

**AN ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL NAMING IN POST-APARTHEID BOLOBEDU,
LIMPOPO PROVINCE: THE CASE OF GA-KURANTA**

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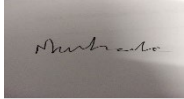
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DECLARATION

I, Lucky Brian Mohale, declare that **AN ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL NAMING IN POST-APARTHEID BOLOBEDU, LIMPOPO PROVINCE: THE CASE OF GA-KURANTA, LIMPOPO PROVINCE** is my own work, and it has not been submitted before for any other degree at any institution. I further declare that all the sources that have been used in this study have been acknowledged through complete references.



Signature

(Mr L.B Mohale)

20 November 2023

Date

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my father, the late Phetole Thomas Mohale; my mother, Khelelo Magreth Ramahlo; my sister, Molatelo Valencia Mohale; my twin brother, Marothi Barry Mohale; my younger brother, Phumelelo Mohale and my three little sisters: Matšhiwane, Dimakatšo and Kgaogelo Mohale. I also dedicate this study to my Fiancée, Dineo Bridget Matentji, and our daughter, Kgaogelo Mohale.

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the analysis of personal naming in post-apartheid Bolobedu, Limpopo Province, with the aim of providing an understanding of the importance of personal naming in the study area. It unpacked the personal naming practices of the Balobedu tribe, with particular focus on Ga-Kuranta as an area that is part of the Balobedu tribe.

This study employed the qualitative research approach, and a descriptive case study design. The population of the study comprised Khelobedu speaking people from Ga-Kuranta under Greater Letaba Municipality and the purposive sampling technique was employed. 26 participants took part in this study. The data of the study were collected through unstructured interviews and analysed thematically. The study was underpinned by the Social Constructivist Theory.

The findings of this study revealed that personal naming among Balobedu is not an accidental event, but a process that is guided by family history, societal norms, and events such as death, marriage celebration, starvation and coronation of a queen or induna. The study further highlighted that personal naming among Balobedu is still affected by Christianity and most personal names given to children are Christian names. Moreover, the study recommended that parents should be encouraged to bestow names that are positive to their children.

Keywords: Personal naming, Bolobedu, Decolonisation, Identity, Culture, Christianity, Marriage.

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a general overview of the study. It provides the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, ethical consideration, significance of the study, quality criteria, and conclusion of the chapter. Guma's (2001:265) assertion that names embody social experiences, social norms and values, roles, and authority as well as personality and individual characteristics, served as a springboard into the discussion of the study's topic.

1.1 Background to the study

Balobedu are among the tribes that reside in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. Statistics South Africa (Stats SA, 2016) indicates that the population of Balobedu is 218, 030 in number. This tribe is well-known for its queenship dynasty as well as the magical rain queen, *Modjadji* (a hereditary name meaning the ruler of the *day*). Balobedu speak a dialect known as Khelobedu. According to Mohale (2014:1), Khelobedu is grammatically similar to both Tshivenda and Northern Sotho. For example, the noun *khelemo* (summer) can be found in Tshivenda as *tshilimo* and *selemo* in Northern Sotho. The foregoing nouns share same two letters at the end, and this is also applicable in nouns such as *mozwala* (Khelobedu), *muzwala* (Tshivenda) and *motswala* (Sepedi), they all mean cousin in English. These nouns exemplify that the above-mentioned languages have some similarities in word formation.

Tatira (2012:78) describes the region of Bolobedu as a surrounded by three tribes, namely; the Vatsonga to the east, the Vhavenda to the north and Bapedi to the southwest. Tatira further provides a snapshot of Bolobedu's cultural orientation with significant appreciation for the vastly scattered villages that are led by headmen. Balobedu originate from Great Zimbabwe, and their kingdom was established by Monomotapa (Malatji, 2017).

The Balobedu tribe is a traditional chiefdom that is distinct from others. For centuries, women have ruled the tribe of Balobedu. Krige and Krige (1980) highlight the notion that Modjadji became the legendary figure in the black and white South Africa, and her dynasty has been surrounded by an atmosphere of mystery. In addition, Krige and Krige (1980) also indicate that Modjadji collaborated with the rain doctor for rain rituals. The chiefdom of Modjadji is organised into administrative units, some of which are in multiple villages. There are 200 communities that make up the Balobedu ethnic group (StatsSA Community Survey, 2016).

As one of the groups in multicultural South Africa, the Balobedu have their unique way of giving personal names. Most people, especially the young ones within the tribe of the Balobedu, do not know the meaning and structure of their personal names. Detecting the motive behind giving a certain personal name may broaden one's understanding of the socio-cultural features of a society.

Makhubedu (2009:1) indicates that the advent of western culture had negative impact on indigenous African naming systems. Indigenous names came to be undermined and regarded as of low status by Western culture. She further indicates that Christianity is one of the creeds by which western culture was transmitted to the Northern Sotho people, and this was the most effective system of destroying the indigenous system of naming. Makhubedu (2009) concurs that the arrival of Western culture through colonisation had a negative impact on African naming systems, including on the Balobedu nation. Furthermore, Arowolo (2010) acknowledges that western culture is now regarded as frontline civilisation while African ways of doing things have largely become primitive, archaic, and unacceptable in the public domain.

Names reflect the way in which people think and see the world around them (Meiring, 1994:67). Among other things, names can be regarded as tools to identify individuals' characters in society. However, in the field of onomastics, they are perceived as carriers of culture, especially among Africans. Moreover, Chauke (2015) indicates that to African people, naming practices are very important, since names are often given to mark the testimony of what a society holds dear to it. In the South African context, Mandende, Cekiso and Rwodzi (2019) affirm that African traditional people use names as an archive for storing all-important facts about their history and daily activities. In other words, names bear testimony to the history and culture of a particular nation or society.

The circumstances prevailing before and after the birth of a child have a crucial effect in the process of naming. Hence, a child who is born after a funeral or any misfortune that may befall any of the family members is likely to be named *Dikeledi* (tears) or *Sello* (cry). Similarly, this also happens to one who is born during sunny or hot temperatures, and that child is likely to be named *Modjadji* or *Mmadjadji* (a hereditary name meaning the ruler of the day).

Naming as an important part of culture and identity needs to be clearly understood; for example, among the Mbeere people in Kenya, personal names are used to show respect for age categories or generational sets (Katakami, 1997). However, little has been done concerning personal names and naming practice in general regarding the Balobedu tribe. The researcher was motivated to conduct this study after observing that most of the residents of Bolobedu did not take into consideration the importance of personal names and naming in general.

1.2 Statement of the research problem

There are numerous studies in Africa that have looked at names and the naming system. The studies include, Mthobeli (2001), Lihudi (2018), Mphela (2010), and Molefe (1999). These studies reveal how personal names and naming practices are linked with language as part of culture and for communication purposes in society.

Even though many scholars such as the above have focused on personal names, there is no study that has looked into the naming system of the Balobedu tribe. Therefore, Balobedu's naming system is still a puzzle that needs exploration through empirical research. The Balobedu ethnic group, like other African nations, use personal names as a storage of their daily experiences and these names can act as a tool for sharing values and customs. Currently, most of the Balobedu still bear the brunt of having both an English and an African name.

According to Mbiti (1990:115), all African names have meanings rooted in culture and history. This shows that African names reveal specific meanings, and they manifest identity. In addition, Palsson (2014) states that "names serve the purpose of situating people in social space, connecting them to family, lineage and ethnic group". However, it seems as if this is no longer the case because the western culture and its naming system have engulfed most African societies, including Balobedu.

Matsimela (1997:31) opines that it is important to give a child a traditional name because of the belief that the name would guide and protect the life of the child. In the context of Balobedu, this is no longer the case because most of them perceive African names as primitive and less valuable, implying that such names must not be assigned to a child.

1.3 Purpose of the study

1.3.1 Aim

The aim of this study was to provide an understanding of the importance of personal naming among Balobedu in post-apartheid South Africa.

1.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- Establish criteria for personal naming in the Balobedu tribe;
- Investigate the nature of personal naming;
- Identify the impact of gender on personal naming; and
- Examine the meaning of Balobedu's personal names.

1.4 Significance of the study

Culturally, personal naming as a practice on its own is important to every African society because it serves as a corpus of societal experiences. The study contributes to the socio-cultural development of the society of the Balobedu at large. It may also be useful to the residents of the Bolobedu, as it will conscientise those who do not know the importance and etymology of the names given to their children. It will also help to preserve the culture by providing more information about the Bolobedu for the coming generations. It will also serve as a source of reference for future scholars in the field of onomastics.

1.5 Outline of chapters

1.5.1 CHAPTER 1: General introduction

This chapter provided a general introduction of the study. It outlined the background of the Balobedu tribe, statement of the research problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study and the outline of the study.

1.5.2 CHAPTER 2: Literature review

This chapter presented the literature review based on the works of various scholars who conducted studies on naming.

1.5.3 CHAPTER 3: Research methodology

This chapter elucidated the methodology employed to execute the study. The procedures of data collection, how the data were analysed, population of the study, sampling, and quality criteria were explained. It also accounted for the ethical considerations adhered to in the study.

1.5.4 CHAPTER 4: Data presentation, analysis, and interpretation

Chapter four presented the collected data and analyse them with an aim of solving the main problem of the study. Data analysis was guided by the methodology employed by the study. In this case, the interpretation of the data led the researcher to the findings of the study.

1.5.5 CHAPTER 5: Findings, conclusions, and recommendations

The chapter focused on the discussion of the findings of the study.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter covered the background of Balobedu tribe, focusing on names and naming practices of Balobedu, including the attendant culture and politics of the Balobedu tribe. It also presented the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study and chapter outline. Thus, the following chapter reviewed the literature related to the current study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the research outputs of various scholars who conducted studies on onomastics. The chapter is divided into different subheadings to present previous findings on personal names and naming in general. The purpose of a literature review is to familiarise the researcher with the past and latest developments in the area of research, and in related research areas. This chapter concluded with the presentation of theoretical framework that underpinned this study.

