ASPECTS OF NAMING IN XITSONGA

By

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DECLARATION

I, MKHACANI THOMAS **CHAUKE**, declare that "**ASPECTS OF NAMING IN XITSONGA**", is my own original work and has not been previously submitted in any form whatsoever, by myself or anyone else, to this university or to any other educational institution for any degree or examination purposes. All sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and duly acknowledged by means of complete references.

Chauke
.....
Signature

01.06.2005
.....
Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the following people:

- My dearest wife, Portia.
- My siblings Hlamalani, Dumisani, and Chavani.
- My late grandparents, Makhanani Phillipinah and Risimati Daniel Shikolokolo Chauke, whose wise counsel remains the guiding principle of my life.

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the significance of names, different types of names and naming practices in Xitsonga. In this regard, politically-inspired names, initiation names, ancestral names, protective names, religious names, Western names, nicknames, and place names come under scrutiny. The study argues that naming practices play a pivotal role in the Xitsonga culture as almost everything that the Vatsonga do and come across in their daily activities is assigned a name.

Furthermore, the study reveals that parents and grandparents, especially, grandmothers, are tasked with naming activities among the Vatsonga. This indicates the seriousness with which the Vatsonga associate naming practices as names bestowed on children by outsiders would not receive prominence.

In a nutshell, the study indicates that naming is taken seriously in Xitsonga as each name should mean something. It is, therefore, not surprising to observe that a name in Xitsonga can be employed as a wish, a reminder of bad or good things that took place in the past or it may serve to describe personality features of the individual concerned. Lastly, the study contends that, despite the impact of Western civilization where naming may just be a number, the Vatsonga as people strive to use their names to uplift and strengthen their culture and tradition.

Chapter One deals with the preliminary considerations, the aims of the study, the rationale for the study, methodology, significance of the study, literature survey and definition of key concepts.

Chapter Two examines the morphology of nouns in Xitsonga.

In **Chapter Three** naming practices in Xitsonga culture and classification of names are discussed.

Chapter Four examines nicknaming among Xitsonga-speaking people. Different types of nicknaming, the functions and significance of nicknames in society are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Five discusses the dynamics of place names in Xitsonga, with special reference to the structure and types of place names. It also examines place name changes and the significance of place names.

Chapter Six is devoted to data gathering techniques and data analysis while **Chapter Seven** gives the general conclusion, which singles out the main findings, suggests possible conclusions and offers recommendations for further research.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Naming is a sociolinguistic act that is intimately linked to values, traditions, hopes, fears, and events in people's lives. Personal naming practices offer important insights into the patterns of social and cultural organisation of communities and may be a key to broader cultural changes. The naming of a newly born baby, implies consciously choosing a word to refer to a new person, so that the chosen name will have enormous symbolic power as it will identify the person, while it can simultaneously send across a message, express a hope or a prayer to perpetuate a cultural or religious tradition, or simply sound interesting or euphonious (Alford, 1988 as cited by de Klerk and Bosch, 1998:1). According to the Bible a name is considered to be God's gift to humanity. Fromkin and Rodman (1988:413) concur with this view:

> And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof (Genesis 2:19).

This verse asserts that God the Almighty gave Adam the power to name all things. However, there are a variety of viewpoints with regard to naming. Some people may not regard naming as of any significance, an attitude illustrated by popular sayings such as: "What is in a name?" and "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet".

In contrast, many people attach great value to naming because they believe that a name is not given for its own sake but has a special role to play in a particular society. In other words, a name has a meaning attached to it. Prabhakaran (1999:02) states:

> Names fascinate the young and the old, the literate and the illiterate alike. It is the name that identifies a person or a place. These so-called names which are phonemic representations with semantic equation do sometimes vary from one individual to the other. It is generally agreed that names have meaning.

Names fulfil a number of different functions. Names may, for instance, vividly remind people of hardships or serve as symbols of victory, glory, joy, loss or shame. In everyday language we talk about people, places, rivers, mountains, cars, and animals in terms of the names attached to them. By naming or renaming villages, schools and stadia after our heroes the new generation will be able to know and understand the role played by these great men and women in uplifting their society. In a nutshell, names may be considered as historic symbols in that they in one way or another have significance or meaning so that naming is an inherent quality of humans in their need to identify with and give meaning to the world in which they live. In Xitsonga culture, names are meaningful because they relate to circumstances surrounding birth, social aspects of the family or family standing, hopes and wishes for the child, personal characteristics of the bearer, and the social order of the group. Everyone is assigned a proper name, according to the conventions of the culture in which they are born (Neethling, 1994 and Alford, 1988).

It is also important to mention that proper names are universal obligatory linguistic signs, which distinguish individuals from one another. Names are given formally, and thus provide the name-bearers with a sense of belonging.

It is interesting to note that it is in the field of onomastics that the greatest possibility exists for the study of language creativity and innovation through name-giving as a cultural phenomenon. Neethling (2000:209) stresses the interaction between language and society when he remarks:

> Names are given and used by human beings. The study of names can therefore not be isolated from the societies in which those human beings live, nor from the study of their minds, their mental and

> emotional processes and their behavioural patterns. Where different communities interact, it stands to reason that influence of some sort would take place, also at the level of naming.

Yesufu (1996:1) is of the opinion that naming in Africa, as in most traditional societies the world over, is not an arbitrary exercise but is rather a practice that is carefully thought out in advance. He further points out that a study of names from any African cultural group is, in essence, a study of the world view of the people.

In the same vein, the study of naming and naming practices in Xitsonga will be a mirror through which we can see and understand the Vatsonga as a people.

1.2 AIMS OF STUDY

The aim of this study is to examine the significance of personal names and naming practices in Xitsonga.

This study also intends to look at the various reasons underlying the giving of Xitsonga names and to relate these names to various aspects of Xitsonga society.

Another important aim of this study is to demonstrate to the speakers of African languages in general, and the Vatsonga in particular, that their traditional African names are of great significance in that they are symbolic and meaningful.

In addition to investigating the reasons that underlie the choice of names and their significance, the study was undertaken to monitor the ways in which naming practices in Xitsonga interact with other facets of cultural organisation and the ways in which changes correlate with processes of acculturation and cultural change. In other words, the study aims to monitor the incidence of any significant changes in names and naming practices before and after the dawn of democracy.

To summarize, the study confines itself to exposing the Vatsonga to Xitsonga culture and heritage and ensuring that they appreciate and celebrate their cultural heritage through naming and naming practices.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR STUDY

An examination of personal names and naming practices in Xitsonga will create an increased understanding of the Vatsonga. It will also help scholars to understand the reasoning behind their naming practices and why such names are selected and used.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Design

Onomastic studies are generally undertaken in the qualitative research tradition. Following this tradition, an ethnographic approach (described below) was chosen, to enable an in-depth understanding of the historical and etymological factors which come into play in naming practices among the Vatsonga. An explanation of the use of "ethnography" as a method of inquiry is thus necessary, given the controversy surrounding this concept.

Borrowed from the social sciences, ethnography is understood as the study of people's behaviour in naturally occurring, ongoing settings and aims to provide "a description and an interpretive exploratory study of what people do in a setting (such as classroom, neighbourhood, or community), the outcome of their interactions, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning interactions have for them)" (Watson-Gegeo, 1988:576). The use of the term is not intended here as another instance of the narrowing of ethnographies to ethnographic studies bemoaned by, among others, Scollon (1995), who also criticises the misuse of the term ethnography and the proliferation of ethnographic studies. Nor does the approach claim to be ethnographic on the mere ground of "collecting qualitative data" which

has, erroneously, been equated with collecting ethnographic data. The study intended to rather go beyond the mere use of ethnographic tools (interviews, observation, field notes, and recordings) by adopting the basic principle of ethnography which is to "learn from people" rather than merely "study people" (Spradley, 1980:3). More specifically, the ethnographic approach which was used in this study is similar to Mehan's (1979, 1987) "constitutive ethnography" because the focus was on uncovering an emic perspective rather than on projecting etic interpretations of any significant changes in naming practices. It will be conducted along the lines of an "exploration of folk models as evidenced by [the respondents'] declarative statements concerning their quasi-introspective experiences" (Bartelt, 1997:24).

To this end, a multi-method approach was adopted in the collection as well as the analysis and interpretation of the data. The use of multiple sets of data in this study was designed as a "between method" triangulation in which more than one method of data collection is used within the same investigation (Burgess, 1982), as explained below. The use of multiple methods of data collection, sets of data, methods of analysis will mimic - but will not be identical to Denzin's (1970) idea of "multiple interpretation" because it will not include multiple investigators (see 4.5).

1.4.2 **Data collection methods**

Three different instruments were used in the data collection process, namely, questionnaires, interviews, and the documentary method to gather data from primary sources (that is, first-hand data) while the third, namely, documentation was used to analyse secondary data (that is, data collected by experts and other researchers).

1.4.2.1 Qestionnaires

Given the magnitude and complexity of the field covered in this research, the researcher deemed it fit to use a questionnaire to elicit the basic information required. A questionnaire was compiled and administered personally to Vatsonga

speaking people whose sampling is explained later (see 4.5 infra) drawn from the selected areas as shown on the map provided (See Figure 1).

1.4.2.2 Interviews

The interviews played two main roles. First, they served to verify the data collected from existing literature and the questionnaires about current naming patterns or practices, as well as the nature and extent of Western or missionary influence on the Xitsonga personal names and naming practices. Second, they provided the much needed etic interpretations which an ethnographic method requires. These interviews were conducted with the aid of a representative of the questionnaire respondents to allow for a comparison of past and present naming practices.

1.4.2.3 Documentary method

In addition to the field methods (namely, questionnaires and interviews), the documentary method was used to complement the data set consisting of the responses to the questionnaires and tape recordings. In the documentary study a variety of written sources, such as theses, dissertations, journal articles, books, and public records, were consulted.

1.4.3 **Data analysis**

The size of the data gathered by means of the interviews necessitated the use of both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Qualitative analysis, based on "content analysis", was used. For the purpose of this study content analysis is understood as propounded by Mostyn (1985), namely, as an analysis that requires that fragmented and unstructured data be restructured to make sense of and inferences from them, in contrast to the quantitative type of content analysis advocated by Krippendorff (1980) and like-minded researchers.

The questionnaire data were subsequently submitted to both quantitative (closed items) and qualitative (open items) analysis.

1.4.4 **Site**

See maps of research site (Appendix C)

1.4.5 **Participants and Sampling Procedure**

A total of fifty of the Vatsonga native speakers drawn from the designated areas (see map 2) representative of gender, age group, dialectical, and geographic (rural and urban settings) variations, were selected by stratified random sampling. It is generally accepted that a sample of fifty respondents is sufficient in a study in which a bulk of qualitative data is dealt with.

The questionnaire had been administered to the fifty subjects after which a representative smaller sample of respondents was selected for interviews. The interviews were tape recorded with the consent of the interviewees while field notes were used in the cases where the interviewees felt uncomfortable with the tape recorder.

To avoid both the impact of intrusion or "experimenter effect" (see Coolican, 1994) and the risk of unnecessary bias by a research assistant (or delegate researcher) who might unintentionally act or intervene in a way that might influence the behaviour of the interviewees and distort their responses, it was decided that the researcher would conduct the interviews himself.

1.4.6 **Hypotheses**

The research was undertaken to test the following hypotheses:

- Naming practices offer insights into the patterns of social and cultural organisation of the Vatsonga.

- Using names that are meaningful and symbolic will enable Xitsonga speakers to retain their tradition and culture. In other words, the events taking place before or after the birth of the child are recorded in names and thus the next generation will not be robbed of the significance attached to those names.

- During the apartheid era offices which issued identity documents insisted that a black person should have an African name. After the attainment of democracy in South Africa in 1994 there has, however, been a move towards abandoning Western names in favour of African names.

1.4.7 **Variables**

(i) Age

The researcher interviewed respondents whose ages ranged from 20 to 89 with the primary aim to determine both past and present naming practices.

(ii) Place of residence

The researcher interviewed respondents from both rural and urban areas in order to determine whether or not their different settings had an influence on their choice of personal names as well as on their naming patterns or practices.

(iii) Education

The level of education of the respondents ranged from no education to tertiary education.

(iv) Religion

The sample of the respondents included Christians and non-Christians.

(v) The sample of respondents

A representative sample was thus used while the researcher visited places such as homes, schools, government offices, hospitals, clinics and health centers.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Given the paucity of works on Xitsonga onomastics, the proposed thesis will contribute to existing knowledge and understanding in this area. It will also constitute a source of information for students of African linguistics, especially those interested in onomastics.

In addition, the significance of this study lies in the reflection of the value, importance and meaning attached to names since it shows how the Vatsonga give their offspring names, which are in most instances symbolic and meaningful. Grieshaber (1990:43) stresses the significance of onomastic research when he comments that it constitutes:

> ... a way of getting to know the world around us through names and the more areas of research that are explored in onomastics, the more insight we are certain to gain access into our world and its people.

The study will be of value as it will encourage the Vatsonga to maintain their rich traditional naming practices which demonstrate that the Vatsonga as a people still value and cherish their own culture and customs. A study of this nature will also bring the Vatsonga closer to reclaiming their lost pride by discouraging the use of Western names that are not symbolic or meaningful at all. They will be introduced to

different categories of names such as ancestor names, commemorative names, politically inspired names, religion-based names, family or birth names, and initiation names.

1.6 LITERATURE SURVEY

The aim of this section was to review a wide range of contributions made by various researchers on names and name-giving practices. It is perhaps important to mention that with the exception of Honours research papers in Xitsonga, no research in this field has so far been carried out at either Master's or doctoral level. The study will, inter alia, cover a wide range of viewpoints on names and naming practices as seen in different languages. The works of the following researchers were reviewed:

1.6.1 Chauke M.T. (1992)
1.6.2 Dickens S.M. (1985)
1.6.3 Koopman A. (1976 & 1986)
1.6.4 Macebele G. S. (2000)
1.6.5 Nkuna S.G. (1999).

1.6.1 Chauke M.T. (1992)

Chauke's study focuses on names and the importance attached to them. In his Honours extended essay, Chauke discusses various naming conventions of the earlier traditional Vatsonga. As far as naming conventions of the Vatsonga are concerned, Chauke (1992:11) points out that:

> Vatsonga, tani hi tinxaka ta Xintima, va thya mavito hi ku landzelela swivangelo swo karhi. Hakanyingi va leteriwa hi mavelekiwele ya n'wana, matikhomele ya muveleki hi nkarhi wa ku tika ka yena, matimu ya ndyangu, vukholwa-kholwa ni swivuriso.

> (Vatsonga, like other African tribes give names according to certain circumstances. They are often guided by the circumstances prevailing at the time of the child's birth, the behaviour of the expecting mother during pregnancy, the history of the family, beliefs and proverbs.)

Furhermore, Chauke (*ibid*) mentions that Xitsonga names fall into various categories which include home or birth names, ancestral names, divinity names, lineage names, nicknames, and historical names.

The importance of names is further highlighted when he discusses four different types of traditional naming practices. Apart from personal names, Chauke includes in his study, place names, plant names, the names of parts of the human body as well as names of rivers in the Kruger National Park. According to Chauke (1992:30), names play a significant role in reminding the next generation that once upon a time there lived a certain group of people in a particular place:

> Mavito ya ta va mimfungho leyi nga ta tshama na hina vutomi hinkwabyo. Hambi ri ri rixaka ra mundzuku ri nge velekiwi emunyameni wo pfumala ntwisiso wa ndhavuko wa rona. Mavito i ndzhaka leyi faneleke ku hlayisiwa enguleni ya rixaka.
>
> (Names will serve as symbols which will remain with us throughout our lives. Even the next generation will not be in the dark as far as its culture is concerned. Names are a treasure of society and should be carefully preserved.)

In so doing, the cherished values, attitudes, norms, and beliefs of the Vatsonga will be transmitted from one generation to another.

Another important contribution of his research is that names play a central role in uncovering a country's history. This implies that names enable people to know the world and its inhabitants. In other words, we must recognize names as treasured memories or possessions, which will remain as historical evidence of man's existence on earth.

1.6.2 **Dickens S.M. (1985)**

In a remarkable and interesting onomastic study, Dickens investigates Western influence on the Zulu personal naming system. According to Dickens (1985:19), the earlier Zulus lived a tribal life:

> The earlier Zulus were a community for whom personal naming was bound by tradition to a very high degree.

Dickens (1985:22) states that Zulu names given before 1840 were chosen according to traditional naming conventions:

> Their view of life was a "collectivistic" one . . . in which "group responsibility" superseded the responsibility of the individual or the well being of the members of the tribe. The traditional pre Western Zulu belonged to a society in which the traditional group was a meaningful entity and personal obligation was not recognised since it would have been in conflict with the cultural stability and group solidarity.

This means that Western influence on the Zulu personal naming system was reflected in a movement away from the carefully structured Zulu names and the adoption names of Western origin. Before the arrival of the missionaries Zulu names reflected a synoptic history of the circumstances surrounding the child's birth. Some of the circumstances were the emotions related to the birth, the family's attitude to the birth, the place where the child was born, the time the child was born, the appearance of the child at birth, the parents' wishes for the child, the parents' spiritual attitudes, the parents' social aspirations, and the country's situation at the time of the child's birth or the clan into which the child was born. Her research suggests that, in the period 1840-1899, the most predominant Western influence on the personal naming system had a religious bearing. It is assumed that this was a direct result of the evangelisation campaigns by the missionaries during that time.

Another interesting feature noted in her study is that because Western culture had exerted a tremendous influence on the Zulus, the latter were forced to use both Zulu and Western names such as the following:

(i) Home name (*igama la sekhaya*).
(ii) School name (*igama leskolo*).
(iii) European name (*igama lombhabhadiso*).

In her final analysis, Dickens remarks that Western influence did not completely replace Zulu convention and tradition. She further argues that currently, however, there is a tendency, on the part of the educated Zulus, to rethink and review their passive acceptance of Westernisation reflected in the giving of Western names to Zulus. This development shows that there is some rejection of Western names in favour of Zulu names and that the probability exists of an eventual return to Zulu naming.

1.6.3 **Koopman A. (1976 & 1986)**

(i) 1976

In his Honours dissertation, Koopman pays special attention to the morphology of Zulu names. In the first place, he looks at a name as a specific form of address, not a generic form, such as *sakubona mfana* (greetings, boy) or *we baba!* (hail, father). He remarks that the specific form of the name relates the one who is being addressed according to his or her place in society – to a clan, for instance, if the surname is being used or to an age-group, if a regimental name is used. He further stresses that the name can be used to indicate the relationship between the one being addressed and the one addressing him or her. Second, he indicates differences between Zulu and Xhosa surnames, clan-names, and praise-names. Koopman (1976:09) further acknowledges that :

> The Zulus call the surname the isibongo and relate it to the clan-name; the izithakazelo is something apart. The Xhosas have a surname (ifani) but relate their clan-name to their clan praises, calling them respectively the isiduko and ezinye iziduko (other names).

He (ibid.) furthermore mentions that the Xhosa people still distinguish between a surname and a clan name, while for the Zulu people the word *isibongo* encompasses both the surname and the clan name.

Koopman's study offers sociological reflections on naming too since he states that names are almost invariably a reflection of the child's background, in other words, traditional or modern, rural or urban, pagan or Christian. He comments that the values to which the parents subscribe and to which they wish their children to subscribe, are frequently reflected in the children's names as well.

Finally, Koopman discusses male and female names. In this respect, he shows that there is a difference between male and female names. He then employs the concept of 'marked' and 'unmarked' categories. Koopman furthermore maintains that the majority of Zulu names are definitely marked either as male or female, and that such marking is morphological, lexical or syntactic:

(i) Morphological marking

According to Koopman, the infixes *-no-*, *-ma-*, and *-so-* are primarily regarded as name-indicators. They are frequently used in the formation of female names.

(a) The *-no-* infix

Examples of names infixing *–no-* are as follows:

UNomvula (Miss Rain), *uNobantu* (Miss People), *uNomasonto* (Miss Sundays), *uNomkhubulwane* (Princess of Heaven), *uNomusa* (Miss Mercy), *uNokuphiwe* (Miss Given), *uNolwandle* (Miss Sea), *uNomabhunu* (Miss Afrikaner), and *uNokuthula* (Miss Quiet).

(b) The *–ma-* infix

The infix *-ma-* serves as a feminine marker. Examples of names infixing *–ma-* are as follows:

uMantusi (she-of-the Ntusis)
uMangcobo (she-of-the Ngcobos)
uMasesi (she-of-the-sisters)
uMantombi (she-of-the-girls).

(c) The *-so-* infix

The infix *-so-* is used purely as a male marker. Examples of the *-so-* infix are as follows:

uSonwabu (Mr Chameleon)
uSomfana (Mr Boy).

(ii) Lexical marking

The following are examples of lexically marked names:

(a) Lexically marked female names

uNtombi (girl), *uNtombazane* (girl), *uMakhosazane* (chief's daughters), *uNtombikayise* (girl-of-her-father), *uNtombifikile* (a girl has arrived), and *uNtombenhle* (pretty girl).

(b) Lexically marked male names

uMfana (boy), *uNdoda* (man), *uBaba* (father), *uMfanyana* (small boy), *uFanyana* (small boy), and *uMfanafana* (many boys).

(iii) Syntatic/Structural marking

The following words serve as examples of syntatic or structural marked names:

(a) Female names

uDuduzile (comforted), *uJabulile* (happy), *uBusisiwe* (blessed), *uZodwa* (girl), *uNtombizodwa* (girls only), *uZomusa* (peace), and *uNtombizomusa* (girls of peace).

(b) Male names

uMduduzi (the Comforter), *uMzungezi* (the Surrounder), and *uMthethwa* (the Chosen One).

Koopman further acknowledges that there are a small number of names which are unmarked either male or female. The Zulu names, which are unmarked, are those of which the stem is singular or plural imperative. The names based on the singular imperatives are as follows:

uThemba (Mr Hope), *uThemba* (Miss Hope), *uDuduza* (Miss Comfort), and *uLandela* (Mr Follow).

Under imperatives as plurals the following examples may be cited:

uThulani (Mr Be-Quiet), *uThulani* (Miss Be-Quiet), *uThokozani* (Mr Be-Happy), *uThokozani* (Miss Be-Happy), and *uJabulani* (Mr Be-Happy).

(ii) 1986

Koopman's 1986 study is entitled *The Social and Literary Aspects of Zulu Personal Names*. In this study, he provides quantifiable data on the use of the various different kinds of Zulu names, the relationship between names and social values, and the reasons underlying how and why Zulu personal names are given.

