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The naming patterns of the Swati people living in the townships:

A case study of kaMsogwaba

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The naming patterns of the Swati people living in the townships:

A case study of kaMsogwaba

by

Nkateko Ngobeni

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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(African Languages & Linguistics)

in the

Department of African Languages

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at the

University of the Witwatersrand

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Supervisor: Dr. EB Zungu

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is entirely my own work. All primary and secondary sources have been appropriately acknowledged where necessary. This dissertation is being submitted for the very first time and has never been submitted to another institution for academic purposes by any other person.

This dissertation is submitted in fulfilment of a Master of Arts Degree in African Languages and Linguistics at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Full Name: Nkateko Ngobeni

Date: 6 July 2018

Signature: 

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ABSTRACT

Substantial attention has been given to Zulu onomastic patterns. However, Swati onomastic patterns have not been afforded sufficient attention. Hence, this study was developed as a means of bridging the gap that exists within Nguni onomastic patterns. The study explores Swati personal names in the area of kaMsogwaba, a former informal settlement situated approximately 29 kilometres from the city of Nelspruit, in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa.

The study focuses on how the residents of kaMsogwaba Township use Swati personal names to embrace their culture and religion. kaMsogwaba is a religiously diverse area and thus provided rich information for the purpose of this study. The township comprises various social classes and is under the leadership of a chief, which indicates that much of the traditional culture is still prevalent in the area. Therefore, the information required for this dissertation was obtained by studying the township of kaMsogwaba, its people, their culture and traditions.

African societies are communal. This implies that social structures such as culture and religion have an impact on naming patterns as people socialize and navigate through life. Social identity theory and identity theory are used to explain how culture and religion become involved in the naming process. The study was conducted from a qualitative perspective, while ethnography was the main method used for data collection.

Key words: Naming patterns, culture, religion, identity, social identity theory, aetiology.

All non-English words and phrases are written in *italics*.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

This study focuses on the naming patterns of the Swati people living in the township of kaMsogwaba in the province of Mpumalanga, South Africa. Swaziland, the country of the Swati people, is a few kilometres away from Nelspruit, the capital city of Mpumalanga. The Swati are a minority tribe in South Africa, who practice various religions. The Swati fit in to the *tekela* group of the Nguni group. The term *tekela* is derived from the verb *kutekela*, meaning 'to tell' or 'to relate', which is used to indicate the use of 't' where other Nguni groups (isiZulu, isiXhosa and isiNdebele) use 'z' (Kuper, 2017). Names are influenced by a variety of factors and for the Swati, it is near impossible for a child to be named without considering either the circumstances of the birth of the child or the wishes of the name-giver. For the purpose of this study, only the Swati in Mpumalanga were explored, namely, those from the township of kaMsogwaba.

The Swati are known for their politeness when it comes to the manner in which they address one another. Addressing an elderly person as *gogo* (grandmother)/ *mkhulu* (grandfather), or *make* (mother)/ *babe* (father), is the basis of respect for the Swati people. Addressing one's peer as *sisi* (sister) or *bhuti* (brother) rather than by their first name, is also a way of showing respect among the younger generation. Addressing a person using their first name is considered a sign of disrespect, especially if the person being addressed is an adult. However, it is acceptable for the elderly to address a younger person by their first name. It is considered rude for any person to address the next person as *wena* (you, as it implies that the person being addressed has no identity in the eyes of the addressor. Stripping a person of their identity further implies that the person amounts to nothing. In the Swati culture, children are named because it is believed that the name-giver has aspirations for the child, and that the name-giver's wishes will be fulfilled because of the name bestowed upon the child.

African personal names assist by shedding light on African cultures, and thus they may serve in reaching a deeper understanding of the people and their way of life (Madubuike, 1976: 13-14). Moreover, it is also believed that personal names bestowed upon individuals have definite meaning. Parents, relatives, and well-wishers are very conscious when choosing the names of their children or of an individual. It is for this reason that names are not merely labels or simply tags which the individual carries along with him, but they serve as a key identifier of an individual. Names have a deep social significance, and many names studied collectively express a world view and the wellbeing of the people (Ngubane, 2000: 15). In the field of Onomastics, excessive attention has been given to the study of Zulu names by several South African scholars (Koopman, 1999; Machaba, 2005; Biyela, 2013). Therefore, this study will explore the use of Swati personal names as a tool for embracing culture and religion in the township of kaMsogwaba in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga. The background information of the research site will be outlined, along with the aims and objectives of the study, rationale, a review of the various literature that was useful in the development of this study.

Several observations relevant to this study were made during Taylor[1] (2013) stay in Ethiopia. Therefore, the following section explores the onomastic observations made by Taylor in Ethiopia. According to Taylor (2013), Ethiopian names often have a simple meaning that can be easily translated into another language. Thus, it makes discussing their names in broken Amharic and English far more straightforward than explaining British names. For instance, explaining the meaning of a British name such as Laura, meaning 'a crown of laurel leaves', to someone who has never seen a film about gladiators, could be challenging. African names, perhaps even more so than those in Western culture, are imbued with meaning, as they can act as a time capsule, and often reveal a lot about the circumstances of the person's birth.

[1] Lauren Taylor is a volunteer from the United Kingdom who visited Ethiopia in 2013 for research purposes.

Taylor (2013) informs us that during the 1970s, Ethiopia was stuck with a tragedy known as the Dergue genocidal regime. It is explained that during this period the Red Terror [2] and famine swept the country and left it in an unstable state. Hence, there are some people who have been named based on situations that occurred in Ethiopia during those years. One of the Ethiopian volunteers who worked with Taylor was named *Selam*, because her parents lived through the horrors of that period, and under no circumstances did they want their child to have to suffer the same. The Amharic name *Selam*, which means 'Peace', reflects the wider mood of the time, when the first democratic government was elected in Ethiopia, promising a brighter, less violent future. The name *Mehret*, which means mercy, again is a name that holds a mirror to the years preceding her birth. Other names such as *Tigist* (patience), *Addis* (new/fresh) and *Tesfaye* (hope) were also popular in Ethiopia at the time.

Taylor (2013) further says that a name may also reflect the name-giver's hope for the child. *Temar*, is a given name meaning something to live up to. This child was born into a very comfortable family, who spared no expense to ensure that their child became a high achiever and had the best education possible. The name comes from *Temari*, which means 'student' or 'educated one' and it was expected that she would study hard, go to university, and have a successful career in the field of her choice. Considering that girls traditionally occupy a lower place in the strata of Ethiopian society, Taylor recounts that seeing a family who were challenging the stereotype not only through the way they supported their daughter, but by the very name they gave her, was completely inspirational.

A name in Ethiopia is not considered simply a parcel of hopes, but an identifier. The name given to a child will often make evident the ethnic background or religious persuasion of the family. Ethiopia is home to over eighty distinct ethnicities, each with their own language, dress, dances, and names. Some names, like *Kokobe* (bright star, Amharic) and *Senait* (gift, Tigray) are drawn from the oral traditions of a particular group; others, like

[2] A movement of oppression and mass killings in Ethiopia between the years 1976 and 1978.

Gelila (from Galilee, Coptic Christian) and *Amina* (honest, Islamic), signal which religion is practiced by the family. It is ideal to see that cultures and languages are being kept alive through the meaning of names. In the same way that if any Swati person who might visit Ethiopia and be told by people there what their English middle name means, the people they might meet could respond by saying "your name means 'this and that' in our language". Such a scenario would be a great way of illustrating how names and languages are able to bring people together by simply conquering a common meaning (Taylor 2013).

The above argument may be expanded by pointing out that experience shows how central names can be to the relationships that are formed in a society, not only between parents and children, but amongst friends and acquaintances, as well as total strangers. Names help to define who people are, and where they come from. Experience also assists in understanding the forces behind a given name, and in understanding the world within which the name-bearer lives. When visiting foreign countries, one may experience being a stranger, a foreigner, a friend, as well as meaning countless things to many different people. Although the focus of this study is on Swati personal names, it was vital that naming patterns of other African languages beyond those in South Africa be included, in order to explore the broader scope of African onomastic systems.

The study used Social Categorisation Theory (SCT) as well as Identity Theory (IT) as a framework. Furthermore, the study adopted a qualitative method of data collection, where ethnography was the main method used for data collection. The focal point of the study was how Swati anthroponyms, particularly those from kaMsogwaba, are used as a tool to embrace culture and religion.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The main objective of the researcher is to demonstrate the naming patterns of the Swati people of kaMsogwaba. This study also aims to contribute the Swati literature in the fiels

of onomastics. The personal name is crutial in the identification of any individual across cultures. According to Shangase (2006: 7), personal names can be defined as names given to human beings for the purposes of identification, or as the word by which an individual is known or spoken of or addressed.

South Africa has a variety of churches which can be categorised under one religion: that of Christianity. This is discussed without disregarding the fact that religions other than Christianity are practiced in South Africa. The study also demonstrates how religion influences Swati naming patterns. Culture is highly significant for the Swati. In order for culture to be sustained, it needs to be practiced. Bestowing siSwati personal names is one way of how culture is practiced. This study demonstrates the role that culture has in preservation through personal names. Lastly, it verifies the existence of a relationship between Swati names, their culture and religion. This helped to determine how culture and religion meet through names.

1.3 Rationale

Due to the lack of Swati literatures in academia, a study of this nature was a necesity because it is a contribution to the elimination of the gap in African literature. The following are questions that were used to anchor the study.

1.3.1 Main Research question:

How do Swati people bestow personal names in the township?

1.3.2 Sub questions:

1. Who bestows a personal name in the township of kaMsogwaba?
2. Does culture play an important role in the bestowal?
3. What role is played by religion in the bestowal?
4. What are other factors that influence personal naming in the township of kaMsogwaba?

These questions have given a direction on how to go about with the study; how data was collected as well as how the collected data was analyzed. kaMsogwaba is a religiously diverse township, and therefore was the most relevant place in Mpumalanga to conduct such a study. This township is still under the leadership of a chief, which implies that the Swati culture is practiced in that area. kaMsogwaba also comprises people of different social class. Therefore, all information that was needed for this study to be completed was obtained by studying this area. This included a variety of Swati names along with the influences of these names, the way of life for Swati people who reside in kaMsogwaba, and the influence of their belief systems on naming patterns. kaMsogwaba is a former informal settlement, which is gradually developing into a township. In studying the residents, it was interesting to note the transition the area is undergoing as the years progress. Further elaboration regarding the history and development of kaMsogwaba is provided in the background of the study area in Chapter 2.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study used Social Categorisation Theory (SCT) as well as that of Identity Theory (IT) as a framework. Social categorisation can be defined as "the process of classifying people into groups based on similarities, nationality, beliefs, culture, as well as other traits. Self-categorisation theory specifies the operation of the social categorisation process as the cognitive basis of group behaviour" (Hogg & Terry, 2000: 122). Social identity theory (SIT) provides an appropriate framework for analysing social collaborative contexts, in which community members have different identities; that is, sets of beliefs, attitudes and values. It also suggests that reflection on social identity improves relationships within the social context. In theoretical terms, social identity assists academics in demonstrating how social considerations influence social cohesion while improving social alliances (Kilker, 1999).

Ellemers, Spears and Doosje (2002) argue that group commitment and social context features are vital determinants of central identity concerns. They developed a taxonomy

of situations in order to reflect motives that may influence threats to ones' identity. Therefore, it is impossible to assume that the focus of the aforementioned scholars is on how individuals constitute identity within a social context, and not on how the identity of the individuals may be under threat within the social context.

Further, Ellemers, Spears and Doosie (2002) state that the importance of social identity within social groups impacts on the manner in which individuals, as well as those around them, cannot be understood without taking into account the social context within which they function. This implies that the source of identity is the social context within which people live and experience their lives.

Social psychology scholars Hogg, Terry & White (1995), conducted a critical comparison between Identity Theory (IT) and Social Identity Theory (SIT). They described both theories in isolation, and included summaries on the similarities as well as critical discussions on the differences between the two theories. By so doing, they were able to establish that identity theory and social identity theory are two different theories. This was done by saying that:

> Identity theory is principally a micro-sociological theory that sets out to explain individuals' role-related behaviours, while social identity theory is a social psychological theory that sets out to explain group processes and intergroup relations. Both theories place their major theoretical emphasis on a multi- faceted and dynamic self that mediates the relationship between social structure and individual behaviour. (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995: 255).

They further assert that:

> Identity theory discusses the organisation of behaviour in terms of roles, while social identity theory talks of norms, stereotypes, and prototypes. (Hogg, Terry & White, 1995: 262).

Taifel (1987a) originally defined social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (1978a: 63). The notion of identity entails that belonging to a group provides individuals with a sense of belonging in the social world Sindic & Condor (2014).

Dundes (1984) informs us about the origins of the term 'identity' by saying that the term *identity* derives from the Latin *idem* meaning 'the same' (1984: *149*). Furthermore, he explains that although the Latin means 'the same', identity depends as much upon differences as upon similarities. Based on the aforementioned, it is possible to assume that when dealing with the concept of identity, we are focusing more on the differences of individuals rather than the similarities. It is impossible to speak of sameness without reference to differences. There can be no 'self' without an 'other', no identity of group A without group B (Dundes, 1984: 149)

The uniqueness of an individual is what sets him/her apart from the social group within which they may belong, even though the social group may share commonalities. Such uniqueness may also be found in the personal names of individuals. Giving a child a unique name, is common practice in the Swati community. It is believed that a unique name will cause the child to stand out in the community; hence, the name is a social marker.

This study made use of the social identity theories of Dundes (1983) and Joseph (2004). According to Dundes, two levels of identity exist: the individual and 'persistent selfsameness', and the collective-identity, which is also known as collective sameness. Joseph argues that being named is 'enacted identity'. This encodes that a child is named in the presence of the community as an act to regulate naming patterns and processes. Biyela (2013) had the following to say with reference to Dundes's first category of identity:

> ...naming oneself in Zulu society, is viewed as self-praise where, for example, the traditional *maskandi* musicians name themselves while singing to make their own statements of how they perceive themselves as individuals. (Bivela 2013: 13).

Both theories focus on the way in which identities are internalised and used by the individual. In other words, we may distinguish the two by saying that identity theory focuses on the process of labelling and naming of individuals who belong to particular social group. On the other hand, social identity theory speaks about social identification as well as the process of self-categorisation. To reaffirm this statement, Hogg, Terry & White (1995: 264) state that identity theory focuses on the process of labelling oneself as belonging to a particular social category, acknowledges the role that others may play in supporting this categorisation, and relates self-conception to behaviour via behavioural prescriptions embodied by roles.

The reason for the above theory being chosen was because it considers different techniques for viewing identity. This aided the researcher in identifying the category in which participants belonged. Individuals are able to formulate their own identity, however, the notion of a collective identity refers to an individual's sense of belonging to a group. The identity of the group imposes on the individual's personal identity, and becomes a part of their individual identity. The notion is that by participating in social activities, a person can develop a sense of belonging and an identity that goes beyond the person. This sense of belonging can become so potent that it takes over other parts of the person's identity. However, this study focusus only on the persistent selfsameness of Dundes's theory. Although identities can be categorised, they are not fixed. Individuals have the potential to change their identity at any given time.

There is no linear way to define identity. Machaba (2004) notes in the statement below that existing definitions can be used only as a point of departure to understand the notion of identity as a whole.

> The concept 'identity' means various things to different people. At the surface level the term means a sense of self. According to the Collins Shorter Dictionary, identity means the state of having unique characteristics, the individual characteristics by which a person or a thing is recognised. The latter definition from the Collins Shorter Dictionary cannot be considered as absolute in defining identity but rather as a starting point. The reason for this is because identity is not only limited to individuals, a group of people can be said to have one identity. The other reason for this is because though identity comprises some of the elements mentioned in the above definition, the concept of identity comprises more than the Collins Shorter Dictionary identifies. (Machaba (2004: 242).

Dundes (1983) and Joseph (2004) recognise the existence of social identity within the notion of identity. According to Burke (2006), those who belong to a social group (two or more people) share the same social identity. They identify and evaluate themselves similarly. They have the same definition of the attributes they have, and how they relate to and differ from those who are not part of their group. Participants of this study possessed several social identities, namely, cultural, family and peer identities. Culturally, participants belonged to the Swati culture. Although as a collective, participants belonged to Swati culture, they differed in that they come from different families. This meant that participants had different family identities. Peer identity is an identity formed by people who belong to the same age group. Participants of this study will be were over the age of eighteen, meaning that each of them belonged to a peer group with which they shared a peer identity.

Castels (1997) argued that identity is a people's source of meaning and experience. In Africa, as in most parts of the world, the birth of a child is an event of great joy and significance. Much importance is attached to the meaning of the name of the child. The hopes of the parents, current events of importance as well as celestial events that

surrounded the birth, are all given consideration when naming the child. It is believed that the name bestowed on a child will exert an influence, either for better or the worse, on the life of the child and on the family as well.

For this reason, the study took into account the development of identities among individuals, as it is possible to use a psychological theory to explain how identities are formed. Erik Erikson, cited in Hardman (2016) is a psychosocial theorist, who explained how individuals form identities as they develop over a lifespan. Erikson proposed that the main intention of development was not biological survival, but rather the formation of individual identity. According to Erikson, an individual passes through various stages of development, and at each stage, a crisis must be negotiated. Successful negotiation of the crisis at each stage helps to develop the individual's identity. The crisis faced throughout development is not solely individual. Individuals are shaped by other individuals, who in turn are shaped by the socio-cultural milieu to which they are exposed. Therefore, while development provides a timeline for the development of an individual's identity, individual cultural contexts can afford altered circumstances of development.

Erikson, cited in Hardman (2016), framed three stages of development which outline how an individual's identity is formed in their first six years of life. He argues that every individual goes through these stages of identity development, and that success or failure to overcome each crisis at the end of each stage impacts on the development of identity at a later stage of life. The stages are briefly discussed: Stage one is known as Trust vs. Mistrust, which begins from birth until the age of twelve months - the first year of life. The first crisis an infant must negotiate is how to trust someone to meet their needs as new-borns. For instance, if the care received by the infant is consistent, predictable, and reliable, they will develop a sense of trust which they will carry with them to other relationships. The development of this sense of trust will help them feel secure even when threatened. On the contrary, if the care received by the infant is inconsistent, unpredictable, and unreliable; the infant will develop a sense of mistrust. Development

of a sense of mistrust results in the child's lack of confidence in the world around them as well as the inability to influence events, thus carrying the sense of mistrust with them to other relationships even at an older age.

In further elaboration of Erikson's theory, Hardman (2016) states that stage two of Erikson's theory is known as Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt. Children are said to experience this stage of development during their second year of life. At this stage, the child must learn to control their own behaviour. Failure to do so may lead them to become doubtful about themselves. If children are encouraged and supported in their increased independence at this stage, they become more confident and secure in their own ability to survive in the world. On the other hand, if they are criticised at this stage, or overly controlled, or not given the opportunity to assert themselves, they begin to feel inadequate in their ability to survive. This may further result in a lack of self-esteem and feelings of shame and doubt in their abilities, which causes them to become overly dependent on others.

The third and final stage of Erikson's' theory of development is known as Initiative vs. Guilt. This stage is said to begin at the age of three years and ends at the age of six years. A child at this stage must learn to become independent. Independence is obtained through initiating their own activities. If the child is prohibited from doing this, he/she will begin to develop feelings of guilt. Children aged three to six years are likely to begin to plan activities, make up games, and initiate activities with others. Given this opportunity, they develop a sense of initiative, thus feeling secure in their ability to lead others as well as make own decisions. However, if they are denied the opportunity, either through criticism or control, they develop a sense of guilt. This may also lead them to feel that they are a nuisance to others, and therefore they will remain followers, lacking in self-initiative, even when they are older (Hardman, 2016).

Although the aforementioned theory of development demonstrates a psychodynamic perspective, it provides clear insight into how personal identity is attained by

individuals. Moreover, the theory also aids in understanding why individuals in society are different, even though they may socialise in the same environment.