2.2. Naming practices in African societies

Personal naming is an interesting aspect that differs from one society to the other and manifests in various aspects such as politics, economy, beliefs, and values of the societies that they emanate from. Various ways in which people are named have varying ramifications for their social formation as individuals (Williams, 2004). This suggests that every nation has its own practice of giving names and the process of giving names is affected by how people view the world around them.

Naming practices are more concerned with the basic principles or logic that has to be followed before a name can be given to an individual, which is common in most African communities. Imoh (2021) highlights that a name is what somebody or something is called or identified by. Mehrabian and Piercy (1993) are of the view that names can reveal both positive and negative aspects and have corresponding effects in social interaction. This concurs with the Sepedi proverb, '*Leina le lebe ke seromo*' meaning that a name has a direct or indirect influence on the character of its bearer. Implicit in this proverb is that it is significant for one to deeply investigate the side effects that a name might have on the bearer before giving it.

Kamar, Fakuade, Fadanhunsi and Adekeye (2015) found that some of the Yoruba married women in Nigeria still retain their father's surnames after marriage. There are reasons outlined for that particular action, and those reasons are easy recognition, to avoid problems of official documentation after marriage, to guard against the extinction of family names and to protect ancestral roots. Moreover, they argue that education, religion, and exposure to western culture has led to the use of such names. This confirms that it is vital to guard against the death of one's name or surname because a given name creates smooth communication between the ancestors and their relatives on earth.

Langendonck (2007) claims that names are products of, and part of the society in which they are used and so, they cannot be viewed in isolation from it. This brings a view that personal names display the background and therefore their association with the culture and society they emerge from. Moreover, Batoma (2006) proffers that the meaning of African onomastics is based on the cultural and traditional aspects, which is something that is very important in African culture.

Al-Zumor's (2009) study discusses the anthroponomy of the Yemeni community of South Arabia, which reflects naming practices that are taken into consideration in tribal regions of Yemen neighbouring Saudi Arabia. The study investigated personal names assigned to females and revealed that the names given to females in that society depict the attitude of their bearers' parents, their relationship with nature, and the atmosphere around them. However, the social, political changes as well as the linguistic influences on the land and the people of Saadah and surrounding communities had an impact on their naming patterns and as a result, naming practices are changing in this area.

There are rituals and ceremonies that are performed in most African societies prior to the assignment of an Afrocentric name to an individual. By Afrocentric, it is meant here a way of thinking and acting that puts the interests, values, and views of Africans first (Chawane, 2016). This notion was relevant to this study because the study sought to analyse African names from an African perspective. Noteworthy, the present researcher observed that the Balobedu youth no longer prefer to use their Khelobedu names such as Khelelo, Moyabo, and Mathibela, because they think that they are for primitive or backward people. Similarly, Nyong (2021) found that most Nigerian youths

preferred Western names over African names, and this was caused by religion, personal taste, creativity, and style.

Sebashe (2003) discovered that a name is a significant social and cultural aspect in almost every country. A name instils a sense of self-identity and self-value. In accord, Mokgokong (2004) highlights that naming is one of the most important acts of humans. People, domestic animals, mountains, rivers, villages, and schools are assigned names in African societies. Mokgokong (2004) further indicates that the goal of naming is to identify an object, or to distinguish it from other entities. Although names can be assigned at random because of the meaning they convey and what they tell about the creature, there are often reasons for preferring one name over another. The wishes expected from the receiver of the name and circumstances prevailing before the ceremony of name giving often influence the preference of a given name.

Nziyane (2004), Sebashe (2003) and Mokgokong (2003) emphasise the significance of naming in human society and how it displays cultural values as well as the traditions of a society. In addition, naming can be tracked back from the biblical story in Genesis (2:19) “now the Lord God has formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them and whatever the man called each living creature that was its name.” Similarly, Philipians (2:9-10) indicates that “for this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name, which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”. This suggests that naming began long time.

Agyekum (2006) indicates that, according to the literature on anthropology, African names are quite different from western names where people take their father’s last names. Agyekum further asserts that in every culture, names have cultural and social contexts that identify the bearer. Agyekum looked studied Ghanaian names, precisely Akan personal names in an effort to show how African names vary from Western names.

Most naming ceremonies performed by African societies before giving a particular name to an individual culminate in an Afrocentric name. However, presently, most African youths shun African names for a variety of reasons, such as religion, modernisation, globalisation, acculturation, among others. Therefore, there remains much work to be done to change the perception of African children towards their culture and traditions as reflected in and through personal naming.

Katakami (1997) indicates that, the Mbeere name the child after another person, which reflects the individual's birth order. Deaths and events that occur during pregnancy have an impact on the Mbeere's basic naming rules. Furthermore, Katakami says that parents are compelled to name their children after a significant event in their lives. Therefore, in the Mbeere's tradition, there are certain basic personal naming characteristics that have to be taken into consideration before giving a name to a child, which resonates with the traditions of both Bapedi and Balobedu who also consider the circumstances that prevail during pregnancy and during the birth of the child. For example, among Balobedu, if a child is born during rainy days, the child is likely to be named *Mapula* and this name is often given to females.

African names are essentially reflectors of the ideologies and traditions of the communities from which they emerge. For example, the name *Lindiwe*, which means "the expected", implies that the parents had been waiting for a child and thus, the name-bearer is seen and known as a long-awaited child. Moreover, *Ntombidzondwa* which is assigned to a girl, is basically given to a girl child born in a family of females only (Dowling, 2004). This is also prevalent among Bolobedu; for example, *Motlatšo*, which simply means 'a girl child is born in the family dominated by male children'. Windt (2003) adds that parents' choice of names for their children has an impact on the development of the child. This implies that in selecting a certain name for a child, one has to take into consideration the impact that such a name will have on the bearer.

In a paper titled 'A semantic analysis of personal names in Datooga society,' Charwi (2019) found out that the naming process in the Datooga society is linked to the time of childbirth, prevailing situations, traditions, norms, and customs. Thus, names are not meaningless labels but words that serve semantic purposes in African societies.

2.3 The importance of personal naming

Machaba's (2004) study revealed that naming is a very important tool used among various African cultures to convey certain messages like alluding to one's economic background, values, beliefs, and culture, an individual, family members or a community. The naming of various objects is linked with the socio-political factors such as religion, education, wealth, and government policies. Such names may be anthroponyms or toponyms, for example. Anthroponyms are basically names of people while toponyms are geographical names (Hlushchenko, Didur, Okulova, and Pylypiuk, 2021). In essence, names cannot be separated from the dynamics of society.

Chauke (1992) mentions that names are important in informing future generations that once at a time, a specific group of people lived in a specific location. Machaba's (2004) study contends that names function as symbols that people will carry with them throughout their lives. Personal names in particular reveal details about social relationships, identities, history, and linguistic processes (Rachel, 2001). Thus, names are not just labels but are archives for preserving the history of a nation and personal experiences. Rosenhouse (2002) and Leyew (2003) add that personal names have semantic content and references, which are tied up to the socio-economic and political situations of the society where a baby is born.

Chipalo (2019) discovered that personal names among the Gogo people from Dodoma region in Tanzania originate from lineage, seasons, socio-economic activities, calamities surroundings, birth circumstances and celebrities. Additionally, personal names were also used to record birthdays, family history; clan legacy and most importantly, the ancestral names such as Mtemi, Masawo and Mnyamhala were used as prayers and wishes for the young generation.

Uluocha (2015) identified place names as one of the essential ways to decolonise Africa. This strategy assists in preserving, reinstating, and promoting the indigenous cartographies of Africa. In the same vein, Mthobeli (2001:4) emphasises that names are more than a word or words by which a person, animal, place, or thing is known, and fundamentally connote designation, reputation, or identification, separation of one individual from the other person.

Nepunda (2020) investigated the significance of Oshiwambo combat names for the People Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) freedom fighters during the armed liberation struggle for Namibia's independence. The study discovered that the former PLAN combatants named themselves and their names helped them to hide their identity and protect them from enemy agents or informers. Therefore, names and naming process encapsulate historical events as well as the semantic information. Mthobeli (2001:16) argues that the meaning attached to names by Basotho, plays a significant role in the definition of personhood, because it is believed that a given name does not only serve as an identity but also determines the type of person the individual will be.

Johnson (2007) is of the view that when we make something, we name it, we put a signifier on that "making" so that we can remember it, describe it, and not always for the best of reasons, own it, even co-opt it. Therefore, after the formation of everything, naming is the first thing to be applied to the subject or object before its actual use. Nevis (2008) postulates that each place name is associated with a well-known narrative about past events that happened at that place. This gives a view that in most instances, places names serve as the reservoir for the previous occurrence in a society. Thus, one can say that through names, the history of a society is preserved.

Nevis (2008) further indicates that 'most of the place names discussed by Basso (1996) contain a physical description of the place that they designate'. This scholar concurs with Webster (2017) in his article 'Reflection on Navajo place names and the inequalities of language' where he indicates that 'place names are intimately linked with narratives'. Thus, it can be said that behind a name, there is a story to narrate, and in most cases, this helps those who come after the existing generation to understand the tradition and culture of their forebears.

Manyasa (2009) investigated 'the basis of naming people in Kisukuma' in Tanzania. The personal names of this tribe are regarded as having socio-cultural value, function and meaning. Various personal names were analysed morphemically and semantically with an aim of shedding light on the socio-cultural significance of the naming process. Manyasa found that the naming process among the Kisukuma community is not done haphazardly; instead, it is a process that depends on the socio-cultural fabric of the community. This study is in line with this research as it looked into Khelobedu personal names and their relationship with Balobedu's culture.

