

The Nature of Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Greater Polokwane, Limpopo, South Africa

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Abstract

Cultural tourism is a fast growing sector in Africa, with many museums and art galleries offering cultural experiences. South Africa, with a large array of cultural products, is actively promoting cultural tourism due to its ability to foster local economic growth and job creation. One such locality in dire need of economic growth is Limpopo Province. Thereupon, it is argued that Greater Polokwane should leverage its significant cultural landmarks and landscapes to promote this form of tourism. However, currently, the size and shape of the cultural and heritage tourism sector in this geographical area is unknown, as scholarly attention has focussed on the wildlife and hunting tourism sectors in this province of South Africa. Ergo, this study outlines the nature of the cultural and heritage tourism industry in Greater Polokwane. This study firstly created a database of cultural organisations and then gathered data by conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the managers and employees. It was found that all the cultural organisations are privately operated, although some are located on State owned-land. The findings indicate that the museums and art galleries generate jobs and foster local economic development; however, they lack the resources to expand and consequently operate below capacity. This has important implications for the viability, growth, and sustainability of cultural and heritage tourism in South Africa.

Keywords: Cultural and heritage tourism, museums, art galleries, local economic development, sustainable tourism

Introduction

Internationally, cultural tourism (which includes museums, art galleries and theatres), whereby tourists learn about, and experience, the products and processes of other cultures, is being increasingly utilised as a tool to stimulate regional development (Mbaiwa, 2016; Timothy & Boyd, 2006; Timothy, 2011; Weaver & Lawton, 2010; WTO, 2014). Cultural tourism can generate taxes, promote local investment, earn foreign exchange, create job opportunities, and generate an income from profits, wages, interest, and rentals (Keyser, 2009). Thus, cultural and heritage tourism is the fastest expanding tourism segment, with some researchers estimating that as much as 45% of leisure tourism includes a cultural constituent (Ashley, 2006; Novelli,

2015; Rogerson, 2012 & Timothy, 2011). For example, roughly 32% of destinations are selected because tourists want to experience heritage sites. Europa Nostra (2006) estimated that the direct contribution to the GDP of the European Union's cultural tourism industry was 4.4% and created roughly 8.6 million jobs. However, its benefits and challenges must be assessed in terms of who the tourists are, how authorities manage cultural and heritage tourism, and account for the views of the local community (Bialostocka, 2014; Boyd, 2006; Timothy, Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012). For example, the recent outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will severely impact the sector. A decline in tourism business will make cultural institutions, associated businesses and employees become extremely vulnerable economically, as the COVID-19 lockdowns and travel bans have shown (Bakar & Rosbi, 2020; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). While the final impact of the COVID-19 pandemic remains to be seen, it has already impacted negatively on global tourism as around the world borders and airports have closed. Those who earn a living from tourism, either directly or indirectly, are now in precarious positions and millions are likely lose their livelihoods. Thus, in a post-COVID-19 world, more than ever, a solid strategy involving all relevant stakeholders is key to fostering sustainable cultural tourism.

In sub-Saharan Africa, cultural tourism is posited as providing untapped possibilities for creating opportunities for inclusive growth, promotion of local economic development and improving the social well-being of the host population (Chhabra, 2009; Christie, Fernandes, Messerli & Twinning-Ward, 2013; Mbaiwa, 2005; Saarinen, 2014; Slabbert and Saayman, 2011; van der Merwe, 2016a). Nations such as Botswana, South Africa and Mozambique are using cultural tourism to diversify and expand their tourism economies (Rogerson, 2012; van der Merwe and Rogerson, 2016). One such locality, with many unique cultural features such as paintings, drawings, landmarks and landscapes, is Greater Polokwane, Limpopo, South Africa.