According to Burke (2006), there exists another form of identity: personal identity. Burke (2006) defines personal identity as a self-elucidation attribution that one shares with other people. In simple terms, personal identity refers to the way people perceive themselves. From an individualised perspective, identity has been portrayed as an individual's survival kit, an ideological envelope (Alexander 2001: 148). It is possible to argue that a person's name is their identity as well as a window on their culture and self. A name has the ability to link people with the past, their ancestors, and is also a part of their spirituality.

This brings us to the core reason as to why identity theories are essential to this study. Compared to Western societies, African societies are communal. This suggests that before people live as individuals they first live as groups, and can be categorised according to various social groups by means of ethnicity, culture, religion, clan, and then individually. This implies that the name-bearers of this study would first need to identify themselves as black Africans, who are Swati, members of the kaMsogwaba community, are members of either Christ Embassy/ SOC/ Nazareth Baptist Church (Shembe church) and belong to the *Dludlu* clan, before they can identify themselves as individuals. This also implies that name-bearers need to be socialised before they can be identified as individuals. Thus, social categorisation theory and identity theory are relevant because they demonstrate how a name-bearer is able to negotiate an identity within social categories before they navigate through life as individuals.

In Swati societies, name-givers are mostly adults; hence, we could say that they are part of these social groups. They bestow names on their children and then the children need to be socialised back into these existing social categories. When the name-bearer grows up, their reaction to their name is what gives them an identity of who they are. This is the central point at which SIT and IT meet. People negotiate their identities as they grow. In this case, name-bearers are negotiating their identities through names (Pfukwa, 2007).

When we touch on names related to religion, God, or the Supreme Being, we need to consider whether the name-bearers feel as though the names bestowed on them represent who they are as individuals. Moreover, we also need to consider how name-bearers use their names to negotiate an identity as they navigate through life.

There are many ways to teach someone about culture and religion without teaching them how to burn incense[3] or *Impepho* (for those who practice African religion), and teaching them how to read the Holy Bible (for Christians). Therefore, this study demonstrates how culture and religion can meet through names. Whatever beliefs the name-giver may have are reflected in the chosen name. The name-bearer will either conform to the beliefs of his/her society, which are reflected in the name, or will move away from these beliefs because as they grow up they feel they no longer belong to a communal society. They may move to an individualistic society (name-bearers), which is 'every man for himself', leaving behind the communal society (name-givers) that believes that *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (a person is a person through people).

Through their naming, name-givers are able to uphold their beliefs as well as socialise the name-bearer. This study navigates between these two aforementioned societies and the theories that helped the researcher to understand how to weave the two societies together. Furthermore, the argument of this study is that SCT and IT can be connected by names. Therefore, names are the glue that connects the two societies.

Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell (1987) echo that according to the self-categorisation theory, when individuals identify closely with a social collective, they experience a process called depersonalisation. Specifically, they perceive all members of the group as interchangeable on some level. That is, they assume everyone in the group, including themselves, share the same underlying values or inclinations. Accordingly, these individuals tend to comply with group norms.

[3] Incense

1.6 Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative method of analysis. Sarakantos defines a qualitative method as:

> ... a naturalistic enquiry, which studies real world situations as they unfold. Qualitative method involves personal contact and insight, with the researcher getting close to the people, situation, and phenomenon under study. (Sarakantos, 1993: 46)

Qualitative research methods encompass the systematic collection, organisation as well as interpretation of textual material derived from dialogue or observation (Malterud, 2001). Qualitative research is concerned with understanding and explaining social phenomena as experienced by individuals in their natural context (Malterud, 2001). The qualitative method is also interested in understanding the meanings people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in that world (Merriam, 2009: 13).

A qualitative research design was more suitable for this study because it seeks to find out the relationship between personal names and religion. This design required the researcher to have dialogue with persons of interest to this study through interviews. Herbert and Irene Rubin (1995) cited in Babbie (1998) said:

> ...qualitative design is flexible, interactive, and continuous, rather than prepared in advance and locked in stone. (H & R Rubin, 1995, cited in Babbie (1998).

This study made use of a tape recorder, to record the conducted interviews. A list of questions was written and used as a guide during interviews.

Ethnography was the main method used for data collection. Ethnography is the analytic description of behaviours that characterise cultures or social groups. The ethnographic method includes analysis of the knowledge and beliefs that generate and interpret those

behaviours. The researcher made use of two essential and indispensable tools with regard to this technique: first-hand observation and formal and informal interviews with the study participants.

Agnew and Pyke (1982) consider ethnography as the core method of field work. They state that:

> The essence of this science sieve is the observation, description, and interpretation of events as they occur in nature or naturally ... This method requires no manipulation, no controlled experimentation, but rather, the careful observation of episodes as they take place in their usual surroundings. (Agnew & Pyke, 1982: 45)

In correspondence, Spradley (1980) states that:

> ...the essential core of ethnography is the concern with the meaning of actions and events to the people we seek to understand.

The reason for choosing this method for the study was to enable the researcher to submerge herself in the participant's world. By so doing, the researcher was able to gain access to the participants' way of living, and was thus able to relate to their responses with better understanding.

Another approach used in this study was that of an interpretive or constructive paradigm. This approach is used in research to discover the underlying meaning of events and activities (Cohen & Crabtee, 2006). The approach assumes that reality is created by individuals as a collective. This is so because reality as we know it is constructed inter-subjectively through meaning and understanding and is developed socially as well as experimentally. This approach assumes that individuals are unable to separate themselves from what they know (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). By using the interpretive paradigm approach, the researcher was able to attain answers to the question "Why do you act this way?"

For researchers to resolve a research predicament, dialogue between the researcher and the participants is necessary (Shutz, 1962). It is during dialogue that researchers are able to find answers to pending questions regarding their study. The interpretive approach encourages observation of context as well as analysis of existing texts in order to ensure an adequate dialogue between researcher and participant.

According to Myers (2009), the premise of the interpretive approach is that access to reality occurs via social constructions such as language, shared meaning, and consciousness. Hence, this implies that the interpretive paradigm approach is reinforced through observation and interpretation. To observe is to accumulate information regarding certain occasions, while to interpret is to accumulate information by comparing between the gathered information and some abstract patterns (Aikenhead, 1997). There is no reality that is 'the same' for all people. Individuals experience different realities as they move and socialise in the world. However, reality can be explored. This may be done by observation of social interactions with meaningful actions through means of observing daily routines, conversations and human contact.

Varying human experiences form the reason for different social realities. This results in people gathering different knowledge and views as well as interpreting various situations differently. Occasions are understood through mental processes of interpretation which are influenced by social interactions. Being part of the kaMsogwaba community during the research enabled the researcher to socially construct knowledge about the residents. The interpretive approach also allowed for a more personal and interactive mode of data collection. Moreover, by making use of the interpretive approach, the researcher was able to be a participating observer while taking part in the daily routines (Carr & Kemmis; 1988). The approach further allowed the researcher to discern the meanings of actions as expressed within the kaMsogwaba society.

1.6 Ethics

As this study required interviews with participants, ethical issues were taken into consideration. The researcher applied for ethical clearance from the University of the Witwatersrand, and once clearance was granted, participants were provided with an information letter outlining the purpose of the study and their role in the study. A letter of consent was signed on their agreement to participate.

Due to shifts in cultures and living, there have been great onomastic shifts in the manner in which names are chosen. Great consideration is given to culture and religion. Thus, it is hoped that this study will contribute to an enhanced understanding of the bestowal of names within the Swati community. The reviewed literature enabled the researcher to use theories of social categorisation and identity as a point of departure, and then focus on the role of culture and religion in the giving of Swati personal names.

1.7 Paradigm shifts

Paradigm shifts can be referred to as fundamental shifts in the manner in which reality is viewed by individuals. They help us to see reality differently, based on individual or group experiences.

Rosado (1997) explains paradigm shifts as:

> A movement away from old explanations that no longer explain reality, resulting in a redefinition of taken for granted boundaries due to the emergence of a new model or way of thinking, valuing, and perceiving the world. (Rosado, 1997: 1)

In essence, for a paradigm shift to take place, individuals must have experienced certain events (usually unfortunate events), and be in the process of overcoming them. As individuals reflect on prior events, they learn from that experience, and as a result, can move past that experience by viewing the way forward from a different perspective.

In this aspect, it could be said that paradigm shifts are used as a method which helps understand behaviours among individuals as well as social groups.

Rosado (1997: 4) said that society is not a static entity. This means that society is changing; the society that existed years ago is no longer the same society that exists today, nor shall it be the same in ten years hence.

Religion aims to combat poverty by creating awareness of prosperity. The definitions of poverty and prosperity are further elaborated upon in relation to their use in this context. Poverty is related to situations such as suffering and illness of all kinds (from 'flu, to HIV, to mental illness such as stress and depression, to paralysis and beyond). Individuals who are in poverty are less probable to enjoy life because they feel aggrieved. On the other hand, prosperity is related to having life in abundance. Life in abundance is not afflicted by; meaning that their lives have stability.

Some may question how it is possible for one to have prosperity in this busy and complex world we live in. Leading a prosperous life may seem like a fairy-tale; however, it is possible. This is why creating awareness about prosperity is vital. People across nations are searching for the same thing: prosperity. Religion and culture meet at this point as they both strive to move people from poverty into prosperity. Compared to culture, religion appears to have the solution to combatting poverty and becoming prosperous. In kaMsogwaba, multiple people have turned to religion in the search for a life of prosperity. Religion in this context may refer to African religion, Christianity or any other religion that may exist in this world.

Many black people are recent Christians; they do not have a long history and background of having Christian forefathers. Most of them have a long history of traditional cultural practices, passed down to them by their forefathers. Many are still torn between Christianity and their traditional cultural beliefs, and this conflict causes an imbalance in their lives. This explains why some individuals have different preferences as to the

church they attend. Most people attend a church that has helped to provide them with solutions after they have experienced a shift in their lives.

1.8 Literature review

The literature review for this study provided insight into the importance of African personal names. It also gave insight into the role culture plays in the Zulu naming system. This naming system is closely related to that of the Swati, which is why the study examined the system in relations to the Swati system in this review. Lack of Swati onomastic literature is also the main reason why most of the literature that was used for this review is concentrated on Zulu onomastic systems. The review further investigated the onomastic shifts that took place during the change of the last era. Lastly, the review studied the cultures and religions (African religion & Christianity) in definition, as well as their role in the bestowal of African personal names.

According to Koopman (1999), anthroponymic systems consist of the following elements: name type, which may be personal; surname; clan and nickname. Personal names are given to newly-born children; a surname is a word derived from Latin which means 'super' or 'above', which implies an extra name or a name over and above the personal name. Moreover, Koopman (1999) denotes that names consist of a shape or a form, which has to do with the morphology of the name. The meaning of a name may give the physical appearance of the child or situation upon the birth of the child. A name is not merely an identifier of an individual from others, but rather can be seen as a social function that usually contains a message and identity, which is constructed by individuals in a certain context. This means that a name may indicate the sex (male or female), age, rite of passage, affiliation, and birth circumstances of a child.

Zondi (2010) looks at personal names given to children born in polygamous marriages. Personal names in polygamous unions reflect life as experienced by women living in this context. Names are centred on everyday community affairs. Zondi (2010) explains that

bestowing names such as *Ngoneni* (what have I done wrong) or *Nqobizitha* (triumph over our enemies) is a way for women to express themselves in their marriage. The aforementioned occurs mainly because women in polygamous unions are required to be conservative at all times due to the custom that certain attitudes from women are unacceptable in African cultures.

Furthermore, Zondi (2010) explains the role of culture in polygamous marriages. She notes that culture tames the behaviour of women in a marriage. Once married, there are certain 'do's and don'ts' that are set for women, and in most cases the don'ts overshadow the do's. For instance, women are not allowed to talk back at their husbands. Doing so may result in punishment for the wife such as sending her back home, where her family may be required to pay a fine in order for her to return to her husband. Zondi (2010) further expresses that such treatment in African cultures may be considered by some to be oppressive and it is understandable that some women in polygamous unions use the process of naming their children as a platform to express themselves.

Ngidi (2012) reports that it is through names that language, culture and religion meet. It is understood that culture refers to daily living routines and that religion is regarded as beliefs that regulate people's lives. Names reflect how people relate to one another. Names also reflect grievances and issues they may have against each other. Through the interactions of African people, we also learn about their relationships with the living-dead. The living-dead have power over their living relatives, and it is through names that we are able to detect the type of relationship family members have with one another as well as with their living-dead. Ngidi (2012) further explains that the living-dead are watchdogs of peace within the family. This implies that angering the living-dead may cause them to stop watching over their living relatives. Without this protection, the family may experience misfortunes such as unexpected illnesses and even death.

The aforementioned scholars dealt with polygamy as cultural aspects of their studies; this study focuses on the birth, life and death of African people, while looking into aspects of their culture. It is important to note that for Africans, personal names, culture, and

religion are intertwined. Ngubane (2000) confirms this by saying that names are connected to the culture, beliefs and customs of the naming group. He further explains that societies are dynamic, thus it can be expected that names may change over time in order to accommodate new experiences. Elaborating on this statement, Ngubane (2000) gave an example about how most colonised Africans accepted Christian names when they were baptised into Christianity. Missionaries had the notion of saint names when they introduced the bible to Africans. Furthermore, in some cases missionaries insisted on white non-biblical names for Africans.

This was also due to the fact that most missionaries were unable to pronounce African names. The above may also imply the change of identity that took place for Africans during that period. Renaming people can be seen as a form of oppression because the person being renamed is moved from their power position to that of the re-namer. Based on this notion, Ngubane detected a trend in Africans of going back to using their African names and doing away with their Western names. He explains that this tendency of Africans renaming themselves using traditional indigenous names is a reassertion of themselves as black people. It is a rejection of their colonial past and reclamation of their right to use their own names, thus keeping their true identity as Africans.

Makondo (2009: 27) agrees with Ngubane's observation when he states the following based on Madubuike's (1970) thoughts:

> African names became increasingly popular with the ascendance in the 1970s of the Black Consciousness movement, an outgrowth of the disillusionment over violent responses to the non-violent struggle for integration and justice. A sizeable number of Africans globally resorted to name changing, especially during the liberation struggles or after the attainment of their independence. (Madubuike, 1970)

Arun (2007) discusses the impact of religious conversion on cultural identity. His study aims to encourage South African Indian Christians to Dalit theology, which is a branch

of Christian theology that emerged among the Dalit caste in India in the 1980s. Arun (2007) also encourages South African Indian Christians to involve themselves with black theologians in order to gain perspective on black theology. His discussion is formed around South African Indians who have converted from Indian religions to Christianity. Arin (2007) maintains that these converts develop a new identity after being converted.

In Barnes and Pfukwa (2010) we discover how new identities were created by bestowing war names on those who were part of the guerrilla war of liberation in Zimbabwe. They demonstrate the processes that create new identities through guerrilla war names, and also elaborate on the functions of these names by quoting Tangamiria (1995):

> These names reflected their new political awareness and their new role in the armed struggle. Combatants could not operate using their original names as they would have endangered their families who might have been victimised by the Rhodesian security forces, if ever it became known their father, son or daughter had joined the 'terrs'. Tangamiria, 1995: 45).

In explaining the functions of the newly bestowed war names, Barnes and Pfukwa (2010) continued by saying that these names are:

> ... an attempt to delete an identity derived from the past in order to replace it with a new identity. The new name brings new attributes that supersede or erase the existing ones. Taking up a war name can be seen as an attempt to erase a colonial past, an erasure of all connections with the past, and simultaneously concealing identity in a war situation. (Barnes & Pfukwa 2010: 212)

Helleland, Ore and Wikstrom (2012) compiled and edited a collection of scholarly work with reference to identity. Reading their text, one grasps how identity can be used as a framework for studies across various fields of academia. Personal names are a crucial

part of an individual's life. In his article titled *A Glance into African Personal Names,* Lubisi (2002) informs us about the value of African personal names.

It can be added that the given name is more important than the inherited surname. In siSwati there is a saying: *Ligama lemuntfu yinkhomo, sibongo sakhe yimbhuti* (The name of a person is a cow, their surname is a goat). This means that the personal name is more important than the surname (Lubisi 2002: 120). To further elaborate on the value of African personal names, Lubisi (2002: 120-121) quotes from an article in the *Saturday Star* newspaper (24 April 1999: 14) which talked about the act of naming:

> Names have to be strong, memorable and capable of standing the test of time. And they should not mean something rude in any language. When the child is given a certain name, the name will accompany the child to his death.

Kishimoto (1961) defines religion as:

> Religion is an aspect of culture centred upon activities which are taken by those who participate in them to elucidate the ultimate meaning of life and to be related to the ultimate solution of its problems. Many religious systems contain the notion of deity and/or holiness in relation with such activities.

Two religions were examined for the purpose of this study: Christianity and the African religion of ancestral veneration. The study looked at how Swati personal names are derived from these religions. Many Africans are moving away from the Euro-Western way of naming back to the African way (Lubisi; 2002). In the past, Africans gave their children names from the Holy Bible as a way of showing their Christianity. Names such as Matthew, John, Martha, Mary and Judas, to name a few, would be used (Ngubane 2000). Nowadays, African Christians include *Nkosi* (God/ King/Leader) to the names of

their children. Thus, names such as *Nkosinathi* (God is with us) and *Bonginkosi* (Thank the Lord) are an example of such names.

Hofstede (1981: 24) states that culture is a system of collectively held values. Therefore, belief systems, language, norms of behaviour, as well as political systems are taken into consideration when naming a child. In the African culture, one cannot shy away from the relationship between a name, culture, and religion. Zungu (2014), stresses that culture and religion are intertwined with names in the African culture. This suggests that the perception of name-giving cannot occur without culture and religion. Furthermore, Zungu (2014) stresses the importance of realising the role ancestors play in the African culture. This means that culture and religion are deeply considered prior to a child being named. This study aims to add to the existing literature by examining aspects of the Swati culture and the naming patterns thereof, and by demonstrating how culture and religion meet through onomastics.

Becken (1995) provides us with scholarly work that contains the history of the Nazareth Baptist Church. His work is based on testimony given by Christians who consider themselves members of that congregation. He refers to the Nazareth Baptist Church as the fruit of an organic growth of Christianity on African soil. Furthermore, he sees the church as an institution in which the Gospel message was incarnated into the African culture, mentality, and community life. Becken (1995) reports that the testimony given by the study participants, who were members of the church, resembled that of the Gospels and Acts found in the New Testament in the Holy Bible. This reference to the Bible indicates that the Nazareth Baptist Church falls under the Christian category of religion.

Theories of social categorisation as well as identity assist in the understanding of social groups. Krueger (2001) informs us that the purpose of social categorisation is that it makes room for constraints within society. Social categorisation also makes it easier to identify similarities and differences within social groups.

Contrary to the aforementioned studies, this study focuses on names and religion, specifically on how religion influences the Swati naming system, with special reference to those who belong to the community of kaMsogwaba in Mpumalanga province, South Africa. Swati personal names are the basis of the study, while the influences of the variety of belief systems found in kaMsogwaba form the structure of the study. There are different ways through which naming patterns occur, and it is through the understanding of the origin or the aetiology (reason behind the name) of names that acceptance of the name comes into play. Furthermore, this study proves the assumption that culture and religion meet through names.

1.9 Conclusion

This introductory chapter provided a clear outline of the major requirements for academic studies. It is founded on the Swati people and their use of names. The Swati are not only found in Swaziland, their home country, but are widespread within South Africa's borders as well as in some neighbouring countries. The study focused on the Swati from Mpumalanga province, particularly those from kaMsogwaba. Chapter 1 enabled an understanding of the Swati way of life, with reference to their culture and belief systems, which constitute the types of names given to Swati people. Theories of identity were a major framework of this study, as these theories helped to understand the role played by identity in social contexts. Identity enables people to have a sense of belonging within society, and can be expressed in different forms. The discussion on paradigm shifts enabled an understanding that life-changing events can result from experiencing paradigm shifts. Lastly, the literature reviewed in this study included previous onomastic studies by renowned scholars in this field such as Koopman (1999, 2002), Ngubane (2002), Machaba (2004), Ngidi (2012) and others.

