AN APPRAISAL OF NAMING PATTERNS FOR SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DZUMERI COMMUNITY IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

by

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DECLARATION

I, **PHILADELPHIA NOMAYANGA MABUNDA**, declare that the dissertation "**AN APPRAISAL OF NAMING PATTERNS FOR SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DZUMERI COMMUNITY IN MOPANI DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Signature   Date

DEDICATION

The study is dedicated to my late grandmother Mdavazi Khamanana Mabunda; and Mtoko Mabunda; and parents Hlomula Timothy Mabunda and Ruth Motseo Mabunda, as well as my children Nhlakati, Ntsieni and Mdavazi.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate and examine the naming patterns of schools among the people of Dzumeri community, in Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

The study demonstrates the importance of naming and the patterns when naming a school. The study also reveals that there are schools named after the royal family, nick-names, and natural features and after an occurrence of events.

In the end, the recommendations were suggested for the naming of schools. This will help in coming up with school names that will be accepted by all.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Naming plays a significant role in our everyday lives (Trewhella, 2002). As the adage goes, no name is sweeter than someone's name to his or her ears. A name carries a special significance to its owner. It gives the bearer a special sense of identity and pride. It affects the individual in one way or another. A name is based on emotions, social activities and the idea of identity. Therefore, the importance of names cannot be over- emphasized.

In her work, Mokgokong (2004) reveals that African names are generally meaningful. They enable people to locate an area and discover its historical background. This is also the view of De Klerk and Bosch (1996:2) who define naming as "… specifically a linguistic act, intimately linked with values, traditions, hope, fear and events in people's lives".

There are also meaningless names which say nothing about the location and origin of the entity. A name is a very important social and cultural construct to forge unity, identity, values and self-esteem within and among communities. It instils a sense of pride and honour. Throughout the whole world, names had been given with specific reasons in mind. Names, in many societies, are given in order to commemorate, honour, or distinguish one place from the other.

The subject of this study is an appraisal of naming patterns for schools. Naming, either a person or a place, is influenced by different aspects such as cultural, social, economic, political and historical. Some school names are given in order to honour or commemorate those who played prominent roles in their communities. Naming patterns will always change depending on situations and circumstances people find themselves in.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Naming plays an important role in any human society. It portrays the cultural values and traditions of a particular society and involves every aspect of life. Generally, the approach used in naming varies from one society to another. The importance of origins of naming can be traced back to the story of the Creator in Genesis 2: 19-20:

> Now the Lord God has formed out the ground the entire beast 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. (NIV).

According to Judaism and Christianity, this indicates that naming started a long time ago, during the creation of the universe, as indicated in the above quote from the Bible. During that time, man, that is, Adam was the only one responsible for naming living creatures. He named them randomly so that he was to identify them. Therefore, naming is necessary for identification, a way of distinguishing one thing from everything else, hence the study of this kind is vital.

Colonialism has done great damage to the African continent. Not only did colonialists steal the continent's physical riches, but they also brainwashed its people to the extent that they saw everything African as being inferior. This is why some Afrikaners tend to identify themselves with Europe and the European way of doing things. Colonialists renamed some of the places in a way that promoted hatred, humiliation, domination and antagonism among communities. In his work, Sengani (2007:2) states:

> In most cases, the name givers being people in power institutions such as government, elders in the community or family have been praised for their wisdom in creating and choosing a name for themselves and powerless without ever checking the kind of names and the impact their message or discourse have on the powerless.

This is exactly what the apartheid government did in South Africa. Most places were given names without consulting the affected people. In most cases, such names were given without the community's consent and interests. Sengani (2007:2) further points out:

> Names can seem befitting to anything that carries them, but it has become obvious that they can be enhancing or damaging, if not deadly to their carriers and the addressed. On the other hand, the powerless groups can resist and construct a discourse of empowerment through both negative and positive names.

The original history of schools around Dzumeri has no written record; only oral history exists, being passed from generation to generation. Originally, the schools at Dzumeri community were started by the missionaries of Swiss Mission Churches coming from Switzerland. These missionaries arrived first at Mhlava tribe in Greater Tzaneen Municipality and Maake Village. They also settled at Elim (Valdezia) and at Makhado (Louis Trichardt). These Missionaries were called *Vamumeri* and *Muvuri* in Xitsonga.

After the arrival of missionaries, most chiefs showed kindness to them, allowing them to settle in their areas. Some chiefs did so in the hope of acquiring guns and trading with them. Chief Dzumeri, for example, agreed to have a mission station in his kingdom. The missionaries promptly asked for permission from Chief Dzumeri to preach the Word of God. The missionaries realised that there were no schools in Dzumeri. They asked the community leaders if they could start a school. It was going to be difficult for missionaries to preach the Word of God to people who are illiterate. The Chief, the headmen, together with the elders had never heard the Word of God, neither did they know what a school was. The chief, however, accepted the proposal. Initially, the missionaries were not teachers, but they had to start a school as it was difficult to start preaching and illustrating the Word of God to the people. The missionaries were given a site to build the school. The site was in a neutral venue and had to cater for the whole community.

At that time there were no formal teachers (qualified teachers) only the missionaries. Mr Mahlori came to Dzumeri to help with the teaching. He was not a teacher himself but an intelligent businessman from Xihoko Village. There were also other elders who came from Elim (Valdezia) where the missionaries had been earlier. They also came to assist with the teaching: Messrs Vuyani and Ndleve. Mr. Zava Mabunda from Dzumeri also came to take part in the teaching.

The process of the changing of names has been with humanity for a long time, as has been mentioned earlier, and it happens in many different parts of the world, particularly in countries that were colonized. It is a process that will continue as long as people feel the need to do so. In his study, Mabotja (2005:18) illustrates that:

> When white settlers arrived, they might have found that the names were too difficult and those names were either anglicized or changed completely. It was also their way of claiming territory.

This implies that name changing is a process which depended mostly on the environmental conditions the community was subjected to at that time. In his work Raper (1997:3) notes:

> Place names often give an indication of the tribe or people who inhabit the various regions and geographical distribution (and in many cases, are accurately determined).

In the far North East of Limpopo, the school names are in Xitsonga language because the area is inhabited by Vatsonga people. In the North, Tshivenda school names dominate because the area is populated by the Venda people. In the central area the school names are in Sepedi because the Pedi people live in this area.

Proper principles and procedures should be followed when proposing a new name or changing a school name. Before embarking on name changing process, great care must be taken as this can also cause division amongst the people. Changing school names can involve quite a number of important aspects, such as redrawing of maps, telephone directories, road signs, letterheads and other official documents. The

South African Geographical Names Council is the relevant authority that deals with place naming. The following questions should be considered before embarking on a name change:

- Why do we need a new name?
- Is the present name not good enough?
- Who gave the name after all?
- What will the implications be?
- Is name changing economically viable?
- What are the appropriate names?
- Who should be consulted in this process?
- What are the underlying principles and procedures stipulated the South African Geographical Names Council?

If those and some other pertinent issues are fully addressed, then a name becomes an appropriate name, which means that it is a name linked to people's culture, background or way of life. In this case it becomes a meaningful name.

In many instances, however, it is difficult for the community to have more or less the same desire when naming entities, but some form of compromise must be made for the benefit of the entire community. Most of the school names also help to show areas occupied by certain people and tribes. For example, in Giyani Township there is a school called *Giyani High*, named after the township itself, Giyani. In support of this Raper (1977:3) states:

> There are numerous nations and people of which no written records exist, and nothing would be known of their history if the place names bestowed, which is still in existence, had not given clues to the part.

He goes on to say that, "if the past is to be found in the present, then it is in place names since it is seldom felt necessary to change them". However, it is important to come to the realisation that not all school names reveal history of the people and the

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location of the entity. Not all school names bring to light information which can be of inestimable value to a researcher, to the history of a race, people or tribe responsible for the names. Basically, there are unlimited numbers of motives which lead to naming schools. Therefore, an appraisal of naming patterns for schools and factors which lead to their coinage should be investigated.

The names that the Department of Education gives to schools both reflect and shape community values. They reflect values in that naming a school after someone or something produces at least an implicit endorsement of the values that the name represents. School names can shape values by providing teachers with a teaching opportunity. The challenge in naming a school after a person is that it may provoke a debate over that person's worthiness. Although most problems identified are broad and global, the study has been limited to the Dzumeri community in Mopani District located in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The area has frequently been used as a point of reference.

1.3   AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim to this study is to examine naming patterns for schools as well as the reasons for using particular school names within the Dzumeri community. Answers to the following questions have helped the researcher to achieve this aim:

     a. Why are such names given to schools?
     b. Who has the authority to best name schools?
     c. What processes should be followed when naming schools?

1.4   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are the following:

     a. To propose an appropriate mechanism for naming schools.
     b. To distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable naming practices.

1.5   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher basically intends to use the qualitative method in the study. According to Wild and Diggines (2009:85):

> Qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data that carry meaningfully qualified, that is, summarized in the form of numbers.

In this study Mudau (2009:6) quotes Mokgokong (2004:5) who points out that:

> The qualitative research paradigm is usually used when a researcher's aim is to understand human behaviour, and wants to probe into the meaning that people attach to specific events and their own experiences. This research paradigm is relevant to this study because it will help the researcher to understand people's attitude, how they react to different situations and what is of value to them.

The qualitative method is relevant to the study as it assists the researcher in answering the why and how of naming of schools in a specific manner.

1.6   DATA COLLECTION

The researcher has used the following methods to gather relevant information with regard to the naming patterns for schools.

1.6.1 Primary research method

Primary research method produces firsthand information. These primary data are collection by the researcher himself or herself. With regard to this method; data have been collected through consultation with up to sixty-nine (69) respondents. The sample population is as follows:

- Chief Mabunda;

- 20 elders of the Mabunda clan;

- 10 Indunas (headmen) in the Dzumeri community;

- 16 principals of primary schools, and 20 principals of high schools in the Dzumeri community;

- 2 Circuit Managers (Klein Letaba and Groot Letaba Circuits); and

- 10 members of school governing bodies (5 members from the primary level and 5 from the secondary level).

The abovementioned respondents were useful in this study given that they deal with school affairs in one way or another on a regular basis. In this research unstructured questions have been be used (see the aim of the study).

1.6.2 Secondary research method

This research method has provided the present research with second-hand information because it had already been collected by someone else. The present researcher has shifted the information she needed in order to validate her study. This type of information is obtainable from earlier researchers, books, mass media, internet, dissertations, and personal records. The purpose of using this method is to utilise relevant information already supplied by some scholars.

1.7   DATA ANALYSIS

According to various scholars, such as Wild and Diggines (2009:85) qualitative data analysis is important when one is undertaking a research study, because validity and reliability should be ensured through careful analysis and objective interpretation of the information gathered. The study, therefore, gives an objective of the appropriate mechanism for naming schools and to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable naming practices.

1.8   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is of paramount importance in highlighting naming patterns for schools within the Dzumeri community. This has helped in understanding the people's tradition, history, culture, preferences and desires. The study has also been a valuable reference material for future studies in naming patterns for schools.

1.9   ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

The study has been organised into five chapters.

Chapter One deals with the background to the study, aim and objectives, research methodology, data analysis and significance of the study.

Chapter Two deals with literature review where views of various scholars on naming are presented.

Chapter Three focuses on the naming patterns of schools in the Dzumeri community.

Chapter Four examines the naming patterns of school based on natural features, nicknames and events.

Chapter Five concludes the study by summarising the main findings and gives recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present views of various scholars on naming. Topics that will receive scrutiny include history of naming, significance of names, name-givers, names as part of language, nickname and topographical names.

2.2   A BRIEF HISTORY OF NAMING

A name is defined in the *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2007:772) as:

> A word or set of words by which someone or something
> is known, addressed, or referred to.