Another important aspect that Koopman brings to the fore is the literary qualities of Zulu names and the use of names in Zulu literature. He (1986:135) covers the literary aspects of Zulu names under four main headings, namely:

(i) African names in their literary context.
(ii) From Zulu personal names to Zulu praise poetry.
(iii) The literary aspects of Zulu personal names.
(iv) The use of names in Zulu praise poetry.

It is worth noting that he discusses the variety of forms of address in Zulu as well. He states that three names constitute an official identity in the South African social context, namely:

(i) The *igama lasekhaya*: endocentric name.
(ii) The *igama lesilungu*: exocentric name.
(iii) The *isibongo*: the clan-name (used as a surname).

In addition, Koopman gives an account of the aetiology of Zulu personal names and mentions that it has much in common with that of other African personal names:

> The name reflects the position of the individual both within the immediate and the wider family. Zulu names show relationships between brothers and sisters, between parents and children. They reflect the importance of the clan and the importance of male children in a patrilineal society. They refer to the institution of lobola as well as to

> misfortunes like barrenness and stillbirth. Names may exhort children to appropriate social behaviour. Zulu personal names are without doubt 'social documents' (1986:132-133).

As far as the aetiology of personal names is concerned, Koopman concludes that the most characteristic features of Zulu personal names are joy in having children and a positive attitude towards life.

To show that the love for Zulu names is rooted in their cultural consciousness or distinctiveness, Koopman outlines the use of names in Zulu praise-poetry. He gives the example of praise-poetry with the personal name of the victim; a further identificatory name, either that of the victim's father (*Sondaba* - son of *Mthanda*; *Nxaba* - son of *Mbhekane*) or the name of the victim's clan (*Phungashe* of the *Buthelezi*s; *Mangcengeza* of the *Mbathas*; *Dladlama* of the *Majolas*):

> Lwagasel' uPhungashe wakwaButhelezi,
> Lwagasel' uSondaba woMthanda ehlez'ebandla,
> Lwagasel' uMacingwan' eNgonyameni,
> Lwagasel' uMangcengez' emaMbatheni,
> Lwagasel' uDladlama wakwaMajola,
> Lwagasel' uNxaba kaMbhekane,
> Lwagasel' uGambush' emaMpondweni,
> Lwagasel' uFaku emaMpondweni.

The following extract from a praise poem to Shaka and Zibhebhu illustrates the ferociousness of their warlike character as expressed by one killing after another does and mentions the names of the victims:

> Oth' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye,
> Wath' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye;
> Oth' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye,
> Wath' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye;
> Oth' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye,
> Wath' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye;
> Oth' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye,

Wath' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye;
Oth' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye,
Wath' esadl' ezinye wadl' ezinye;

Koopman thus shows the relationship between names and the persons being praised or honoured, thereby revealing the nature and dynamics of Zulu naming patterns.

1.6.4 **Macebele G.S. (2000)**

The aim of Macebele's study was to unveil the importance of nicknames in Xitsonga. He thus investigated the relationship between a nickname and its bearer as well as the socio-linguistic reasons for giving such a nickname and classified nicknames in the following different categories:

(i) Nicknames which reflect physical appearance:

Magelevende,	*Khwiri-xa-tika*
(big head)	(big belly)

(ii) Nicknames which reflect peer-group influence:

Makala-khiya,	*Mabukuti*
(The one who has no keys)	(the one who hits)

(iii) Nicknames which reflect personality traits:

Madyelakhwirini,	*Handzelo*
(The one who fills the stomach)	(malt/ferment)

(iv) Nicknames which are given according to the person's position in the workplace:

Boso,	*Makuma-swi-vupfile*
(leader)	(the one who benefits from other people's work)

(v) Nicknames which derive from place names:

Xibuxwana,	*Xipilongwana*
(a resident of Bushbuckridge)	(a resident of Spilonke)

Macebele (2000:31) mentions that nicknames play an extremely important role in that they act as cohesive social devices indicating warmth, solidarity, and affection. He, however, notes that nicknames may, in one way or another, be interpreted as signs of disrespect or disapproval by stating:

> Ndzi heta xitsalwana lexi hi ku bumabumela leswaku vanhu va tekela enhlokweni mavito yo duvulela hikuva i ma nkoka. Mavito lawa ma swi kota ku ndhundhuzela munhu, ni ku n'wi khutaza leswaku a ya emahlweni a endla leswinene. Kasi hi tlhelo ma swi kota ku tshinya munhu hi ku n'wi hlekula leswaku a ta tshika swendlo leswo biha.
>
> (In concluding this essay I would like to recommend that people should recognize the fact that there is a great importance attached to nicknames. Names of this nature may encourage the bearer of the name to continue doing good. On the other hand, a nickname may serve to discourage a person from doing evil.)

The above quotation suggests that nicknames, may send a message to people and thus result in minimising friction and criticism. They may also act as a critical device which encourages people to avoid direct confrontation.

1.6.5 **Nkuna S.G. (1999)**

Nkuna's study discusses personal names and indicates the way in which gender plays a role in naming children or people in Xitsonga. In her analysis Nkuna (1999:37) highlights the origin of certain Xitsonga names and the importance attached to names:

> Vito i nchumu wa nkoka evuton'wini bya vanhu eka tindzimi hinkwato ta misava. Vanhu va kota ku twanana no tiviwa hikokwalaho ka mavito ya vona. Hina vanhu hi ambala ku fana, hi tshama ka tindlu to yelana kambe ha swi kota ku hambanyiseka hikokwalaho ka mavito ya hina.
>
> (A name is a very important thing in people's lives in all languages of the world. People are able to understand and know one another through their respective names. We, as people, wear similar attire and stay in similar houses but can be differentiated by our names.)

She further points out that the Vatsonga give names according to the sex of the bearer:

> Eka ririmi ra Xitsonga vito ra munhu ri thyiwa hi tindlela to tala swinene. Mhaka ya nkoka eku thyeni ka vito ra n'wana i rimbewu ra n'wana. Ku na vito leri nga fanela ku thya n'wana wa xinuna na leri nga fanela ku thya n'wana wa xisati.
>
> (In the Xitsonga language, there are many ways of giving a name. In giving a child a name, the sex of the bearer plays a very important role. A child is named according to his/her sex, namely, male or female.)

Nkuna gives the following examples of male and female names:

Male		**Female**	
Hlupheka	(suffer)	*Vusiwana*	(poverty)
Mufana	(boy)	*Khegu*	(little girl)
Hanyani	(let them live)	*Vukwele*	(jealousy)

She also points out that the Vatsonga make use of a number of naming practices to name newly born children. In most cases, names given denote pleasure, ancentral beliefs, birthplaces or the behaviour of the mother during her pregnancy.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

To facilitate understanding, onomastics and related terms will be defined.

1.7.1 Onomastics

Onomastics is a branch of semantics that deals with different types of names. Crystal (1980:314) defines onomastics as:

> A branch of semantics which studies the etymology of institutionalised ('proper') names, such as names of people ('anthroponymy') and places ('toponymy').

Little, Brown and Trumble (1973:1449) support Crystal when they define the term onomastics as "relating to or connected with a name or names or with naming; consisting of or dealing with names."

Burchfield (1982:72) concurs with the above definition when he states that: "The scientific study of names as names, that is, of the human habit of naming things, is the science of onomastics."

Burchfield's definition clearly points out that onomastics is a science that studies how naming patterns are used in naming different things.

In addition to what the above authors have mentioned Hymes (1964:231) states that:

> Onomastics, or the study of names, deals with all the vocabulary of a language. The writings which deal with one or another lexical aspect of culture or cultural aspect of vocabulary...

The above definition thus stresses that language and culture play an extremely significant role in the field of onomastics.

Although the focus of this study is to establish the origin and meaning of names in order to understand the reasons behind naming patterns or practices, it is of paramount importance to gain a deeper insight into and understanding of what the field of onomastics entails. Onomastics covers a wide field, including personal names, place names, animal names, plant names, the names of rivers, as well as the names of mountains.

Onomastics can be subdivided into two major classes, namely general onomastics and literary onomastics. General onomastics deals with names in general, whereas literary onomastics has to do with names in literature, for example, the names of characters in a novel, short story or drama. This research study was undertaken under the ambit of general onomastics. Onomastics consists of the following categories; anthroponomastics, toponomastics, microtoponymy, hodonymy, hydronymy, oronymy, and chrematonymy. Below each category is discussed briefly in order to shed more light on what the field of onomastics entails.

1.7.1.1 Anthroponymy

Anthroponymy refers to personal names while the study of personal names is called anthroponomastics. According to Prabhakaran (1997:01), the term anthroponymy of the Greek words *anthropos* (man) and *onoma* (name).

1.7.1.2 Toponymy

Toponymy refers to place names while the study of place names is called toponomastics. Stewart (1975:4) mentions that toponymy is derived from the Greek words *topos* (place) and *onoma* (name). Stewart (*ibid.*) maintains that a place name is "a word or words used to indicate, denote, or identify a place" and further states that the place does not have to be big or small. Traditionally, ethnographers and linguists prefer to use the term toponymy to refer to place names and the study of them. Due

to the expansion of terminology and the impact of technology, the terms toponymy and toponomastics respectively refer to place names and the study of place names.

1.7.1.2.1 Microtoponymy

Microtoponymy refers to names of fields and small parts of forests.

1.7.1.2.2 Hodonymy

The study of the names of streets and roads is known as hodonymy.

1.7.1.2.3 Hydronymy

Hydronymy studies the names of bodies of water, which include the names of rivers, streams and oceans.

1.7.1.2.4 Oronymy

Oronymy refers to names of mountains.

1.7.2 **Conclusion**

The discussion in this section has indicated that the field of onomastics is very wide. All the above onomastic terms and their respective definitions are, however, acceptable because they shed more light on what the field of onomastics encompasses.

1.8 **ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY**

This study focuses on names, different types of personal names, naming practices, and their impact on our everyday lives.

The research is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter One concentrates on the preliminary considerators, the aims of the study, the rationale for the study, methodology, significance of the study, literature survey, definition of key concepts, and organisation of the study.

Chapter Two, in turn, examines the morphology of nouns in Xitsonga.

In **Chapter Three** naming practices in Xitsonga culture and the classification of names into ancestor names, politically inspired names, commemorative names, religion-based names, birth circumstance names, and initiation names are discussed.

Chapter Four examines nicknaming among Xitsonga-speaking people. The chapter contains definitions of and types of nicknaming while it discusses the functions and significance of nicknames in society as well.

Chapter Five discusses the dynamics of place names in Xitsonga, with special reference to the structure and types of place names. It also examines place name changes and the significance of place names.

Chapter Six is devoted to data gathering techniques and data analysis while **Chapter Seven** contains the general conclusion, which summarizes the main findings and offers recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

2. THE MORPHOLOGY OF NOUNS IN XITSONGA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the morphology of Xitsonga proper nouns. Personal names belong to this category. As the study deals with naming, only those lexical categories that have a bearing on naming will be analysed, namely, noun classes, compound nouns and verbs. For an indepth analysis of the morphology of nouns (see Nekhumbe, 2002; Musehane, 1995; and Nkondo, 1973). It is, however, important to state that the chapter will invoke leme-morpheme base morphology (Beard, 1995; Aronoff, 1994).

2.2 DEFINITION OF MORPHOLOGY

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1987:678) defines morphology as follows:

> Morphology is the study of the morphemes of a language, and of the way in which they are joined together to make words.

Fromkin and Rodman (1988:127) support the above definition of morphology by stating:

> The study of word formation and the internal structure of words is called morphology.

Nkondo (1986:1), in turn, defines morphology as:

> Mofoloji i dyondzo ya xivumbeko xa marito. Leswi swi vula ku dyondza timofimi ta wona, kun'we ni swihluvi swa mbulavulo swo hambana.

(Morphology is the study of the structure of words. This means the studying of their morphemes, and the different parts of speech.)

According to Du Plessis and Madadzhe (1999:1), there are two principles of morphology, namely, (a) a major class of lexical items, such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives. The lexical items consist of phonological, grammatical, and semantic representations. The following nouns are examples of lexical items:

(1) *munhu* (person), *murhi* (tree), *rivoni* (lamp), *nambu* (river), *nghala* (lion), *voko* (hand), and *rivala* (field).

The phonological representation of the above lexical items is as follows:

(2)

munhu	>	*m-u-nh-u*
murhi	>	*m-u-rh-i*
nambu	>	*n-a-mb-u*
nghala	>	*ngh-a-l-a*
voko	>	*v-o-k-o*
rivala	>	*r-i-v-a-l-a*

The semantic representation of the above lexical items is as follows:

- the lexical item *munhu* means a human being
- the lexical item *murhi* indicates a plant
- the lexical item *nambu* refers to the body of flowing water
- the lexical item *rivoni* means a source of light
- the lexical item *nghala* indicates a wild animal.

The verbs such as *famba* (walk), *dya* (eat) and *vulavula* (speak) are also lexical items.

The phonological representation of the lexical items is as follows:

(3) *famba* > *f-a-mb-a*

dya > *dy-a*

vulavula > *v-u-l-a-v-u-l-a*

The semantic representation of the lexical items is as follows:

- the lexical item *famba* indicates movement
- the lexical item *dya* refers to food
- the lexical item *vulavula* means speech.

(b) The second principle states that the major lexical items, namely, nouns, verbs, and adjectives, constitute open classes. One may, for instance, derive one word from another. The following examples illustrate this:

(i) Nouns

m*unhu* (person) > *vanhu* (persons)

nenge (leg) > *milenge* (legs)

nhlana (spinal cord) > *minhlana* (spinal cords)

nomo (mouth) > *milomo* (mouths).

(ii) Verbs

dya (eat) > *dyela* (eat for)

nyika (give) > *nyikela* (give for)

famba (go) > *fambela* (go for)

hleka (laugh) > *hlekela* (laugh for).

(ii) Borrowings – these may be nouns or verbs.

Xitsonga	Afrikaans	English
baji	*baadjie*	jacket
buruku	*broek*	trousers
fasitere	*venster*	window.

(iii) Acronyms

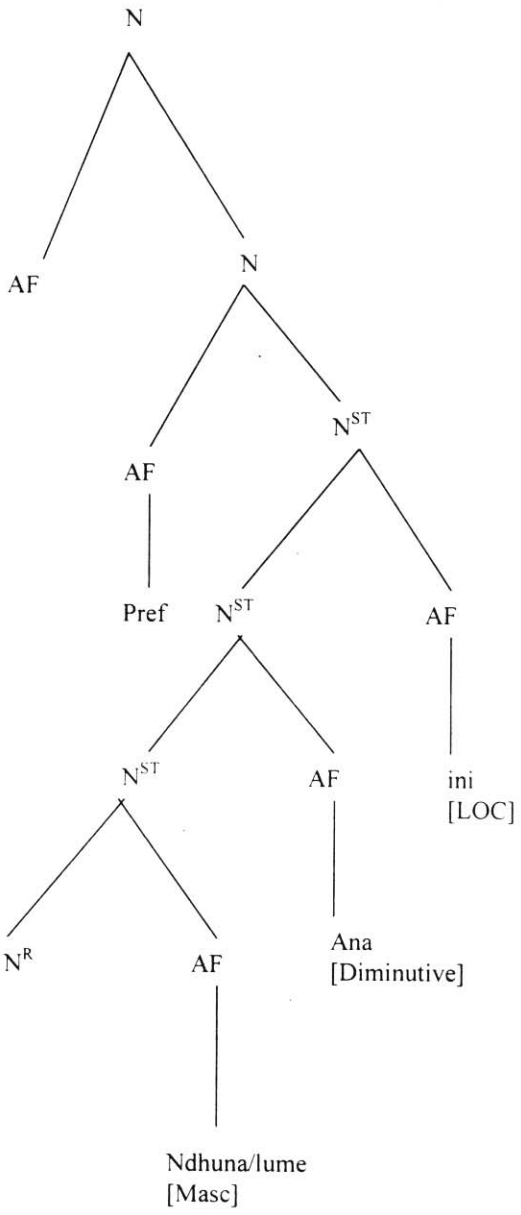
UN	(United Nations)
ANC	(African National Congress)
UDM	(United Democratic Movement)
NNP	(New National Party)
NPNC	(National Place Names Committee).

(iv) Compounds – these may be nouns and verbs such as:

madyisa-mbitsi	(the one who causes bitterness)
xintshunxa-tshevele	(fee paid in advance to medicine-man)
madya-tshamile	(one who eats while being seated) i.e. a lazy person.

There are other ways in which one may expand the number of lexical items in these categories. One may always add new words to expand these categories. The morphological structure of the noun in Xitsonga can be illustrated as follows (see also Du Plessis and Madadzhe, 1999: 287):

(4)



Locative: *e-/ -ini*

e-mu-rhi-ini > *emurhini* (in the tree)

Diminutive

[*ana*]

xi-mu-ti-ana > *ximutana* (small family)

[*nyana*]

ma-ti-nyana > *matinyana* (small quantity of water)

[*etana*]

xi-fana-etana > *xifanyetana* (small boy)

2.3 THE NOUN CLASSES IN XITSONGA

A viable morphological study of names cannot be undertaken without taking noun classes into consideration (Louwrens, 1994:8). In Xitsonga, most nouns are grouped into noun classes by virtue of the particular prefix which they exhibit.

The basic non-derived noun in Xitsonga has the following structure:

(5) N [*Va* + *nhu*] N

The following elements are distinguished in this structure:

a. The class prefix [*Va*-] forms an inherent part of the noun.
b. The stem morpheme is [-*nhu*].

Doke (1945:36) defines the term noun as 'a word which signifies the name of anything concrete or abstract'. A noun may also be defined as a word or group of words that is the name of a person, a place, or a thing or activity, or a quality or idea (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* 1987: 708).

The second definition may be illustrated as follows:

(i) the name of a person: *Tsakani*, *Khazamula*, *Tsatsawani* or *Risenga*
(ii) the name of a place: *Malamulele*, *Xikundu*, *Giyani*
(iii) the name of a thing or activity: *bolo*, *kofi*, *mati*
(iv) the name of a quality or idea: *ntsako*, *khombo*.

NOUN CLASSES

(5) Noun classes in Xitsonga can be listed as follows:

CLASSES	**AFFIXES**
1	[*Mu-*]
	mu-nhu (person)
2	[*Va-*]
	va-nhu (people)
1(a)	[-]
	tatana (father)
2(a)	[*Va-*]
	va-tatana (fathers)
3	[*Mu-*]
	mu-rhi (tree)
4	[*Mi-*]
	mi-rhi (trees)
5	[*Ri-*]
	ri-wa (slope)

6	[*Ma-*] *mariwa* (slopes)
7 8	[*Xi-*] *xi-hlovo* (well) [*Swi-*] *swi-hlovo* (wells)
9 10	[*N-*] *n-tshava* (mountain) [*Tin-*] *ti-ntshava* (mountains)
11	[*Ri-*] *ri-vambu* (rib)
14	[*Vu-*] *vu-mba* (clay)
15 16 17 18	[*Ku-*] *ku-famba* (to go) [*Ha-*] *ha-nsi* (down) [*Ku-*] *ku-le* (far) [*Mu-*] *ndzhaku* [**mu-rhaku*] (back)
21	[*Dyi-*] *dyi-homu* (big cow)

1. Classes 1/2 : *Mu/Va*

The prefix of class 1 in Xitsonga is *mu-* and of class 2 is *va-*. The singular is indicated by *mu-* and the plural by *va-* (see also Nkondo 1986:13). A common semantic feature shared by all nouns which occur in these classes, is that they show

the semantic feature [+human]. Owing to this fact, they are also called the "person classes" (Du Plessis and Madadzhe, 1999:31):

(6)

n'wana (child)	*vana* (children)
munhu (person)	*vanhu* (people)
wanuna (man)	*vavanuna* (men)
wansati (woman)	vavasati (women)
nhwana (girl)	*vanhwana* (girls)
mufana (boy)	*vafana* (boys)
muvatli (carpenter)	*vavatli* (carpenters).

In this regard, classes 1 and 2 represent a unique case where there is a one-to-one correlation between a highly specific semantic feature and morphological marking by means of class prefixes (See also Nkondo, 1986; Du Plessis and Madadzhe, 1999). The nouns *n'wana*, *nhwana* and *nsati* belong to these classes despite the absence of the prefix *mu-*:

(7) *mu-* + *ana* > **mwana* > *n'wana* [child]
mu- + *sati* > *nsati* > *nsati* [woman]
mu- + *nhwana* > **mnhwana* > *nhwana* [girl]

Derivative nouns abound in 1 and 2 classes. These are the nouns which indicate a person (or any other agent), who carries out an action (Du Plessis and Madadzhe 1999: 31). The following examples illustrate this point:

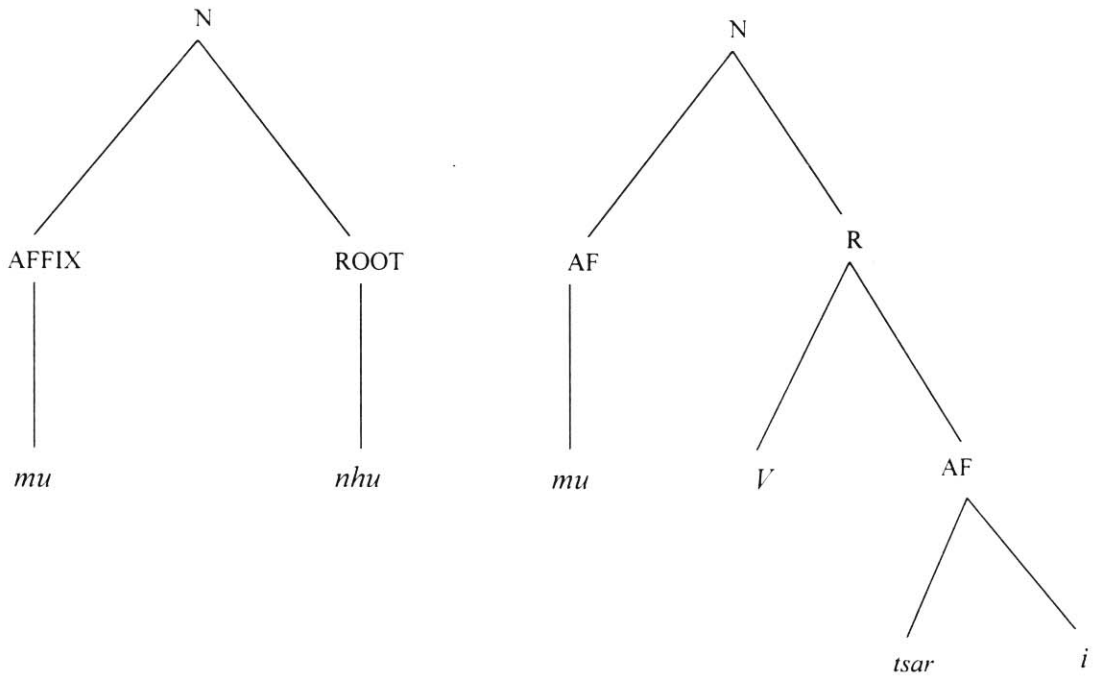
(8)

Verb	**Singular**	**Plural**
aka (build)	*muaki* (builder)	*vaaki* (builders)
rima (plough)	*murimi* (farmer)	*varimi* (farmers)
tsala (write)	*mutsari* (writer)	*vatsari* (writers)

vulavula (speak)	*muvulavuri*	(speaker) *vavulavuri* (speakers)
hlota (hunt)	*muhloti* (hunter)	*vahloti* (hunters)
dyoha (sin)	*mudyohi* (sinner)	*vadyohi* (sinners).