CHAPTER 2

This chapter discuss the way of life of Swati people along with some of their religious experiences. The structures of the three selected churches are discussed in this chapter. The churches give us a backgroung on how religion man influence naming patterns. Thefore, anthroponyms discussed here are used to discuss culture and religion of the Swati people.

2.1 A brief overview of the Swati culture and religion

Swati culture encompasses the way of life and customs of the Swati people through historical stages and events. Swati people make up the various Nguni clans (Xhosa, Ndebele, and Zulu) who speak the siSwati language. Swati speakers reside in Swaziland as well as in South Africa, in the kaNgwane region of Mpumalanga province. Traditions surrounding ancestral veneration are still strong among the Swati (Sihlongonyana, 2003). Religiously, the majority of Swati claim to be Christians. Traditional religions which mix Christianity with tradition are predominant. Although many Swati claim to be Christians or associated with mainline religions, during times of extreme need they tend to return to traditional beliefs and intermediaries such as *Tinyanga* - traditional healers, or *Tangoma* - seers.

Various religions are practiced by South Africans, including Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and the traditional African religion commonly practiced by the Bantu people. However, ancestors are an effective part of African tradition. They are to be consulted before, during and after every major event such as births, deaths, weddings, or any other event that is held by the family. Offerings are always made to honour, please and thank the ancestors. A cow, sheep, goat, or chicken is usually slaughtered at these events, and the ancestors will then be called to receive the offering and bless the event. The veneration of ancestors is conceived by some to be an outdated aboriginal custom with no relevance to modern society. However, the veneration of ancestors is founded on the belief that the dead live on in spirit and are capable of influencing the lives of those

who are still living. It is believed that ancestors are capable of both blessing and cursing the living. Hence, their veneration is inspired by both respect and fear.

According to Fortes (1965: 122), the veneration of ancestors emerges large in the anthropological image of sub-Saharan Africa. Ancestors are believed to hold mystical powers and authority, and they retain an important role in the world of the living even though they are dead. Kopytoff (1971) describes the relationship of ancestors to their living descendants as ambivalent, as it can be both punitive and compassionate, and sometimes even unpredictable. However, there are some Africans who follow the religion of dynasties. In South Africa, the Zulu nation is known to be a nation that fully embraces and fulfils ancestral veneration in various ways. It should be noted that the Zulu naming system is also considered part of their traditional religion.

The ancestors are arbitrators between the living, the deceased, and God. As such, Mbiti refers to ancestors as the 'living-dead' (1970: 10). With this being noted, the influences brought forth by traditional religion to the naming patterns of Swati people must be acknowledged. During the study, the researcher was informed about cases of the living-dead communicating with their living relatives directly through dreams, without the aid of an *inyanga* or *sangoma*. One of the participants informed the researcher about a dream where his great-grandmother informed him about his pregnant girlfriend. He reported as follows:

> I was not aware that my girlfriend was pregnant. It is funny because my girlfriend was also unaware that she was pregnant. So, one night, while I was sleeping I was visited by my *khokho* (great-grandmother). I know it was my *khokho* because she told me who she was. She said to me: *yeJeffrey ngimi khokho wakho Smangele. Ngikwatisa ngalesisu lesitfelwe ngilesidzandzane lovana naso. Unetinyanga letintsatfu atetfele, utetfele umtfwana wemfana.* (Jeffrey, it is I your great- grandmother *Smangele*. I am here to let you know about your girlfriend's pregnancy. She is three months pregnant with a baby boy.) Basically, she told me to tell my girlfriend not to terminate the pregnancy, because if she does,

> we will never be able to conceive again regardless of whether we are together or not. She said that we should name the child *Mbhijane* (a little bit). If we do not give this name to the child he will not live a fruitful life, as he might become disabled before he reaches his teen years. This child was going to help me build the family, especially financially, so indeed I gave the child that name. My girlfriend and I are now married, and our son is seventeen years old. After my son was born my *khokho* visited me again, this time she just smiled at me.

This illustrates some of the influences the living-dead have in the naming of children in the Swati culture. When an instruction is given by the living-dead, it is imperative for the living to follow these instructions because failure to do so could result in consequences. The participant mentioned that if he did not follow his *khokho*'s instructions the child would have been disabled. However, once the instructions were followed, his *khokho* came back and smiled at him as a sign that she was pleased.

The *sangoma* is a traditional diviner chosen by the ancestors of that particular family. The training of a *sangoma* is called *kwetfwasa*. At the end of the training, a traditional graduation ceremony takes place where all the local *tangoma* come together for feasting and dancing in celebration of the new *sangoma*. The diviner is consulted for various reasons, such as the cause of sickness or even death in the family. His diagnosis is based on *kubhula*, a process of communication with the ancestors where the *inyanga* possesses the bone throwing skill (*kushaya ematsambo*) used to determine the prognosis of the issue brought forth.

There is a widespread belief in witchcraft and sorcery among African people. *Mutsi* (medicine) murders, in which persons are killed so that their body parts can be used for medicine are now uncommon. It is believed that the *tinyanga* use body parts to strengthen their healing powers. Traditional religion has no class of ordained priests. The senior male in each family maintains communication with the ancestors. *Tangoma* are considered more powerful than healers and are often possessed by ancestral spirits. Traditional healers are typically male; however, female healers also exist.

Bhengu (1975: 52) acknowledges that names may be used as a tool to connect living descendants with their living-dead. Thus, because Zulu people believe in the living-dead, the lives of the living descendants are controlled by the living-dead. In other words, the living must not make important decisions without first consulting or reporting to their living-dead. Consultation with a *sangoma* is usually done before a certain decision is taken by the family; such as a man taking a wife. *Tinhlolo* (bones) are thrown on the cow skin in the consultation room. If the ancestors do not approve of that action, the *sangoma* is able to read that in his *tinhlolo*, and even pass on messages from the living-dead to the living descendents. *Sangoma's* can be perceived as mediators between the living and the ancestors.

Kushiswa kwempepho (the burning of incense) is a major part of traditional religion. It helps to bring the ancestors closer to the living. *Impepho* has been used by the ancestors of many people in the world; from ancient Hebrews to ancient Africans. It is also used by most cultures in South Africa. *Impepho* is believed to be a prayer stimulator, which is why it is burnt before *ukubikeza* (greeting) the ancestors. Just as it is important to worship in praise inside a church in the Christian religion, so it is also imperative for *impepho* to be burnt in a specified room (*emsamo*) in the house. The elderly member of the household is usually the appropriate person to lead the prayers during *kushiswa kwempepho;* especially before a major event. When *impepho* is burnt, the spirits delight and listen to your requests and attend to them.

Kuphahla plays a major role in traditional religion, because it is the key to opening many doors that hinder communication between the living and their living-dead. It is believed that the living-dead are always waiting to hear from their living descendants. If done incorrectly, or done by the wrong person, it can cause bad luck or cause someone to die strangely in the family. *Mqombotsi* (African beer) plays a huge role in the veneration of the living-dead. This beer is said to broaden the contact between the living and their ancestors. *Mqombotsi* also plays a central role in the social context, by bringing people together, often during ceremonies such as customary weddings and funerals. The

sangoma is a traditional diviner chosen by the ancestors of that particular family. It is correct to imply that Swati culture is intertwined with African religion, because these two entities complement one another and together they make one unit. Culture is the dominant element between the two because through the acts and beliefs of the acts, a culture religion has been formed.

Christian work among the people of Swaziland began around the year 1844, when a Wesleyan missionary conference in South Africa responded to a request from King Mswati II for a missionary. James Allison and Richard Giddy came with two Sotho evangelists from what is now known in South Africa as the Orange Free State. The Swati responded robustly to Christian work and as a result, numerous churches were established and extensive work done among this comparatively small group of people. Churches which may be found in South African Swati communities are the Nazarene, Anglican, Roman Catholic, the Assembly of God, and the Evangelical church. Baptists were added to the list when they also began work in South Africa in 1983 (Kuper, 2017). Response has slowed in the current generation, and cultural Christianity may be a disincentive to conversion. The population of charismatic churches has also increased in the South African Swati community.

2.2 The Swati culture

Language and culture are symbiotic entities (Ngidi 2012: 32). In the African society, culture is profoundly rooted in the language spoken by the people. This implies that culture determines language. If an individual had to introduce herself as a Swati, it will be implied that they speak the siSwati language. If the same individual introduces herself as *Tingetile* (Have been added), because this name is of a Swati nature, it will be assumed that the language they speak is siSwati. In recognising the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (1956: 59), we are informed of a linguistic relativity principle. This principle states that our cognitive process as well as our behavior are influenced by language. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (1956) is based on two philosophies: the theory of determination, and

language as an influencer of thought. The theory of determination assumes that the language one speaks determines the way in which one views the world one lives in. The second philosophy assumes that cognitive processes are governed by the language(s) we speak. This also implies that the language in which a person is named reflects the thoughts of the name-giver.

The Swati culture can be described as the way of life and customs of the Swati people through various historical stages. The culture of the Swati people includes religion, music, food, architecture, and kinship, among many other things. The Swati people are composed of various Nguni clans who speak the Nguni language, siSwati. These people mostly reside in Swaziland and South Africa. Swati people include citizens of Swaziland, where one of the most visible features of cultural identity is the traditional political structure of the nation and the home. This is the case as well among the Swati in Mpumalanga province, especially for those residing in the Nelspruit and its surrounding townships.

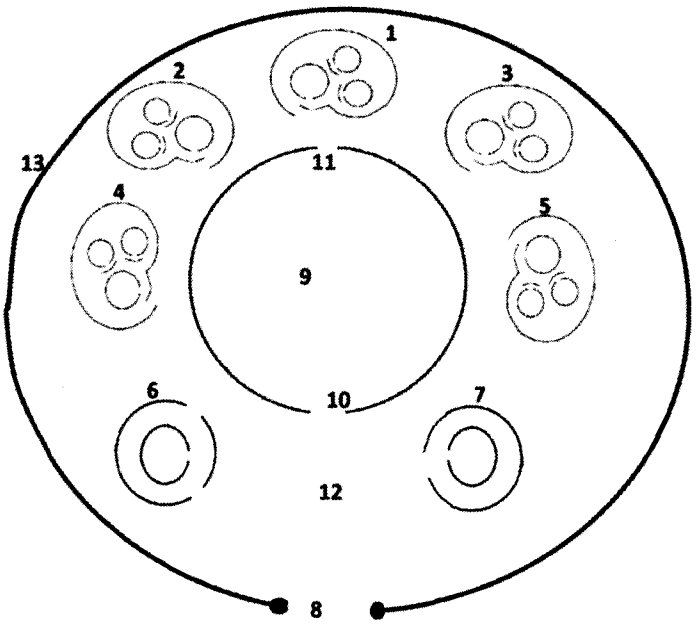
There are a few local variations of Swazi dialects that can be traced to specific clans. Doke (1931) noted the old *siMfungu* and *siBhaca* as part of Swati dialects. In Doke's view, there is a third dialect known as *siBhaha*, which appears to be influenced by the surrounding xiTsonga language spoken in the Namahasha area. Dialectal variations occur in the vocabulary, rather than in grammatical structure (Kuper, 2017). The siSwati-speaking people also have knowledge of other southern Bantu languages as well as a number of English and Afrikaans words, which may have been adopted and modified for new concepts, including naming patterns (Kuper, 2017).

2.3 The Swati homestead

The principal Swati social unit is the homestead, a traditional beehive hut thatched with dry grass. In a polygamous homestead, each wife has her own hut and yard, surrounded by reed fences. There are three structures for sleeping, cooking, and storage (brewing

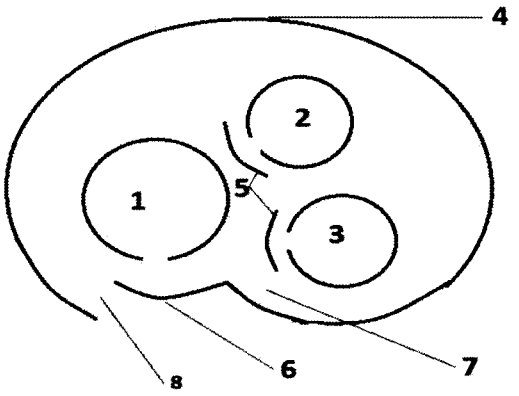
beer). In larger homesteads there are also structures that are used as bachelor quarters and for guest accommodation. Central to the traditional homestead is the cattle kraal or *sibaya* (a circular area enclosed by large logs interspaced with branches). The cow barn has ritual as well as practical significance as a store of wealth and a symbol of prestige. It contains sealed grain pits. Facing the cow barn is the great rondavel, which is occupied by the mother of the headman. The head of the house (the husband) is central to all homestead concerns. He is often polygamous. He leads through example and advises his wives on all social affairs of the home as well as seeing to the survival of the larger family. He also spends time socialising with the young boys, who are often his sons or close relatives, advising them on the expectations of growing up and manhood. Modernity gave rise to the use of bricks around Swati homesteads, due to the association of dried grass structures with lack and poverty (Wilcox, 2017). Figure 2.1 shows a typical homestead.

Figures 2.1: Layout of a typical Swati homestead



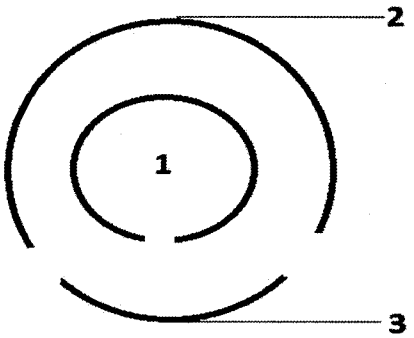
1. **Indlu yakagogo (indlunkhulu).**
2. **Indlu yekunene: Umfati weku-cala (sesulamsiti). Ekhabosoka-nchanti.**
3. **Ekhohlo: Umfati wesibili. Kutsi-wa futsi kusembufu.**
4. **Umfati webutsatfu.**
5. **Umfati webune. (Nangabe ukho-na umfati webuhlanu utawunge-na entase kwa-4, lolandze-lako angene entase kwa-5.**
6. **Lilawu.**
7. **Intsanga.**
8. **Lisango lemuti.**
9. **Sibaya.**
10. **Lisango lesibaya.**
11. **Inshungunshu: Lisango lelinca-ne leliphumela endlunkhulu.**
12. **Ebaleni.**
13. **Lutsango lwemuti.**

F1



1. Indlu.
2. Lidladla lelingenhla.
3. Lidladla lelingentasi.
4. Umtungeleto.
5. Emaguma emadladla.
6. Liguma lendlu.
7. Sibuya.
8. Imphundvu.

F2



1. Lilawu.
2. Sihonco sangemuva.
3. Sihonco .

F3

2.4 Translation of labels in Figures 2.1:

F1

1. Main house (Belongs to the grandparents)
2. The first wife's house
3. The second wife's house
4. The third wife's house
5. The fourth wife's house (if there is a fifth wife, her house would be located next to the fourth wife's house, and so on)
6. Bedroom

7. Fencing
8. The main gate of the homestead
9. The kraal
10. Entrance to the kraal
11. The small gate that leads to the main house
12. The yard
13. The wall fencing the whole homestead

F2

1. The house
2. The upper kitchen
3. The lower kitchen
4. The fence surrounding the house
5. The walls of each kitchen
6. The wall of the house
7. Pathway
8. The exit

F3

1. The room
2. Back fencing
3. Front fencing

2.5 Names in relation to language

Language is the source of names. Without language it is impossible for any entity to be named. According to Raper (1983), language is a social tool that is used for communication purposes in any social context. For society to function cohesively, there needs to be understanding. If members of a society do not understand one another then it is likely that cohesion of any sort will not take place. This is where the role of language

comes into play. Language provides cohesion in a sense that it allows members of a society to communicate with one another. With regard to names in the siSwati speaking community of kaMsogwaba, names are used as a gauge of pious convictions. Names are an integral part of a language (Raper 1987: 78) as they allow these pious convictions to be expressed in a variety of languages. A demonstration of the latter is the name 'Happiness'; which can be translated into at least three other indigenous languages, *Njabulo* (Nguni), *Tsakiso* (Xitsonga) and *Lethabo* (seSotho). To further elaborate, Machaba (2004) asserts that:

> Although names are found in a language, they do not only function as linguistic items. The fact that naming is not simply a linguistic matter, but a social and a psychological matter, is demonstrated by various naming practices adopted by people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. (Machaba 2005: 29).

2.6 The Significance of having children

To the Swati people, children are a fundamental element in the family. Children are considered valuable and special, which forms part of the reason why procreation is encouraged and celebrated in every household. A household that has children in it is considered to be a lively one. There are sayings in siSwati that are popularly used when appreciating children.

> *Ummbila lomuhle ngulobhacekako* (The good corn can be hidden).
>
> *Bantfwana bangumliba loya embili* (Children are the stream which moves forward).

The above sayings explain that when a household has children, it means that the household will not die because the children are yet to grow and procreate, which will

result in the perpetuation of the family surname as well as the family at large. Such sayings are examples of a few which are used by the Swati to express how precious children are, and that children bring hope for the future.

Swati people give attention to how children are raised. They believe it is vital to raise children appropriately because they form part of the next generation. This is why the Swati often say the following with regard to children:

> *Bantfwana sitsembu* (Children are polygamy).
>
> *Ingwe ikhotsa emabala ayo lamhlophe nalamnyama* (A leopard licks all of its spots, those that are black and those that are white).
>
> *Lugotjwa lusemanti.* (It (a stick) is bent while it is still wet/weak).

These are examples of sayings used when referring to children and how children should be raised. The first saying implies that children should be raised by everyone, regardless of whether they are your biological children or not, and that raising a child is the responsibility of everyone in the family. The implication of the second saying is that all children should be treated in a uniform manner. Just as the leopard does not choose which of its spots to lick off and which to leave, the same should apply to the treatment of children within the household. The last saying denotes that children should be taught values and morals from a very young age. It is said that teaching a child good values and morals at a young age ensures that the child will be able to live by these values and morals until their old age.

As children grow older, it is imperative for parents and caregivers to pay attention to different talents that the child may have from when they are still very young. Noticing these talents will ensure that parents and caregivers encourage the children and help them to improve their talents as early as possible in order for them to be perfected when they are older. Encouraging talent also improves children's confidence in society.

Moreover, it is considered imperative for parents and caregivers to keep a close eye on children. This is because if children happen to encounter trouble around the neighbourhood, they will be reported to the parents. Children who are orphaned at a young age are not neglected in the Swati culture. In siSwati, it is usually said that *umuntfu utala aze ayofa* (a person gives birth until they die). This saying means that it is never too late for a person to become a parent, even if the child that is being raised is not the 'parent's' biological child. This entails orphaned children being taken-in by another family, who raise them as their own. By so doing, children are able to grow and become people of stature, just as they would have had their biological parents been alive.

Having children is seen as an advantage, because once the children are grown, parents can have pride in having brought up those children. Once children have grown into responsible adults, parents often say that *kutala kutelula ematsambo* (to give birth is to stretch your bones). This phrase implies that once one has a child or children to call one's own, it is similar to stretching one's bones in the sense that these children will now be able to assist their parents because they can now stand on their own.

2.7 Birth and the Naming Process

In the Swati culture it is important for a child to be named, because the elders of the family will be able to use that name when introducing the child to the ancestors. When the mother is in labour, a stone or sizeable rock is usually given her to carry on her way to the place where she will be giving birth. This stone is placed on her back as she would a baby, using what is known as a *lihiya* or towel. When the mother gets to the hospital or clinic, or the place where she will be giving birth, the mother-to-be is supposed to throw the stone away. She is not allowed to enter the place of birth with that stone. The stone is a representation of the baby. The reason why the stone is carried by the mother is a measure for preventing the baby from arriving on the way to the birthing centre. The act of throwing the stone away at the door of the place where the child will be delivered is a way of saying that it is alright for the child to come out now, because the mother has

arrived at the place of birth. It is believed that if the mother does not carry the stone with her, the baby will be delivered along the way. Such an instance could cause a lot of complications in the birth of the child, or possibly lead to the death of either the mother or the child.

