

Cultural Landscapes And Tourism Development In Botswana: The Case Of Moremi Gorge In Eastern Botswana

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ABSTRACT

Cultural landscapes of tourism are fundamentally contradictory sites considering the interests of all stakeholders involved in their management. Key contradictions relate to cultural authenticity, credibility, and the values that people who associate with such landscapes attach to them. The Botswana tourism industry needs to carefully confront these contradictions to maximize and sustain the tourist potential of cultural landscapes. In the World Heritage list there are presently 47 African cultural properties some of which, are considered as cultural landscapes as they bear exceptional cultural traditions of human settlements, land use, and associated with events, living traditions, and beliefs. Sukur (Nigeria), Koutammakou (Togo), Bassari (Senegal), Mapungubwe and Richtersveld (South Africa), Mijikenda Forests (Kenya), and Konso (Ethiopia) are some of the most representative sites. This paper uses secondary data to identify and discuss the impacts of tourism development on cultural landscapes. The paper further considers the implications of such impacts for the ancestral (*Sedimo*) or cultural beliefs of the people of Goo-Moremi Village. The paper concludes by discussing existing opportunities for developing the tourism-product base for Goo-Moremi cultural landscape based on their beliefs, taboos and the general tourism environment.

Key words: Cultural landscapes, tourism development, commodification, ancestral (*Sedimo*) beliefs, taboos, sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

According Leader-Elliott (2005, p. 2), “the cultural landscape of any place is an integral part of any destination, and therefore will have a profound effect on the tourism experience”.

Thus, it will surround visitors wherever they go. However their awareness of this will depend on what they already know about the destination and the information they get when they are there. On the one hand, tourism refers to the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes. On the other hand, cultural heritage tourism (CHT) is defined as travel that involves people experiencing different environments, including landscapes with diverse ways of life, the visual and performing arts, and special lifestyles, morals, traditions, and events (Robinson, 1999). Globally, the tourism industry has experienced sustained growth and development over the last decades, and the reasons for such growth are diverse. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2014) notes that global tourism trends have been growing over the years in terms of tourist arrivals and revenue despite geopolitical and economic challenges, the number of international tourist arrivals has grown by 5% a year on average since 2010, a trend that has translated into more economic growth, more exports and more jobs (UNWTO, 2014). According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (2014) international tourist arrivals grew by 4.6% in the first half of 2014. Destinations worldwide received 517 million international tourists between January and June 2014, 22 million more than in the same period of 2013. So far, these results are in line with the UNWTO forecast issued at the beginning of 2014. For the full year 2014, international tourist arrivals were expected to increase by 4% to 4.5% worldwide, above UNWTO's long-term forecast of 3.8% per year for the period 2010 to 2020. Africa's international tourist numbers grew by 3% as the recovery consolidated in North Africa. This is despite the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak that might have affected tourism to North African region due to misperceptions about the transmission of the virus. These results show that tourism is consolidating the positive performance of recent years, providing development and economic opportunities worldwide. Thus, for sub-Saharan Africa, the Travel and Tourism's direct contribution to employment recorded a 2.8% growth by 2012, making the region to rank fourth (4th) after Latin America with 4.2%, South East Asia, 3.2% and South Asia with 2.8% (WTTC, 2012).

Tourism growth worldwide has been driven by improved communication networks, availability of information, better infrastructure and rising disposable income (Terkenli, 2000). For a long period of time, tourism in most parts of Africa has been wildlife based, with places like the Serengeti in East Africa, the Okavango Delta in Botswana, Kruger National Park in South Africa, Kafue National Park in Zambia and Etosha National Park in Namibia recorded among the busiest tourism destination in Africa (Mulale, Matema, Funda, Slater-Jones, Njovu, Kanguuehi, Hay & Crookes, 2013). However, in recent years cultural tourism experienced significant growth worldwide leading to commoditization of many cultural landscapes (Richards, 2001; Chhabra, 2010). According to the WTO (2005), cultural tourism accounted for 37% of global tourism, with an estimated growth rate of 15% per year. Thus, in many places cultural tourism can present an ideal vehicle for local and regional development where local people can experience the direct economic benefits and employment (Smith, 2003). Cultural tourism is reported to have grown because many places are turning to creative development strategies, or different forms of creative tourism in the process (Richards, 2009). Examples include, among others, Tongariro in New Zealand, the Vega archipelago in Norway, the ancient rice terraces of Luzon in the Philippines, the Mapungubwe in South Africa (Buckley, Ollenburg, & Zhong, 2008). Despite the growth of cultural tourism, the socio-economic impact

of cultural tourism development and commoditization of cultural landscapes on rural livelihoods remain unclear due to inadequate documentation and research. Defining the significance of cultural landscapes is not easy due to the requirement to balance the traditional values of the landscapes with the contemporary focus (Jopela, 2011). Breedlove (2002) argues that scholars and tourism developers should consider landscapes as always changing hence the need to recognize the differences. However, the rapid growth of cultural tourism from the preserve of the elite Grand Tourists to a major industry in the 20th Century has also caused problems (Richards, 2009). Growing numbers of tourists at major sites and in small communities has raised questions about the sustainability of this new form of mass tourism. In particular it has become harder for destinations to profile their culture among the products on offer, each desperate to claim their uniqueness (Richards, 2009). There is a growing number of places in search of new forms of articulation between culture and tourism which can help to strengthen rather than water down local culture. This, can raise the value accruing to local communities and improve the links between local creativity and tourism (Richards, 2009; Jopela, 2011; Mulale, et al., 2013) Different cultures occupying the same landscape at different times often embrace the same significant landscape features such as high points and siting of churches in England, sacred springs and Christian shrines in Ireland, and aboriginal sites such as Ayre's Rock (Breedlove, 2002). There is an argument that "the concept of a cultural landscape closely involves the spiritual and contemporary uses of a landscape with the management of its archaeological heritage" Shackley (2000, p. 80).