According to Nkondo (1986) and Du Plessis and Madadzhe (1999), all the preceding derivative nouns utilize *mu-* and *va-* to indicate the singular and plural respectively. The non-derivative nouns and derivative nouns display different structures. The difference is to be found in the root: derivative nouns have a root which comprises a verb with a nominal affix *-i* while the root of non-derivative nouns cannot be divided any further:

(9)



Alternatively, these structures may be represented as follows:

(10) *Munhu* N [*mu* + *nhu*] N
Mutsari N [*mu* + *tsari*] N.

2. Classes 1a/2a

In Xitsonga, class 1a does not show any prefix (see also Nkondo, 1986), and is often referred to as a class with a zero prefix which is shown thus [ϕ]:

(11) *Tatana* (father): N [ϕ + *tatana*] N.

In class 2a the prefix is *va*-:

(12) *Vatatana* (fathers): N[*va* + *tatana*] N

Class 1a/2a is generally regarded as a subclass of class 1/2. (see also Nkondo, 1986, Du Plessis and Madadzhe, 1999). Therefore, this class uses the same numbers because both classes 1/2 and 1a/2a use the same set of agreement morphemes:

(13) Class 1: muaki *u* dya swakudya (the builder eats food).
Class 1a: tatana *u* dya xinkwa (father eats bread).
Class 2: vatirhi *va* dya xinkwa (the workers eat bread).
Class 2a: vamanana *va* dya xinkwa (the mothers eat bread).

Nouns with the following characteristics occur in this class:

(14) (a) Proper names

Nkalaxaka (person without relatives)
Rivengo (hatred)
Marhumbini (ruins)
Tsakani (happiness)

Rirhandzu (love)
Rhukanani (insult).

(b) Terms of relationship:

mhani/manana (mother)
tatana (father)
hahani (aunt)
malume (uncle)
kokwana (grandparent).

(a) Professional people

dokodela (doctor)
matsalani (clerk)
profesa (professor)
thicara (teacher)
muongori (nurse).

Although classes 1 and 2 are used to refer to people, there are other situations where they can be used to refer to things such as animals. According to Nkondo (1986:17), classes 1(a) and 2(a) may be discussed under the following categories:

(15) (i) Personified animals

N'wamfenhe (baboon)	*va-N'wamfenhe* (baboons)
N'wampfundla (hare)	*va-N'wampfundla* (hares)
N'wanghala (lion)	*va-N'wanghala* (lions)
N'wandlopfu (elephant)	*va-N'wandlopfu* (elephants)
N'waxipene (steenbok)	*va-N'waxipene* (steenboks).

(ii) Others

manghovo (mungoose)	*vamanghovo* (mungooses)
maxindyana (squirrel)	*vamaxindyana* (squirrels)
mangedyana (bat)	*vamangedyana* (bats)
mavolwana (quail)	*vamavolwana* (quails).

3. Classes 3/4: mu/mi

The singular prefix *mu-* and the plural prefix *mi-* distinguish nouns in this class. A large corpus of classes 3 and 4 nouns denotes trees, shrubs, animals, and insects as well as commonly natural phenomena such as rivers. Classes 3 and 4 may also include nouns referring to parts of the body, implements, utensils, and other miscellaneous objects (see also Louwrens 1994). Another important aspect is that class 4 is characterised by nouns with a plural meaning. In this regard, class 4 only expresses numerical/ distributive plurals:

(16) (i) Trees

murhi (tree)	*mirhi* (trees)
nkuwa (fig tree)	*minkuwa* (fig trees)
nkanyi (morula tree)	*minkanyi* (morula trees)
mondzo ("lead-wood" tree)	*mimondzo* ("lead-wood" trees)
ncindzu (palm tree)	*mincundzu* (palm trees)
nkuhlu (mahogany tree)	*minkuhlu* (mahogany trees)
nxanatsi (mopani tree)	*minxanatsi* (mopani trees).

(ii) Parts of the body

nkolo (throat)	*minkolo* (throats)
nenge (leg)	*milenge* (legs)

nhlana (spinal cord) *minhlana* (spinal cords)
n'wala (nail) *min'wala* (nails)
nomo (mouth) *milomo* (mouths)
nkondzo (sole of foot) *minkondzo* (soles of feet).

(iii) Rivers

nambu (river) *milambu* (rivers)
nkova (valley) *minkova* (valleys).

(iii) Utensils

nkombe (wooden spoon) *minkombe* (wooden spoons)
musi (pestle) *misi* (pestles)
ndzheko (drinking calabash) *mindzheko* (drinking calabashes)
nkambana (earthenware dish) *minkambana* (earthenware dishes).

(iv) Shrubs

mpoti (short stem) *mimpoti* (short stems)
mpotsa (russet bush-willow) *mimpotsa* (russet bush-willows).

(v) Others

muti (family) *miti* (families).

The nouns *nambu*, *nkanyi* and *nkumba* belong to this class despite the absence of the prefix *mu-*. The prefix *mu-* seems to have disappeared due to some phonological changes.

(17) *mu* + *lambu* > *mulambu* > *nambu* (river)
mu + *nkanyi* > *munkanyi* > *nkanyi* (morula tree)
mu + *nkumba* > *munkumba* > *nkumba* (blanket).

There are instances where there are some nouns in class 4 which have no singular:

(18) *misawu* (jokes)
miroho (vegetables).

4. Classes 5/6: ri/ma

The prefix of class 5 is *ri-* and of class 6 *ma-*. Nouns in classes 5/6 denote a variety of semantic categories which include anatomical terms, nature terms as well as nature terms such as the names of mallals, birds, fruits, vegetables, and liquids. Classes 5/6 nouns denote abstract concepts (see also Nkondo, 1986 and Louwrens, 1994). Class 6 is the only class, which, apart from a regular numerical plural, expresses a collective plural as well.

(19)

rito (word)	*marito* (words)
riwa (well)	*mariwa* (wells)
rendzo (trip)	*marendzo* (trips)
voko (hand)	*mavoko* (hands)
ribye (stone)	*maribye* (stones)
tuva (dove)	*matuva* (doves).

ma may also occur in loan words.

(20) *fasitere* (window) *mafasitere* (windows).

The word *fasitere* (window) is a loan word from the Afrikaans word *venster*.

bokisi (box)	*mabokisi* (boxes)
thayere (tyre)	mathayere (tyres)
pencisi (peach)	*mapencisi* (peaches).

The words *bokisi*, *thayere*, and *pencisi* are loan words from English.

There are nouns, which occur in class 5, without a prefix. In other words, the prefix *ma-* does not appear in the singular:

(21)

khongoloti (millipede)	*makhongoloti* (millipedes)
siku (day)	*masiku* (days)
voko (hand)	*mavoko* (hands)
chela (frog)	*machela* (frogs)
tihlo (eye)	*matihlo* (eyes)
tandza (egg)	*matan*dza (eggs)
katla (shoulder)	*makatla* (makatla)
tino (tooth)	*matino* (teeth)
papa (cloud)	*mapapa* (clouds)
rhumbu (intestine)	*marhumbu* (intestines).

According to Nkondo (1986) and Du Plessis and Madadzhe (1999), mass nouns (collectives and fluids) do not reflect the singular prefix:

(22) *masi* (milk)
mati (water)
matimba (power)
mafurha (cream/lotion).

5. Classes 7/8: Xi/Swi

The prefix of class 7 is *xi-* and that of class 8 is *swi-*. Nouns occurring in these classes denote objects which can be classified into a variety of semantic categories such as names of languages, anatomical terms, nature terms, tools, and implements (see also Du Plessis and Madadzhe, 1999).

With some stems commencing with a vowel, the class prefixes are *x-* and *sw-* respectively:

(23)	*xandla* (*x/andla*)	(hand)	*swandla* (*sw/andla*) (hands)
	nxakwa (*x/akwa*)	(trunk of an elephant)	*swakwa* (*sw/akwa*) (trunks of elephants).

In the above examples there has been an elision of the *i*:

xiandla > *xandla*, *swiandla* > *swandla*.

It is further noted that class 7 includes the following aspects:

(24) (a) Languages

Xitsonga
Xixhosa
Xizulu
Xisuthu
Xivhenda
Xishona.

(b) Cultures

Xilungu (Western culture)
Xitsonga (Xitsonga culture).

6. Classes 9/10: *yi*(*n*)/*ti*(*n*)

The prefix of the class 9 is *yi*(n)- and of class 10 *ti*(n)-. These classes are sometimes referred to as the "animal classes" due to the large number of nouns denoting animals. Apart from nouns denoting animals there are, however, nouns referring to inanimate objects as well.

Examples of classes 9/10

(25) *nhlamulo* (answer) *tinhlamulo* (answers)
nhlengeletano (meeting) *tinhlengeletano* (meetings)
yindlu (house) *tindlu* (houses).

Class 9/10 contains the following objects:

(26) (a) Borrowed words

buku (book) *tibuku* (books)
rhoko (dress) tirhoko (dresses)
thayi (tie) *tithayi* (ties)
buruku (trousers) *tiburuku* (trousers).

The above words have been borrowed from Afrikaans and English.

(b) Animals

tihomu (cattle)
tindlopfu (elephants)
nghala (lion)
yingwe (tiger)
mbila (rock-rabbit)
nyimpfu (sheep)
mbuti (goat)
nyarhi (buffalo)
mhunti (duiker).

(c) People

hosi (chief)
khomba (girl)
ndhuna (headman).

(d) Parts of the body

nhloko (head)
mbilu (heart)
nhompfu (nose)
ndleve (ear).

(e) Domestic utensils

khapu (cup)
ovhene (oven).

(f) Tools/instruments

nhonga (stick)
xigombo (knobkierie).

7. **Class 11:** *ri-*

The prefix of class 11 is *ri-*. This prefix expresses ordinary singularity. Nouns in this class express a variety of objects, concrete and abstract:

(27) *rirhandzu* (love)
ripfumelo (religion)
risokoti (ant)
rimpfani (chameleon)
rimbambu (rib)
ririmi (language).

Nouns of class 11 utilise the prefix *tin-* of class 10 to indicate the plural:

(28)	*risimu* (song)	*tinsimu* (songs)
	ririmi (language)	*tindzimi* (languages)
	rimbambu (rib)	*timbambu* (ribs)
	rimpfani (chameleon)	*timpfani* (chameleons)
	rixaka (nation)	*tinxaka* (nations).

There are some abstract words which do not have plurals:

(29) *rirhandzu* (love)
rivengo (hatred)
ripfumelo (religion).

8. Class 14: *Vu-*

The prefix of class 14 is *vu-*. It indicates abstract things or quantity (Nkondo 1986, Du Plessis and Madadzhe 1999). Class 14 does not have a corresponding plural class. The majority of the nouns in this class are derived from either other noun classes or other word categories.

(30) *vumunhu* (humanity)
vuhlonga (slavery)
vutomi (life)
vutshamo (abode)
vulombe (honey)
vutivi (knowledge)
vunene (goodness)
vuswa (porridge)
vusiku (night)
vuxika (winter)
vuyada/vufendze (uncleanliness)
vukungundzwani (corruption)
vukhamba (theft).

Class 14 also includes the names of two of the four cardinal points on the compass:

(31) *vuxa* (east)
vupeladyambu (west).

9. Class 15: *ku-*

The prefix of class 15 is *ku-* (see also Nkondo 1986).

(32) *ku tsutsuma* (to run).

The above example may have a nominal function or act as a verbal noun:

(33) Subject: *Ku tsutsuma ka tsakisa.*
(running is fun).

Object: *Ndzi rhandza ku tsala.*
(I like writing).

Clause: *Ndzi lava ku tsala.*
(I want to write).

10. The locative classes 16, 17, 18: *ha-*, *ku-*, *mu-*

The nouns in these classes indicate location:

(i) **Class 16:** *ha-*

(34) *hansi* (down); *handle* (outside); *henhla* (above).

(ii) **Class 17:** *ku-*

(35) *ku-*: *kusuhi* (near); *kule* (far), *kona* (there)

(iii) **Class 18:** *mu-*

(36) *mu-*: *ndzhaku* (back) < [**mu-* + *rhaku*]

11. Class 21: *dyi-*

The prefix of class 21 is *dyi-*. It is a singular prefix with an augmentative meaning (see also Nkondo 1986, Du Plessis and Madadzhe 1999).

(37) *munhu* (man) *dyimunhu* (big man)
n'wana (child) *dyin'wana* (child with unbecoming behaviour)
nyoka (snake) *dyinyoka* (big snake)
mbyana (dog) *dyimbyana* (big dog).

2.4 COMPOUND NOUNS

A compound noun can be defined as a noun which consists of two or more words or free forms. Nkondo (1973:20) maintains that morphologically, therefore, a compound noun consists of two or more words, each of which has full separate existence elsewhere than in the compound, or consists of a reduplicated stem or root of the word from which it is formed. She further confirms that in some cases in Xitsonga, other morphemes are added to make the words grammatically classifiable lexical entities. This justifies that a compound noun must be classifiable with other nouns under a particular class. As noted in the preceding paragraphs, nouns are grouped into classes, where each class is distinguished by a class prefix:

(38) *muxavisi* (seller)
murimi (farmer)
muyivi (thief).

The above nouns belong to class 1 and are distinguished by the prefix *mu-*.

In the light of the above examples, Nkondo (1976:21-22) mentions that compound nouns must conform to the general pattern of nouns:

(39) (i) *Marhandza-teka* (one who loves to take [things])

The compound noun *marhandza-teka* is derived from the following words *-rhandza* (love) and *-teka* (take). The plural form of *marhandza-teka* is *vamarhandza-teka* (those who love to take).

(ii) *Madya-swakwe* (one who eats his or her own)

The compound noun *madya-swakwe* is derived from -dya (eat) and -swakwe (own).

(ii) *Xivanga-mugayo* (one who brings maize meal).

The name *Xivanga-mugayo* refers to a person who provides food for the family. In other words, we may refer to him as "the breadwinner in the family". The compound name *Xivanga-mugayo* is derived from the verb *-vanga* (bring about) and the noun *mugayo* (maize meal).

A compound noun may contain more than one class prefix. Nkondo (1976:23) observes that the prefixes appear in their full forms particularly in verb-noun combinations, because the verbal element has to have a class prefix affixed to it to give the word the status of a noun, for instance:

(i) *mbuti-mahlanga* (goat of the reeds), namely, "a wild cat".
(ii) *xipandza-mananga* (something which cracks the wilderness), namely, "a motor car".

The compound *xipandza-mananga* is derived from the verb *-pandza* (to crack) and the noun *mananga* (wilderness).

(iii) *Xivanga-milandzu* (one who causes trouble), namely, "a troublesome person".

(vii) *xivatla-nkombe* (something which carves the wooden spoon), namely, "a cobra".

xihandza-matala (something which scrapes around garbage heaps), namely, "a fowl".

In her study, Nkondo (1973) gives the following examples of possible combinations of nouns:

(i) Noun + Noun

mimpfi	+	*ndlopfu*	>	*mimpfi-ndlopfu* (elephant wasps)
mbuti	+	mahlanga	>	*mbuti-mahlanga* (wild cat)
njiya	+	*mavele*	>	*njiya-mavele* (locust of mealie)
nyoka	+	*hansi*	>	*nyoka-hansi* (snake of the ground)
huku	+	*nambu*	>	*huku-nambu* (fowl of the river)
nkwahle	+	*mananga*	>	*nkwahle-mananga* (iguana of the wilderness)
mbuti	+	*maribye*	>	*mbuti-maribye* (goat of the rocks).

(ii) Noun + Adjective

siku	+	*nene*	> *siku-nene* (day-good), namely, "initially appointed day"
holobye	+	*nkulu*	> *holobye-nkulu* (minister-big), namely, "chief minister"
mbila	+	*mbisi*	> mbila-mbisi (porridge-raw), namely, "badly cooked".

(iii) Noun + Possessive

munhu + *kulorhi* > *munhu-kulorhi* (my fellow being)
munhu + *kuloni* > *munhu-kuloni* (your fellow being)
nkati + *kulorhi* > *nkati-kulorhi* (my co-wife)
nkati + *kuloni* > *nkati-kuloni* (your co-wife)
nkati + *kulobye* > *nkati-kulobye* (her co-wife).

(iv) Verb + Verb

hlasela + *hundza* > *mahlasela-hundza* (one who attacks and passes)
ba + *hleka* > mabahleka (one who beats while laughing)
dya + *tshama* > *madya-tshamile* (one who eats while being seated)
famba + *bola* > *mafamba-borile* (one who goes about rotten).

(v) Noun + Pronoun

n'wa + *yexe* > *n'wa-yexe* (child of alone/lonely child)
nyama + *ya* + *vo* > *nyama-ya*-vo (their meat).

(vi) Noun + Ideophone

ngoma + *ntanda* > *xingoma-ntanda* (witch doctor).

(vii) Verb + Adjective

mudya + *xihi* > *mudya-xihi* (eat which)
ndzhuka + *lavakulu* > *ndzhuka-lavakulu* (one who swears at big ones)
madya + *swimbisi* > *madya-swimbisi* (one who eats raw ones).

In addition, Nkondo (1973) gives the following examples of miscellaneous compounds:

nyenya + nyana > nyenya-nyana (small bird)
tshamele + ni > tshamele-ni (what is the use of staying)
nsati + muni > nsati-muni (what kind of a wife)
vukati + muni > vukati-muni (what kind of a marriage)
n'wana + muni > n'wana-muni (what kind of a child)
salele + ni > salele-ni (what have you remained for).

There are other possible combinations such as:

(viii) Ideophone + Ideophone

mbile + mbile > mbile-mbile (be slow in doing things)
mpaku + mpaku > mpaku-mpaku (puff audibly)
mbeku + mbeku > mbeku-mbeku (be restless)
mpfendze + mpfendze > mpfendze-mpfendze (state of being scattered)
mbvendla + mbvendla > mbvendla-mbvendla (be soft).

2.5 **VERBS**

Welmers (1973:124) defines the verb as follows:

> A verb is a word which signifies an action connected with a substantive or the state in which a substantive is, and is brought into concordialagreement therewith (except when used imperatively) by the subjectival concord.

In Xitsonga names may be formed in many ways. The verb is widely used as a base for names, as in the following examples:

Verb		**Name**
wisa (rest)	>	*Wisani*
tshika (abandon)	>	*Tshikani*
hlayisa (look after)	>	*Hlayisani*
rhula (be quiet)	>	*Rhulani*
xanisa (persecute)	>	*Xaniseka*
tshama (stay)	>	*Tshameleni*
hlula (overcome)	>	*Hlulani*
komba (demonstrate)	>	*Xikombiso*
hlayisa (care)	>	*Hlayisani*
khensa (thank)	>	*Khensani*
loya (bewitch)	>	*Vuloyi*
ringeta (attempt)	>	*Ringetani*
hleka (laugh)	>	*Hlekani*
hlamala (surprise)	>	*Hlamalani*
tsaka (be happy)	>	*Tsakani*
hloma (take up arms)	>	*Hlomani*

The above examples show that many personal names in Xitsonga emanate from verbs. This view is supported by Marivate, Nkuzana, Mabunda and Shilubane (1989:100) when they say:

> Mavito ya vumbiwa ya huma eka swihluvi swin'wana swa mbulavulo.
> (Names are formed from some parts of speech).

A name may indeed be formed from a verb, because in most instances a verb denotes us what the person is doing or the action that is being performed, for example

- *mudyondzisi* (teacher), *mudyondzi* (student) and *dyondzo* (lesson) are derived from the verb *dyondza* (to learn);

- *mutirhi* (worker) and *ntirho* (work) are derived from the verb *tirha* (to work);
- *murhandzi* (lover) and *rirhandzu* (love) are derived from the verb *rhandza;*
- *murimi* (farmer) and *vurimi* (farming) are derived from the verb *rima* (to plough);
- *mupendi* (painter) and *pende* (paint) are derived from the verb *penda* (to paint).

This is the process of derivation from noun class 1 to noun class 1 (a). Shabangu (1994:66) supports this view by stating:

> Swa koteka leswaku mavito ma vumbiwa ya huma eka maendli ku komba muendli wa mhaka.
>
> (It is possible that names are formed from verbs to denote the person performing the action).

Marivate *et. al.* (1989) and Shabangu (1994) concur that names may be formed from some parts of speech such as verbs as shown above.

Names may also be derived from verb stems as illustrated below:

musweki (cook)	<	*ku sweka* (to cook)
muaki (builder)	<	*ku aka* (to build)
mutsari (writer)	<	*ku tsala* (to write)
mufambi (walker)	<	*ku famba* (to walk)
muhlengeleti (gatherer)	<	*ku hlengeleta* (to gather)
muhembi (liar)	<	*ku hemba* (to lie)
murimi (farmer)	<	*ku rima* (to plough)
mudyondzi (teacher)	<	*ku dyondza* (to learn)
muvulavuri (speaker)	<	*ku vulavula* (to speak)
muchayeri (driver)	<	*ku chayela* (to drive)
muyivi (thief)	<	*ku yiva* (to steal)
mutirhi (worker)	<	*ku tirha* (to work).

2.6 **CONCLUSION**

It has been observed that names can be derived from verbs and nouns. In addition, in Xitsonga language, all nouns are grouped into noun classes by virtue of the particular prefixes they exhibit.

It has been observed as well that in Xitsonga there are different types of word-formations, such as verb + verb, noun + noun, noun + adjective, noun + possessive, verb + adjective, and ideophone + ideophone.

This chapter has thus examined Xitsonga names in relation to their morphology. All names may be derived from primary sources in the language, that is, from nouns, noun phrases, noun clauses, sentences, verbs, adjectives or ideophones (Dickens, 1985). Xitsonga personal names can only occur in the noun classes 1 and 2. However, as outlined in this chapter, they may also be derived from any of the other noun classes.

