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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ZIMBABWE  
MUSEUM OF HUMAN SCIENCES AND THE ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS'  
SOURCE COMMUNITIES.**

**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELORS OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE IN  
CULTURE AND HERITAGE STUDIES.**

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## APPROVAL FORM

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to the Manyengavana family, my future children as well as my friends who stood with me.

## **AKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Firstly, I would like to thank the almighty God who gave me the grace to complete this study. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family who supported me from the beginning till the completion of this dissertation and to my supervisor also for being there to guide me towards this success.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

ICOM- International Council of Museums

NMMZ- National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe

ZMHS- Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences

## ABSTRACT

The study examines the connections between museum collections and their communities at Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences (ZMHS). The objective of the study includes identifying the communities associated with ZMHS, as well as investigating the perceptions of the public on museum collections. The researcher used four methods to acquire data and these include observations, interviews, desktop survey and questionnaires. The major findings of this study reveals that most of the collections that have connections with communities such as Ngoma lungundu, Mkwati walking stick, former President Robert Mugabe's office furniture, the Tonga doors and *zvikwambo* (goblins) are 'imprisoned' in the museum's store rooms. This study argues that ethnographic collections should be made easily accessible to the communities through interaction, for them to connect with their past. The conclusion of the study is that the museum needs to engage communities in their programs as well updating the documentation collections so as to reveal their provenance and significance. There is also need for the museum to make use of public programs as a way of increasing communities' appreciation and awareness of the museum programs and the importance of heritage to their societies. The museum should make collections available to the communities as a way of enhancing their significance and for them to know and pass their cultural identity to other generation



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# CHAPTER ONE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Museums are places that help in recreating the past of communities. ICOM (2007) referred to a museum as an institution that does not focus on making money but rather focus on interpreting and exhibiting for the purpose of study, learning and luxury of material evidence of people and their communities. The museum acquires its collections or objects mostly from the people. This means that the people make collections and those collections reveal a community's life. It is through museum's collections that one gets to understand the life of the past communities. (Mirara 2006). It is of paramount importance for the museum institution to interact and relate with the source communities of the collections that they collect, conserve, exhibit and display to the visitors. World over, museums are facing the problem of creating a connection or link between the collections or objects in their custody and its source communities. This is because of many factors which include the violent nature in which some of these objects were taken away from the source communities particularly in Africa. In European museums, the majority of the ethnographic collections were illegally acquired during the colonial period. As such, most of the objects were taken away without the consent of the source communities. In some cases, objects were taken during armed expedition. These include the British military expedition in February 1897 which resulted to the looting of the Benin bronzes from Nigeria (Ratte 1972)

These valuable collections ended up in several European museums in countries such as Britain, Sweden and Germany. In Africa, the situation is almost the same. In other words, museums are by-products of colonialism. Most of the ethnographic collections in African museums were illegally and unethically collected from the source communities. This is the case with the ethnographic collections at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences located in Harare. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the relationship that exists between the source communities and the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences. When objects enter the museum, there is a tendency by the collectors to distort facts and emphasize on their overseer vision and travel exploits, rather than anything specific about the people or places associated with the objects. It is against this background that this study is aimed at understanding how the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences relate with the source communities of the ethnographic collection in their storeroom and on display.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The relationship between museums and source communities of the ethnographic collections remain uncertain. This is largely due to the nature to which most of these collections ended up in museums. Some of the collections were acquired through draconian laws such as the Witchcraft Suppression Act 1889. It is uncertain how museums such as the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences relate with the collections' source communities. It is therefore the aim of this study to investigate this relationship and find out whether it exists, whether the museum know about the source communities and how the relationship has been over the years.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

To investigate the relationship that exists between the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences and the source communities of its ethnographic collections in the storerooms and on display.

## **1.4 Objectives**

- ✓ To identify the ethnographic collections at the ZMHS storerooms and on display and their source communities.
- ✓ To examine the relationship that exist between the ZMHS and the collections source communities.
- ✓ To evaluate the public's perception and attitudes towards the ethnographic collection at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences.

## **Research Questions**

- What are the ethnographic collections found at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences' storerooms and on display as well as their source communities?
- Examining the relationship between the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences' ethnographic collections and the source communities
- What is the public's perception and attitude towards the ethnographic collections at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences?

## **Assumption of the study**

The source communities are being denied the access to their ethnographic collections by the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences, they are made to pay a certain amount of money to the museum first then see but not allowed to take pictures or to touch it. Creating a relationship between the source communities and their ethnographic collections benefits the museum in such a way that they gain more knowledge about the collections as well as the value each object carries and how to preserve it.

### **Significance of the Study**

The importance of the study is that it allows the source community people to take up in the issues to do with the ethnographic collections. An example is the people gaining employment or participating during some exhibitions. The ZMHS is a hub of knowledge that can help in getting the source communities' people attached to their past and at the same time serving the nation at large to have a cultural identity in the face of cultural imperialism.

### **Delimitations**

The research is geographically limited to ZMHS. The selection of the case study is based on the fact that ZMHS is the principal museum that houses objects that have more to do with people and communities (ethnographic collections). It is the museum that relates more to people. Meaning it should be in a position to connect with communities and people for shared memory, that is, spiritual and social.

### **Limitations**

The study is focusing on the ethnographic collections found at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences in specific and the relationship it has with the source communities. The relationship is uncertain. Some of the collections were acquired through laws such as the Witchcraft Suppression Act of 1889, hence, it becomes difficult to know whether the source communities' people were in favor of the law or the ethnographic collections were acquired by the ZMHS by use of force.

### **Ethical considerations**

The researcher will first seek for permission from the responsible authorities. For those that require appointments the researcher will set appointments in time. The researcher will also respect the myths and taboos associated with different communities and also give room for respondents to decide on the time for interviews. The researcher make participants aware that the information they give will be kept in confidence and give assurance of anonymity.

### **Definition of key words**

**Source Communities:** the society or place where the collections found in a museum came from

**Ethnographic Collection:** the branch of anthropology that scientifically describes specific objects.

**Relationship:** the interaction found between two or more things. In this research it refers to the connection between museum collections and communities. Looking at how communities feel or think.

**Community involvement:** this is the participation of people. In this research it means the partnering of museum institutions with the public.