Phillips (1998) and Weaver (2006) contend that cultural landscapes are a combination of public and private spaces upon which the tourism industry is often dependent, but over which it has little or no control. As summarized by UNESCO (1996:para 39), "cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land use, considering the characteristics and limits of natural environment they are established in and a specific spiritual relationship to nature". This means that protection of cultural landscapes can contribute to modern sustainable land use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape. However, in Botswana, cultural tourism is not given the due attention it deserves as much of the focus is on wildlife based tourism in northern Botswana. Studies by several scholars, for example; Mulale (2005); Thakadu (2005); Mbaiwa (2008); Moswete (2009); Moswete and Dube (2013); Mulale et al., (2013) have largely focused on the impacts of wildlife-based tourism on the regional and national economy. While tourism usually has an influence on the economic development of destination areas, recent studies for example by; Moswete and Mavondo (2003); Thakadu (2005); Mbaiwa and Darkoh (2006); Geoflux (2009); Mbaiwa and Sakuze (2009); Dichaba (2009); Mbaiwa (2011); Moswete and Lacey (2015), demonstrate that communities living within the vicinity of most tourism destinations in Botswana experience high level of poverty. For instance, the 2008 poverty map of Botswana shows that communities living around key destination areas such as the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR), the Okavango Delta, Gcwihaba and Tsodilo Hills are among the poorest in Botswana, and this suggests that tourism has insignificant positive socio-economic impacts on local communities in Botswana (CSO, 2008). There are not many studies on the nature of cultural landscapes in Botswana. This is despite the fact that there are cultural landscapes such as; the Tsodilo Hills and Gcwihaba in the north-west, Tswapong Hills in the east, Domboshaba in the north east, Lekhubu Island in the Central and Mogonye in the south of Botswana. Research on the impacts of such sites on

conservation and rural livelihoods is limited. Therefore, “given the paucity of information and research on community-based tourism in the region, there is a dire need for additional baseline data” (Moswete & Thapa, 2015, p. 1).

The main goal of this paper is to examine the contradictions that the commodification of Goo-Moremi Cultural Landscape has caused. As alluded to earlier, key contradictions relate to cultural authenticity, credibility, and the values that people who associate with such landscapes attach to them. The Botswana tourism industry needs to carefully confront these contradictions to maximize and sustain the tourist potential of cultural landscapes. The paper uses the Goo-Moremi Conservation Area located in the Central District of Botswana as a case study. Using the concept of cultural commodification, this paper traces the development of Goo-Moremi as a cultural landscape from a historical perspective, thereby, discussing the Community’s ancestral (*Sedimo*) and or cultural beliefs.

CONCEPTUAL / THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper is informed by the concept of commodification. This concept is built from that of capitalism which relied on commodification of labour and goods. Originally, capitalism was built on globalization and the new economy transformed culture into a commodity as well (Mowforth & Munt, 1998). As suggested by Mowforth and Munt (1998, p.64), “with the spread and intervention of capitalism into the Third World societies, tourism has also had the effect of turning Third World places, landscapes and people into commodities”. This means that elements of a holiday are consumed the same way as other objects or commodities and commodities acquire a social value from being created through labour (Marx, 1977). Therefore it is safe to argue that, tourism transforms culture into a commodity to be sold and consumed. The concept of commodification refers to the “dominance of commodity exchange-value over use value and implies the development of a consumer society where market relations subsume and dominate social life” (Gotham, 2002, p. 1737). This means that the basic principle of the concept of commodification is that tourism converts culture from having a social value and a use value to an exchange value thereby “transforming the impetus for tourism into a tangible commodity” (Douglas, Douglas & Derrett 2001, p. 122). Douglas et al., (2001, p. 122), argue that, “commodification is certainly inevitable in cultural tourism and could generally be argued to be benign, creating tourist products and experiences that tourists are usually relatively happy to consume, as well as mementos of experience in various forms.” This is because commodification extends into the most sacred and profound aspects of culture, despite measures taken to safeguard the culture.

However, Cohen (1988) and Weaver (2006) note that, through commodification a destination’s culture is gradually converted into a saleable commodity or product in response to the perceived or actual demands of the tourist market. The above argument means that the origins of Commodification can be traced to a Marxist perspective that “commodities come into the world in the form of use values” (Marx, 1977, p.138). It is worth noting that commodification does not necessarily destroy the meaning of cultural products. This is despite the fact that it may change cultural products or add new meaning to old ones. Tourism can be used as a vehicle to preserve local cultures and cultural heritage in cultural landscapes. To achieve this, cultural integrity must take priority over economic gain which, in most cases is

