

## Abstract

Modernization, which is inevitable in every society, should not overshadow the importance of cultural heritage as a vector of development and social stability, both for present and future generations. Today, a number of traditional solutions to development, which are particularly ingenious, deserve to be taken into consideration in the search for solutions to prevailing life challenges. In order to preserve this legacy from the past, National and local communities are encouraged to protect and valorize this heritage that represents the core of their common identity. Today, more than ever, it is essential to better know and understand the richness and variety present within African cultural heritage. In Kenya, the preservation of this heritage will only be possible through the collaborative efforts of county governments that can appropriately legislate, local communities, and the citizenry, who have the capacity to identify their own cultural heritage that will remain coherent and relevant as long as it remains alive in the context where it originated.

This has not been the practice in Kenya as the importance of cultural heritage in the spatial planning process tends to be sidelined or minimized with, at best, only certain classes of heritage resources being made public as part of tourism planning processes.

In this work the valoration of cultural heritage within Nairobi's Central Business District through spatial planning has been investigated. The specific objectives of the study were to investigate the extent of awareness of cultural heritage among local urban communities in Nairobi; explore how knowledge and skills of cultural sites is transmitted to communities in Nairobi; identify the gaps in planning and urban design that hinder the transfer of knowledge and skills on cultural heritage; and recommend spatial planning interventions that will lead to increased awareness of cultural heritage preservation of existing cultural heritage characteristics, and dealing with the gaps in policy and practice that hinder the manifestation of cultural heritage in Nairobi's CBD.

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The study established that urban communities are conscious of their heritage environment from which they derive both material and intrinsic benefits. It also found out that there is absence of deliberate planning for cultural heritage in the urban areas, thus exposing the existing cultural heritage to risks of diminishing value, extinction or conversion to other uses. Important case studies, such as the KwaZulu-Natal provincial government interventions in ensuring that their cultural heritage is appropriately integrated into planning processes, as well as the work by the Nairobi National Museums of Kenya in a village known as Shimoni in South Coast Kenya were found to provide useful lessons for Kenya to adopt and adapt in ensuring that cultural heritage is made part and parcel of planning processes.

It is concluded from that study that the opportunity to reclaim Nairobi's degenerating cultural

identity, while increasing its revenue base through cultural heritage is of strategic importance today, more than ever. It is therefore recommended that the Nairobi County Government sets out relevant legislation and guidelines for the responsible management and sustainability of existing cultural resources, and serve as a model for other county governments in Kenya. Introduction of innovative and creative urban design solutions that valorise heritage sites, such as designing of urban routes and cultural heritage corridors and the application of clustering and agglomeration cultural typology is also recommended. Finally to ensure that cultural heritage remains embedded in spatial planning profession and practice, the study recommends curriculum inclusion of cultural heritage modules in the planning educational initiatives.