### **Dissertation outline**

The dissertation is in 5 chapters. Chapter 2 discusses literature review, that is, an analysis of the literature that relates to the topic under study and the theoretical framework which relates to the theory of the processes that constitute the relationship of the ethnographic collections at the ZHMS and the source communities. The literature review looks at museums and their



communities, community participation in museums, and also covers how Ethnographic collections at Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences were acquired in the colonial era. Chapter 3 covers the research design and methodology of the study. It discusses the research design used and the data collection techniques. Chapter 4 is data presentation and analysis. Since the information is qualitative in nature most of the data is presented in narrative form. The last chapter, chapter 5 will cover the recommendations, summary and the conclusion.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the literature that is relevant to the study. Literature review is a survey of what has been written about a specific subject. According to the University of Wisconsin Writing Centre literature review has to describe, summarize, evaluate and clarify the study. The literature covers from the development of museums, looking at the different roles of museums in the society and the museums and their communities, looking at how museums in Africa and the world in general have enhanced their relationships with their communities. The literature also comprised of museums and the colonial collection practices, stating some of the ways that were used by the Europeans to collect cultural material and revealing how these practices separated the collection with their original communities or users.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The research bases on Szekeres (2002) model of community engagement in museum activities. In his models he noted that museums should take into consideration their roles socially, needs to educate include acting as a memory oasis to the local communities. Szekeres (2002) offers a model where museum staff handover a temporary exhibition space to community groups for them to create their own presentations and be able to express and broadcast their own narrative. This is done so as to strike a balance between communities' needs and expectations as well the museums'. The model is also supported by the International museums day theme for the year

2014, ‘Museum collections make collection’. The theme reflected the need for collections to connect with their communities. Museums contribute to the growth of their humanity by making connections between visitors and collections in their custody. The President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Heinz while emphasizing the significance of the 2014’s International Museum’s day theme mentioned that the museums serves as a path in enhancing cultural exchange, development of mutual understanding as well cooperation and peace among the people. He also went on to note that nowadays, the museums are competing with other media and they should question themselves whether they are doing justice to present the culture and history that visitors identify themselves with when they leave the exhibition.

Thus the theoretical framework seeks to express how museum collections should contribute to a community’s shared. There is need for museum exhibitions to reflect more on a community’s life and culture. There is a need for museums to stay relevant to the communities they represent. Museums as institutions for people they are supposed to connect with the makers, owners and users of material culture that is in their custody. In achieving this, museums should value the people first instead of the collections.

## **2.2 Development of Museums in Zimbabwe**

The development of museums in Zimbabwe traces back to the colonial era. The development of museums began with the private collections. European travelers and missionaries collected objects out of interest and in some cases when they visited a place they would collect material culture as souvenirs. The development of museum emerged as a way of making available those collections to everyone. The privately owned collections were then deposited to the museums,

leading to the development of museums like Natural History in Bulawayo in the nineteenth century. Later on the museum of Human Sciences in Harare, Museum of Antiquities in Mutare and the Military museum in Gweru were also developed in similar fashion.

Mirara (2006) noted that in order for the Europeans to rule and exploit the resources successfully, they need to have a lot of knowledge on the surrounding, hence, this was archived through collection of all the objects that were of spiritual value and those that they viewed as unique. During the colonial era Europeans collected material culture that was of importance to the local communities especially those that were of spiritual significance. It was a way of weakening the local people's belief system. Due to the increase rate in the collections they saw the need for storage places, hence the development of museums began (Mirara 2006). There was the building of museums like the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences which by that time was called Queen Victoria Museum. The museum was developed as a way to show tribute to the Queen of England. After independence the museum was then named Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences. Ucko (1994) referred to it as the 'Museum of Man'. The earliest collections date as early as 1903. Ucko (1994) argues that in the early 1980s the museum collections, ethnographic collections in specific were not in a good condition. After independence the collections then increased with stipulated collecting methods.

### **2.3 Museums and their communities**

A museum according to ICOM (2007) is a non-profit making and permanent institution in the service of the society as well as being available to the public. Museums are regarded as

important in the people's lives, they are also responsible for the management of collections or objects and making sure that the public is given enough and excellent services (Ambrose and Paine, 1993). Museums act as a mirror of a community's culture. Therefore, there is need for the museum to be available to the people and the surrounding communities. Gurian (2006) concurs that a museum is the memory of the community as well as its tangible past. Nyangila (2006) refers to a community as a group of people with ethnic and geographical bonds that are put in a similar unit with a common cultural identity and these can be defined by racial origins and religion.

Watson (2007) asserts that in this twenty first century it is often not easy to identify museum communities and their representatives. This is due to the displacement of people and some of the practices separated material culture from its community. She considers a museum community in its various forms national, regional and local. According to Watson (2007) a museum community can be defined through shared historical or cultural experiences, identities, it can be, national, local and regional. A museum community then can be everyone the difference will then depend on the value(s) that one gives to museum collections.

Kavanagh (1990) refers to a museum community as a sense of belonging that comes to those who are part of it, hence anyone qualifies to be part of the museum community. A museum community can also be a tourist as long as he or she has some values attached to the museum and its collections. Due to the change in museums and their locations it is difficult to define a museum community as those people surrounding the museum, most of the museum are situated

in urban areas where there is more than one ethnic group so to regard a community as an ethnic group in this case becomes bias (Kavanagh 1990).

Watson (2007) concluded that it is a challenge to identify a museum community in the twenty first century; a museum then can determine the group of people they wish to refer as a community. She refers to museums as mirrors that reflect on the beliefs of the society in which they are developed as well as influencing the society's view itself. Museums have the power to shape collective values and also social understanding (Luke 2002). The museum community is almost a pointless expression and what we consider to be a community is 'hugely complex. (Davis 1999) is of the view that the museum community refers to the public, that is, from ethnic groups, tourists to school children. However, it is too broad and ambiguous to refer to a museum community as everyone as there are some people with no other connections with museum collections besides for entertainment.

There is need for museums to stay relevant to communities they serve. Abungu (1998) emphasized that museums and its programs need to create impact and significance within their local communities in order to attract more funding and continuing support in interpretation of collections. As non-profit making institutions museums has a need to partner or link with communities for financial support. Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences has opportunities to influence and change how visitors or museums communities view museums through community participation. Museums can act as places for sharing concepts, knowledge and experiences about past and contemporary issues through community participation it encourages meeting of people from different ethnic groups. Sandell (2003) stated that it is of importance for the museums to be part of the local cultures and as well serve the community in order for them to remain relevant to people's social needs. It is the public that should give meanings to museum's collections and

exhibitions. For a museum to attain its objectives there is need to identify its communities and involve them in all programs.

#### **2.4 Museums and colonial object collection practices**

Museums in Africa have a colonial background of aversing local communities in preference of the white minority groups and the elite (Garlake 1982). In Zimbabwe, museums were developed with the intention of satisfying the elite citizenry curiosities rather than serving the local communities (Makuvaza 2012). The acquiring of material culture can be traced back to the colonial period. During this period objects were collected by anyone who was interested and it is because of these collection practices which then led to the rise of disconnections between collections from their cultural, religious and political context (Mataga and Chabata 2012). Ucko (1994) concurred that during the colonial period, people would just collect collections for personal sake there were no restrictions. Mataga and Chabata (2012) noted that due to the movement of the objects from their source communities to the private collectors who were often white settlers to the museum, the collections gained different values as the distance between it, that is, the object and its originators increased. During acquisition limited information was available this is because most of the donors were whites with limited knowledge on how to collect, document as well as the values that are attached to the material culture. In the museum then the objects were categorized with province or tribe, hence being separated from their makers, users and owners.

In 1890 Zimbabwe was colonized and the colonial systems made efforts to track down the identity of the local community people (Katsamudanga 2003). Ngoro (2005) concurs that during

colonization, the Europeans mainly focused on iron age sites like Great Zimbabwe where some of the objects were distorted. Many of the collections that were collected by the white settlers were collected out of curiosity with some being regarded as souvenirs. The collection practices were not systematic and most of it was done by travellers and private collectors with no knowledge on how to collect and document material culture for the benefit of the future generations.