A name is a symbolic representation of a thing. The thing could be an object of some sort, or an action to be performed; conventionally, a name has tended to mean a logical way of referring to an object in some abstract name space. Kabalarians define a name as the grouping of several letters of an alphabet, or other symbols, which represent the identification of a person or an object.

"In all human communities there are certain recurrent idioms - creating events called naming, and people are named. (Hocket, 1958:311). Hocket's comment indicates that names have a great significant value in any society. As quoted by Nziyane (2004):

> A name may be defined broadly, as a word or small group of
> words indicating a particular entity in its entirely without
> necessarily or essentially indicating any special quality of the
> entity (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1768:1156).

According to Tullock (1993:1008), a name is the word by which an individual person, animal, place, or thing is known or spoken of. This indicates that a name is the word or words by which something is known. In the Book of Ecclesiastes (1999:722), King Solomon says "Whatever exists has already been named," he was expressing an idea that a name carries recognition and status, and to be nameless is to be socially dead, worthless and beyond the protection of society (Harries, 1994: 59-60). It is important and necessary to name all things. Nothing exists unless it has a name. Stuhlman (2004) notes that personal names have existed from the time of the first man Adam, a point which has already been made. However, although all cultures in this world use names, naming customs vary greatly, from nation to nation, people to people.

2.3   A NAME AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

In Xitsonga, a name is not merely a conglomeration of letters put together as a convenient way to refer to someone. Ideally, it is a definition of the individual, a description of his or her personality and an interpretation of his traits. It may even be a portent of the person's future, or perhaps a prayer that the person bearing this particular name shall live up to the potential   expressed in the name.

A name is basically used for identification purposes. A name can indicate a large area such as a city, or even a continent or an ocean. One may say that a school name supplies more information about the location referred to, such as what type of a place it is and, in many cases, about its cultural, political, and historical background. School names can even tell a great deal about the people connected to it. School names are just like anthroponymy that is, names of human beings and can be given after local events, important personalities, religious sources and even human happenings. Raper (1987:78) defines a name as:

> A proper name, like any other linguistic sign, consists of
> a sound sequence which may be presented graphically,
> and a "verse" or "meaning."

A name also has the function of referring to, or designating an extra linguistic entity. On the other hand, *Glossary of Toponymic Terminology* (1992) defines a name as:

> An oral or written item recognised as designating a particular entity such as an object, an individual or a topographic feature.

The above definitions as given by different scholars even though they are to some extent different from each other, all emphasise the fact that a name has the function of referring to an entity, be it a school or a person. Arizal writes that the nature and behaviour of a person, whether good or bad, can be classified into different classes such as toponymys and anthronomys. A toponymy (place name) or topographic name is defined by Kadmon (1992) as the name given to any topographic feature or item anywhere or on a celestial body such as the moon or a planet.

Geographical names are defined as names of features on the earth that are natural, or made or adopted by humans. (Unpopulated Handbook on Geographic Names). Walt Whitman in Fromkin and Rodman (1993:1) also presents the significance of names as part of language in action: "Language is not an abstract construction of the learned or of dictionary makers, but is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes, of long generations of humanity." This suggests that language emanates from society and the same society uses language to communicate through words or symbols. Through words or symbols, it enables people to evaluate and appreciate the world that they live in. One of the ways in which people use language is through the naming patterns that they adopt.

Naming plays a significant role in our everyday lives. It is a fact that one should always "remember that a man's name is a sweet sound in any language" (Carnegie, 1936:84). The name to be given to a school should give a sense of purpose and belonging to the inhabitants.

2.4   THE NAME DEFINES

The study of names is called Onomastics, a field which touches on Linguistics, History, Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, Philosophy and much more. When people refer to the "meaning of name," they are most likely referring to the etymology, which is the original literal meaning. A name element is an etymological piece of an individual name. Some names contain multiple elements, such as dilemmatic given names which contain two elements.

To label something properly is to define its nature, what one may see as a rusty old spoon, another will see it as antique silverware. What one may consider random scrabbling, another will consider abstract art. And what one observes as a heap of scrap in a city square, another will call modern sculpture befitting a large metropolis. Rabbernu Bachaya (Genesis 2-17) comments that Adam revealed his great wisdom when he named all species of creation with his superior intellect. Every name that he chose, together with the combination of its letters, defined the nature and characteristic of a thing meant to be defined. One of the things that all people and places have in common is names. At the outset of mankind, to name meant to define. As an aspect of language, names can be used to fuel or minimise conflict because they become conduits through which people communicate their emotions and perceptions. Finnegan (1976:470) amply captures this value of names when she posits that:

> There have been many different interpretations of these names. They have ranged from the psychological functions of names, in providing assurance or "working out" tensions to their usefulness in expressing the self-image of their owner or in providing a means of indirect comment when a direct one is not feasible.

Finnegan (1976:471) goes further to observe that names, among other issues, also express aspirations and philosophical comments. In short therefore, names capture and communicate an awareness of life's ups and downs. At Dzumeri community there is a school named *Ukuthula Primary*. The name *Ukuthula* was given to the school after a long argument and it proved difficult to register it with the Department

of Education. A serious argument started and Mr Mathonsi (a local businessman) stood up, and commanded the congregation to keep quiet because they were making a lot of noise. He instructed them in isiZulu by saying *thulani*, meaning "keep quite"., and it is how the school got its name, *Ukuthula*.

2.5   THE HIDDEN POWER BEHIND A NAME

Throughout the Bible, characters are given names at birth and these names reflect something of significance or describe the course of their lives. For example, Solomon means peace, and the king with that name was the first whose reign was without warfare. Likewise, Joseph named his firstborn's son Manasseh (Hebrew; "causing to forget") as a gesture of forgiveness to his brothers who had sold him into slavery.

For as long as culture exists, some people have placed a meaning to it by naming every event they have encountered, be it the birth of a child, climatic conditions, initiation rites, battles, death, or any other event that seems vital to their daily existence.

2.6   NAME-GIVERS

Amongst most Africans names are not just given. The naming pattern is more than just the attachment of a label. *South African Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2007:855) defines a pattern as "an arrangement or sequence regularly found in comparable objects or events". It is an act meant to make the coming into the world of a new being; either through birth or through new experiences. Because of this, names are laden with a lot of shades of meaning.

Fasku (2006:53) posits that no one bears a name without a reason and that no one exists without explanation or justification. Among Africans names are often used to express the name's ideals, aspirations, sorrows and philosophical comments (Finnegan, 1976:471). The idea of experiences and expectations is the major underlying factor that influences how the Vatsonga, who like other Africans, name

their schools. According to Neethling (in Makhado, 2009:33), name giving among the Bantu cultures reflects the socio- cultural circumstances of the group or clan. De Klerk and Bosch (in Makhado, 2009:340) also add on to this understanding of the factors that influence the Bantu naming patterns, when they state that:

> African names often retain their meaning-bearing function and are much less arbitrary, their meaning generally being transparent and accessible and often recording complex details about their bearer.

This framework can however best be understood if before proceedings, the names, which are part of language are put into their proper perspective. The giving of names is largely circumstantial. It does not matter, however, whether the name is given at birth or even later in life. The event taking place at a particular time determines the name that the identified person gets. Kahari (1990:281) sums up the situational aspects of the naming patterns when he asserts that:

> The custom of giving proper names to human beings, domestic animals, modern transport and places operates under a system determined by social conditions and the environment.

Those who give names are usually in the position of power and authority. In the case of people, for instance in a family, paternal grandparents are traditionally name-givers. These names are carefully considered and in some families, it is common to honour the grandfather by bestowing his name on the first born son. Today the act of naming a new born infant is done by parents, thus ignoring the culture. Parents give names following different patterns. There are, however, a variety of influences that operate in the naming of a child. These include events that happened during the time of birth, religion, political influence, and also the expectations of the parents on their offspring. Naming, as it is one of the contentious issues today, requires people with skills and extensive knowledge.

2.7 NAMES AS PART OF LANGUAGE

Names exist as part of the sociolinguistic milieu. They are a part of every society that gives them names and they act as a window through which the world is understood and appreciated. Through names, members of the community can express their experiences, feelings, joy or even sorrows. Names function as conduits of information, especially on society's attitude or observations towards the named (Mapara, Mutasa & Nyota, 2009). For one to appreciate names there is a need to have good knowledge of the imagery and metaphor of the language. The value of names as a case of language in action (Ngugi, 1987:15) is very well captured in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in Mazrui (2004:41). Mazrui states that according to Sapir, human beings are very much at the mercy of a particular language, which is part of the medium of expression of their society. Sapir observes that the fact of the matter is that what people consider to be the rural world is largely built upon the language habits of the group. He goes further to express the idea that there are no two languages that are ever sufficiently similar though they can be considered as representing the same social reality.

This is so because each person's ontology or worldview is structured or determined and organised by language. According to Whorf, each language is encoded with a particular mode of thought, a metaphysics that affects the speaker's experience at the level of perception. The view that is expressed in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis rings true when applied to the study of naming patterns of schools around Dzumeri community.

2.8 NICKNAMES

The word *nickname* comes from an old English term called *ekaname* which was often shortened to *nekename.* The word *eke* meant additional, so an *ekename* nickname is an extra name. Kahari (1990:283) best sums up the importance of nicknames thus:

> A nickname is a name that an individual is given by the community which is usually descriptive because it sums up that individual character's physical shape or idiosyncratic indicators.

Not all nicknames describe people who are in unfortunate positions, however. There are some that indicate the name holders, generosity, achievements and other material possessions. At Dzumeri community, there is a school called *Mizuzwana Primary. Mizuzwana* is a nickname given to one of Chief Dzumeri's sons because he called money *mzukula,* which is also a Zulu name, meaning money. After chief Ndhambi passed away, his son, Divila, was still young so they asked Piet to act as a chief. He was the late chief's little brother. His focus was on education and asked each household in the community to contribute R5.00 to build schools. Because of this they honoured him, while he was still alive, by naming the school *Mizuzwana Primary School.*

Some names are used to accentuate and situate the significance of an experience, event or phenomenon, and like proverbs names are instruments of arousing, defining, manifesting and establishing the expectations, aspirations and conscious-ness of the bearers.

Unlike real names, nicknames do not follow a specific pattern or structure. African names, especially real names, follow a specific phonological structure. The common structure is that one of the consonants plus vowels are abbreviated. Nicknames can be derived from real names.

2.9 SCHOOL RENAMING PATTERNS

Renaming is mostly influenced by multiple factors such as marketing, topography of a school restoration of historical events, etc. Schools may be named following what happed in the past and this is supported by Crystals (1987:114) who asserts that:

The names people give to their schools provide a unique source of information about the society's history, beliefs and values.

Guidelines on the establishment of District Geographical Names Committee have this to say about reasons for renaming: "It is important to standardise names for the purpose of affirming a country's history and national identity, and for the purpose such as trade and commerce, transportation, communications, regional and environmental planning, social services, science and television, disaster management and search and rescue operations." *The Oxford English Dictionary* (2007) defines orthography as "The correct and proper spelling, spelling according to accepted usage, the way in which words are conventionally written".

The orthography of a language specifies a standardised way of using a specific system (script) to write the language, where more than one writing system is used for a language. For an example, *Shihlomule Secondary School* instead of *Xinhlomulo.*

Other reasons for such a transformation are, among others, that people are reclaiming their lost identity and the need to restore historical records. According to Jenkins *et al.* (1996:12), "changing a name is part a process of change in the tide of a country's history. It acts as a mirror of the dynamic forces of changing historical relations, human sentiments, ideologies and attitudes towards change".

In today's world, everything is ever changing; people change, and so do governments, leaders, laws and ideas. It is common among Africans to name schools after living or dead people. Sometimes the idea is simply to show respect to the person in question and to help preserve his or her memory.