Asheli (2017) studied 'the semantic of personal names among the Kuria, Iraqw and Maasa' to uncover the semantics of personal names as well as the semantic principles guiding the choice of a name. The study reveals that naming practices are principled and are likely to be shared if the domains employed are comparable, irrespective of language family membership.

2.4 Names as the mirror of community culture

According to Olenyo (2011), Lulogoodi names of Kenya come from manmade and natural phenomena like famine, seasons, war, poverty, social activities, and political activities. This portrays a view that African names are tied to issues that prevail before and after the birth of a child. Chokoe (1992) says that names are crucial in educating the next generation about the history of a certain group of people in a specific location. Moreover, Mandende (2009:1) indicates that personal names among Africans serve as a communication tool and storehouse for the culture and history of the society. Culture refers to the customs, beliefs, art, music, and all other products of human thought made by a particular group of people, at a particular time, within a particular geographical space (Mohale, 2014:1). Ngade (2011) adds that personal names and naming culture confer identities that are crucial to maintain power and resilience against the foraying of culturally inherited values in Bakossiland.

Lombard's (2008) study notes that Niitsitapi personal names in southern Canada play an important role in capturing and conveying different aspects of traditional Niitsitapi sociocultural knowledge. This study concurred with the notion that names contain and communicate the sociocultural meanings held by a society that they come from.

Jayaraman (2005) asserts that the meaning attached to a name plays a significant role in the definition of human self, since it is believed that a given name does not only

serve as a social identity, but also influences several aspects of human living. Olatunji, Issah, Noah, Muhammed, and Sulaiman (2015) indicate that in the African context, a name is not taken with levity since a huge socio-cultural importance is attached to it. Therefore, a name serves as a socio-cultural expression and elucidation of self-concept (Yusuf, Olatunji and Issah, 2014). Mandende (2009) emphasises that the naming process in African society is to pass a message or information from the name-giver to the entire family and the community at large.

Zungu and Zulu (2018) opine that naming plays an important role in any human society, it portrays the cultural values and traditions of a particular society. Zungu and Zulu (2018) further state that African people look at their state of affairs before they name their children. Thus, African personal names reflect social behaviour patterns of family members and the community at large.

Khumalo (2005) confirms that African names are meaningful and tell specific stories relating to the circumstances surrounding the conception and birth of a child. Zungu (2016: 93) further asserts that names are helpful tools of making the family and community know about the concerns and disappointments they may feel because of what the family members have done. Nevertheless, AmaZulu prefer Euro-Western personal names over IsiZulu names because Euro-Western personal names seem or sound modern, unlike IsiZulu names which are viewed as primitive (Zungu and Zulu, 2018).

Machaba (2005) says that African people have found a way to make names from a foreign language work for them. This shows that Euro-Western names are welcomed and appreciated by most Africans, because it is believed that they portray the image of modern society. Moyo (1996) posits that in African societies, naming practices consistently echoed the significant rite of passage as a cultural practice, which was always synchronised with each society's ordinary citizens' socio-cultural and historical conditions. Moyo (1996) adds that colonialism in some parts of Africa like Malawi had a negative impact on the personal naming of Africans.

Obeng (2001) indicates that African cultures are pointers to their users' hopes, dreams, and aspirations; they may reflect their users' geographical environments, their fears, religious beliefs, and philosophy of life. Thus, through names, expectations and dreams are attached to the bearers of the name and in some cases, the environment of the bearer is reflected through a given name.

2.5 Naming and gender

Lihundi's (2018) study discovered that among the Pogolo people of Tanzania, there are names that portray the gender of a person. For example, the prefix *li-* stands for male names like *Likwawa* and the prefix *shi-* stands for female names, like in the name *Shitapaka*. This is also evidenced from the Luo of Kenya, as Obeng (1998) affirms that a child born along the road may be called *Ayo* if it is a girl and *Oyo* if it is a boy. From those names, it is clear that *a-* is a feminine prefix and *o-* is a masculine prefix. Thus, most African societies have personal names with prefixes that identify the gender of the name-bearer.

Neethling (2003) says that choosing personal names in African societies is a conscious decision, rather than a random processes. Mkhize and Muthuki (2019) explored how naming in polygynous families has a direct impact on the individual's gendered identity and how there has been a gender shift in the naming practices. Their study uncovers that personal names have a direct bearing on gendered identity.

In most cases, names are given to entail certain circumstances within society, and this is done by adding an onomastic meaning to the lexical meaning of a particular name (Ngubane, 2013). For example, a name such as *Mathata* meaning 'problems' and may imply that at the time the name was given, the family was going through hard times, e.g. death in the family and lack of financial freedom. Luseko's (2018) study found that Nyakusa names in southern Tanzania are mostly meaningful in relation to birth circumstances and association between the bestower of the name and supernatural powers. In addition, Muzale (1998), Ngubane (2013) and Luseke (2018) indicate that the opportunity to confer a personal name is used to commemorate important historical birth events, and to show faithfulness to spiritual powers.

Slepian and Galinsky (2016) discovered that most of the names with initial voiced phonemes are associated with males while the ones with unvoiced phonemes are associated with females. For example, the first phoneme in the name *Brian* [b] is voiced, unlike in names like *Sarah* [s] and *Fiona* [f]. Their findings suggest that the first phoneme of a name influences how masculine or feminine a name would be judged. On the other hand, Pilcher (2017) points out that names as proper nouns are important for the identification of individuals in everyday life. Most importantly, names are used for the categorisation of sex at birth and in the ongoing management of gender conduct

appropriate to sex category. Moreover, he indicates that forenames and surnames need to be recognised as doing words.

In most European cultures, names are basically gender specific (Leibring, 2016). For example, the name *John* refers to a male person and *Mary* to a female person. However, this is not the case among the Vashona people of Zimbabwe; in fact, their names are gender-free (Penzura, 2021). Similarly, Koopman's (2002:45) study discovered that within the Abaluhya of Uganda, a girl's name *Nafula* is differentiated from a boy's name *Wafula* even though both names mean 'born during a rainy season'. Thus, prefixes and suffixes in personal names can indicate the gender of an individual. Viriri's (2019) study revealed that gendered names have far reaching effects on the bearers of the names. Moreover, the study also posits that names are not given randomly but based on the gender of an individual among the people of Zezuru in Zimbabwe.

2.6 Decolonisation and Africanisation through personal naming

Mandende (2009) indicates that most African societies use personal names as a means of relaying the values, culture, and other traditions of the society as well as their daily experiences. Chabata (2012) comments that Zimbabwe defines itself through names like *Mudzimundiringe*, *Chinyamapere*, and *Gwindingwi*. Thus, through names of natural features like mountains and rivers as well as manmade features like schools, hospitals, and roads in Zimbabwe, one gets to know how Zimbabweans interact with the environment they exist in.

Nkamigbo (2019) notes that naming is linked with traditions, values, beliefs, and events in people's lives. Furthermore, Nkamigbo (2019) shows that personal names in Igbo reveal important insights into the patterns of social and cultural organisation of the Igbo society. This shows that the Igbo's personal names serve as a microscopic lens to observe, learn, and understand the way of living of the Igbo society. Nkamigbo (2019) states that names are no longer driven by the traditional Igbo philosophy but by religion, urbanisation, and western philosophy. Those who still bear names that are in line with the Igbo traditions are perceived as uncivilised members of society.

The political landscape and democratic state of most African countries like South Africa still reflect colonial patterns of naming. Chauke (2015) is of the view that politically inspired names are names that are related to the politics of the day in a country. These names may relate to political incidents or the activities of politicians. Moreover, the choice of a name is motivated by the work of a certain political leader in a country with an aim that their child will emulate the leader he or she is named after. Thus, political occurrences may give rise to personal names with an aim to record or mark the involvement of the community. For example, a child can be named *Strike* to mark the protest that once took place in a society. Thus, political names are, in essence, expressive of the rejection of colonial rule and its attendant practices.

In the postcolonial era, some African people, particularly the youth have come to the self-realisation that they were called by names that they do not agree with, recognise, or appreciate (Pina-Cabral, 2010). An Afrocentric vision of naming among African people will ensure that African names are valued and appreciated by the Africans, given that such names have age-long ideological rootedness in African culture and institutions (Mensah and Rowan, 2019). Mutunda (2011) argues that a name is like a document where one can read the history, culture, and heritage of the individual or the family in time and space. Chishiba (2016) adds that unlike in the western world, the Lamba do not name their children arbitrarily; instead, they choose names based on the cultural meaning they convey. This then makes culture central to understanding the meanings of Lamba names. Thus, African personal names are not just names, they are bestowed with a purpose.

Mphande (2006) asserts that through the naming system, African-Americans are reclaiming their complex African roots in the continuing process of redefining themselves and dismantling the paradigm that kept them mentally chained for centuries. Similarly, Ogunwale (2012) indicates that Yoruba personal names represent unwritten regulations for the individual members and society on a number of issues like caution, the essence of man, kinship, absolute hope and trust in God, the pregnant nature of future life. Nevertheless, Ogunwale (2012) also reveals that there are still Yoruba people who do not show interest in these kinds of personal names.

Mohale's (2014) study discovered that Khelobedu culture has changed substantially, as contact with other South African cultures has impacted Balobedu's perception of themselves and the world. In addition, she revealed that Christianity is one of the factors that drove the evolution of Khelobedu culture. Wanjiru and Matsubara's (2017) study focused on decolonisation through naming and renaming of streets in Nairobi. The study discovered that toponyms were used to reflect power and ideological dominance by British rule (1895-1963). After the gain of independence by Kenya, street names were used to reject the ideology of colonialism and to redefine the identity of the city through toponymic symbols.

