societies in the world. As a result, terms such as cultural mapping which involves the identification and recording of an area's indigenous cultural resources for the purposes of social, economic and cultural development have taken root when it comes to identification of cultural destinations which manifest unique cultural element. Other terms such as Cultural Resources Management (CRM) which is the vocation and practice of managing cultural resources has taken root in archeologically rich destinations. CRM is mainly concerned with the investigation of sites with archaeological potential, the preservation and interpretation of historic sites and artifacts, and the culture of indigenous people. CRM is important to destination with rich architectural or historical sites such as the old coastal towns of

Kenya. The key factor in CRM is in fact interpretation of those sites together with their inclusive artifacts and culture. This is because, planning for, developing and managing authentic cultural destinations must require an assessment of what the residents feel are important in historical terms and an assessment of these resources from a tourism perspective using reliable formation (du Cros & Mckercher, 2015).

However, there may arise issues such what tourists perceive as historically important versus what the locals feel it is important. This issues as seen by Mumma, (2005); Musonda, (2005); Jopela, (2011) and Ndoro & Wijesuriya, (2015) relate to are more evident when tourists may associate historical practices with backwardness. This has led to heritage managers preferring the use of cliché terms such as 'indigenous' or 'local' instead (Mumma, 2005; Jopela, 2011). Others have challenged the notions of what is 'traditional or what is the real heritage. For example, the coastal towns of Kenya have over time experienced long term visitation by traders such as Indians and Chinese. This is coupled by the fact that the old towns were also part of Portuguese, Omani Arabs, German and British past colonies. This means there are possible disruptions that caused a interruption in transmission of "original" oral traditions, arts and past knowledge and as Hobsbawm, (1983) Ranger, (1983) and Cocks (2006) have noted, this might have led to the introduction of new practices considered to be tradition in some instances. In this study, the term 'tradition' will be adapted from the Oxford English dictionary (2010) to mean 'a long-established custom or belief that has been passed on from one generation to another'. Cultural heritage system has been used in this study to portray a form of heritage management system which is long established and practiced within communities aiming at controlling access, use, maintenance and transmission of material and immaterial aspects of surroundings that are important and valued by them and used by other industries such as tourism.

This meaning of CHMS has been adapted from Mumma (2004) and Ndoro (2004) who have asserted that the term can be used to mean a form of cultural heritage management system that has its roots in a community's daily practices, activities, and traditions that are directed towards protecting and conserving material and immaterial aspects of their surroundings considered important and valuable, thus transferred from one generation to another. This form of management system has long establishments, particularly in Africa and Asia. As noted by Ndoro & Pwiti, (2001), one of the long-held misconceptions is the belief that prior to the introduction of the western influenced cultural heritage management systems, there was no

system for heritage management in pre-colonial Africa and Asia. While this may be a misconception, it is good to note that a vast majority of African heritage was orally transmitted and the presence of sites, images and landscapes that are known to have been destroyed during colonial wars may prove that traditional forms of heritage management systems existed.

Modern heritage management methods and systems may have a hand in the success in the management of some heritage assets. However, the methods may also have disregarded or abandoned traditional oriented management systems which may be more effective in dealing with shocks accompanying cultural heritage. As Wijesuria, (2003) notes, the westernized heritage management system may have facilitated the destruction of important cultural heritage materials and practices that were deemed as dangerous, outdated or harmful or pagan. This was either due to a failure of the colonizers to understand the meaning and importance of such practices or a deliberate attempt to destroy practices that formed a basis for resistance against colonial domination (Bwasiri, 2011).