Greater Polokwane's cultural attractions include museums, theatres, art galleries, curio shops, antique shops, informal arts traders, crafts and curio traders (Wachowiak, 2012). However, little is known about this tourism sector, with much of the published work on Limpopo tourism relating to wildlife tourism (see Ferreira, 2005; Hughes, 2005; Spenceley, 2006); rural tourism (see Mafunzwaini and Hugo, 2005; Boonzaaier & Phillip, 2007) the accommodation sector (see Nelwamondo, 2009) and adventure tourism (see McKay, 2016). Thus, the size of the cultural tourism industry, the nature of its labour force, the type of government support it receives and other aspects of cultural tourism in Greater Polokwane is unknown. It is this gap in the literature that this study seeks to illuminate. To this end, this paper explores the formal cultural organisations located in Greater Polokwane, most of which are museums. This paper begins with a review of the international and local literature on cultural and heritage tourism. Then the methodology and materials employed in doing this research is elucidated. Finally, the results and several recommendations are presented to suggest areas for future research in the South African Cultural and Heritage Sectors; followed is a conclusion focusing on the importance of the local government leveraging and developing heritage tourism in Limpopo province.

The role of museums in cultural tourism

An important part of urban cultural tourism are museums (Calinao & Lin, 2017; Johansen & Olsen, 2010). Their main task is to preserve and protect culture and heritage artefacts, and accordingly; store, manage and communicate history, culture, heritage and historical records (Tomaselli, 2012). In addition, they contribute significantly to cultural tourism by both entertaining and educating tourists. Moreover, museums can also have a positive economic impact (Rogerson, 2012) on the local economy. However, the extent to which they do this

depends on what they exhibit, as well as their size, age, and status (Aarsman, van der Horst, de Groot & Lagendijk, 2012). Subsequently, although the primary task of museums is archiving cultural artefacts, they also play a key role in the development of regional tourist income (Novelli, 2015). Visits to museums can, likewise, increase profits in associated activities such as accommodation; food and beverages; retail trade and passenger transport. Backward linkages also flow from employee salaries (Frey & Meier, 2006; Sims, 2008). Arguably, then, museums both enhance a city's attractiveness to potential visitors and boost the local economy (Xie, 2006). Examples include the establishment of the Burrell Collection, which acted as a catalyst in developing Glasgow into a culturally attractive capital for Scotland (Plaza, 2000; Travers, 2006).

Cultural (and heritage) tourism and local economic development

Smith (2003) argues that the extent to which cultural tourism can contribute to the local economy depends on a balance between the local and foreign entrepreneurial activity. That is, tourism must provide business opportunities for locals, not just for foreign investors. For example, in Sanyi, Taiwan, reducing economic leakage meant linking tourism firms to local food and accommodation entrepreneurs (Hsiao & Chuang, 2015). However, there are also negative impacts of tourism (Archer, Cooper & Ruhanen, 2005; Timothy, 2011). For example: tourists may drive up the cost of goods in local shops (see Frauman & Banks, 2011); some communities are forced to leave their land to make way for tourism activity (see Ried, 1997); and Tosun, Timothy and Öztürk (2003) found in Turkey, cultural tourism can create inequalities between social classes and regions.

To reduce possible negative impacts, there is a need to create models and platforms for community participation (Lenao & Saarinen, 2015). Such as, involving the host population in the tourism sector to better cater for local needs and economic circumstances (Pongponrat, 2011; Slabbert & Saayman, 2011). Community participation can take different forms (Dyer, Guroy, Sharma & Carter, 2007). The community may, for example, share their views on developments or be more actively involved in the developmental process. In Costa Rica, for example, Matarrita-Cascante, Brennan and Luloff (2010) found that community involvement included jobs for locals, meetings with local residents, launching community projects, and ensuring community management and ownership of tourism properties and resources.