There are various factors which lead to renaming schools. Mokgokong (2004) quotes Jenkins *et al.*. (1996:104) who state that some names may be changed because:

a.   They replace existing names with others that certain people want to be restored.

b.   A name is offensive because it is associated with something unacceptable even if originally it was given innocently.

c.   People may want to make a public statement usually on ideological or political grounds.

d.   Change may be made for the sake of standardisation.

e.   An official name may be a distorted form of a name in spelling or contextually.

f.   A name can be discriminatory or derogatory as regards to race, colour, creed, sex, political affiliation or other social factors.

School renaming patterns in Dzumeri community or in Limpopo Province as a whole does not occur much, only place renaming occurs frequently, because it is believed that some of the existing names do not meet the policies and principles of the democratic society. In the same note a member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Sports Arts and Culture in the Province pointed out in the *Northern Review* (3-4 April 2002) that name changes of geographical features is regarded as reclaiming identity and redressing the deep social, economic and political effects of apartheid colonialism.

2.10   TOPOGRAPHICAL NAMES

There is also a practice whereby people name institutions after particular physical features in the environment. There are topographical names, for example, which describe some features of the landscape. According to the history of English places names, the topographical elements in the name can be a natural feature of the landscape such as a hill, valley, a type of a country, a human created or used elements such as a borrow or fort (Mokgokong, 2004: 28).

The abovementioned statement is evident at Bambeni village where a school is named *Phadi Primary*. This school name is descriptive, in this instance clearly describing a mountain. Name-givers were bestowing names sometimes according to the physical appearance of the area.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a brief history of naming, the significance of a name and the appropriateness of each name in different places. Factors which influence the renaming of places were also given and a few examples of affected schools were also given and a few examples of affected schools were mentioned. This chapter also explained names as part of the language system. It indicated that religious, social, political and economic factors play a role in the naming of people and entities such as schools.

CHAPTER THREE

NAMING PATTERNS OF SCHOOLS WITH CLAN NAMES AT DZUMERI COMMUNITY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to examine an appraisal of naming patterns for schools with special reference to Dzumeri community. This will be achieved by looking, inter alia, at the following issues:

● 16 high schools and 20 primary schools around 18 villages in Dzumeri community.
● Definition of a name-giver.
● Schools named after ancestry and heritage names.
● Schools named after clan names.
● Schools named after the chiefs' brothers-in-law and headmen.
● Schools with honorific and commemorative names.
● School names indicative of religious and apartheid influence.

Names reflect the way in which people think and see the world around them (Meiring, 1994: 67) as quoted by Chauke (2005:56). Names have a specific meaning to every nation since they convey the history and culture of a particular nation, while also evoking memories of love or bitterness within members of that nation. The interesting trend is that through the ages, males have enjoyed the privilege in the naming process. This may be because people live in a patrilineal society and everything that is associated with muscularity is regarded as enduring. This is typical in tracing ancestral descent as this is done through the factor's side. Patriarchy is a social system in which the males, especially fathers, have central roles of political leadership, moral authority, and property. Many patriarchal societies are also patrilineal, meaning that property and titles are inherited by the male lineage.

Historically, patriarchy has manifested itself in the social, legal, political, and economic organisation of a range of different cultures. Many argue that patriarchy entails institutions of male privilege and encourages female subordination. Patriarchy also has a strong influence on modern civilization, although many cultures have moved towards a more egalitarian social system over the past century. Patriarchy literally means "rule of fathers" from Greek (patriakhes) "father" or "chief" of a race, patriarch. Historically, the term patriarchy was used to refer to autocratic rule by the male head of a family. In modern times, however, it generally refers to social systems in which power is primarily held by adult men. The interesting trend is that through the ages, males have enjoyed the privilege in the naming process.

The work of Aristotle portrayed women as morally, intellectually, and physical inferior to men, saw women as the property of men, claimed that women's role in society was to reproduce and serve men in the household; and saw male domination of women as natural and virtuous. The Mabunda Royal Family is essentially a patrilineal one. Chief Dzumeri was the founder of the Dzumeri community and was then usually succeeded by his paternal brothers or blood relatives. All the 36 schools are named after men, and this supports that patriarchy does exist in the area. It can also be shown by their family tree, which shows that only males exist. *Xivongo xa ka Mabunda* (Mabunda family tree) reads as follows:

Mazivuko

↓

Mabunda

↓

Mbatsane

↓

Nthlelele

↓

Xiake

↓

Nyavana

↓

Gwambeni

↓

Dzumeri

↓

Ndhambi

↓

Nyumbani

↓

Divila
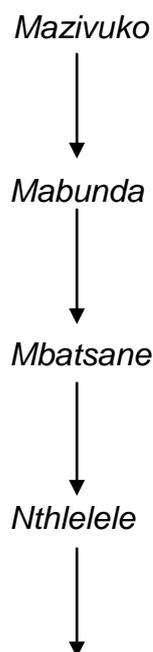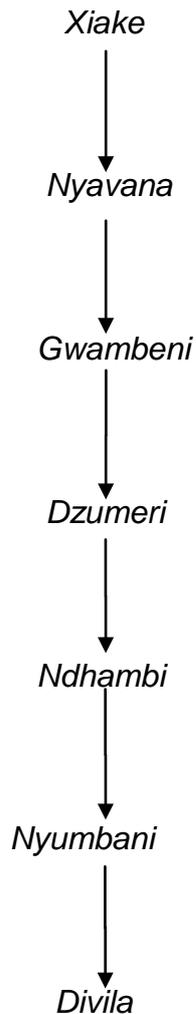
This imbalance in the naming system can be traced to the fact that throughout history, women have played a domestic role and were not encouraged to venture into politics, science, economics and other arenas, thus preventing them from playing a heroic role. Very few women in general have had a particular feature named after them. The fact is that society allows women very restricted roles and as a consequence does not give them the status they deserve in a number of areas, including naming. Naming in the African culture reveals the origin, customs and beliefs of a particular society. For instance when a school is given a name, a nickname or a clan name, that signifies something for the society. Nida (1954:111) points out that the naming not only reveals how diverse such cultural practices may be, but also indicates a number of fundamental social attitudes, which need to be known if one is to understand the people.

The culture of people is taken into consideration when naming is done. Among the Vatsonga people for example, reasons are attached when school names are given. There are similarities in the naming of schools and that of people. Schools can be given names because of the following reasons, for example: commemorative meanings, politics and incidents which happened at the time of building the school. For instance, *Hinkhensile Secondary School - hinkhensile* means joy or appreciation, and *Sasekani Secondary School*, where *sasekani* means gratitude (refer to the abovementioned two schools in 4.4).

3.2   NAMING PATTERNS OF SCHOOLS

Naming patterns are an extremely useful tool for finding the right name of the school for its community. Communities rely on them to find a meaning. They are able to discount most of the possibilities, leaving an entry which turned out to be the correct one.

During the apartheid period as stated by a former school inspector whom as we shall call Respondent 1, the school inspector was supposed to have knowledge to guide the community through the process of naming. Naming is supposed to be done by the Tribal Authority in the villages.

This also applied to Dzumeri because it is a Tribal Authority. This helped in building a school that is sustainable, giving every child access to a good education; the school thus becomes the focus of the community. It was the norm that a community would start by asking for permission to build a school from the Department of Education via its local school inspector. The inspector will advise them on how to start the negotiations, that is, by writing a formal letter to the Department of Education. The letter must also state three (3) names according to their preference, their meanings as well as the reasons why they have chosen those specific names. The school inspector does not need to question anything about the names, but forwards the letter to the Head Office. Normally it takes 3 to 4 months for the Department of Education to answer, because it would verify if the name is not in existence in South Africa. After the verification, the department would give answers in writing to the inspector who will then take it to the community.

According to Respondent 2, the procedure that they followed as a community in the process of an appraisal in the naming patterns of schools was that firstly the chief had to call *xivinjo/huvo* (tribal gathering). Then he informed the community that there was a proposal of building a school. The chief listened to the needs of the community in choosing the name. The community then chose a site where the school had to be erected; a neutral venue to cater for their neighbours as well.

The community then had to write a letter to the school inspector to apply for permission to build the school. After receiving the letter the school inspector or any representative from the Department of Education would be deployed to come and view the site. They only approved if the site was chosen at a neutral location, if not they had to instruct the community to choose another site. If the site was well selected the school inspector would send the letter to the Head Office where the school's name would be checked whether it was registered or not with the Department of Education.

This process is still applicable today because according to Respondent 3 (a circuit manager), Head Office will verify if the school name chosen is not listed in the school database in South Africa. If not listed it will be automatically approved, but if it is in existence somewhere else it will fail and the community will have to provide another name. The Department of Public Works would then offer a tender for constructors to come and build the school provided the enrolment is around thirty-five (35) and above.

3.3   DEFINITION OF A NAME-GIVER

A name-giver is one, or that which gives a name or names (*The Oxford English Dictionary Volume VII-N-POY*, 1979:16). In other words, a name-giver is someone who is capable of expressing a certain message or feelings to the addressee through naming. He or she is responsible for naming the nameless. According to Nelson (1992:30), the function of naming is solely to assist memory and to communicate our ideas to others because the name-giver has a certain message or idea to transmit.

There are valid reasons for the choice of any name. Therefore, each and every name has a reason for its existence.

The community name-givers together with their headmen maintain that the Vatsonga may give schools names, of their chiefs. They are guided by what that particular chief has done to uplift the standard of living in their community. In many societies, it is a common practice to name a school after a living or dead person who is related to the chief. Sometimes, the idea is simply to show respect to the person in question or to help preserve his or her memory.

Neethling (2000:58) emphasises that a significant feature of the naming process is that generally speaking, naming is not restricted to certain gifted or highly experienced individuals, but that it could rather be seen as an extremely common activity in which many individuals or groups in any given society participate. Any individual may name an entity and hence the possibility of creativity in naming is great.

3.3.1   Structure of school names

The structure of school names varies according to the language of origin of the names. In the African languages, morphemes are added to nouns and pronouns to indicate locality. Such derived forms are called locomotives (Jenkins, Raper & Moller 1996). It is furthermore distinguished that each language group uses its own locomotive prefixes to denote a particular name. Some names from the African languages are characterised by locomotive prefixes such as *eka, ka, e-,* and *n'wa-.* The following are examples of each locomotive prefix:

Locomotive prefix with *eka.*

(1)   a*.*   *Eka Mphakane*
      b.   *Eka Mayephu*
      c*.*   *Eka Mzilela*
      d.   Eka Dzumeri
      e*.*   *Eka Mageva*

Locomotive prefix with *ka.*

(2) a. *Ka Ndhambi*

   b. *Ka Matsotsosela*

   c. *Ka Mzilela*

   d. *Ka Ngove*

   e. *Ka Mbhendlhe*

Locomotive prefix with *e-*

(3) a. *Ezava High School*

   b. *EMizuzwana Primary School*

   c. *EShihlomule Secondary School*

   d. *EPhadi Primary School*

   e. *ENyumbani High School*

Locomotive prefix with *n'wa-*

(4) a. *N'wamaranga* village

   b. *N'wakhada Secondary School*

   c. *N'wamankena Primary School*

   d. *N'wamatatana* village

   e. *N'wanjhakanjhaka* village.

The analysis of school names indicates that some school names are compounded, consisting of more than one element, for example:

(5) a. *N'wakhada Secondary School*

   b. *Charlie Rhangani Primary School*

   c. *N'wamavimbi Primary School*

   d. *N'wamalobye High School*

   e. *N'waxindzele Primary School.*

Others are non-compounded, consisting of a single element, for example:

(6)   a*.*   *Dzumeri Primary School*

        b.   *Ndhambi High School*

        c.   *Mzilela Primary School*

        d*.*   *Sasekani Secondary School*

        e*.*   *Pheni Secondary School*

3.3.2 Naming of schools in Xitsonga culture

Great significance is attached to the naming of a school. This is also applicable to the Vatsonga, where naming is considered to be of profound significance because it identifies the school as a structure. To the tradition of African people, naming patterns are very important since names are often given to mark the testimony of what a society holds dear in a given community. In other words, school names bear testimony to the history and culture of a particular nation or people. The Vatsonga, as a nation, have a tendency to enshrine any event that is considered memorable in a name. Names are, therefore chosen for their beneficial influence on the life and character of the bearer, as Golele (1993:85) mentions:

> Names reflect the society or community in which they are found. They originate in different circumstances which may be social, economic, political, or legal. Although at times the meaning of such names may be forgotten, it is traceable to the circumstances which gave rise to them, as they are situation-bound.