### **3. Methodology**

This study utilized exploratory research design. The exploratory design was enhanced by conducting a cross-sectional survey that allowed the researcher to look at numerous characteristics of respondents at once while also analyzing their predominant characteristics. Generally, an exploratory method is used on a research problem when few or no earlier studies refer to or rely upon to predict an outcome (Creswell, 2014). In addition, the exploratory design was enhanced by conducting a cross-sectional survey that allowed the researcher to look at numerous characteristics of respondents at once while also analyzing their predominant characteristics. A cross-sectional survey involves looking at people who differ on one key characteristic at one specific point in time. According to Mertens (2012), the researcher collected qualitative data that allows the respondents to describe what is meaningful to them than being restricted to predetermined categories.

Additionally, cross-sectional surveys provide information about what is happening at the present moment in the current population. In this study, respondents differed in age and experiences. The target group involved elders and leaders of communities who are expected to have deeper influence and knowledge on matters pertaining to cultural heritage. Since this is exploratory

research, the cross-sectional survey helped gather preliminary data to support further research in manifestation of heritage across different target population.

### **3.1. Study Setting**

The research was conducted in the old towns of Mombasa and Lamu. They were purposively selected because of their historical prominence and their ability to attract cultural tourists. Being Kenya's oldest town and second-largest city, Mombasa has had its share of external governance other than the native Mijikenda people. For example, it has been subjected to Oman, Portuguese and British rule over the decades it has been in existence. Consequently, one experiences a touch of Portuguese décor, a taste of Indian and Arab cuisine, an air of British courtesy, all wrapped up in an authentic feeling of the Swahili hospitality.

The Old town of Lamu, on the other hand, is in itself a masterpiece of human genius. It is one of Kenya's oldest towns which has seen continuous settlement for decades and it is attributed by eminent Swahili researchers as the cradle of Swahili civilization. UNESCO indicates that, Lamu county is known as the home to some of the best preserved Swahili architecture in the world. But the small archipelago exhibits the distinctive but rare African cultural heritage that is a mixture of Swahili, Arab, Indian and other Asian heritage. In fact, as Rotham (2002) affirms, the county of Lamu boasts of its inimitable architecture against a background of splendid ocean view that is a result of cultural influences that have come together over many centuries from Europe, Arabia, and India. Owing to its status as a World Heritage Site inscribed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Lamu has all the luster of a successfully well maintained heritage site that attracts tourists yearly. Its inscription as a world heritage under criterion ii, iv and vi means denotes its importance as a cultural hub. The different criteria mean that Lamu's architecture and urban structure validate the cultural influences that have come together over several hundred years from all over the world which have utilized traditional Swahili technique, represents a significant cultural and economic phase in the history of the region, and it is a significant center for education in Islamic and Swahili culture as it continues to attract scholars, tourists and religious visitors.

Other than the coastal strip that forms the clear coastal beaches along the two old cities, the different cultures highlight the complex yet, alluring facet of the county's heritage that has continued to attract considerable numbers of local and international tourists. While the study was interested in cultural heritage, which, as discussed above, consists of built and living heritage, the

study noted that built heritage invariably acts as the host of the community that depicts a living cultural heritage. Therefore, the study focused on cultural heritage sites in the old towns of Mombasa and Lamu.

### 3.2. Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure

#### 3.1.1 Target Population

The study population comprised community leaders, community households, and local heritage site managers from Old Town Mombasa and Lamu Old Town. The total target population was 470 respondents as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Distribution of the Study Population**

Heritage sites	Area	No of community leaders	No of community households	No. of local heritage site managers	Total pop	Source of information
<b>Old town Mombasa</b>	180 acres	32	225	9	266	Tourism Report (2017); Department of Tourism, Mombasa County
<b>Lamu old town</b>	39.9 Acres	23	175	6	204	Lamu County Integrated Plan 2013- 2017; Lamu Old Town Management Plan 2013- 2017

#### 3.1.2 Sample Size

Multi stage cluster sampling was used to decrease the extent of geographic dispersion within the two old cities. The target group of the respondents that was selected through multistage cluster sampling was the community leaders, community households and the local heritage site managers which were regarded as the unit of analysis for the study. This target group was deemed appropriate because it was regarded to have possible knowledge regarding the benefits of cultural heritage and management of heritage resources.