CHAPTER THREE

3. PERSONAL NAMES AND NAMING PRACTICES AMONG THE VATSONGA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to examine personal names and the naming conventions or practices among the Vatsonga. This will be achieved by looking, *inter alia*, at the following issues:

- the universality of naming world-wide;
- the significance of names;
- philosophical aspects on which naming practices are premised;
- the influence of culture on naming practices.

(i) The universality of naming world-wide

Names reflect the way in which people think and see the world around them (Meiring, 1994: 67). Names have a specific meaning to every nation since names convey the history and culture of that particular nation while also evoking memories of love or bitterness within members of that nation.

(ii) The significance of names

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 avers 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.

(iii) Philosophical aspects on which naming practices are premised

In African cultures a range of social, religious and cultural circumstances at the time of the child's birth can influence naming practices (Moyo, 1996:10). The Western view seems to address the immediate and direct access to what the name affords. As opposed to Western thinking the Greek Sophists held the view that the propriety of names inheres in convention, agreement or custom and habit. The Sophists thus alluded to the fact that the knowledge of things can be attained through names. Summerell (1995) in Moyo (1996:11), avers that Aristotle argued that the name should be related to its immediate referent or preconception, in other words, according to Aristotle the one who knows the name also knows the thing. Moyo (*ibid.*) further mentions that "a fairly universal normative is the relation of the name to its immediate referent of the preconception or universal notion."

In addition, Aristotle sees a proper name as a category which includes all linguistic signs of determinate objects which have both reference and meaning (Summmerell, 1995 in Moyo, 1996:11). Moyo (1996:12) thus concurs that among African cultures, personal names are part and parcel of cultural universals with referential meaning, despite the advent of Western acculturation where names are merely arbitrary labels.

(iv) The influence of culture on naming practices

The influence of culture on naming practices cannot be overemphasized. Among African cultures name-giving reflects the socio-cultural circumstances of that group, where the name is not only related to the immediate biological family but also to the extended family and sometimes to the entire clan as well (Neethling, 1994:957; Thipa, 1984:94). Evans-Pritchard (1948), as quoted by Koopman (1995:2), points out that the study of names and titles of address has importance because they symbolise a person's social position in relation to the people around him or her so that the use of a specific name indicates the status of the speaker to the person addressed.

3.2 NAMING IN XITSONGA CULTURE

In African societies the birth of a child is an event of great magnitude (Mbiti, 1975:125). Great significance is, therefore, attached to the naming of a child. This is also applicable to the Vatsonga where naming is considered to be of profound significance in that the namegiver chooses a name that truly identifies the child as a person. A name is considered a precious and marvellous gift while a person without a name is regarded as a non-human being.

To the traditional African people, naming practices 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, names bear testimony to the history and culture of a particular nation or people. The Vatsonga as a people 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.

Traditional Africans believe that by naming the offsprings after dead relatives their former are protected from all evils, as Feldman (1989:24) states:

> The name, which is inherited from the dead, enters into and emerges with the child at birth and protects it.

Mbiti 1975:125) concurs with Feldman (*ibid.*) when he expands:

> The departed are also remembered by naming children after them, especially if their features have been inherited by these children.

Thus, in African societies, the dead or the ancestors are not readily forgotten but are recalled and respected through names. They are considered to be still alive because their great grandchildren will use their names for many years to come.

The Vatsonga often name their children after their dead ancestors so that the latter may be near the child and protect him or her from all evil. They even visit traditional doctors to find out which name is suitable for a child. Some Vatsonga think that by naming a child after their ancestors they will receive blessings while others think that the child will be an outstanding member of the society, as Kahari (1990:282) maintains:

> The name belongs to the family lineage, that is, the family wishes the child to bear the name of the outstanding members of the dead ancestors.

Fromkin and Rodman (1988) further mention:

> In ancient Egypt every person was given two names, one of which was a secret. If the secret name was discovered, the discoverer had power over the person".

Naming in Xitsonga culture is thus not an arbitrary exercise but a practice that is carefully thought out in advance. A most interesting feature is that the 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 namegiver should consider the close ties between naming and identity. The informants in this study thus maintained that the namegiver

should exploit the identity-language link in their selection of different names, as Dickens (1985:01) opines:

> It is reasonable to expect that a nation's names will come from the language of the nation. One does, of course, make allowances for the odd names, taken from a language other than the bearer's. However, when a large proportion of the names come from another language, one is inclined to wonder why there is such a widespread use of "foreign names".

It should, nevertheless, be borne in mind that the colonial bureaucracy did not take into account the importance attached to African names since the colonial rulers were not concerned that the use of "foreign names" would retard the development of African languages and their respective speakers. In reality, the use of a language in naming enhances the status of that particular language.

The use of Afrikaans and English names in national monuments was detrimental to the recognition of the other languages in the country. Although with the demise of apartheid and democracy now firmly in place, the wealth of African names has not yet come to the fore strongly enough in all areas of social life, but it has already begun to exert its influence on other cultural groups (Neethling, 2000:208). Moyo (1996:13) strongly supports this view when he avers that as part of the movement towards self-rule, resistance grew towards "colonial" names when English or Christian names were equated with a colonial mentality. The thinking was that the mind needed to be decolonised by shaking off what was considered to be a state of mental colonial domination.

The lack of sufficient attention to the relationship between language and identity of a child has resulted in bestowing names inappropriate to the sex of the name bearer. A situation has thus developed where names such as *Nyiko* (gift), *Vongani* (be thankful) and *Dumisani* (praise) have been given to children irrespective of their sex. A Mutsonga namegiver is conscious of the sex of the name bearer. Thus, in a Mutsonga

family, naming and identity play a major role. The following names are meant for female children only:

Nyeleleti	(star)
Tsakani	(happy)
Hlamalani	(surprise)
Tintswalo	(mercy)
Rirhandzu	(love)
Mafanato	(the one who dies with a secret)
Tshameleni	(what are you waiting for)
Khombomuni	(what kind of misfortune)

We also have names meant for male children only, namely,

Hlomani	(prepare for war/fight)
Matlhari	(weapons)
Fumani	(rule)
Akani	(build)
Musa	(kindness)
Khetani	(choose)
Dlayani	(kill)
Navela	(desire)

3.3 **WHEN IS A CHILD NAMED?**

There is little evidence to indicate the exact period the family members usually spend in deciding on a name for naming a newly born child. In some parts of the world, the child's name is chosen before the birth of the child while in others it is given immediately after birth. According to the informants, a newly born baby might be given a name which could serve as a birth name or maternity home name/forename/childhood name (*vito ra vuhlangi*) for a certain period, namely

Butana (derived from the Afrikaans "*boetie*") (little boy), *Khegu* (little girl), and *Sesana* (derived from the Afrikaans "*sussie*") (little girl). *Kahari* (1990:282) defines the maternity home name as follows:

> This is a name given to a new born baby. It does not follow that the child will necessarily be known by this name throughout its life.

3.4 BY WHOM IS A CHILD NAMED?

It is interesting to note that during the colonial and missionary eras paternal and maternal grandparents played a leading role as name-givers of children. However, there is a strong belief that women were the most active participants in name giving. Alia (1989:22) supports this thesis:

> Research on the naming traditions of many cultures ... has revealed that women often control, [name-giving] even where they have few other powers.

Furthermore, research reveals that women have fought unflinchingly for their right to participate in the process of naming. This fact confirms that women were not always in charge of the naming process, as Alia (*ibid.*) mentions: "... women in many parts of the world have sought greater control over the right to name".

The above assertion means that women were not the most common name-givers. Due to the migration labour system men as decision makers were forced to work far away from their tribal homes. Women thus assumed the role of name-givers. When the mother gave birth to a child, she would give the child a name designated as a birth name or forename. The name would serve for a certain period. However, it is said that the family members would then be given the responsibility to give the child a name that would be used for the rest of his life. In spite of shouldering the responsibility of having to name the child, the family members would finally allow

the head of the family, namely, the father and his sister to decide on the name of the child. In this regard, Herbert (199:5) mentions:

> Initial childhood names are typically bestowed a short time after birth, with the name usually chosen by the mother although it "will finally have to be decided on by the family of the father, and particularly by his sister".

To a Mutsonga family, steeped in tribal customs and beliefs, for the most part, grandparents had the privilege of giving names to the newly born children. Dickens quotes Nel (1970:17) when he reinforces this viewpoint:

> The naming of a child is a shared family experience, in which the grandparents took a leading role with the assistance of the parents and aunts.

One may thus conclude that the naming process is nowadays open to any person irrespective of his family standing. However, Xitsonga traditional naming conventions stress that the most qualified people, as far as naming is concerned, are the elderly people, especially the paternal and maternal grandparents. Herbert (*ibid*) confirms this viewpoint:

> The vast bulk of names are given by family members, especially parents and grandparents. Parents are the most common namegivers, followed by paternal grand-parents and then maternal grandparents, especially the grandmother.

Another interesting trend is that in the past, in public hospitals and clinics, nurses bestowed names, for example, *Dumisani* (praise), *Rivoningo* (light), *Maxongi* (the beautiful one), *Vutomi* (life), *Xaniseka* (suffer), *Mona* (surliness), Vunene (goodness), *Vuxaka* (kinship), *Hlayiseka* (be safe), *Nsovo* (mercy), and *Xikombiso* (example). Naming, in this instance, has both positive and negative connotations depending on the behaviour of the mother. (For more details see 3.5.2.1).

Nowadays the naming trend is characterised by enormous change in that even children are allowed to participate in naming activities. It is no longer taboo for children to participate in family matters such as naming newly born babies.

3.5 TYPES OF NAMING PRACTICES

The Vatsonga, like other African people, make use of different naming practices to give names to their children. They often bestow names according to certain circumstances. In Xitsonga culture, for instance, names are typically bestowed upon children according to the circumstances surrounding the birth of the child, social aspects of the family, hopes, traditional beliefs, and wishes for the child, or the expression of gratitude to a deity.

Xitsonga names are often bestowed upon children with the purpose of remembering their late relatives. Parents may name a child after their late parents because of the love they had for them, thereby feeling as if their parents were still alive. Sometimes children are named after their paternal or maternal relatives because of resembling their physical appearance.

Xitsonga names also reveal the profound influence Western encroachment has had on African life. Experience shows that the Vatsonga, as a people, cannot be completely free from Western cultural taints. Naming practices are in one way or another characterised by an acceptance of a hybrid culture in which transcultural forms have become the norm. In such a hybrid culture, the Vatsonga draw on both their own indigenous resources and Western cultural distinctiveness or uniqueness. Koopman (1986:23) quotes Nsimbi to support this fact:

> There are many good traditions and customs which the African ought to keep and be proud of. At present many tribes are losing much of this inheritance in an attempt to adopt Western culture wholesale. In my opinion the use of African traditional names ought to be preserved.

Junod (1938:53) states that there are many ways of giving a child a name:

> Everyone who has studied a Bantu tribe knows that in olden times there were definite rules about naming a child and that the name itself was, in many cases, a kind of a proverb. A mother will often give her child a name like "Vuloyi",i.e., "witchcraft" as a challenge to public opinion, showing that she defies the verdict of the witch doctor.

One peculiar naming pattern found among the young Vatsonga generation is that the name goes against the expected and the name-giver explicitly aims at being unique and creative. Modern parents prefer to cultivate a spirit of onomastic individualism or creativity and search for a special, perhaps unique name for their child, for example, *Vulombe* (honey), *Nsuku* (gold), *Nhlangano* (togetherness), and *Ndzalama* (gem). They prefer to choose names for aesthetic appeal or to satisfy a personal whim. Koopman (1976:16) supports this view by saying:

> The values to which the parents subscribe and to which they wish their children subscribe, are also well reflected in names.

Indeed, a name should be appealing and something that the people should be proud of. A name should also bear testimony to the history and culture of the people, for example, *Xihluke* (shoot of plant signifying the continuation of the family), *Xinyori* (of Chauke clan), and *N'wanati* (of Maluleke clan). The social processes and reasons underpinning manifestations of onomastic creativity reveal that this naming process is inextricably linked to events within a given community. This means that the names parents give to their children provide a unique source of information about the family's history, beliefs, and values.

Junod (1912:38) states that the Vatsonga use four traditional naming practices:

3.5.1 Junod (1912:38) maintains that the Vatsonga may give children names of their chiefs. They are guided by what that particular chief is doing to uplift the standard of living of his subjects. They firmly believe that the child named after a certain chief will emulate that particular chief. Parents also believe that the community will emulate the chief. Furthermore, parents believe that the community will respect their chiefs. This shows that parents are very proud of their offspring and hold them in high esteem.

Names of chiefs that are usually given to children are as follows: *Soshangane*, *Nghunghunyana*, *Xikundu*, *Mhinga*, and *Muhlava*. Because of their roles in their respective communities, chiefs are regarded as symbols of unity, who are highly respected for their roles in settling family disputes and other family related matters. Junod (*ibid.*) further maintains that by naming their children after their chiefs parents endeavour to flatter their chiefs' vanity.

(i) Soshangane

Many of the Vatsonga may name their children after Soshangane as he is regarded as the first person to unite the Vatsonga under one rule (Mathumba, 1993:56). He is regarded as the first chief of the Vatsonga.

(ii) **Nghunghunyana**

Nghunghunyana was the son of Muzila. In 1884 he succeeded his father as chief of the Vatsonga in Mozambique (Mathumba, 1993:50). According to Mathumba (1993:50), after staying at Musapa for about five years, Nghunghunyana went to Bileni where he built his capital at Mandlhakazi. The Vatsonga thus name their children after Nghunghunyana as a way of remembering and honouring him because he was the descendant of Soshangane.

3.5.2 Junod (1912:38) mentions that the second naming practice that the Vatsonga may use is to give children the names of their ancestors. The parents sometimes visit *sangomas* with the aim of consulting the divine bones to help them find suitable names to give their children. According to Junod (*ibid.*), "the parents like to recall a name of the old times (*pfusha bito dja khale*), the name of one of the ancestors ..." and continues:

> A name is proposed, and if the bones in falling do not give a favourable indication, another is tried till they feel sure that the dice "has spoken."

The divine bones can also be consulted when a child cries incessantly or is seriously ill. It is believed that the name to be suggested by the *sangoma* or the diviner will restore the child to happiness or good health. The child will no longer cry incessantly and will recuperate from his illness.

3.5.3 Junod (*ibid.*) mentions even a traveller or a visitor may be given the opportunity to name a newly born child. He is then bound to visit the child once a year and must bring along some gifts to consolidate the name that he gave the child. In the same vein, the mother and the child are expected to visit the traveller when the child is old enough to get out of the homestead. As far as this naming practice is concerned, Junod (*ibid.*) asserts:

> ... it is often also a traveller who happens to be in the village and to whom this privilege is accorded. He will "name himself the child" (*ku titshula ka n'wana*). This fact will establish a special relation between this person and the child.

In other words, the relationship between the name-giver and the child will be established and consolidated.

3.5.4 Junod (1912:39) states that the fourth naming practice the Vatsonga may associate themselves with is the circumstances surrounding the birth of the child. He maintains that the experts in pregnancy matters always observe the pregnant woman. They study whatsoever she does, such as her eating habits, her reaction to questions, her execution of family chores, and her behaviour in general. If the woman does not behave herself according to the norms and values of the society, the elderly women may give the child names such as:

Swicele (quarrels)
Rivengo (hatred)
Mona (rudeness)
Vulolo (laziness)
Vukwele (jealousy).

If the woman, however, behaves according to the norms and values of the society, the child may be named:

Tintswalo (mercy)
Munene (goodness)
Khensani (be thankful).

3.5.5 Junod (*ibid.*) remarks that the Vatsonga may name their children according to the birthplace as well. For example, if the child is born on the way to a hospital the namegiver may name the child *Ndleleni* (on the way). The name *Ndleleni* is a locative, formed from *ndlela* (way) + *ini*. If the child is born under a fig tree, the child may be named *Nkuweni,* derived from the noun *nkuwa* (fig tree). The name *Nkuweni* is also a locative, formed from *nkuwa* (noun) + *ini* (locative suffix). If the child was, for instance, born during a war waged by the chief bearing the name *Mawewe*, the newly born child would be given the name of that chief.

Besides these four naming practices mentioned by Junod, Xitsonga speaking people may use a number of naming practices such as names reflecting the politics of the day, names which describe the child's or family's background, protective names, celebrated names, commemorating names, and religion-based names (for more details see 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.5.5). In this study nine categories of classifying different types of Xitsonga names are examined below.

3.6 **TYPES OF NAMES**

There are many naming customs or practices. In some cultures the name is chosen before the arrival of the child. Others prefer to choose a name immediately after the arrival of the baby. Since the birth of a child is regarded as a *nyiko* (gift) there is a special ceremony in Xitsonga called *ku dya hojahoja* (the traditional ceremony of introducing a newly born child to the general public). In this ceremony the child is open for viewing by the general public. People sing and run around a hut and throw mealie seeds at the child. It is on this special day that the sex and name of the child are made known to the general public.

Given the importance of choosing a name, it is appropriate in this study to scrutinise names according to their different categories.

3.6.1 **Politically inspired names**

Politically inspired names are names that are related to the politics of the day in the country. These names may relate to political incidents or the activities of politicians. Name-givers may choose names of some prominent political leaders whom they wish their children to emulate. As far as political incidents are concerned they name their children after such occurences in order to mark their involvement or record them as the most important dates in their lives. Examples of such names follow below:

3.6.1.1 Xitereko (strike)

In South Africa many children who were born in the year 1976 bear names related to the June 16 uprisings, the day on which Soweto students took to the streets to protest against the introduction of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction at South African schools by the former apartheid government.

In similar vein, many children who were born in 1976 bear names related to the June uprisings. Such names include *Xitereko* that is derived from the English word "strike". This name is, therefore, pertinent to issues and situations in which some form of rebellion has taken place.

3.6.1.2 Madiba

Names such as *Madiba* remind us of Nelson Mandela who made it possible for the dawn of a new era of political tolerance in South Africa. This is a clan name for the Mandela family. The name may be given to a child regardless of his colour, race or language and may be regarded as a symbol of perseverance because Nelson Mandela made history by spending 27 years in jail and showed no sign of bitterness or retaliation against his oppressors after his release.

The politically inspired names thus play a significant role in that they strengthen and symbolise the self-awareness and self-confidence of a society.

3.6.1.3 Ximoko (whip)

Names such as *Ximoko* remind us of the late Professor H.W.E Ntsanwisi, the first Chief Minister of the former Gazankulu homeland in South Africa. He had worked tirelessly to establish the then Gazankulu government.

He was also a great visionary and distinguished scholar as well as a political leader of the *Ximoko xa Rixaka Party*. The Vatsonga may name their children after this stalwart because they support his political ideology or his contribution as a nation builder.

3.6.1.4 Ndzivalelano (reconciliation)

The name *Ndzivalelano* can be used to mark a special occasion, for example, the sitting of the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (1995-2000) whereby South Africans in spite of their extremely difficult past were able to sit down and relate the horrible acts of terrorism and apartheid. This name is derived from the word *rivalela* (forgive) and acts as a unifying force or a symbol of unity. It calls upon people to work together regardless of colour, race or language while also forbidding people to retaliate for the evil deeds inflicted upon them in the past. As such, the name is a symbol of hope. By giving a child this name the people externalise the hurt, pain, and bitterness of the past by building a fortress of forgiveness within themselves.

3.6.1.5 Ntshunxeko (freedom)

A child may be given the name *Ntshunxeko* to mark South Africa's new-found freedom or the restoration of democracy in a war-torn country. The name Ntshunxeko is derived from the word *tshunxa* (free/liberate) and means that people of the country have gone through difficult times and have now been set free.

Political names are, in essence, expressive of the rejection of colonial rule and its attendant practices. These new naming practices are also indicative of the rejection of English and Afrikaans names in favour of African names (Meiring, 1994:67). He indicates that examples of this new trend are the first names by which former and present premiers of Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Eastern Cape, and the Free State became, which were 'traded in' for African names: Johannes (Mahlangu) became *Ndaweni* (Mahlangu), Sam (Shilowa) became *Mbhazima* (Shilowa), and Arnold (Stofile)

became *Makhenkesi* (Stofile), Terror (Lekota) became *Mosiou* (Lekota). Bennie Alexander, former Secretary General of the Pan African Congress, changed both his first name and surname to *Koisan !X*. African political leaders who are regarded as outstanding and as political heroes seem to be the "in-thing" in naming nowadays. Hence there are children named after, for example, Kwame Nkrumah, Robert Mugabe, Samora Machel, Steve Biko, and Seretse Khama (Thipa, 1983 in Raper, 1986:287).

3.6.2 **Commemorative Naming/Initiation Names**

In Xitsonga culture, boys and girls are made to attend circumcision/initiation schools as a passage to adulthood. The initiation school is a school characterised by hardship or harsh treatment. Initiation is a public act of recognition that the individual is now passing from childhood to adulthood.

The chief aim of attending the initiation school is to cultivate courage, endurance, perseverance and obedience amongst the young people. In this initiation school, boys are taught different laws pertaining to manhood and how to behave themselves as the fathers of the future. They also learn how to handle cases in tribal courts. When a boy graduates, he is given the opportunity to give himself a name such as *Mkhacani*, *Magezi*, *Risimati* or *Mzamani*, to commemorate his bravery despite hardships or harsh treatment. However, graduates from the royal family, especially first-borns, are given names as a special treatment or honour.

Although some of the initiation names are not easy to define or assign a meaning to, some of them have significance, for example *Xitlhavangoma* and *Mzamani* (see discussion in 3.5.2.1).

Upon completion of their initiation school, the young people return home. Mbiti (1975:96) sums up their return to their homes as follows:

> Returning home is like being born afresh into a new life. They go home as new people. ... they are given new names following their initiation, to show the radical change they have undergone.

As indicated earlier, women do attend their special initiation school, which is set up at home. Special names are used for the graduates of this school as well, such as *Mphephu*, *Mamayila*, *Tsatsawani*, and *Mujaji*.

Another feature which needs attention is that affluent Xitsonga speaking people in some villages, no longer have interest in the so-called initiation schools. In the light of the above development, circumcision names are discarded because the most rural and traditional Vatsonga are no longer interested in initiation or commemorative naming.

The following serve as examples of names bestowed at initiation schools:

3.6.2.1 Xitlhavangoma (the first initiate)

Xitlhavangoma is a name given to the first initiate who in many cases, is the son of the chief or *induna*. In this instance, the name-bearer is not given the opportunity to give himself a new name according to the rules and regulations governing the circumcision school. The chief, the *induna* or the person in charge of the initiation school often gives the name.

3.6.2.2 Xirilele (the one who cries for something)

Xirilele is a symbolic name given to a boy who forces his way to a circumcision school without the prior consent of his parents or elders. After graduating from the school the elders may name the boy *Xirilele* (the one who cries for something).