Naming, in Xitsonga culture, is thus not an arbitrary exercise but a pattern that is carefully thought out in advance. A most interesting feature is that Vatsonga people do not regard a name as an ordinary label provided for the sake of convenience in distinguishing one person from another, but that names come through the machinery of naming, determined by a variety of factors beyond our control. As such, there is a strong belief that a name giver should consider the close ties between naming and identity.

3.4   SCHOOLS NAMED AFTER ANCESTORS AND HERITAGE NAMES

A child's heritage is an essential part of who she is, and one may want his or her name to reflect that. A family has a tradition of naming first born sons after their fathers as in Vatsonga culture. If one loves a name but it is found that the name does not meet his or her family's tradition requirements, a middle name can be used; one can also give him or her another one for the middle name. Ancestral names are surnames held by immediate royal family; generally they are compound of a meaning. In Ancient usage Mabunda*'s* family members used to denote the first, second, third and fourth eldest sons in a family. These were sometimes adopted as surnames. Sometimes they got those names as they came back from the initiation school or as nicknames given by the community. Dzumeri's real name, for example, was Benula Mabunda. According to Chauke (2005: 100-101), the name relates the history of the Vatsonga in their various travels. *Bvin'ula,* the son of *Nyavana (Mbhalati)* left Mozambique, in the company of his royal subjects for Northern Transvaal, *Bvin'ala* sought to seek refuge among the *Bapedi.*

According to the informants, during his brief stay with the *Bapedi, Bvin'ala* used to wear their cultural attire. Bapedi gave him a very beautiful and fertile land in the Mphaphuli area which was affectionately called *Xamufana* (of the young boy). The place was given the name Dzumeri in that the *Bapedi* regarded Bvin'ula as a very submissive person. The name Dzumeri is a combination of *o dumetše* (you agree). However, according Respondent 4 from the Royal kraal, Bvin'ula was never a submissive person at all as he was a very cruel, aggressive, and militant man who used to attack and kill the Bapedi in the still of the night, but pretending to be kind and gentle during the day. When they were having community meetings known as *xivinjo/huvo*, it was known that he would not argue or disagree with them, but would just agree to whatever idea they were suggesting while deep down in his heart knowing that he was against what was being said.

Sometimes, instead of giving a school a direct name of the traditional leader, they named it after the totem animal considered to be closely connected to the chief concerned. For an example:

(7)   *a. Mfenhe* (baboon)

       b. *Nghala (*lion*)*

       c*. Ndlopfu (*elephant)

       d*. Hongonyi (Wild* beast*)*

       e*. Mhelembe* (Rhino)

3.4.1 *Ndhambi High School*

Another way of honouring traditional leaders and other prominent people was to name educational institutions after them. They named *Dzumeri Primary School* after the chief. This is evident in Dzumeri. At Mzilela village there is a school named *Ndhambi High*, built in 1976. Ndhambi is the son of Chief Dzumeri. It is also the name of a village in the Giyani District of the former Gazankulu homeland. The royal house and the Tribal council are found at Ndhambi village. The name *Ndhambi* was given to the school after the name of the chief of the Dzumeri Royal Kraal, to show respect and honour him. According to Respondent 5, Ndhambi, Chief Ndhambi, was born during a deluge or flood. Ndhambi literally means flood or deluge. When *Ndhambi High School* was established the area suffered devastating floods.

3.5   SCHOOLS NAMED AFTER CLAN NAMES

In her investigation, the researcher discovered that many schools are named after clan names. Clan names are very unique and very important. They have a general meaning of family, but there they have peculiar senses in which they are used. Clan names are important to Africans because they still observe traditional rituals that they believe are instrumental in cleansing their spirits and their culture. When they plan to have a ceremony, they invite everyone whose surname belongs to that affected family. Names of chiefs are usually given to schools because of their different roles in their community. Chiefs are regarded as symbols of unity and are highly respected for settling family disputes and other family related matters. Pinnock (1988:15) notes that a clan name is considered to be more important than a surname. The clan name is the strongest way of identifying someone, even stronger than a father or grandfather's surname because it identifies a person's whole family group and

forbearers. A clan is a social group of common descent, or collection of animals, plants, or lifeless thing, a body of persons with a common interest.

In African communities, naming schools after traditional leaders (namely chiefs and headmen) is conspicuous. It is understandable because in the area they led, they were not only the most prominent leaders, but also the very authority that people knew and obeyed. Furthermore, in most instances, they were responsible for the establishment of schools in the areas in which they lived, and above all they were the founders of the tribes. Thus *Dzumeri Primary School* refers to their first chief at Dzumeri community as indicated above.

3.5.1 *Nyumbani High School*

At *Ndhambi* Village there is *Nyumbani High School* named after the royal family. *Nyumbani* is the name of the chief; his real name was Gezi Mabunda. *Nyumbani High School* was built in 1991 with the initiation of Mr. Mabunda Keyson who went straight to the chief to ask for permission to allow Dr. Pearl from Switzerland, working at *Giyani Science Centre* to donate funds to build a science school in the area. Mr. Mabunda was then the principal of *Nghonyama High School*. Dr. Pearl asked Mr. Mabunda if it would be possible for him to get land to donate money to build the science centre. Dr. Pearl's offer was welcomed by the community, and *Nyumbani High School* was not built like other schools in the community, where the community initiated the building of their schools.

The community chose a site at the far east of Ndhambi at the end of the village going to Daniel Rababalela. When the Department of Education came to inspect the site, it failed because it was not in the neutral zone. They also said that it would invite criminals since it would be at the end of the village. The Department changed the site and located it to the neutral venue where it was built. The school caters for all learners from the village even from its neighbouring villages. Learners no longer walk long distances, because they used to walk to *Nghonyama High School.*

In Xitsonga, a child used to have two names, the first name was used at home and they called it *vito ra vuhlangi* and the Chief's name was Nyumbani. *Nyumbani* is a

word which comes from the verb *nyumba* meaning a woman who is barren. Besides being founders of their areas, some of the traditional leaders are honoured because they led their people when fighting for their respective land, an example is Chief Dzumeri. There are many schools which have been named after their respective traditional leaders. These traditional leaders have done good things for their followers.

3.5.2 *Zava High School*

At *Zava Village* there is a school named *Zava High School* which was built in 1997. The school was named after Zava because he was from the royal family and also the headman. He was the son of Chief Dzumeri. He became the headman before they relocated from *eXivhalweni* to Zava, he ruled until 1975 when he died. He ruled under chief Ndhambi. His son January Zava Mabunda took over in 1977. The school was named after him to honour him for his services and hard work.

3.5.3 *Nghonyama High School*

Nghonyama High School is at Mageva village and was built in 1974. *Mageva* Village is adjacent to Ndhambi village and the two villages are divided by the Molodozi River. Nghonyama is a name given to a boy by his parents when he came back from the initiation school. His real name was N'wavusikwana Mabunda. In Xitsonga custom when a boy comes back from the initiation school he comes back with a new name. He was the son of Rhangani, from Nyavani family and the son from the little wife*. Nghonyama* is a Zulu name meaning a lion. He was a wise man and intelligent. This made people to love him and when people arrived at Dzumeri they used to go to him thinking that he was the chief, but he told them that he was not the chief. Some whites came with bribes to ask for favours to acquire land from him but he referred them to the real chief at Ndhambi. His name was given to the school to honour him, and to signify that the school results must always be excellent. *Nghonyama High* is a very big school which is known for its quality results in Grade 12.

3.5.4 *Pheni Secondary School*

Pheni Secondary School is located at Guwela village. Pheni belongs to Mabunda royal family but does not belong to Chief Dzumeri's family tree. His father, Ngove, is a brother to Chief Dzumeri and they have their land at Ngove, and they are also chiefs there. They named the school in honour of him.

3.5.5 *Khomani Mbhalati Secondary School*

At *Munghonghoma* village there is a school called *Khomani Mbhalati Secondary School* built in 1989. They named the school after Khomani Mbhalati to show respect for him. The school was named after *xithopo xa ka Mabunda. Xithopo*, a praise poem which talks about the family tree of Dzumeri. When reciting it one has to start from the younger person to the oldest. It is recited as follows:

Dzumeri

↓

Nyavana/Mbhalati

↓

Khomani

↓

Jakani

↓
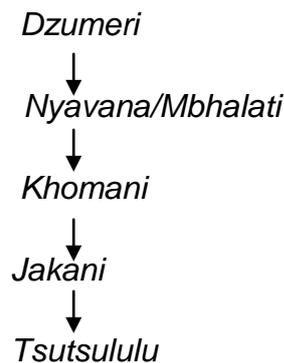
Tsutsululu

(*Dzumeri* son of *Nyavana* or *Mbhalati* son of *Khomani* son of *Jakani* son of *Tsutsululu*).

Khomani Mbhalati got the name when he came back from the initiation school. The names given to the individuals should reflect a combination of these qualities and their life histories. What is of primary importance, however, is the adoption of praise-poems (*xithopo*) as a medium to represent the 'self' prior to the incorporation of Vatsonga to industrialisation (monetary economy) initiation names of the sons of chiefs transcended the confines of the initiation school; they were also used for naming age-group regiments. All those who were initiated with him identified themselves as belonging to chief so-and-so son's regiment and were called by his

name, and "it was regarded as a great honour to be initiated with a chief's son" (Kunene, 1958: 184). Because of the status factor associated with the chief's son's regime name, elder boys would sometimes want to be circumcised with the chief's son.

3.6 SCHOOL NAMES INDICATIVE OF RELIGIOUS AND APARTHEID INFLUENCE

After the arrival of the missionaries and the consequent spread of Christianity in the country, many people were given Christian names. The missionaries had a great challenge in pronouncing some of the African names and they changed or gave a second Christian name to the Africans. Jenkins *et al.* (1996:3) state that the name-giver was giving names to features which (to him) had no previous name, or renaming features that already had African or Dutch names. The name he chose was either a duplicate of names from his country or named after him or his family.

The advent of Western cultures has a negative impact on the indigenous African naming system. The indigenous names came to be undermined and regarded as of low status. Christianity is one of the creeds by which Western culture was transmitted to the Vatsonga people, and this was the most effective system of destroying the indigenous system of naming. The European missionaries could pronounce the newly awarded names with ease compared to the indigenous names such as *Rhangani* and *Mihloti*, even though these Christian names were hardly meaningful to the Africans. Indigenous African names were associated with non-Christianity or what the converts used to refer to as *Vahedeni* (heathens). A new name given after a conversion to Christianity showed that such an African has become a convent. Mbiti (1990:115) correctly observes that almost all African names have meanings rooted in culture and history. Names bestow identity. A name has an impact on the life of an individual and his or her family.

3.6.1 *Charlie Rhangani Primary School*

The names derived from Western culture reflect no meaning and relation to residents. An example is Charlie *Rhangani Primary School*. This is a school with double names,

English and Xitsonga. The school was named after the only person from the royal family who had both English and Xitsonga names and he was also the interpreter to the missionaries. While working with him, they had a challenge of pronouncing his name, so they gave him the name Charlie. When the community decided to establish a primary school at Mageva, they named it *Charlie Rhangani* to honour him. The name Charlie is typical for Germanic names as it is not composed of two elements, but simply a noun meaning "(free) man*." (Charlie-Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia).* The name Charlie was in a sense ironic because *Charlie Rhangani* as a black person was not free as blacks in general were ruled by colonialists. After the departure of the White farmers, the names allocated to the black people remained with them, others renamed them or simply reverted to their original names, but Charlie Rhangani never reverted*. Rhangani* comes from the verb *rhanga*, meaning the first one.

