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"ARCHAEOLOGY FOR WHOSE INTEREST?" PUBLIC ATTITUDETOWARDS ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IN KENYA

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Abstract

Despite Kenya's rich archaeological heritage, the discipline of archaeology remains academic and detached. It encompasses limited public engagement due to insufficient outreach activities thus fostering misunderstanding and hostility. This study aimed at assessing public knowledge and consumption of archaeology, exploring dissemination channels through the Nairobi National Museum's exhibits and programs. Conducted at the Nairobi National Museum, a key heritage site since 1910, the research used a cross-sectional, descriptive design targeting 268 Westland sub-county history students. Data collection involved questionnaires, staff interviews, and observations, analyzed using narrative methods and adhering to ethical standards. The study was guided by purposive sampling to decide the representative sample that contained the relevant information for the study. It explored aspects of archaeology and public education trends in museum visits and public engagement with their heritage. Findings revealed low public fascination with archaeology, linked educational neglect as a history subset and archaeologists' focus on research over outreach. Museum education, however, enhances understanding through interactive exhibits, with potential for broader digital and media engagement. The study concludes that archaeology's relevance in Kenya hinges on improved communication and participation to boost awareness and heritage value. It recommends the integration of archaeology into early education, enhance museum interactivity, leverage media, and foster public excavations to bridge the engagement gap and protect Kenya's archaeological legacy.

Key words: Archaeology, *Cultural heritage, Heritage, Legislation, Public*

Introduction

Despite Kenya's rich archaeological heritage, the discipline remains largely intellectualized and detached, with minimal public involvement. Archaeologists have struggled to educate the populace on the significance of their work, leading to a lack of understanding and appreciation. This disconnect is evident in the hostility and suspicion some locals exhibit toward archaeological efforts, compounded by their

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reluctance to maintain sites for preservation or tourism, as Perry (2009) notes. Matsuda (2004) attributes this to archaeologists' inadequate ethnographic training, resulting in oversimplified views of community dynamics, even among those with anthropological backgrounds.

Thomas (2000) points out that many archaeologists prioritize research, publishing, and teaching over public outreach, leaving little time to interpret the past for non-specialists. Shackel (2005) suggests archaeology could be more inclusive by integrating multiple voices to create a sense of place, while Chambers (2004) emphasizes the importance of conducting archaeology with, not just for, the public. However, archaeologists in both public and private sectors rarely produce accessible accounts of their work, missing opportunities to bridge this gap.

Public interest in archaeology—encompassing romanticism, aesthetics, human community, social roots, and technical avocation (Davis, 1978)—remains underexplored due to a lack of systematic data (Cole, 1980). The public often holds a simplistic view of the discipline, seeing it as irrelevant to modern concerns. In Kenya's education system, archaeology is underrepresented, taught as a subset of history rather than a standalone subject, as Wandibba (1990) observes. This neglect spans primary, secondary, and university levels, denying early exposure to heritage. Feder (1984) warns that this ignorance makes students susceptible to pseudoscientific narratives, underscoring the need for attitudinal data on current archaeological issues in Kenya.

Protecting archaeological resources hinges on raising public consciousness, a task requiring widespread awareness and support for nationwide monument preservation programs. Moser et al. (2002) advocate for collaborative project design with the public, while Knudson (1990) asserts that everyone has a right to their past—a global record of human experience. Schadla-Hall (1999) defines public archaeology as the discipline's interaction with society, navigating economic and political challenges. In Kenya, archaeologists bear a responsibility to explain their work's value to both colleagues and the public, who often lack knowledge of its impact. Renfrew and Bahn (2000) note that disseminating discoveries through publishing reaches broader audiences, with amateur enthusiasts providing critical support for projects.

Cultivating public interest through outreach is essential for heritage advocacy and funding. Media campaigns, as Lubensky (1988) suggests, can leverage archaeology's popular appeal, with newspapers, magazines, and television amplifying new discoveries. Steele et al. (2007) recommend public lectures, documentaries, popular writing, site tours, and volunteer involvement to engage audiences, allowing them

to encounter artifacts and follow project progress. McGimsey (1972) frames knowledge of the past as a birthright, carrying a responsibility to educate and lead, ensuring no one undermines this right.