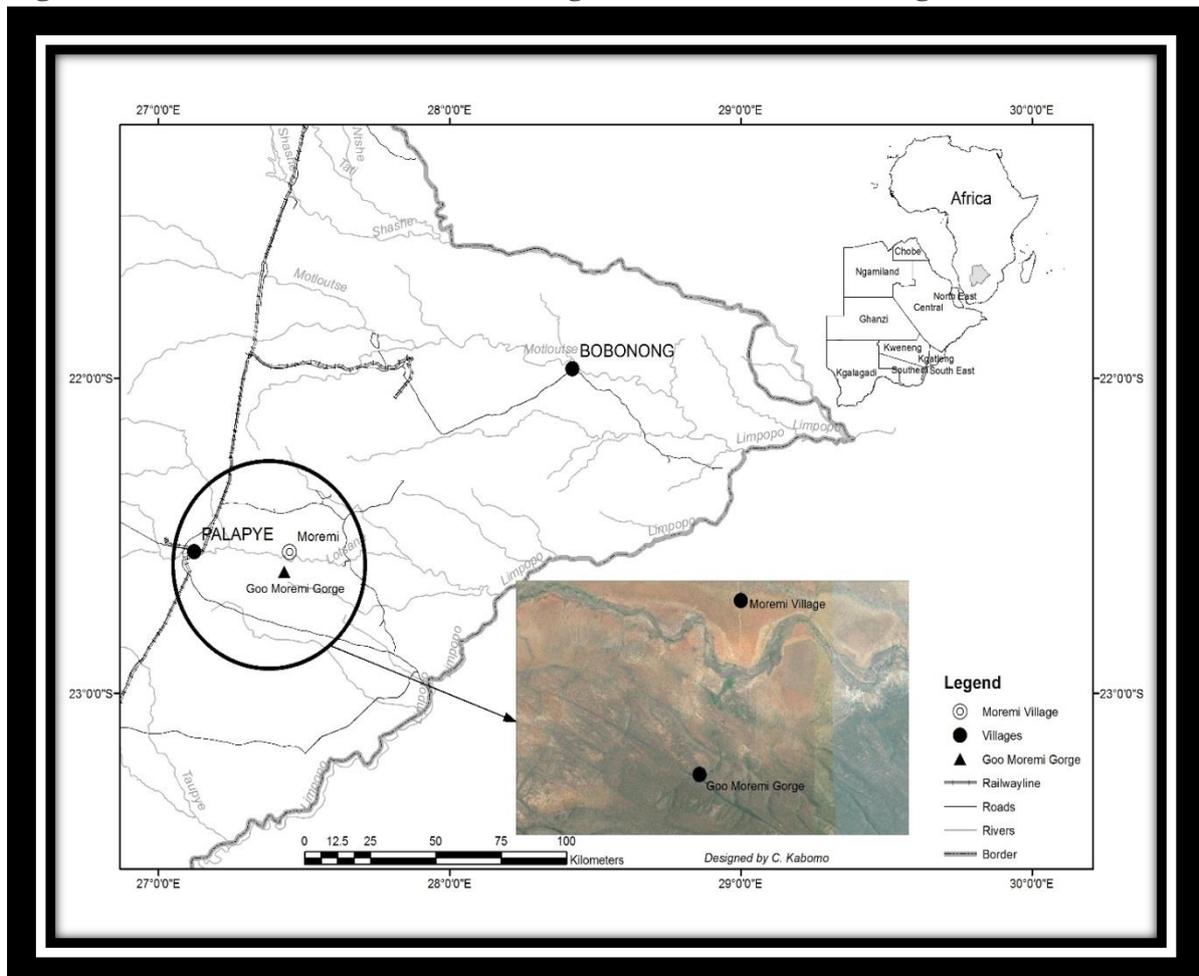
geared towards satisfying tourists' needs (Douglas, et al., 2001). As pointed out by Douglas et al., (2001, p. 276), "commodification of a destination's culture, or its conversion into a commodity in response to the perceived or actual demands of the tourist market, is commonly perceived as a major negative socio-cultural impact associated with tourism". The other concern is on the modification of what is being manufactured for tourism, namely; the art and craft work, performances and representations of the culture being sold. Thus, while some cultural forms may become extinct, other traditional forms may be transformed into new products. The new products are those such as: souvenir uniqueness, reintegrated arts, and assimilated fine arts. Nevertheless, the issue of commodification can be more complex, thus, packaging a destination culture for the consumption of visitors raises many issues, (MacCanell, 1973; Cohen, 1988; Douglas, et al., 2001; Weaver, 2006). Using such strategies as underscored above, communities can deflect at least some of the impacts and consequences of tourism in order to support the local culture and sense of identity of the locals. Commodification of culture should not necessarily be detrimental to the host community. This is despite the fact that impacts may arise from four different situations, as follows; when residents are faced with unaccustomed behaviour and demands from tourists, or when they become involved in changing patterns of employment created by the tourism economy, as visitors find themselves spatially distanced from their homes, in the midst of a different way of life and lastly, as residents and tourists interact, both within and outside the context of the tourism industry (Weaver, 2006). As stated by Weaver (2006), commodification of culture in effect can rob people of the very meanings by which they organize their lives. Thus, conflicts may arise in the community over the; distribution of revenue, appropriate rates of remuneration, for example, performers and craft producers and other market related issues with which society may not be equipped to deal (Jopela, 2011).

This means that traditional societies that are exposed to intensive and invasive levels of tourism development are especially susceptible to commodification. However, local residents are not powerless in the face of commodification pressures, and can adopt various measures to minimize the negative impacts of commodification (Douglas et al., 2001). Tourism development for long has focused on tourist consumption needs that gave more emphasis to single product elements (Weaver, 2006). In Botswana this type of development is apparent in the domineering role of wildlife and nature-based tourism in specific locations such as the Okavango Delta and Chobe. As a result, the Botswana government is engaging in efforts to increase the share of cultural attractions in the country's tourism industry (Mbaiwa, 2011). As commodification is a process in which the final outcome of a product is solely defined by its economic value, as such, the Goo-Moremi Community has already expressed concern over the impact of tourism on their ancestral (*Sedimo*) culture (Geoflux, 2009; Dichaba, 2009). Cultural commodification frequently results in the loss of control over cultural resources as outside agents begin to capitalize on cultural elements that belong to others (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). This often occurs without the approval of the people whose heritage is being consumed and results in conflicts over rights of ownership and fair trade in culture.

THE STUDY AREA

This paper is based on available literature on Goo-Moremi cultural landscape. The landscape comprises of Goo-Moremi village and the Goo-Moremi gorge in the Central District of Botswana (Figure 1). Botswana is divided into nine (9) districts for ease of allocation of resources and management purposes. These districts which are administered by District Councils under the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development were created for improvement of service delivery and implementation of policies and programmes at local level (Government of Botswana, [GoB] 2004). Botswana government’s aim was to achieve improved service delivery through capacity building and decentralization of its services “with a view to enhance local level accountability to the public.” (GoB, 2015, p.6). Goo-Moremi Village falls within the jurisdiction of Central District which is administered by the Central District Council. The Central District is the largest District in the country, in terms of human population and area of coverage. Go–Moremi village is 76 Kilometers east of Palapye village. The Goo-Moremi Gorge is situated in the Tswapong Hills in the Goo-Moremi Conservation Area (GMCA) about 5 kilometers south of Goo–Moremi Village.

Figure 1: Location Of Goo-Moremi Village And Goo-Moremi Gorge



Source: GIS laboratory at Okavango Research Institute (ORI)

Goo-Moremi Conservation Area (GMCA)

The village of Goo-Moremi together with the Goo-Moremi gorge are together referred to as the Goo-Moremi Conservation Area (GMCA). The village is one of several villages situated on the northern edge of the Tswapong hills (Mbaiwa, 2011). The Goo-Moremi Village community originates from areas now in present-day South Africa and they migrated to Botswana around the 1800s fleeing from the regional tribal wars in Southern Africa known as the Mfecane (White 2000a). *Kgosi* (Chief) Mapulane led the people of Goo-Moremi Village to settle at the mouth of Goo-Moremi Gorge in the Tswapong Hills (Geoflux, 2009). According to the 2011 Botswana Population and Housing Census, the total population of Goo-Moremi village was 597 (275 males and 322 females). Goo-Moremi village is regarded as the headquarters of the ancestral (*Sedimo*) culture in the Tswapong area and therefore the community of Goo-Moremi village is the one that is mostly affected by tourism. Agriculture has been the dominant source of livelihoods in the village; 31% of households rely on ploughing for food supply while 13.8% sell their livestock to supplement household needs (Geoflux, 2009). This reveals the vulnerability of rural households, because arable returns can be low and erratic (Geoflux, 2009). Approximately 21% of local households supplemented their incomes through engagement in casual employment in drought relief and odd jobs, such as doing laundry and yard clearing. Small businesses operated in 13.8% of households, including the selling of cigarettes, shoe repairs and the brewing of traditional alcohol (Geoflux, 2009).