3.7   SCHOOLS NAMED AFTER THE CHIEF'S BROTHERS-IN-LAW AND HEADMEN

Schools under the jurisdiction of the chief are also named after their headmen. All headmen around Dzumeri are related to the chief, since most of them are married to the chief's sisters, and they are called *Van'waMabunda* or *Van'waDzumeri*. The discussion that follows will highlight some school names in this regard.

3.7.1 *Bvuma Primary School*

Bvuma Primary School is located at Loloka village. The school is named after the headman Bvuma, because of his hard work and dedication to his duties. Bvuma is married to four of the chief's sisters.

3.7.2 *Xitlakati Primary School*

Xitlakati Primary School is located at Xitlakati village. *Xitlakati* literally means tattered clothes. According Respondent 6, the name *Xitlakati* is derived from the fact that the former headman, Xitlakati, had a taste for expensive brands of clothing, but would wear the clothes until they were tattered. The school was named after him to honour him. Xitlakati's real name is Sunday Nkuna. *Xitlakati* is a nickname given to him

because of his dressing code (more information will be found in chapter 4 under negative nicknames).

3.7.3 *Munghonghoma Primary School*

At Munghonghoma, there is *Munghonghoma Primary School* named after the village. Initially, Munghonghoma was from Nkomo, Chief Ndhambi asked him to relocate to Munghonghoma because he feared that people would steal his land. They honoured him by naming the village after him. The community further thanked him by naming the primary school after him. He got his name when he came back from the initiation school.

3.7.4 *Ndzhovela Primary School*

Daniel Rababalela is the only village called by the name and surname of a resident. At Daniel Rababalela there is a primary school named *Ndzhovela*. This is the first primary to be built in the village. The chief used this village to accommodate people who were accused of witchcraft. The person suspected of witchcraft was handed to the chief, and as a fine he was supposed to offer a substantial number of head of cattle to him and relocate to Daniel Rababalela village. Daniel was not a stable person; he used to go and work in Gauteng. His village was supposed to stay without a headman. The chief asked Jackson Ndzhovela to act as a headman while Daniel was away. Later Daniel became sick and came back home. He passed away in 1974 and his headman duty was taken from Ndzhovela and given to Daniel's son, Mahommed Rababalela. Ndzhovela was honoured for his hard work while he was acting as headman.

3.7.5 *N'wakhada Secondary School*

At Kheyi village there is a secondary school named *N'waKhada*, built in 1987. *N'waKhada* is the name of the headman in the village. His surname is Mathebula (Baloyi) from the royal family at N'wamitwa, which is in Greater Tzaneen. When Mathebula came to Dzumeri he was looking for grazing land for his livestock. He was

a headman and a brother-in-law to the chief. The community also honoured him by naming the school after him.

3.7.6 *Mushiyani Primary School*

At Mushiyani village there is a school named *Mushiyani Primary School*. Mushiyani was the first resident in the area. The community named the school after him to honour their first resident.

3.7.7 *Chameti Secondary School*

Chameti Hlongwane is the name of the headman in the village. His sister was married to the royal family. The school was named after the headman to honour him. According to Respondent 7, *chameti* means lack of water, the word a mixture of *Sotho* and *Xitsonga*. When naming the school the people wanted both ethnic groups to feel honoured. Mushiyani village has a challenge of water supply. And according to Respondent 8, Chameti is a village in Mozambique, so the community named the school after this village, in remembrance of their country of origin, Mozambique.

3.7.8 *Mayephu Primary School*

At Mayephu there is a school named *Mayephu Primary School*. The school was built in 1967. Mayephu was originally from Mpumalanga, Lydenburg, and he relocated to Mhava village. On his arrival he got a job as a bodyguard to chief Mhlava. He was a loyal person; as a result the chief thanked him by giving him many head of cattle. He came to Dzumeri to ask for grazing land in 1925. Chief Dzumeri made him a headman. He once killed a tiger, and this made his fame flourish.

3.7.9 *Mzilela Primary School*

Mzilela Primary School was built in 1974 at Mzilela village. Mzilela is the name of the first headman in the village. *Mzilela* is a nickname which he gave himself when he came back from the initiation school. His real name is Piet Zava Nkwinika (Zitha).

Chief Ndhambi made him headman, having been married to the chief's sister. The school was named after him to honour him.

3.7.10 *Phayizani Primary School*

At Maphata village there is a school named *Phayizani Secondary School*. Phayizani is the name of the headman and he, too, was the brother-in-law to Chief Dzumeri, because he married two of the chiefs' sisters (Chief Dzumeri and Chief Ngove). His wives were *N'waDzumeri* and *N'waNgove.* The village honoured him by naming the school after him.

3.7.11 *Mhitlwa Primary School*

Mhitlwa Primary School is located at Khaxani village. The school was named after the headman of the village to honour him. The first headman was Jakalazi, and Mhitlwa took over from him when he died.

3.8   SCHOOLS WITH HONORIFIC AND COMMEMORATIVE NAMES

This is another broad category. According to Mokgokong (2004:9) honorific and commemorative names refer to people in authority or to owners of land or simply to someone who had a link with a place. This is a naming pattern whereby schools are named after people. The purpose is mainly to honour and commemorate them. To qualify to be honoured, a person has to be important in the eyes of the community or sometimes the person may be named for his notorious deeds. Prominence is usually acquired through different achievements, some through positions of leadership, for example chiefs (traditional leaders), military leaders, headmen, community elders and relatives to the chief. An honorific is a word or expression with connotations conveying esteem or respect when used in addressing or referring to a person. Sometimes, the term is used not quite correctly to refer to an honorary title. It is also often conflated with systems of honorific speech in linguistics, which are grammatical ways of encoding the relative social status of speakers. Typically, honorifics are used for second and third persons; use for first persons is less common. Names of

traditional leaders, in the first place indicate that the area is rural, where people are still under tribal authority and they bring to one's mind the customs and activities of rural life. Honorific names are dominant in all areas, rural and urban.

Other people are honoured for their contribution to the development of the community in various fields, such as, religion, education and health. This trend is common across cultures. In the areas demarcated for this study honorific names are found mainly in all other villages in Dzumeri, which in the apartheid days, were inhabited predominately by Africans. This pattern of naming is still continuing even now in the democratic era, with naming and renaming of schools, places and others. These names refer to people or simply to someone who has a link with a place. Examples include *Constantinople* because an emperor made it the capital of the Roman Empire. *New York* is honorific for the Duke. *Cape of Good Hope* is a renaming of a more descriptive *Cape of the Tempests*. For an example, according to Phillip W. Goetz quoted by (Mokgokong 2004:9), there is a school in Polokwane named *General Piet Joubert Skool*, which is named after the soldier Piet Joubert who is the founder of Polokwane. There were also schools owned and managed by the missionaries.

The head of the tribe did not like the attitude of missionaries, when they forced people to join their faith before their children could be admitted. Chief Dzumeri established a school and the Department of Education deployed Mr. Mangotlo from Valdezia-Elim to be its headmaster and a teacher at the same time. This sub-pattern of naming is an exception rather than a rule. Mr Mangotlo was never honoured; instead the first official school was named after Chief Dzumeri.

Names may be given to schools to show how people suffered or enjoyed themselves under the leadership of a particular headman, or chief. This is supported by the view expressed by Gregory and Smith (1994:443) as quoted by Chauke (2005:125).

The names of settlements, locations, fields and features of natural and cultural landscapes may provide evidence of environmental settlement and social conditions at the time a name was coined. Schools are named after chiefs, not through their

names, totem animals or praise names but by their features. The intention was clearly to honour members of the ruling family.

When naming schools, the African people are also creative. When a school is serving two or more communities or built by communities belonging to different chiefs or headmen, they would combine names or totem animals to make one name. For an example at Maphata Village there is a school named *Muswanama Primary*. The name is a combination of *Xitsonga* and *Sotho*. Its meaning and reasons why it was named *Muswanama Primary School* will be discussed further in the next chapter, under 4.3.1. The adjective *commemorative* is derived from the verb *commemorate*. According to Tulloch (1993: 284), to *commemorate* means to celebrate in speech or writing or to preserve in memory by some celebration. Hawkins, *et al.* (1998: 126) echo Tulloch's view when they state that to commemorate means a celebration or reminder of some past event or person etc. Commemorative then means a celebration to honour someone or a school name for the important events that took place in the past. Some school names are derived from people's names. Although of late these school names are being changed for similar reason.

3.9   CONCLUSION

The chapter focuses on clan names and various naming patterns of schools around Dzumeri community. It stressed that naming a school is considered an important appraisal; hence school names are determined by the community at large. Both living and dead members' names are considered in naming a new school. This indicates that the living and the departed have a special place in the history of the community. The choice of such names is equally influenced by the royal family members.

From a traditional point of view, naming a school after some outstanding or revered people is regarded as an honour to the school in that it is believed the students would emulate that particular prominent figure. It has also been mentioned that schools were given names of traditional leaders. It has also been noted that school names reflect a spectrum of emotions, and therefore it is necessary that people are in agreement. The chapter has also pointed out that Vatsonga still adhere to their customs, and that naming is very much important in their lives.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DYNAMICS OF SCHOOL NAMES IN XITSONGA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The emphasis in this chapter is on naming patterns of schools which are not related to clan names, and what they are likely to reveal.

The chapter also deals with the names of geographical features that include natural and non-natural entities, and schools named after events.

4.2 DEFINITION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAME

Kadmon (1992:8) comments:

> A geographical name is a toponymy - the name of topographical features whether natural or man-made are identified by people through names given to them.

It is common for people to name a school to express social trends. Place names through their meanings, denotations, and connotations, are capable of arousing strong feelings (Jenkins, Raper & Moller, 1996).

Geographical names serve several functions. They serve to locate, classify, distinguish, characterise an endless number of places of varying nature, function and size. But they also serve to recall, evoke, record and even promote elements of the collective memory of a people, be they events, persons or other elements of regional and national culture.

Dorrion (1992) notes that names reveal significant cultural and environmental aspects of a community's identity. Dlomu (1994:13) further indicates that "geographical names are packed with cultural messages".

4.3 TOPOGRAPHICAL NAMES

There is also a practice whereby schools are named after a particular physical feature in the environment. These are topographical names; because they describe some features of the landscape. The topographic element in the name can be a natural feature of the landscape such as a hill, valley, a type of country, a river, a stream, a pool, a sea, or human created or used elements such as a burrow or fret. We also find these in schools around Dzumeri. One of the patterns is naming the schools after natural features like mountains, rivers and streams. These do not generate any controversy because people agree about them.

The same view is echoed in Raper, *et al*. (1977:2) who state that place names are mainly given according to topographical phenomena, events, appearance, situations, the presence of water and species of fauna and flora. In many instances, these natural features have some significance for the community apart from identifying and locating the school. This chapter will therefore identify schools that are given names of mountains and streams and explain how they relate to the inhabitants of that particular area. Duckling (1974:192) refers to such names as transferred names. He states that the largest group of such names consists of transferred place names, which area usually borrowed because of sentimental association. Dzumeri village has schools named after a mountain, rivulet and stream.

4.3.1 Schools named after a mountain, rivulet and stream

Some schools were given the names in accordance with the natural features existing in that particular area. Name givers sometimes bestow names according to the physical appearance of the area. Scholars have found that toponymy provides valuable insight into the historic geography of a particular region. Toponymys do not only illustrate ethnic settlement patterns, but they can also help identify discrete periods of immigration. According to the *Free Dictionary* (2007:1) toponymy is "the branch of lexicology that studies the place names of a region or a language". The abovementioned is evident at Bambeni village; there is an interesting naming pattern

which is peculiar to that area. Some schools are not named after chiefs, but accordance with their physical features and totem animals.