An important way to attract and include the local people – and ultimately win their support – is through the generation of local employment (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). In this regard, cultural tourism has the capacity to provide small-scale economic opportunities, making it a good potential source of job creation for labourers, small entrepreneurs, service providers, and the production of crafts and the arts (Chok & Macbeth, 2007; Boley & Gaither, 2016). However, there are some limitations to the participation of community members (Ward & Berno, 2011). For example, host populations are not heterogeneous, with different aspirations and unequal positions (Scheyvens, 2007). Often, those who are privileged are more likely to benefit (Tosun, 2006). This can cause unequal distribution of opportunities and benefits. As a result, some community members may view cultural tourism unfavourably (Blackstock, 2005). Another constraint is that local people often lack information, power, and resources making it difficult to participate in the local tourist economy (Reed, 1997; Scheyvens, 2007). Consequently, cultural tourism does not come without challenges and risks (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008). This includes the (possibly problematic) potential for tourism activities to commercialise culture (van Beek & Schmidt, 2012). Tourism can concomitantly result in undesired changes to local traditions and norms (Manwa, Moswete & Saarinen, 2016). Accordingly, Ashley (2006) recommends that governments manage tourism impacts. For

example, the Kenyan government ensures that 18% of tourist revenue is allocated to the local people who reside adjacent to protected areas (Weru, 2007).

Cultural and heritage tourism in South Africa

Manwa et al. (2016) points out that South Africa is gifted with diverse cultural resources such as traditions, religions, ethnic groups, museums and rock art paintings, amongst others. Therefore, since 1994, cultural tourism has been included on the policy agenda as the South African State views it as a viable tool to curb poverty and promote inclusive socio-economic development (Khumalo, Sebatlelo & van der Merwe, 2014; Masilo & van der Merwe, 2016; van der Merwe, 2016a). For example, South Africa’s Department of Trade and Industry estimates that cultural tourism provides approximately 38,062 formal jobs (DTI, 2013). More are achievable if the country maximises its cultural and heritage assets and encourages place-based local economic development (King and Flynn, 2012; van der Merwe and Rogerson, 2016). The spatial distribution of cultural tourism organisations in South Africa indicates, however, that not all localities are fully leveraging their cultural assets (van der Merwe, 2019). As a result, the diversification of local products derived from tourism activities is now on the agenda of future policy adoptions and planning (Rogerson, 2015).

Many researchers highlighted the necessity of promoting local participation and control of tourism operations for sustainable cultural tourism development (Manwa et al., 2016; Snowball & Courtney, 2010; van der Merwe, 2016b). van der Merwe (2016a) argues that the State has a significant role to play in this regard including directly constructing tourism facilities, ensuring accessible and good quality roads, building communication infrastructure, maintaining law and order, and enforcing good sanitary and health conditions. This is in addition to conserving heritage sites, as well as rolling out mentoring and training opportunities such as the Tourism Funding Programme for Small Businesses (DEAT, 2013), and the Tourism Enterprise Partnership (TEP), and Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education Training Authority (THETA). Building skills and helping cultural enterprises to establish themselves is essential if the country is to compete in the global cultural and heritage tourism market.

Materials and Methods

This study set out to determine the size and shape of the cultural and heritage tourism industry in Polokwane with respect to formal operators and the conditions under which the sector operates. Mixed research methods were used. Firstly, a database of all formalised cultural tourism organisations (excluding commercial antique shops and informal arts, crafts and curio traders) in Greater Polokwane was created using an Internet footprinting approach (Jakobson, 2012). The final database consisted of 10 cultural institutions (see Table 1 and Figure 1). All 10 owners or managers and 40 of the 50 employees were interviewed. Permission for collection of data was sought and obtained from the relevant authorities with ethics clearance obtained from the University of South Africa (UNISA)[2015/CAES/129]. In terms of data analysis, the responses recorded in the transcripts were coded in order to determine the hierarchy of themes.