Sometimes a child who is not yet old enough to attend the initiation school may cry and long to go there so much that the parents may sympathise with the child and allow him to attend. After the graduation ceremony, the boy may be given the name *Xirilele*.

3.6.2.3 Mzamani (the one who tries)

An initiated boy can also name himself *Mzamani* which is a symbolic name that can be given to a boy who is willing to keep on trying to do something and who is inquisitive to learn from family related chores executed by boys.

3.6.3 **Ancestral Names**

Ancestral names are names which people believe link their present life to their ancestors. Such names are given when the child, it is believed, cries for the name. The name is usually determined by the throwing of divining bones. It is alleged that the discovery and bestowal of the right name restores the child to health.

In most cases the paternal ancestors' names are given because the paternal family is closely involved or is in association with the child. It is further argued that the names of the dead and the living should be the same. A name is, therefore, ageless, standing for an endless number of persons so that when one intones the name of an ancestor or even of the living, one could be invoking a large number of spirits (Beidelman, 1991: 287).

Ancestral names are associated with families who still believe in rituals or are tied to traditional beliefs. There is thus such a close relationship between a person's name and ancestral beliefs that a child is only named after an ancestor following revelations made to the parents in, for instance, dreams and divining bone throwing. But one can deduce that giving a child an ancestor's name is considered as the reincarnation of the ancestor. This view is also buttressed by Saarelma-Maunumaa (1996:35):

> In many socities, it is common to name children after living or dead relatives. Sometimes the idea is simply to show respect to the person in question or to help preserve his or her memory. On the other hand, sharing can also be a symbol of a belief that a child is a re-incarnation of a departed member of the family.

In addition, the ancestors are believed to form a bridge between the living and the dead.

3.6.3.1 Nyakwavi (the one who takes care of ancestors)

Nyakwavi is an ancestral name which is given specifically to a girl who looks after the "*ndhumbha*", a special hut meant for the ancestors. If she happens to get married, the family must make sure that there is another girl who has to carry out the ancestral obligations. Her duties include, inter alia, the cleaning of the *ndhumbha* and seeing to it that it is kept alight in the evening by placing some burning brands on a potshed since the ancestors should not come and find their hut in darkness.

3.6.3.2 Xinyori (of Chauke clan)

Xinyori is an ancestal name given specifically to a boy born to the *Chauke* family as it is associated with the partriarchal ancestry of the *Chauke* clan.

3.6.3.3 Malenga (of Maluleke clan)

Malenga is also an ancestal name associated with the *Maluleke* clan and may only be given to a child born to a royal family.

3.6.3.4 Bangwana (of Chauke clan)

This is an ancestal name which is associated with the *Chauke* clan too since children born to a *Chauke* family may be given the name *Bangwana.*

3.6.4 **Christian Names**

Christian names are given to children in accordance with their parents' religious beliefs. These names are in most instances currently associated with the parents who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour and who believe that their offspring will follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and avoid all the evils of the world. Both maternal and paternal families do participate in giving a child a Christian name. Children may be given names such as *Nhlamulo* (answer), *Nyiko* (gift), *Tshemba* (trust), *Rivoningo* (light), and *Musa* (mercy). These names can be bestowed regardless of the sex of the name bearers. In this regard it should be borne in mind that the emotions and feelings of name-givers are very strong at certain stages of life, especially during birth, especially since people usually associate God with the continuation of life.

3.6.4.1 Nhlamulo (answer)

When a child is born after many years of marriage, its name may indicate that God has heard the prayers of the parents. The name *Nhlamulo* may thus show that the parents have waited for a long time for the child. This name is derived from the verb -*hlamula* (answer). In other words, the name shows gratitude to God for giving them "a new lease of life" after such long, barren years.

3.6.4.2 Vongani (be thankful)

The name *Vongani* may be given to both boys and girls whose parents are Christians and is formed from the verb -*vonga* (praise). The family gives the child the name

Vongani as a way of giving gratitude to God since a child is viewed as a precious gift from God.

3.6.4.3 Xikhongelo (prayer)

The name *Xikhongelo* may be given to a child whose parents have longed for a child and have frequented the church in order to ask for a child. In the long run their prayers were answered, hence the name *Xikhongelo* that is derived from the verb *khongela* (pray). The name is a constant reminder to the couple that they should never cease praying to and praising God.

3.6.4.4 Mikateko (blessings)

The name *Mikateko* is given to a baby girl and reflects that the parents feel blessed in having a child.

3.6.4.5 Rirhandzu (love)

Rirhandzu indicates a strong feeling of love for the newly born child. The name could also be a symbolic way in which the parents or the name-giver says "God is Love".

3.6.4.6 Themba (trust)

The name *Themba* encodes hopes and wishes for the child, indicating that the family wants the child to be dedicated and patient in everything he/she does. The name also calls upon the family to have trust and faith in God.

3.6.4.7 Khensani (be thankful)

Khensani shows that parents are very grateful for having a child so the family is expressing gratitude for the birth of their child.

3.6.5 **Family/Birth Circumstances**

According to the informants birth circumstance names reflect the very wide range of circumstances recorded or observed during and after the pregnancy of the mother.

A child can be named in accordance to family circumstances if the name bestowed upon a child has to do with the advancement of the family. Names such as *Mfumo* (government), *Akani* (build), *Miyelani* (be quiet), and *Nhlanhla* (luck) serve as examples of such names.

It is interesting to note that specific events which prevail at the time of birth are also recorded in names, for example, an invasion of locusts, war, famine, and floods. According to Mbiti (1975:88), names can be related to weather conditions as well:

> The state of the weather is often in people's names. Some are named after thunder, rain, drought, famine, harvest, weeding, hunting, and other seasons of the year.

3.6.5.1 Mata-ni-mpfula (the one who comes with rain)

Mata-ni-mpfula is a name which can be given to a child whose mother gave birth to him during heavy rains. The name *Mata-ni-mpfula* is a compound name derived from *ta* (verb), *na* (pp) and *mpfula* (noun).

3.6.5.2 Marhambu (bones)

Marhambu is a name which may be given to a child who looked like a skeleton at birth.

3.6.5.3 Maxangu (suffering)

This name may be given to a child whose mother was sick during her pregnancy. In order to remember the period during which she was ill, the mother could name the child *Maxangu*. The name *Maxangu* means suffering.

3.6.5.4 Byelamani (relate to whom?)

Byelamani is a name which can be given to a child by his or her mother who has lost her husband during pregnancy. The name *Byelamani* is a compound name derived from *byela* (verb) + *mani* (interrogative pronoun). It means that the mother felt lonely and she did not have someone to comfort and talk to her. In other words, she did not have someone to relate to and share her sufferings with. She, therefore, believes that by naming the child *Byelamani* she would ultimately forget her problems.

3.6.5.5 Tintswalo (mercy)

A child born to a woman whose kindness was outstanding may be given the name *Tintswalo* since the namegiver recognises her immeasurable kindness or generosity. The name also calls upon the mother to continue the good work she has done. This means that her good work was not in vain, as it has been noticed.

3.6.5.6 Munene (goodness)

The name symbolises the idea of peace and harmony. It is given to a child by the parents as an indication of their belief that the child will bring peace and harmony to their family. They hope that the arrival of the new-born baby will give them a sense of security and certainty.

3.6.5.7 Tsakani (happy)

The family may name the child *Tsakani* as a call to their relatives and neighbours to share their happiness or joy. By naming the child *Tsakani* the namegiver is just saying, "Let us rejoice for our family has been blessed with a child." The name *Tsakani* is derived from the verb *-tsaka* (be happy).

3.6.5.8 Ndleleni (on the way)

The name *Ndleleni* relates to a place and may be given to a child who was born on the way to hospital or while her mother was visiting a friend or a relative. The name *Ndleleni* is derived from *ndlela* (noun) + *-ini* (locative suffix).

3.6.5.9 Xilumi (the one who bites)

This name is related to hardship since the namegiver has been alert and observing the way the pregnant woman behaved during her pregnancy. If the pregnant woman always complained about recurring stomach cramps, the namegiver may name the child *Xilumi* which is derived from the verb *–luma* (bite).

3.6.5.10 Masingita (miracles)

Masingita is a name connected to miracles or something which happens unexpectedly. The name may be given to a child who was born after many years of waiting. The name may sometimes be given to a child whose parents had in the past lost many children. In other words, the birth of that particular child is regarded as a wonderful and unexpected event, a miracle since the parents did not expect that their child would survive.

3.6.5.11 Masirheni (graveside)

A child born on the day of the death or during the mourning of a family member or relative may be named *Masirheni* to remind the family of the day on which they buried their loved one.

3.6.5.12 Nyimpi (fight)

When a family characterised by domestic violence is blessed with a newly born child, they may name the child *Nyimpi* in an effort to encourage the family members to resolve their differences amicably.

The name may also be given to a child who was born during times of war to remember the time of agony and suffering when the head of the family was away and serving the country as a soldier.

3.6.5.13 Rhukanani (of blasphemy)

The name *Rhukanani* may be given to a child whose mother did not behave properly during her pregnancy to censure such unbecoming behaviour. The namegiver believes that the mother, through the name of her child, will try to mend her ways and live in harmony with the other members of the family.

3.6.5.14 Mixo (morning)

Mixo is a symbol of dawn heralding the coming of a new day. In the context of a family it symbolises the heralding of a new period in the history of the family. The name also may record the time at which the child was born.

3.6.5.15 Langutela (wait for)

The name is given to a first child after a long period of waiting during which the mother was accused of being barren.

3.6.5.16 Maxongi (the beautiful one)

A child born with characteristics showing natural beauty may be called *Maxongi* to indicate that the name-bearer is beautiful.

3.6.5.17 Tiyiselani (be courageous)

The name *Tiyiselani* records circumstances about the pregnancy and/or birth of the child if there were quarrels between the parents before the child's birth. The name thus calls for patience.

3.6.5.18 Humelelani (be successful)

The name reflects the parents' feeling of satisfication that with the birth of a child they progressed in life.

3.6.5.19 Hanyani (let them live)

This refers to a child who is born when the mother was seriously ill and did not expect the child to live. This means that the birth of her child has brought life to her.

3.6.5.20 Mfumo (government)

The name *Mfumo* may be given to a child whose physical apperance resembles the head of the family as a way of expressing the family's wishes for him to take over after his father. Such a child is expected to have leadership qualities. In other words,

the child must be exemplary. The name *Mfumo* may also be given to the only baby boy born to a family of many girls.

3.6.5.21 Akani (build)

Akani is a name which may be given to a child who is expected to bear more children who will help in building the family. The name usually refers to the boy's potential to continue the genealogy of the family.

3.6.5.22 Miyelani (keep quiet)

A child who is born during a troubled time in the family may be named *Miyelani* since it is believed that the birth of that particular child signifies the end of the period of agony and that his/her birth will bring lasting peace and happiness as hence the name calls for tranquillity.

3.6.5.23 Nhlanhla (luck)

The name *Nhlanhla* may be given to a child who is expected to bring luck to the family and bless the family members in whatever they are doing. The family members thus expect themselves to be successful in all their endeavours.

3.6.5.24 Khindlimuka (wake up)

The name *Khindlimuka* may be given to the newly born child of a couple who is contributing towards the development of their family as well as to that of the community at large. The name may serve as a wake-up call for parents to uplift themselves. The name may also be given to a child born during the annual choral music festival that is held by the Vatsonga, which is known by this name.

3.6.5.25 Nhlangano (togetherness)

When the family has long been engaged in conflict, the birth of a child may bring it together again so the couple may name the child *Nhlangano* which suggests that the newly born child has brought the family together.

3.6.6 **Names which describe the child or the family's background**

Xitsonga names may reveal a vast degree of information about the Vatsonga as a people. For instance, certain names describe the child's or family's background, mark the activities of the family, record unusual events or the place where the child was born. Names may also mark the interests of the parents, social relationships, and economic life, for example, *Vusiwana* (poverty), *Rifumo* (riches), and *Xaniseka* (hardship).

3.6.6.1 Vusiwana (poverty)

A child born to a family living in abject poverty may be given the name of *Vusiwana*. The namegiver may also give the child this name due to the failure of the head of the family to properly look after his family. This may be caused by a variety of reasons such as the negative effect of the migration labour system. By naming the child *Vusiwana* the mother may be trying to alert the other family members to her plight in the hope that they will come to her rescue.

3.6.6.2 Xaniseka (suffer)

If a family is living under difficult conditions such as experiencing a lack of money or unemployment a child born to it may be named *Xaniseka*. The name is associated with suffering and agony to remember the trying times in which the child was born while also constantly reminding them to work harder.

The name may also be given to a child who has been born to a single parent since it means that the child has come to face a world of suffering.

3.6.6.3 Rifumo (riches)

A child born to a well-to-do family or a successful person may sometimes be given the name of *Rifumo* (riches). In contrast, the name may also be given to the child of parents living below the poverty line as a way of wishing the child luck or success in his/her life. The parents strongly believe that the child will, one day, become a successful person and, therefore, be able to look after them. In other words, the child is expected to rise above the difficult conditions and become successful and wealthy.

3.6.7 **Protective names**

In traditional Xitsonga culture, when death or illness strikes, a supernatural cause is suspected. This unfortunate situation is, therefore, enshrined in a name. According to the informants, experts in namegiving can give children protective names such as *Telakufa*, *Nyamayavo, Rifumuni*, and *Mafanato*. Protective names serve to publicly encode complaints to the members of the family and are also known as sarcastic names. In other words, protective names are often given with a slightly teasing tone.

3.6.7.1 Telakufa (come to die)

Parents who had lost a number of children and are blessed with a newly born child could name the child *Telakufa* because they may have little hope that the child will survive. The name may thus be considered as a form of prayer in desperation. They wholeheartedly hope that the name will protect the child from all the evil spirits and expect the child to survive. Nkondo (1973:72) indicates the significance of this name by saying:

> This is given to a baby born to parents who have lost a number of children before it. Like the others, it too, has come for death.

In this instance the belief exists that the dead children were bewitched and that the witches will feast on the newly born baby too.

3.6.7.2 Nyamayavo (their flesh, their meat)

A mother who has lost many children may also give her newly born baby the name of *Nyamayavo* as Junod (1938:54) remarks:

> When a mother has lost many children, if another is born, a name which is often chosen to protect the child against witches, such as *Nyamayavo*, which means "Their Flesh", is given.

The name *Nyamayavo* is considered a protective name in that the witches will realise that their evil deeds are known since the namegiver has a strong belief that the child will survive because the witches will shy away or distance themselves from the child's family.

3.6.7.3 Rifumuni (what kind of death?)

A child born during a period of mourning or after the loss of a family member may be named *Rifumuni*. The namegiver is thus trying to put a curse on death as it has robbed the family of a member. By naming the child *Rifumuni* the namegiver poses the question, "What kind of death?" (*I rifu muni*?) is the family having? In this regard Nkondo (*op.cit.*71) observes:

> Such a name is given to a child born after a sudden death in the family, particularly if the circumstances of the death are not fully understood.

The family believes that by naming the child *Rifumuni* death will not strike again.

3.6.7.4 Mafanato (the one who dies with a secret)

A child born out of wedlock may be named *Mafanato*. It is interesting in that the name bestowed upon the innocent child serves to publicly register a complaint about the mother of the child because the mother refuses to reveal the name of the child's father so that the namegiver ultimately deems it necessary and correct to name the child *Mafanato*. The name *Mafanato* refers to the one who does not disclose a secret as the mother would rather die than reveal a secret. As such, the name is a symbol of disobedience and immorality.

3.6.7.5 Mapatweni (on the roads)

The name *Mapatweni* may be given to a child whose father suspects the mother of being unfaithful. The namegiver is thus sternly warning to the mother that her unfaithfulness is known.

Junod and Jacques (1970:342), however, record how the child's mother counteracts the accusations of unfaithfulness:

> If she is suspected of having committed adultery, she will call her child *Mapatweni*, "on the roads", because she is not afraid to face the accusation that she got the child in an illegitimate way.

3.6.7.6 Vuloyi (witchcraft)

One of the most disturbing elements in African life is the fear of witchcraft. In spite of education and Christianity, it has been very difficult to eradicate the belief of witchcraft. A woman accused of witchcraft may name her child *Vuloyi* to defend her

reputation against an accusation of witchcraft. In other words, the mother gives the child the name *Vuloyi* to defy public opinion and the verdict of a witchdoctor.

3.6.7.7 Ganyani (enrich yourself)

When a mother has lost her husband and the family denies her the opportunity to inherit the estate of her late husband, if a child is born to that particular family she may give the child the name *Ganyani* which means "let them enrich themselves'. This kind of treatment frequently happens in a polygamous family, especially when one of the deceased's wives has no children. The children of the other wives may end up taking the wealth of the family without sharing it with her. The name also serves to indicate to the family members that the mother will have nothing more to do with the property.

3.7 WESTERN NAMES

The Vatsonga also give Western names to their children. Among Xitsonga speaking people there are people who prefer to name their offspring after apartheid rulers such as Malan, Verwoerd, and Botha. Dr D. F. Malan was the first Prime Minister of the former National Party and led South Africa from 1948 until 1954; Hendrik Verwoerd was the architect of separate development (apartheid) who led South Africa from 1958 until 1966. In 1978 P W Botha was inaugurated as the State President of the Republic of South Africa and ruled the country from 1978 until 1989.

3.7.1 Circumstances of giving Western names

Cultural contact with colonial values, power, and languages and the demands of colonial bureaucracy have resulted in the introduction of Western names to Africans. Many "colonised" inhabitants of Southern Africa acquired European names as a symbol of Christian conversion, which resulted in bestowing two names instead of one name at birth (De Klerk and Bosch, 1998:8; Dickens, 1985:66). The Western

influence on the Zulu personal naming system, in the period 1840-1899, was a direct result of the evangelisation campaigns of the missionaries.

The above situation was also prevalent among the Vatsonga. According to the informants, the adoption of Christianity and European influence, especially Swiss missionary work, has led the Vatsonga to use Western names. Western names were adopted with the ultimate aim of meeting the demands of westernisation, namely baptism, schooling and employment (Dickens, 1985; De Klerk and Bosch, 1998).

The following Western male names are familiar among the Vatsonga:

Thomas, John, George, Peter, Morris, Wilson, Patrick, Elvis, Samuel, Ethiane, Simon, James, Abel, Ernest, and Elijah.

The following Western names female names are well-known:

Mary, Sarah, Doris, Grace, Victoria, Carol, Patience, Olga, Mavis, Marble, Vivian, Anna, Elizabeth, Ruth, Rachel, Alinah, Joyce, Wendy, Brenda, Yvonne, Mercy, Pretty, Prudence, Petunia, Rose, Ivy, Connie, Margaret, Lucy, Patricia, Lucent, Lydia, Deborah, Beauty, Nancy, Jane, and Norah.

3.8 **NAMES OF CELEBRITIES**

The Vatsonga may also name their children after celebrities:

3.8.1 **Soccer stars**

3.8.1.1 Jomo (Sono)

Jomo Sono is one of the soccer legends who has contributed immensely to the soccer fraternity. He was a dribbling wizard during his heydays whilst playing for Orlando

Pirates in South Africa and Denver Cosmos in America. He once stunned the world when he came out of his wedding ceremony and scored three goals to register a historic win whilst his team was 2-0 behind before half time. His contributions in soccer circles speak volumes and his name is associated with success. The namegiver may thus name a child *Jomo* in the hope that the child will emulate him.

3.8.1.2 Kaizer (Motaung)

Kaizer Motaung is also one of the soccer legends who is held in high esteem in South Africa. He was a dribbling wonder as well who played for Orlando Pirates before he went to form his own club, which is popularly known as Kaizer Chiefs. Many soccer fans may name their children *Kaizer* because of their association with his team in the hope that their children will emulate him.

3.8.1.3 Ace (Ntsoeleng)

Ace Ntsoeleng is a former Kaizer Chiefs star who played very entertaining soccer alongside *Jomo Sono* for Denver Cosmos. He was one of the most gifted stars of his time. Name-givers may give his name to newly born children in the hope that they will be as successful as he was.

3.8.2 **Boxing legends**

Names of boxing legends are also given to children. Some of these names are *Ali* (Mohammed), *Terror* (Mathebula), and *Baby Jake* (Matlala).

3.8.2.1 Ali (Mohammed)

Ali Mohammed is a former boxing world champion. He was indeed a fearless fighter who attracted many fans whenever he was fighting as the undisputed champion in the heavy weight division. No boxing history can be regarded as complete without

mention of his name. Many parents choose to name their children *Ali*, hoping that they will follow in his footsteps.

3.8.2.2 Terror (Mathebula)

Terror Mathebula is another former boxing world title holder who contributed to South African history.

3.8.2.3 Baby Jack (Matlala)

Jacob Matlala is a pocket-sized, stockily built man. Matlala is one of local fighters who made South Africa proud because of his contribution to the South African Boxing Fraternity. He grew up in Meadowlands and first learned his boxing skills from his father Isaac who was a fearless fighter. Matlala is a former holder of the International Boxing Association Flyweight championship crown due to his dedication and discipline.

Matlala is a successful businessman too who is the proud owner of the Baby Jake's Dinner, a fast-food outlet. The Minister of Sports and Recreation has recently seconded Matlala to serve in the newly formed South African Boxing Commission. Parents may name their children after him because of their physical appearance which resembles his. They may also wish their children to emulate Matlala as a dedicated and disciplined boxer.

3.8.3 **Film stars**

The Vatsonga may also name their children after film stars such as Sdumo (Joe Mafela) and Mhlongo (Don Eric Mlangeni) in the belief that their children will also bring fame to their homes or families as well.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The chapter has focussed on personal names and various naming practices among the Vatsonga. It has been stressed that naming an individual is considered an important event; hence names are sometimes determined by the need to perpetuate the names of some family members. Both the living and dead members' names are considered in naming a newly born child. The choice of such names is equally influenced by the desire to honour the family members. This indicates that the living and the departed have a special place in the family's history.

From a traditional point of view, naming a child after some outstanding or revered person is regarded as an honour to the child in that it is believed that the name-bearer would grow to emulate that particular prominent figure. The chapter has also shown that by perpetuating the name of a family member, the family concerned is in one way or another trying to create a positive and mutual relationship among its members.

The chapter has also shown that naming a newly born child is not independent of the society in which events occur. The circumstances surrounding a child's birth account for a variety of reasons behind the naming of children. If a child is born on the way to hospital, for instance, such an incident is recorded in a name such as *Ndleleni* (on the way). A child born under the fig tree might be named *Nkuweni* (under the fig tree), thus recording the place where the child was born.