4.3.1.1 *Phadi Primary School*

Phadi is a mountain next to Exivhalweni village. *Exivhalweni* has been changed to *Xamfana,* meaning little boy. Their fathers used to work at the mine wearing *'tinjovo'* (clothes made from wild animals). *Phadi* is the name of the mountain with a big rock on top of it, and a big cave underneath it. It used to have Wild animals. Some way back the Vhavhenda migrated from Venda during the forceful removal of South Africans to be grouped together in the former homelands. When they reached Bambeni, they did not have shelter. They discovered a big cave at this mountain, and decided to hide there. They were so many, and due to suffocation and staying inside the cave they were infected and killed by chicken-pox, alias *Phadi* in Tshivenda. Due to the outbreak of chicken pox, they named the mountain Phadi. They named the school *Phadi Primary* in remembrance of those who died at the mountain due to *phadi* (chicken pox) which in Xitsonga is called *swimungwamungwana.* The school's name is descriptive, clearly describing a mountain. Name-givers sometimes bestowed names, according to the physical appearance of the area.

4.3.1.2 Muswanama Primary School

At Maphata village there is also a school called *Muswanama Primary.* The school is named after a stream. According to Respondent 9, at Maphata only the Vatsonga tribe used to reside there; but at some stage due to migration, the Basotho people came to ask for grazing land for their livestock. Later on, some of the Bapedi came to Maphata because of the introduction of the Group Areas Act. During this time homelands were created. The chief accepted their plea, and were given land to settle in. They had a lot of cattle and goats. There is a little stream with a lot of water known as *Muswanama* that flows adjacent to the village where livestock drink water.

There was a challenge at the community whereby goats disappeared without trace. The community started realized that when their livestock go to the stream to drink water, some of the goats did not return. A resolution was taken that divers must go

and check as to what was taking their goats in the stream. To their amazement they discovered that there was a very big pond infested with crocodiles. *Muswanama* is a word derived from two languages, Xitsonga and Sepedi or Northern Sotho. It means when someone or something goes for good and never returns.

There was a time when the community needed to build a school at their village, and they named it after a river stream *Muswanama*. The community gave the school this name because they wanted their children to go to school and learn and not bunk classes during teaching and learning. They wanted them to be better people of tomorrow and bring civilisation to the community. In Xitsonga *swa-* means to disappear forever and Sotho *ma-* literally means to go faraway, and forever this name suggests that learners must go to school to learn and proceed with their studies to higher institutions and must not be seen lingering in the village uneducated.

There is a proverb in Xitsonga which says *dyondzo i xitlangu*, meaning that education is a shield. The community named the school *Muswanama* to embrace the tragedy of crocodiles which killed their goats.

4.3.1.3 *Makhwivirini Secondary School*

At Daniel Rababalela village there is *Makhwivirini Secondary School*. This is the only village among 18 villages around Dzumeri with the name and surname at the same time*. Makhwivirini Secondary School* is named after the river that is found in that area. According to Respondent 10, a member of the community and a local teacher at Daniel Rababalela, chose this name because they did not want the school to be named after a person. They believed that when a person passes away so does his name. They also had a problem in using a person's name because their leaders or headmen in the village were constantly replaced from time to time. For example, the person who started as a headman was Daniel Rababalela, and he was the first person to come and stay at the place. He travelled a lot and when he was away there was no one to look after the community.

Chief Ndhambi deployed Mr. Ngoveni Mativisi from Kheyi village to Daniel Rababalela village and be the headman while Daniel Rababalela was in Gauteng and other places. The community never welcomed him because they did not want a *Xitaxifamba,* a person they did not know. He ruled for a very short period, and he was disliked and disobeyed. As a result, some of the community members conspired to kill him. But, they first told him lies that his son had beaten a community member's goat. The owner of the goat bought assassins who were instructed to cut his body into pieces with an axe and pangas. This made the chief to look for a local person to be a headman in the meantime.

When they submitted the names to the Department of Education, *Makhwivirini'*s name was the first in order of preference. They chose *Makhwivirini* rivulet to be the name of the school, because the river never dries up; even today the river still flows with water. This is the only high school in the village.

4.4   NAMING SCHOOLS AFTER HISTORIC EVENTS

The naming of schools after historical figures is a subtle yet powerful way of communicating "the accomplishment of previous generations" and defining a set of folk heroes (Goldstein, 1978:119). Merging history and the physical environment, place and other spatial commemorations   gives the process of naming legitimacy and identification with the natural order of things (Azarayahu, 1996).

Historical names are of great importance and significance in that they are symbolic in nature and may help to uncover the history of a village, town, city or country and school. Many schools have a history attached to them or come about as a result of events or the nature of their surroundings. According to *Hornby's Dictionary* (1974) an event is something that happened of an unusual scale, something memorable. School names given after events and situations serve as symbols of reminding people of their experience.

Names in Africa and all over the world for both individuals and places are not mere tags; they carry with them certain meaning. In the case of places, they reflect a particular history of a given people, either residing in the area or those with some link

with the area. Sometimes when naming schools, the African people were also creative when, for example, a school is serving two or more communities, or built by communities belonging to different chiefs or headmen. Such schools would combine names or totem animals to make one name. Sometimes the name givers would give a school a neutral name with a meaning to the community indicating the event that took place during its naming or establishment.

4.4.1 *Hinkhensile Secondary School*

At Dzumeri there are schools which are named after historic events. At Xitlakati village there is a school named *Hinkhensile Secondary School,* which was built in 1992. *Hinkhensile* means "we are grateful". Indeed when the community built this school there were so grateful because other communities had just been declined permission to build schools.

4.4.2 *Sasekani Secondary School*

At Mphakane village two official languages are spoken that is Xitsonga and Northern Sotho (Sepedi), though they can be considered as representing the same social reality. The village is dominated by Vatsonga speaking people. When the first secondary school was established at Mphakane, it was named after the headman's father. Mphakane's surname is Malatjie and he is a Pedi man. He came to Dzumeri in 1944. Malatjie used to work for a white farmer in the neighbouring farm. The farmer came to ask for a piece of land from chief Ndhambi in order to accommodate his workers, having had no land on his farm to accommodate his workers. Mr. Mphakane Malatjie was the foreman at the farm and he asked the chief to be the headman in the new area. The land was nameless so the people named it after Mphakane after the chief agreed to install him as the headman. Mphakane himself never came to live at Mphakane, staying behind at Modjadji his birth place where he died.

The village needed a high school, so the community decided to build it themselves. In 1992 the school was established, and it was named after their headman Mphakane, in his honour him. He is not related to the chief in any way and as has already been mentioned above, he was a Pedi.

This has pushed the community to change the name of the school from *Mphakane* to *Sasekani.* Mphakane's name was used for six (6) months only. Vatsonga thought that Basotho would undermine them. They further went on to say: *A hi sasekeni hi nga ha pendi hi Vasotho (*let us shine and be beautiful; let us not let the Basotho rule and overpower us).

Literally it means that they must not let Bapedi control them in their own land. *Sasekani* is a word derived from *saseka* (of beauty) and the vocative suffix *-ni.* The name *Sasekani* calls upon the village to beautify their surroundings by engaging in a variety of community development projects. For instance, *Sasekani Secondary School* must give their children the best and quality education they deserve by producing good examination results.

4.4.3 *Vuyani Primary School*

At Mbhedlhe village there is *Vuyani Primary School.* There was no school at the village, and learners had to travel for about thirty-five   kilometres on foot others bare footed from Mbhedhle to *Vahlave Primary School* at Ngove village to seek education. *Vuyani* comes from the verb *vuya* which means to come back. The community was calling the learners to come back home and learn at *Vuyani Primary School.* Vuyani was also one of the names of teachers who assisted with teaching and learning when the missionaries arrived. They named the school after him because he played a crucial role in offering his free services in the Dzumeri community.

4.4.4   *Katekani Primary School*

At Zava village there is *Katekani Primary School.* When the school was to be built there was a lot of rain. The rivers were full of water, and this made it easy for the

community to build the school. They finished the school building in a very short space of time. And they were blessed by having a school built in their community.

4.4.5 *Kulani Primary School*

There is also a primary school named *Kulani. Kulani* comes from the verb *kula* which means to grow bigger. They named the school *Kulani* honouring the Mabunda royal family. They were happy about the development of education at Dzumeri. Shabangu (1994:66) supports the idea that a name can be given from a verb, he posits that: "*Swa fanela leswaku mavito ya vumbiwa ya huma eka maendli ku komba muendli wa mhaka*".

It is wise for to understand that a name is something that is used by other people more than their own. When giving names to schools, it is important to know and understand their meanings of the past or the present. At Mageva village there is a school named *Ukuthula (*refer to its history and the appraisal of naming pattern in 4.8 of this chapter).

4.4.6 *Govani Primary School*

Govani Primary School is the name of a school at Mphakane village. In Xitsonga *govani* comes from the verb *gova,* meaning to arrive at a village unknown and ask to stay before you are registered as a member of the community. The first inhabitants at Mphakane were originally from a local farm called Barnard, which is now called Constantia nicknamed *Falia*. They were having a challenge of accommodation and its owner came to Chief Dzumeri to ask for a piece of land to accommodate his workers. They were called as people who are loaning the land and in Xitsonga they say *gova.* They are called like this until they have registered and recognised by the community and start to contribute or pay money for stands. In Xitsonga this is said to be *mali ya xigodo* (payment for the stand). The school was the first one to be built in the village and they named it *Govani* in remembrance of the name they were given by the first time arrived in the area.

4.5   SCHOOLS WITH WESTERN NAMES

The arrival of missionaries during 1800s in Transvaal led to a fundamental transformation in Vatsonga social life and world view. The primary objective of the missionaries was to convert Vatsonga into Christianity. The number of chiefs who were converted at this time could evaluate an assessment of the impact of missionaries.   And the introduction of formal education which is concomitant to conversion was the introduction of Christian names among the Vatsonga who were baptised in the church and to pupils attending missionary schools. Children were given names derived from the Bible to denote their newly acquired status. English names were also used, particularly for those who had to go and work for European settler families. They eventually adopted English names as their second names in order to avoid the derogatory modes of address so often used by Europeans at the time such as "Sixpence", "Jim" or "Mary" (Ashton, 1967).

4.5.1 *Kheyi Primary School*

At *Kheyi* village there is a school named *Kheyi Primary School.* Kheyi Joe Mathebula is the name of a person who was elected as the headman, and the village is named after him. The name *K* was given to him as a nickname because he regularly used to say *ok* when he spoke.

4.5.2 *Nghilazi Primary School*

At Guwela there is also a school named *Nghilazi Primary School. Nghilazi* is a word borrowed from English meaning glass. It was named in honour of Mr. Mthombeni. He was also a headman and married from the royal family. They named the school after him to honour him. The leaders asked the community to take care of the school as if it was a glass. (Its naming patterns are also explained in chapter 3 and the sub-heading is the same as above).

4.5.3 *Semendhe Secondary School*

At Mbhendlhe there is a school named *Semendhe Secondary School. Semendhe* is a name given to George Mnqiloqolo Selowa. He was given the name when he come back from the initiation school, and he was proud of this name because he liked to say he was untouchable and strong like Portland cement. He was a prominent figure in the village and also a strong man. His father was the headman, and after his death *Semendhe* took over the headmanship. The school was given the name *Semendhe* to honour him. The name *semendhe* (cement) is an English word defined by *The Free Online Dictionary* as "a building material made by grinding calcite limestone and clay to a fine powder, which can be mixed with water and poured to set as a solid mass or used as an ingredient in mixing mortar or concrete". His character made the community to honour him by naming a school after him.