Public attitudes significantly influence site protection, with cultural and adventure tourism growing as expressions of national identity (Fagan and DeCorse, 2005). Turning archaeological heritage into a tourist attraction can economically benefit locals, indirectly fostering education and interest. Public archaeology operates on two fronts: the public sphere (state-driven or participatory research with citizens) and the private sphere (individual or amateur efforts), as Merriman (2004) and Carman (2002) outline. Museums, like the Nairobi National Museum, serve as interpretive centers, with exhibits and staff offering insights into past societies, shaping public perceptions.

In the public sphere, active involvement in research with scientist's fosters understanding, assuming people have a say in what matters to them (Carman, 2002). This participatory approach pieces together the archaeological narrative, supported by legal frameworks. Despite challenges, the National Museums of Kenya (NMK) and Community Peace Museums (CPMs) promote nationhood through ethnic exhibits and hero commemorations, though NMK's focus may reflect political agendas (Karega-Munene, 2011). Local governments bridge public and heritage management (Amanda, 2008), preserving sites and monuments as national symbols.

Public archaeology manifests in two forms: professional-led work with public participation opportunities, offering hands-on experience, and amateur archaeology by local societies, often to high standards (Manley, 1999). In the UK, such groups trace back to the 19th century (Wetherall, 1994). This study aimed to assess public knowledge and consumption of archaeology, focusing on the Nairobi National Museum's exhibits, educational programs, and media collaborations to disseminate research insights.

Thus, archaeology in Kenya faces a public engagement crisis, rooted in its academic insularity, educational neglect, and failure to address community complexities. Overcoming this requires robust outreach—media, education, and participation—to elevate awareness, protect resources, and transform heritage into a societal asset, aligning with global calls for inclusivity and accessibility.

The main aim of this study, therefore, was to assess the level of public knowledge and the consumption of archaeology. The research explored potential channels that should form the conduits of disseminating the

archaeological product to the public. The focus was the Nairobi National Museum through its exhibits as well as its educational and outreach programmes. The extent to which museums work with the media in informing the public about new insights into archaeological research and discoveries was another task of this research.

Methodology

This study was conducted at the Nairobi National Museum, a key institution under the National Museums of Kenya (NMK), established in 1910 and renamed in 1963. Located on Museum Hill since 1929, it serves as the main repository of Kenya's heritage, showcasing history, culture, art, and nature through exhibitions like Birds of East Africa, Cradle of Humankind, Halls of Mammals, Ahmed Courtyard, and Nairobi Snake Park. The museum, also the NMK headquarters, supports research and preserves artifacts, making it a vital educational resource.

The research employed a cross-sectional and descriptive design, targeting secondary school students in the Westlands sub-county studying history. The data was collected within the museum as these students' made visits at different times. In total 268 students were interviewed. The study was guided by purposive sampling to decide the representative sample that contained the relevant information for the study. The number of students and museum staff interviewed was able to give adequate information to answer the research questions raised. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. Museum staff from education department who were considered knowledgeable on museum operations were selected for the study. The study explored aspects of archaeology and public education, trends in museum visits, and public engagement with heritage. Ethical considerations included obtaining permits, ensuring informed consent was key. The Nairobi National Museum proved a rich site for understanding Kenya's cultural and historical legacy.

Results and Discussions

Field archaeology can be a powerful mechanism in cultivating student interest in the subject. The development of archaeology in the UK, and particularly in England, provides considerable insights on public involvement. In the early 20th century this was seen as the preserve of the few largely upper middle-class activity and of only limited interest (Hunter and Ralston, 2006:13). In

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North America, public archaeology is funded directly or indirectly with public monies and mandated by popularly supported legislation (Smardz and Smith, 2000:7). In more specific terms, public archaeology has been referred to as educational archaeology and public interpretation in public areas such as schools, parks and museums with a view to protecting archaeological resources through stewardship education (Bazely, 2001). It is also the use of education about archaeology to address the abuse of deliberate or accidental misinterpretations (Stone and Planel, 1999:7). Museum education can complement field archaeology**.** The purpose of museum education is to enhance the visitors' ability to understand and appreciate museum collections. A museum is a place where visitors experience learning. A learning situation is a condition or environment in which all the elements necessary for promoting learning are present. Learning experience is the mental or physical reaction made through seeing, hearing or doing the things to be learnt and through which one gains meaning and understanding of the materials to be learnt. Falk and Lynn (2000) extensively studied museum education in the USA, India and the UK. They concluded that learning in the museum involves a visitor or a group of visitors attending to an object, a display, label, person, element or some mental construct. Any information obtained during the museum visit is likely to include social related, attitude related, and cognitive related and sensory related associations. These associations will become embedded in memory altogether with the result that anyone facet of these experiences can facilitate the recall of the entire experience. Exhibit halls, properly arranged secondary collections, labels, guided tours, travelling exhibits, school class visits, training courses to the teachers, illustrated lectures, motion pictures, and so on, are various means which constitute the educational activities in a museum.