During 1999, a local non-governmental organisation, the Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) mobilised the Goo-Moremi community to be involved in community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) projects. As a result, the people of Goo-Moremi Village formed a community-based trust (CBT) known as Goo-Moremi-Mannonnye Community Conservation Trust (GMMCCT), which was registered in July 1999 (Dichaba, 2009; Mbaiwa, 2011). The aims of the Trust according to White (2001b); Dichaba (2009) and Mbaiwa (2011) include: protecting and preserving natural resources and heritage of Goo-Moremi Gorge, its flora and fauna; developing viable and sustainable tourism enterprises utilising the human, scenic cultural and biological resources of GMCA; and, preserving the natural environment while generating income opportunities and creating jobs for the community of Goo-Moremi Village. As a result of its rich cultural heritage, Goo-Moremi Village represents a suitable case study for analysing the effects of tourism development on the community. The GMCA and entire Tswapong area are the abode of the *Badimo*, the ancestors of the Tswapong communities (Dichaba, 2009). This means that the community believe that *Badimo* (ancestors) are part of their lives and therefore should be consulted in almost every activity undertaken in the village (White, 2001a; 2001b). The Goo-Moremi Cultural landscape represents a unique tourism destination in Central Botswana. It was declared a National monument in 2006 (DNMM records). Mannonnye gorge is sacred to the people of Goo-Moremi Village and the rest of the communities surrounding Tswapong Hills as it is considered the spiritual seat of their ancestors (Dichaba, 2009). This means that the local people in the area see Goo-Moremi gorge as the headquarters for their culture.

The gorge area has historical and archaeological attractions, rich biological diversity, spectacular perennial streams and water ponds which potentially can become tourism products

(Geoflux, 2009). Thus, the gorge is renowned also for its waterfalls and Cape Vulture colony. Historical remains at Goo-Moremi Gorge include the graves of *Kgosi* Mapulane and his sons (Dichaba, 2009). The community's first settlement was around the mouth of the gorge which is acknowledged by the local people of Goo-Moremi as the first site of the village (Dichaba, 2010; Mbaiwa, 2011). At this site, there are remains of the old village, tobacco fields, school and the graves forming a cultural heritage which, the people of Goo-Moremi Village respect (Geoflux, 2009). The present village is about eight kilometres from the old village site and Goo-Moremi Gorge. The GMCCT has developed a Goo-Moremi Gorge Management Plan and Tourism Development Plan for Goo-Moremi Gorge with the assistance of the KCS in 2001 (Dichaba, 2010). These plans serve to guide the Trust on activities that can be implemented in order to enhance tourism and high-light the potential for Goo-Moremi Gorge to be an attractive tourist destination (Geoflux, 2009). It is considered that tourism development at Goo-Moremi can contribute to the broadening, diversifying and geographically spreading Botswana's tourism away from the existing concentrations in Northern Botswana (Mbaiwa, 2011). Accordingly, the Botswana Tourism Organisation (BTO) jointly with the GMMCT developed the cultural tourism resources of the Goo-Moremi area for wider tourism development (Geoflux, 2009).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The discussion of tourism development around the world often focus on nature-based or wilderness areas paying less attention to cultural landscapes. Such an approach often praises tourism development for its ability to reconcile conservation and development goals in or near protected areas (Kiss, 2004; Ashworth & van der Aa, 2006; Figgis & Bushell, 2007; Borges, Cabone, Bushell & Jaeger, 2011). From a conservation perspective, tourism can raise funds for protecting natural areas, enhance local and tourist awareness of biodiversity and conservation issues as well as discourage local people from adopting unsustainable livelihoods practices (Borges et al., 2011). Biodiversity conservation appeals to local people because it gives them a voice in natural resource management decisions and a financial stake in the preservation of wildlife (Richards & Hall 2000; Figgis & Bushell 2007). Kiss (2004) also argues that ecotourism is a fairly good land use practice in cultural landscapes because it can generate some income and contribute to community development.

Thus, from a development perspective, ecotourism revenue may reduce poverty by stimulating business development and job creation (Richards, 2001, 2009). In principle, this is compatible with biodiversity conservation as well as enhancing local services (Borges et al., 2011). Through improved education local communities can be empowered to advocate for the protection of the natural environment in their landscapes. Conversely, if tourism is badly planned and not managed responsibly, it can lead to biodiversity loss, eco-system degradation and negative impacts on local communities (Borges et al., 2011). These processes of landscape change have also been observed in other parts of Europe, such as the Mediterranean countries (Pauleit, Breuste, Qureshi & Sauerwein, 2010). Detailed accounts of land use transitions were contributed from Spain and Portugal. According to Otero, Boada, & Varda (2009) and Pauleit et al., (2010), such land use transitions were observed in Olzinelles, North East of Spain, where a parish of 2286 hectares in the municipality of Saint Celoi in the province of Barcelona's forest cover increased between 1851 and 2008 significantly at the costs of agricultural land.

This means that expansion of woodlands led to a decline in biodiversity dependent on fields and meadows (Otero, et al., 2009). It is, therefore, clear that in modern times the old type of land management in the cultural landscape is difficult to achieve. At a few locations elements of this landscape remain but elsewhere the pattern of land ownership, which reflects modern management, prevents the establishment of an extensive system (Richards, 2009). Thus, where cultural landscapes remain, as in western Norway or the New Forest in England, they should be sustained and encouraged because the landscape they produce has a high value for nature conservation (Webb, 1998). Terraced rice fields and sacred mountains are the two major landscape resources that represent cultural landscapes in Asia and the Pacific Region (Otero, et al., 2009). The terraces have been formed in close association with rice-growing agricultural practices prevalent in the region. Thus, agricultural practices for rice growing have played a significant role in the formation of cultural landscapes in the area and rice fields have always been the central element of these unique landscapes.