Mabotja (2005) states that since the reign of democracy in South Africa, there have been changes in the country. Nevertheless, people are still labelled and called by offensive and derogatory names such as *kaffir*, or *lekgeretona*. According to Mabotja (2005), it is clear that even though South Africa is a democratic country, people are still not aware or well-informed about the origin, meanings, and significance of personal names. Mphela, Ramusi and Mphasha's (2021) study revealed that renaming has been on the agenda since the arrival of democracy in South Africa. Their study also discovered that the renaming of universities in South Africa aimed at unifying the nation and showing recognition of various natural, political, and socio-economic aspects that formed part of rebuilding South Africa after 1994.

2.7 Identity revealed through personal naming

Mutunda (2011) affirms that among the Lunda speaking people of Zambia, personal names are the cornerstone of one's identity. Moreover, Mutunda (2011) indicates that the circumstances and meanings in which the names are chosen to show that they are not just a linguistic phenomenon. On the contrary, they convey the social and cultural existence of the Lunda people. Lungu (2019) discovered that the Namwanga personal names of Zambia have semantic and pragmatic meaning that can only be known by the name giver or context in which they are given. Lungu (2019) further says that Namwanga personal names possess social and cultural significance. Windt-Val (2012) argues that language functions as a carrier of culture and identity. Through the words we choose when talking, we create the picture of ourselves that we want others to see about us. This indicates that personality consists of different aspects, which when added up constitute identity. The names that we get from birth build a certain identity about us.

Bramwell (2012) posits that personal name is a global practice, although there is a difference in the manner in which the naming process is carried out. He further indicates that a person's name identifies them together with the cultural background. This emphasises the notion that there is more in a name and everywhere one goes, the name will always be there to display their identity. Mashiri (2013) postulates that naming in African societies often reflects socio-cultural and ideological realities of these societies. Mandende (2009) says that African societies use personal names to convey cultural values and traditional experiences. In addition, Musonda's (2018) findings show that, among the Tumbuka people of Zambia, the first name of a child is

bestowed after the detachment of its umbilical cord. Musonda's (2018) findings also indicate that, among the Tumbuka people, the grandfather and great grandfather are the sole name givers, and the bestowal of the first names arises from various events or circumstances like a child's place, period, order and manner of birth, death, fertility, religion, marital disputes, and physical appearance of the new-born. Hang'ombe (2015) discovered that among the Tonga people of Zambia, fathers give given names to their children at one week of age while nicknames are either self-imposed or given by other community members. The foregoing scholars emphasise the idea that personal names are important, display socio-cultural significance and express certain various thoughts and messages.

2.8 Negative attitude towards indigenous personal names

The basic role of names has been to provide reference and differentiate people from others or to be recognised, they however, possess religious, cultural significance (Snodia, 2010). Names are thus a great repository of knowledge concerning the society from which they originate, and they also serve as a mirror for future generations. Thus, a careful consideration is needed in the bestowal of personal names so that they can go along with the culture and traditions of the society.

According to Mensah, Nyabiri and Nyong (2021), some Nigerian youths, especially in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River state, South-eastern Nigeria, prefer European and westernised names over indigenous African personal names. Moreover, their study revealed that young people adopt foreign personal names to challenge stereotyped ethnic identities and to contest existing traditional norms about personal naming. The study further indicates that this phenomenon tends to be driven by additional social, personal, and religious factors.

Names embed deep cultural insights that reflect their bearers' social lives, philosophy, religion, emotions, and worldview (Mensah, 2021). This study concurred with Mensah (2021) in that it also regarded personal names as carriers of societal aspects like culture, religion, emotions, and philosophy.

2.9 Theoretical framework

This study was underpinned by the Social Constructivist Theory. Vygotsky (1978) says that social constructivism purports that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and is not an individual experience. Through this theory, Vygotsky opines

that learning is influenced by social development and culture. The Social Constructivist Theory was relevant to this study because personal naming among the Balobedu involves an interaction of people in search of common experiences and practices that obligate society and the family as far as naming is concerned. Naming practices vary from one society to another, and this shows that people construct their own knowledge and share it among themselves. Mandende, Cekiso and Rwodzwi (2020) point out that names communicate a community's and family's intentions, aspirations, struggles, achievements, challenges, and progress, thereby conforming to the values of social constructivism.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented a review of literature in the field of onomastics, more specifically focusing on personal naming. The chapter revealed that most African names are not just words for labelling objects and human beings, but essential aspects that play a significant role in communicating and storing the information of a society for future generations. Hence, most personal names are given to honour those who existed before the current generation. In addition, the Social Constructivist Theory was discussed as a framework that reinforced this study. The next chapter elucidated the research methodology followed in the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter expounds the research methodology employed in this study. Cresswell (2013) postulates that methodology is a strategy or plan of action that links methods to outcomes. Methodology entails the research design, research approach, population, sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria, and ethical considerations, among other aspects.

3.2 Research Approach

The research approach refers to the procedure or plan that is used to conduct research. Williams (2007) states that the three common approaches to conducting research are quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. In addition, Dornyei (2007) proffers that the quantitative research method involves data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data, which are then analysed primarily by statistical methods. On the other hand, a qualitative research method involves data collection procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data, which are then analysed by non-statistical methods. The mixed method research basically involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

This study was conducted at Bolobedu, more specifically covering the village called Ga-Kuranta as a representative sample of the Balobedu tribe. The study considered this village for the analysis of personal naming among Balobedu in post-apartheid South Africa. The researcher employed a qualitative research approach in conducting this study, as the approach permits the research to use interviews for data collection. Vorster and Prozesky (2011) state that qualitative research is always used to try to understand human behaviour or portray a narrative from the viewpoint of the participants. The goal of a qualitative research approach then is to create explanations for social occurrences. It seeks to enhance our comprehension of the world we inhabit and the reasons behind why things are the way they are (Degu and Yigzaw, 2006).

3.3 Research Design

Research design is basically the overall plan to achieve research objectives, collect data to answer research questions, and procedures that the researcher intends to employ in data analysis (Adams, Khan, Raeside and White, 2007). Marshall and Rossman (2006:58) opine that one of the purposes of a research design is to indicate that the researcher is able to conduct empirical research. For this study, the researcher used a descriptive case study design. This type of case study is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurs (Yin, 2003). Its goal is to comprehend the complexity and distinctiveness of a given situation (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2005). Moreover, a case study offers illustrations of actual individuals and real challenges in real situations, allowing readers to comprehend concepts clearly than just giving them abstract theories or principles (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007).

A case study depends on historical and document analysis, interviewing and observation for data collection (Marshall and Rossman, 2006:164). Furthermore, a case study is an intensive investigation of a single unit and can differ as some focuses on individuals, families, communities, social groups, organisations, institutions, events, and countries (Vorster and Prozesky, 2011:640). Marshall and Rossman (2016:19) declare that case studies are commonly used by qualitative researchers as they explicitly focus on content and dynamic interactions.

The descriptive case study design was chosen because the study dealt with a single element, which was to provide understanding of personal naming among the nation of Balobedu in post-apartheid South Africa.

3.4 Population and sampling

3.4.1 Population

According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2007:55), a population is a group of potential participants that the researcher uses to transfer the results of a study. The population of this study comprised 3,500 speakers of the Xhosa of Ga-Kuranta Village. The village is located in Greater Letaba Local Municipality, Mopani District, in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The village has two schools, one primary school and one high school.

3.4.2 Sampling

According to Turner (2020), sampling is the selection of a subset of the population of interest in a research study. Furthermore, sampling yields a sample or sample size. Dornyei (2007:96) defines a sample as the group of participants that the researcher examines in an empirical investigation. This study employed purposive sampling. Etikan, Musa and Alkassim (2016) define purposive sampling as the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities that the participant possesses. Purposive sampling was chosen after consideration of the knowledge and experience of the participants of the study. Moreover, this manner of sampling was considered because it was convenient for the researcher as it saved time and money.

The researcher selected 26 participants, both male and female, from across the following structures: traditional leadership structures, civic structures, ward committee members, church structures, and school educators involved in the advancement of Khelobedu. The choice of this sample was determined by age and the fact that all participants were the residents of the Bolobedu (Ga-Kuranta), where the study took place.

3.5 Data Collection

Kabir (2016) defines data collection as the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. Furthermore, qualitative data are gathered primarily in the form of spoken or written language rather than in the form of numbers (Polkinghorne, 2005:137). This study used unstructured interviews to collect data. According to Mackey and Gass (2015:173), unstructured interviews are more similar to natural conversations and the outcomes are not limited by the researcher's preconceived ideas about the area of interest. In some way, an unstructured interview is like an everyday conversation because of its informal and free-flowing nature.

The chosen method of data collection was relevant to this study, because it allowed the participants to be flexible and feel relaxed to a point that they managed to reveal more than what they would have in a formal context. The method helped the researcher to understand the participants because it allowed a free flow of new ideas. The researcher also used a tape recorder as a tool for collecting data and writing down important points.

3.6 Data Analysis

Ashirwadani (2014) states that data analysis is a method of putting facts and figures to solve the research problem. This study employed thematic analysis in analysing the collected data. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data. It minimally organises and describes a data set in detail (Boyatzis, 1998). This is a technique for identifying, examining, categorising, and reporting themes using a data set (Nowell, Norris and White, 2017:230). Themes were created based on the collected data. The themes created served as the categories for data analysis. The researcher transcribed the recorded audio on paper so that it could be comprehensible and clear to get the main idea about it. The data were also checked and edited. The themes generated from the data were used to analyse and interpret the data and ultimately verified by going through the transcripts used to record the data.