A child can be named before or after birth. In the Swati culture, it is considered very disrespectful to refer to a person as *wena* (you), because that implies that that person is nameless. In the unfortunate event of a child being stillborn, the child will still be given a name. Although the child may be without life, he/she is still considered a person; hence, he/she is given a name. Whenever the child is talked about, he/she will be referred to by their name rather than *lomntfwana* (the child). Referring to the child as *lomntfwana* is said to bring a cloud of bad luck to the parents of the child, especially to the mother. It is believed that the mother may not be able to conceive another child if she uses the aforementioned way of addressing her child, which is why the behaviour is discouraged. On the other hand, it is believed that the father of a stillborn child may be able to conceive again, but only with another woman, one who could possibly be a second wife. The Swati people believe in and practice polygamy. Polygamy is a type of marriage where a man has two or more wives (Ngidi, 2012). A child may be named by any member of the family.

2.8 The Importance of Indigenous African Names

The history of South African onomastic patterns is vast. Change in African naming patterns has been evident since the arrival of missionaries on African soil. In most African societies, individuals have strong relationships with their culturally given names (Biyela; 2013). In the typical Swati household, the father names the child. This gave rise to names such as *Ntombikayise* ('The girl who belongs to the father' or 'Daddy's little girl' in modern terms). Prior to colonialism, there were no restrictions on where and when indigenous names could be used. If a child was named *Mnikeni* (Give it to him/her) then he would use that name across all social institutions. The arrival of missionaries gave rise to the

limitation of the use of indigenous names across social institutions. Ngubane (2000) notes that many Africans accepted Christian names when they were initiated into Christianity, which accounts for Africans having names in two languages; one in an indigenous language, the other in the English language such as 'Mildred *Sizani*' [Mildred - English name, *Sizani* (Help) - indigenous name].

Koopman (2002: 20-23) gives insight as to how Africans had names which were used at home as well as at school and at church. He asserts that indigenous names were the ones used at home, which were known as *igama lasekhaya*. English names were used at school as well as at church. The school name was known as *igama lesikhole*, and the name used at church was known as *igama lesonto*. Naming patterns have evolved since then. For instance, names that were fashionable a long time ago (*Bheki* (Look), *Sifiso* (Wish), *Mandla* (Power)) are no longer as popular among the younger generation. Grandmothers were given names resulting from colonial influence, such as Betty, Joyce and Dorothy. Their daughter's names were also influenced by colonials, as they were given names such as Beauty, Grace, Mable, Olga and so on. South African naming patterns post 1994 gave rise to names such as *Asanda* (are expanding), *Aphiwe* (are given), *Anathi* (are with us), *Afika* (have arrived), *Anele* (are enough), *Zethu* (ours), *Zinhle* (pretty), and so on. These changes in naming patterns are referred to as onomastic shifts (Ngubane, 2000).

According to Machaba (2000), these new names gave individuals a new identity by way of the change. However, black South Africans are moving away from English names and are now using their indigenous names. Xulu (1987) supports the aforementioned statement by saying:

> *Amagama omdabu sekayiwona asemqoka manje. Singasho ukuthi lokho kwenziwa yikuthi yiwona akhuluma nomuntu nakhuluma ulimi lomduba kunawesilungu, kumbe athathelwe eMqulweni. Sibona umuntu omnyama esebuyela kokwakhe.* (Xulu 1987: 43).

(African names are the preferred ones. It can be said that it is because they are ones that speak to a person as well as the indigenous language more than the Western ones or those taken from the Holy Bible. We see the black man going back to his roots.)

It seems that Africans are proud of their roots and of who they are. This is evident through their naming patterns, where indigenous names are dominant. They are no longer afraid of being black (Lubisi, 2002). Democracy in South Africa came with choices; people chose to use African names over European names. Thus, it is clear that this is one of the ways that Africans embrace their roots and identify with the land of their forefathers.

2.9 *Imbeleko*

Imbeleko is a ritual that is performed to thank the ancestral spirits for protecting both the baby and mother during birth. If the ritual is not performed, it is believed that the child will continuously wet its bed and will be disobedient (Pauw, 1994: 12). The ritual takes place at the home of the child's father, never at the home of the child's mother. This is due to the belief that the child does not belong to the mother's family, but to that of the father. During this ceremony, the mother of the child is summoned by the family of the child's father in order for them to see the child. On the child's arrival with the mother, a goat is given to the mother. The mother of the child is then asked if she agrees that the goat should be slaughtered. Upon her agreement, the goat is slaughtered as a sacrifice to the living-dead. The mother then says the praise names of the family of the father.

Once the goat is slaughtered the mother of the child presents the head and feet of the goat to the head of the house (the father-in-law). This process is known as *kucomisa babetala* (Gifting the father-in-law). Usually, the meat is boiled before it can be presented to the head of the house, as it should not be raw. A piece of skin from the goat is then cut and made into *siphandla* (a bangle-like garment), which is placed on the child's left wrist. This

siphandla reflects their acceptance of the child. *Inyongo* (The bile from the goat) is also placed on the child; it is symbolic of the child being connected to his/her ancestors, for them to know the child and protect him/her. The elders call the child by his/her name when presenting him/her to the ancestors whilst the goat is being slaughtered. The child is to wear the *siphandla* until it falls off of its own accord. The *imbeleko* serves to prevent the baby from falling when being placed on the mother's back, as well as from evil spirits that might try to cause harm. In that sense, the child is thus welcomed into the family and is protected by her ancestors.

Ritual ceremonies are performed throughout the baby's life-span, marking the different stages of life, such as the birth and maturity stages, and even after a person has died. For As per the Swati tradition, a child is perceived as a blessing from the living-dead; which is why there is a need for a ritual to be performed for her. There is also a ritual that is performed at the birth of a child. This ritual is used as a platform to introduce the new member of the family to the living-dead. According to Zungu (2016):

> From the time a child is born, he/she is introduced to his/her living-dead by its personal name. The living-dead are informed of the arrival and are told to protect from evil spirits and jealous people. After this ceremony of *imbeleko*, the living-dead recognize this child because of its name. They act as guardian angels to protect this child. (Zungu, 2016: 273).

The event is addressed as a personal ritual that is performed especially for the child. When a woman has a new-born baby, she is expected to stay in her house for ten days performing various ritual ceremonies. After ten days, when the mother leaves the house, a white goat is slaughtered. The mother eats some of the ritual meat known as the *intsonyama* (The meat on the inside of the right front leg).

2.10 The Ancestral Cow

In the Swati culture, every person should have a cow in their barn that belongs to the ancestors. The ancestral cow is usually male. The cow is selected while it is still a calf. Once the calf has grown into a cow, it is then slaughtered as a sacrifice to the ancestors. During this ceremony, the ancestors are informed that a cow has been slaughtered in their honour by the person who owns the cow. Once the ceremony is completed, another cow is chosen as an ancestral cow in replacement of the slaughtered cow. The second cow is not chosen from any calves, but from the mature cows in the barn.

The newly selected ancestral cow will not be slaughtered in honour of the ancestors. It is also not to be slaughtered for any other occasion that may arise within the family. The only time this cow will be slaughtered is once the owner of the cow gives permission to have it slaughtered in order to provide for the family. Once the cow is slaughtered, only members of the family are welcome to eat the meat from the cow. None of the meat is allowed to be eaten by anyone who is not a family. Therefore, family members gather at the homestead and the meat is enjoyed by all. However, if the second ancestral cow is not slaughtered for a long time, the cow is said to become problematic in the cow barn. It is also possible for the cow to run away without its whereabouts being known, or it could cause trouble with a neighbour, resulting in conflict within the community. The aforementioned incidences would occur only if the ancestral cow is not slaughtered timeously, as it is meant to be a provider of meat for the family.

With reference to this study, the ancestral cow is significant because it is named after its owner. If the cow belongs to *Makabongwe* (May he be thanked), then it is referred to as *inkhomo ya Makabongwe* (Makabongwe's cow). This act of naming signifies the role of names in the Swati culture. Personal names are not limited to people; that same personal name may be extended to the owner of the ancestral cow.

2.11 Background of the study area

This study was conducted in kaMsogwaba, a township situated in the KaNyamazane area. It is approximately 22 kilometers from Mpumalanga's capital city, Nelspruit. The popular name for this location is Pienaar. This area used to be an informal settlement but has now become one of Nelspruit's most fast-developing townships. The majority of the residents in the capital city as well as the surrounding townships are siSwati mother tongue speakers, and most of them have siSwati names that proved useful when completing this study. During apartheid, black people in Nelspruit lived in a small community called Mbombela, located on the outskirts of the main city. Mbombela was about five kilometres walking-distance from the town.

The community had several facilities such as schools, tuck shops, churches, and rental backrooms for those who did not own a stand. At the time, residents of Mbombela had to undergo a process which would result in them obtaining a four-roomed house at a new township called KaNyamazane, and it was implied that residents would have to relocate to this new township. KaNyamazane was separated into six zones. Four-roomed houses were awarded to those residents who owned a stand in Mbombela. Those who could afford to buy a house in KaNyamazane were allowed to purchase one. Mbombela residents who did not own a stand in Mbombela and could not afford to purchase a house, moved to Pienaar and settled there.

According to Kuper (2017), the Swati are not limited in terms of location:

> The majority are in the Transvaal districts of Barberton, Ermelo, Lydenburg, Middelburg, Nelspruit, Piet Retief, Rayton, Schoonoord, Witbank and Sekukuniland. Smaller sections also reside in the Natal districts of Umzimkhulu and Ladysmith and in Nqamakwe district of South Eastern Cape. A Small group of Swazi, probably only a few hundred, overlap into Portuguese East Africa in the areas around

> Namahasha, and through early raids and diplomatic marriages a few Swazi are scattered in Basutoland and Rhodesia. (Kuper, 2017: 12).

The Swati located near Swaziland have strong cultural practices compared to those who are in the areas further from Swaziland (Kuper, 2017). Nonetheless, the Swati in kaMsogwaba also participate in other religious practices. This validates why there is a variety of churches in kaMsogwaba. However, this study focused only on a selected few; the Charismatic Church, Christ Embassy, the Zion Church, Saviours of Christ (SOC) and the Nazareth Baptist Church (kaShembe). The study also focused on African religion and its practices in the area of kaMsogwaba. Swati people are very religious and give their children religious names. These names can be associated with aspects of religion; for instance, Christian names that are associated with God and aspects of the Holy Bible. Names associated with the African religion are those associated with aspects of African culture and religion. Some kaMsogwaba residents classify themselves as Christians because they go to church and believe in God. Others classify themselves as Africans who practice the African religion because they believe in ancestors. Pienaar is known to have an abundance of traditional healers, in fact more than it has churches.

There are not many onomastic publications about Swati names and Swati culture. This means that there is not much literature to be used as a direct basis for studies such as this. However, there are numerous scholarly works in isiZulu and isiXhosa by onomastics scholars. Thus, work by these scholars was used as a point of departure for this study and thereafter was built upon using the Swati aspects of onomastics.

2.12 Royalty and Ruling of the Community

This section addresses royalty in the community, which is relevant due to the fact that kaMsogwaba has a tribal chief - Prince Hlungu Nkosi. His presence brings clarity in understanding the role played by traditional leaders in their communities. South Africa

has seven recognised kings and approximately eight hundred and sixty (860) senior traditional leaders who are known as *emakhosi* (kings/chiefs). *Emakhosi* are followed by Headmen and Headwomen, who are known as *Tindvuna*. The number of headmen in South Africa is estimated at over one thousand. Every traditional leader presides over a headman. The headmen are heads of villages and rural locations and are followed by sub-headmen and sub-headwoman, who also form part of the estimated one thousand in South Africa. The sub-heads are heads of sub-villages.

Royals remind Africans of their origins and help to preserve African cultures. Community development is driven by residents of the community. Traditional leadership existed long before the introduction of political parties, hence it is unfair to expect traditional leaders to be fully responsible for transformation. The responsibility of the traditional leader is to guide the community.

As mentioned earlier, this study was conducted in kaMsogwaba, which is under the leadership of a chief. Chiefs and kings are referred to as *Inkosi*. Due to unforeseen circumstances an interview with Chief Msogwaba was unsuccessful, but after several attempts, the researcher was successful in conducting an interview with an Inkosi from a neighbouring district. He is known as Inkosi Sizwe Mkhulu Ngomane III. He is the youngest king in Mpumalanga, and rules over the community of Kwalugedlane, which comprises five districts: Mangweni, Steenbok, Malelane, Mjejane, and parts of Skhukhuza.

Names of community leaders, chiefs and kings are respected beyond the walls of their households (Biyela, 2013). It is thus imperative for children born of royal families to have names with meanings related to greatness, leadership, or royalty. The name *Sizwe* is an isiZulu name which means 'Nation'. The siSwati term for 'Nation' is '*Sive*'. *Mkhulu* means 'Grandfather'. *Mkhulu* can also mean 'Big' or 'Great'. Inkosi Ngomane III was named after his great, great grandfather, whose name was Simkhulu. The translation of the name Simkhulu could be 'we are big' or 'we are great'. Residents of the Kwalugedlane community also use the term *Ndabezitha,* or his praise name, *Imamba lemnyama* (the black

mamba) to address Inkosi Ngomane III. This is a display of respect. The full praise names of Inkosi Ngomane III are provided in Chapter 4 of this study under the subheading Praise Names. Translations of the praise names are:

Imamba emnyama (The black mamba)

Yakithi kwa Lugedlane (From our home at Lugedlane)

Ningayithinti. mhla nayithinta iyovusikhanda kungabe kusasondela (Do not provoke it. The day you provoke it, it shall lift its head and nobody will be able to get close to it.)

Mfana kungabe kusasondela Ndoda (Neither boy nor man shall be able to come close).

Inesibiba Esibi (It has dangerous venom)

Sowomshika nesa woNgomane nesawoMdumezulu (The one of the Mshika clan, of the Ngomane clan, and also of the Mdumezulu clan)

Inyoni emhlophe (The white bird)

Endizele kwezinde (That flew ever so high)

Izintaba zakwa Zulu yangena emMoses Mabhida (Across the High mountains of the Zulu kingdom and entered Moses Mabida...)

Yabhula amaphiko bayibona bayibukisisa (... and flapped its wings, and they saw it and looked carefully at it)

Umabizwa asabele. Ubizwe Osuthu (The one always quick to respond. He was called from the place of Osuthu...)

Kwa Nongoma wavuma wabahola. (... in Nongoma and he agreed and led them)

Abadletshe (The Dletshe clan)

Kwahlokoma. Inkundla kwalilizela nobengathandi (And the crowd cheered, everyone ululating, even those who did not want to ululate)

Kunyathela Inkosi yakithi kwa. Lugedlana (Here enters the King of Lugedlane)

It was explained to the researcher that it is the first male child who takes the role of *Inkosi*. If there are no male children, then the first-born girl will rule as the queen of the clan. It is rare to find a queen (female ruler), because it is believed that ruling a clan or community is best suited to males. As a child, an *Inkosi* does not grow up at home. They are usually brought up at a 'safe place' in order for them to be protected from anyone who might try to kill them. For most of his schooling life, *Inkosi Ngomane III* was placed at a boarding school where only his family had access to him. His job as *Inkosi* is to regulate social behaviour within the community over which he has control. He is not in control of service delivery as it is the local government's responsibility. He is a social leader rather than a government institution.

This study concentrates on two types of religion, Christianity and the African Religion, and some of the similarities and differences when it comes to who, how, and where Africans worship. Other factors such as socio-economic status, dress code/ attire and ceremonies such as birth and death were also explored. For instance, the founder of *kaShembe* was a Zulu prophet, and the attire worn at the church is Zulu traditional attire (*izidwaba*). The researcher was thus interested in finding out whether the attire of church members in kaMsogwaba remains as *izidwaba* or has changed to Swati traditional attire (*tidvwaba temaSwati*). The study also looks at how Swati naming patterns are influenced by different churches.

Syncretism, is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary (2017) as the merging of conflicting systems of belief. Religious syncretism takes place when foreign beliefs are introduced to an indigenous belief system and the teachings are combined, forming a new religion. The new, heterogeneous religion then takes a shape of its own (Blakely, van Beek & Thompson, 1994). A good example of religious syncretism in the South African

context is the Zionist Church as well as the Nazareth Baptist Church. These churches incorporate traditional beliefs and practices into modern Christian beliefs. Hence, when we speak of religious syncretism in this context we are referring to the fusion of Christianity into existing African belief systems.

There is also cultural syncretism, which is the blending of two or more aspects of distinct cultures to create a new practice, custom, idea, or philosophy. It can occur due to many reasons, such as immigration or marriages between groups. This results in one culture seeking ways to incorporate new customs.

2.13 Background of the churches

This section gives some insight into the three churches of interest in this study. Churches fall under different categories within the religion. Thus this section looks at both primal and western religions and how they impact the naming patterns of the Swati people. The first example is the Christ Embassy church, which represents the charismatic churches. The second church discussed is The Saviours of Christ (SOS), which represents the Zionist church, and the third is the Nazareth Baptist Church, also known as the *Shembe* church, which represents the Nazarits. Swati personal names are embraced through the influence of principles that are taught by these churches.

The background of each church is explored, as well as its methods of worship, and the ministry materials that are used by each church. Healing is also be discussed, and some examples given of names that were influenced by the nature of each church. Lastly, the theory of social categorisation is used to explain how people are socialised, with reference to the church as a social institution. The churches chosen for this study help in distinguishing the variations in naming patterns that fall under the umbrella of Christian beliefs.

2.13.1 Christ Embassy

Christ Embassy, also known as Believers' LoveWorld Incorporated, is a mammoth church of Christian denomination, founded by Reverend Doctor Chris Oyakhilome in Benin City, Nigeria, in 1987 (Oyakhilome, 2017). It has since become a global network of churches with congregations in many countries, with millions of members. The church headquarters in Lagos has over 40 000 members. The church grew in the southern region of Africa, especially in South Africa, where they managed to branch out throughout the country and into neighbouring countries such as Swaziland and Zimbabwe. The head and manager of the southern African region is Pastor Ose Oyakhilome. The zonal pastor of the southern African region is pastor Lawrence Ajiboye. The church also has various branches in Mpumalanga, Bushbuckridge, White river and Nelspruit, to mention a few. Those who reside in kaMsogwaba and are members of Christ Embassy, commune in the Nelspruit branch. KaMsogwaba is approximately thirty minutes away from Nelspruit CBD where the church is located. The pastor at the Nelspruit church is Pastor Nomvula.

2.13.1.2 Vision, Mission and Purpose

It is the nature of charismatic churches to have a vision, a set mission, and a purpose. Although charismatic churches may have similar characteristics, not all of them have the same vision. The vision of Christ Embassy church is to take the divine presence of God to the people of the world. The vision of the church also includes demonstrating the character of the Holy Spirit. This implies that the church intends teaching people of the world about the word of God, the Holy Bible, and illustrating how to use it as a tool to live the best life as a Christian.

The mission of the church is to lead generations into "the inheritance" in order to fulfil God's purpose for their lives. The purpose of the church is to bring generations of men and women into inheritance of the Lord. The inheritance here refers to everlasting life in Jesus Christ. Born again Christians believe that giving one's life to Jesus means that one

will have eternal life. Some may ask, how does one give their life to Jesus Christ? Giving your life to Christ is given through saying the Prayer of Salvation. One has to believe with all one's heart that Jesus Christ died, and that God arose Him from the dead. The prayer of salvation requires confession and wholehearted belief that Christ is their Lord and their saviour (Oyakhilome, 2016).