There is very little reference to the makers, owners and users of the object or how and in what context it was used. The exclusion of such important information objects' values were taken away the objects were then displayed in places where they could not be accessed by their creators (Konare 1995). The colonial ways of collecting the collections led to the reduction of the objects to common consumer goods (Makuvaza 2012). Ucko in his paper "Museums and Sites: cultures of the past within education- Zimbabwe of 1994" stated that in the 1980s ZMHS's ethnographic collections were not in a proper maintenance state with most of the collections without provenance. The cataloguing activities were not systematic. Garlake (1982) states that a Eurocentric approach to the introduction of museums in Africa did not give the local communities chance or enough room to articulate their own understandings, thoughts and choices concerning their culture, hence they were left with no option but to be passive observers of events around them.

## **2.5 How museum collections disconnected with their communities**

Cultural objects are society's cultural capital. In West Africa cultural capital is very strong and bankable while in Southern Africa colonial practices washed away the cultural significance of



cultural objects. The cultural objects were disconnected from their communities. As a result, communities no longer hold strong claims to their collections. Instead the curator assumed the responsibility to authenticate and sanctify the objects (Chipunza 2022; *pers*

*comm*) Many of the museums in Zimbabwe no longer have any relation to the living Zimbabwean cultures or communities this is because of colonial collecting practices. Some of the collections were collected by missionaries, travellers and from district commissioners of the “Native” (African Affairs Department) as well as the police (Mataga and Chabata, 2012). The 1899 Witchcraft Suppression Act was also introduced as a way of supporting the confiscation of material culture which was believed to be used for witchcraft. The passing of the Witchcraft Suppression Act in 1899 gave the police powers to arrest anyone who was found practicing “witchcraft” (Mataga and Chabata 2012). The Act suppressed the African religious practices, it led to the taking away of materials that were used during rituals among other ceremonies, some of the ceremonial objects were the ceremonial axes and knives. Most of the collections collected during this time are currently classified under Material medica meaning objects of divination.

The displacement of people due to colonial policies like the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Land Tenure Act of 1969 separated people with their material culture and led to an end in some of the traditional practices such as rain making ceremonies and initiation ceremonies. (Pwiti and Ndoro 1999; Mataga and Chabata 2012). Munjeri (1997) concurred that the colonial government was against the involvement of local communities in museums in an effort to enforce marginalization and culture inferiority. Due to these practices it has become a challenge for museums to improve cultural awareness (Konare 1995). Pwiti (1997) postulates that post-

colonial Zimbabwean museums still remain colonial and focuses mainly on the foreign tourists. There have been a very limited number of adults visiting ZMHS from both the urban and the rural areas this can be ascribed to lack of relevance. Mupira (2002) concurs that many museums in Zimbabwe have been built in urban areas where there are people from different cultures and beliefs, and there is little evaluation on museum impacts to local communities.

After independence museum practitioners imitated the ways of the white predecessors instead of bringing into consideration the communities in their activities, In fact they have further been side-lined (Makuvaza 2012). Museum curators took the position of communities then ascribed value to some of the collections that were collected by whites. This study then seeks to look for ways in which the museum can bring back the past collection value through community involvement. Also the NMMZ Act does not recognize community participations hence the communities have been marginalized in the collection and management of their material culture.

## **2.6 Museums and community involvement**

Most museums have changed its nature and is now taking communities to be part of them in their programs and services (Nyangila 2006). Community involvement is about the participation of people in museum programs. Involvement is the level of engagement in museum activities. Community participation also includes community consultation, involvement and collaboration. Community participation means the local people will be having an active role in museum programs, for instance taking part in decision making and delivery of services (Heritage lottery fund, 2010). Active participation gives communities a meaningful stake in museums programs. Community involvement can enhance any project in museums from collections interpretation,

development of collections and in mounting of exhibitions. In England museums community consultation is done during development of exhibitions. The messages and meaning the exhibitions should portray comes from the communities.

Though community participation has arguments Lagerkivist (2006) suggested that controversial issues within the consultation process are not only unstoppable, it is healthy and besides, they have the ability to be productive. What museum professionals should take into consideration is that it is people who bring the value and problems to objects and collections and if a museum fails to create a link or an interaction with the people, it will have no significance (Crooke 2007). Museums should interact with representatives of various communities and different cultural groups in the research and documentation process similar to their cultural experiences in order to widen the range of perspectives and deepen their understanding of museum holding, Pittman and Fleming (1991).

Simon (2010) urges museums to choose the co-creative participatory method where museums and communities share equal rights over museum activities. According to Nina again co-creative is when museums work together with the collections' source communities in projects, a museum might invite a community to participate in exhibiting their culture at the same time a community might do the same as well. Simon (2010) noted that there are basically three main reasons why museums engage in co-creative projects. Firstly, it is done so as to give voice and be responsive to the needs and interests of the local community members, there is need for museums to stay relevant to the communities they serve addressing the contemporary issues as well making available the collections that have connections with their communities

Secondly, Simon (2010) noted that museums take part in co-creation to come up with a place for community involvement and participation. ZMHS as a national museum can provide a place where people from different communities can meet and share ideas. The museum also through community engagement they can create conversations with communities through the use of their material culture in the museum. Lastly, to help develop skills that supports their individual and community goals. Communities through participation in museum activities benefits as it helps them to bring back the life style of the past, thereby enabling continuity of a community's culture.

Community members can also be trained by museums staff on how to handle collection and how to mount exhibitions that tell a story about their community. These community members can be “co-researchers and co-producers of knowledge rather than informants and quaint stories of the past” Lynn (2011). Chirikure and Pwiti (2008) noted that community participation is one of the ways to empower the previously marginalized groups. Through community participation, museums are able to achieve their social roles. Weil (2003) argues that lack of community participation in museums by the collections' source communities can result in low visitor ship. This is due to the fact that people need to understand the purpose of a museum and its link with the people where the collections being kept in the museum originated from.

Museums are progressively expected to be responsive to their communities to justify and actively develop the roles they play in the society. Museums are supposed to consider communities' ideas so that they may stay relevant. Ambrose and Paine (1993). Museum staff should engage interest through active participation of communities and achieve their objectives.

Museums can take the museum gallery out in to the community through workshops or exhibitions in community centers such as growth points. Lavine (1992). They can also be in partnership with the community, the second museum revolution advocate for museums to engage with the communities they serve, assigning them role of problem solver within the community Primo (1999). This helps museums to know the needs and expectations of communities. This study seeks to emphasize the need for collaborations in museums programs.

Community participation promotes a participatory approach were the community will be directly involved in making decisions. It also helps in that it creates awareness of the importance and value of cultural material. The involvement of communities also contributes to the development of communities and this help to eradicate poverty. It also can people of different communities together and those that maybe interested in museum services. Community participation enhances a sense of belonging hence linking the past and the present with the future through interactions with their cultural material.