The basis for their protection is often formed by traditional respect for these places, and by existing access restrictions to these sacred sites. Threats to indigenous cultures also exist in many parts of the world, therefore, “research has to be carried out on the evidence of the human interaction in order not to fall into the trap of romanticizing cultural landscapes and traditional cultures” (Rossler, 2006, p.167). Thus, tourism needs to be managed such that it upholds the principles of sustainable development. In view of all the research cited above, it is evident that a very small number of tourism publications have ever used the term cultural landscapes. The term cultural landscape does not seem to have entered into the vocabulary of tourism marketing, destination analysis or tourism studies at all (Buckley, Ollenburg, & Zhong, 2008). This shows that cultural tourism is a well-established field of study but with little reference to landscape (Buckley et al., 2008). The term cultural landscape is commonly found in World Heritage literature, where many sites are listed specifically as cultural landscapes (Fowler, 2002). These are sites such as Tongariro in New Zealand, the Vega archipelago in Norway, the ancient rice terraces of Luzon in the Philippines, the Mapungubgwe in South Africa (Buckley et al., 2008).

According to Jopela (2011), Africa has become dependent on tourism as one of the top foreign income generators in most of the continent’s countries. Therefore, Jopela asserts that diversification of the tourism product from natural products such as wildlife, and the wilderness to include culture and cultural tourism is the answer for most of these countries. Several contributors to the debate of cultural landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa are for the idea that despite lack of formal management systems, the role of local communities in the active custodianship of cultural landscapes through living traditions has been observed in Southern Africa, including Zimbabwe, Kenya (Ngoro, 2001; Taruvinga & Ngoro, 2003; Taruvinga, 2007; Ngoro & Kiriamu, 2008; Chirikure & Pwiti, 2008) and Mozambique (Jopela, 2011). They have also observed that communities’ attachment to cultural landscapes do not always imply that such communities embrace traditional custodianship of these cultural landscapes. For example, in Malawi, although communities living in the Chongoni landscape recognise the rock art as part of their heritage, “this recognition does not permeate to conservation” (Jopela, 2011, p. 14).

There are also those who believe that the management of cultural landscapes is about managing change such that environmental and cultural values are able to withstand the change

(Mupira, 2008; Chirikure & Pwiti, 2008; Ndoro & Kiriama, 2008). Nevertheless, it is important to note that in many cases management arrangements for the protection of cultural landscapes imbued with sacred values is not effective due to the centralised state-based administrative systems for heritage management that are found in most African countries (Chirikure & Pwiti, 2008; Jopela, 2011). This is due to the fact that development of tourism in Africa in general, and the development of cultural tourism in particular, is at its incipient stage (Akama & Sterry, 2002). However there is a great variation in the level of tourism development in the 53 African countries. The variation in the notion of tourism development field ranges from the most developed to those that are least developed (Dieke, 2000). Within this scale of tourism development, countries such as Kenya, Mauritius and Seychelles, Morocco and Tunisia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, and Cote d'ivoire and Senegal, have a well-established tourism industry. These countries can safely be referred to as the so-called African success stories. Whereas, other countries such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Eritrea, Sierra Leone, Angola, Zambia, and most notably Botswana, have limited tourism development, but by comparison have considerable potential for future development. However, Dieke (2000) further argues that even in those African countries, especially in eastern and southern Africa, that are considered a success story, the development of tourism is currently narrowly focused on a limited tourism product based on wildlife safari and beach tourism. Even in those countries, especially Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire which have developed elements of cultural tourism, their tourism product is targeted to a narrow market segment, mainly the African-Americans and other Africans in the Diaspora (Dieke, 2000). Thus, in most African countries, the rich and diverse indigenous cultures such as the living heritage of the African people, the assortment of ethnic material and non - material culture has not been developed for tourism (Ndoro, 2001; Munjeri, 2003). Landscapes may become cultural or sacred simply through the benefit of the representational interface between people and their natural environment over a period of time (Munjeri, 2003). In fact, as observed by Mahachi and Kamuhangire (2008), in Jopela (2011, p.15), "state institutions in charge of heritage are frequently understaffed due to limited funding, hence interaction with communities is limited", making it difficult for such institutions to respond to the needs of communities living in these cultural landscapes and other stakeholders. Ndoro (2006, p.336), argues that, "African heritage has to be considered in its totality, including the intangible elements such as the spiritual and sacred values that are held within cultural landscapes", if management strategies conceived by modern heritage managers are to succeed. This means that the aspirations of local communities must be taken into consideration.

In Botswana, the focus in tourism development has been on wildlife-based tourism while ignoring cultural tourism products found in cultural landscapes. This limitation is demonstrated in the work of researchers such as; Bolaane (2004); Mulale (2005); Thakadu (2005); Mbaiwa (2003; 2004; 2005; 2007; 2009; 2010; 2011); Magole (2009); Moswete (2009) and Lenao (2013; 2014), whose work has focused on the impacts of wildlife-based tourism to the regional and national economy. Most of these scholars focused in northern Botswana and ignored the contribution of cultural landscapes to tourism development. Studies by Hitchcock (2000; 2004); Molebatsi and Masilo-Rakgoasi (2005); Moswete, Thapa and Lacey (2009); and Bolaane (2004; 2005; 2013) have focused on access and rights of minority groups such as the Basarwa to the use of natural resources in wilderness areas in Ngamiland, Ghantsi and Kgalagadi. However, these studies are limited in that they have not shown how minority and

rural groups such as the Basarwa can derive socio-economic benefits from cultural landscapes such as Tsodilo Hills, Gcwihaba Caves and Goo-Moremi Gorge. Hitchcock (2000) and Campbell (2010) discuss the natural artefacts and tourism products at Tsodilo Hills which became a World Heritage Site in 2001 ignoring the fact that Tsodilo is also a cultural landscape. While, Hitchcock (2000) and Campbell (2010) provide insights into the cultural tourism products at Tsodilo Hills, they fail to demonstrate cultural changes and the controversies that surround the commodification of Tsodilo. How commodification of Tsodilo has affected the social life and related socio-economic aspects of the local communities have been ignored by these researchers. Research by Bolaane (2004; 2005; 2013) and Taylor (2000; 2007) focus on the historical aspects of the Basarwa in Moremi Game Reserve and how these local communities came to be relocated from the reserve when it was established. These researchers provide credible recommendations on how the Basarwa can benefit from wildlife tourism in Moremi Game Reserve. The dilemma with their research is that it falls short in identifying some of the cultural sites in the reserve and the controversies of how local groups can benefit from cultural tourism in the area. According to Lenao (2013, p.579), “community-based tourism is thought to carry the promise to increase, promote and provide improved livelihoods for rural communities.”