Apart from the numerous branches around the globe, Christ Embassy also has other platforms through which they aim to fulfil their set vision, mission, and purpose. Some of these platforms are discussed in detail below.

2.13.1.3 Ministry material

Ministry material refers to texts compiled by LoveWorld Inc. in partial fulfilment of the church's vision, mission and purpose. These materials are aimed at helping individuals grow their spiritual life and live their life using the Word of God as their tool. These texts are available in various forms and in different languages.

2.13.1.4 Rhapsody of Realities

The *Rhapsody of Realities* (*RoR*) or 'The messenger angel' is a daily devotional written by the founder and president of Christ Embassy. According to Oyakhilome (2016), it is now available in over nine hundred (900) languages worldwide, "and still counting". Translations of the daily devotional include some of South Africa's official languages. Additionally, Oyakhilome (2016) stipulates that the effects of reading this daily devotional bring life-changing thoughts that refresh, transform, and prepare individuals for a fulfilling, fruitful and rewarding experience with God's word (the Holy Bible). Every month, a new edition of the devotional is compiled and made available.

The *Rhapsody of Realities* daily devotional caters for children, adolescents and adults, thus three different devotionals are compiled. Although the daily devotional is translated into

more than 714 languages, the content remains the same. The format of the daily devotional consists of the following: the day of the week and the date, a topic for the day, a discussion surrounding the topic at hand (which is often accompanied by quotations from the Bible), a short prayer or confession followed by a recommendation of Bible verses for further study on the relevant topic and lastly, a one-year or two-year Bible reading plan. The Rhapsody of Realities is available as a hard copy as well as in digital form. Figures 2.2 shows the format of the Daily Devotional.

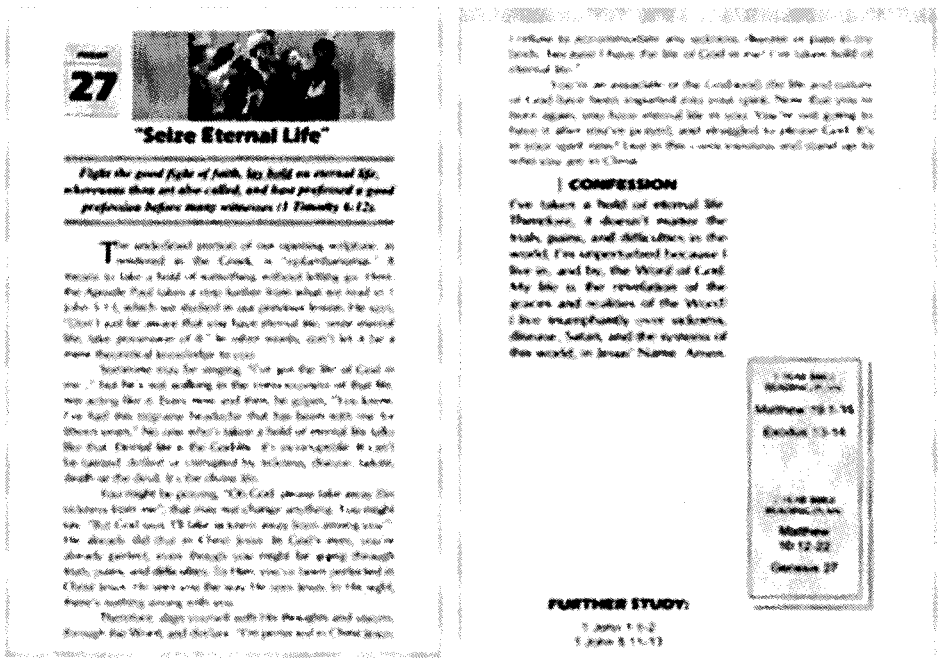


Figure 2.2: Format of the Daily Devotional

2.13.5 Healing School

The Healing School is the healing ministry of Reverend Chris Oyakhilome. The purpose of the healing school is to teach people about the healing ability of Jesus Christ, and how to apply that ability in one's life in order to receive healing. The Healing School app provides subscribers with access to languages such as French, Spanish, German, Russian, English, and African languages (unspecified); healing school testimony videos; healing session reports; healing school ministers' visitation programmes; and faith-stirring audio

confessions from those who have been healed. An illustrated monthly magazine that covers ministry events is also available on the app. Lastly, the app also provides a section where people can register for upcoming healing sessions and the International Easter Youth Camp with Pastor Chris. The Church uses numerous platforms through which they spread the Word of the Lord. These platforms include a television station, digital applications, books, audios, and DVDs.

Christ Embassy church focuses on the promotion of both the gospel of Christ as wells as the spiritual prosperity of its members. This is reflected their congregants' naming patterns. The following are some personal names used by some members of this church. Names such as those below are believed to be a discribtion of the life that is lived by the 'born again' Christian.

Grace

Favour

Nkanyezi (Star)

Skhanyiso (Light)

Mpilenhle (beautiful life)

Zoë (the life of God)

Prosper/Prosperity

Since Christ Embassy church was of interest to the study, the researcher saw fit to include some of its platforms in the background discussion of the church. Including these platforms also helped to show the differences found in the three churches. Furthermore, these platforms form a basis that helps the church to fulfil its mandate and its aim of ensuring that the Word of God reaches as many people as possible worldwide.

2.13.2 Nazareth Baptist Church (*Libandla laka Shembe*)

According to their sources, *Libandla laka Shembe* was founded in 1910 by Prophet Isaiah Shembe, also known as *Mqaliwendlela*, in the Province of Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) in South Africa. Today it is by far the largest African Independent Church (AIC) in KZN. However, *Libandla laka Shembe* is not limited to KZN alone; congregations can be found in all nine provinces of South Africa, and in its neighbouring countries, Swaziland and Mozambique. Members of this church worship God in an African manner. They make reference to the Holy Bible while having great regard for the existence of the ancestors. *Libandla laka Shembe* addresses the mentality of Africans in a way that allows them to sense their own spiritual and social needs in order for life to progress (Becker, 1995).

Members of the Nazareth Baptist Church refer to the pastor of the church as *'iNkosi'*, a Zulu term which means father. At the branch in kaMsogwaba, members of this church also use the term *ubaba* instead of the siSwati term used for father, which is *'babe'*. The manner in which church members are addressed by the church differs according to the position held in the congregation, and the age of the congregant. For instance, the head pastor is addressed as *iNkosi uShembe*; a branch pastor like the one in kaMsogwaba, is addressed as *ubaba uMpandza*. There are also those who are referred to as *bavangeli* (evangelist). However, young members of the church address the evangelists as *babe Mvangeli* as a sign of respect.

Church members may be appointed as pastors (*mfundisi*) from the age of thirty. However, being thirty years old does not mean that all male members are going to being appointed as *mvangeli*. Only a selected few are chosen and appointed to *bamvangeli* by the *iNkosi*. Many members of the Nazareth Baptist Church are born into the ministry, meaning that they were brought up with the values and beliefs shared by the church. Therefore, by age thirty, they are well equipped with knowledge of the functions of the church. Older women are referred to as *boMake* or as *ingundlangudla*. Young women in their youth are referred to as *maKhosatane*. Older men are referred to as *boBabe* and younger men, also in their youth, are referred to as *tiNtsizwa* or *emakhosana*.

Although the Nazareth Baptist Church was established by one person, *iNkosi Mqaliwendlela*, there has been a split in the church over the years. This resulted in different forms of the church following the principles of its founder. There is a Nazareth Baptist Church of eBuhleni, of eKuphakameni, of eThembezinhle and the Nazareth Church of God (NCG). The aforementioned fall under the umbrella of the Nazareth Baptist Church (*kaShembe*), although they differ in the way in which they practice their religion. For instance, Nazareth churches are known to combine African religion with Christian principles. For them, it is possible to praise God and venerate the ancestors at the same time. However, due to modernity, some members of the church have changed with time and moved away from combining the African religion with Christianity.

The Nazareth Church of God is an example of a modern version of *kaShembe*. Members of the NCG do not venerate ancestors. They also do not consult traditional healers or use traditional medicine *(mitsi)*. This concept is the major different factor among Nazareth churches. The churches also differ in terms of leadership. The eBuhleni branch has its own leader, *iNkosi Nyazilwezulu*; the eKuphakameni's leader is *iNkosi Ncoyincoyi*; the eThembezinhle branch leader is *babe Vela,* also known as *imisebe yelanga;* and the leader of the NCG is *babe Mpandza*. As explained earlier in the discussion, the Nazareth Baptist church was established by *iNkosi* Isiah Shembe. When the Prophet passed away in the year 1935, his son, Johannes Galili Shembe took over his father's responsibilities and led the church.

2.13.2.1 Church services

Members of the Nazareth Baptist church meet on their Sabbath days, which are every Saturday. During the apartheid era when *iNkosi* Isiah Shembe established his church, he had many of enemies. The Prophet was not allowed to preach in his area, and was arrested every time he was found preaching. The government stipulated that Prophet Shembe was banned from building any churches in South Africa. Had he found land and

build a church on it, the church would have been burnt down. As a result, he decided to take his church under a tree; where members would gather rocks to use as a parameter demarcating a circle in which people sat as they listened to the *Mvangeli* as he preached to them. The rocks were painted white and known as *boLinda*. Over the years, it became a stereotype that members of the Nazareth Baptist Church held their church services under a tree. Therefore, services were held in an open field under a tree, not because it was a norm of the church, but in recognition of political situations of the past.

Typical church services of the kaShembe church take place in a large open field. The space is sometimes secured by a fence with one entrance - the main gate used by all members. Everyone is required to leave their shoes at the main gate as they walk towards the place of worship, which is surrounded by *boLinda* painted in white. There are three entrances to the place of worship: the first is for virgin girls only, the second is for women who are non-virgins, those who have children and those who are married and the third one is for men. The gate for each entrance is a space between *boLinda* which is big enough to accommodate four people at a time. The reason for these different gates to the holy place of worship is because the church does not allow virgin women, non-virgin women, and men to mix. It is also a measure to avoid commotion as well as having some sort of order within the church.

Members are required to kneel at the inner gate before entering the place of worship. A brief prayer is said, where they ask God to make their hearts be ready to receive His word and that they may also be holy as they enter the holy place of worship. There is a white rock placed at the centre of the circle which is also known as *Linda*. This white rock represents the Sabbath Angel. No one is allowed to sit next to the *Linda* at the centre because this rock is 'holy' and is said to represent the Holy Spirit. Hence, the *Linda* at the centre should not be disturbed. The outer rocks which make up the circle are also symbols of holiness. Being between the central *Linda* and the surrounding *boLinda* means that members are inside holiness. During services, members sit on mats made from grass known as *emacasi*.

Men sit on one side and women on the other side, separate from the virgin girls. The reason for this form of seating arrangement is that it reduces any distraction between the males and females. The majority of Nazareth Baptist Church members still commune in large open fields or under a tree on the Sabbath. However, due to modernity and the fact that more and more land is becoming occupied, it has reached a point where members of the church commune in a building. Nazareth's refer to their place of worship as a Temple (a holy place) regardless of whether they worship in a school classroom, in the fields under a tree, or in a community hall. For them, any place where they meet and worship as a congregation is considered holy.

When large numbers of church members congregate, they usually build *emadvokoto* (tents) and sit in them. Another reason for the changed venues is that currently, the South African government permits people to practice their religion anywhere, so there is no longer a need for members of the Nazareth Baptist Church to meet in fields.

Some people believe that people from the Nazareth Baptist Church worship *iNkosi* Shembe; meaning that they pray to him and ask him for deliverance, and so forth. However, according to members of the Nazareth Baptist Church who were interviewed for this study, they praise and worship God, Jehovah. Their argument in their belief that *iNkosi* Shembe taught them about Jesus Christ and that Jesus is the son of God. They do not discredit Jesus and the works He did when he walked the earth, but they believe that God sent *iNkosi* Shembe to continue God's work from where Jesus left off. Nazareth members believe in the laws of Moses from the Old Testament, which explains why they behave in the way they do. For instance, in keeping the Sabbath; the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible states in Genesis 2:3:

> Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

The seventh day mentioned above refers to Saturday, a day of rest. This entails that people should not work on a Saturday because it is a day of or rest and since it is

sanctified, it is the day to praise God for all His good works and thank Him for all that has been created. It is the reason for the Nazareth Baptist Church holding its services on Saturdays rather than on Sundays, as Christian churches do. Following the laws in the Old Testament, it is also the reason why Nazareth members do not consume pork, why the men do not cut their hair and their beards, why the women do not use synthetic hair (weaves), why women only wear long skirts and dresses, and why the Nazareth congregation does not support the concept of homosexuality.

2.13.2.2 Attire

The attire of the Nazareth Baptist Church consists of all white garments. Different attire is worn based on the different age groups of church members. Virgin girls wear a one-shoulder dress made from *emahiya*. The length of the dress should be knee-level (not too short and not too long). Virgin girls and women also wear *lihaqha* (a black cloth decorated with small white beads) underneath the dress. Only virgins cover their heads with a white cloth called *inantsuka*. Non-virgin women who have children, as well as those who are married, do not wear *inantsuka* over their heads, but over their shoulders as a shawl. These women also wear long skirts known as *emahiya,* with *tidvwaba* (cow skin) underneath. Church protocol for men's attire is that men wear *emabheshu* (cow skin) and *mqhele* (head gear made from cow skin) to church on the Sabbath or alternatively black trousers and a white shirt with a tie, over which they wear a white garment. This garment is called *umNazaretha* and is put on before entering the place of worship.

2.13.2.3 Courtship and Marriage

Members of the Nazareth Baptist Church are not permitted to date. In the event of a man being fond of a woman, he must go directly to *bafundisi* (pastors) or *baphatsi* (leaders) who will then approach the girl to inform her about the man who has shown interest in her. Thereafter, arrangements known by the congregation as *emhlanganweni,* are made for the

man to officially ask for the girl's hand in marriage. The girl is then asked by the older virgin women in the church, known as *boAnti*, who are in charge of all virgin girls. Upon shaking of hands between the man and the woman of interest, the two are considered a couple. However, they are not allowed to conduct any romantic or physical affection because fornication before marriage is prohibited by the church. Arrangements for the man to pay *emalobolo* (bride price) to the woman's family are then made. This is followed by a wedding ceremony known as *kuhlanganiswa ngokwelisontfo* (Being united according to the church customs), which first takes place at the church and thereafter a white wedding may be conducted. Should the woman reject the man's proposal, then there will be no union between them.

2.13.2.4 Annual Events

Three major events are held annually by the Nazareth Baptist Church. These events are referred to as *miKhosi*. The first event is held in January. It runs from the first day of January until the thirtieth of January. This event is called *mhlangano wa January* (the January meeting) and is significant because it is a remembrance of the first time the Prophet Shembe met with God-Jehovah, where God revealed the Nazareth religion to him, and the laws under which the religion should function. This event is a reminder of what happened during those days in the month of January on the mountain of *Nhlangakazi* in KZN. During this encounter with God, the Prophet was given the rules of the Nazareth religion. The next event is in July. Reference to this event is found in the bible where God told His people not to eat certain food and to behave in a particular manner. The third event is held in October.

During these events, members of the Nazareth Baptist Church do not consume any chicken or foods that contain yeast. Fasting takes place, and members must abstain from any sexual activity. Members of the church must refrain from anger, and are advised to

always be at peace with everyone around them. These periods are demarcated as times to connect with God on a spiritual level.

Additionally, three monthly services are held, *inkonzo yaboBabe*[4], *inkonzo yaboMake* [5] and *inkonzo yemakhosazane*. The first service, *inkonzo yaboMake*, is known as Fourteen (14), because it takes place on the fourteenth day of the month. The service starts on the thirteenth day at 8:00pm and goes on until midnight on the fourteenth day. During this service, woman teach one another about life as women of Nazareth, how to behave, how to take care of their household and husband, how to raise their children, and so on. The events grant women the platform to preach, as men generally preach during Sabbath services.

Following this service is *inkonzo yaboBabe*, which is known as Twenty-three (23), because it occurs on the twenty-third day of the month. This service begins on the twenty-third day at 8:00pm and goes on until midnight on the twenty-fourth. During the service, men teach each other how to conduct themselves as a Nazareth man in terms of how to treat their wives, and how to be responsible as the head of the family. In the case of unmarried men, they are taught how to conduct themselves as young men of Nazareth. This service is also dedicated to practicing *kugidza noma kusina kwemaNazareth* (Nazareth dancing), as well as the hymns from the prayer book.

The last event of the month is *inkonzo yemakhosazane*, which is known as Twenty-five (25), because it takes place on the twenty-fifth day of the month. The service begins on the evening of the twenty-forth at 7:00pm and ends at midnight on the twenty-sixth. This service is dedicated to the young virgins in the church, but because of the times we live in, the service is dedicated to young girls who do not have children, regardless of whether they are virgins or not. During this service, the young girls are taught how to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.

[4] A service for men
[5] A service for older women and a service for young women

According to the teachings of *iNkosi* Shembe, once a person dies they live in spirit on the other side. It is also believed that a deceased person can communicate with the living in the form of a dream. However, members of the Nazareth Church of God do not believe in worshiping the dead or in performing any ritual or ceremony on their behalf. Slaughtering and responding to the request of ancestors is a norm for most the Nazareth members. Those who are members of the Nazareth Church of God believe that the devil has the ability to take the bodily form of a deceased member of the family and come to a living relative in a dream and request for a goat to be slaughtered, but due to uncertainty, such requests are not attended to. Rather, they say that the *iNkosi* Shembe instructed them to pray to God and inform him about the request made by the deceased, asking the Lord to answer that request. Members of the NCG say that according to the bible, people are not allowed to give a living sacrifice by shedding blood for the sake of another person. The only person to whom a sacrifice should be made is God-Jehovah, because he is the only one who knows where the spirit of the deceased goes.

The religion of the Nazareth is often considered to be part of the Zulu culture. This may be due to the fact that the religion was established in KZN. It is also said that it is customary for members of the Nazareth church to wear *tidvwaba* or *emabheshu* (cow skin) to church. However, after conducting this study it came to the researcher's attention that long before missionaries landed in KZN, the Zulu people wore animal skins *(tidvwaba)*. Clothing made from fabric was introduced to the Zulus by the missionaries, who regarded animal skin as dirty (Camaroff & Camaroff, 1986). According to *iNkosi* Shembe, there is no law in the bible that prohibits people from wearing *tidvwaba,* therefore people are allowed to come to church dressed in their *tidvwaba,* and most members do so. Another reason why Nazareth members wear *tidvwaba* is because many of them did not have enough fabric to make clothes to wear in church and as a result, they would not attend.

According to Camaroff & Camaroff (1986), missionaries would not allow anyone dressed in animal skins to enter a church, and would turn them away at the door, allowing only

those who were dressed in fabric clothing to enter in fellowship with them. Therefore, as a measure of increasing church attendance, *iNkosi* Shembe allowed people to come to church dressed in *tidvwaba* and *emabheshu*.

2.13.2.5 Ministry Materials

During worship the Nazareth Baptist Church uses a book of hymns called *incwadzi yekuhlabelela*. The book is categorised into four sections; *tihlabelelo, mthandazo wokuvuka,* and *mthandazo wokulala ne mthandazo wesabatha* (hymns, Morning Prayer, Evening prayer and Sabbath prayer). *Mthandazo wasekuseni* is recited at four o'clock in the morning before the day starts. In this prayer, God is thanked for overnight protection and is asked for protection during the day. The Nazareth religion encourages its people to work hard and not be lazy, hence they ask God for strength during the day while they work. *Mthandazo wokulala* is recited at six o'clock in the evenings where God is thanked for protection during the day and is asked for overnight protection.