Multistage cluster sampling was firstly used to divide respondents into three (3) clusters, and then from each cluster, the respondents were selected, thereby totaling one hundred and ten (110) respondents.

Snow ball sampling was used to acquire the sample size. Snowball sampling involves a non-random sample collected by interviewing someone and then asking that person for suggestions about other people (Spickard, 2017). The researcher interviewed 55 community leaders, where 32 were from Old town Mombasa and 23 from Lamu old town. The same was also done for the local heritage site managers. The researcher interviewed 15 local heritage site managers, where 9 were from Old town Mombasa and 6 from Lamu old town.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select community household's respondents. This technique uses the researcher's judgment in determining cases, or cases are selected with a specific purpose in mind (Altinay, Paraskevas & Jang, 2015). Cluster sampling and purposive sampling was used to sample community households, snowball sampling was used to sample community leaders, and snowball sampling was used to sample site managers supported by purposive.

Multistage sampling was used to sample

**Table 2: Sample Size**

<b>STUDY SITE:</b>	<b>No of community leaders</b>	<b>No of community households</b>	<b>No. of local heritage site managers</b>	<b>Sampling</b>	
Old town Mombasa	180 acres	32	22	9	Tourism Report (2017); Department of Tourism, Mombasa County

Lamu old town	39.9 Acres	23	18	6	Lamu County Integrated Plan 2013-2017; Lamu Old Town Management Plan 2013- 2017
<b>Total sample used</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>110</b>

### 3.1.3 Data Collection Instruments

In the study, data was collected primarily using interview guide on community leaders, community households, and local heritage site managers from Old Town Mombasa and Lamu Old Town of local cultural heritage sites and participant observation.

The researcher conducted interviews that involved face-to-face interviews of the research respondents. The interviews were semi-structured and were used to collect qualitative data. A semi structured interview guide was used to generate data on key issues of the study and to keep participants engaged. Although the groups shared similar questions, the answers were varied depending on the demographic characteristics, occupation and knowledge of subjects at hand. For example, Local heritage site managers and guides were more knowledgeable and in most cases, the interviewer did not have to explain various concepts on the other hand, Heads of households seemed to have engaging knowledge on their cultural heritage a fact which the researcher appreciated especially when assessing the shocks that the shocks and pressures that the heritage has experienced. A total of 110 respondents were interviewed. Every interview session was recorded using an audio recorder for clarity and further transcription and interpretation. Each interview session lasted for approximately 30 minutes. This data collection method was purposely chosen as it gave the researcher flexibility in data collection. Ideas could be tracked up, responses could be further investigated, and intentions could be further explored.

An observation guide was also used to develop insight into the cultural heritage environment including, cultural events, activities, interactions, values, practices, language used among others, which might be representative of cultural heritage manifestation. The researcher used photography as a method to acquire both primary as well as secondary data.

### 3.1.4 Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to make replicable inferences by interpreting the outcomes of the study. Krippendorff (2014) defined content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of research use. By using text analytics, analysis was done by interpreting and coding available data, then entered in using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. The researcher specifically used semantical content analysis. Normally, semantic analysis is the process of drawing meaning from text. Stewart (2016) explains that the researcher will extract meanings, insightful information normally displayed through emotions and sentiments mostly from unstructured data. Semantical content analysis took two forms namely:

### **Designation Analysis**

Designation analysis determines the frequency with which particular objects (or persons, institutions, or concepts) are mentioned. For example, designation analysis was used where the respondents frequently mentioned a cultural object or cultural heritage institution. An example is where most house hold respondents would mention a particular cultural dish or their religion to emphasize how heritage is manifested.