Table 1: Cultural Institutions in Greater Polokwane

Polokwane Art Museum
Schoeman St, Polokwane. Founded in 1970 by Jack Botes, a former Town Clerk of the city. Houses over 800 artworks by various artists of Limpopo, including sculptures and a variety of traditional Tsonga, Pedi and Venda crafts.
Bakone Malapa Open Air Museum
Situated on the R37, Chuenespoort Road. Reconstructed in the style used by the Sotho people. Traditional beer brewing, maize grinding, fire making, pottery making, beading and basketry demonstrations.
The Industrial Art Park
Located at N1 North to Makhado. Curates works of art produced from industrial materials.
Hugh Exton Photographic Museum and Eloff Gallery

74 Dorp Street, Polokwane. Housed in a Dutch Reformed Church, built in 1890. It has over 23,000 original photographs recording life in Polokwane between 1892 and 1945.
The Irish House
Corner Market St and Thabo Mbeki St, Polokwane. This Victorian building was originally built in the 1880s, destroyed in 1906 and rebuilt in 1910. It displays the history of Limpopo and its various cultural groups.
Arend Dieperink Museum
97 Thabo Mbeki Dr, Mokopane. Located in a former schoolhouse built in 1917. It portrays the history of Mokopane, including the Anglo-Boer War, San art, and fossils. The museum is characterised by beautiful gardens with old tractors, wagons and farming implements. The grave of Piet Potgieter (a South African Boer political figure) can also be found there.
Makapans Valley/Caves
Southern Gateway Ext. 4, N1 Main Road on route to Mokopane. The caves are key to the history of the Ndebele Tribe. The caves served as refuge during conflicts between Makapan communities and white settlers.
Barnyard Theatre
No fixed location – a building is presently under construction at the Farnyard grounds in Polokwane. It hosts a variety of musical shows, with various cultural acts.
Touch of Genius Art Gallery
Located at 50 Erasmus Street. Established in 2004. It provides an outlet for previously disadvantaged and upcoming Polokwane artists to showcase their work.
Gemco Arts, Crafts and Curios
Plot 124 Ivydale Polokwane. It is a supplier of original African art, crafts and curios.

Database of cultural organisations in Greater Polokwane

As shown in Figure 1, eight cultural institutions are in Polokwane and two (Arend Dieperink and Makapans Caves) are in Mokopane. The geographical distribution of these cultural institutions is highly irregular, with some clustered in the centre of Polokwane, some on exit routes out of Polokwane, and three far from the city. This uneven, metropolitan based spatial distribution is in line with the literature (van der Merwe, 2016a; van der Merwe, 2019). As a result, the museums and art galleries may struggle to reach and educate a widespread audience, considering motorised transport is required to get to most of them. The organisations are all privately owned, but some are on State land. Most cater for relatively small numbers of tourists, hence, cultural and heritage tourism in Greater Polokwane is small.