The Sabbath prayer is taken three times a day during Sabbath. The Sabbath ceremony takes a maximum of three days, from Friday evening until Sunday evening. The first prayer is recited on Friday evening as an introductory prayer to the Sabbath. On Saturday morning when the congregation gathers for service, the Sabbath prayer is recited again by everyone in the congregation. The Sabbath consists of three ceremonies per day, hence the prayer is taken three times a day. The morning serves runs from 9:00am to 11:00am. The afternoon ceremony runs from 1:00pm until 3:00pm. The afternoon ceremony is followed by the segment of *kugidza/kusina* (dancing). This is the segment of the Sabbath where congregants dance for God in joy. *Kugidza* is a dance that the Prophet Shembe invented, and differs from the traditional dancing common among the Nguni people.

Tihlabelelo are hymns in the prayer book that are sung during church services. The lyrics of the songs are considered another element of preaching and teaching about God and the Nazareth religion. Figure 2.3 shows the prayer book in which Prophet Shembe talks

about keeping the Sabbath. The prayer book is written in isiZulu, and Swati members of the Nazareth Baptist Church use the book as there are no know translations of it from isiZulu to siSwati.

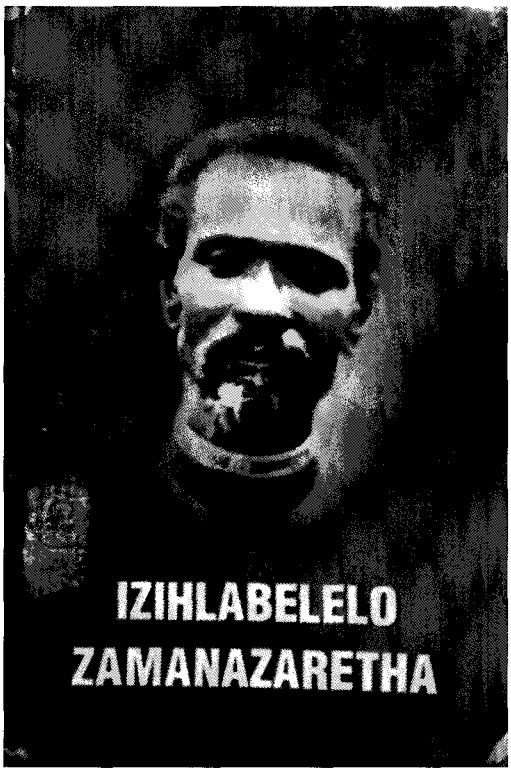


Figure 2.3: Example of the prayer book written in isiZulu

The Nazareth religion is based on four principles: belief in God-Jehovah, belief in Shembe as the son of God-Jehovah, and belief in a culture and that is should not contradict the laws of the bible. They do not discredit Jesus Christ and his works, they acknowledge Him as the son of God, but they also believe that *iNkosi* Shembe is the son of God.

The Nazareth religion is based on a verse about The Law of the Nazareth's found in the book of Numbers (6: 2-5), which states the following:

> Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: [2] "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When either a man or woman consecrates an offering

to take the vow of a Nazarite, to separate himself to the Lord, [3] he shall separate himself from wine and *similar* drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from *similar* drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. [4] All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin.

[5] All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. *Then* he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow."

2.13.2.6 *Sitfunywa*

The concept of *sitfunywa* for the Shembe differs from that of the Zionist church, which is discussed in a section below. Zionists consider *sitfunywa* a prophetic angel that abides within a person's spirit, while Nazareth followers consider *sitfunywa* as a person who has been sent by God. It is believed that the Prophet Shembe was sent by God to be a leader of his people here on earth by restoring the laws of the Nazarites. It is for this is the reason that the prophet Shembe is considered to be *sitfunywa saNkulunkulu* (the one sent by God-Jehovah).

2.13.2.7 The Vaseline

In the past, it was difficult for people to believe that they can be healed or that the situations they were faced with would change by simply kneeling and praying to God for change. When the Prophet Shembe began on his evangelistic journey, it was hard for him to win over the people because they believed in the traditional medicine that was readily available to them. It was difficult for them to let go of their old ways and convert to the new religion due to lack of faith. They wanted to have something tangible, as most

of them functioned on the concept of *kukholwa ngokubona* (seeing is believing). As a way of strengthening the beliefs of his people, the Prophet Shembe introduced Vaseline (petroleum jelly). Members of the Nazareth Baptist church make use of Vaseline as a product on a daily basis, and can purchase Vaseline at any retailer and bring it to church, where the pastors will pray for it and sanctify it before it can be used. Vaseline may be used for different reasons. The people of the church believe that using Vaseline as a tool to cure their illnesses is more realistic than just praying for a cure. During an interview, one of the study participants said:

> *Kufana nekutsi uye kadokotela akuhlole bese angakuniketi emaphilise, kokvwa akutjele kutsi utawophila. Mavi adokotela angeke akuphilise, udzinga emaphilisi. Lo vaseline lona ufana neliphilisi kitsi bantfwana bababe.*
>
> (It is the like when you're sick and you consult a doctor, he examines you and then tells you that you should go home, and that you will get better without him giving you medication. You need medication. This Vaseline is like medication to we Nazarites)

The use of Vaseline is not restricted to members of the church; it can be used by anyone, because it is meant to heal and nourish rather than to destroy.

2.13.2.8 The aetiology of Shembe anthroponomy

Names are bestowed to embrace the church and its works. The following are common names bestowed on children born in *Libandla lakaShembe*. Within *Libandla lakaShembe* names are used as instruments to the nature of their church. Members are known for their obedience to church rules

> *Masabatha*
>
> When translated, this name means the Sabbath. The name was inspired by the book of Exodus (35 verses 1-3). According to the Nazarites, the week begins

on a Sunday (day one), meaning that Saturday is the seventh day, which is their Sabbath day, and a day of rest. Such a name reaffirms the beliefs of the name-giver.

Makhosazane

This name is derived from the term *Nkosazane*, which means Princess when translated. Such a name is usually given to the first-born girl child. Makhosazana is also a term used by church members when reffering to virgin girls. This name also reflects the namegiver's asperations for the child to remain a virgin until she is married.

In cases where women would go to *iNkosi* and make a request to be blessed with a child or children in their marriage, *iNkosi* would pray for them and then tell them which name to bestow upon the child once born. Parents will often name these children names that have relation to *iNkosi*.

Sibusiso - A Blessing

Siphosenkosi - Gift of the Lord

Sibusisiwe - We are blessed

Busisa - Bless

Ntsandvoyenkosi - The love of the Lord

Nkosikhona - The Lord is here

Nkosinathi - The Lord is with us

Mfanawenkosi - The boy of the Lord

Bonginkosi - Thank the Lord

Sibongumusa (*weNkosi*) - We are thankful for the kindness (of the Lord)

Musawenkosi - The Lord's kindness

2.13.3 Zionist Church

Sundkler (1961: *38*) recalls that there are two types of different churches in South Africa; the first being Ethiopian. These are the churches that were left behind by missionaries. Ethiopian churches are known to show aversion to racial discrimination as well as to white dominance. The second type is the Zionist churches. These churches are opposed to traditional African as well as Western medicine. They believe in fighting disease and sickness with water (which is prayed for and thus called holy water), ashes, holy oils, and baptism. Zionists also firmly believe and rely on spirits (*mimoya*). They believe that there are certain people who are gifted with prophetic spirits (*titfunywa*). Prophetic spirits are helpful to those who are members of the church. The bishop, who is often the founder of the church, is believed to be gifted with prophetic spiritual powers. In Zionist churches, the bishop is usually a male. It is very uncommon for a Zionist church to be led by a female, as males are prevalent in these churches.

The bishop is usually responsible for the training of young, gifted members of the church to ensure that they reach their fullest potential in their prophetic duties. Prophetic spirits are believed to have the ability to diagnose sickness: not only physical sickness, but also spiritual sickness. By spiritual sickness, we refer to illness that cannot be detected by western medicine, nor can it be healed using western methods. Spiritual sicknesses are believed to be caused by witchcraft or by bad spirits. However, witchcraft is the most common spiritual illness-causing factor in Swati communities. Whenever a person has an illness that is undetectable by western medicine, that person is believed to have been bewitched by somebody. Holy water, ashes, holy oils, and baptism come in here as the medicines that cure medically undetectable illnesses.

2.13.3.1 Water and its significance

Water is the most common ingredient for curing sicknesses diagnosed by the prophets in Zionist churches. Different types of water are used to cure different kinds of sicknesses.

Sea water is considered the strongest type of water to be used during curing, because the sea is considered to be the biggest form of water supply in the world. It has no known beginning and no known end. The sea also contains different creatures. These creatures are believed to have an influence on the effectiveness of the healing power contained in the water. According to Zionists, the mermaid (*indzundzu*) is considered the most powerful creature living in the sea. However, it is taboo to talk about, let alone mention, the term *indzundzu*. A term which is considered a respectful alternative for the term *indzundzu* is *silwane sasemantini/saselwandle* (the creature from the water/from the sea). The reason why the creature from the sea may not be referred to as *indzundzu* has not been clarified. In the Swati culture, it is said that taboo's may not be questioned. Rather, when a person is told that something is a taboo they should receive it and value it so that one day as an adult they would gained wisdom and thus have an understanding not just about taboo issues, but also about life. Since creatures from the sea are said to live in the deepest waters, the healing power of sea water is considered to be of great might.

2.13.3.2 Cleansing

The most common use of sea water by Zionists is for cleansing bad luck (*ibhadi*). *Ibhadi* may be brought upon a person by an enemy through the use of witchcraft. *Sicitfo* is a very common man-made illness in the Swati community. Ngidi (2012:77) describes *sicitfo* as a charm which is used to cause estrangement. The term is derived from the term *-cits-* which means 'to pour out'. This charm is believed to cast out all forms of good luck from a person, only leaving the bad luck. It is also believed that *sicitfo* makes a person unappealing to people, which results in people being disliked for no reason. Hence, people who have been cast with *sicitfo* are always followed by bad luck. In such instances, water from the sea will be used to make *siwasho* (a cleanser). *Siwasho* is water mixed with salt, ashes, or holy oils. The prophets of the church pray for the *siwasho* and it is then given to the sick person. Unlike Western medicines, *siwasho* cannot be prepared in bulk then distributed to people who experience similar symptoms. *Siwasho* is made and mixed

especially for a particular person based on the illness that person has been diagnosed with. *Siwasho* will help get rid the *sicitfo* so that the person is able to move forward in life without bad luck. Just like prescription medicine from Western doctors, the prophets give out directions to the ill person as to how and when the *siwasho* should be used, how many times it should be used, and for how long.

2.13.3.3 River water

It is rare for Zionist's to use tap water when mixing *tiwasho* (cleansers). River water is also used when making *tiwasho*. Different sections of a river where the water has collected are chosen, and depending on the severity of the ill person's condition, the water could either be still (*emanti lamine*), normal flowing (*emanti lahamba kahle*), or fast-running water (*emanti lagijimako*). Still water may be described as water that is stationary. It is usually found trapped between rocks and covered with clay (*libumbha*) on the side of the river. Although *emanti lamile* is found between rocks and mud, this water is usually clear and undiluted. Normal flowing river water is usually found in the body of the river. It flows steadily, neither fast nor slow, and is usually greenish or turquoise. There are often no rocks or mud in or around this part of the river. *Emanti lagijimako* is found where the river slopes and is usually rocky. This part of the river differs from a waterfall (*impophoma*). A waterfall flows vertically over a hill and *emanti lagigimako* often flows rapidly over rocks. This type of water-flow creates a white glare as it hits the rocks and runs through the river. The area where the glare is formed is where Zionists collect water for *tiwasho*. The type of water that should be used depends on the severity of the diagnosis made by the prophet. Still water is usually used to cure mild illnesses (e.g. dizziness, tiredness, etc.); running water is usually used when dealing with severe cases relating to *butsakatsi* [6] (e.g. *sicitfo*).

[6] Witchcraft

2.13.3.4 Angels

Zionists also believe in *tingelosi* (angels). Two types of angels are distinguished in Zionist churches. There is *ingelosi leyikugadzako* (a guardian angel) and *sitfunywa*. As has been previously defined, *sitfunywa* is a prophetic angel. These two types of angels differ in that every person is born with an *ingelosi leyibagadzako*, however, only few people are born with *sitfunywa*. Furthermore, these two types of angels have different roles: the *ingelosi* guards and protects only the person it is assigned to while the *sitfunywa* not only guards its proprietor, but also provides the proprietor with prophetic powers. These powers are meant to help other people and not just the proprietor of the *sitfunywa* himself.

Christians in Africa see the presence of their ancestors as a matter of course. Their many reports of dreams emphasise that they receive divine guidance and spiritual insights similar to those experienced by the apostles in the Holy Bible. When it comes to communication, the *ingelosi* are believed to communicate with the proprietor through dreams. This implies that whatever issue the *ingelosi* wants to address will be in the form of a dream. On the other hand, the communication between the *sitfunywa* and the proprietor is more direct. Their communication is almost instant, and is triggered by a problem that needs to be addressed. The *sitfunywa* is able to detect more than one person's problem at any given time and detect not only the bad things in people's lives, but also the good. Moreover, the *sitfunywa* guides the prophet though people's predicaments and leads them to a solution.

2.13.3.5 *Siguqo*

In the Zionist church, *siguqo* is a segment in which prayer and healing takes place. The term *siguqo* is derived from the term *-guq-* which means 'to kneel'. During this segment, the church members gather around in a circle and sing while moving clockwise to the rhythm of the song. The prophets of the church then get inside the circle and continuously spin 360 degrees. This process is believed to awaken the *sitfunywa* of the prophets. The

more aware the *titfunywa* are of the prophets, the more accurate they are in detecting people's predicaments, and clearer solutions will be obtained. *Siguqo* is the longest segment at a Zionist church. It may take up to five hours, depending on the severity of the predicaments people are faced with on that day. As a result, most Zionist churches have a set starting time for their services, but no closing time. Typically, services begin at 10:00am on a Sunday, and ends at around 4:00pm.

The Zionists rely heavily on prophesies given by the prophets of the congregation. Names given to children are often based on where the inspiration came from. The following are some names used in the Zionist church:

Ngelosi (Angel)

Celuxolo (ask for forgiveness)

Nomsizi (Mother of help)

Wenzile (he has done)

Thanduxolo (one who loves peace)

2.13.4 The church as a social institution

The church is not just a building where people gather to pray, sing, listen to the preacher, make offerings and then go home afterwards. The church is a place where fellowship takes pace. Fellowship means oneness; a coming together; a union (Oyakhilome 2018: 18). Church is a place where society comes together with the hope of having their spiritual needs met. Churches can be seen as a public service to society, a place that members of society can rely on during hardships. Although the three chosen churches of this study are different, they are similar in a sense that their congregants believe in God and reference to the Holy Bible is made in their teachings and during church ceremonies. However, they have different ways in which they worship God. These differences are featured in the discussion below.

Every church has its own culture and principles within which it functions. This means that although the three churches discussed above use the Holy Bible as their basis, not all of them identify themselves as Christian. Members of the Christ Embassy church were the only ones among the three churches under study who identified themselves as Christians. This implies that they have to walk in line with what is said in the Holy Bible. Not only to be a hearer of the Word of God, but also to be a doer. They believe that the Word needs to be spread and heard throughout the world in order for more and more people to turn to Christ and lead the Christian life. Hence, media platforms are implemented by the church as an attempt to fulfil what is believed to be the mandate of Christ.

The Saviours of Christ members refer to themselves as Zionists and not as Christians. They believe more in prophecies and in following them, because they believe that prophecies are instructions in the bible given to man by God. Furthermore, they believe that the mandate from Christ was for His people to go out and prophesy to all nations, and that in so doing, the unsaved will be saved. The mandate of this church is to heal God's people. They believe that wickedness enters the body due to the work of man, and that it is up to the prophets of the church to help in removing the wickedness from people by observing the prophecies. This entails conducting actions such as *kuya emufuleni, kungena sifutfo nekunatsa tiwasho* (going to the river, steaming of the body, and drinking cleansers).

The Shembe do not regard themselves as Christians, but as adherents to the Nazareth religion. In the Book of Numbers, Chapter 6 Verse 2, it is stated that when women or men devote themselves to the Nazareth church, they will separate themselves from worldly pursuits such as drinking wine or living unfaithfully in the eyes of the Lord. This indicates that members of the Shembe do not drink alcohol or indulge in worldly behaviours (drinking, fornication, going out to clubs until the early hours of the morning, etc.), because they believe that these are restrictions given to them by the Lord in the Bible. Some people identify themselves as believers in Christ, yet they do not follow such

instructions. The Shembe believers do not condone this kind of behaviour as they firmly believe in living up to what is said in the Bible.

The social categorisation theory analyses social collaborative contexts. It is evident that the main goal of these churches is to ensure that their members lead full lives in accordance with the Bible, and to assist those who may be encountering difficulties. The church offers members a sense of belonging and is therefore the place where most member's values and beliefs are established. It has the ability to unite individuals from various walks of life into one community of people, and is also able to inculcate a vision that can be followed by many. It has been established that there is an existing belief in a higher power among the three churches, hence it is possible to assume that the influences upon naming patterns arise from a common source, which is the Holy Bible. The following are some common names found during the data collection:

Thembinkosi

This name means 'trust in the Lord'. It demonstrates how a name can be used to show the impact of religion on the name-giver and that his/her belief in bestowing this name encourages the child to trust in the Lord, regardless of what may be encountered throughout his lifetime.

Kholiwe

This name means 'the one who has believed', and is derived from the siSwati term *Kholwa*, which means 'believe'. In siSwati those who believe in Jesus Christ are referred to as *emakholwa.* The name *Kholiwe* reflects the act of becoming a believer in Jesus Christ. It is an indicator that reflects the actions of the name-giver.

In their article, Koopman and Zungu (2013: 66) noted that:

> The use of *-nkosi* (Lord) suggests that the parents' lives are centred on having faith in God and religion. These names reflect the strong bond

between parents and God, and reiterate the notion that everything they have is from God.

In distinguishing the above churches, variations in naming patterns were established and found to be distinguished by the nature of the church. Also common are names that reflect religious beliefs and political beliefs, as discussed in this section. Many Christian Swati people give their children names that reference the Holy Bible and their faith. Note that the bestowal of names incorporating '*-nkosi*' is not limited to Shembe naming patterns, but these names appeared to be common among that group during data collection and analysis for this study.

2.14 Conclusion

Three different kinds of beliefs can be identified that distinguish African religions from Christianity when it comes to how Swati people may be healed. Followers of African religions believe in the power of their ancestors as well as in herbs, plants, roots and leaves from trees, which, when combined, form part of African traditional medicine. Furthermore, the belief of Christians may be split into two: Zionism and born again Christians. Zionists believe and depend upon tiwasho (cleansers) while born again Christians believe and depend upon the healing power of the Holy Spirit (*moya loyincwele*). Born again Christians believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again; that when He died all sickness and poverty died with him, and that when he rose and was resurrected in heaven, new life was brought upon anyone who believed in Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Therefore, they do not believe in being ill or in living a poor in life. They believe that when they accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour, all things from the past (including illness) are behind them and that as a born again, their new life in Christ entails that there is no sickness nor any lack in their life because Christ's spirit (the Holy Spirit) lives within them; therefore, no evil spirit is able to enter into their life and cause

any harm. There are also those who believe in both traditional medicine and in Jesus Christ. When they need healing, they resort to the aforementioned ways.