Thus, it promotes a sense of ownership of the resources in question with the potential to promote their sustainable use and conservation by the communities. Botswana’s tourism industry has grown steadily to reach a 9.7% Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution value by 2007 (WTTC, 2005) from a 2 % contribution to the GDP at independence in 1966. As observed by Moswete (2009), this steady development has seen tourism overtaking the Agriculture sector and becoming the second biggest contributor to the country’s GDP after diamonds. It is evident that from its earliest stages of development. Botswana’s tourism industry has been heavily reliant on wildlife and the wilderness resources that mostly abound in the North western parts of the country (Moswete & Mavondo, 2003; Moswete, 2009; Mbaiwa & Darkoh, 2006; Mbaiwa & Sakuze, 2009; Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010; Lenao & Saarinen, 2015). White (2001a), Geoflux (2009), Dichaba (2009), and Mbaiwa (2011), provide a description of the cultural tourism products as well as flora and fauna found in the GMCA. These researches provide insights into how the local community at Goo-Moremi can benefit from tourism development in their area. However, the noted research work except for Dichaba (2009) has not provided the controversies surrounding Goo-Moremi cultural landscape. Keitumetse (2006) has focused on archaeological sites such as Tsodilo Hills and only suggested how they can be tourism destinations. This also applies to research by Denbow & Thebe (2006) and Segadika (2006; 2008), which is mostly concerned about how communities living next to Tsodilo hills could be crucial in the preservation of the rock art. The research does not explicitly acknowledge the impact of commodifying this very important cultural resource on the livelihoods of the local communities, hence, leaving out the controversies and contradictions that go along with managing such landscapes.

This means that although cultural tourism is being promoted in Botswana, there is very little research that has so far analysed the, “effects of tourism and commodification of cultural landscapes on the socio-cultural, socio-economic livelihoods of local communities” (Mbaiwa, 2011, p.291). The Botswana Government’s decision to devolve management of natural resources to communities also contributed to shaping heritage management in Botswana

through Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) programme. This was done in line with the government's vision 2016, a long-term vision for Botswana that coincided with the country's celebration of fifty (50) years of independence from Britain. Sankoyo was the first village to have a CBNRM program in the Okavango Delta in 1995. It is also recognized by several studies for example; Bolaane (2000), Arntzen (2003), Thakadu (2005), Arntzen, Setlhogile, & Barnes (2007), Mbaiwa (2007; 2011b) as one of the villages where CBNRM has a significant impact on livelihoods as a product of tourism development. Sankoyo epitomizes some of the best solutions to challenges of livelihoods, tourism development, resource use and conservation in CBNRM areas. However, all the research in Sankoyo is in relation to wildlife and the wilderness as opposed to the culture and or cultural tourism in the village and how it can be used to augment wildlife tourism to improve the livelihoods of the community and conservation. Given the fact that tourism has been associated with a rise in crime, a drop in morals, barring residents from access to and enjoyment of services and encouraging homogenization as well as commercialization of culture, it is not surprising that most studies of the social consequences of tourism have taken a negative view of tourism (Thakadu, et al., 2005). In Botswana, cultural landscapes are looked after by the Botswana Government to safeguard the sustainable utilisation of these landscapes by communities. In recent years many developing countries have turned to tourism as an important feature in their development process. This is because it is seen as a solution to many problems that bedevil the developing countries. Thus, it promotes employment, brings in the much needed foreign exchange revenue and also promotes the conservation of the natural and cultural resources (Irandu, 2004). The impact of tourism on cultural heritage is ambiguous as the available literature tends to paint a negative picture of its impact on culture (Irandu, 2004).

The GMCA has a great potential for non-consumptive or ecotourism development. This is because of the availability of non-consumptive ecotourism products which make the GMCA unique when compared to tourism products found in other parts of the country. Some of the unique ecotourism products identified at GMCA are that; Goo-Moremi Village culture of ancestral spirits (*sedimo* or *badimo*), craft products such as wooden crafts, leather works, basketry, graves of the former chiefs and hut of the ancestors (*ntlo ya badimo*). There are also some bird species like the cape vulture, falcon and eagles; medicinal and fruits plant species and those used for other purposes, and lastly, wildlife which include animals like Leopard, Kudu, hare and baboon (White, 2001a). The ancestral or *Sedimo* culture is currently not a tourist attraction. However, it is unique and can attract tourists if it is properly developed, packaged and marketed because its historical development is unique and not found in other parts of the country (Mbaiwa, 2011). Also, an oral tradition approach of storytelling by the elders can be a significant product which can be loved by tourists. This means that the oral traditions on the Goo-Moremi culture of *Sedimo* can attract both domestic and international cultural tourists thereby diversifying the Botswana tourism product from the largely wildlife and scenic beauty of wilderness based to cultural tourism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-cultural impacts of Tourism on Goo-Moremi Cultural Landscape

Tourism can commodify local culture if religious traditions, local customs and festivals are altered to conform to tourist expectations, resulting in what has been called staged authenticity, (McCannell, 1973) and or “pseudo-culture” (Irandu, 2004, p, 145). This means there is bound to be standardization of what the community offers the tourists due to having to satisfy tourists’ desires, thereby undermining authentic cultural products (Cohen, 1988). Socio-cultural impacts of tourism refer to the effects on host communities of direct and indirect interactions with tourists and with the tourism industry (Irandu, 2004). The impacts arise when tourism brings about changes in communities’ value systems and behaviour that could threaten indigenous identity (Jamal & Hill, 2004). Adaptation to tourist demands can also put undue pressure on local communities as they choose different aspects of culture that they believe tourists want to see and are prepared to pay for (Buckley et al., 2008). In tourist destinations such as; Kenya, craftsmen such as the Maasai have responded to this growing demand and have made changes in the design of their products to make them more saleable to customers (Irandu, 2004).