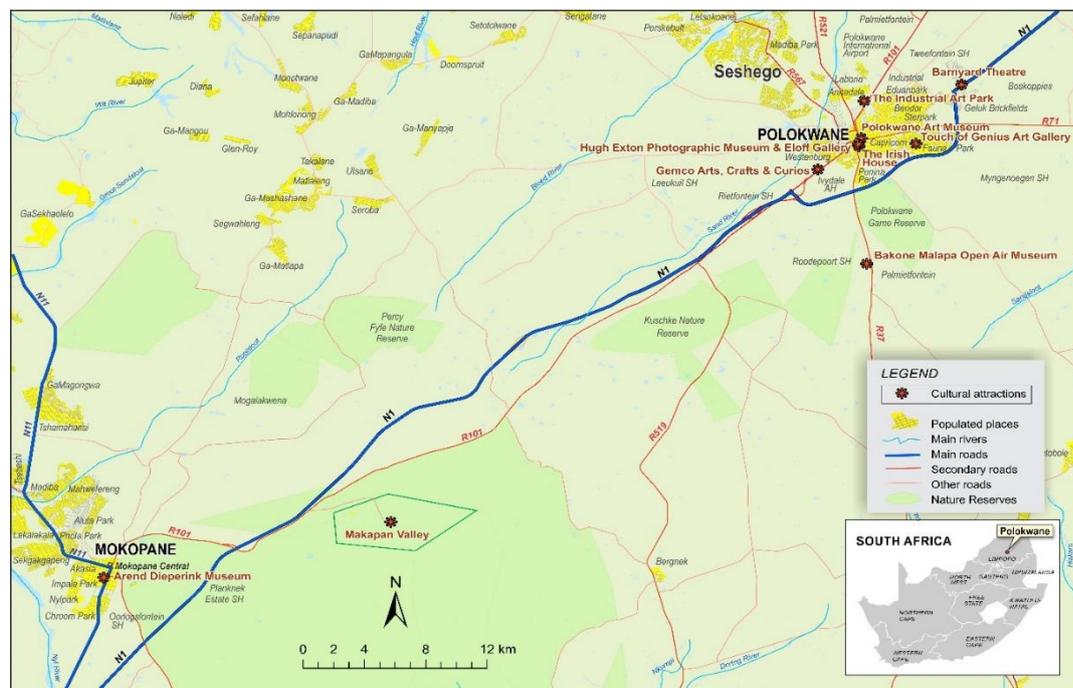


Figure 1: Map of the various cultural organisations of Greater Polokwane (Source: authors)



Results

Demographic and educational profiles of managers and employees

All ten managers or owners were South African, living in Polokwane, self-identified as Black African and aged between 28 and 54. Seven said they were male. The mean age was 40 years. Thus, the sample is heterogeneous in terms of age distribution but skewed towards mature people. In terms of education levels, all ten managers indicated they had a tertiary level qualification of some sort (see Table 2). Many (7) are furthering their studies.

Table 2: Social and demographic profile of the managers (N=10)

	Male (7)	Female (3)
Under 30 years of age	One	None
Enrolled for a qualification	Five	Two
Enrolled for a Higher Certificate	One	Two
Enrolled for a Diploma	Three	None
Enrolled for an undergraduate degree	None	One

In terms of job descriptions of the employees, sixteen of the 40 (40%) worked as general workers, doing work such as maintenance, gardening, and landscaping. Six (15%) worked as cleaners, and another six (15%) were security personnel. Five (13%) worked as receptionists and office clerks. Four of the 40 (or 10%) worked as tourist guides. Three (8%) worked as waitrons. Thus, the vast majority of employment created in the ten cultural organisations under study was not directly tourist related but exists because of the tourism sector.

In terms of gender, twenty-six of the 40 employees (or 65%) self-identified as males, whilst 14 (35%) self-identified as female. There was a gender difference in terms of job types. Of the 16 general workers, the majority, 12 (75%) were males and four (25%) were females. Of the six security personnel, five were males (83%) and one (17%) was female. All the receptionists and cleaners were female. Of the four tourist guides, three (75%) were female. One self-identified as Caucasian, one as Coloured and the remaining two as Black African. Overall, in terms of race, one (or 2%) employee self-identified as Coloured; three (or 8%) self-identified as Caucasian; and thirty-six (or 90%) self-identified as Black African. All the cleaners, waitrons, and security personnel were Black African. In terms of age, employees varied from 25 to 60 years of age. The bulk of the staff (65%) was under 40 years of age. Most workers were young Black South African males. All staff members stayed in and around Greater Polokwane.

In terms of education levels, some 12% (5 of the 40) indicated that they had a tertiary level qualification of some sort. Table 3 outlines the level of education of employees in the sample.

Table 3: Education levels of employees

Education levels	Male workers	Female workers
No post school qualification	16%	72%
Holds a tertiary qualification	8%	4%
Enrolled for a tertiary qualification	15%	45%
Enrolled for higher certificate	6%	22%
Enrolled for diploma	7%	13%
Enrolled for degree	4%	8%

With regards to additional training, most (48%) employees did not see it as necessary or important, saying things such as: “No I think I am enough [sic] with schooling” [Respondent 23] and Respondent 30 said they were “too old for studying”. A minority of the employees (7 of the 40 or 18%) said that they did not have the money to pay for additional training. Fourteen of the 40 (35%) said that they were enrolled for additional training in order to get a better job, a better salary, a promotion or to upgrade their CVs. For example, Respondent 2 said:

I have enrolled for a degree in tourism because I want to upgrade my CV and maybe get a better job and I have registered because I want to improve my chances of getting promotions in the future [Respondent 18].