It promotes a sense of local pride this can be through offering space in museum were communities can to show their skills and resources. It enhances freedom of expression were community can share freely their experiences and knowledge. Involvement is good for both museums and communities as it enriches what museums offer and transforms communities and individuals. For museum community participation increases the number of visitors with some even repeating visitation. It also reduces risks of conflict with communities. Community involvement leads to the economic and educational empowerment of local people (Miller 1996). It also helps museums to position themselves more centrally within the communities they serve.

According to Gurian (1991) establishing partnerships between museums and locals increase museums services, in other words the life of the museum will be prolonged.

In Central and Southern American numerous communities have been given the right to manage the direction and content of their local museums (Stanish 2008). He also notes that by making these communities a first priority in the museum's mission and goals helps in the development of the museum. (Carr 2010) asserts that museums must allow some ideas to come from communities since they are the owners of the cultural objects, by so doing more information about the objects is revealed. Sheppard and Falk (2006) are of the view that museums should consider the collections' source communities of their institutional agenda through self-representation and they should also put into practice the concept of feedback from their visitors so as to evaluate their services.

## **2.7 Community Museums**

Community based museums are a specific type of museums, whose main agenda is to facilitate the well-being of their communities where the collections came from rather than the individual visitor experience (Gurian, 2002). A community museum focuses on the people living in the area where they are located. Gurian (2002) noted that community museums are often ruled by the communities themselves and the collections that comprise their museum comes from the members of the community. In the development of community museum's exhibitions there is need to bring in many community members in the development process and in co-operate oral histories from these community members in to multimedia exhibitions.

The development of community museums has the ability to give voice to those who had traditionally been unable to express themselves in the national museums. For example, on ZMHS exhibitions they depict more the Shona life than any other ethnic groups. In Zimbabwe the concept of community museums started in 2000. The development of community museums was started as a way to empower smaller communities through promotion of their cultures as well as their language thus NMMZ's way to promote "cultural equity". The program began as another "museums conception" which was motivated by the community significance in museum issues. Community museum program's main aim is to empower local artists, provoke inactive talents, carry out community exhibitions, develop dying skills, promote community arts, and exchange programs between different communities.

The community museums program has tried to remove the curators as the community as they were the ones who had taken the community's role in museums activities. Community museums have helped in the creation of museums with community relevance thus promoting cultural diversity as well as enhancing the livelihoods of communities through sale of curios. A typical example is the Ba-Tonga Community Museum located in the North Western Zimbabwe. This community museum concept has helped in the empowerment of local cultures another example is the Nambya museum is situated in the town of Hwange, it exhibits the languages and cultures of ethnic groups such as the Nambya, Dombe, Tonga and Nyanja.

Community museum concept is a tool for communities to build shared self-knowledge. Through community museums community members now can participate through oral history, selection of themes for exhibitions, designing of exhibitions and the selection of collections to exhibit as well

as providing the necessary information about the objects. This concept has also helped in building a collective interpretation of communities' reality and their history. Community museums have given chance to the communities to share their own story. In the community museum, the object does not serve any significant value, but instead a collective memory which is vitalized by the recreation and reinterpretation of meaningful stories (Ocampo and Lersh, 2010). Thus, the members of a community use the community museum to remember how things were before, to recall events and practices which marked communities' lives. In the community museum people create means of telling their stories, and in this way they participate, by so doing, they will be defining their own identity instead of holding on to the executed identities (Ocampo and Lersh, 2010). The community museum becomes a tool to manage heritage. The community museum is an instrument to foster sovereignty, strengthening communities as collective subjects that create, recreate and make decisions that shape their reality.

## **2.8 Chapter summary**

The chapter provided with the literature that has been written about the development of museum in Africa and specifically in Zimbabwe. Several works have been done about museum and their communities and development of community museums as well as social roles of the museum. However, there are no researches that had been done to reflect on the connections between collections and their communities. Thus this study seeks to highlight these connections as well as looking for ways that can be used to increase these connections.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodology and methods that were used to collect data for this research. It also covers the target population, data sampling methods and the data presentation and analysis approach. Ngulube (2003) noted that it is crucial for the researcher to define the methodology used for a study as it will determine the authenticity of the findings of the study. The research methodology confirms the research results. The aim of the study is to establish a link between museum collections and their communities. The word methodology is mostly used to refer to the methods or procedures applied or approach used to get the facts in a certain field of work, (Jasmael 2010). The two main research approaches that were used for this research are qualitative and quantitative. The research was largely qualitative though quantitative was lightly applied. To meet objectives set for this study various instruments of gathering data were employed, which are desktop survey, observations, interviews and questionnaires.

#### **3.1 Ethnographic Research**

Jasmael (2010) defines research design as a plan, structure and technique of investigation used as to obtain answers or results to research questions or problems. Research design is the research process that involves the overall assumptions of the research to the method of data collection and analysis (Creswell 2009). The choice of research design depends on the objectives of the research in order to be able to answer the research questions. Research design ensures that the information meets the research objectives. Qualitative research design was used because the

research is more descriptive in nature. Key (1997) sees the descriptive research design as one used to acquire information concerning the present condition of a phenomenon, describing what exists with respect to variables or conditions in a situation. Therefore, this study seeks to understand if museum communities are connecting with their collections and to know people's perceptions about ZMHS. Smith (1987) noted that qualitative research design research is all about the studying of entities in a particular context to derive meaning. The researcher mainly selected qualitative because it is effective in attaining culturally specific information about values, opinions and links between people and collections.

This research approach used multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic in nature. It involved active participation of participants in data collection. Qualitative research is essentially interactive, meaning the researcher makes an interpretation of data (Creswell 1992). The main methods that were used to gather qualitative data are desktop survey, semi structured interviews, observations and ethnography. Quantitative methodology provides numeric description trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population Creswell (2014). Quantitative method is mainly depended on numerical presentation. For quantitative research methodology questionnaires were factual.

### **3.2 Targeted population and what they represent.**

Mugo (2002) referred to population as a group of people from which the sample is taken for the study. The main target population that the researcher acquired data from was ZMHS staff, museum visitors and the descendants of the Mkwati walking stick ethnic group. The researcher selected a sample of twenty-five (25) people. The sample size was as a result of the research

methodology. The researcher chose five (5) Curators from the Museums and ten (5) from the Museum visitors for interviews. Fifteen (10) people were selected from the Mkwati descendants. The other five (5) were selected from other ethnic groups. This was done so as to have knowledge on the connections that museum visitors and visitors ascribe to collections. The chosen visitors felt that the collections brought to the Museums should link with their communities as well their past for them to get connected.

### **3.3 Data Sources**

The researcher used oral sources and secondary data. The information gathered through primary sources is gathered straight from the field meaning it has never been published and it does not have a component of misinterpretation. However the information the researcher got from the Museums Curators were factual as this was coming from the custodians of the collections. Primary data was collected from the Chief Curator, Ethnography Curators, Mkwati descendants and museums visitors through semi interviews and questionnaires. The advantage of primary data is that it provides first-hand information than secondary.