Names which refer to the constant imminence of sorrow, death, poverty, starvation or hunger, have also been discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. THE DYNAMICS OF PLACE NAMES IN XITSONGA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the names of geographical features that include natural and man-made entities. In this study, we shall use the terms "geographical name" and "place name" or "toponym" interchangeably to refer to a place inhabited by people. The place names, which will constitute this study, will inter alia include both standardised and non-standardised names. This infers that the study will document the names of both formal and informal settlements. Names of formal and informal settlements are rich with significance for the residents. Most settlements throughout South Africa have names that are expressive, descriptive, commemorative or symbolic in nature. Nevertheless, there are names that seemingly do not convey any message to the residents. Interestingly, some developers choose names regardless of their possible connotations in South Africa's multilingual and multicultural society, with unfortunate consequences (Jenkins, Raper and Moller, 1996).

4.2 DEFINITION OF PLACE NAMES

According to Stewart (1975:4), a place name is "a word or words used to indicate, denote, or identify a place". The place does not have to be big or small. Crystal (1987:4) adds that "a place name is the only record of a historical event or of a person's existence". Riddler (1986:154) defines a toponym as:

> The place names of a country or district as a subject of study or personal names derived from the place where a particular ancestor lives.

To expatiate what Riddler means by a toponym, Crystal (*ibid.*) adds:

> The study of place names includes the "small" places and institutions (such as names of streets, houses, inns and fields)as well as the main geographical features of the world (such as seas, rivers, mountains, cities, and towns).

Dlomu (1994:9) quotes Vallieres (1988) when he avers:

> By geographical names is meant names of any place, whether a line, a point in space, at any level (micro-toponymy), buildings, complexes, transportation routes, urban centres, administrative regions of various kinds, topographical features, localities and so on.

To sum up the definition of toponym, Kadmon (1992:8) comments:

> A geographical name is a toponym - i.e., the name of a topographic feature - on earth. Geographical features whether natural or man-made are identified by people through names given to them.

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

4.3 **THE STRUCTURE OF PLACE NAMES**

The structure of place 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 locatives (Jenkins, Raper and Moller,1996). It is furthermore distinguished that each language group uses its own locative prefixes to denote a particular area or location. Place names from the African languages are characterised by locative prefixes such as *Ga* (Ga-Dikgale) in Sotho, *kwa*

(kwaMashu) in Nguni, *Ha* (Hamasia) in Venda, and *eka* (eka Mhinga) in Xitsonga (Jenkins, Raper and Moller, 1996).

The locative prefixes *ga-*, *eka-*, *kwa-* and *ha-* literally mean "the place of so and so" while these prefixes are also affixed to names of prominent people such as chiefs and indunas.

More examples of locative prefixes as reflected in different African languages are as follows:

(i) **Northern Sotho/Sotho**

As already indicated, the locative prefix *ga-* is utilised by the Sotho language group to denote place names. The locative prefix *ga-* in the Sotho languages is joined to the component that follows it. The prefix *ga-* and the component begin with capital letters (Jenkins, Raper, and Moller, 1996). The following are examples of place names:

Ga-Kibi
Ga-Kobe
Ga-Teffo
Ga-Mokumuru
Ga-Chuene
Ga-Makanye
Ga-Moloto
Ga-Mathabatha
Ga-Mawasha.

(ii) **Tshivenda**

In Tshivenda, the locative prefix *ha-* is used to denote place names. *Ha-* is affixed to the personal name that follows it. The local prefix *ha-* begins with a capital letter and the personal name with a small letter (Jenkins, Raper and Moller, 1996). The following are examples of Tshivenda place names:

Hamphephu
Hamasia
Halambani
Hatshivhase
Hatshikonelo
Harabali
Hatshitumbe.

(iii) **Nguni**

Nguni people use the locative prefix *kwa-/ka-* to denote place names:

kwaMhlanga
kwaNdebele
kwaZulu
kwaThema
kwaNdengeza
kwaMashu
kaNyamazane
kaBokweni.

The structure of Xitsonga place names is distinguished by the use of the locative prefix *eka-/e-*. In Xitsonga where place names begin with the locative prefix *eka-*; the place names are written as separate words as shown in (a). However, when

the locative prefix *e-* is used the place name is written as one word as shown in (b).

(a) Examples of place names that use the locative prefix *eka-* are:

eka Xikundu
eka Mhinga
eka Madonsi
eka N'wamitwa
eka Malamulele
eka Magomani
eka Mbhokota
eka Nkovani
eka Nkuzana
eka Majozi.

(b) Examples of place names that use the locative prefix **e-** are:

eMhala
eMaviligwa
eNtlhaveni
eBotsoleni
eElim
eGiyani
eHlanganani.

The analysis of place names here indicates that some place names are compounded, consisting of more than one element, while others are non-compounded, consisting of a single element only. Examples are Port Elizabeth and Pretoria (see Jenkins, Raper and Moller, 1996:38). This is also evident in Xitsonga where there are both compounded and non-compounded place names.

Examples of compounded place names:

Tshama-hansi	(*Tshama* + *hansi* : Verb + Noun)
Hluvula-baji	(*Hluvula* + *baji* : Verb + Noun)
Peta-nenge	(*Peta* + *nenge* : Verb + Noun)
Hunguta-ximbitana	(*Hunguta* + *ximbitana* : Verb + Noun)
Tana-hi-wexe	(*Tana* + *hi* + *wexe* : Verb + Subject Concord + Pronoun)
Tshemba-nenge	(*Tshemba* + *nenge* : Verb + Noun)
Chavela-Gaza	(*Chavela* + *Gaza* : Verb + Noun)
Hunguta-poto	(*Hunguta* + *poto* : Verb + Noun)
Wisa-poto	(*Wisa* + *poto* : Verb + Noun)

Examples of non-compounded names:

Mhinga
Xikundu
Mhala
Hluvukani
Malamulele
Fikani
Sasekani
Saselani
Magona
Nkovani.

4.4 TYPES OF PLACE NAMES

The political and social fabric of South Africa is often reflected in different types of place names. It is common for people to name places after prominent leaders, but political popularity is fickle, and such names often become objectionable, at least to a section of the community (Jenkins, Raper and Moller, 1996). About 60% of rural

villages have been named after their respective traditional leaders. Only about 40% of place names have been given to rural areas through onomastic innovation or creativity. However, this study will include names of villages, towns and cities.

4.4.1 **Places named after traditional leaders**

There are many settlements which have been named after their respective traditional leaders. These traditional leaders are being honoured for the sterling job they are doing for their followers.

4.4.1.1 Xikundu

Xikundu is the name of a tribal authority in the former Malamulele district in the Limpopo Province. The place was named after the royal family. When the members of the *Xikundu* royal family speak vaingloriously they praise themselves by saying, "We are the tree trump (*xikundu*) that the firewood collectors failed to chop down". According to the informants from the royal family the praise simply means that the royal family is very firm, strict, and committed in executing their royal duties and obligations.

4.4.1.2 Govhu

Govhu is the name of a village also in the former Malamulele district. The name was initially given as a nickname to the headman of the village. The name became so popular that the village is now known as *Govhu*. The name *Govhu* which is a circumstantial name literally means a crook that accumulates wealth through criminal or illegal activities, thus greed or gluttony. According to the informants, however, the headman *Govhu* acquired his name through his excellent negotiation skills during village meetings. They claim that he used his manipulative tactics to win the hearts of his subjects.

4.4.1.3 Xitlhelani

The name *Xitlhelani* refers to a village in the south-east of the Malamule Township. It is derived from the verb stem *–tlhela* (go back) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. This village was named after its leader. The leader of the village earned this name after he was refused admission to a local initiation school. He was sent back home because he was too young to attend the initiation school.

4.4.1.4 Fikani

Fikani is the name of a village under the Xikundu Tribal Authority. According to the informants, the name Fikani has been given to the village in honour of the headman George Fikani Xikundu. The name Fikani is derived from the verb stem *–fika* (to arrive) and the vocative suffix *–ni*.

4.4.1.5 Chavani

Chavani is the name of a village in the Makhado municipality in the Limpopo Province. The name *Chavani* is derived from the verb stem *–chava* (to fear) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. This name was given in line with the name of the leader of the village.

4.4.1.6 Dzumeri

This name relates the history of the Vatsonga in their various travels. When Bvin'ula, the son of Nyavani (Mbhalati) left Mozambique, he was in the company of his loyal subjects in the 1800s. When they arrived in the then Northern Transvaal, Bvin'ula sought refuge among the Bapedi.

According to the informants, during his brief stay with the Bapedi, Bvin'ula used to wear their cultural attire. Seeing his keenness to practise and adopt their culture, the

Bapedi gave him a very beautiful and fertile piece of land in the Mphephuli area which was affectionately called Xamufana (of 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 corruption of "o dumetsi" (you agree). However, according to the researcher's principal informant, John Ndhambi from *Dzumeri/Ndhambi* 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 kind and gentle during the day.

4.4.1.7 Ndhambhi

Ndhambhi is the name of a village in the Giyani district of the former Gazankulu homeland. The name Ndhambhi was given to the village after the name of the leader of the Dzumeri/Ndhambhi Royal Kraal. According to Mr John Ndhambhi, Chief Ndhambhi was born during a deluge or flood. *Ndhambhi* literally means flood or deluge.

4.4.1.8 N'wamarhanga

N'wamarhanga is the name of a village in the former Giyani district of the then Gazankulu homeland. The village is under the leadership of January N'wamarhanga Mabunda. It is harbouring a river infested with crocodiles, which is a source of irrigation water for all the residents' agricultural activities. *N'wamarhanga* is well known for its fertile soil and its high production of various species of cucumbers (*marhanga*).

4.4.1.9 Xitlakati

Xitlakati literally means tatters. *Xitlakati* is the name of a village under the leadership of one of the researcher's informants, Sunday Nkuna. According to him, 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.

4.4.1.10 Dinga

Dinga is the name of a village south of Malamulele Town. It is derived from the fact that the headman of the village, Manganyi, used to ask his subjects about what they were in need of, especially in matters relating to the development of their village in the areas of education, health, agriculture, and economy.

Another striking aspect that earned the area the name *Dinga* is that the headman had the tendency to ask the villagers during the tribal meetings about the low birthrate of boys. He was worried because the village used to register more girls than boys. He always said that the village needed boys, hence his expression "*hi dinga jaha*" (We need a boy).

4.4.1.11 Mavalani

Mavalani is the name of a village north of Giyani. It is derived from the noun *mavala* (spots) and the vocative suffix *-ni*. According to the informants, the former headman Tinyonga Mathebula left Nchangana (Mozambique) in the 1800. He used to claim that he lived like a tiger in that he and his subjects used to attack people and take their belongings on their way to South Africa.

During tribal gatherings, Tinyonga Mathebula would dress in garments made out of tiger skins. He would also boast that "the clothes were of the spots of a tiger".

4.4.2 **Place names of historical origin**

These names are of great importance and significance in that they are symbolic in nature. Historical names may help to uncover the history of a village, town, city, or country. Below are some examples of place names that relate to historical factors:

4.4.2.1 Nkhwinyamahembe

In 1958 there was fighting among the three villages: Lyllidale, Metsi, and Kildare in the former Mhala area. The villages were under the leadership of Njonjhela. The residents of Lyllidale village fought against those of Metsi village.

Today the Lyllidale village has been named *Nkhwinyamahembe* due to the conduct of its inhabitants during the fight they waged against the members of the Metsi village. According to the researcher's informants, the fighters from Lyllidale village used to fold their shirt sleeves as if they were to fight with their bare hands. In Xitsonga this action will be translated as *nkhwinyani mahembe* (wrap your shirt sleeves).

4.4.2.2 Gwazani

Metsi village was renamed *Gwazani*. The name is derived from the fact that the members of the Metsi village used an assortment of weapons such as assegais and knives to fight the Lyllidale residents. Their use of these weapons earned them the new name *Gwazani*. The name *Gwazani* is derived from the verb stem *–gwaza* (to stab) and the vocative suffix *–ni*.

4.4.2.3 Malamule

During the battle between the inhabitants of Lyllidale and Metsi, the members of the Kildare village entered the fray in a conciliatory manner and stopped the bloody clash. Their intervention earned them the name *Malamule*. The Kildare village was then renamed *Malamule*. This name is derived from the verb stem *-lamula* (to separate or to arbitrate).

4.4.2.4 Thulamahashe

Thulamahashe is the name of a township in the Bushbuckridge area of the Limpopo Province. The name was given in the memory of the son of Nghunghunyane. *Thulamahashe* is a Nguni word which literally means "the dust has settled". This name was given after Mpisane (Nghunghunyane's uncle) and Nghunghunyane's children had fled Mozambique following the arrest and banishing of Nghunghunyane to Portugal. When they had arrived peacefully in the Eastern Transvaal, the youngest son of Nghunghunyane was given the name *Thulamashe* as a symbolic gesture to indicate that "the dust of war has settled".

4.4.2.5 Gandlanani

Gandlanani refers to a village situated about five kilometers north of Malamulele township. The name is derived from the verb stem -*gandla* (to be packed firmly in one place). The name was given to the village in reaction to the forced removal and relocation of people from their former ancestral places where they used to occupy a vast piece of land. Shikwambana (1999:21) explains the origin of the name *Gandlanani* as follows:

> Hi nkarhi wa Mfumo wa Xihlawuhlawu wa Pitori, hi malembe ya va1963 na 1964 vanhu va matikoxikaya a va boheleriwa ku ku ya tshama eka ndhawu yin'we.
>
> (During the reign of the Apartheid Government of Pretoria, in the years 1963 and 1964 respectively rural people were forced to resettle in one area .)

Gandlanani simply means that people were resettled on a very small piece of land. In registering their dissatisfaction, the inhabitants of the newly relocated village called it *Gandlanani*. By calling the village *Gandlanani* they were alerting the government of the day that they were dissatisfied with their forced removal.

4.4.2.6 Hatshama

Hatshama is a village east of Giyani. It is under the leadership of three headmen, namely, Makosha, Risinga, and Munguni.

According to the informants, *Hatshama* (we are here to stay) was established as a result of the forced removal and relocation of people in terms of the Urban Areas Act. The village was formerly situated at the place where Giyani is today. It was called by the name of its leader, Risinga. When the residents of Risinga village were forcibly removed from their ancestral area, it was agreed that a new area would be earmarked where they would relocate. In the process of relocation, the Risinga residents were told that they would share their newly demarcated area with the subjects of Makosha and Munguni, and the area was thus renamed *Hatshama.*

The new name was the result of the people's frustration in that the residents were later informed that they had to abandon their newly acquired area and relocate to Homu Block 14 C near the Hluphekani informal settlement. The newly proposed move was, however, met with great resistance from the residents who indicated clearly and boldly to the authorities that they were no longer prepared to move.

4.4.3 **Names of townships**

4.4.3.1 Nkowankowa

Nkowankowa is the name of a township about 15 kilometers from Tzaneen and literally means thorny trees. The township got its name from the fact that the place is characterised by an abundance of thorny trees (*minkowankowa*).

4.4.4 **Names of districts of the former Gazankulu Homeland**

The former Gazankulu homeland was subdivided into five (5) districts, namely, Giyani, Hlanganani, Ritavi, Mhala, and Lulekani.

4.4.4.1 Giyani

Giyani is the name of a town that served as the capital of the Gazankulu homeland. The name Giyani was derived from the verb stem *–giya* that means to dance with joy. The name is thus a symbol of happiness. To show that *Giyani* is a name associated with festivity, Shikwambana (1999:11) quotes Rikhotso (1984) who writes the following about the inauguration of the Gazankulu homeland as a self-governing territory:

> Emasikwini ya 13 ku fikela 17 Nhlangula 1969, ku lulamisiwile nkhuvo lowukulu wo tlangela matimba yo tifuma entsindza wa rixaka eGiyani.
>
> (On the dates 13th to 17 August 1969, a great grand ceremony was held to commemorate being a self-governing territory at the nation's capital, Giyani).

Rikhotso (1984:13) further comments by extracting from a song titled "*Giyani*" composed by the renowned composer and conductor, S J Khosa:

> Giyani n'wina rixaka ra Vatsonga
> Mi tsakela ku tifuma
> Mi yimbelela hi milomo
> Mi yimbelela hi timbilu
> Mi tsakela ku tifuma…

(Dance with joy you Vatsonga nation
Rejoice over self-governing
Sing with your mouths
Sing with your hearts
Commemorate being self-governing…)

To show that the people of the former Gazankulu homeland were radiant with joy, Shikwambana (1999:09) quotes Rikhotso (1984) who remarks:

> Minkulungwana hi dzonga yi biwile, timhalamhala ti mbvungunya hinkwako, n'wana a an'wa hi tsheve ku ciniwa ku yimbeleriwa ku dyiwa.
>
> (Exclamation of thanksgiving was made by means of ululation. Trumpets reverberated everywhere. Many people who graced the occasion danced, sang and ate).

In buttressing the above statements, Chauke (1992:25) states that Giyani also served as one of the districts of Gazankulu:

> Vito ra Giyani i ra doroba, ntsindza ni xifundza xa tiko-xikaya ra Gazankulu.
>
> (The name Giyani refers to the town, the capital as well as the district of Gazankulu).

4.4.4.2 Hlanganani

Hlanganani is the name of one of the districts in the former Gazankulu area. The name was derived from the verb stem *–hlangana* (to come together) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. This name calls for the people to unite. This means that all the people in the *Hlanganani* area should unite and develop their area in spite of differences.

4.4.4.3 Ritavi

Ritavi is also a name of the former districts of Gazankulu. The name Ritavi comes from the name of a river. Raper (1987:296) gives the following version of the origin of the name *Ritavi*:

> Great Letaba-tributary of Olifants River, it rises near Haenertsburg at the northern extremity of Drakensburg. The name is derived from Northern Sotho "Le hlaba" dialectically "le thaba" "sandy river."

According to Raper, the name of the district (Ritavi) was derived from "le hlaba" which is an interaction between Nothern Sotho and Xitsonga.

4.4.4.4 Mhala

Mhala is the name of one of the former districts of Gazankulu. Mhala district was situated in the Bushbuckridge area near the Kruger National Park, which boasts a wide range of wild animals. The name was derived from the fact that the area had a large herd of impala. Shikwambana (1999:11) gives the following version of how the area was called *Mhala*:

> Mhala i vito ra xifundza lexi kumekaka eBushbuckridge kusuhi na Kruger National Park, laha ku nga tala swihari swa nhova. Xifundza lexi xi thyiwile vito ra Mhala hikuva ku tale timhala exifundzeni lexi. Mfumo wa Gazankulu wu vonile yi ri mhaka ya nkoka ku thya xifundza lexi vito ra Mhala.
>
> (Mhala is the name of the district situated in the Bushbuckridge area near the Kruger National Park where there are many wild animals. This district is named Mhala because of the abundance of impala in this district. The Gazankulu government deemed it important to give the district the name Mhala).

4.4.4.5 Lulekani

The *Lulekani* refers to a township situated about 15 km from Phalaborwa. The name also served as the name of the district of the former Gazankulu homeland. Shikwambana (1999:9) explains that the *Lulekani* township came into existence as the result of infighting between Vatsonga and Bapedi labourers of the PMC mine in Phalaborwa:

> Hi minkarhi ya vaGazankulu na vaLebowa, Vatsonga lava a yile hi ntirho ePhalaborwa, a va tshama eNamakgale laha Vatsonga va nga khiriwa hi Vasuthu lava a va kumeka kwala Namakgale.Xidorobana xa Lulekani xi sungurile ku akiwa exifundzeni xa Lulekani.
>
> (During the times of the Gazankulu and Lebowa governments, the Vatsonga who went to look for jobs in Phalaborwa and resided at Namakgale were reportedly discriminated against by the Bapedi. They were discriminated against by the Bapedi people residing at Namakgale. The building of the Lulekani township began in the Lulekani district).

According to the researcher's informants, the intervention of the former Chief Minister of Gazankulu, Prof H W E Ntsan'wisi, prevented further complications. He built his people a beautiful township and named it *Lulekani*. The name *Lulekani* is derived from the verb stem *–luleka* (put straight or show the right way) and the vocative suffix *–ni*.

4.4.5 **Names of informal settlements**

The movement of refugees from Mozambique to Gazankulu resulted in settlements, which reflect their desperate position of their inhabitants (Golele, 1993).

4.4.5.1 Hluphekani

Hluphekani is the name of an informal settlement south-east of Giyani. The settlement has been established exclusively for the Mozambican refugees.

The name *Hluphekani* is self-explanatory in that its inhabitants are indeed in a state of abject poverty. Stench, filth, and dirt characterise the place. The place has no lights and the darkness, even at dusk, is palpable. The place looks, smells, and sounds like a typical ghetto. There is no fresh drinking and running water. The dawn is interpreted as another day of suffering. The name *Hluphekani* is derived from the vocative form of *-hlupheka* (to suffer). The name epitomizes the challenge that the South African government faces if it is to curb the number of informal settlements.

4.4.5.2 Tana-hi-wexe

Tana-hi-wexe refers to a settlement situated near the Thulamahashe township in the Bushbuckridge area. The area emerged as an informal settlement when contract workers of Gazankulu's Public Works erected tents while they were busy with the construction of a local dam. According to Nxumalo (*op.cit*: 5), the informal settlement was originally inhabited by the contract workers who were only males:

> Vanuna lava a va tshama kwale matendeni a va ri hava vavasati. Vanuna lava a va tiswekela va tihlantswela hambi ku ri ku tikulela. Vanuna lava a va tala ku aneka nyama na timpahla ta vona endhawini yin'we. Hi ku hela ka vhiki loko va horile a va xava byalwa va nwa va tlhela va cina hi xikongomelo xo tikandza mafidzula. Vanuna lava a va endla leswi va nga ehleketi leswaku swiendlo swi le ku kokeni hi vavasati. Vavasati lava a va ehleketa leswaku va ta dyela loko vo endla vuxaka na vona.
>
> (Men living in the tents were not staying with women. These men used to cook, wash and even sweep for themselves. These men often used to hang their biltongs and clothes on the same washing line. On

> the weekend of the month end they would buy and consume beer, and ultimately dance as a way of pleasing themselves after such hard work. These men were doing all this not anticipating that their activities were curiously being watched with great agitation by a number of women. The workers' actions had ultimately attracted women who thought that they would win their hearts.)

The main "culprits" who were attracted by the hive of activity taking place at the *Tana-hi-wexe* informal settlement were women from the neighbouring places such as Thulamashe, Xiphafulanini, Mambhumbhu, Kumani, and M P Stream (see also Nxumalo, 2000). The informal settlement was then characterised by the constant influx of females. The contract workers were very excited by this development. After the successful completion of the dam, some of the workers were reluctant to permanently move out of *Tana-hi-wexe* because they were happily married and blessed with children. They also went on to boast: "if you want to visit us, just come at your own peril."