However, there has been an increase in governmental and professional involvement in public archaeology (Simpson and Williams, 2008:70). Considerable attempts have been made to involve the public in archaeological activity, ranging from wider participation in fieldwork, liaison with metal detector users, better presentation in museums and on sites, and greater involvement in the school and adult education sector. This has been accompanied by a growth in the critical analysis of how museums go about ensuring presentation, access and involvement (Colomer, 2002: 86). There will always be need for traditional public outreach components, like tours to archaeological sites, public lectures and presentations (Shackel, 2005:36). In addition, watching educational or

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public television, reading scholarly books and journals on archaeology can also be useful (Perry, 2009:390). Nonetheless, to most of the public, especially in Kenya, archaeology is not fascinating. Only a small segment of people know what archaeology is or believe there could be any personal role for them in the interpretation of the archaeological record.

A growing number of professionals engage with digital media of various kinds, researching heritage sites and museums online and downloading apps and videos, and public archaeology scholarship is increasingly taking this into account (Pett, 2012). Archaeology relies on this engagement to maintain popular interest and support for archaeological heritage in political, cultural and economic terms. Public archaeology is a distinctive combination of practice and critique. This is in line with the practice of public archaeology. The academic discipline of public archaeology is concerned with archaeology where it meets the world, but it draws upon and informs its practices (Flatman 2012). The study of archaeology in its economic contexts draws on the work of heritage organizations struggling to survive cuts, and of communities fighting to preserve their archaeological sites in the face of environmental threats (Gould and Burtenshaw, 2014).

Some professional archaeologists evidently still believe that extensive involvement with the non-professional and the public is a mistake, that amateur societies or public lectures increase pot hunting. On the contrary, any such attitude is a mistake. But it's very true it is self-defeating. If there was a time when archaeologists could afford to operate as if in a vacuum it has long passed. Without public involvement there has not been and there cannot be effective public support of archaeology, and without public support there cannot be legislative founding and funding of adequate programme to recover and protect a states or the nation's archaeological heritage (McGimsey, 1972: 7). Without public appreciation of the importance of archaeological sites and information there can be no effective protection of sites, or of the information contained within them, through well written, enforceable antiquities legislation and through the willing effective cooperation of those who control the use of land (McGimsey, 1972: 8) However, by emphasizing

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this total involvement, this implies that each individual has an obligation how he best can contribute and how his picture will affect the total picture. Knowledge carries with it equivalent responsibility, but lack of knowledge does not in any sense free one from responsibility.

Irresponsible actions are ever to be condemned, and they are even less tolerable in the field of archaeology, where every record is unique and irreplaceable. The practice of archaeology entails total involvement of all interested parties and the public. Obviously, the vast majority of the public is not going to become involved beyond appreciating the need for proper archaeological recovery and appreciation and perhaps taking interest in the results. It is the active practitioners of archaeology, both full-time and part-time, who hold the key to the future success of failure of the endeavour to educate the remainder of the public and to preserve the archaeological heritage (McGimsey, 1972: 8). It is the responsibility of each individual who handles or affects archaeological materials to examine his knowledge, his conscience, and his actions to determine if his activities are detrimental to the public good. The failure of people to understand or recognize this individual responsibility and to accept the legitimate right of the public to the knowledge contained in archaeological sites has been and will continue to be the greatest cause of friction and misunderstanding between those dedicated and determined to recover and protect that knowledge for the private good. There is ample evidence today that interested and concerned amateur archaeologists are the professionals' greatest source of assistance and support given the opportunity. It should be emphasized that the vast majority of the practitioners of archaeology are not fully trained archaeologists. Those archaeologists who go to excavate must have the discretion and judgment to restrict their activities to sites and a scale which their background and training enables them to handle without destroying data (McGimsey, 1972:9).