Secondary data is that information which already exists. Denscombe (1999) referred to secondary data as the information collected from sources for example, publications written by other people for other purposes. Secondary data was collected from text books, suggestion book, journals and letters or correspondences. This data source proved to be less expensive and it was easily retrieved from the Museums library as well from the correspondences the researcher got from the representatives of the Mkwati descendants Desktop survey is the consultation of secondary data that is already available. This data was obtained from text books, journals and suggestion books. The suggestion books provided information on the comments and suggestions

revealing people feelings towards ZMHS. Newspaper cuttings which were filed in the ZMHS library were also consulted. The researcher also consulted published literature, websites, journals from the internet, letters and visitor trends records. This method proved to be good backup for observations as it provided information on how people are viewing the museum services as well as knowing their suggestions. It also helped the researcher with information from other scholars and museum visitors.

### **3.4 Interviews**

Interviews were conducted as part of use of oral traditions in reconstructing the history of the connections of the Mkwati walking stick. Interviews are a systematic way of gathering data through talking, listening and recording people's views (Copper 1988). Semi-structured interviews were used to gather views from participants. Patton (1990) noted that semi structured interviews have themes which guide the interviewer but not necessarily laid out questions. These were used to gather data from museum staff who were directly involved with collections management. Interviews were pre-planned by a way of setting appointments. Just before the interview the interviewee was given a question guide to go through for them to generally appreciate the kind of direction the interview was going to take.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allowed the interviewer to probe for views and opinions from the interviewee. Views and perceptions on what a museum community, community involvement and establishing connections between collections and their communities were gathered through this method. Unplanned questions were also asked basing on what the previous interviewee would have said. This was done to validate and fill up information gaps from the earlier interviewees.

This method proved to be good and effective as it gave room for probing. It also gave the researcher the room to observe facial non-verbal expressions. This method also gave a space for clarifications in cases where the researcher did not understand the question. It also has the room to motivate the participants leading to the acquiring of large amounts of data, as some of the participants provided historical information. This method proved to be more flexible than questionnaires as it allowed more complex issues to be explained. This helped the researcher to also get clarifications. However, this method has weaknesses for instance some people were afraid to talk as this method has a less degree of anonymity. Some of the participants were not willing to be interviewed as they saw the researcher as intrusive.

### **3.5 Questionnaires**

Sedlack and Stanley (1992) defined a questionnaire as a list of questions either given or posted to respondents who will fill them by themselves. Bell (1999) also referred to a questionnaire as a series of questions for which the respondents have to provide the answers. This research seeks to find out the range of the museums visitors and also to know if there were connected to any of the collections on exhibitions. Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to the Curators, museum visitors and Mkwati descendants. This was the best way to gather information.

The researcher selected this research instrument because it is a cheaper way to reach to people. It reduces personal interaction hence it is less time consuming. Questionnaires are also good as they give room for anonymity. However this method has its own short coming for instance it does not give room for probing and clarifications.

### **3.6 Observations**

This research instrument enabled the researcher to observe what was on the ground. In this method the researcher was the participant and it all depended on the researcher's readiness and wiliness to observe museum activities as they were taking place. In this study it was selected to observe the museum visitors and also to see their reactions after the tour. It also enabled the researcher to compare with the data from interviews and questionnaires, in other words the research instrument validated data from other sources.

This method did not rely on people's willingness to provide information in fact the researcher observed the visitor ship trend and the non-verbal expressions. This data collection method was helpful as the researcher managed to get first-hand information from the respondents. This method also gave room for the researcher to notice non-verbal communication. However the disadvantages of this method are that it requires time and it is prone to observer bias. It also does not have the room to understand if the museum visitor had any connections with any of the collections on exhibition and their perceptions towards the museum.

### **3.7 Data analysis approach**

For this research, data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. After collecting data through interviews, desk survey and observations during field work a qualitative approach was considered to be the best method. One way of collecting qualitative data is through semi-structured interview. This is where opinions of an individual are gathered. The best way to present the opinions of the interviewees was by describing and interpreting them.

Consulted sources on desktop survey were also analysed individually. Interviews were analysed following themes or questions. After data collection the researcher then reviews all the data, make sense out of it and organize it into themes or categories that cut across all the data sources

Creswell (2014). All possible responses that addressed the same issue were grouped together. Themes which were created are; definition of a museum community, community participation and its levels, connections between museum collections and communities and ways to enhance links between the two.

### **3.8 Summary**

This chapter highlighted the research methods and instruments used in the study. It also covered target population and sampling. The researcher made use of desktop surveys, interviews, observations and questionnaires as instruments for data collection. In this chapter they were all discussed stating their strengths and weaknesses. The chapter also covered the data collection procedures and administration and how the data was analysed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents data collected using the instruments discussed in chapter 3. The data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. Much of the information was obtained from interviews and questionnaires. Information from these sources was presented through descriptions and interpretations. Some of the information presented using tables and data from secondary sources was analysed individually.

#### **4.1 Positive results on the research**

The researcher attained a lot of information through interviews. Interviews were successfully carried out with the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences curators, tour guides, visitors and people from different ethnic groups. The researcher targeted museum staff with information about collections and tour guides helped with information about the visitor trends and views shared by visitors. The interview targeted the people who work with collections and those that are closely related to the museum. Ten museum workers were targeted for the interview and seven of them were successfully interviewed whilst three did not manage to answer. Therefore, giving a response rate of 70%. Ten people were also targeted from museum visitors and of the ten, only five were successful thus giving a response rate of 50%. Lastly for the five people that were targeted for interviews from ethnic groups four were successful the response rate being 80%.

The responses were satisfactory and fruitful, participants were very cooperative. The respondents from museum visitors showed that there is very limited connection with museum collections on



exhibition. Museum staff responses showed the overall view that there is a relationship between collections and communities but due to lack of community participation in museum activities it is hard for museum visitors to understand and know the value(s) of the collections. The table below shows the interviewed museum staff and their titles.

<b>Title of the Interviewed</b>	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>
Curators	5	1
Tour guides	2	2
Total	7	3