The taboos and cultural beliefs that also form the sacred being, dignity and history of the people of Goo-Moremi Village can be the main tourist attraction and appeal to cultural tourists (Mbaiwa, 2011). Manonnye Gorge is regarded by the people of Goo- Moremi Village as home or resting place of spirits of their ancestors, as a result, the taboos and beliefs associated with Goo-Moremi Village and the Gorge include the following; the ancestors’ secrets are not to be divulged to unauthorized people and, because of this belief, the spiritual mediator of the village does not easily divulge information to visitors when they ask (White, 2001a; Dichaba, 2009; Geoflux, 2009; Mbaiwa, 2011). This belief has safeguarded and ensured authenticity of Goo-Moremi *Sedimo* culture from time immemorial and has helped this cultural landscape to maintain the uniqueness that sets it apart from other cultural landscapes in Botswana (Siphambe, forthcoming)..

It is compulsory for all people in the village to observe the *Mophaso* ceremony in quietness, where the spiritual mediator speaks and makes requests to the ancestors. *Mophaso* is a ceremony held to appease the ancestors or to make special requests about infrastructural developments, ailments or rain from the ancestors (Dichaba, 2009). As further noted by Dichaba (2009), on the day of the ceremony, people may sit at the *Kgotla* (a social space designated for village meetings, administrative and social activities presided over by the Village Chief), but they are not allowed to face the *Ntlo ya Badimo* (hut of the Gods or Ancestors) where the spiritual mediator will be speaking to the ancestors (*Badimo*). In addition, all couples whether married or unmarried should avoid sexual activity the night before visiting the Gorge or on the day the *Mophaso* ceremony is held. Sexual activity should also be avoided at the Gorge. Making of fires, noise and swimming are prohibited at the Gorge. As a sign of respect for ancestors, all women in their monthly periods are not allowed to visit the Gorge and, all development projects in the village should not be executed without asking for permission from the ancestors through the spiritual mediator (White 2001a; Geoflux 2009; Dichaba 2009; Mbaiwa 2011). All the taboos and beliefs should be observed by all Goo-Moremi Village residents and visitors alike. It is believed that failure to observe these taboos often result in offenders being punished by the ancestors or *Badimo*. For example, it is believed that if a couple makes love at the gorge or during *Mophaso* ceremony, this can result in them giving birth to an albino baby (Mbaiwa 2011).

Conflicts with traditional land-uses are also inherent in GMCA in that the local community feel alienated from the Gorge especially after commodification (Siphambe, forthcoming). The conflicts arose after construction of tourist facilities such as fencing off the GMCA, which, cut off the locals' access to traditionally used areas like the Gorge where they used to worship their ancestors and get water for spiritual purposes without any restrictions and now they have to register at the Gatehouse and pay an entrance fee.

Potential Socio-economic, Cultural and Environmental Impacts of Tourism at Goo-Moremi Village

While residents of a destination may obtain significant financial returns from tourism, the contention is that serious social problems arise. The problems are in association with the loss of cultural identity and the related disruption of traditional norms, values and structures that maintain social stability (Irandu, 2004). Tourism plays a major role in boosting the economies of most developing countries in Africa. Many African countries have begun to realize the limited successes of agricultural exports due to climate change and developmental pressures and have so far shifted their focus to tourism as a new source of growth (Moswete & Dube, 2013).. Nature-based tourism has become the most popular land-use tool, and a rural-development strategy in southern Africa, in particular Botswana, where it has contributed to job creation, income generation and promoted the conservation of natural resources and improved living standards of remote-rural area communities, such as that of Goo-Moremi Village some of who have been hired to work for the venture (Moswete & Dube, 2013).

Cultural Landscapes

Cultural landscapes may have evolved from human settlement and land use overtime, resulting in a diversity of distinctive landscapes in different areas (Taylor, 2008). The complex nature of the relationship of the tourist with the visited landscape should be established at the outset. Thus, the tourism landscape requires appropriate interpretation and cannot be detached from its relationship with the tourist.

This paper argues that the use of cultural landscapes to promote conservation in Southern Africa has produced multiple regional spaces that are theoretically and virtually incompatible. These spaces are informative of the role played by cultural landscapes in decentralization of resources through nature conservation and how nature conservation also shapes these landscapes (UNESCO, 1992). This also involves how people perceive and use landscapes. Landscape interpretation, took as a guiding principle the notion that landscape is to be read and interpreted according to function rather than merely appraised visually. Thus, "mere seeing was deemed less important than understanding landscapes as lived-in places. Real comprehension grew from awareness of function in the identification of cultural, social, economic, and political contexts" (Breedlove, 2002, p.89). This is characteristic of the GMCA in that the Gorge is the abode of their ancestors, thereby playing a particular function in the community's *Sedimo* culture, besides being a good source of water for both domestic use and livestock watering (Geoflux, 2009). The GMCA also has within its environs the community's old settlement, graves of their late Chiefs, old tobacco fields, old school and *Kgotla*. These

indicate the Gorge's function in the lives of the Goo-Moremi community, hence their attachment to it.

Tourism

The impacts of tourism are often grouped into social, cultural, environmental and economic categories. These four categories are subjective and overlapping especially the first two which are often combined into one called the socio-cultural category (Mbaiwa, 2011). The socio-cultural impacts of tourism can either be positive or negative (Dichaba, 2009). Among the positive impacts are issues such as preservation of culture, broadening of community horizons and building of community pride (Mbaiwa, 2011). There is also enhancing of local and external appreciation and support for cultural heritage by providing funding for site preservation and management. On the other hand, there are negative impacts of tourism such as commodification of culture and traditions, loss of authenticity and accuracy in the historical interpretation of sites (Cohen, 1988). Also, there is alienation and loss of cultural identity which may lead to damage of attractions and facilities. Therefore, looking at the important role that culture plays in society and individual lives, these positive and negative impacts can be profound (Molstad, Lindberg, Hawkins, & Jamieson, 1999). This means that the negative impacts can be mitigated while the positive ones enhanced. In 2008, there were 415 visitors recorded at Goo-Moremi Gorge and they generated a total of 10, 657.50 Pula (Mbaiwa, 2011). However, in seven (7) years later, in 2015, the total number of visitors had risen by 91.7% to 5,015 and the amount of revenue generated had increased by 98.5% to 726,528.99 Pula (Siphambe, forthcoming). This is a clear indication that tourism development in GMCA has great potential.