Many people are intrigued by the idea of discovering the physical remains of past human activity, whether they consist of dishes used by people living a few generations ago or projectile points left by hunter's millennia in the past (Wells, 1991:181). Thus, professional archaeologists should move a step higher and take the moral responsibility to educate the public on archaeological discoveries. Wells (1991:182) argues that conferences organized to present the past are important. Such conferences can inform the public about archaeology and involve it in the process of doing

archaeology. However, most members of the profession in developing countries take a narrow view of this fact. If channeled correctly, the public's contribution to knowledge production will be of greater significance if they possess insights into archaeological research and are also allowed access to the existing knowledge base (Franklin and Moe, 2012: 570). Professional archaeologists should therefore foster the public's understanding of essential archaeological concepts, theory and practice with the long-term goal of creating an archaeologically literate citizenry.

Unless archaeologists find ways of making their research increasingly relevant to the modern world, the modern world will find itself increasingly capable of getting along without archaeologists (Fritz and Plog 1970:412). If archaeologists want to be relevant to society and be part of an important dialogue throughout this country, they need to think about how they can make their discipline relevant (Shackle, 2005:27]. In a world where finances and accountability are prime considerations within archaeology (especially publicly sponsored initiatives), these authors' insightful decrees serve as a warning that archaeology cannot afford to become an irrelevant social science dinosaur, lumbering along in a self-contained bubble, serving nobody's interest but its own. Archaeologists in private consulting companies, academic institutions, and federal, state, and local agencies are increasingly required to justify and demonstrate "that public money is being spent wisely, appropriately, and that they are attempting to extend the benefits of that funding to a wider audience" (Merriman 2002:546).

There is need to have pedagogical skills in archaeological practice (Baugher, 2007; Nassaney, 2004; Levine and Delle, 2009). This approach aims to provide students with opportunities to learn by engaging with real world settings while providing a community service. Since archaeologists have a history of working with communities, they should expand the scope of learning opportunities for their students (Baugher, 2007; Levine*et al*., 2005; Shackel and Mortensen, 2006; Nassaney and Levine, 2009). In this regard, a range of different practices and pedagogical skills have been proposed, some of which underscore the importance of engagement and public accountability. This is the hallmark of public archaeology that encompasses both the active inclusion of the general public in archaeological research as well as the presentation of

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archaeological research, and also the presentation of archaeological results to the public by every available means (McGimsey, 2003).

The discipline of archaeology has taken numerous initiatives that take public concerns into account and incorporate community input into the design and implementation of a project (Derry and Malloy, 2003; Baugher, 2007). Such community-based archaeology projects should have all the hallmarks of participatory action research in which archaeologists collaborate with community groups as equal partners in project design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination of project outcomes, particularly at local levels**.**

However, community archaeology has always been with us to some extent**.** People have often engaged with the past in the process of establishing meaning in the present, and they routinely incorporate objects and places associated with remembered or imagined past events into the narratives that create and sustain them as communities (Bradley and Williams, 1998*).* In Africa, the role of archaeology in presenting a critical facet of its past has been appreciated (Burkitt, 2014). However, the diversity and richness of its archaeological resources when compared to other parts of the world, archaeology is still underdeveloped in Africa. Except for Zimbabwe and South Africa, archaeology has encountered, and still encounters, its own share of challenges (Segobye, 2005). These challenges have transcended into education within the university system so much so that the teaching of archaeology at all levels of education still faces a lack of resources that hinder the capacity to deliver a high-quality education.

An important part of the learning experience takes the form of critical reflection in formal and informal settings. There needs to be an ample opportunity to employ reflexibility by turning our gaze back on ourselves and positioning ourselves in the archaeological projects through discussion, journal writing and public interaction. Students and the public should be encouraged to consider how the archaeologist is embedded in the process of enquiry, investigation, and interpretation (Mendoza, 2009). According to Little (2007:144) efforts should be made to provide students with opportunities to interact with the various stakeholders and employ venues to disseminate

information and receive feedback whenever possible. Public lectures, lesson plans, pamphlets, exhibits, or reports presenting the results of the study to a wide audience are important steps in that process. The author further suggests that a balance should be reached between one's authority as an archaeologist and the needs and concerns and expertise of the community (Little, 2007:164).