This chapter provided a comprehensive overview of the Swati way of life, along with their traditional and ritual belief systems. It was noted that names are used as a tool to express cultural and religious forms in the Swati community. Moreover, the great regard that the Swati have for a higher power was discussed in detail. The chapter also discussed how names cannot be separated from language, because language is the source of names. Language and customs are interwoven through all cultures and therefore, names, language, customs, and culture are intertwined entities. The variations in the three churches under study was taken into consideration. The naming patterns deduced from each church were provided as a demonstration of onomastic variety.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Names and Identity

This chapter focuses on Swati anthrophony and identity, and looks at how names are related to the formation of an identity by the name-bearer. Naming is used across cultures in Africa as a vital way of expressing certain messages and to pass on information. Naming of entities allows for variation when distinguishing entities from one another. The study of various social, psychological, behavioural and individual dynamics cannot be done in isolation when conducting onomastic studies (Machaba, 2004). During an interview, one of the participants of this study was asked for their opinion on the importance of having a name. This is how they responded:

> *Uma ungenalo ligama kuyefana nekutsi uyintfo lengaphili ngoba wonke umuntfu uneligama, ngisho nalofile imbhala. Uma umntfwana avela kuye kutsiwe kulonina aketse lomntfwana ligama angaze abe yintfo. Phela kwetsa muntfu ligama kumupha impilo ngoba lelo gama liyomulandzela aze ayongena etfuneni lakhe. Ngisho nangoma sekahambile loyomuntfu utawubitwa ngalo lelogama lakhe uma bakubo baphahla.*
>
> (If you do not have a name it is the same as if you are a thing without life, because every person has a name, even a dead person. When a child is born the mother is usually told to name the child before the child becomes a 'thing'. To bestow a name on a person is to give that person life, because that name will be with them until death. The name a person is given will still be used even after that person's death by their living relatives during *kuphahla*.)

In the literary world, and in fiction in general, the identity of someone necessitates a complex operation since the person has been created in the imagination of the author, and because the character is not physically present. His/her identity emerges bit by bit through descriptions of behaviour, habits, reflections on his/her personality traits, etc., and also, for the reasons given above, through the attribution of a name or surname, sometimes even a nickname, in a direct or indirect manner (Arcomone 2012:18)

Names are a reflection of who a person is; a name may be said to be a characteristic of an individual's identity, because identity may be defined through character. According to Brendler (2012), identity has a crucial role in onomastics, mainly because people consider their personal names a major part of their identity. This implies that in the study of names, personal names and identity should not be studied in isolation. Moreover, we can use names to distinguish people from one another. It is also through names that the intentions of the name-giver are revealed. For instance, if a person is named *Siyakha* (we are building), we are able to establish that the name-giver hoped that this name would signify the bricks needed by either the parents of the name-bearer or the families of the name-bearer's parents, to build a strong and solid relationship and unite the two families while increasing their own. The importance of a name thus lies in its meaning, and in how the name-bearer feels about the name. If the meaning has positive connotations, name-bearers are most likely to develop a positive attitude towards their names and thus develop a positive identity as they navigate through life.

Through names, we can see the power that ancestors have over their living descendants. Swatis usually have more than one name, given by members of the extended family. Names usually denote the family's expectations of and encouragement for a baby; some reflect the family's experiences, or how they relate to others in their community; sometimes they reflect the time, how the weather was when the baby was born, and so on. Names are used on a variety of occasions and not just for identification purposes. They can be used as a way of communicating socially, ideologically, emotionally and cognitively (Andersson 1994: 8).

3.2 Swati personal names and religion

Personal names may be derived from different variables. Personal names refer to names given to human beings for the purpose of identification, or are the word by which an individual is known or spoken of, or addressed (Shangase 2006: 21). Shangase (2006)

recognised that linguistic features may be used to distinguish personal names. He also notes that the introduction of Christianity into southern Africa by missionaries in the 1800s, had a major impact on African naming practices. A name such as *Mdumiseni* (Praise Him) is an example of such cases. The 'Him' in this context refers to God the creator. The name *Mdumiseni* is an expression of gratitude to God by the name-giver for the birth of the child. Other names which express gratitude through *'-dumis-'*(praise) are *Ndumiso, Dumisani* [Praise (plural)] and *Nondumiso* (Mother of praise). In Genesis 17: 5 we see a scenario where God changed the name of a man from Abram to Abraham. In an attempt to clarify this point, Oyakhilome (2016: 132) states that:

> God had changed the man's name to Abraham to reflect his new identity and align with the vision of his life, and as far as He was concerned, it was a foregone conclusion. God didn't need to do anything more to make it happen. It was Abraham who needed to discover and align his mind with God's idea and plan for his life

To further elaborate on the quotation above, once a person becomes a Christian, it is their responsibility to align themselves with God's word (Holy Bible) as well as with His plan for their life. This process is what makes people identify themselves as Christians, because they are acting in accordance with the word of God. However, not everyone who identifies themselves as Christian, acts according to the word of God. Such instances are the reason why Christians believe that there is a necessity to teach the word of God so that those who identify themselves as Christians may be equipped with the knowledge of how to act and live a full and abundant Christian life.

Oyakhilome (2016) expresses the above by informing us that "Abraham accepted his new name and began to introduce himself as 'Abraham - father of many nations'." A person's identity may be formed once they have accepted their name. Until then, it may be difficult

for that person to gracefully form an identity. Most importantly, individuals need to be able to accept themselves before they are able to identify themselves as individuals.

Personal and cultural identity is connected to the place the individual lives in (Tilley 1994: 15). The social context within which an individual exists contributes to the characteristics of their personal identity. The experience of living and interacting in a social context is partly responsible for building their personal identity.

It is vital for a son to take his father's last name, the surname. A father gives his children their true identity by giving them his surname, which was passed down by his father and his father's father, and so on. A girl child will not have that much difficulty if she does not bare her father's surname, because it is assumed that girl children will become married and take the surname of the man they marry. However, a boy child is meant to expand the family's surname as well as his father's house *(muti wa babe wakhe)*. In the Swati culture, a household belongs to the father of the boy child. Even if the boy child built the house for his own wife and family, traditionally the house belongs to his father. When the boy child has a son of his own, that son's house will belong to his father, and so on. Hence, it is vital in the Swati culture for a boy child to bare the surname of his biological father.

Bongani (be thankful) is a common name among the Swati people. This name implies that when one is given something, one has to be grateful and thankful. It is often bestowed upon a first-born son, and in doing so, the father instructs the family to be grateful for the first-born male child. Having a male first-born child is considered a sign of victory in the African culture, because a male child is seen as the heir of the family, and is the person responsible for passing on the family name to the next generation.

The name-bearer, a study participant, believes that the name *Bongani* relates to Christianity rather than to the African religion. He is a member of the Nazareth Baptist Church and relates his name mostly to the Bible. He explained that one of the first prayers written by *ubaba uShembe* says *'Bongani uJehova'* (Give thanks to the Jehovah). Since

Jehovah is God, and the prayer states that thanks should be given unto Him, he thus believes that this his name relates to God and Christianity. He is also grateful to God for creating him and making him the person that he is today.

3.3 Names and indigenous knowledge

When speaking about indigenous knowledge, we are referring to the knowledge of the people who preside in and around a certain area. Any change or interference could affect the accuracy of this indigenous knowledge for future generations. Knowledge in general is not linear, nor is it static. As the world progresses and develops further, so does the knowledge of the people who live in it. Nowadays, people travel to various destinations where they encounter a variety of cultures different to their own. On their return home they share the knowledge they have accumulated on their journey, thus introducing and disseminating new knowledge. If this new knowledge is accepted and put into practice, it often hinders their indigenous knowledge from being explored. To further emphasise indigenous knowledge and its systems, Zungu (2016) states:

> Indigenous Knowledge Systems refer to the complex set of knowledge and technologies existing and developed around specific conditions of populations and communities indigenous to a particular geographic area. These populations retain some of, or their own individual social, economic, cultural and political institutions, however, owing to the nature of the rapidly changing society around us, this inheritance is quickly disappearing and in danger of being lost forever. (Zungu, 2016: 270).

Naming patterns in the Swati community form part of indigenous knowledge, religion, language and cultural practices. Name-giving is never a random act, because meaning and aetiology are always attached to the names. The act of naming is usually inspired by a variety of instances, including family gatherings, community functions, days of the

week, current situations, as well as simple things like the weather. The Swati anthroponymic system is highly reliant on indigenous belief. It is imperative to note that identity and Indigenous beliefs are intertwined in names (Zungu, 2016). In the Swati culture, names are given as a means to address certain issues within the homestead in an indirect manner. Confrontation is considered a rude act which can cause bad luck to family members due to the ancestors' disapproval. For African people, "names are sometimes used as a cultural device in maintaining and establishing kinship and progeny" (Fitzpatrick 2012: 6).

It is for the aforementioned reason that names in the Swati anthroponymic system are carefully thought out before being given. It is common for the Swati to give names that commemorate the living-dead. This is due to the role that the living-dead play in most Swati households. Not only are the living-dead considered mediators between God (the creator) and the living descendants, they are also considered guardian angels of the family. Names such as *Mkhulu* (grandfather) may be given to a child because it is a name that belonged to his great grandfather. More names such as the latter are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

This chapter focused on the importance of names in forming a person's identity. Names are a reflection of who a person is. Not having a name assumes the absence of identity. Names typically indicate the family's expectations and respect they have for the name-bearer. Certain names reflect family experiences, or how they relate to others in the community. At times names are taken from instances, certain phases in life, the weather conditions when the person was born, and so on. Lastly, the name-giver's knowledge can contribute to their decision when naming a person.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 The aetiology of Swati names

This chapter explores the Swati personal names that were collected while undertaking this study. The names are categorised and the aetiology is provided. Koopman and Zungu (2013: 61) noted the following about naming patterns among the Zulu:

> In any naming system, there are always four elements: (1) the names; (2) the named entities ('name bearers'); (3) the name-givers; and (4) the context within which naming takes place. In the Zulu anthroponymic system, the names may be categorised as follows: (a) the personal name given to the child soon after birth (*igama lase khaya*); (b) the 'colonial' or European-origin name which the child may get later in life (*igama lesilungu*), (c) the clan-name (*isibongo*), (d) the clan-praise(s) (*isithakazelo,* plural: *izithakazelo*...)

In following the above quotation, we are able to comprehend that the Zulu naming system consists of similar characteristics as that of the Swati. The Swati naming system is broader, as it considers different categories of names. The process of naming is mostly viewed within the context of the family and not of the society. Hence, it is possible to assume that names are never given in a vacuum within the Swati culture. Parents or the name givers bestow a name on the child based on circumstances surrounding the birth of the child. This means that the *igama lasekhaya* is the name given to the child after she is born; which becomes the child's personal identifier. A child may be named after an ancestor (deceased member of the family) if the family sees that the child has great physical resembles to that of the deceased. For instance, a child may be named after her great-grandmother as a way of commemorating her life. For instance, if the great-

grandmother's name was *Phumulile* (the one who has rested), the child may be named *Phumulile* as a way of showing that the great grandmother lives on through this child.

4.2 Discussion of Swati anthroponyms

The whole clan may have the same surname, however, each person has their own name. The aetiology of personal names is given below. There are some cases where name-bearers do not know the aetiology of the name they bear. Although the name may be translated, it is often that name-bearers know the full story behind their given name. Identities are formed through social interaction. It is during social interaction that individuals are likely to engage with existing social groups and begin negotiating an identity for themselves in relation to their experiences. Through these experiences, be they good or bad, individuals are able to establish what they can or cannot comprehend, what drives them, and most importantly, who they are.

Listed below are some comments made by participants on the aetiology of their personal names. Although these names are not related to culture or religion, they simply echo the name-bearer's feelings towards their personal name.

> *Gcebile* (Tidy up)
>
> *Yoh, angati kutsi lichaza kutsini leligama. Kube babe usaphila ngabe ngiyambuta ngoba ngetsiwa nguye. Kusho kutsi angeke ngisati kutsi lichazani ligama lami ke.*
>
> (Wow, I do not know what my name means. If my father was still alive I would ask him because he's the one who named me. This means I will never know what my name means.)
>
> *Mongezi* (Added)
>
> Well, I don't know that this name means. My dad has the same name; I guess he wanted me to have his name because I'm his only son. I'm not even sure

what language it is; be it in Swati or in English, I cannot explain this name. Mongezi is a name usually given to male children.

Mkhulisi (Extender)

Angati kutsi ngitalichaza ngitsini leligama. Kwatsi ngalelinye lilanga uma ngibuta gogo lowangetsa wasti 'Ligama lifuta umnikati walo'. Ngatibambela loko, azange ngisatihlupha ngoba muntfu lomdzala besekakhulumile.

(I do not know how to explain this name to you. I once asked my grandmother, she's the one who named me, and she said that 'a name identifies with its owner'. That is all I took with me and did not question her any further because the adult had already spoken.)

The following are names of participants who used the aetiology of their names to develop a personal identity. These names elucidate how individuals may look to their personal names when building an identity. Thus, names may also be seen as a marker of identities.

Nkumbulo (Rememberence)

My absence is always felt. People always question my whereabouts because they say *bayangikhumbula* (they miss me). This makes me feel good; I'm always wanted by people. I know I'll always be wanted because of my name. I don't think people would want me if I had another name, *aw nani* (never).

Nyoniyetive (The bird of nations)

I feel invincible and unique with my name. I love it because I am an outstanding performer and it shows in my work. I have great leadership skills therefore I admire my achievements. I am a determined person because I am living up to my name. This name keeps me motivated; I mean, I'm very prosperous because *ngiyinyoni yetive letinengi* (I am a bird of many nations). I soar on high!

Hlabekisa[7] (Provoke)

I know I'm handsome, even my mother knew that, that's why she gave me this name. *Phela bebacabanga kutsi ngiyophuma ngiyishishi, ngabalaya ngaphuma nginje* (They thought I was going to be born ugly but was not. I came out like this). *Nyalo ngiyati kutsi kute intfombi letangala, ngoma angangala ngitotfola lomunye fast-fast* (I know there's no girl who will ever turn me down, even if they do, I can get another one fast). This wouldn't be the case if I was ugly. I would probably have another name, like *Mubiza* (Ugly one).

Yedwazwi (All alone)

My mother was a domestic worker who stayed in the back room at her boss's house. She was by herself when she gave birth to me in the bedroom. She had nobody to help her. My uncle named me '*Yedwazwi*' because of that. [The term *yedvwa* means alone/ by him or herself.] I am always by myself. I'm the only child. Everything I do, I do it on my own. I don't want to have children because I don't think I can handle having people around me for that long. I do have friend, but friends always go back to their homes.

The names that are discussed below are personal names accompanied by the full aetiology behind the name.

Melusi (Shepherd)

This name was bestowed upon the child by his maternal grandmother. The reason for this name was because *Melusi* was the first-born child of his mother, and *Melusi's* mother was the grandmother's first-born child. For that reason, the name-giver said that the child would be the shepherd of the family, and would guide the rest of the grandchildren. It is ironic that the name-bearer is the first-born child of the name-bearer's first-born. The name-bearer is the

[7] With the intent to create envy

youngest grandchild to the name-giver; yet he is said to be a shepard to the rest of the grandchildren.

Majawonke

This name is derived from *emajaha wonke,* which translates to 'all the men'. The mother was expecting to have a female child after giving birth to four male children. Once the child was born and she discovered that she had given birth to a male child again, she exclaimed in disappointment *"whoooo, ngemajaha wonke!"* (Wow, it is only men!) It was then that the child was given this name as an indicator that those born before him are all male.

Khetsani (Choose)

The name-giver was the child's paternal grandfather. The grandfather had a question within him which he was struggling to answer. The family strongly believed in traditional Swati beliefs and did not believe in Christianity. Meanwhile, the mother of the child (the daughter-in-law) was from a family with a Christian background, whose father was a priest of a local church. The grandfather was asking himself whether his daughter-in-law would stay in his family, or if she would she back to her family, because her background differed from theirs; and if she were to stay, would she be able to adapt, or would she continue practicing her beliefs? A decision needed to be made, *bekufanele labatali balomtfwana bakhetse* (the child's parents were supposed to choose). Hence the child was bestowed with the name *Khetsani* as a way of informing the parents that they needed to make a decision on whether or not to continue with the marriage.

Ntsika

This name means 'a pillar'. It is usually used when referring to a person who is considered a pillar of strength during trying times. The name was given by the name-bearer's grandmother; who thought the name-bearer would be a

pillar of strength to the family because the family was left with no men after the passing of her husband. The name-giver did not have any male children of her own. When her grandson was born she believed that the family will stand once again, because according to her beliefs, a home is not complete without male members in it.

Mfundo

This name was derived from *imfundvo* (education) and *sifundvo* (a lesson). When the mother was six months pregnant and the pregnancy was starting to show, she realised that the father was not keen on taking the responsibility of being a father to their child. Instead, he ran off with another woman. This came as a lesson to the mother; that she should not trust men, especially at a young age (she was seventeen-years-old when she got pregnant). Being a teenage mother was a lesson (*sifundvo*) to her. Therefore, her child should learn from his mother's lesson by not having children during the teenage years. Rather, the child should focus on school and be educated. As a result, the name-bearer now has a Master's degree and does not have a child.

Machawe

This name is derived from the term *emachawe* which means 'heroes' when translated. The father of this child was killed in a fight at a bus stop while he was trying to help two ladies from being raped by a group of five men. It was early dawn and the man was on his way from work (he worked as a security guard) when he heard women screaming and he rushed to see what the matter was. Upon his arrival at the scene, the ladies were pinned down by two of the men, while the other three were on guard for passers-by. The man tried to fight the men but was overpowered. The woman managed to escape, but unfortunately the man was stabbed and left in the bushes. Hence the child was named *Machawe* because the mother believed that her husband died a hero.

Semende

This name means 'cement' when translated. The name-bearer is the first male child in the family. He has an older sister who is the first-born child. Her name is *Sibongile* (we are grateful). When *Sibongile* was born, the parents were grateful to have been blessed with a female child. However, the parents were not certain about their relationship at that time. When they discovered that they were expecting a male child, they saw the child as the cement that would hold their relationship together, just as it holds a building together. Indeed, this was so, as the parents have been happily married for over twenty-five years.

4.3 Contrast of aetiology of names and the reality of the name-bearer

There were cases where the aetiology of participants' names was not coherent with the life lived by the individuals, and where individuals' names and their meanings were not coherent with the lifestyle of the individuals.

Fisiwe (Wished for)

I love my name, but I don't relate to it. *Yebo kona make bekafisile kuba nemtfwana, kepha manje loku ngila emhlabani anginabo bangani* (yes, my mother wished for me to be born, but now that I'm here on earth, I do not have friends). *Bothishela bangenyanya* (Teachers at school don't like me). I don't enjoy being a teenager. I don't even have a boyfriend. It's boring, *nje.* At times I wish I had a different name, maybe I would have a better social life.

Colisile (Apologised)

Bo make bebacolisa kuNkulunkulu kutsi ngivelile. Batsi ngiyi-mistake (My parents were asking God to forgive them that I'm born. They say I am a mistake). All the kids at home are paired but me, I don't have a pair. They constantly remind

me that I was a mistake. I hate this name because it makes me feel unwelcome. *Ingiphatsa kabi lendzaba lena* (This really hurts my feelings).

Attitude towards one's name can determine one's personality. As demonstrated above, those who are fulfilled by their names possess a positive attitude towards their names. The above serves to prove that not knowing the origins of one's personal name impacts on an individual's attitude towards the name he/she bears.

4.4 Names used for appeasing the living-dead

In the Swati community, names are used as an instrument to show respect and to praise people. Praise names are often bestowed as a way of thanksgiving, or when showing appreciation to people. For most Swatis, the belief in ancestors (*emadloti*) is a very common practice. The ancestors are equivalent to God (the creator) in their eyes, therefore they command great respect. It is believed that the ancestors maintain surveillance over peace within the family. This implies that the deceased have superiority over their living relatives. Ngidi (2012) demonstrates how Zulu personal names are used to appease the living-dead. She provides examples using the context of polygamous families to illustrate how personal names are used in dialogue during conflicts within the polygamous marriage. Ngidi believes the reason for this is to avoid upsetting the ancestors.

Angering the ancestors could lead to more conflict and danger for the family. The following names are examples of how the Swati may use names to appease the living-dead and avoid confrontation within a household.