Contested Landscapes

Defining the significance of cultural landscapes is not easy due to the requirement to balance the traditional values of the landscapes with the contemporary focus of the host community, which, are always changing. However, the critical aspect is to recognize the differences (Breedlove, 2002). This has mainly been sparked by the negative impacts of tourism on the community's social life (Dichaba 2009). The Goo-Moremi Community on one hand, envision their landscape as a sacred and spiritual place. While, the Botswana Government through the DNMM (a government department that is a custodian of all the country's cultural and natural sites) on the other hand see it as a cultural landscape in that it has extensive cultural material and natural resources which the DNMM think should be exploited for the whole community's benefit through (CBNRM) programme. The DNMM sees it as a good example of cultural tourism project which should be run with minimal disturbance from the Community, hence the signing of a Joint Venture Partnership with a Private Company and later with Botswana Tourism Organization (BTO), to establish a tourism venture at this conservation area (Dichaba, 2009). This led to commodification of the landscape which, brought about issues of ambivalence among the elders and the youth. The elders see the landscape as the land of their ancestors and think tourism will disturb the sacredness of the area, while the youth anticipate economic benefits from tourism and think the ancestral significance of the landscape will sell

it better to the tourists if it is made into a tourism product (Mbaiwa, 2011).

Traditional Livelihood Strategies

Improvements in the livelihoods of residents is the key factor in motivating change that lead to an improved quality of life (Henderson, 2009). The traditional livelihood strategies persist in most rural communities in Botswana and vary between livestock farming, crop farming, collection and utilization of veldt resources, and government welfare programs (Botswana Review, 2005; GOB, 2001; Phuthego & Chanda, 2004). Community-based and cultural heritage tourism ventures have been advocated and encouraged by the government as possible avenues for diversification, especially in rural areas (Keitumetse, 2009; Mbaiwa, 2004; Richards & Hall, 2000; Moswete, et al., 2009; Rozemeijer et al., 2001). Although this strategy has been recommended for sustainable rural development, challenges include striking a balance between the natural and cultural environment and integrating conservation and tourism development projects (Shackley, 1998; Mbaiwa, 2004; Mbaiwa, 2009; Mbaiwa, et al., 2007; Moswete, et al., 2009).

Young people and the leaders of GMMCT welcome the tourism initiatives in their community as a way of improving rural livelihoods (Mbaiwa, 2011). However, there are both negative and positive socio economic impacts of tourism at Goo-Moremi Conservation area which may positively or negatively affect the rural livelihoods in the area. Thus according to Geoflux (2009), the positive socio economic impacts include; income generation as the number of tourists increase; employment opportunities as the tourism venture is likely to result in the people of Goo-Moremi being employed as tour guides, managers, book keepers, camp keepers night watchers and cleaners. There has also been a good infrastructure development in the form of the construction of roads, electricity connections, telephone lines and a bridge which are a very welcome development in Goo-Moremi village. Therefore, the establishment of ecotourism supporting services such as restaurants, garages petrol stations, shops and other related projects can boost the local economy of Goo-Moremi Village leading to improved local livelihoods (Geoflux 2009),

Sedimo

It is important to note that at Goo-Moremi Cultural Landscape every project has to first be approved by the ancestors (*Badimo*), otherwise the community suffers the wrath of the ancestors (White, 2001a; Mbaiwa, 2011). The approval is sort through a ceremony called *Mophaso*, led by the *Komana* sect, which, is the nerve centre of the ancestral (*Sedimo*) culture. The Goo-Moremi Community has expressed concern over the impact of tourism on their ancestral (*Sedimo*) culture (Dichaba, 2009). For example, when the Community Trust received some funds for the construction of an ablution block near the Gorge in 2004, it is indicated that the *Komana* Sect together with the community were noticeably divided, some members of the community believed that *Mophaso* was held to ask for the permission of the ancestors while some thought the ceremony was not meant for that (White 2001a; Geoflux 2009; Dichaba 2009). Sometimes, even after *Mophaso* has been held like in this instance, the *Komana* may not hold a similar view on the message relayed by the ancestors (*Badimo*).

The Community of Goo-Moremi is not happy about the tourism project because they feel the tourists violate their taboos and ancestral (*Sedimo*) culture by swimming in the water pools at Manonnye Gorge that are sacred and meant exclusively for bathing by the ancestors (Siphambe, forthcoming). Therefore, there is a strong belief that violation of these pools by the tourists has brought the community trouble as they often experience strong mighty winds that always tear apart their houses' roof tops (White, 2001a, 2001b).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The negative socio-economic factors which will have a major impact on the livelihoods of the Goo-Moremi Community are internal conflicts which are likely to emerge due to some members of the community endorsing the tourism venture while others feel it is an intrusion into their sacred *Sedimo* culture (Mbaiwa, 2011). Internal conflicts may also emerge as some of the community members get employed in the tourism business while others get left out due to differences in skills and or favouritism. Overdependence on tourism which is likely to be the main economic activity in the village, might lead to neglecting of other livelihood activities such as crop and livestock farming. This will badly affect the rural livelihoods because tourism "is seasonal and relies on the global economic scale", (Geoflux, 2009, p8).

In conclusion, it is worth noting that this paper reveals that tourism has a great potential of growth in Goo-Moremi Cultural Landscape, however the impacts of tourism development need close monitoring and management. This is due to the sensitive nature of the Goo-Moremi cultural landscape mainly because of its *Sedimo* culture which has enabled the local community to preserve the authenticity of the landscape for a very long time. Since tourism development or commodification has a potential of debasing the sacredness of this cultural landscape, this may affect its values, and authenticity that the local community revere.

It has been argued by Dichaba (2009) that churches do exist in Goo-Moremi Village even though ancestral worship is the major religious activity. Therefore, due to the interest that tourists have on Goo-Moremi cultural landscape, coupled with government's interest to improve the livelihoods of the community through CBNRM projects there is bound to be controversy in this landscape. All these arguments call for a balance between tourism development and cultural or spiritual preservation. Thus stakeholders need to work together to find a balance which will avoid exacerbating the conflicts that are bound to erupt as indicated earlier in this paper's discussions. Therefore, using this paper as baseline data necessitates further studies on the impact of commodification on cultural landscapes in Botswana, which, is currently insufficient.

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