The completion of the dam did not signal the demolition of the informal settlement. The area was duly demarcated and developed into a fully-fledged residential village. The name *Tana-hi-wexe* literally means "come by yourself."

4.4.5.3 Tshemba-Nenge

The invasion of Mozambique by the Nguni conquerors forced the Vatsonga to flee the country. They had to walk hundreds and hundreds of kilometres to South Africa. These people used to encounter endless hardships in the form of starvation, disease and brutal attacks by wild animals. Some lost their lives due to natural causes such as dehydration and malnutrition. Most appallingly, the deceased were not buried and mourned for in accordance with the customs and traditions of the Vatsonga nation. It was indeed a very despairing and humiliating experience when their corpses were devoured by wild animals. All these disturbing situations, however, did not dampen the spirit of the survivors. They indeed bore their sufferings bravely and confirmed

their hazardous trek until their safe arrival at different destinations as determined by the will to search and meet their relatives and friends who had left earlier.

It was indeed a journey of hope where only those who "trusted the feet" (*tshemba nenge*) would dare to travel such a distance of despair and tribulations. Golele (1993:90) mentions that *Tshemba-nenge* is "the name of a place occupied by refugees from war-torn Mozambique. They say you have to have strong legs to foot it from Mozambique to that place."

4.4.5.4 Humulani

Humulani is an informal settlement about fifteen kilometers from Phalaborwa town. The *Humulani* settlement is on the outskirts of the Lulekani township.

Humulani is a place inhabited by Mozambican refugees who fled their country and was derived from the verb stem *-humula* (to rest for a moment) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. The name *Humulani* implies that the Mozambican refugees had found a well-earned rest after running away from their war-torn country, Mozambique.

4.4.6 **Names of formal settlements**

These are the names of settlements which have been registered formally with the South African Geographic Names Committee.

4.4.6.1 Pfala-nomo

Pfala-nomo is the name of a village under the Xikundu Tribal Authority. The name *Pfala-nomo* is a symbolic name for discipline. The induna of the village called upon his subjects to work as a unit and warned them about discussing and boasting about their village's developmental projects in public, hence the name *Pfala-nomo* (close your mouth). The leader of the village wanted his subjects to set standards and lead in

community projects. In other words, the headman was calling upon his people to let their deeds count.

4.4.6.2 Tlangelani

Tlangelani refers to a village in the former Malamulele district. It was derived from the verb *–tlangela* (to celebrate) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. The Swiss Mission Church has played a major role in the naming of Tlangelani because it established *Tlangelani* as a mission station. The missionaries called upon the converts to celebrate (ku tlangela) that they had accepted the Word of God.

4.4.6.3 Basani

Basani is the name of villages in the Malamulele and Hlanganani districts of the former Gazankulu homeland. It is a symbolic name for unity. The name *Basani* was derived from the verb stem *–basa* (to be clean) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. The name urged the members of the village to work very hard to keep their area clean and tidy. The *Basani* village in the Malamulele area is under the leadership of Hosi Xigalo, whereas the one in Hlanganani is under the leadership of the Bungeni Royal Family.

4.4.6.4 Nkovani

This village is under the leadership of the Xikundu Tribal Authority. Its name was derived from the noun *nkova* (stream) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. To show that the place has a number of streams, *Nkovani* village is situated along the Dombodzi spruit that runs into the Shigwedzi River. According to the researcher's informants, the village also got its name due to the fact that it is surrounded by a number of small ravines.

4.4.6.5 Xikukwana

Xikukwana is the name of a village near Giyani. It was derived from the noun *nkuku* (cock) added to the prefix *xi-* and the diminutive suffix *-ana*. The village was named *Xikukwana* because the residents who had disobeyed the chief's instructions had to pay fines such as live chickens, preferably cocks.

4.4.6.6 Sasekani

Sasekani is situated about twenty kilometers from Tzaneen and falls under the Muhlava Tribal Authority led by Chief Samuel Muhlava. The name *Sasekani* was derived from the vocative form *saseka* (of beauty) and the vocative suffix *–ni*. The name *Sasekani* calls upon the villagers to beautify their surroundings through engaging in a variety of community developmental projects.

4.4.6.7 Kurhuleni

Kurhuleni is a village in the Makhado municipality. Its name came from the verb stem *–rhula* (peace) and the vocative suffix *–eni*. The Swiss Mission Church missionaries established it as their mission station.

4.4.6.8 Rivoningo

Rivoningo is the name of a village under the leadership of Hosi Ribungwana. The name was derived from the noun *rivoni* (light). According to the researher's informants, the name was given to the place with the intention of encouraging the residents to work towards developing their area. Chief Ribungwana advocated his subjects to treat their area as a source of enlightenment. The residents of *Rivoningo* village were thus encouraged to send their children to school with the ultimate aim of enhancing development in areas such as education, commerce, science, and technology.

4.4.6.9 Ntlhaveni

The community of *Ntlhaveni* comprises ten villages, which are administered by ten different headmen. *Ntlhaveni* is situated near the Kruger National Game Reserve. It is a symbolic name for fertile soil and was derived from the noun *ntlhava* (loam soil), which refers to fertile soil suitable for farming activities. To support the view that *Ntlhaveni* is a place suitable for farming, the former Gazankulu government commissioned the local commercial farmers to start an irrigation scheme at the Makuleke village in this area. The irrigation scheme is now characterised by a large number of farming activity. *Ntlhaveni* was established in terms of the Group Areas Act of 1969 when the Vatsonga/Machangana were forcibly removed from Venda to Gazankulu.

4.4.6.10 Hluvukani

According to Nxumalo (2000:15), Petrus Munghena Mdluli is regarded as the pioneer of the Mnisi community. Mdluli is a revered person who regards education as the cornerstone of human development and emancipation. The Mnisi community was founded in an area resembling a wilderness. Without any complaints, Mdluli shouldered the responsibility of enlightening and empowering his people as outlined by Nxumalo (*ibid.*):

> Nkulukumba Mdluli u akile tliliniki na xikolo xa phurayimari. Hinkwaswo ka swona u swi thyile vito ra Hluvukani. Leswi a swi vangiwa swinene hi leswi vanhu va kona va nga xaniseka swinene hi tlhelo ra dyondzo. Vito ra Hluvukani ri vula leswaku vaaka-tiko va fanele ku hitekela ku tihluvukisa.
>
> (Mr Mdluli built a clinic and a primary school. They were both given the name Hluvukani. This was prompted by the fact that these people were in dire need as far as education was concerned. The name Hluvukani means that the members of the community have to strive to develop themselves.)

Mdluli, as the community builder, went ahead to build a high school which was named after him, the Munghena High School. The erection of this educational facility came as a bit of relief to the subjects of Hosi Mnisi in that their children had to travel long distances to attend the neighbouring high schools such as Orhovelani, Mafemani, and Soshangana. Munghena High School is situated in the vicinity of the local post office which was also built by Mdluli. The official inauguration of all the buildings was graced by the presence of the Honourable Chief Minister, H.W.E. Ntsan'wisi, of the then Gazankulu government who made a passionate call to all the subjects of Mnisi to emulate Mdluli in developing their community.

4.4.6.11 Chavela-Gaza

During the bantustan era, a war of words erupted between the Vatsonga and the Bapedi. According to the informants, the Vatsonga were not allowed to reside in areas meant for the Bapedi.

This ugly incident took place at Acornhoek, Rooiboklaagte and Casteel (See also Nxumalo, 2000). Vehicles belonging to the Gazankulu government were either vandalised or burnt by the warmongers of the neighbouring homeland. School children were denied admission to schools belonging to the Lebowa government, as Nxumalo (*op.cit*: 14) comments:

> Nyimpi leyi yi lamuriwile hi khale ka Holobyenkulu yena H.W.E Ntsanwisi. Holobyenkulu u kumile ndhawu yo saseka leyi nga n'walungwini wa xibedhlele xa Tintswalo. Ndhawu leyi va nga tsemeriwa yona yi vuyile yi hundzuka vuchavela-hwahwa bya vana va Nchangana, hikokwalaho yi nga thyiwa vito ra Chavela- Gaza.)
>
> (The former Chief Minister H.W.E Ntsanwisi brought this fight to an end. The Chief Minister spotted a very beautiful area north of the Tintswalo Hospital. This newly demarcated area was virtually perceived as the "exile" of the children of Nchangana and it was eventually named Chavela-Gaza.)

The residents of the *Chavela-Gaza* settlement regarded this place as "Canaan" of the Vatsonga in that they have ultimately found peace of mind after having suffered in the hands of their neighbours. The settlement is also perceived as the area in which the people who are troubled elsewhere should feel free to settle.

4.4.6.12 Tsuvulani

Tsuvulani is a village under the chieftainship of Nxumalo. This village was characterised by dense forests. It was felt that a new area had to be established and developed into a formal settlement. After the demarcation of the place, people worked around the clock to clear the forests. The residenets' removal of the natural vegetation caused the area to be called *Tsuvulani* which was derived from the verb stem *–tsuvula* (to uproot) and the vocative suffix *–ni*.

4.4.6.13 Vongani

Vongani refers to a settlement situated between Olifantshoek and the Rivoningo (Ribungwana) villages in the Hlanganani district of the former Gazankulu homeland. The name *Vongani* came from the verb stem *–vonga* (give thanks) and the vocative suffix *–ni*.

4.4.7 **Name of homeland**

During the apartheid government in South Africa (1948-1993), people were forced to form different homelands according to their ethnic groupings. In 1969 homelands were created under the Group Areas Act of 1969. These homelands were designated to be traditional "tribal" areas to which "black" South Africans were located according to ethnic groups in order to advance the policy of separate development. The Gazankulu homeland was thus established under this Act for the Vatsonga ethnic group. The names of the homelands were as follows:

Name of homeland	Ethnic group
Bophuthatswana	Tswana
Ciskei	Xhosa
Transkei	Xhosa
Venda	Vhenda
KaNgwane	Swazi
KwaNdebele	Ndebele
Lebowa	Pedi
Qwaqwa	Tswana
KwaZulu	Zulu

Four of these homelands, namely, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei, and Transkei, were granted independence by the apartheid regime. However, their independence was not recognised by any other country in the world.

4.4.7.1 Gazankulu

The name *Gazankulu* was designated to the homeland established predominantly for the Vatsonga/Machangana. The homeland was established according to the principles of separate development (apartheid) advocated by the Nationalist Party government under the leadership of Dr Hendrik Vervoerd. The *Gazankulu* homeland was established in the year 1969.

The name *Gazankulu* is a compound derived from *Gaza* and *nkulu* (big) which signifies "greatness". The name was perhaps coined in memory of the kingdom of *Gaza* in Mozambique, where all the Vatsonga/Machangana congregated.

4.4.8 **Other names**

4.4.8.1 Masakeni

The name *Masakeni* refers to a certain section of the Basani village in the Malamulele district. The name came from the noun *saka* (grain bag). According to the informants, the name *Masakeni* was given to this section of the village because 90% of the families were poverty-stricken. It is said that most villagers used empty grain bags as their hut doors.

4.4.8.2 Mbamba-Muchisi

This name refers to a certain section of the Saselamani village in the former Malamulele district. The name means to search for a box of matches and came from the fact that this section did not have electricity. According to the informants,the residents claimed that they search for a box of matches in order to light their houses/huts. This is how the section earned its name *Mbamba-Muchisi.*

4.5 **CHANGES OF EXISTING PLACE NAMES IN A CHANGING SOCIETY**

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 a country's development which achieve linguistic recognition through its place names (Crystal, 1987). Nevertheless, names can change along with governments. It is said that a large amount of time and financial resources are spent on deciding on the names of streets, rivers, dams, cities, or towns when a new government comes to power. Jenkins, *et.al* (1996:12) echo this sentiment:

> Changing names is part of 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.

Interestingly, name changing may be a positive drive that reflects creativity 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 is a list of countries, provinces, cities, and towns which received new names after the attainment of democracy or change of political parties ruling that particular country:

Old name	**New name**
Rhodesia	Zimbabwe
Salisbury	Harare
Lourenzo Marques	Maputo
South West Africa	Namibia
Northern Province	Limpopo Province
Eastern Transvaal	Mpumalanga
Orange Free State	Free State
Bloemfontein	Mangaung
Pietersburg	Polokwane
Potgietersrus	Mokopane
Warmbaths	Bela-bela
Verwoerdburg	Centurion
Nylstroom	Modimolle
Louis Trichardt	Makhado
Beaufort West	KwaMandlenkosi

Hlophe (*City Press*, 18 July 2002) is of the opinion that the problem with the names of South African towns is that during the apartheid era they only reflected the history and background of the Afrikaner people to a large extent and to some degree the English.

The names of South African cities, towns, dams, rivers, buildings, streets, and all major roads in the country cannot be left untouched to only express and depict white history. Jenkins, *et.al* (1996:22) reflect on the manner in which the political leaders of the previous government imposed their names:

> The names of National Party leaders have been given more often to features such as dams, airports, roads, buildings, schools and hospitals, whereas in the 19th century British Imperialists and Voortrekkers had a field day commemorating their leaders in the names of towns.

During the apartheid era dams and water schemes were named after Nationalist Party leaders. However, shortly after the "new" South African government had been established in 1994, the first major political place name changes were instigated by the then Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Kader Asmal (Jenkins, Moller and Raper, 2000:26). The dams and water schemes which were given the names of Nationalist Party leaders and their homeland counterparts were subsequently changed/renamed in November 1994:

Old name	**New Name**
Hendrik Verwoerd	Gariep
Braam Raubenheimer	Kwena
Charlie Malan	Impofu
Fanie Botha	Tzaneen
Hans Strijdom	Mokolo
Hudson Ntsanwisi	Nsami

Jan Wassenaar	Klaserie
Lake Mentz	Darlington
Mokgomo Matlala	Arabie
Paul Sauer	Konga
P K le Roux	Vanderkloof
Sarel Hayward Canal	Orange-Riet Canal

(Adapted from *Changing Place Names*, 1996:26)

Several major airports in the apartheid South Africa were also named after former prime ministers according to their province of origin (Jenkins, Moller and Raper, 2000).

In South Africa, roads as well were named after Nationalist Party leaders. Examples of the roads are as follows:

Ben Schoeman Highway
Jan Smuts
D F Malan
J G Strijdom
H F Verwoerd
Danie Joubert

Examples of airports that bore the names of apartheid leaders are as follows:

Old Name	**New Name**
Jan Smuts Airport	Johannesburg International Airport
D F Malan Airport	Cape Town International Airport
H F Verwoerd Airport	Port Elizabeth Airport
Louis Botha Airport	Durban International Airport.

This simply suggests that name changing can be the only solution to bring all the citizens of the country on board. Name change is, therefore, a must. It is disturbing to learn that symbolic African names such as Chris Hani, Winnie Mandela and others are only given to poverty stricken squatter camps or informal settlements, as Hlophe remarks:

> Names of cities, towns and major streets are very essential in terms of passing the rich diverse history from one generation to another (*City Press*, 18 July 2002).

Due to social and political transformations taking place in our country, name changes are unavoidable in the new South Africa. Name changes can be a process that unifies rather than divides. The government would do well in giving a more balanced reflection of the real South Africa (*Sunday Sun*, 10 February 2002).

4.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PLACE NAMES

Place names reflect a spectrum of emotions, reminding people that they were created and are used daily by human beings who call those places home. They can be despairing, bleak and soulless, remindful of the callous past, self-conscious, ironic, hyperbolic, euphemistic, humorous, imaginative, or proud and defiant. Furthermore, the names of informal settlements make a vibrant, creative and multilingual contribution and deserve to be welcomed wholeheartedly (Raper, Jenkins and Moller, 1996).

The significance of place names is clearly outlined by Dorion (1988) as cited by Jenkins, *et.a.l* (1996:32):

> Geographical names serve several functions, in relation both to the places they designate and to the groups who live in them. They serve to locate, classify, distinguish, characterise an endless number of places of varying nature, function and size. But

> they also serve to recall, to evoke, to record and even to promote elements of the collective memory of a people, be they events, persons or other elements of regional and national culture.

This affirms that South African names do not only constitute an effective system of communication but also serve the cultural interests of all the peoples of the country (Jenkins, Raper, and Moller, 1996). Dlomu (1994:9) also maintains that one uses geographical names in one's descriptions of his/her surrounding areas. When relating to someone where one has been or where one plans to be in future, a geographical name is almost invariably used. In this regard Dorion (1992:1) opines that geographical names reveal significant cultural and environmental aspects of a community's identity. Dlomu (*op.cit*:13-14) further indicates:

> Geographical names are packed with cultural messages. They constitute a very sensitive area in the South African history of land occupance and settlement. There is in the news currently a wish by the old residents of Sophiatown which was demolished between 1955 and 1959 and named Triomf, to have it renamed Sophiatown. There are many residential areas that have been demolished in South African towns and cities - the Sekhokho of Tzaneen, the Newlook location of Pietersburg, the Lady Selbourne of Pretoria, to mention but a few, are geographical names that give identity and cultural meaning to millions of African people. Geographical names need careful handling as part and parcel of the country's attempt in the creation of lasting peace and harmony amongst its people.

Hlophe (*City Press*, Sunday 18 July 2002) underpins the significance of both personal and place names:

> Names in Africa and all over the world for both individuals and places are not mere tags. They carry with them certain meanings. 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.

Names are given to places in order to identify or differentiate them from one another. Hagget (1979:30) is of the opinion that: "the simplest way of specifying a location somewhere on earth's surface is to give it a name."

According to Hagget (*ibid.*), the best way to locate a place is to give it a name. This will enable its inhabitants or tourists to identify and locate the place. Names may be given to villages, towns, cities, and suburbs in relation to the people inhabiting these particular areas. Golele (1993:30) states: "Place names in many ways reflect the nature of the society or community in which they are found."

The above quotation simply implies that place names can help one to know the culture of the people who are occupying a particular place. Place names play significant roles in that people are able to locate places through their names. Baker and Billinge (1982:161) concur: "A place which acquires a name must have a role to play in the society."

The most important function of a place is to refer to an entity; that is to select one particular entity from a host of others of a similar or different nature, and to identify it from others (Raper, 1987:11). Place names are not given to locations or areas for the sake of giving them but to help understand the history of the people inhabiting in those respective areas. Buttimer (1993:77) agrees with the aforementioned assertion: "Place names, too, whether real or imaginery... symbolise a particular kind of experience."

This means that place names may be given in relation to how a particular group of people behaved at any given time. Place names may be given to show how people suffered or enjoyed themselves under the leadership of a particular induna, or chief. This is supported by the view expressed by Gregory and Smith (1994:443):

> 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.

Historical collections, resources, and sites must fully reflect the many components of South Africa's cultural heritage and, in particular, neglected and suppressed aspects of its people's cultures must be conserved (Jenkins, Raper, and Moller, 1996). This sentiment is aptly summed up by Golele (1993:88) when she explains the upheavals caused by the Group Areas Act:

> In the process of the removal and resettlement of people the land they could occupy was a mere stand, compared to their original vast areas. This gave rise to places such as Gandlanani in Giyani and Malamulele in Gazankulu. The name literally means "being packed together very firmly."

Another feature of interest is that other names are evidence of the breakdown of the extended family, for example, when the young people set up home they are likely to leave behind the old people as reflected in place names such as Hunguta-ximbitana (reduce the little pot), Hunguta-poto (reduce the pot) and Wisa-poto (fell the pot) (Golele, 1993). The newly established families no longer need huge pots to cook for many family members as the aged parents are left behind. The young people opt to live independently and believe that life is much sweeter than before in that they do as they wish without any parental advice.

4.7 **CONCLUSION**

This chapter reveals that the names of geographical features included natural and man-made entities. It also stresses that the structure of place names have varied according to the language of origin of the names. The locative prefix *ga-* is utilised by the Sotho language group to denote place names while Tshivenda, the locative prefix *ha-* is used to denote place names. The structure of place names in Xitsonga is distinguished by the use of the locative prefixes *eka-/e-*.

It has also been mentioned that places were given names of traditional leaders. However, some place names got their respective names through onomastic innovation or creativity. The names people give to their geographical areas provide a unique source of information about a society's history, beliefs, and values.

In addition, this chapter has highlighted the changes that might take place due to political changes taking place in the country. When a new government came into being in South Africa it signalled a new era where the names of cities, towns, villages, dams, rivers, buildings, streets, roads, and schools, which depicted white history, would change their names. As far as this development was concerned, name changing became a political tool of manipulation, even destruction, of social assets and at times, of a cultural heritage. Nevertheless, name changing was the only solution to bring all the citizens of the country on board.

We have also observed that place names reflect a spectrum of emotions, reminding us that they were and are used by human beings who resided at those respective places.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. NICKNAMES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with nicknames and their significance among the Xitsonga speaking people. The Vatsonga have the tendency of giving names which act as tokens of appreciation or disapproval. Nicknames are, therefore, one of the forms of address which the Vatsonga as a nation use to either praise or show disapproval of a person's behaviour. Among the Vatsonga, in informal situations, first names are often used interchangeably with nicknames. This form of address is commonly used by peers, in particular age-groups, namely, children, adolescents, and young adults. This practice is also common among friends. It is rare to find the elderly using this form of address because they prefer to use pet or endearment names when addressing their children.

5.2 DEFINITION OF THE TERM "NICKNAME"

The term "nickname" is used to describe a name used in the place of a personal first name. The equivalent Xitsonga term is *vito ro duvulela/khovolela/tshinya*.

To be more precise, nicknames are acquired informally and offer a rare example of people using language creatively, free from the normal phonological and semantic constraints pertaining to the other aspects of language use (see Van Langedouck, 1983 and De Klerk and Bosch 1996). In other words, nicknames offer an opportunity to speakers to display a touch of linguistic invention, to break the rules of language and get away with it (see Bruner, 1970 and Korg 1977). It is further noted that many nicknames can easily be regarded as powerful symbols of disapprobation and subtle criticism. In a more appropriate manner, one may say that nicknames are commonly

used as a means of easing social tensions and minimizing friction among people. This means that nicknames can be used to send out a critical message to friends and neighbours and to avoid direct confrontation.

Finnegan (1970:470) too reinforces the above viewpoint when she mentions that using a nickname as a critical device is not uncommon in oral cultures. In essence, a nickname usually acts as a cohesive social attribute indicating warmth and solidarity. This view does not rule out the fact that a nickname may be used as a powerful tool to show disrespect. It all depends on the intention of the namegiver. Herbert (1992:348) in turn observes that "nicknames may be either self-selected by an individual or imposed by others".

5.3 FUNCTIONS OF NICKNAMES

Nicknames are very significant to both namegivers and name bearers. There are many functions of nicknames. They may be descriptive, linguistic or relating to physical appearance. Nicknames act as "tokens of positive identification" and serve to establish an informal relaxed atmosphere (De Klerk and Bosch, 1977 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, "names can be used as a succinct and oblique way of commenting on their owners or on others".