### **Attribution Analysis**

Attribution analysis examines the frequency with which specific characterizations or descriptors are used. Again, this can be a simple counting exercise, but the emphasis was on adjectives, adverbs, descriptive phrases, and qualifiers rather than the targets of speech. For example, most respondents would attribute the changes of their cultural heritage to influx of tourists and “watuwa Bara” (upcountry people)

Analysis of photographic materials was also essential to the research outcome. As Sontag (1977) states, photographs produce knowledge that is dissociated from and independent of experience. The author continues to state that photographs are part of the subject and allow us to predict, manipulate and decipher behavior and in this case, of a cultural group. The researcher therefore analyzed photographic materials through coding, sorting and content analysis. Each photograph was coded for content and was used to support participant and researcher’s observation analysis. The interpretation of artifacts and cultural phenomena was used for leveraging images as an illustrative element in communicating concepts.

In analyzing participant observation data, the researcher coded observation notes which were essentially field notes details of informal conversations with the respondents. Also, the

researcher took into account personal cultural experiences, whereby she assumed the role of a cultural tourist. Analysis of interview schedules was done by creating data themes, categorization, and coding which commenced after arranging meetings and appointments and eventual meet up with respondents through phone calls and short messages.

## **4. Findings**

### **4.1. RQ1: How is cultural heritage manifested in the old towns**

According to Mason (2008), the social values of heritage assets are frequently conveyed by concepts such as the spirit of the place or *genius loci*. The social values are associated with the place and with feelings of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction coherence (English Heritage, 2008), and a sense of belonging that establishes spiritual links between people and (historical) buildings. There are two types of cultural heritage which are tangible and intangible. Where strong safeguarding mechanisms are in place, tangible heritage may withstand pressure for some time, but it may still be noticeable, and a slight restoration process will bring it to life. However, for the intangible heritage, since it consists of individuals' values and habits, they tend to change as time goes by due to innovation and technology development.

Manifestation of intangible cultural heritage may happen unconsciously and as such may come out as authentic. Locals tend to portray their daily activities that are deemed as unique by an outsider which essentially can be labeled as authentic.

#### ***Cultural expressions***

Due to sharing almost similar historical backgrounds, cultural heritage of the two old towns have comparable manifestations. The most popular manifested practices and cultural expressions are weddings, cultural festivals, and burial rituals. From table 3 below, the current cultural heritage manifestations in the two towns were during wedding rituals (39.1%), during religious/cultural festivals (39.1%) as well as during burial rituals (11.7%). These three activities have some cultural manifestations although they were not as pronounced as they were in the past. The wedding ceremony has experienced notable changes as compared to the early weddings in the two regions where there was a weeklong celebration with the wedding open to the community without any limitations on numbers. Currently the wedding is only limited to a few invited family members and only the event taking place within few hours or a day at most. The key

reasons behind this change according to the informants were the hard economic times as well as busy schedules which may not allow for long durations of weddings as well as spending but also decline in cultural significance of prolonged days. The results support the findings of Chaudhary (2019) who noted that cultures may change according to historical, economic as well as political demands of a given community. However, there is architecture (10.1%) which includes Swahili houses, including house hold items.

**Table 3: How Cultural Heritage is Manifested in Mombasa Old Town and Lamu Town**

Cultural heritage		Frequency	Percent
	Wedding rituals	36	39.1
	Burial rituals	10	11.7
	Religious/cultural festivals	36	39.1
	Architecture (Swahili houses, including house hold items)	10	10.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Researcher (2020)**

### *Cultural festivals*

Meethan (2011) noted that relationship between globalization and culture results into increased homogenization and westernization of culture. The study noted that although wedding ceremonies emerged as the most manifested cultural activity, some aspects of weddings had similarities with the modern-day weddings which had traces of westernization. however, cultural festivals are the reasons as to why many tourists visit the old towns. The respondents were quick to mention the dhow and donkey races, Maulidi and Lamu festivals as well as lamu art and yoga festivals. The festivals exhibit the cultural heritage of the residents and signify the importance of certain economic and social practices.