4.5.4 *Shihlomule Secondary School*

It is alleged by Respondent 11 that during the process of applying to the Department of Education, there was a lot of corruption in the process of the approval of the building of a school. At Khaxani village the community had applied before Zava community could apply and had included the information that the new school would cater for their three (3) neighbouring villages, Zava, Khaxani and Kheyi. Their application was turned down and the reason given was that the communities had fewer occupants. This means that the enrolment of learners would not meet the requirements of the Department of Education.

The application from Khaxani village was approved, and was going to carter for their community only. This angered the people of Zava village. They went straight to the inspector to get clarity, and to threaten him pointing out that he was involved in receiving bribes. To their surprise their declined letter was uplifted, and they got an approval letter to build the school. This made the community of Zava to believe the rumours of bribery. They named the school *Shihlomule Secondary School.* In English *shihlomule* means sufferings, indeed they suffered a lot to get an approval letter to

build the school. *Shihlomule* also has a spelling error it was supposed to have been written *Xinhlomulo* (refer to *Shihlomule* Secondary School at 4.7 below).

4.6   SCHOOLS WITH NICKNAMES

The research analysis and discussion will try to figure out any particular pattern that is observed, any possible rule under which this activity takes place and the constraints that determine the nicknames for different names of schools. Nicknames are observed for different naming patterns as well.

Members of society give a nickname to the individual. The name is usually descriptive, summing up the individual's character, physical shape and idiosyncrasies (Kahari, 1990:283). While Kahari's conceptions are concise, it leaves out two important attributes of a nickname that pertain to Vatsonga society. Kahari's definition implies that nicknames are given to men alone and that they always have to be given by members of the community.

In Xitsonga, like in other South African cultures, nicknames are given to both men and women and individuals can also adopt nicknames for themselves.   The self-selected nickname is always positive and has undertones of self-praising and bragging. Sometimes the imposed nickname may become more established than the one adopted for oneself. There is a tendency for the addressee to resist the imposed nickname; this indirectly encourages peers or members of the community to use the name more frequently. Imposed nicknames are of three types. They can be positive, negative, and descriptive, morphologically. The names in the three categories are either compounds or derivatives. Nicknames are only used to address the addressees directly by friends or acquaintances. The other members of the society may only refer to the names in secret.

4.6.1 POSITIVE NICKNAMES

Nicknames appear as metaphorical descriptors of members of a community. A positive nickname can be a symbol of endearment and cherished values. At community and national levels such names are given to leaders. South Africa's president Jacob Zuma, has a nickname, *Muchini-wam, for example,* because of his favourite slogan or liberation song. National leaders can be given pet names, too.

4.6.1.1 *Dzumeri Primary School*

Dzumeri Primary School was built in 1958*.* The school name was given after Chief Dzumeri*.* The names alluded to or described the various episodes in which their bearers distinguished themselves. Dzumeri is the nickname given to Chief Mabunda by the Sothos because they said if people spoke to him he was a good listener. If he did not approve of a particular issue at hand, he would never show his disapproval even if he knew he was against it. He would just pretend to welcome the idea by saying responding positively. In Sesotho 'yes' means *kedometsi* and they would say we knew already *o dumetsi* meaning he would say yes (refer to chapter three (3) under the sub-heading schools named after clan names).

4.6.1.2 *Mizuzwana Primary School*

At Ndhambi village there is a school named *Mizuzwana Primary School.* This is a positive nickname given to Piet Mabunda, the little brother to late the Chief Nyumbani Mabunda. *Mizuzwan*a is a Zulu word, meaning *mali* (money). When his brother, Gezi died in 1968, Chief Divila Wilson Mabunda was still young. Mizuzwana was asked to act on behalf of the chief because Divila the chief-to-be was still young. The nickname *Mizuzwana* was given to Piet Mabunda by the community when he was still alive. This is a positive nickname.

There was a need for a second primary school, because the community was getting bigger and *Dzumeri Primary School* was overcrowded. By this time the community had *Nyumbani High School* in honour of the late Chief Nyumbani. Mizuzwana was a good wise man with an intelligent mind and who understood the importance of

education in his community. During his reign he formed a tribal council which comprised different stakeholders such as: pastors, school principals, teachers and headmen. He never approved of corruption and nepotism, and this made him to be honoured. He also understood that education is a better way to success.

The community came with a resolution and agreement that a second (2) primary schools must be built. During the apartheid regime, communities were the ones to start erecting school buildings, so the community had to build on their own. A neutral venue was chosen. The acting Chief Mizuzwana agreed with the community that each household had to pay five rand. He never delegated anyone to collect the money. He did it by himself using his bicycle. If the household did not have the money, they had to do some work in the project, for instance collecting sand, burning the bricks and fetching water from the river.

His hard work and dedication made the community to name the proposed school *Mizuzwana* in honour of him, while he was still alive. Most of the schools in South Africa are named after the clan family names and heroes after they have passed away. The school is situated next to *Nyumbani High School.* They are just one (1) kilometre apart from each other.

4.6.1.3 *Matsotsosela Primary School*

At Matsotsosela village there is a school named after the name of the village itself *Matsotsosela Primary School. Matsotsosela* is a positive nickname, given to Bvuma. He was a famous *sangoma* (witch-doctor). *Matsotsosela* literally means a good witch-doctor. He was best when it came to healing and protecting new born babies. In Xitsonga we call the ceremony *ku tshusa* and in Sotho they call it *tsotsosela*. He got this job due the nature of work he was offering by protecting the newly born babies.

Tattoo making is the last ceremony from the birth of the child. Vatsonga believe in protecting their children against illness that can disturb the life of the child. According to Mönnig (1962:122) to vaccinate the child against illnesses that are caused by witches, the parents of the child will hand the child to a *sangoma* (traditional healer) and thereafter he or she will cut the skin of the child by a razor, putting *muti*

(*sangoma*'s medicine) inside. The parents will be given some orders that the child should follow for the period of three days, i.e. the child should not bathe.

In the African culture, traditional healers play an important role in protecting the lives of their newly born children and in shaping their lives. As mentioned above, the school was named *Matsotsosela Primary School*. They were honouring the witch-doctor, because he protected their children from birth until they started schooling. The community wished that their children could excel in their education because they were strong and had a strong protection from their local witch-doctor Matsotsosela. The nickname *Matsotsosela* has two versions because, according to Respondent 12, *Matsotsosela* was given this name because he used to offer his visitors *umqomboti* traditional beer, believing that a person cannot talk sense if he has not taken *umqomboti* first.

4.6.1.4 *Ukuthula Primary School*

At Mageva village there is a school with a positive nickname, it is called *Ukuthula Primary School* (refer to this chapter at 4.8 for its naming patterns).

4.6.2 Negative nicknames

Imposed negative nicknames are generally used for expressing disapproval, deriding, and insulting the addressee in order to discourage him or her from certain forms of behaviour. If a community intends to show its discontent with character of a person in power or and authority, it imposes a nickname on him or her. The community uses the name to refer to him or her in secret. The addressee may or may not know his or her nickname. Nicknames imposed on children by their peers or adults may be used to address them directly. Morphologically, there are two types of imposed nicknames; those that are coined from names of known people or media/ literary characters whose behaviour resembles that of the addressee.

4.6.2.1 *Xitlakati Primary School*

Xitlakati Primary School is located at Xitlakati village. The school has been named after the name of the village. *Xitlakati* is also the name of the headman in the village. *Xitlakati* is a negative nickname given to Mr. Sunday Nkuna. *Xitlakati* literally means tattered things, here they were referring to a person who does not bath regularly and adorns tattered clothes. According to Respondent 13, the name *Xitlakati* is initially derived from the fact that *Xitlakati* had a taste of expensive brands of clothing. He used to wear expensive labels. He had one weakness, though, that of wearing the same clothes every day until the clothes were in tatters. It was then that he would buy new clothes. He was also untidy, and he never minded about his nickname. He was a simple person, he used to wear a *kanga,* and in Xitsonga we call it *nceka*, all the time even on top of a suit. The community honoured him by naming the school after him. His tattered clothes symbolise that the learners must study hard until their books are in tatters, to gain knowledge, as goes the saying in English, "knowledge is power". One can further talk about imposed or colourful nicknames (Herbert, 1992). Imposed nicknames may be pleasant or not in that they are sometimes insulting, offensive or derogatory. This is evident from the nickname *Xitlakati.*

4.6.3 Coinage

Traditionally, Xitsonga nicknames where highly descriptive and imaginative. Examples of coined names, which depict certain behavioural patterns and which appear as coded messages are the following:

Matsotsosela literally means one who is a witchdoctor specialising in healing newly born children or preventing them from evil spirits and so that they are not bewitched. *Xitlakati* literally means tattered clothes.

Nicknames can be a descriptor of a physical characteristic, or the opposite of a physical characteristic. It should be noted that in English, such nicknames are often considered offensive or derogatory, unless the nickname is based on a trait that is viewed positively. Sometimes nicknames are based on things to alter a person's physical appearance; such names can be temporary.

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Nicknames act as "tokens of positive identification" and serve to establish an informal relaxed atmosphere (De Klerk & Bosch, 1997 and Neethling, 1994). One of the most common functions of nicknames is to signal affection or friendship. Finnegan (1970:470) highlights this issue when she states that: "Names can be used as a succinct and above oblique way of commenting on their owner or on others". For example, the name of the school *Kheyi* is a nickname, given to him because he used to say *ok* and nodding his head to say yes when talking (refer to 4.5 above).

According to Macebele (2000:31) as quoted by Chauke (2005:20) these nicknames play an extremely important role in that they act as cohesive social devices indicating warmth, solidarity, and affection. From the above quote one can conclude that people around Dzumeri recognize nicknames as being of value because they reflect the importance, and motivate a person to keep up the good work he is doing. But on the other hand, they mock what the person does, believing that he will abandon his wayward deeds.

4.7   SCHOOLS WITH MISSPELLED NAMES

Various dialects of Xitsonga are spoken in South Africa. While most dialects are mutually intelligible, they are geographical as well as based on influence of the colonial era. These dialects and relatives differ in pronunciation. For example, in the South African Vatsonga, the use of the prefix *xi-* is pronounced *shi-* in *Xikwembu* (God). South African Vatsonga also use consonant combinations like *nk-*, *nkhesa* (thanks) *mp-, mpahla* (clothes) and *ns- nsele* (wickedness).

All dialects have been influenced to a different degree by isiZulu, and so Xitsonga now contains click consonants. These words are not indigenous to the language, but are understood when used. Unlike the case in isiZulu where there are distinct clicks, in Xitsonga one needs only to make a clicking sound for any click word adopted.

Xitsonga uses the Latin alphabet, however certain sounds are spelled using a combination of letters, which either do not exist in Indo- European languages, or may be meant to distinguish the language somewhere. An example of this is the letter *x* taken from Portuguese orthography, which is pronounced /ʃ/. Therefore, the following words in (1a-d) below should be written in a form that appears in (2a-d):

(1)   a*. Shusha (*relax*)*
       b*. Shikolo (*school*)*
       c *. Shilo (*object)
       d*. Shihlomule (*disgrace*)*

(2)   a*. Xuxa (*relax*)*
       b*. Xikolo (*school)
       c*. xilo (*object)
       d*. xinhlomulo (*disgrace)

Xitsonga has been standardised as a written language. However, there are many dialects within the language that may not pronounce the words as written. For an example, Xitsonga Bible uses the word *byela* (tell), pronounced *bwe-la;* however a large group of speakers would say *dzvela or dyela* instead.

Wikipedia, the *Free Encyclopedia* posits the following about misspelled names: "spelling is very inconsistent in old records". Many names were spelled phonetically, sometimes with strange results." This indicates that misspelled names are an act or an instance of spelling incorrectly.