It is critical that archaeologists are trained and educated to be effective teachers and researchers and be able to apply archaeological methods and theory to real world problem solving (Bender and Smith, 2000). They must strive to help others see commonality and diversity and, above all, provide a basis for understanding and respecting differences. There is a tremendous opportunity to take advantage of the interest in 'things archaeological' as a powerful tool for global education, site protection and study and world peace (Messenger and Enloe, 1991).

Archaeology must be inclusive in its efforts to explore the past (Stone and Mackenzie, 1990). It is also important that the past not be portrayed in a way that takes the local population out of the equation. Making the past accessible and empowering the public to draw their own conclusions is an ethical responsibility of all archaeologists. Archaeologists can add much to the public's understanding and appreciation of the past by providing intellectual tools to interpret the past for them (Potter and Chabot, 1997). This is because they are more than chroniclers of the past. They are part of the medium through which the past is channeled to the present and the future (Fagan, 2002).

Archaeology in Nigerian universities is taught mostly by non-archaeologists within history departments (Nzewuna, 1990:39). This has seriously undermined discipline. The effective development of curricula in any given discipline is heavily dependent on the availability of staff and facilities. The author adds that the 1980s saw the departure of most expatriate archaeology staff from Nigerian universities and the appointment of new indigenous Nigerian archaeologists but there was still lack of qualified teaching staff to service the departments of archaeology at the beginning of the 1990s. In many Nigerian universities, archaeology was still largely conceptualized as `a service discipline' in the shadow of history and anthropology. At both universities of Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello, archaeology was for a long time subsumed under history (Ogundele, 2007). However, the course has remained unpopular and at a backstage

to a few other courses due to the inability of the Nigerian public to draw a nexus between archaeology and development. Archaeology is still a highly misunderstood subject in Nigeria just like other countries of West Africa. The poor image of archaeology in Nigeria reflects a wide communication gap between the practitioners of the discipline as well as the government and the general public (Ogundele, 2005). This is the same predicament with many universities in Kenya where there is an acute shortage of staff, literature, visual materials, structures, and accurate data analysis techniques, all of which hamper the teaching of archaeology.

Archaeologists in the faculties of many Nigerian universities, especially the universities of Benin, Jos, Port Harcourt and Benue State, are merely serving history and other anthropological courses. This has not only created a crisis of confidence for the discipline but has also undermined the quality of archaeological training and education (Clarke and Davidson, 2007). Archaeological curricula in many universities are heavily influenced by the initial concerns of archaeological practice revolving around history. Archaeological curriculum content in Nigeria is tilted towards discovery, recovery, documentation and interpretation, with excavation as the central concern of fieldwork. The current challenges in education and training of archaeologists lies in funding. Many universities lack functional laboratories and other research facilities. Poor archaeological scholarly output at the institutional level is also partially attributed to funding problems.

In Indian universities, there are many reasons for the relative absence of archaeological fieldwork. Firstly, archaeology has not been considered as an acceptable subject of specialization, leading to job opportunities. Indeed, archaeology has been generally regarded as completely irrelevant to the contemporary Indian society. The number of MA graduates in archaeology who could be absorbed into universities, museums and official bodies was necessarily small. In general education, graduates with archaeology MAs found it difficult to secure employment. Archaeology had no place in BA courses and lower levels in the university-affiliated colleges. The discipline was unheard of in schools. No school student was expected to know anything about India's archaeology except that there had been an early civilization in the Indus Valley. This meant that graduates with archaeology MAs had to compete for history-teaching jobs with those holding history MAs having an upper hand (Chakrabarti, 1990:28). The author further states that recruitment for government archaeology posts in the survey and elsewhere did not give preferential treatment to those with Archaeology MAs. They had to compete on the same footing as applicants with MAs in history and

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medieval languages. In addition, archaeology is not listed as a subject in the curricula of civil service and other elite examinations, and this has militated against the arousal of student interest in the universities.