### *Cultural replicas, Images and artifacts*

Tangible heritage on the other hand seems to be more prominent and well identified by the locals. There are replicas of objects which represent cultural heritage of the old towns. For example, plate 1 indicates a replica of the ancient coffee pot, which was symbolic of all Swahili people and was used to serve distinguishes guests with coffee. It had 24 cups which were used to

serve guests with coffee. The coffee pot was known as Buli and it is used as an element with historical bearing indicating an interesting aspect of cuisine. The Bronze Kettle was popularly used as it could keep the coffee hot for a long period. The pot was later built-in front of fort Jesus in 1988.



***Plate 1 Replica of Coffee pot used by ancient Swahili people, Source: Researcher (2020)***

Engraved artefacts which symbolize human needs such as need for love and communication are also manifested. For example, An African parrot with colorful feathers was used to signify some form of communication and smartness. Parrots were unique type of birds which were able to mimic different tones and sounds. They were also captivating in that they had a good hue of different colors. Their uniqueness led to the carvings on ancient doors which was a reminder of the place where they had visited.

Plate .2, indicates an ancient Indian love birds engraved on the main door symbolizing the love with which the residents of the places visited had towards them. This also indicated the love between the local community and their culture. It was also used to indicate a long term commitment, loyalty and care. The representation of culture by the use of engraved animals signify a strong relationship between living culture and material culture.

**Plate .2 Ancient Indian love birds**



*A cultural artefact used as a room divider (the divider has an Arabic/Indian/Swahili heritage and may come in sizes, designs, aesthetics that will represent the heritage of the household occupants. Source: Researcher (2020)*

### ***Architectural heritage***

Manifestation of architectural heritage was evident in both Lamu and Mombasa old town. Beautiful, aesthetically made houses with coastal passage ways, house hold items and objects representing the architectural heritage of both towns was an indicator of a consciousness in heritage preservation

Plate .3A below, represents the Lamu Museum. The Lamu Museum building design itself represents the architectural heritage of the old town. It is one of the prominent of the five museums and resource centers in Lamu Old Town, namely; Lamu Museum, Lamu Fort, German Post Office, Swahili House and the Takwa Ruins and MwanaArafa-Jambeni. The Lamu Museum was built in the early 1900s and according to the national museums of Kenya, it serves as a perfect example of architectural heritage change, from the traditional Swahili stone houses of 19th Century to a new architectural style influenced by the European and Indian merchants who began to settle in the town during this period.

The property was originally owned by Mr Abdallah Bin Hemed Said Al Busaidy a close friend to the then sultan of Zanzibar. The building was left to a noble family after Bin Hemed moved to Mombasa and later on was used by the Imperial British East Africa Company before serving as

the official residence of the Senior British Colonial Administrator. In post-independence Kenya the building served as the District Commissioners residence until 1968.



*Plate 3A The front sections of Lamu Museum (source: researcher)*

The Lamu Fort is a splendid architectural heritage in Lamu old town that was built by the Omanis between 1813 and 1821. It was used as a base from which the Omanis consolidated control of the East Africa's coast. The fort was utilized as a prison by the British through the colonial period and was later used as the same after Kenya gained independence. It now contains an environmental museum and a library, and it is frequently utilized for community activities. The fort was built beside the Pwani Mosque, the oldest known mosque in Lamu, with origins in the 14th century

Lamu Fort Library is located within the Lamu Fort in Lamu Old Town. The fort was formerly a prison between 1910-1984. The fort was restored by the National Museums of Kenya in 1984 and officially opened to the public in 1986. Currently, the Lamu fort also houses the Lamu Museum library which houses a digital library, books, photos and manuscripts.

The Old town of Mombasa houses one of the most popular and UNESCO inscribed architectural masterpiece –the Fort Jesus. This fort was built by the Portuguese in 1500s in order to secure their safety during the many hostilities the Portuguese endured. In the 1600s the Omani who were advancing throughout the East coast of Africa attacked the fort but the Portuguese reclaimed it in the 1700's. However, when the British took over the colony, the fort was used as barracks for soldiers and later converted to a prison. The Fort was which was later declared a national park post-independence is now under the National Museums of Kenya.