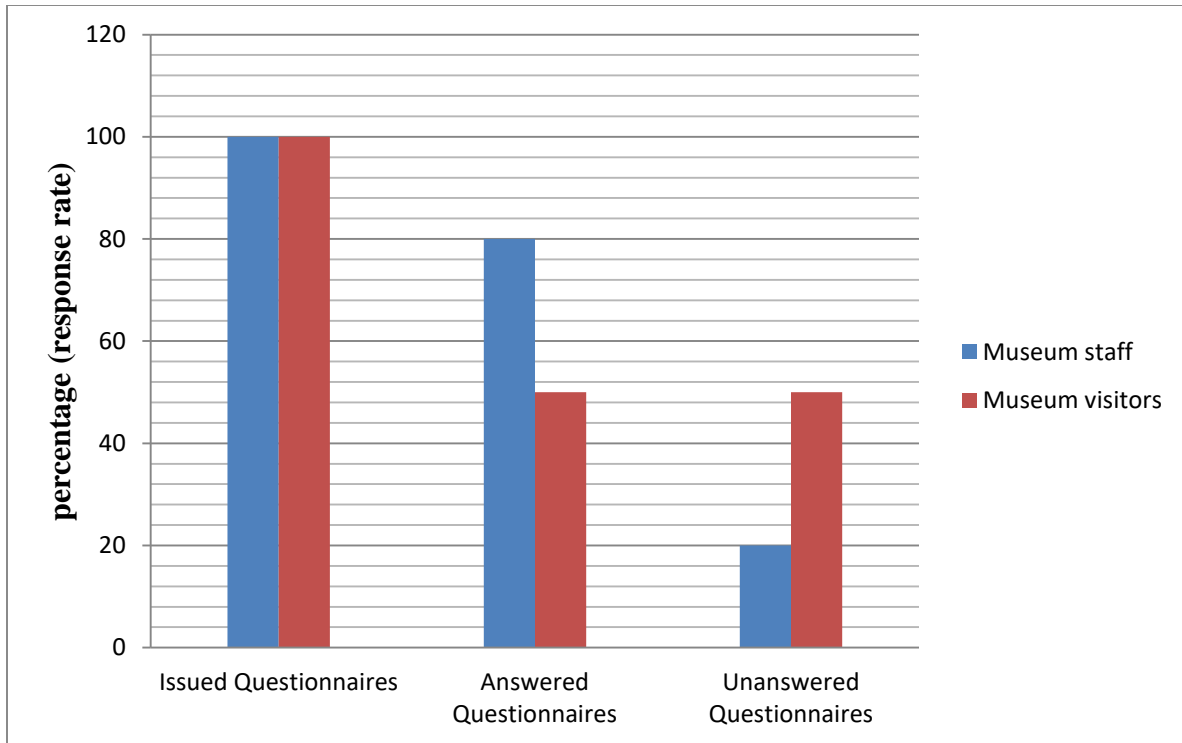
**Table 4. 1 showing the response rate from the museum staff.**

#### **4.2 Negative results on the research**

Questionnaires were filled by museum staff and visitors. The total number of targeted participants was twenty. Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher and participants were very helpful. This data collection instrument proved to be very useful the museum staff and museum visitors were very supportive. The information from respondents showed that there are a very limited number of people visiting the museum for more than once. The museum visitors, for example, Tanyaradzwa Moyo stated that,

There is need to involve communities by giving them space to showcase their cultures, knowledge and skill as well as for the NMMZ to keep establishing community museums so as to portray every ethnic group's culture.

The researcher observed that the museum is not recognising the local communities in the affairs which include the preservation of the collections as well as protecting the significant value that the objects has. The responses from the museum staff revealed that there is no community participation in museum activities especially when mounting exhibitions. They also revealed that the highest number of museum visitors were school children. The response rate for museum visitors was 50% from the ten questionnaires five were returned with school teachers revealing that they only come to visit the museum during the school tours hence they can visit the museum once per year.



**Figure 4. 1**Graph showing the overall response for questionnaires

#### **4.3 Field observations**

The researcher also used observations as a data collection method, the researcher observed the visitor trends and the facial expressions of museum visitors after the tour. The researcher also observed visitors as they were touring the exhibitions this was to see how they related with the collections on exhibitions. The researcher also managed to take pictorial evidence of the exhibitions and collections.

#### **4.4 Desktop survey**

The researcher used this data collection tool referring to journals, memos and newspaper articles in the museum library. The researcher also consulted the accession register of ethnography collections this was done so as to see how the museum collections were documented and the information that was recorded. Consultation of memos helped to know how collections were

declared as national objects and the conditions taken into consideration for the management of these collections.

#### **4.4.1 Documentation**

This instrument helped to see how lack of effective documentation has affected the value and the links between collections and their creators, owners and users. The researcher noted that documentation that was done by Europeans left out important information such as the provenance. They classified most of the collections with tribe or province. A province has a number of ethnic groups hence their documentation practices left separated material culture from their communities. With the growing of professionalism in museums after independence there was a change in collection and documentation practises. The accession register now showing the location where the collection were collected as well as the community groups that are associated with collection. This enhanced connection between collections and their communities as well the effective preservation methods to be used. An example is of pottery that was collected they have names like the Ndaou pottery and the Batonga pottery. Values of collections all depend on the uses ascribed to it for instance pottery they are some which were used for ceremonies, cooking with some being used for water storage. In short documentation is an important aspect in the establishment of connections between these collections and their communities



**Figure 4. 2 shows an Article on the return and declaration of Mkwati's walking stick as a national relic.**

The researcher noted that the Mkwati walking stick was exhibited at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences. It has a spiritual value on it and it is given to its source community where it originated from whenever the people wants to carry out their rituals such as the rain making ceremony. Mr Chipunza who works at the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe concurs that,

The Mkwati walking stick was seen worth of historic and spiritual importance nationally and has to be protected as supported by the NMMZ and should be made available to the Mkwati descendants when rituals calls for its presence.

#### **4.4 Identified communities associated with ZMHS**

Nyangila (2006) defines a community as a group of people with ethnic bonds that are linked into a unit with a common cultural identity these can be defined by racial origins and religion. Responses from questionnaires and interviews from museum staff indicated that a museum

community is an open concept that includes surrounding members of society and all those who patronise the museum and those whose collections are in the museum. They also regarded the museum community as the local people. Other respondents also argued that it is too general to refer to a museum community as the general public since the word public is too broad; they defined the communities then with location with some referring to a museum community as those communities that have collections in the museum.

However, some respondents noted that it is hard to identify the museum community associated with ZMHS. Respondents concluded that a museum community then can be referred to as those people that have their collections in the custody of the museum. In Zimbabwe they are a number of ethnic groups that include the Shona, Ndebele, Nambya, Batonga, Tshangani and Venda who has collections in the custody of ZMHS yet their connections with the museum is not clear. In the museum there are objects from all over Zimbabwe thus it covers all ethnic group. However, in practice not all of these ethnic groups are represented on the exhibitions. Curators noted that on exhibitions the museum focuses more on the Shona people than any other ethnic groups.

#### **4.5 Connections between Museum collections and people**

Most of the museum staff noted that there is a relationship between some of the museum collections and their communities though these connections are being effectively improved and made known to these communities. One curator noted that some of the communities do not even know that they have collections from their communities housed in the museum. Collections come from ethnic groups in Zimbabwe thus the community gives value to the collections. On exhibitions most of the collections present the life from the Mashonaland region that is it covers the life of the Shona people. One respondent noted that connections are there but some of the groups are not represented at all on exhibitions.