Another reason why fieldwork did not feature prominently is because university archaeology departments did not device academic programmes and syllabuses that differed markedly from what was offered in the ancient Indian history departments, apart from a paper in archaeological aims and methods, and a general emphasis on field work. Even the emphasis on fieldwork for archaeology students gradually weakened, mostly because of apathy on the part of university departments. There was also a failure in most universities to create an interest in archaeology by undertaking important field programmes, and a great number of university excavations has remained unpublished. However, purposeful leadership in the universities of Poona and Baroda in the 1960s did result in extensive field programmes, followed by substantial publications, which put archaeology in these two universities on a more solid foundation. Regrettably, however, archaeology did not continue to flourish as an academic entity in Baroda (Chakrabarti, 1990: 29).

In most Indian universities, archaeology is an adjunct of history. Virtually, archaeology teachers in these universities operate more or less as individuals, concerned with their own research. The position of archaeology in the Department of History, Delhi University, which has one archaeology teacher on its staff, is representative. The situation is largely the same where archaeology is included in the university curriculum as an adjunct to anthropology. The Delhi University Department of Anthropology, for example, offers courses in prehistory at the BSc and MSc levels. There is only one teacher, and there is no specific field programme. In Indian universities there is no clear acceptance of the important relationship between archaeology, the past and the present. Archaeology is allotted one or two papers in the syllabus of a large university history department. In a way archaeology is neglected both by the students and authorities (Chakrabarti, 1990: 30).

In some countries such as Australia and the United Kingdom there are national benchmarks for archaeological degrees, which exist to ensure that professional standards in archaeology are being met and to provide employers and clients with a consistent level of confidence about the type of training required (Clark and Davidson, 2007). Lack of benchmarks has created considerable variations between universities in entry requirements, equipment and facilities, student learning outcomes, content of core courses, including differential emphasis on competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform as

archaeologists. Archaeology is also crystallizing around four major fields of endeavour: research and report writing, teaching, management and outreach, each of which requires an in-depth study and understanding (McGimsey, 2003).

Australia provides opportunity at all levels and all ages for the study of archaeology as a life enhancing experience (Smith*et al.*,2007). Integrating archaeology in curricula at the lower levels of education also means that well before entering university, students have an opportunity to learn about and appreciate archaeology. Such background prepares them better for university level archaeological education and training. The position of archaeology in the general scheme of university education no doubt plays a major role. However, equally important is the relationship between archaeology and contemporary society.

The Archaeological Museum of Sparta, despite its great efforts to be designed and built, remains generally at the same level as its initial foundation. The layout of the collections has not changed dramatically. The museum has no permanent staff and although some archaeologists have worked temporarily on the development of the museum, there is a lack of cohesion in the museum's activities. Nevertheless, despite its poor facilities, lack of museum staff and minimal funding, a large effort is made to share its knowledge with its public. Although the museum does not use interactive technological means and modern ways of exhibiting objects, it does include an educational programme as one of its activities. The Archaeological Museum of Sparta is trying to present the real history of Sparta. The foundation and the history of the new city of Sparta are closely connected to the image of ancient Spartan society. The necessity of ideological cohesion between the modern city of Sparta and the ancient city is proved by the fact that the Archaeological Museum of Sparta is the first museum to be built in a provincial town after the creation of the Greek State (Falk and Dierking,1992: 135). The educational programme will provide quality education, aimed at intensifying the knowledge that is provided by the school curriculum regarding ancient Sparta and its civilization. It goes without saying that the general financial situation in Greece and the money that is available to be spent on and spent by the museum are playing a major role on the development of the museum, and subsequently on the educational programme. However, they are still able to provide enlightening educational programs with the help of teachers and temporarily employed archaeological staff (Falk and Dierking, 1992: 136).

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Archaeology is a popular subject of lecture tours and cruises, online courses, adult education courses and evening classes: many prominent public archaeologists have worked extensively in these fields. Public archaeology has, in Merriman's view, long been based on the 'deficit model', a term taken from science communication that suggests that experts have a duty to remedy the deficit of scientific knowledge in the general public, who are viewed as empty vessels to be filled with information (Merriman, 2004). Merriman's critique and suggested alternative, a 'multiple perspectives' approach, has advanced the understanding of education in public archaeology but in practice a wide variety of educational philosophies are employed, tacitly or explicitly, with greater or lesser success. Open archaeology, one of the most interesting aspects of public archaeology, is the degree to which archaeology can be made open: compared to many of the sciences and other scholarly fields, many of the processes and practices of archaeology (particularly around excavation) are visible and easily comprehensible to the public (Farid, 2014; Moshenska, 2009). People watching an excavation can see artefacts, bodies and structures emerging from the earth before their eyes: this is part of what makes archaeology popular and successful on television. Throughout the history of archaeology this openness has been a factor in its popularity and success. Tourists visiting excavations frustrated Sir Flinders Petrie and delighted Sir Mortimer Wheeler, while many modern excavations, particularly in urban areas, provide a view of the site through viewing platforms or, more recently, webcams (Moshenska and Schadla-Hall, 2011).