**Picture 1 :Lamu Fort and Library: Researcher (2019)**

Among the architectural heritage in Lamu which falls under Lamu Museums is the German post office. The Building which houses the German post office was built and owned as a private residence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1888, It was converted to a post office post office by the Germans during when Witu, situated on the south of Lamu was a German protectorate. However, it operated for a short while and when the Germans withdrew from the witu settlement. Its counterpart on the Mombasa old town is the Old post office. It was built in the 1890's to enable Indians who were building the railway to send money home. The old post office is a good example of architectural heritage in need of immediate restoration.



**Picture 2 :German Post office (Lamu)**



**picture 3 : Mombasa house (Mombasa)**

Other than the Mandhry Mosque in the old town of Mombasa, The Mombasa House represents one of the distinctive historical building that has been restored with the help of the locals. The house was built around 1880 by a customs official who was a member of the Indian community. The house portrays a traditional coastal town house with a closed balcony at the first floor made of carved decorated wood. This design symbolizes Indian influence in architectural heritage within the coastal region where balconies were partly closed to shield women from public view in accordance with their traditional culture.

### ***Interior designs and decorations***

The Manifestation of Architectural heritage in the old towns signifies a rich industrial and colonial heritage between the Swahilis, the Persians, Omanis and Indians. The old houses, bazaars, mosques, market centers, post offices and forts all represent cultural heritage of the old towns that needs to be safeguarded. The interior designs of the old towns are not much different. The houses are defined as standing close together in narrow streets. For example, Lamu houses are typical of Islamic building styles. Almost in all houses are rectangular and white washed or plastered. all the rooms face towards a well-lit and open courtyard. The houses and rooms are accessed through well decorated main doors. The towns seem to have almost the same door designs including decorations



Figure 3 and 4: Swahili door in Shanga (Lamu) and Old town of Mombasa

Known as the Swahili doors, these doors represent a mixed heritage of the Persian- Shiraz, Oman, and Indian Heritage. The doors have either a rectangular frame and more recent one which have an arched shaped frame. The manifestation of well-preserved doors in all the famous houses found in the two old towns shows the significance of doors and portrays earlier trading commodities and resources eg wood. The size and decorations on Swahili doors represented the social status of house occupants. The larger and more ornamented the door was, the greater the social status or wealth. Even now, most doors are divided into half. Traditionally, the left door was known as the female door and the right door was known as the male door.

### ***Transportation and economic activities***

Although motorized boats are now being used to ferry passengers to and from Manda airport, donkeys are still being used for transportation purposes within the mainland. The tradition was initially used by the Sultan of Oman in the coastal area. The other option though not popular is the use of a hand cart. Of late, transportations issues have risen and the town has seen an attempt by the residents to introduce motor bikes. The Old town of Mombasa however, can be accessed by cars and motor bikes.



Picture 4 :Lamu old town trader carrying good with the help of a donkey. (researcher (2020)

Manifestation of authentic, well maintained cultural heritage was more evident in lamu than in The old town of Mombasa. This may be due to Lamu having a unique status as a UNESCO heritage site, thereby giving it more priority in heritage conservation and management.

#### **RQ2: How well do other stakeholders recognize manifestation of cultural Heritage**

An analysis of data revealed the how well the communities and other stakeholders within the old towns recognize and relate with cultural heritage. As seen in the table below.