3.7 Quality Criteria

3.7.1 Credibility

Credibility is the truth of the information or the inputs of participants and the interpretation and representation of them by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2012). To ensure credibility in this study, the researcher followed two techniques: prolonged engagement and persistent observation, as stated by Guba and Lincoln (1994). Moreover, the researcher understood and interpreted the collected data carefully and remained objective in order to deliver valued and accurate results of the study.

3.7.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree that the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts involving other participants (Bitsch, 2005). To ensure transferability, the researcher provided adequate data and linked these to the context of the study to enable readers to judge whether the findings of the study can be applied to other contexts or not.

3.7.3 Dependability

Bitsch (2005) explains dependability as the stability of findings over time. Dependability demands that the researcher thoroughly describes and precisely follows a clear and thoughtful research strategy. Tobin and Begley (2004) add that dependability involves participants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study. In this study, the researcher demonstrated dependability by consistently applying the selected method of data collection in order for the study to produce similar results, if the study is retraced.

3.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which results of research can be confirmed by other researchers (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). To ensure the confirmability of the study, the researcher presented findings that are a result of the experiences from participants and not the researcher's preferences.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

3.8.1 Informed Consent

Faden and Beauchamp (1986) define informed consent as the autonomous authorisation by a patient or subject. Informed consent is an ethical method of making the subject of the research clear to respondents and how their participation in the research will affect them so that consent may be voluntary without any kind of pressure (Kumar, 2011). Before the commencement of the interview, the researcher disseminated consent forms and requested approval from the participants. In addition, handing out consent forms helped respondents to understand what was required from them during their participation in the study.

3.8.2 Privacy and confidentiality

According to Summers (2018), privacy refers to a person's desire to control the access of others to themselves. Furthermore, confidentiality refers to the freedom of individuals to disclose and withhold any information they consider unfit to the public space (Talerico, 2012). In protecting participants' privacy and confidentiality, the researcher recorded information about participants in a way that did not reveal or lead to the invasion of their personal information. Moreover, the information provided by participants was not used for any purpose except for this study. Participants were allowed to withdraw from participating in the process of collecting data whenever they felt uncomfortable.

3.8.3 Risk and harm

Risk in research refers to the possibility and magnitude of discomfort or harm predictable in research (Fleming and Zegwaard, 2018). In addition, harm means an injury to the rights, safety or welfare of a research participant that may include physical, psychological, social, financial, or economic factors (Shaw and Barrett, 2006). It is the responsibility of the researcher to avoid, prevent, or minimise harm to others. In this study, the researcher ensured that all the participants were not exposed to any harm or environmental conditions that might have put their health at risk. Lastly, the researcher applied for ethical clearance from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) at the University of Limpopo.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter explained the overall research methodology and the design employed in this study. It served as the navigator of this study as it showed how the study unfolded up until it achieved its objectives. The chapter specifically expounded the research approach, research design, population and sampling, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria, significance of the study and ethical consideration. The following chapter focused on data presentation, analysis, and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data. It starts by presenting the demographic information of the participants of this study. Demographic information encapsulates the background of the participants. The chapter also presents the collected data and analyses them through thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006:2) state that thematic analysis is advocated as a useful, theoretically flexible, and accessible method for the collection and analysis of qualitative data.

4.2 Codes representing the participants

The researcher used the following table to present, analyse and interpret the information provided by participants.

Participants and codes	Gender	Age	Ethnicity
TL1: Traditional leader	Male	57	African
TL2: Traditional leader	Female	68	African
TL3: Traditional leader	Male	70	African
TL4: Traditional leader	Female	58	African
TL5: Traditional leader	Male	49	African
CM1: Civic Member	Female	46	African
CM2: Civic Member	Male	54	African
CM3: Civic Member	Female	38	African
CM4: Civic Member	Male	49	African

CM5: Member	Civic	Male	54	African
CM6: Member	Civic	Female	50	African
WCM1: Committee Member	Ward	Female	47	African
WCM2: Committee Member	Ward	Male	38	African
WCM3: Committee member	Ward	Female	58	African
CMB1: Member	Church	Male	65	African
CMB2: member	Church	Female	57	African
CMB3: Member	Church	Male	72	African
CMB4: Member	Church	Female	62	African
SE1: educator	School	Female	52	African
SE2: educator	School	Male	49	African
SE3: educator	school	Female	53	African
SE4: educator	School	Female	55	African
SE5: educator	School	Male	51	African
SE6: educator	School	Female	49	African

4.3 Theme 1: The nature of personal naming within the tribe of Balobedu

Most of the participants possessed notable knowledge of personal names of the Balobedu tribe. The analysed data revealed that personal naming in Bolobedu is not an accidental event, but a process guided by the history of a family, society, and current affairs of the society such as death, marriage celebration, starvation and coronation of queen or induna.

TL1 asserted:

Among the Balobedu tribe, events and circumstances surrounding the child's birth affect the choice of name for the child, some of those events or circumstances includes order of birth, fertility, marriage, marital disputes, religion, unity, bad occurrences, social caution, death, and happiness. In addition, some of the names are given to a child to remember previous occurrences such as the death of one of the family members like grandparents, siblings, parents, or a public figure in the community.

TL2 remarked:

We as the tribe of Balobedu, we understand very well that we are deeply connected to the mother nature, and it is important to record the circumstances that prevail around us. Personal naming is one of the tools that we use to record the information concerning our surrounding.

TL3 indicated:

Our roots guide us to consider naming our children based on the circumstances or events around the birth of the child. However, it is a challenge to achieve that recently because modern parents hold a belief that some of the names given to their children are primitive and they suggest that English names should be given first preference because they sound well or show development.

African names are not extremely literal or semantic in content but embody a wide range of particularities that need to be broadly contextualised and understood from social, religious, cultural, and pragmatic perspectives (Mensah, 2015). From the above responses, the researcher observed that the nature of personal naming of Balobedu is guided by the circumstances taking place around the birth of a child. Furthermore, Balobedu believe that in naming children this way, their history, value, traditions, and customs will be preserved for the upcoming generations. Nevertheless, there is another group of participants who mentioned that giving their children Khelobedu names is an indication of inferiority, resulting in English names given preference over Khelobedu names.

4.4 Theme 2: Personal naming that takes place at birth within the land of Balobedu

A birth moment is one of the remarkable moments among Balobedu. This moment is characterised by personal naming that follows upon the arrival of a child on earth. Participants opened up and showed their knowledge of personal names that are given to a child guided by prevailing situations or circumstances around the birth of a child.

CM1 highlighted:

There is a time frame for waiting before bestowing a name, that time is known as o gola ga ndho which means that the umbilical cord is still in the process of closing, and the mother is also recovering from the process of birth.

CM2 concurred:

A child may be given a temporal name which is well known as leina la boyana, mostly the name may arise from the appearance of the child or the character of the mother. If the child is a female figure, she may receive a name like Mmamokhubedu (white in skin colour) and if is a male figure he may receive a name like Khosi (King).

TL4 affirmed:

During the time of birth, there are so many occurrences around the parents of the child and the family at large. Some of those occurrences may be death, release of one of the family members from prison and hospitalisation of someone related to the child. A name is given taking into consideration of those events that will serve as a reminder to the family and the community at large about the occurrences, such name will not die or be forgotten easily.

CM3 agreed with the above information that Balobedu consider the above-mentioned events in their naming system:

'Ngwana o phela o ya le ka motho yo a mo theeletšego' meaning that a child lives according to the footsteps of the person she or he is named after. It is important to take note of the characters of the people that children are named after.

4.4.1 Subtheme: Examples of names that arise from personal naming that takes place at birth within the homeland of Bolobedu:

CM1, CM2, CM3, TL3 and WCM1: provided the following examples of personal names that arise from personal naming during birth among Balobedu:

a) Mahloko (sadness)

The name is mostly given to a female child who is born after the funeral of a family member.

b) Mathata (problems)

The name is given to a male child who is born after the event of funeral or passing of a family member. On the other side, it may imply that the mother of the child has gone through difficulties before birth.

e) Dikeledi (Tears)

The name shows that he or she was born at the time when one of the family members was passing to another world of life. The name is normally bestowed to a girl child.

f) Sello (cry)

This name is given to a boy or girl child who was born after a funeral in the family.

g) Kedibone (went through difficulties)

This name is given to a child whose mother has been through a difficult situation like financial constraints or health-related issues before birth. Normally, the name is given to a girl child.

h) Phomelelo (succeeding)

This name is basically given to a child after the father or one of the family members is released from prison. Sometimes, it was given if the birth of a child was characterised by unpleasant events.

i) Dimakatjo (surprise)

The mother of the child might have been unaware of her pregnancy until birth or after one of the family members achieved a remarkable sign. The names serve as a reminder of events in the family.

j) Marothi (drops)

This name is normally given to a boy child who came after a long time of having another child, especially a male one. The name is given to a child with a belief that the following child will not take time to come.

k) Mahlatse (Blessing)

The name shows that a child may be lucky to be alive taking into consideration the manner of his birth. Moreover, the name also indicates that a child's birth is a blessing because it has brought happiness or unity within the family. Lastly, this name may be given to both male and female children.

l) Mpho (Gift)

The child is given this name because he or she is seen as a gift from God and because it might have taken the parents some time to have a child.

m) Karabo (answer)

When a child is born after many years of marriage, its name may indicate that God has heard the prayers of the parents. The name *Karabo* may thus indicate that the parents have waited for a long time for the child. This name originates from the verb *araba* (answer). In other words, the name expresses gratitude to the Almighty God for blessing the parents with a child after a long time of not having a child.

n) Matswenyego (suffering)

According to the participants, the name *Matswenyego* is given to a child, if a child is born into a family that is living under difficult conditions such as experiencing a lack of money or unemployment. The name is associated with suffering and agony and is assigned to remember the trying times in which the child was born while also constantly reminding them to work harder. The name may also be given to a child who has been born to a single parent since it means that the child has come to face a world of suffering.