In many cases visitors are able to tour the excavations and talk to the archaeologists, while in some cases dedicated tour guides are used. While excavation is only one aspect of archaeology, this openness is a vital element in maintaining the public profile of archaeology and its democratic nature as something (at least potentially) participative and accessible to anybody. Open archaeology is part of what sets public archaeology aside as a distinct field within the wider fields of science communication and science studies. Popular archaeology could equally be described as media archaeology or popular culture archaeology: the communication of archaeological research to the public through accessible and user-friendly media, rather than the more serious and detailed educational means described above. At the same time this is probably the largest field of public archaeology in terms of economics, employment and impact on the public understanding of archaeology and the human past. Public archaeologists often forget that the public, by and large, do not want to be archaeologists and, nor do they want huge amounts of detailed archaeological knowledge (Merriman, 1991).

Education plays a great deal of work in public archaeology, based on the principle that experts have a responsibility to share their knowledge with those who can appreciate and use it. Archaeological education takes place in museums and heritage sites through visitor interaction with displays and archaeological materials, and through the work of curatorial staff and museum learning professionals (Corbishley, 2011; Henson, 2000). In Kenya the museum has played a vital role in archaeological public education through guided tours and showcased exhibits that gives visitors an opportunity to learn about their past.

Conclusion

This study underscores the need for archaeologists to enhance communication about their work, its importance, and its relevance to the public and modern society. Archaeologists should prioritize educating and involving the public through site programs, public talks, and excavations, fostering enthusiasm and understanding. In Kenya, integrating archaeology into early education, as practiced in countries like Australia and Ireland, could make it a lifelong learning experience, connecting students with tangible heritage. Universities must revise curricula and collaborate with stakeholders to establish national benchmarks, enhancing program standards and competitiveness, as seen in Australia and the UK.

Museums, particularly archaeology-focused ones, should facilitate interactive experiences, such as handling cultural objects, to enrich visitor engagement. Educational visits should be child-friendly, bridging schools and museums to align with curricula and promote active learning. Public archaeology must extend beyond the discipline, engaging professionals like environmental planners and engineers by showcasing its value through data-driven evidence of public interest. Legislation protecting cultural heritage in Kenya requires overhaul to reflect local and global norms, ensuring community participation and benefits, unlike outdated colonial frameworks.

Archaeologists should leverage the internet for broader dissemination of research, making findings accessible to all, not just peers. Public outreach should be embedded in planning documents to secure funding and support. Collaboration with communities, integrating their perspectives, is vital for relevance, supported by graduate programs teaching negotiation and ethnography. Archaeology's potential in developing nations like Kenya—academic, economic, and socio-

cultural—is underutilized. Solutions include public education, centralized research planning, and financial independence. Ultimately, archaeology belongs to the public; effective communication, education, and collaboration are essential to preserve heritage, justify public funding, and contribute to societal development.

Recommendations

Children's museums should be introduced to young children, providing them with the foundations for future generations. These museums should teach children how to use museums, display temporary exhibits, and use warm colors. Curators should be different from grown-up museums, requiring strong nerves and humor. Museums should also prepare children for visits by circulating leaflets to schools. Museum visits should be increased, encouraging children to think for themselves and engage them in problem-solving and creative exploration.

The Museum Education Department should set school visits on the right tracks, offering lectures, films, demonstrations, and guided tours. Each museum should have its own unique types of tours, arranged according to the content and requirements of the schools visiting. Museum guides should act as teachers, as children are more used to their teachers. Museum staff should train teachers to conduct visiting tours for their school children.

Research archaeologists should provide more opportunities for public excavations and consulting archaeologists should publish reports on their findings. The educational system should promote the preservation of the archaeological record as part of Ontario's heritage, working with First Nations communities to protect and educate themselves on the importance of their culture and traditions.

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