**Table 4 Cultural Heritage and its Management**

<b>Current manifestation of cultural heritage</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>Sample Variance</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
The locals are able to link the past and the present habits of local community'	1.9171	0.0903	1.4764	1.2151
National culture is well defined positively	2.1436	0.1034	1.9348	1.3910
Tourist brings transmission in cultural heritage for the current and future generation	2.1492	0.0922	1.5387	1.2405
Cultural heritage is differentiated by different regimes and language	1.8840	0.0905	1.4809	1.2169
Cultural festivals are considered and supported by the state	1.8232	0.0880	1.4019	1.1840
The education sector has incorporated culture in the learning syllabus	2.1160	0.0898	1.4587	1.2078

**Source: Researcher (2021)**

Table 4. indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that cultural festivals are considered and supported by the state as indicated by a mean of 1.8232. The government is able to protect and safeguard the cultural heritage since due to the culture tourist are attracted and this is treated by the government as a source of revenue. With a mean of 1.88 there is an indication that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that cultural heritage is differentiated by different systems. In different period of time people have different ways of doing things with different seasons and different age group as well as gender. Due to the different demographic profiles of respondent, a differentiation of past and present was varying but there was an agreement that the national culture was easily identified and defined. During different festive seasons people react differently with characters, songs and dress code. The Language used tends to differ as the generation grows due to the existence of education and the growth of modern knowledge. Tourist brings transmission in cultural heritage for the current and future generation in a modern way which have been beneficial but it has led to the elimination of intangible cultural heritage.

A mean of 1.91 shows that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the tourists are able to link the past and the present habits of local community'. Society in the past had minimum knowledge on how to do things and everything had to take a long period of time. But in the present there is existence of technology which has made it difficult to carry out previous activities such as the African dress cord has been modernized, English has been incorporated in some local language, the process of cooking food has moves from use of firewood to cooking gas and women are now included in the education and leadership process. But this does not mean that the past cultural values have been forgotten, rather, the habits are still carried out in the local areas. With an agreement indicated by a mean of 2.12 there is an indication that there was a high number of respondents who agreed that the education sector has incorporated culture in the learning syllabus this is an indication that from the beginning just like the history of a country the children are able to understand why certain community behave differently with others. This explains that National culture is well defined positively as explained by a mean of 2.1436.

According to previous research the most severely affected heritage are usually located in coastal region which usually includes the tangible and intangible heritage. This indicates that there is a relationship between natural and cultural heritage. This means that protection of one form of heritage will automatically factor the other form of heritage. Poor management and negligence of one can affect the other as stated by Pannel, (2016).

## **5. Discussion**

The manifestation and presentation of cultural heritage is based on what exists in the old towns of Lamu and Mombasa. This includes the pre and post-colonial vestiges. For instance, the old fort Jesus is manifested and presented as an open area with ease of public access. Colonial and historic buildings are physical evidence of colonialism in the old town such as the old German post office in Old town of Lamu. Hence, tourists see the architectural design of the buildings rather than other evidence of colonialism. The presentation of manifested culture is evident also in museums. The Lamu museums, an amalgamation of architectural heritage that includes the German post office, the Lamu fort and library and the Lamu Museum itself exhibits old cultural relics and buildings that are a testament to the past lifestyle of the inhabitants of the old town. To some extent, the museums corroborate on the manifestation of cultural heritage in that some of the relics that can be seen in the museum are also available in local houses such as the unique Swahili doors, the materials used to construct sections in the house and tools used in producing food ingredients. Intangible cultural heritage in the region has declined to some extent but still, there are various practices and expressions that are displayed. Among the most evident manifestations in both Mombasa and Lamu old towns are in the form of wedding ceremonies, burial rituals, and cultural festivals especially during key religious practices. It was noted that the locals believed that maintain and protecting of ancient building alone was not an indication of cultural heritage as buildings alone and other tangible cultural resources were not a reflection of their heritage. Therefore, it is necessary for those responsible to devise better modes of encouraging locals on why they should preserve the tangible cultural heritage resources for posterity.

## **6. Conclusion**

The study focused on the manifestation of cultural heritage in the Mombasa and Lamu old towns. The towns are known for their rich cultural heritage resources emanating from the different cultural backgrounds of the inhabitants who have lived there for ages.