Museum collections have a crucial part to play in providing an understanding of identity and a sense of belonging to a place or community, museum collections are a reflection of a community and culture. It is through museum collections that people or communities get to understand why the past communities behaved the way they did. Chabata (pers comm) noted that museums are an embodiment of the diverse cultural and natural heritage of Zimbabwe and is a source of inspiration to individual, groups, communities and co-operate bodies, hence museum collections should connect or like with their communities. The collections in ZMHS's custody have a symbolic meaning and they are supposed to be passed from generation to generation. The collections with connections with their communities will be discussed below

#### **4.6 Museum collections that have connections with their communities**

##### **4.6.1 Divination collections.**

The *ngoma lungundu* (drum that thunders) is a collection under the custody of ZMHS which has been linked to the Biblical Ark of Covenant (Parfitt 2008). The *ngoma lungundu* is believed to have been a sacred object to the Venda and Remba. The *ngoma lungundu* is said to have the powers to bring rain, thunder and lightning. When the *ngoma lungundu* was exhibited at ZMHS on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010 people came to visit the museum and people were happy to see the collection. Mr Mangwiro, a ZMHS staff member who works at the Ethnography Department said,

during the time when the *ngoma lungundu* was on exhibition the number of visitors was high and this showed that people loved the exhibition as it

had a connection with its community. Not only the Venda and Lemba people came to visit the museum but people also from different communities came to share this memory with the collection's source community. There were a number of claims from different ethnic groups. Christians also associated themselves with *ngoma lungundu* revealing that it is associated with the biblical ark and the Hwesa people from eastern Zimbabwe also claimed ownership of the object



**Figure 4. 3** shows The *Ngoma lungundu* (Courtesy of National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe)

The Remba reflected that they had a connection with *ngoma lungundu*, for example Chief Tseisi Mposi of the Remba community claimed the object back, he argued that,



We used the *ngoma lungundu* for our traditional rituals as a community therefore it should be brought back and we should be able to use it again. The drum should not be stored in the museum instead it should be given back to the communities. Therefore, those who want to see it has to visit the community.

The researcher observed that some of the people gave the *ngoma lungundu* devotional significance while others were against its association with biblical ark. The exhibition of the *ngoma lungundu* was given a warm welcome with people. This showed that the *ngoma lungundu* is not only associated with the Venda or Remba people but other communities also had a connection with it. Therefore the drum has to be brought back on display so that people can all be able to have the chance to see it.

The *mkwati walking stick* belonged to Mkwati who was the high priest for the Zimbabweans during the liberation struggle. The stick is of great importance to the descendants of Mkwati. They value the stick as it has a connection with their past community thus they were given the right to ask for the object whenever they want.



**Figure 4. 4 shows Mkwati's walking stick.**

In the museum collection there is also divining instruments (*hakata*) or (*amathambo*) these were used by the traditional healers. They are also classified under *material medica* in the museum. These are very important to local communities they reflect on the past's ways of healing as well the spiritual practices. The traditional healers were important as they helped in foretelling the future. They connect with all communities as memory of what was there before the introduction of Christianity.

#### **4.6.2 Weapons and tools**

Bows and arrows are very important collections to the communities. Past societies used these collections for hunting as well as weapons in times of war. They show the transition that has occurred over time due to technological advancement, this before the use of guns as weapons in times of battle and for hunting. One participant noted that there is need for communities to continue using these weapons as a way of showing their culture identity. In some parts of Zimbabwe people still use these in the rural areas.

Axes are also associated with all communities they only differ in their uses and how they were made. There are axes used for dancing, hunting, ceremonies and for cutting firewood. In the Ndebele culture axes were used in times of war as weapons and some were also associated with ceremonies like the rainmaking (*inxwala*). To the Shona communities they used these for cutting fire wood. These should be exhibited or made available to the public so that they can know how the past was like hence connecting with the past communities. Spears and shields are mainly associated with the Ndebele communities. They used these as weapons in times of war. There is need for the museum to exhibit all these collections or rather give space to the communities to showcase their culture. For example, the museum may give space to the Ndebele where they can

exhibit what used to happen in times of war or to show their past life style. All these can be presented through plays or exhibition of material culture.

#### **4.6.3 Musical instruments**

Mbira is used by a number of ethnic groups. It is linked with the Ndau, Tonga and Shona this means that the collection is connected to a large number of the ethnic groups (Ellert 1984). They were used at ceremonies as well as at rituals. Other collections that are associated with music include rattles (hosho), leg rattles (*majaka*) and *hwamanda*. Before the introduction of other communication media, the past communities or societies used the *hwamanda* and drums. These were used to summon people for important events. Though they are in different shapes, their uses were the same (Ellert 1984), they were used for different dances such as *mbende*, *jerusalema*, *mhande*

And *muchongoyo*



**Figure 4. 5 shows the Mbira musical instrument**

#### **4.6.4 Pottery and the Shona exhibition**

There are a number of collections that have connections with more than one ethnic group like for example pottery. Pottery is used in almost every ethnic group but the difference is on the values attached to it. In the museum pottery that was collected after independence was documented with the ethnic group associated with them. Pottery was used for carrying and storing water, for

brewing and for cooking. There are also other forms of pottery that were used for ceremonies and ritual even the traditional healers also have their pots that they use for their healing purposes.

Most of the Shona people who visit the museum appreciate the exhibition of the Shona village. It is a model reflects the structure and set of a Shona village as well as the activities associated with the rural areas. The huts reveal the structure of the house structures in the past the model also a man doing carpentry. The displaying of objects like the pottery and mates (*rupasa*) it serves as memory communities will recall the kind of pots as well as the sleeping or sitting mates that were used before the introduction of metal pots as well as beds and chairs. The exhibition managed to connect with the Shona communities depicting their cultural identity hence enhancing community development. *Chikuva* also is found on the shone exhibition, this is the raised platform in the kitchen where pottery and kitchen utensils are arranged. The fire place which is mostly located at the centre of the kitchen



**Figure 4. 6 shows objects from the Shona Village kitchen.**

To the Shona people headrests are given a certain value. Long back headrests were used during the burial of important men in the society whereby the dead person's head will be lying on the headrest. Headrests also served as pillows for the people when sleeping. Ellert (1984) is of the view that headrests were used by the women when sleeping as a way of preserving their hair styles during their sleep. One museum visitor by the name, Tapiwa Zvorwadza said,

the exhibition of the headrests reminds us people of what the past communities used to do before the invasion of the Europeans with new materials. The past objects are important to us as they reflect where we came from.



**Figure 4. 7 shows a headrest (*mutsago*)( *Courtesy of National Museums and monuments of Zimbabwe*)**

#### **4.6.5 The mining exhibition**

School children expressed interest on the exhibition of the mining activity; they revealed evidence of what they had learned about the economic and organisation of the past communities. They also reflected that the depiction of both man and woman shows the social structure of the past. To the adults the exhibition also shows how the past communities used to practice gold mining.

#### **4.7 People's perceptions towards ZMHS**

The research revealed that the public or museum visitors feel that the museum is meant for tourism this is because the local people do not have enough knowledge about the significance of museum collections to their ethnic groups. Most of the respondents, that is, the museum visitors were school teachers. They felt that the museum exhibitions displayed more of academic information through the objects.

The researcher noted that the highest number of visitors at the museum were school children. One of the teachers after paying a visit to the museum, he left the students touring the museum with the tour guide. When interviewed the teacher said,

as the organizer of the school trips I have been visiting the museum more than twice in six months and I now know what the museum looks like and there is no longer that attachment with the museum collection instead it is now for recreation.