The provided information shows that immediately after birth, a child is given a temporary name and after the process of 'o gola a ga ntlo' (the falling off of umbilical cord) a permanent personal name follows. Moreover, the given examples of personal names given to children upon their birth indicate that the personal naming of Balobedu has a specific meaning. In most cases, they are attached to the good or bad situations that the mother, father or certain family members went through before or after the birth of the child.

4.5 Theme 3: Effects of Christianity on personal naming of Balobedu

Personal naming among Balobedu has been affected by numerous aspects of the society. The presented data affirm that Christianity has been prevailing among the people of Bolobedu and its prevalence has negatively affected the personal naming of Balobedu.

CMB1 highlighted:

Christianity is one of the religions that are widely spread within the tribe of Balobedu, its spread began even before the birth of democracy in Bolobedu, and the rise of Christianity has affected most of the aspects of the society like personal naming. The Christian personal names seem to be given more preference than African indigenous names and this promotes superiority of Christianity in our societies and along the way of doing that, African traditions in terms of personal naming gets to be lost.

SE1 elaborated:

During the apartheid era, at school, we had religious studies, wherein we were taught about God and Christianity at large. Along the journey of those lessons, we were also given biblical names which were easily comprehensible to whites' masters" for example females were given names like some Martha, Sarah, Rebecca, and Maria, while males were given names like Samuel, Paul, Mathew, and Joseph.

CMB3 agreed:

Some are given Christian personal names because their parents were in the religion of Christianity. Moreover, we consult with our church prophets before we can give our children names, this is why most of our children end up carrying Christian or biblical names. Adoption of Western culture has engulfed most of the critical aspects of African societies and the public seems to be ignorant and do not care about the repercussions of giving a child a name that does not resemble his or her roots.

CMB2 added:

The personal naming of Balobedu still resembles the religion of Christianity, the names given to children seems are guided by the Holy Bible and the Hymn book which is well known as Difela tša Sione. Moreover, the names are gender specific. The young ones are given the names with a hope that they will be good people like the ones in the Bible and follow the religion of Christianity.

SE2 supported:

During our school days, we had the so-called religious studies which focused much on the religion of Christianity. This made us to believe that Christianity is the only pure religion that one must follow. As a result, we abandoned African religion and ways of doing things, more specifically the personal naming is no longer resembling the African traditions completely due to aspects of this nature.

SE3 concurred with the above:

Some of the Biblical names given to the young ones are transliterated because some of the name givers realised that they are losing their culture in adopting Biblical names which are basically in English. For example, Moses (Moshe) and Rachel (Rahele).

4.5.1 Subtheme: Examples of Christian names

CMB1, CMB2, CM3, SE1, SE2 and SE3: provided the following examples of personal names that arose from the effects of Christianity on personal naming of the Balobedu:

Females

- a) *Marita (Martha)*
- b) *Rabeka (Rebecca)*
- c) *Sinthia (Cynthia)*
- d) *Khutšo (Peace)*

Males

- a) *Moshe (Moses)*
- b) *Tafita (David)*
- c) *Samuele (Samuel)*
- d) *Josefa (Joseph)*
- e) *Filipi (Philip)*
- f) *Simone (Simon)*
- g) *Sakaria (Zacharia)*
- h) *Khutšo (Peace)*

Looking at the above examples of Christian names, some names are gender specific while some are genderless. For example, the name *MmaKgotso (Mother of Compassion)* applies to females only while *Khanya (Brightness)* applies to males only. The name *Khutšo (Peace)* applies to both genders. This implies that the issue of gender is very crucial when it comes to personal naming that is guided by Christian principles.

4.6 Theme 4: Personal naming that takes place during marriage ceremony

Marriage is a formal union of a man and a woman, typically as recognised by law, by which they become husband and wife. In most African cultures, there are names that are given to women when they get married (Mphela, 2010). Participants were of the view that marriage is still a societal aspect that gives rise to certain personal names that contain specific meanings.

TL5 indicated:

Women are given certain names during the celebration of their marriage in Bolobedu. The naming proceedings are basically led by the elderly related to the bride; this takes place before she could receive an inherited name from groom's home. One of the remarkable features of this naming process is that it indicates the kind of family they get married into.

CM4 added:

Names of this nature are often referred to as Maina a bo ngwetji, meaning bridal names, they are only given to newly married women.

TL4 said:

In most cases, the first born of the woman from the marriage is likely to carry the name related to the one that the mother got during marriage ceremony. For example, if the wife got a name like MmaNgwako, the first boy child that comes from the marriage is likely to be named Ngwako.

4.6.1 Subtheme: Examples of the names that are basically given to newly married women and their first-born

TL4, TL5, and CM4: provided the following examples and meanings as part of personal names that are given to newly married women and their first-born.

a) *MmaMoyahabo*

Morphologically, *MmaMoyahabo* is a compound name which consists of three categories of words:

Noun + Verb + Pronoun

Mma (Mother) + *ya* (go) + *habo* (home)

The name *MmaMoyahabo* originates from the word *moyahabo*, meaning one who goes home. The prefix *mma-* attached to the name signifies the female person who carries the name. This kind of name is given to a woman who is marrying into the family where one of her family members is or was married to. This is applicable in cases where the child of an aunt or uncle marries a child of his or her uncle or aunt to strengthen the relation between the two families.

b) *MmaModhatjo*

MmaModhatjo is a compound name, which is formed from the following categories:

Noun + Noun

Mma + Modhatjo

MmaModhatjo is derived from *dhatja*, meaning to add in Xhobedu. The name is given to a bride who is being married to a family that has many daughters-in-law. Therefore, she is there to add the number of daughters-in-law. In addition, the first female child that will be born from the marriage is likely to be named *Modhatjo*.

c) *MmaMaropene*

MmaMaropene is also a compound name, which consists of the following categories:

Noun + Locative

Mma (Mother) + *Maropene* (abandoned)

In the context of the name *MmaMaropene*, *Marope* may be defined as the abandoned and destroyed place. Xhobedu hold a belief that, if a family does not have a mother, such a family is incomplete, and it is viewed as a destroyed or ruined family. Thus, there must be someone to save the family from falling into total destruction. Basically, the name *MmaMaropene* is given to a woman who is marrying into a family in which the wife of the husband has passed away. As a result, the new wife of the husband becomes a stepmother to his children and takes care of them. The family will escalate and become a better family where children will grow up under the care of the mother and be taught most of the important ways of life like respect.

d) *MmaMolatelo*

MmaMolatelo is also a compound noun, which is formed by the following categories:

Noun + verb

Mma (Mother) + *latela* (follow)

The name *Molatelo* is derived from the verb *latela*, which means to follow. *MmaMolatelo* is bestowed to a bride who gets married to a family where one of her members is or was married to. Xhobedu believe that this was one of the ways of intensifying the relation between two families.

e) *Mmamoloko*

The name *Mmamoloko* is a compound noun formed from the following categories:

Noun + Noun

Mma (Mother) + *Moloko* (relative)

The name is basically given to a woman who is getting married to a relative or cousin. In most cases, this happens because the marriage is organised by the two families with an aim to strengthen their relation and keeping their blood within their circle.

f) *MmaMohale*

According to the participants, *MmaMohale* is a common marriage name within Balobedu given to newly married women. The first-born child is expected to be named *Mohale*.

g) *MmaPhetola*

The name *MmaPhetola* is a compound noun, which is given to a newly married woman. The first born of the woman in the marriage is expected to be named '*Phetole*' which means 'Reply' in English.

h) *MmaMohladheo*

MmaMohladheo is also a compound noun, which is given to a newly married woman. Her first-born son in marriage is expected to be named '*Mohladheo*'.

The above information and examples from the participants show that Balobedu perform marriage ceremonies where women get marriage names as newlyweds. This remarkable moment of life gives rise to personal names that reflect the society they originate from and most of them are compound names. The names given have a prefix *mm-* to indicate that the name is bestowed to a woman and the kind of a name that a woman gets is likely to affect the nature of her first born in the marriage.

4.7 Theme 5: Personal naming that takes place to express sadness

Moments of sadness or unforeseen circumstances are also considered in the bestowal of personal names. Participants were open to the researcher and provided the information freely.

WCM1 said:

That life on its own is a journey, and along the journey there are moments of sadness and happiness. The people of Balobedu mark these moments of life through personal naming.

Responding to the same question, **WCM3** indicated that:

Yes, no one like to be sad. However, the people of Balobedu accept the moment of sadness and take it as opportunity to develop personal names that reflect the norms and customs of Balobedu.

WCM2 added that:

Moments of sadness include the loss of a family member, or one being involved in unpleasant situations like being involved in a car accident or being jailed. Personal names like Mathata (problems) and Dikeledi (Tears) are likely to be given to children who are born during this period of life.

In accord, **CM5** attested that:

It is very much important to take into consideration the kind of names we give our children because they tend to live according to their names. For example, if a child is named Mathata (problems) that child is likely to be followed by numerous problems in life.

CMB2 contradicted **CM5** as he highlighted that:

Yes, some of the personal names are a result of the sad moments of life. However, they do not mean that their bearers will automatically live within the literal meaning of that personal name.