Most of the manifested cultural practices in the regions are grounded on Islamic religion. While religion in itself is an element of culture, it is the most important determinant of manifested

cultural heritage in the old towns. This means, as long as the residents are keen on practicing their (Islamic) religion, then some heritage aspects will always be manifested.

It was noted that the locals believed that maintaining of ancient buildings alone is not a reflection of their perspectives towards the importance (or lack of) cultural heritage. This is because building alone and other tangible cultural resources may not be a reflection of their heritage. As some respondents claimed, the towns exhibit some old buildings which are a reflection of colonialism but not of their true culture. But, while heritage managers such as the Lamu museum curators and tour guides acknowledge the touristic importance of old relics such as old colonial buildings and houses in the old towns, there is need for inclusion and sensitization of the communities concerning the importance and management of tangible cultural heritage resources. The lack of awareness of the socio-economic benefit of cultural heritage resources beyond religious value is one of the reasons for poor management of the resource. The management of cultural resources in the old towns must take different forms which include promoting resilience in urban cultural spaces. The argument, preservation of cultural heritage in urban and open spaces especially of those of historical significance may not be effective due to that fact that such spaces contend with the much needed urban development

## **7. Recommendations**

Devise the best strategies to involve the local leaders in Mombasa and Lamu old town in their pursuits to conserve and protect both tangible and intangible heritage for long term sustainability. Government and local should apply mechanism of solving issues in cultural change that must involve community stakeholders. This will be an indication of government willingness to support and work with communities within the old towns and that they are ready to explore different management strategies.

It's important for community leaders in Mombasa and Lamu towns to reinforce their sharing of intangible cultures to the young generations to ensure there is continuity of intangible cultural heritage for posterity. This is because it is difficult to move and change tangible cultural heritage. However, virtues, morals, habits and character can easily change if not forgotten.

There is also the need to identify specific indicators of cultural elements and a method that specifically recognize and identify the importance of these indicators so that the integrity of culture can be ascertained. This is because, by merely using conventional methods such as photography may not determine the authenticity of portrayed culture. This in turn may help determine and assess the probability of change by monitoring these indicators

Also, since media has played a key role in transforming the youth into embracing western cultures as the new and classic trend, it is important that the same media be used to share the authentic culture in these areas so as to instill the original culture into the minds of the young generations as they grow. Through the media it can be recommended that education on cultural protection should be offered including penalties for vandalizing cultural relics.

## **8. Contribution of research findings and Implications**

The study is relevant and very timely for the culture and heritage sector, which has to contend with several external impacts. For example, currently, Kenya is undergoing immense infrastructural development on or around designated heritage sites e.g. Lamu, which make the surrounding heritage less “authentic”. Given the current development of mega projects undergoing in Lamu and Mombasa, e.g. The LAPSSET, a mega infrastructural project that the governments of East African communities intend to accomplish, the old towns of Lamu and Mombasa might in the near future experience some shocks and changes which may be reversed if indeed tourism is seen as a resilient agent.

This study constructs a practical contribution to the existing cultural heritage literature through the use of a qualitative approach. The undisputed role of tourism on management of cultural heritage need further review with a clear shift towards new models of management of cultural heritage systems. The role of communities in developing, maintaining and managing cultural resources should not be overlooked especially in developing economies. This can be done through Public participation and partnerships between the available stakeholders and the communities concerned.

The most prominent findings are that the areas are rich in intangible heritage for example the annual festivals and community occasions that signify the manifestation of a rich intangible. Perhaps the concerned heritage managers should create local awareness of the importance of their intangible heritage, in that as much as it affirms their religious inclinations, it can be

utilized for tourism purposes. More concern and efforts should be geared towards the rehabilitation of tangible history. For example, the narrow roads in both old towns, some popular historical buildings such as the old post office, and even the popular Fort Jesus showed elements of deterioration and therefore, restoration should be a priority.

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Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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