#### **4.8 Collections that were disconnected with their communities**

Colonial collecting practices were not systematic without any guiding policies hence most of the important information was left out Ucko (1994). The researcher through the consultation of secondary sources discovered some of the collections that have no provenance. Collections that were left without provenance includes a tobacco pipe spear that is made of wood iron, knife and beads. All these disconnected with their makers, users and owners due to lack of documentation. Collections have also disconnected with their communities due to lack of presentation of these collections in museum galleries. The museum focused more on the Shona culture yet they have

so many collections from the Ndebele and Tonga people. In the store room they are collections that were collected from Matabeleland like shields, spears and knobkerries. One pointed out that there is limited space to display all the material from ethnic groups and suggested that there is need to change exhibitions so as to make available the material culture to the people.

#### **4.8.5 Ways in which connections between museum collections and their communities can be established.**

The respondents identified ways that may be employed to promote connections between museum collections and their communities. Respondents revealed that there is need for the museum to educate people on the importance of cultural heritage and also the value of museums to their communities. This can be achieved through mobile exhibitions as well as workshops with the communities. There is also need for the institution to invite communities to participate in museum activities especially mounting of exhibitions. Pearce (1990) concluded that a successful museum exhibition has to be more like a television programme that keeps the visitor attracted till the show is finished. The museum institution might invite communities to mount an exhibition and communities may as well partner with museum to showcase their culture and knowledge through crafts. Museums should also mount exhibitions on academic and arts festival like the Harare International Arts Festival and the Zimbabwe International Trade Fair.

Respondents also suggested that the museum should give space to communities to showcase their culture, knowledge and practices; they can make use of the culture week in May. This was adopted in the United Kingdom where the museum gave space for temporary exhibitions where communities to showcase their cultural identity. Also in Kenya the National Museums created Public Programmes and Research divisions which included community representatives (Nyangila 2006). In public programmes the communities help to educate the public as well as



making them aware of their collections in the museum custody and through research the museum is now able to acquire as much information as they can about collections. Mirara (2006) states that during the period 2005 to 2008 the Nairobi Museum in Kenya was transformed into a platform for stakeholders' partnership and networking, creating and promoting cultural experiences, material expression, attractive and interactive programmes and dialogue, for the development of present and future generations.

The issue of community participation was also raised in Kenya where they felt that there was need for community representation in museum activities. Museums should encourage communities to explore and discover museum collections as well as constructing their cultural identity. One curator suggested that if the museum is to engage communities in its activities it is supposed to be the co-creative or co-involvement, where communities and museum have equal say as well as benefits. Community participation will also help in the authentication and restoration of meaning of collections.

Many respondents felt that ZMHS should also develop activities that are meant for adults like the quiz competitions for the school children. There were also calls for effective marketing strategies. For people to visit a museum they have to know about it first and have the information on the importance of visiting the museum. Adults around Harare rarely come to the museum with a very few number from the rural areas.

There should be a balance between museum activities and community values for instance in the case of the *mkwati walking stick* it is being preserved in the museum while at the same time communities can have access and use for ritual and other cultural practises. This is not the case with the *ngoma lungundu* which has been imprisoned in the museum and communities cannot access it for their ceremonies. Collections are part of a culture's expression hence museums

should let collections participate in community activities. Museum collections are a product of art and the connections depends on the type of collection.

#### **4. 9 Chapter summary**

The chapter outlines the results of the study. It carries the overall response rate as well, data presentation and analysis. The study concluded that there are connections between communities and their collections. The study also revealed that the disconnections have been caused by the fact that the museum was inherited from a colonial government and also because most of the collections that create dialogue like the *Ngoma lungundu* are imprisoned in the museum storeroom instead of being on exhibitions. For the museums to enhance connections there is need to involve people in museum activities especially when mounting exhibitions.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter is focusing on the summary of the research, the conclusion as well as the recommendations and the area of study. Summary of the research is the brief information on the findings concerning the investigation into the relationship between the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences and the Ethnographic collections' source communities. The conclusion is on whether a relationship exists or not. Some advice is given by the researcher on how to create or maintain the relationship under investigation.

#### **5.1 Summary of Research**

The research is investigating into the relationship between the ZMHS and the collections' source communities. The researcher obtained some information which shows that it is not every community that is having a connection with its collections that is being kept at the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences. The Ndebele ethnic group is an example of people lacking a connection with the collections such as pottery which came from their community due to poor documenting of the objects. The study shows that it is important for the Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences to have a strong relationship with the community people from where the collections came from. The relationship also helps the museum staff to gain more knowledge on the history of the object, the value it carries as well as information on how to maintain the value of the object whilst keeping it as a museum object. There is also evidence that the community people lack interest in the affairs of the Museum. An example is the people not actively

participating in the exhibition of the objects by the ZMHS. The carrying out of the task of accession on the collections made the connection to be stronger since the information on where the collections came from is kept in the accession register. This act also helps in keeping the cultural heritage safe for the present as well as the future generations to come.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The museum collections help in interpreting the history of its community where it came from as well as the country as a whole. It helps the people to gain confidence knowing that they have a culture and the ZMHS is working as a tool also to bring unity amongst the people and erase the painful memories of being denied the right to the cultural objects or activities by the colonialists, for an instance, the Ark of the Covenant also known as the Ngoma-lungundu made the community people to visit the site even those who did not come from the place it originated from, all came to see it. By so doing the thought which was installed into the minds of the people that the Africans does not have a culture was being destroyed. A sense of belonging is developed into the people as they are being allowed access to the collections. In some instances the community people are being employed into the Museum, by so doing, the Museum gains more knowledge on the collections and some people are even donating more objects as a way of showing appreciation to the ZMHS for being given the opportunity to relate with the objects from their communities.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The relationship between the ZMHS with the local communities where collections comes from can be improved by reconnecting the collections again with its people from where it originated from, for an example, the ethnic groups has spears and arrows which are kept in the museum but not being displayed due to a limited space. It is then advisable to create more space, display all the collections as well as interacting with the ethnic groups informing them of the development. Another issue is the ignorance from the community people as far as the museum and the collections is concerned. This research shows that it is due to lack of the knowledge on the importance of the collections being exhibited. This problem can be solved by carrying out some campaigns as well as inviting the local community people and giving them the chance to participate. The people should be granted permission to using the cultural objects when carrying out ceremonies or rituals. The Ngoma-lungundu is an example of an object that is no longer being displayed in the museum or given to the people when they carry out activities that requires them to use it for spiritual purposes since it is known as the Ark of the Covenant since long back. A number of the collections which carries a spiritual significance on them are now losing it due to the fact that the ancestors are being denied the privilege to be remembered, and praised using the objects that are meant for those purposes but are now serving a displays only in the museum.

#### **5.5 Area of Research**

Further Research should be taken into consideration on the ethnographic collections that are being kept at the ZMHS and are still required when carrying out some ceremonies. A relationship with that kind of collections has to be rekindled by the ZMHS and the community people. The study should also focus on ethnic groups' collections being displayed just like what is being done to the Shona people's collections. Also, the research should find out whether the

collections which were collected with a spiritual, aesthetic as well as religious value on it but is not being given the chance to connect with its community people from where it came from, still have any value on it.

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