History and raison d'être of the cultural organisations

Five of the managers cited history and cultural reasons for the establishment of the institutions. Three said that the museums were established in order to show tourists the collection of various precious stones and works from Limpopo artists. Manager 9 said: “To display an eclectic mix of rural crafts, bespoke furniture, and the works of many South African artists” and Manager 7: “To display the collection of semi-precious stones and items such as gold, ivory and other jewellery”. Two spoke about the founders of the museums: “The museum is housed in a Dutch reformed church and it was started by Hugh Exton who took photos of everyone and everything” [Manager 4] and “This museum was inspired by Mr Jack Botes back in the 1970s, who started by collecting art” [Manager 5]. The rest did not know why the museum started. For example, Manager 10: “I have no idea. My job is to oversee the operation”. Seven said that the museums reflected different cultural practices and attract tourists: Manager 1: “To attract tourists and educate them about the cultural life of [the] Basotho tribe that lived in the north in the 17th Century”. None of the managers had originally been involved in the establishment of the museum. In terms of start-up capital, three said their organisation started with donor money, one was given money from a company, and the rest raised their own funds to start the institution.

Management and operational issues

Half (five) of the managers were involved in daily operation of the museums. Two were part-time and three were only available during peak times. Thus, only half were ‘hands on managers’, despite none being involved in any other business or institution. All managers wanted to increase the number of tourists, most of which came by road – own car, minibus taxis, metro buses or rental vehicles. In terms of day-to-day challenges, seven spoke of staff challenges and lack of funds. For example, Manager 1 said, “Staff absenteeism and financial constraints”, Manager 4 said, “Staff are overloaded, we have a shortage of staff” and Manager 6 said: “Lack of funds”. Beyond the organisation three said corruption in the government was limiting the growth of the cultural tourism sector in Polokwane. For example, Manager 7: “Corruption and maladministration are inhibiting the growth of the cultural tourism industry”, Manager 10: “Corruption in the government is stopping us to grow” and Manager 4: “Lack of skilled people to run the tourism sector and poor management from the government”. Seven spoke about the lack of funds and shortage of skilled people in government. For example, Manager 5 said: “Lack of financial support from the government” and “Lack of skilled people to run the tourism sector prevents the sector from growing”.

Marketing and trade associations

Seven used websites to market their enterprises and three made use of local press to advertise their products. Three said that their museums did not experience any major problems with marketing, but five said that their museums experienced financial problems and this negatively affected their ability to do marketing, e.g. Manager 8: “Marketing the museum needed more finance, and there were not enough funds to do the marketing”. Six used the sale of additional items (add-ons) as a crucial way to market the organisation; “These add-ons make the name of our institution trend and this boosts us”. [Manager 6], “Add-ons help us to advertise and market our institution” [Manager 3]. But four had no items for sale as ‘add-ons’. In terms of image, five rated their museum as a ‘market leader’, two felt they were ‘innovative’, and the remaining

three rated themselves as a ‘start-up to watch’. None were concerned with watching their competitors.

All ten organisations were affiliated with trade or tourism associations. These include: the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG) and the South African Museum Association (SAMA). Most (nine) agreed that the associations helped with support, workshops and labour relations: “The associations help us with funds and labour related issues” [Manager 3] and “They keep us abreast with the labour related issues and developments” [Manager 6]. Only one manager did not see the benefits of being the member of an association. In terms of links to travel agencies/tour operators/hostels/hotels/other cultural tourism operators, all the managers said that they have links to different cultural tourism operators. For example, Manager 3 said, “We have links with several local accommodation facilities”, Manager 9 said, “We have links to different travel agencies and local hotels”.