4.7.1 Subtheme: Examples and meanings of the names that express sadness within the homeland of Balobedu.

CM5, WCM1, WCM2, and WCM3 provided the following examples of personal names and their meanings in an effort to show how they express sadness:

a) *Mmadhala*

Mmadhala is a compound name, which is by the following categories:

Noun + Noun

Mma (Mother) + *dhala* (Hunger/poverty)

The name *Mmadhala* originates from the noun *dhala* in Xhosa, which means hunger or poverty. The name is given to a child to show that the child was born in times when there was lack of proper food to eat in the family. The name is usually given to female children. However, these days, it is also prevalent among male children.

b) *Mmalefo*

Mmalefo is also a compound name, which is formed by the following categories:

Noun + Noun

Mma (Mother) + *lefo* (death)

Mmalefo originates from the noun *lefo* (Xhosa), which means death in English. It shows that the child was born during the death or funeral of one of the family members. Thus, the child's name will remain a mark for the departure of one of the family members.

c) *Mathata*

The name *Mathata* means hardship or troubles in English. It is given to a child after his or her parents have gone through difficulties before her or his arrival. In addition, it may imply that during pregnancy, the mother was always in quarrels with the father of the child. As a result, the child is given the name *Mathata* to display all movements of misery that the mother or both parents went through.

d) *Dikeledi*

Dikeledi implies tears in English. It is basically given to a female child who was born during the funeral or mourning the death of one of the family members. This name is more or less similar to the name *Mmalefo*. Most importantly, they are both given to females.

e) *Mphapantšhi*

In this case, the child is given this name because she was born during the death of one of the family members. It implies that the child and the deceased have gone their separate ways, the other one went to the world of the dead while the other one came to planet earth.

f) *Madimabe*

The name *Madimabe* implies misfortune. The child receives this name if he or she was born when the family was going through misfortunes or unpleasant events like a funeral.

g) *Sello*

Sello is also a name which means to cry. The name is applicable to both males and females, and it is basically assigned to children to mark the event of sadness like funeral. This name is more or less like the name *Dikeledi*.

h) *Masale*

This is the name given to a child who was born after the death of her grandparents. The name *Masale* can be given to both girls and boys.

i) *Mahlomola*

The name *Mahlomola* is also given to both girls and boys who were born during or after the funeral in a family.

Moments of sadness are considered in the personal naming process in Bolobedu. Furthermore, it is important to scrutinise the personal names that children are given because they tend to live according to the meaning of the name. However, some participants were of the view that it is not always the case that children will live according to the literal meaning of a given name. Therefore, the main idea of these names is to mark events that the family or a family member went through along the journey of life. Lastly, the attachment of the prefix *mm-* in most of the names indicates that the bearer of the name is a woman.

4.8 Theme 6: Personal naming that goes along with expression of happiness.

Life on its own has both sad and happy moments. The moment of happiness does not pass by without being noticed among Balobedu; hence, it is marked by personal names that express happiness in the lives of Balobedu. In this regard,

CM5 highlighted:

Most of the names that display happiness are given to boys. For example, the name Lekhumo (wealth) and Lefa/Mojalefa (legacy or inheritance).

In support of **CM5**, **TL2** asserted:

Males are prioritised over females because we believe that boys are the ones who will continue to develop the clan's name and they do not change clan names in their journey of life.

CM6 indicated that:

Basically, boys are the ones who remain at home and look after the legacy of the parents, in most cases those young ones are referred to as 'Mosalalapeni' meaning that the one who remains at home while others go out to form their homesteads.

WCM3 added:

After marriage, parents are expected to broaden the family through giving birth. When it brings happiness to the family whenever life is added. The names that indicate how the families manifest their happiness upon the birth of a child include Remofilwe (we are given), Lethabo (Happiness) and Tshegofatšo (Blessing). Family is considered a complete family with children because they are the ones who will take further the surname of the family.

Balobedu hold a perspective that there must be a child who remains with the parents whenever others are moving out to form their own homesteads. Moreover, they lean on the notion that a boy child is the one who expands the surname of the family because whenever he marries, he does not change the surname. In a case where the family has boys only, the lastborn remains at home and looks after the legacy of their parents. Furthermore, newly married couples are expected to multiply the family through having children in their marriage.

4.8.1 Subtheme: Examples and meanings of personal names that express happiness within the homeland of Balobedu.

WCM3, CM6 and **CM5** provided the following examples and meanings as part of personal names that are bestowed to express happiness:

- a) *Lefa* (Legacy or Inheritance)
- b) *Lekhumo* (Wealth)
- c) *Lethabo* (Joy)
- d) *Remofilwe* (Given)
- e) *Refilwe* (Given)
- f) *Tshegofatso* (Blessing)
- g) *Reneilwe* (Given)
- h) *Rethabile* (Happiness)
- i) *Mahlogonolo* (Luck)
- j) *Tumiso* (Praise)
- k) *Lesego* (Fortunate)

4.9 Theme 7: Personal names given based on weather condition

Balobedu note that Mother Nature plays an important role in their daily lives. Hence, weather conditions are considered when giving personal names to children:

SE4 postulated:

The people of Balobedu are basically connected to the mother nature in various aspects of life. Weather conditions is one of aspects that are considered giving a new-born baby a personal name.

SE5 concurred:

*The people of Balobedu take the prevailing weather conditions seriously to an extent that they end up naming their children according to some of the weather conditions. Some of those names include *Mapula* (Mother of rain), *Modhalepula* (one who came with rain) and *Medupi* (soft rain that takes time to cease).*

CMB4 affirmed:

The personal names that are related to the prevailing weather conditions help to record the weather conditions or weather patterns of our nation. The record of the weather patterns of the nation helps in planning our agricultural activities accordingly because our society depends heavily on agriculture for survival. Personal names like Modjadji or Mmadjadji (mother of the sun) are given to children who are born during the period of hot temperatures.

Balobedu consider weather conditions whenever they assign personal names, meaning that their personal naming reflects the weather patterns that the society went through. Therefore, the prevailing weather conditions have an effect in the choice of personal names given to their children.

4.9.1 Subtheme: Examples and meanings of personal names that are given based on weather conditions within the homeland of Balobedu

CMB4, **SE5** and **SE4** provided the following examples and meanings as part of personal names that are bestowed according to the prevailing weather conditions.

a) Mmadjadji

The name 'Mmadjadji' is a situational name that is very common in the Balobedu tribe. Balobedu is situated in the Far East, where people experience very hot days during summer. Most of the girls born during summer are named 'Mmadjadji'. The noun 'mma' means 'mother', 'djatdji' comes from 'letšatši' meaning 'sun'. If the child is a male, he will be given the name 'Raletšatši', which also signifies that the person was born during a sunny day.

b) Mapula (Mother of rain)

The name *Mapula* is basically given to a girl child who was born during a rainy day.

c) Medupi (soft rain that takes time to cease)

The name Medupi is also a climatic condition name, which implies that the bearer of the name was born during the rain that took time to stop.

d) *Motlalepula (one who came with rain)*

This is also a personal name that is based on the weather condition around the birth of a child in a family. The name is usually given to a child whose birth is accompanied by rainfall.

e) *Maphefo (mother of coldness)*

The name *Maphefo* is a personal name given based on the prevailing weather condition. The name is given to a girl child who was born during a cold season like winter.

4.10 Theme 8: Nicknames based on a person' lifestyle in Bolobedu

Character, lifestyle, and physical appearance remain the main contributors towards the nicknames given to individuals in Bolobedu. A nickname is a person's additional name to the real name (Nziyane, 2004).

SE5 elucidated:

There are nicknames that we as teachers we are aware of, and they are those that we are not aware of. Most of the nicknames that we are not aware of are those that are very funny and mocking.

SE6 supported:

*In most cases, we get these nicknames based on our conscious and unconscious conduct that we resemble before the learners. The lessons we present before the learners have an effect also. For example, the principal in our school is given a nickname *Kheyadi (strict)* because she is very strict when it comes to schoolwork.*

SE3 said:

*Nicknames are also prevalent among learners in our school and most of them are used to tease or mock other learners. Some of those include: *Lezeze (flea)*, *Mmataseleng (mother of the road)*, *Majino (unusual dental arrangement)*, *Lekhowa (light skinned)*, and *Mokhufi (short one)* *Mmantwa (one is always in fight)*. Most of the nicknames result into bullying in our schools and because of pressure from peers, some learners end up taking their lives.*

TL1 said:

As long as we are still living and making moves, we will develop nicknames that we know or do not know. Most of the nicknames that we do not know are used in our absentia.

4.10.1 Subtheme: Examples and meanings of nicknames that are given by Balobedu.

SE5, SE6, SE3 and TL1 provided the following examples and meanings as part of nicknames that are bestowed among Balobedu.

a) *Kheyadi* (Strict)

According to the participants, the nickname *Kheyadi* is given to someone who is very strict, especially when it comes to following the proper procedure of doing the work assigned.

b) *Majino* (unusual dental arrangement)

The nickname *Majino* comes from the unusual dental arrangement of the name bearer. The name is given to mock the person given the name because of his or her dental arrangement.

c) *Lekhowa* (light skinned)

The name *Lekhowa* is given to someone who has a light skin colour. The name is also given to mock the bearer about his or her skin colour.

d) *Mokhufi*

It is basically given to a person who is short to mock the height of the person.

e) *Mmantwa*

The participants mentioned that the name *Mmantwa* is an example of a character's name. They said that the name is also given to a female who has a fighting character. The name *Mmantwa* comes from the noun *ntwa*, which means to fight. The respondents also reveal that most of the people given the name *Mmantwa* used to separate themselves from other people.

f) *Hlogokgolo*

The participants indicated that while growing, a person acquires that nickname. They dwelt much on nicknames that are based on the physical character of a human being. They gave an example of *Hlogokgolo*, so called because of his or her big head. They also stressed that most people feel offended when they are called by nicknames.

g) *Mathaithai (Troublesome)*

The person is named *Mathaithai* because of his or her troublesome behaviour.

h) *Mponeng (Show-off)*

The individual is given the name Mponeng because he or she shows off.

i) *Ditsebe*

The name *Ditsebe*, meaning big ears, is also a nickname, which is based on the physical character of a human being. In fact, *Ditsebe* is not a real name, a child acquires this nickname as they are growing. The participants also revealed that most of the nicknames usually become more popular than real names. Nevertheless, the nicknames in most cases disappear as the bearer enters adulthood. The peer group of the name bearer is the one that makes the nickname popular.

j) *Raihlwana (one eye)*

The participants stated that a child may be given the nickname, *Raihlwana*, which means one eye. The name is given to a person because of having one eye. In most cases, the nickname *Raihlwana* is suitable for males.