4.7.1 *Shihlomule Secondary School* and *Phadi Primary School*

In Xitsonga *shi-* is spelled *x-,* but when one is pronouncing it, it can be heard as *shi-.* It means *Shihlomule Secondary School* is misspelled as it was supposed to be *Xinhlomulo. Phadi Primary School* is a Tshivenda word meaning chicken-pox. The word is missing a symbol under the alphabet *d.* It was supposed to be written *Phaḓi.*

4.8   NAME CHANGE OF SCHOOLS

The names people give to their surroundings provide a unique source of information about a society's history, beliefs, and values. There are a large number of aspects of community development which achieve linguistic recognition through its school names. Jenkins, *et al.* (1996: 12) echoes this sentiment:

> Changing names is part of a country's history. It acts as
> a mirror of the dynamic forces of changing historical
> relations human sentiments, ideologies and attitudes
> towards change.

Interestingly, name changing may be a positive step to reflect creatively and may serve as an expression of common interests and goals of solidarity. However, name-changing may also become a political tool of manipulation, even destruction, of social assets and of a cultural heritage that may never be regained (Jenkins, *et al.*, 1996). Jenkins, et al. (*op.cit*: 5) maintain that it is only natural that when people come to power they should seek to right old wrongs by changing place names, as has happened all over the world. The following are a list of schools which received new names from old names:

Old name	New name
Hilbrow Primary School	*Ukuthula Primary School*
Mphakane Secondary School	*Sasekani* Secondary School

4.8.1 *Mphakane* to *Sasekani Secondary School*

Name change can be a process that unifies rather than divides. Different speakers of different languages also influence the name change process. This is evident with the above mentioned school, where people are usually identified by their socio-economic status, hence the change from *Mphakane Secondary School,* to *Sasekani Secondary School* (refer to 4.7 above).

4.8.2 *Hilbrow* to *Ukuthula Primary School*

At Mageva village, *Hilbrow Primary School* started at *emarhumbini* (former village) *eXivhalweni,* but changed to *Ukuthula Primary School* in 1954, when they were forcefully removed and relocated by the Boers to Mageva village. They decided to change the name of the school from *Hilbrow t*o a new name *Ukuthula.* The major reason of changing the school name was the challenge of registering it at the database of the Department of Education, because *Hilbrow School* already existed in Gauteng.

The people in Mageva also said that *Hilbrow* had no connection or meaning to them. This created some arguments and counterarguments amongst them. Respondent 11, a local businessman named the school *Ukuthula.* He named by chance; he was trying to calm the situation by telling them to be quite in isiZulu which is *thulani.* Thereafter there was quietness, so they decided to name the school *Ukuthula. Ukuthula* means "let there be peace" or "stop fighting and arguing by keeping quiet". The school was registered as *Ukuthula*, and it continues to be called by that name up to now. It never came to their minds that this is an isiZulu word. Lombard (1997) states that, "It is interesting to know the origin of a name, and when and how it became a definite family name". He says that family names are formed in different ways. The school name may be derived from a person, place of origin, but among Vatsonga, a school name is given from the community. In some societies, these schools are limited and at times got names that described their station in life.

Many schools have a history attached to them or came as a result of events or the nature of their surroundings. According to *Hornby's Dictionary* (1974) an event is something that happened or is of an unusual scale, something memorable. School names given after events and situations serve as symbols of reminding people of their experience.

Finnegan (1970:472) mentions that names are of great significance in that they can express joyful sentiments and a sense of personal aspiration for oneself or others. She further notes that names may also contribute to the literary flavour of formal or

informal conversation, adding a depth or succinctness through their meanings, overtones or metaphors.

4.9   SCHOOL NAMES FROM OTHER LANGUAGES

The Vatsonga people can give their schools Xitsonga, isiZulu, Tshivenda and Sesotho, even English names. There is a great influence of other languages as far as naming is concerned. This is also caused by migration and missionaries among the people who speak these languages. There are six (6) schools at Dzumeri that have been given names from languages other than Xitsonga.

At Bambeni village, we is a Tshivenda name *Phadi,* at Mageva village there is an IsiZulu name *Ukuthula*, and a school with a combination of English and Xitsonga, namely, *Charlie Rhangani*. At Maphata village there is a school with a combination of Xitsonga and Sesotho, which is *Muswanama*. At Ndhambi village there are two (2) schools which have nicknames, *Dzumeri*, a Sotho name and *Mizuzwana*, a Zulu name. This brings us to the conclusion that the royal family does not practice nepotism or tribalism, but they listen to the voice of the community.

4.10   SCHOOL NAMES INDICATIVE OF RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE

After South Africa it's a democracy in 1994, every religion is regarded as legal and official. Africans have different religions and beliefs. Many of them believe in ancestors and different traditional leaders. Some school names reflect their belief in the operation of ancestral spirits, gods and witch-doctors.

Van der Zanden (1963: 348) observes that religions are those socially shared ways of thinking, feelings and actions which have as their focus, the reality of the supernatural or "beyond" and that are centred in beliefs and practices related to sacred things. Giddeons (1993:124) defines religion as a kind of human behaviour, which can be classified as beliefs and rituals concerned with supernatural things, powers and faces. Hamalombos (1985:453) defines religion as belief in the existence of supernatural beings which has a governing effect on life. In this research, religion

is regarded as beliefs and practices with reference to more or less "personalised spiritual beings such as gods, ghosts and spirits".

4.10.1 *Matsotsosela Primary School*

As mentioned above *Matsotsosela Primary School* is a school at Matsotsosela village. This is a nickname given to the *sangoma/n'anga* (witch-doctor) in the village; because he was famous to the locals and even from people coming from far. They said when he talked to his bones he was good in telling the truth to his patients, so they said he *tsotsosela tinhlolo* meaning that he was excellent in his witchdoctor's work. It shows clearly that people at Matsotsosela village believe in the gods, because they gave the name related to the gods to their *sangoma,* and in turn they gave it to their school (refer to 4.6 for a full explanation of naming patterns of *Matsotsosela Primary School*).

4.11 SCHOOL NAMES WITH NO RELATIONSHIP TO NAMES OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

It is not all the time that we find school names with a meaning, sometimes we do find them without a meaning. Some school names explain past events that have happened to a particular community. This is evident in Dzumeri, because there are some schools with no relationship to the names of the royal family.

4.11.1 *Bambeni Secondary School*

Bambeni Secondary School is located at Bambeni village. Bambeni village used to be called Phadi. As mentioned above *Phadi* is the name of the local mountain at the village. According to Respondent 14, Bambeni used to be called Phadi after the local mountain. This happened after Chief Dzumeri deployed headman Mashaba to be the headman at Bambeni. The name *Bambeni,* given to the school is not named after a person, but after a small village in Mozambique. They named the school in remembrance of where they come from. According to Respondent 15, *Bambeni Secondary School* is named after Xitsonga traditional dance called *Xigubu,* danced

by Vatsonga men only. *Bamba* means to walk with pride; one can say that those males who used to dance *xigubu* were great dancers. The community named their school *Bambeni Secondary School* to show that they are walking tall, because the community was going to have the first school at last. One can conclude that when the Dzumeri community gave names to their schools, they did not give names with meanings only, but also in remembrance of their past and where they come from.

4.12 CONCLUSION

This chapter reveals that school names of geographical nature included natural and man–made entities. The names that people give to their local schools provide a unique source of information about a society's history, beliefs, and values. Some school names and their meanings reveal different aspects of life. They reveal the era in which the people lived, their language and the type of a place, whether rural or urban. The school's name can reveal the culture, attitude and behaviour of people. From the preceding discussion, what has become evident is that names of all kinds abound. The significant feature of the process of school naming is that it is not restricted to certain gifted or possibly experienced individuals, but that it could rather be seen as an extremely common activity in which many individuals or groups in any given society participate. This chapter also highlighted the fact that some schools are named after topographical features. This naming pattern shows that topographical names stand a chance of being permanent. They are mostly neutral and do not cause controversy and have the potential of unifying the people.

From this chapter, it is clear that the topographical features of a country are significant to the residents. Some schools are named after streams and mountains because of certain special events associated with them and because of emotional attachment. School names (through their meanings, denotations and connotations) are capable of expressing strong feelings of the name-givers.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to give the conclusion of the study. This will be achieved by giving a summary of each chapter of this study, as well as recommendations regarding the findings of this research.

5.2   SUMMARY

Chapter One serves as an introduction of the study. This chapter looked at the background to the problem, the aim of the study, the objectives of the study, the research methodology, and data analysis, significance of the study and the organisation of the study as a whole.

Chapter Two concentrated on literature review, and the history of naming.

Chapter Three examined naming patterns of schools in terms of the clan names prevalent in Dzumeri area. In this section, the study revealed that some schools are named after clan names and headmen.

Chapter Four analysed the meaning of school names indicative of heritage. It was discovered that school names are derived from natural features such as mountains, rivulets and streams.

The chapter also examined the impact and meanings of school names on the society. The analysis revealed that there are some spelling conventions in school names, such as *Shihlomule* and *Phadi* which were incorrectly spelt and consequently might distort the historical background of Dzumeri. These names might confuse people as they would not know their correct form.

Chapter Five concludes the study and summarises the main findings of the previous chapters and provides some recommendations and guidelines for further research. This chapter has, therefore, focused on the summary of the study, the main findings, recommendations, prospects for future research and conclusion.

5.3   FINDINGS

The following are some of the most relevant deductions that can be made from this study:

- The study of school naming, both inside and outside of Africa, with regard to traditional and modern societies, is of outmost importance, specifically in the Dzumeri area, as school names reflect a society's experiences, religion, attitudes and the physical reality of a place.

- The Study has revealed that most of the schools are given the names of members of royal families. This is reflected in the tribal names, such as *Dzumeri, Ndhambi, Nyumbani* and *Divila.*

- The study has revealed that some schools are named after people's nicknames.

- The study revealed that some schools are given initiation names, that is names given to people after having attended initiation schools. This shows that the community value initiation schools;

- The study further revealed that naming of schools in Dzumeri community has, to some extent, been influenced by religion, race, culture and   ethnicity;

- It was also clear in this study that the commemorative naming patterns of schools after the royal family deceased ancestors could help them in tracking their kinship, but this does not mean that each name from the name-stock of the ancestors qualifies to be used.

5.4 RECOMMEDATIONS

The following recommendations can be made in relation to this study:

- Naming schools after natural features such as mountains, rivulets, rivers and streams must be sustained as this, by and large, does not cause conflict in societies;

- School names that are indicative of religion and beliefs should be avoided. School names must not be discriminatory and should allow people of different religions and beliefs to be accommodated. This will help in strengthening the people's traditional ties, thus creating and promoting camaraderie and peace among the different groups in the area.

- School names that restore the historical background and cultural heritage of Africans should be encouraged as they trace the history of the area, allowing the new generation to understand the socio-political and economic dynamics of the past. It is recommended that names of former chiefs of Dzumeri royal family and names that are associated with their cultural activities be employed when naming schools. As has been alluded earlier, this will help the present generation of Dzumeri to know their roots and their cultural background;

- Noting the impact that meaning of school names have on the feelings and emotions of people, it is recommended that school names that the community give to their schools should not evoke negative emotion feelings. Hence the use of racist and offensive language should be avoided at all costs;

- It is recommended that the royal family in each community compile school database with the history of all school names. This will further help the new generation to know the history of their community and also that this indigenous knowledge will be preserved; and

- When it comes to the naming of a school the community should have freedom of choice as they are the ones who know what is important in their lived experiences.

5.5   FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study can in no way claim to have covered virtually everything on naming patterns, but it has certainly prepared ground for   future investigations in the naming patterns of schools. Future scholars may wish to explore in more detail a particular sub domain of naming patterns such as the naming patterns of birds, fish, rivers, trees dams, FET Colleges, universities, technical colleges, to mention only a few. It will be interesting to see more of these domains being rigorously examined and investigated. This will add the necessary indigenous knowledge in the national pool of cultural preservation and promotion, thus allowing the people to understand their historical African background and cultural heritage.

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