Assistance from the State

Two reported that the local government supported them by renting their facilities. Manager 4: “We sometimes get government using our institution to hold events and meetings and they pay” and Manager 6: “Local government sometimes uses our facility to hold artistic events”. Despite the lack of financial support from government, two specifically wanted subsidies, Manager 3: “The government should inject more money in the cultural tourism sector”. Three of the 10 said that the Department of Tourism should assist with resources, money, and infrastructure: “The government must subsidise us with cultural resources and the necessary infrastructure to attract tourists” [Manager 7]. Eight wanted the government to foster job creation: Manager 2: “The government must create more jobs in the cultural tourism sector” and Manager 5: “The government must employ more youth to give them an exposure of what happens in the tourism industry”. They also wanted help from SA Tourism: Manager 4: “The provincial SA Tourism should provide the museums with the necessary resources and funds to improve tourist expenditure” and Manager 8: “The SA Tourism must invest more money in the cultural tourism industry to create more jobs and economic opportunities”.

In terms of employees, there was a range of opinions as to how the State could assist the sector. Six of the 40 (or 15%) did not know how the government may assist. This was followed by 33% of those who, like the managers, stressed the importance of job creation. They said things such as “The government should create more jobs” [Respondent 37]. Most (53%) talked about financial subsidies from the government. This can be seen in the responses of: Respondent 1: “The SA government should invest millions in the cultural organisations to create more jobs and to boost production”. In terms of assisting the employees, most (85%) wanted money and benefits. They said things such as “by giving the employees benefits such as pension funds, medical aid and other allowances” [Respondent 33] and “the government must force the minimum wage principle ... so that the employees get paid better salaries” [Respondent 28].

Human resource issues

In terms of seasonal variations in employment, seven managers reported no seasonal variations in employment. When it came to recruitment, three advertised their vacancies through the local newspaper and seven on the internet. Four said that they seldom struggled to find skilled staff. However, six said that they hold workshops with their employees to address skills related problems, for example Manager 7: “We make sure that employees undergo thorough training processes before being employed”. In terms of human skills, four of the managers said they needed employees with tourism related skills and qualifications. Three managers wanted employees with a passion for the arts, and the remaining three wanted staff with knowledge of

ceramics and art. Two spoke about the importance of being able to work with different kinds of people. They said things such as, “You need to have good relations with tourists so that you can explain what the features mean” [Manager 7] and “Ability to work with different kinds of cultures” [Manager 8]. Six said that a person should have knowledge of culture. Manager 1 spoke of “Knowledge in the practices of Basotho Culture” and Manager 10: “A person should have skills in culture and the ability to manage a cultural institution”. The answers from the employees were somewhat different. In terms of skills required, eight of the 40 (or 20%) said there were no specific skills required for the jobs that they are undertaking. Some 23% of respondents emphasised the importance of having good communication skills and the ability to interact with different tourists with different cultures. Respondent 10: “Skills that will enable you to interact with different people” and Respondent 31 who said: “You must have good communication skills in order to work here”. Eighteen of the 40 respondents (45%) mentioned computer literacy skills, hospitality, accounting, and marketing, as essential required skills.

Discussion

Despite being privately owned, and not getting much support from the State, as well as being spatially uneven, the cultural organisations under study are doing a great deal to protect and preserve the cultural heritage of the area. The owners or managers are educated and have expertise on how to preserve and protect heritage products. If these cultural institutions were to close, in addition to the sense of loss of cultural identity and heritage, 60 direct jobs would be lost. Scholars such as Smith (2003) and Josse-Durand (2018) argue that local entrepreneurs are needed to boost tourism and establish linkages, which in the case of Greater Polokwane is true, as all the staff were South African citizens and local residents. Furthermore, trade or tourism associations are clearly beneficial, with these associations helping the organisations resolve labour issues, apply for funding, as well as preserve and manage heritage resources.