Nicknames are prevalent among Balobedu and do not have age restriction. They are basically based on the lifestyle or conduct of a person in the society. Most of these nicknames are used to mock others. As a result, some learners use the nicknames to bully their fellow learners, and some end up taking their own lives because of bullying. Therefore, mocking nicknames may negatively affect other people, especially the ones with a low self-esteem.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter presented, analysed, and interpreted the data collected from the participants. This was done through the categorisation of gathered data into various themes. The researcher also identified that Balobedu consider various aspects of nature, lifestyle, and physical appearance of a person when naming people. The following chapter provides the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented, analysed, and interpreted the data of this study. This chapter provides a summary of the study together with the findings of the study. Recommendations for future research are provided as well.

5.2 Restatement of the aim and objectives of the study

5.2.1 Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to provide an understanding of the importance of personal naming among the Balobedu nation in post-apartheid South Africa.

5.2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- Establish criteria for personal naming in the Bolobedu nation.

This objective was achieved in 4.3 and 4.4, which dealt with the societal events that are considered in the bestowal of personal names in Bolobedu.

- Investigate the nature of personal naming.

This objective was achieved in 4.3, which focused on the circumstances such as the birth of a child as influential factors in the personal naming of Balobedu.

- Identify the impact of gender on personal naming.

This objective was achieved in 4.5 and 4.6, which identified names that are gender specific and genderless ones. The attachment of the prefix *mma-* to most of the personal names showed that those names are specifically given to women.

- Examine the meaning of Balobedu's personal names.

This objective was achieved at 4.4, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8, which focused on personal names that reflect the sad moments of life such as death and happy moments such as marriage celebration and the birth of a child in a family.

5.3 Summary of the study

In chapter one, the study commenced by unpacking the background and the motivation of the study focusing on the historical background of Balobedu, outlining the personal naming of Balobedu and how they go along with the cultural practices of Balobedu. The statement of the problem was expressed, purpose, aim and objectives of the study were highlighted.

Chapter two provided the review of literature on personal naming of Balobedu and other studies that focused on personal naming. This chapter concluded with the theoretical framework of the study.

In chapter three, the research methodology that underpinned this study was presented. The study used interviews as a method of data collection. The study employed a qualitative research approach and a descriptive case study design. Purposive sampling was used to sample Khelobedu speakers from the population of Balobedu.

On data analysis, the gathered data were presented and analysed based on various themes. Credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were discussed as the key aspects of quality criteria because this study aimed to harvest reliable and valuable findings. Ethical considerations were discussed.

Chapter four presented, analysed, and interpreted the data. The data were presented in codes, analysed according to created themes of the data with an aim of addressing the main aim of the study and achieving the objectives of the study. Each theme was concluded by an interpretation of the presented and analysed data.

Chapter five presented the summary of the study, findings of the study, recommendations, and conclusions. The findings were guided by the data presented, analysed, and interpreted data from chapter four.

5.4 Findings

- The findings of this study reveal that the personal naming among Balobedu is not an accidental event, but a process that is guided by the history of a family, society, and affairs of the society such as death, marriage celebration, starvation and coronation of queen or *induna*. Nkamigbo (2019) concurs with

this discovery as she notes that naming is linked with traditions, values, beliefs, and events in people's lives.

- The study discovered that the personal naming of Balobedu has a specific meaning. They are attached to the good or bad situations that the mother, father or a particular family members went through before or after the birth of the child. In addition, the bestowal of a personal name to a child happens after the detachment of the umbilical cord. Concurrently, Khumalo (2005) confirms that African names are meaningful and tell specific stories relating to the circumstances surrounding the conception and birth of a child. Similarly, Chipalo (2019) discovered that personal names among the Gogo people from Dodoma region in Tanzania originate from lineage, seasons, socio-economic activities, calamities surroundings, birth circumstances and celebrities.
- Personal naming among Balobedu is still affected by Christianity and most the personal names given to children are Christian names. This is because most of the parents are Christians.
- The findings of this study also show that marriage names are still prevalent in Bolobedu and are meaningful. Most marriage names are compound personal names, for example:

MmaMolatela

Noun + verb

Mma (Mother) + *latela* (follow)

In addition, the data of this study reveal that, *MmaMolatelo* is bestowed to a bride who gets married to a family where one of her family members is or was married to. In the same breath, Mashiri (2013) emphasises that naming in African societies often reflects socio-cultural and ideological realities of these societies.

- The findings of this study reveal that the moment of sadness is marked by personal names that are bestowed to children.
- The study revealed that in Bolobedu, the moment of happiness does not pass by without being noticed; it is marked by personal names that represent happiness in their lives.

- Findings reveal that, prevailing weather conditions have an effect in the choice of personal names given to children of Balobedu. Moreover, those personal names are used as tools to mark the weather patterns that the society went through.
- The presented data uncover that nicknames are prevalent among Balobedu and do not have age restrictions. Most of these names are given based on the lifestyle or physical appearance of the person given the name. On the other hand, some learners use those nicknames to bully their fellow learners, and some of the bullied learners end up taking their own lives because of bullying.

5.5 Recommendations

In the light of the above findings, the researcher recommends that:

- The tribe of Balobedu should educate the young generation(s) about the importance of personal naming.
- Parents should be encouraged to bestow names that are positive to their children.
- The traditional norms and values of Balobedu should be incorporated in the process of giving names to newly born babies because each society has its own norms and values that shape that society.
- People should retain the proper procedure of giving marriage names and inclusion of ancestors in the proceedings of giving those names.
- Seminars should be held annually to conscientise the youth of the Balobedu nation about the importance of giving traditional names, and they must be taught about the praises and totems of their families or names, so that they can know their history and roots of their families.
- The tribe of Balobedu should also be taught that Christian names are not the only names that are important, indigenous names are important as well.
- Personal naming is an important practice in the life of a human being, it needs more research to reveal more information so that African children may be at the best position to learn more about the norms, values, culture, and history of African societies through personal naming.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter concluded the whole study. It provided the summary of chapters from chapter one to chapter five. The findings of the study and recommendations were also outlined and lastly, the conclusion of this study followed. The foregoing discussion reveals that it is important to have a deeper understanding of personal names of Balobedu because they cannot be understood from a literal point of view. Moreover, African names are symbolic to an extent that they manifest experiences, conflicts, or situations with deep historical resonances (Mensah and Rowen, 2019). The data of the study also indicate that, the personal names of Balobedu embody the history, philosophy, culture, and language of Balobedu, Khelobedu. Thus, the personal names of Balobedu mirror the circumstances, organisation, and culture of Balobedu.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS.

1. Gender.
2. Age.
3. Home Language
4. Level of education

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dear participants

You are hereby requested to participate in this research study titled: **An analysis of personal naming in post-apartheid Bolobedu, Limpopo Province: The case of Ga-Kuranta, Limpopo Province**. The research is meant for the completion of a Masters' degree at the university of Limpopo in the School of Languages and Communication Studies. The objectives of the study are to: establish criteria for personal naming in the Bolobedu nation, investigate the nature of personal naming, identify the impact of gender on personal naming, and examine the meaning of Balobedu's personal names.

Participation in the research is voluntary and the interviewee is at liberty to withdraw at any time s/he feels uncomfortable. The findings of this investigation will be used only for research and academic purpose and the participants have assured anonymity. Your participation in this regard will be highly appreciated. Your participation in this regard is important to me and I would, therefore, appreciate your honesty and openness in answering the following questions:

1. What do you understand about personal naming?
2. What are the criteria for personal naming in the Balobedu nation?
3. How is the nature of personal naming around the nation of Balobedu?
4. What are the effects of gender Balobedu's personal naming?
5. May you please provide examples of personal names that you are familiar with?
6. Provide meanings to the examples of names you have given?
7. What is the significance of personal names within the nation of Balobedu?

Participants will be asked to elaborate on the above questions if there is a need to do so.

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL



University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Office of the Director
School of Languages and Communication Studies
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 2684, Fax: (015) 268 2868, Email: mphoto.mogoboya@ul.ac.za

Date: 25 July 2022

NAME OF STUDENT: Mohale LB
STUDENT NUMBER: 201602067
DEPARTMENT: Linguistics, Translation, and Interpreting
SCHOOL: Languages and Communications Studies
QUALIFICATION – MA Course work

Dear Student

SCHOOL APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (Mini-dissertation)

I have pleasure in informing you that your MA proposal served at the **Department of Linguistics, Translation and Interpreting** Research & Ethics Committee meeting held on 02 November 2021 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: Analysis of personal naming in post-apartheid Bolobedu: the case Ga-Kuranta, Limpopo Province

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
In principle the study requires no ethical clearance, but will need a TREC permission letter before proceeding with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	✓
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully

Prof MJ Mogoboya
Director: School of Languages and Communication Studies
Supervisor: Dr KL Mphela

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
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TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEETING: 26 September 2022

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/386/2022: PG

PROJECT:

Title: An analysis of personal naming in post-apartheid Bolobedu, Limpopo Province: The case of Ga-Kuranta, Limpopo Province.
Researcher: LB Mohale
Supervisor: Dr KL Mphela
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Languages and Communication
Degree: Masters of Translation and Linguistics

PROF D MAPOSA
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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