Skhumbuzo

The name *Skhumbuzo* may appear to be isiZulu, because it is converted from its Swati state which is *Sikhumbuto;* which means 'a reminder'. This name was bestowed upon the child as a great reminder to the family that the *Mvila* surname needed to be expanded. The name was also a reminder to the mother

that she should give birth to more male children in order for the family surname to expand. The grandfather of the child was the name-give in this instance. He had heard that the mother of the child intended having only one child in her marriage.

Sivile

The name *Sivile* means 'we have heard'. This name was given by the child's maternal grandmother who heard rumours that the father of the child was having an affair while the mother of the child was pregnant. When the child was born, the grandmother took the child into her hands and said to him, *"Sitivile tindzaba teyise tekutsi bekentani naloyamfati ngalesikhatsi unyoko amitsi. Sivile"!* (We have heard about your father's affair with another woman while your mother was pregnant. We have heard!). The grandmother saw fit to give this child the name *Sivile* rather than to confront her son-in-law and cause conflict within the family.

Vumani

Further to the above, the mother of the child named her child *Vumani* (admit). This was her way of saying that her husband should admit to having had an affair while she was pregnant.

Such names are a subtle way of confronting family members without the presence of bickering. This way, the issue is not spread outside of the family. Using personal names as a dialogue is another way of the offended person of informing their offender that they now have knowledge of the acts against them.

4.5 Aetiology of names that are used as religious marks

In Bhengu (1975: 52), we learn that a traditional African name is a religious mark of one's personal as well as human identification. The traditional personal name is said to be a symbol of gratitude and respect for the environment within which people live and experience their lives. Thus, new members of the family, especially new born babies, are connected to their ancestors and to the spirit world through which the names were bestowed upon them.

Sivikele

This name is derived from the word *Sivikele,* which means 'protect us'. It was believed that this child has come as a protective shield to the family. This was after the child's parents experienced two miscarriages and they took a decision to consult a *samgoma.* During consultation, the *sangoma* explained to them that there was a certain neighbour who was using witchcraft on them in order to bring them misfortune as a family. It was further explained that the neighbour viewed that household as perfect and realised that once they had a child they would be complete. Thus, the neighbour saw fit to cast a spell on them out of spite. After several treatments with the *sangoma,* the mother of the child was instructed to come back when she was four months pregnant in order to ensure that the baby would survive and come out of the womb alive. The mother arrived with her husband on the day in question, and the *sangoma* told them that the child in her womb wanted to protect his mother because she has been through too much loss. It was also said that once the child was born, the mother would no longer have any miscarriages because this child has protected her. Now that the child is born, it is believed that the ancestors sent him to be a protector of the family.

Ludumo (Praise)

This name is constructed from the phrase *Ludvumo lukufanele Nkhosi* (you deserve the praise, Lord). Here the name-giver was referring to God the creator, who deserves to be admired for his beautiful creations on this earth. All things created by Him are beautiful, just like this precious baby boy. The name-bearer believed that if it was not by His grace, he would not have been born.

4.6 Names that reflect gratitude

In the Swati culture, as in many other African cultures, each family bears a surname by which it is known. These surnames originated from the names of people who lived at some stage in the past (ancestors/ living-dead). Each surname is a representation of a clan and its kingdom. Furthermore, each surname is believed to have a praise name, *sinanatelo*. Praise names come about in many ways. The importance of *sinanatelo* is that it shows the descent, relationship, and status of family members from that clan.

Reciting praise names is another way of remembering deceased family members. Sometimes the praise name would function as a name or surname (as illustrated above). Praise names are used to show respect. In Swati culture it is rude to simply call a person by their name. Praise names are important because they take the place of a person's name. Praise names are also used for married women and for recalling or respecting the woman's family. For instance, a bride from the *Khumalo* clan would be referred to as *MaMntungwa,* instead of referring to her using her personal name. As a result, we may find that a person is no longer addressed by their personal name, but by their praise name. This can be seen as an example of how ancestors are venerated through the use of praise names.

The *sibongo* and the *sinanatelo* play a crucial role in terms of honouring the living-dead. It is also possible for a name to be derived from the *sinanatelo.* For in instance, a daughter

of the *Ngwane* clan may be named *Temangwane* (daughter of the *Ngwane* clan). Calling out this name at any given point of the child's life means that her ancestors are being praised and they acknowledge her as the daughter of the *Ngwane* clan.

Mantini

This is a praise name of the *Siphepho* clan. The name *Mantini* means 'in the water'. The name-bearer was given this name as thanksgiving to the ancestors for providing them with a male child who will be able to pass on this surname to the next generation.

Temaduma

A praise name of the *Mlambo* clan. After giving birth to two sons and three daughters, the father said *"Setenele tintfombi takamaduma kulomndeni"* (There are enough girls in the *Mlambo* family) when the fourth daughter came into the world. The *Temaduma* of this child were expecting to give birth to a baby boy but was gifted with a girl instead. Therefore, the father was pleading with the ancestors not to give them anymore girls.

Temahlubi

A praise name of the *Mthimkhulu* clan. She is the last born. After giving birth to eight boys, her paternal aunt was grateful for the gift of a baby girl in the family. Therefore, she was giving thanks to the ancestors on behalf of the whole family for the birth of a girl child.

During the process of data collection, an interesting conversation took place between an elderly woman and the researcher. It seems wise to include the elderly woman's words as they were heard, in order for meaning not to be lost in translation. An English translation is provided.

Kadzeni besingenalo lwati lelinyenti ngetintfo tala ehlabeni. Akusafani nanyalo kutsi tintfo nititfola la kulemishini yenu lefana nale loyiphetse nyalo nalamaTV enu lanibonisa mhlaba wonke kube wena uhleti esofeni noma unabise tinyalo. Nine niyakhona kukopela emagama alabantfu benu lenibabona kulemishini nemaTV. Tsine wena mtfwanami ligama lemntfwana belilandzela simo salendlela atalwa ngayo. Bo 'Smangele' ngilaba bokuvela singakalindzeli. Ukhandza kwekutsi lomake bekafihle lesiso tonke letinyanga, bantfu lahlala nabo bamangala nje kutsi umutfu uyashumashumeka kantsi uphetfwe ngumhela. Uyabona kutsi kuhamba njani? Tsine besingenaso sikhatsi sekuqhwabaqhwabata emaTv nelemishini yenu le. Ungasho kutsi besivilapha kwetsa emagama, ngoba uma utsi uyanakisisa emagama ebantfu labanigi la esgodzini setfu ayafana. Umuntfu usuka alive kulomunye umuntfu lelogama. Ukhandza kwekutsi akati nenqazelo yalo lelogama, kodvwanje umane walitsadza wase uba nesifiso sokwetsa wakhe umtfwana lelogama. Bo 'Lucrecia' *laba, asati nektsi kuyini, kodvwa nje besibetsa ngoba livakala limnandzi. Bo 'Dimakatso' asati kutsi kuqhazani kodvwa siyetsa. Emagama alamalanga ehlukile kunalwa akadzeni. Kuhle kutsi kubekhona mehluko ngoba loko kukhombisa kwandza kwelwati bantfu labanalo kulamalanga. Nine nibuye nitakhele na enu emagama ngokuhlanganisa magama ebatali. Ukhandza make anguNolwazi babe anguSbongiseni untfwana abe nguSbonglwazi. BoSipho naNomndeni babeleka Simndeni.*

Tidlela tokwetsa tiyatfutfuka kulamalanga. Loko kuyintfo lehle, kodvwa ngesaba kwekutsi emagama etitukulwane tenu ayogcina angasasho lutfo. Senitawetsa ngani ngoba Vele umuntfu kwamele abe neligama khona atawubonisa kwekutsi naye uyaphila.

(Long ago, we did not have sufficient information about the things and activities of this world. It was different then, unlike nowadays, whereby information can be retrieved from these devices like the one you are holding as well as from the television while one is sitting at the comfort of one's home. My child, with the older generation, a child's name would be influenced by the nature of the birth or by the circumstances surrounding the birth of the

child. People with names such as *Simangele* ('we are surprised') are those who were born unexpectedly. You will find that the mother was hiding the pregnancy from the public, hence the shock when they realised that she was in labour. So, do you see how it goes? We did not have time to change channels of the television or go onto any mobile devices to seek inspiration for names. It could be assumed that we were lazy to name our children, because if you were to make a close analysis of the names of people from this community, you will notice that they are similar. A name will be given to a child because the name-giver has heard it from somewhere and they liked it. In most cases, the name-giver may not be aware of what the name means, or of what language the name is. But they have the desire to bestow that name on the child. Names such as 'Lucrecia' are a mystery to us, but we would bestow such on our children because the name sounds good to the ear. We do not even know what a name such as *Dimakatso* (Surprises) means, yet many children are bestowed with that name.

Names bestowed on children nowadays are different to those that were used in the past. It is good to have such changes in naming patterns because that shows expansion of knowledge possessed by people of these times. This generation may even go to the extent of making up their own names by combining the parent's names. For instance, the mother's name may be *Nolwazi* (mother of knowledge), and the father's name may be *Sbongiseni* (be thankful along with us), and the child will be *Sbongulwazi* (we are thankful for the knowledge). Another example is *Sipho* (gift) and *Nomndeni* (mother of family) child's name is *Simndeni* (we are family).

There is great improvement in the way names are derived, which is a good thing. However, concerns arise when thinking about what our great, great, grandchildren will be named. At the rate things are going, their names will

end up being without meaning. That generation will be named because a person needs to have a name.)

4.7 Names influenced by modernity

There are also names which were found to be a reflection of the wishes of parents from the new generation. These names do not appear to regard the mother tongue of the name-giver. When asked, name-givers either stated that they 'just loved the name' or that 'it sounds nice', hence they desired to bestow the name on the name-bearer. It was observed that majority of participants who contributed to this section of the study were victims of teenage pregnancy. This has led to the assumption that naming patters are no longer thought out and that names are now given without any consideration. The aetiology of personal names these days appears to lack both depth and significance. The following are some examples of the names:

Khumo - Ingcebo - Wealth

Chineke - Inkhosi inatsi - God is with us

Frenti - Unknown meaning

Nyiste - Unknown meaning

Dibekza - Unknown meaning

Major

Bright Future

Nanka - Unknown meaning

Nanya - Unknown meaning

South Africa has eleven official languages (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996), SiSwati being one of them. The Constitution states that indigenous languages must

be elevated. This came about due to the reduced use of indigenous languages during the apartheid era. It can be argued that the media is the most powerful tool used to elevate languages. That being said, the siSwati language is little used on media platforms, particularly in the print media. It is also very rare to hear the siSwati language on television, such as in drama series' or in other popular programmes. It is therefore difficult for the nation to be aware of the terminology used by siSwati speakers. With regard to names, there is also a decline in siSwati name-bearers in this country, excluding popular names such as:

Lihle - It is beautiful/nice

Swazi/Nomaswazi - Swati/ mother of the Swati

Njabulo/ Nonjabulo - Happiness/ Mother of happiness

Sifiso - A Wish

Mbongeni - Thank him/her

Mandle - Power

Thandazile - Have prayed

Therefore, the Swati naming system suffers. As a result, speakers of the siSwati language resort to using names from other languages, especially isiZulu names. For instance; a name such as '*Thokozile*' (we are happy) would be '*Tfokotile*' in siSwati. Due to the fact that *Tfokotile* does not sound familiar to the ear, name-givers resort to using *Thokozile*. Examples of such other names are:

Zandile - *Tandzile* - They (girls) have expanded

Mdumiseni - *Mdvumiseni*- Praise him

Mthobisi - *Mtfobisi* - Calmer of the heart)

Themba - *Tsemba* - Hope

Nomathemba - *Nomatsemba* - Mother of hope

Nomaswazi – *Nomaswati* - Mother of the Swati

Thando – *Tsandvo* - Love

Thandiwe – *Tsandziwe* - the loved one

Sizwe – *Sive* - Nation

4.8 Names influenced by language contact and dialectology

There are many other influences on naming patterns, such as language contact and the effects of dialectology. When talking about dialect, we are referring to a regional version of a language, which is distinguished by pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. The term dialect is often used to characterise a way of speaking that differs from the standard language. As a result, siSwati is spoken in different dialects in various parts of Mpumalanga. The list below shows a variety of names that were collected as part of this study, that are examples of how dialect has caused changes in the naming patterns of residents of kaMsogwaba. Included are the languages of influence, the siSwati version of the names and the English meaning of the names. Some of these names reflect the religious beliefs, desires, expressions and aspirations of the Swati.

Names from Sotho languages:

Thabang - *Jabulani* - Be happy

Keletso - *Miyalo* - Advice

Thato - *Indzandvo* - Will

Lerato - *Litsandvo* - Love

Palesa - *Imbhali* - Flower

Thabiso - *Njabulo* - Happiness

Karabo - *Mpendvulo* - An answer

Tswarelo - *Lixolo* - Forgiveness

Lebohang - *Bongani* - Be thankful

Rethabile - *Sijabulile* - We are happy

Thabisile - *Jabulisa* - To make happy

Thapelo - *Mithandazo* - Prayers

Dimpho - *Tipho* - Gifts

Kamogelo - *Wamukelwe* - Welcomed

Refilwe - *Siphiwe* - Given

Rorisang - *Dumisani* - Praise

Mmabatho - *Make webantfu* - Mother of the people

Names from XiTsonga language:

Tinyiko - *Tipho* - Gifts

Nyiko - *Sipho* - Gift

Ntsako - *Njabulo* - Happiness

Tsakani - *Jabulani* - Be Happy

Khensani - *Bongani* - Be thankful

Nkateko - *Sibusiso* - Blessing

Katekani - *Busisani* - Bless

Mikateko - *Tibusiso* - Blessings

Xiluvha - *Mbhali* - Flower

Matimba - *Mandla* - Power/Strength/Strong

Names from the Venda language:

Lutendo - *Litsemba* - Faith

Lufuno - *Litsandvo* - Love

Pfarelo – *Lixolo* - Forgiveness

Names from the Xhosa language:

Vuya - *Jabula* - Be happy (singular)

Vuyo - *Njabulo* - Happiness

Luvuyo - *Injabulo* - It is happiness

Vuyelwa - *Jabulela* - Be happy for

Vuyi - *Jabulile* - Happy

Vuyani - *Jabulani* - Be happy (plural)

Ndivile - *Ngivile* - I have heard

Kamvelihle - *Likusasa lelihle* - Bright future

Viwe - *Viwe* - Heard (single)

Aviwe - *Iviwe* - Heard (plural)

Anathi - *Anatsi* - Are with us (referring to the ancestors)

Ndathi - *Ngitsite* - I have said

Yongama - *Kuphatsa* - To take charge of

Yanga - *Maka* - May (when making a request)

Zoleka - *Thobeka* - Humble

Thamsanqa - *Nhlanhla* - Luck

Nomathamsanqa - *Nonhlanhla* - Mother of luck

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter explored siSwati personal names and demonstrated how names are used in Swati communities. The aetiology of the personal names has been provided in full.

Suzman (1994: 270) wrote:

> Name-giving provides an outlet for the regulation of social relations in the intense social interaction of small communities. It allows people to communicate their feelings indirectly, without overt confrontation and possible conflict.

The Swati are profoundly rooted in their customs. Male individuals in Swati communities are addressed by their surname or their clan name, as a sign of recognition. Due to language contact, the influence of other languages cannot be ignored when it comes to naming patterns in a South African context. Religion and culture are embraced through name-giving. This implies that name-giving patterns are not fixed to suit the language of the name-giver, nor are they fixed to the language used in that community.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.1 Swati naming patterns

This study has attempted to illustrate how culture and religion meet through names. It was found that in Swati communities, names could be used to interrogate identity. It is imperative to have a name in order to have an identity and a sense of belonging within a society. It is through a person's name that we can glimpse into their background. The language a person speaks at home can be determined by the name they bear, and a name reveals a person's religious background. Furthermore, names often reflect the manner in which people relate to one another. The closer people are, the more informal are the names they use to address one another. It has been established that names can sometimes be used as a tool to retaliate or confront situations in the household. Naming patterns in the Swati community are not limited by language. It is due to factors such as dialect as well as language contact that the Swati have experienced extensions in their naming patterns.

5.2 The influence of religion in naming patterns

Western religion has resulted in a shift in African onomastic patterns. It has also contributed in providing synonyms for indigenous names. Due to the dynamic nature of society, it can be expected that naming patterns may change over time in order to accommodate new experiences. An example of this is how most colonised Africans accepted Biblical names (such as John, Mary, etc.), when they were baptised into Christianity. Western religion has also contributed to religious synchronism, where many Africans find themselves caught between their former beliefs and Christianity. Western religion has provided an alternative to problem-solving through believing in Jesus Christ.

This explains why some Africans believe in African religion, others believe in Jesus Christ, and some believe in both. With regards to naming patterns, this study has shown how religion is expressed through names. The nature of the name-giver's relationship with religion has also been demonstrated. Names such as Kholiwe (believed) and Vumile (agreed) are used to distinguish between Western and African religion. Kholiwe marks one's belief into Christianity; as the basis of Christianity is faith. One needs to believe in the Holy trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as in the eternal life that is promised by Christian religion. On the other hand Vumile is an indication of acknowledgment of the living-dead; which is the basis of African religion.

5.3 The impact of culture in naming patterns

Names are connected to the culture, beliefs, and customs of the naming group. Hence language and culture meet through the use of names. To have a ceremony performed is crucial in the African culture. Rituals are important because they help the living connect with their living-dead. The living-dead are a very important element in African culture. It is believed that being introduced to the living-dead is a way to secure protection throughout one's, because the living-dead are able to watch over you. Things such as impepho (incense) are used as a catalyst to connect the living with the living-dead. Cultural rituals keep Africans grounded. Therefore, names are used to introduce the living to the living-dead. It is believed that if a person is not introduced to the living-dead, then they that person will not be protected and will fall prey to his enemies.

5.4 Implications for theory

The theories used in this study involved identity and self-categorisation. Through self-categorisation theory we understand how individuals are fitted into social structures with the aid of names. Although names provide individuals with a sense of belonging, the surname broadens their sense of belonging as they navigate through society. Theories of identity gave an understanding of how individuals are socialised. The profoundness

of identity theories lies in the fact that they acknowledge that identity is not fixed: an individual may possess an individual identity as well as a collective identity.

An individual's name plays an essential role in forming their identity. For the reader to relate to this statement, they need to understand that individual identity is a quest which is seeked by many as they navigate through society. It is exceptional for a black person in South Africa to identify him/herself isolated from their name, surname, clan, culture, and place of birth. This implies that black individuals identify themselves in a collective manner. Therefore, one's name, culture, clan, religion, and place of birth are interwoven with one's identity.

5.5 Recommendations for further research

In order for siSwati to develop, researchers should be willing to join with existing scholars and conduct Swati studies at various tertiary institutions. They should also produce siSwati literature, and include the many new terms that have surfaced over the years. Moreover, the names of new inventions should be included in this literature in order for future siSwati generation to have access to them. The world is changing and evolving, which implies new inventions. If there are no names in siSwati for these new developments, names from other languages whose scholars have invested in developing those languages will have to be used. This will result in siSwati being marginalised and will increase the academic gap that already exists.

Moreover, attention needs to be given to onomastic studies in Swati communities. There is more than enough to be researched in these areas. Mpumalanga is rich in cultural diversity and landscapes that would provide excellent platforms for research. A study such as this sheds light on the way of life of minority groups in South Africa. There is still hope that more scholars will be encouraged to conduct studies on the Swati after having read this study.

Due to insufficient scholarly material on the siSwati people and their language, a number of challenges arose while conducting this study. It became evident that academic attention needs to be given to this subject. Scholars who are keen on conducting Swati studies have to rely extensively on word of mouth from willing participants, and on unscholarly platforms such as social media, in order to acquire information. Such instances bring about many uncertainties with regard to the information given, thus requiring researchers to work twice as hard to confirm the information acquired through these platforms. However, it is possible for the gap to be filled by conducting further studies on the Swati people. Not only will this bridge the academic gap, but it will also develop siSwati as a language, and further our knowledge about the Swati people.

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