There are, however, some concerns. For example, only some managers could speak to the institutional history of their respective cultural organisations (an indication of a loss of institutional memory) and most did not seem to place emphasis on the strategic direction their organisation needed to adopt to ensure long-term growth and sustainability. Half of the managers only started working in the museums less than three years ago. Some may, therefore, initiate changes without any consciousness of what happened during the previous managers’ tenure. This may have a negative effect on the institution. Additionally, while all the managers are qualified to hold management positions, only half appear to be ‘hands on’. This ‘manager absenteeism’ is a concern as it may hinder smooth operations and profitability of the institutions. From a marketing and trade associations’ perspective, while most institutions made use of websites and the sale of additional items (add-ons) to market their enterprises, few paid attention to their competitors. As a result, their product offerings may eventually become stale and out-dated, further hindering the growth of the sector. Thus, more emphasis on segmented marketing needs to be undertaken (van der Merwe, 2019) to grow the cultural and heritage tourism base of Greater Polokwane and grow this sector of the tourist economy.

Most managers and employees identified the need for more training and up-skilling of tourist officials and tourist guides. This is something local government can consider supporting for the cultural and heritage tourism industry to grow in Limpopo. That employees were upskilling themselves (to the benefit of the cultural or heritage attraction) by studying further at their own cost may be an indication of where State support is required. The managers also expressed the need to deal with issues such as corruption and maladministration in local government, (where headlines such as “Forensic probe reveals litany of corruption” and “AG report: Polokwane a top contributor to irregular expenditure in Limpopo” prevail) (Erasmus, 2018), if the tourism industry is to flourish in the area. Furthermore, while none got any

financial support from the State (although some did get State business), most wanted assistance in the form of finance, resources, infrastructure, and job creation. Thus, it may be that a lack of funds, resources and infrastructure is hindering the expansion of the cultural tourism sector in Polokwane.

Conclusion

Several needs for further research were identified in this study. Currently there is no public data on museums' revenues, thus it is unknown if the institutions are financially sustainable or not. Accordingly, this research gap needs to be filled. Additionally, the full history of the museums is unknown. This calls for further research as institutional memory loss can impact negatively on the museums' ability to successfully advance their missions. There is correspondingly a need for research to be conducted on the demand for this kind of tourism in Polokwane. That is, we do not know who the tourists that visit these museums are or where they hail from. Does Greater Polokwane represent a specific niche market in heritage tourism? Are the tourists to Greater Polokwane having memorable cultural tourism experiences as expressed by Seyfi, Hall & Rasoolimanesh (2019)? Answering these questions will contribute to an understanding of whether South Africa needs to develop a specific and segmented marketing approach to cultural and heritage tourism (as suggested by van der Merwe, 2016a; 2019).

Based on the findings a more active, hands-on and compassionate State would strengthen these Greater Polokwane cultural organisations. Although South Africa has moved from an autocratic and domineering Apartheid state to a more liberal and democratic; one of the unintended consequences may be that the private sector is left to curate the cultural heritage of Greater Polokwane without support or oversight. Wherefore, firstly, the State should consider a more active role in supporting these cultural institutions, both in terms of where they are operating; and assistance with provision of cultural resources, and marketing. For example, encouraging the organisations to engage with schools and community groups to promote themselves and expand the tourism sector through culture and history education outreach. Secondly, issues around the desire for subsidies by the museums need to be tackled. To that end, subsidies need to be financially appropriate, paid on time and paid for specific purposes, such as to host websites or bus learners from schools to visit the museums for extracurricular purposes. Lastly, the possibility of awarding infrastructural grants to the museums to upgrade their accommodation and ablution facilities (for example), or to assist them to find corporate sponsorship for such upgrades, could significantly improve the museums working environments and sustainability. Although not much attention has been given to cultural and heritage tourism in Greater Polokwane, this study has demonstrated the sector is generating local economic development and entrepreneurship. It should therefore be fostered by the state to grow the potential of this niche of the tourism economy in a very poor province of South Africa.

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