One can further distinguish between imposed and colourful nicknames (Herbert, 1992). Imposed nicknames may be pleasant or not in that they are sometimes insulting, offensive or derogatory. Colourful nicknames are given to popular figures who enjoy a large following or support in the community. Turner (2001:457) quotes Impey and Nussbaum (1996) when they mention:

> African culture has relatively conservative norms regarding direct expression of feelings and emotions, and a high degree of interpersonal sensitivity. There are many prohibitions regarding direct confrontation with another person. The arts provide a socially

> sanctioned vehicle for expressing complaints or criticism of others.

Suzan (1994:269) reinforces this point:

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

Nicknames containing cryptic social messages serve to express dissatisfaction or vent frustration. They are also used to cast suspicion or level accusations in the community, ridicule, mock or warn against an unacceptable mode of behaviour (Turner, 2001:456).

Finnegan (1970:470) cites the disciplinary messages or social functions that are carried in nicknames:

> Names often play an indispensable part in oral literature in Africa ... they have many different interpretations ... from the psychological functions of names in providing functions of names in providing assurance or "working out" tension, to their connection with the structure of society, their social function in minimizing friction, or their usefulness either in expressing the self-image of their owner or in providing a means of indirect comment when a direct one is not feasible.

Turner (2001:451) reinforces the view expressed by Finnegan (1970) when she points out that:

> The practice of composing derisive names often embedded with humour, can provide the individual with an acceptable but allusive way of astutely airing a conflict or source of discontent.

In Xitsonga culture, nicknames are often so entrenched that they become acceptable forms of address. They are frequently used to warn against an unacceptable mode of behaviour or dispute any allegation levelled against an individual member of the family or community, for example, *vuloyi* (witchcraft) and *vudlakuta* (prostitution). Nicknames make social interaction in human relationships easier, more enjoyable, and funny. They are also used to send messages that would in normal discourse be regarded as unacceptable, derogatory, and insulting. In addition, the use of nicknames enables people to cope with despair, failure, and allegation. However, nicknames may also be used to suggest positive feelings of endearment or social solidarity.

5.4 **DIFFERENT TYPES OF NICKNAMES**

There are different types of nicknames. In the following paragraphs, these different types of nicknames will be discussed.

5.4.1 **Names relating to physical appearance**

Nicknames are sometimes given in direct reference to bodily features or deformities. They may often refer to unusual features, for example, *xinengana* (little leg), *mandleve* (big ears), *mandulwana* (big eyes), and *magelevende* (big head).

5.4.1.1 Xinengana

Xinengana is a nickname which can be given to a person whose leg(s) are deformed. It is an imposed or derogatory nickname which cannot be uttered in the presence of the name bearer. The nickname *Xinengana* literally means 'little leg'.

5.4.1.2 Mandleve

Mandleve is also a derogatory nickname which may be given to a person whose ears are big. This name can only be used in the absence of the name bearer.

5.4.1.3 Mandulwana

Mandulwana is a nickname given to a big-eyed person. In other words, his or her eyes are of unusual size and resemble those of an owl. This nickname is a derogatory name as well that cannot be uttered in the presence of the name bearer.

5.4.1.4 Mavoya

This nickname may be given to a person whose whole body is covered by hair so that the name bearer resembles an animal. The nickname *Mavoya* literally means fur and is derogatory.

5.4.1.5 Mpandlana

The name refers to a bald-headed person. *Mpandlana* is a diminutive of *mpandla* (a bald head) and is a derogatory name which insults the name bearer.

5.4.1.6 Makhwiri

This nickname may be given to a person who has a protruding stomach *(khwiri)*, which resembles that of a pregnant woman. The nickname *Makhwiri* may be insulting, offensive, and derogatory and the name is only uttered in the absence of the name bearer.

5.4.1.7 Xilebvu

The name *Xilebvu* (cheek) is used to a bearded person who loves to grow a beard and is easily recognised by it as it has become his trademark. The nickname *Xilebvu* is regarded as a colourful and pleasant name so that the name bearer enjoys being addressed by it.

5.4.1.8 Magelevende

A person who has a very big head may be nicknamed *Magelevende*. It is a sarcastic name which is always used in the absence of the name bearer. However, a well known SABC presenter, Mr Eddy Khosa, is affectionately called *Magelevende*.

5.4.1.9 Xikanda

A person with a big face may be addressed as *Xikanda* which literally means "a face". It is an imposed or derogatory name which the name bearer may find unpleasant and insulting.

5.4.2.1.10 Mabihana

The nickname *Mabihana* may be given to a very ugly as well as to a very cruel person. However, the name bearer may start liking the name to such an extent that when extremely happy, he will call himself by it.

The above examples of nicknames may serve merely as a form of humorous observation to prove that nicknames do not always have a negative implication.

5.4.2 **Nicknames relating to behaviour traits**

In addition, nicknames may be given to people in relation to their behaviour.

5.4.2.1 Ncindzu

Ncindzu is derived from the Xitsonga proverb *U nga tiendli ncindzu makukula-kule* (Do not be like a palm tree which sweeps far away). The name *Ncindzu* (palm tree) may be given to a person who has more time for his friends than for his home or relatives (Junod and Jacques 1957:348). Chauke (1992:20) describes the origin of the nickname as follows:

> Munhu loyi u fananisiwa ni murhi wa ncindzu lowu marhavi ya wona ya kukulaka ekule ni le ntshinyeni ra wona, ivi thyaka ri sala ri lo pyi kwala ntshinyeni.
>
> (This person (name bearer) is equated with the palm tree whose branches sweep far away from the stem, leaving rubbish heaped near the stem).

The name thus refers to a person who does not care for his family but roams about and enjoys being in the company of his friends only.

5.4.2.2 Handzelo

Handzelo is a nickname which may be given to a heavy drinker. Resultantly, the name bearer does not have time to stay and enjoy life with his family. He is addicted to such an extent that he wakes up in the early hours of the morning and goes out of his kraal in search of the home brewed beer. The nickname *Handzelo* is derived from the home brewed beer's ingredients called *handzelo* (malt/ferment). The name may also be given to the drinker who goes from party to party and knows the taste of all the home brewed beer in his village as well as in the neighbouring villages.

5.4.2.3 Maguxe

The nickname *Maguxe* may be given to a person whose family enjoys its meal with *guxe* (a green plant eaten as a vegetable). When the name bearer is asked about what

the family will eat, he does not hesitate to quickly respond, "God has provided us with the delicious evergreen plant called *guxe*". He always boastfully asks his wife to go and pick *guxe* in the mealie fields.

5.4.2.4 Fayeteri

The name may be given to a person with destructive behaviour because the name bearer becomes angry easily and does not mind to transfer his anger on his hard-earned property. It may also be given to a person who believes in using force when solving family disputes. This indicates that the name bearer does not have time to enter into negotiations but uses physical force to instill discipline.

5.4.2.5 Mungoma-a-nga-twi

The name *Mungoma-a-nga-twi* was given to the traditional healer who refused to join a demarcated village set up by Chief Xikundu and his elders. According to the informants, *Mungoma-a-nga-twi* refused to relocate because he did not want to leave his ancestors behind. He believed that if he relocated to the new village his ancestors would have desert him. The name *Mungoma-a-nga-twi* literally means "the traditional healer who does not listen".

5.4.2.6 N'wagagavula

This is a name may be given to a person who exerts high compensation for little damage done to her (Cuenod, 1985). It may also be given to a person who cuts off more than his/her share, for example, meat or bread or to a businessperson who sells his/her goods to people at exorbitant prices. The name *N'wagagavula* means "the one who cuts off more than his/her share".

5.4.2.7 Xijamela

The name *Xijamela* may be given to a person who has a strong personality or who persists in any conflict until having gained victory. In other words, one who does not give up until he/she has won (Cuenod, 1985: 233).

5.4.2.8 Mafelasopo

This nickname is usually given to a person who tries to intervene in a quarrel to stop it. In the process of intervening, he/she is caught in the crossfire and finds himself/herself at the receiving end. The name *Mafelasopo* simply means that the name bearer has been punished for no apparent reason.

5.4.2.9 Pambula-Nyama

The nickname *Pambula-Nyama* may be given to a ravenous man who eats meat in large quantities. The name bearer attends every occasion with the intention of enjoying the meat served there. In some instances, the name bearer always avails himself at every party in order to take part in the slaughtering of cattle. His great capacity for eating meat makes him turn up despite having received no official invitation.

5.4.2.10 Madyelakhwirini

The nickname *Madyelakhwirini* may be given to a man who immediately spends all his earnings with his friends and sends nothing home. The name bearer is indeed a spendthrift while this nickname literally means "hand-to-mouth ".

5.4.2.11 Nsikiti

Nsikiti refers to a bed bug which sucks people's blood. It is a derogatory name given

to a person who gossips. The name bearer appears to be smart but is in reality one who incites people to quarrels, as Chauke (1992:20) points out:

> Nsikiti i vito leri nga thyiwaka munhu hi xikongomelo xo n'wi tshikisa vutomi lebyo biha. Hi ku vona leswaku vutomi bya yena bya lunya bya tiveka, kumbe a nga ringeta ku va ni vumunhu tani hi van'wana vanhu.
>
> (Nsikiti is the name that may be given to a person with the aim of driving him away from his evil behaviour. Realising that his dubious character is known, he will maybe try to behave himself like others).

5.4.2.12 Ngwenya

Ngwenya, meaning crocodile, refers to a very powerful animal that is associated with strength or wrath. This name may be given to a person who has done heroic deeds or to a very aggressive and brave person. It is currently also used to refer to champions, such as soccer, tennis or boxing champions.

5.4.2.13 Mukhuhlwana

The name *Mukhuhlwana* may be given to the one who always coughs. According to Junod and Jacques (1957:345), the nickname was given to an administrator who was always coughing to assert his authority.

5.4.2.14 Rikavakava

Rikavakava literally refers to a thieving lean dog. This nickname may be given to a woman of loose morals as well.

5.4.2.15 Nkondzo

The nickname *Nkondzo* (foot) refers to a person who is always on the move, thus indicating that the name bearer does not stay in one place for a long time but always travels long distances on foot but does so aimlessly.

5.4.2.16 Mapengani

The name *Mapengani* may be given to a person who deviates from the norm (Cuenod, 1985). It indicates that the name bearer easily gets out of control and literally refers to "someone who is insane".

5.4.2.17 Muchaviseki

Muchaviseki is a nickname which may be given to a person who is held in high esteem. The name bearer commands and enjoys respect within the community and is regarded as a role model in all respects. The community looks up to that person for help and advice. The name *Muchaviseki* may thus be given to community leaders who bring change and development to people's lives.

5.4.2.18 Xihlekisi

A person who cracks jokes may be nicknamed *Xihlekisi* which reveals that the name bearer is held in high esteem in social circles as "the one who flows with laughter". *Xihlekisi* is a nickname with a definite connotation of endearment. The name bearer may adopt the nickname as his "first name". It is also readily acceptable to his immediate family, relatives, and the community at large.

5.4.2.19 Xigida-Vusiku

A person who travels in the still of the night is referred to as *Xigida-vusiku* because such a person does not travel during daylight. When he wants to visit his relatives and

friends who are staying far away, he waits for the night to come in order to start his journey.

5.4.2.20 N'wamafafazi

This nickname refers to the one who spreads false news. According to the informants, *N'wamafafazi* is a nickname that may be given to a child who likes to eavesdrop when people are talking. By so doing the name bearer develops into a child who lies because he/she cannot substantiate some of his/her information.

5.4.2.21 Xihubu

A person who rises early is referred to as *Xihubu*. The name may also be given to a man who wakes up very early during the times of ploughing and harvesting.

5.4.2.22 Kandziya-Phaxani

This nickname was allegedly given to a taxi driver who drove his taxi at a very high speed. In contrast to this unbecoming behaviour, his passengers used to commend his style of driving by stating openly and loudly "*khandziya-phaxani*" (literally meaning to press the sandal). Their applause was intended to encourage him to drive at such a high speed.

5.4.2.23 Mitonga-Kan'we

This nickname was given to a person who used to dress smartly and wear very expensive clothes. He always boasted that a person's life was short and one had to enjoy life to the fullest. In his daily contact with people, he used to emphasize that "*wanuna u fanele a tonga kan'we*" (a man should brag once).

5.4.3 **Names relating to very strong sentimental attachments**

5.4.3.1 Taleni

The nickname *Taleni* literally refers to a place where rubbish is dumped. This nickname may be given to a child who was born out of wedlock. Such a child is often maltreated as Macebele (2000:14) comments:

> Vamuti a va nga n'wi teki a ri nchumu hikuva a nga ri n'wana wa laha mutini kutani a va n'wi fananisa na thyaka.
>
> (The family members did not hold him in high esteem because he was not recognized as a child belonging to the family. And therefore they equate him with rubbish).

5.4.3.2 Pyata

The nichname *Pyata* which means nakedness may be given to a child of needy, destitute parents. This means that the family can hardly clothe their newly born child since it is financially and materially in need. The nickname has to do with the hardships that the family was experiencing at the time of the birth of their child.

5.4.3.3 Makala-Khiya

This is the nickname given to a girl of loose morals as she does not hearken to the advice given to her by the elders and uses to sleep around. She is thus often caught in uncompromising situations with different men. The name *Makala-Khiya* is, therefore, used for a person who has no keys to gain access to her house.

5.4.3.4 Mabukuti

The name *Mabukuti* may be given to a person who enjoys beating others without the slightest provocation. According to Macebele (2000:6), this nickname may also be given to a troublesome child:

> Vito leri ri thyiwile n'wana un'wana hikokwalaho ro tshamela ku ba vana van'wana loko va ri eku huhweni. Ndzi nga vula leswaku munhu loyi loko a ha kula ku sukela evutsongwanini bya yena, a swi nga olovi leswaku a hambana ni vana lavan'wana un'we wa vona a nga rilanga hikokwalaho ka ku biwa hi yena. Ku fikile laha vana lavo tala a va chava ku huhwa laha a nga kona. Loko a vutisiwa hi mhaka ya ku va un'wana a biwile hi yena, u tala ku tibiyelela a ku: "A ndzo huhwa na xona". Ku ya hi yena u vula leswaku vana lavan'wana vo nyenyela.
>
> (This name was given to a certain child because he would always beat other children whilst playing. Let me say it was rare for the name bearer from his early childhood to part with others without a cry caused by him. At some stage the majority of the children were fearful to play with him. When confronted about hitting one of the children he would defend himself by saying "I was just playing with him". As far as he was concerned, these other children were just whimpering).

The name bearer would be rather elusive in that the parents of his victims would not find him hurting other children but they would only receive countless complaints about his quarrelsomeness (*rigombo*).

5.4.3.5 Magumeni

This nickname literally refers to rags/tatters. A person who dresses in rags and tatters is thus addressed or referred to as *Magumeni*. The nickname may also be given to a child in a poverty-stricken family whose clothes are in tatters.

5.4.4 **Nicknames in the work enrivonment**

Humour is one of the aspects that make life interesting as it serves as a source of entertainment, removal of stress and tension, and a social corrective in the work environment (Turner, 2000:453). The nicknames in the work environment transform personal expression into collective expression as they foster a sense of belonging, group dimension and identification. These nicknames often create colourful caricatures which refer to physical, behavioural and characteristic oddities. However, in the workplace, nicknames may also be used to express appreciation for a person's behaviour or character.

5.4.4.1 Makuma-swi-vupfile

The name *Makuma-swi-vupfile*, for example, may be given to a person who has recently been promoted to a high position in a company who finds the company in a good financial standing and boasting a high production rate. This means that he is not going to sweat because he found everything done and in order.

5.4.4.2 Jekiseni

This is a name given to a medical doctor (Macebele, 2000). The name bearer had the tendency to give his patients an injection and attracted many patients to his surgery because of his method of treatment that primarily centred on the administering of the injection proved to be yielding positive results. This kind of treatment earned him the name *Jekiseni* (injection). Due to his successful treatment of many different diseases through the administering of an injection, no patient felt comfortable if he/she could visit and leave his consulting rooms without being injected.

5.4.4.3 Xithicarana

Xithicarana is the diminutive of *thicara* (teacher) (Macebele, 2000) and may serve as being both colourful and sarcastic. One may have been very impressed by the service the teacher is rendering to the community and, therefore, affectionately call him/her *Xithicarana*. *Xithicarana* may also be given to a teacher in relation to his/her small physical appearance. Nevertheless, the name Xithicarana may also be given to a teacher occupying a junior position in a particular school. In this context, the name bearer does not have any authority and such a person is often undermined by his/her co-workers and learners.

5.5 **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter it has been noted that nicknames are one of the forms of address which the Vatsonga as a nation use to either praise or show disapproval of a person's behaviour. Contrary to the common belief that nicknames are consistently names which serve to signal endearment, affection, and social approval, it is pointed out that nicknames can be used with negative intent as well. Nevertheless, the chapter has shown that there are a fairly high proportion of nicknames which are used in order to be friendly and thus suggest basic warmth and affection.

The chapter has too revealed that both family members and peer group members use nicknames and that nicknames serve an identificatory and classificatory function, especially in the work environment in that workers and employers are often no longer called by their first names. Nicknames are sometimes given in direct reference to actual physical features or deformities. Nicknames are also given to people in relation to their behaviour and often signal sentimental attachments. They can, however, serve to express dissatisfaction or vent frustration, or to ridicule, mock or warn against an unacceptable mode of behaviour.

Lastly, this chapter has shown that nicknames include imposed and colourful nicknames as well. Imposed nicknames are unpleasant, insulting, offensive, and derogatory in nature whereas colourful nicknames are regarded as remarkable and are given to popular public figures.

CHAPTER SIX

6. DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter essential steps of collecting data as well as data analysis and interpretation are presented. Names are given and used by human beings. The study of personal names and naming practices can neither be isolated from the societies in which those human beings live, nor from the study of their minds, their mental and emotional processes, and their behavioural patterns (Neethling, 2000:209). With the changing social framework, namegiving and naming practices have been affected as well. The above situation has, therefore necessitated an investigation into some of the dynamics of change affecting personal names and naming practices of the Vatsonga.

The data gathering procedures that were employed in this study are discussed in more detail in this section. For this study data were collected in two ways, namely, by means of questionnaires and interviews.

6.2 DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES

The data collection steps involve setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through observations, interviews, documents, and visual materials, and establishing the protocol for recording information (Creswell, 1994:148). LoBiondo and Haber (1990) in Babane (2003:136) point out that data collection methods may be classified into five different types, namely, observation methods, questionnaires, interviews, physiological or biological measurements and records of available data. As indicated in Chapter One, questionnaires and interviews were chosen as the principal methods in the data gathering for this research study.

6.2.1 **Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was designed and developed to elicit data relating to the naming conventions of the Vatsonga, the influence of democracy on the naming practices, the namegiver, the importance attached to naming, and other naming related matters. This open-ended and close-ended questionnaire was designed and developed after an in-depth literature review. The questionnaire was drawn up in English and translated into Xitsonga. Fox, as cited by Mahlangu (1987:79), defines a questionnaire as:

> the technique whereby the researcher believes that an impersonal approach will suffice and according to which he puts his questions on paper and submits them to the respondents asking them in turn to write their answers on paper.

The questionnaire is one of the most widely used techniques which allows the researcher to gather information from an individual which would be difficult to obtain without directly asking the subject. It is a technique which allows the researcher to gain access to respondents who are geographically distant. In this regard Creswell (1994:119) contends that questionnaires can be mailed to the respondents in the sample, administered in face-to-face interview format with individuals, or gathered through telephonic interviews.

The questionnaire is cost-effective in terms of time and money. It is also impersonal, anonymous, and provides a relaxed and unhurried atmosphere which allows the respondents the necessary freedom to give their responses.

However, the questionnaire has shortcomings too. The questionnaire is a very unreliable data collection technique in that the respondents may ask other people to help them in completing the questionnaire or improviding answers to the questions. It is also problematic in that the respondent is not given a chance to ask questions if something is unclear or ambiguous to him/her.

In this research both open-ended and close questions were employed. Open-ended questions are questions aimed at extracting the views of the respondents. Mahlangu (1987), as cited by Ntsandeni (1993:103), regards open-ended questions as those questions which:

> do not suggest answers. They call for the respondents' free response in his own words. No clues are provided and provision is made for greater depth of response. The respondent reveals his frame of reference and the reason for his responses.

Close questions are questions which require the respondents to add any other information which they consider to be of significance to the researcher in question. Ntsandeni (*ibid.*) quotes Oppenheim (1979) who argues that a close-ended question is a question "... in which the respondent is offered a choice of alternative replies. He may be asked to check or underline his chosen answer(s) in a written questionnaire". The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to all the respondents who participated in this study.

6.2.2 **Interviews**

To supplement the questionnaire data, interviews were conducted. An interview is a direct way of obtaining data and there is direct personal contact with the interviewee. Gay (1996:223) is of the view that "a typical, qualitative interview is a one-on-one session in which the researcher asks a series of open-ended, probing questions". According to Cohen and Manion (1980), cited by Ngubane (2000:37), there are various kinds of research interviews, namely, the structured interview, the unstructured, the non-directive interview, and the focused interview.

For the purpose of this study, only the structured, the semi-structured and the unstructured forms of interviews are used. In structured interviews the content of the questions, the procedure to be followed during the interview session, and the sequence in which questions should be asked are predetermined. The interviewer is

left with little or no room to make modifications to the content of the questions and/or the sequence in which they should be asked. Structured interviews are characterised by closed situations, since they do not allow the respondents to express themselves in unlimited words. Unstructured interviews are characterised by open situations. In the structured interviews, both the interviewer and the interviewee have freedom and flexibility to modify the content of the questions and the sequence in which these questions are asked (Cohen and Manion (1980) in Ngubane (2000:37). McMillan and Schumacher (1993) as cited by Ngubane (2000:37) add that in semi-structured interviews "questions are phrased to allow for individual purposes". The semi-structured interview is considered more appropriate than any other method because it allows even illiterate respondents to participate. It also allows the respondents to expand on their responses in a way that gives the researcher more details than a questionnaire (Cohen and Manion, 1989).

When contrasted with the questionnaire, the interview permits the researcher to probe more specific answers and ask follow-up questions. The interview allows the researcher to persuasively and intelligently redirect the interview when the respondents stick to matters not related to the research topic. It is also a reliable and suitable data collection technique in that it permits all people to participate, irrespective of their educational background, and permits the respondents to seek some clarity if the question asked is not clear (Ntsandeni, 1993:106).

More importantly, the interviewing method is used to obtain supplementary information, which supplements and clarifies the data collection through the use of questionnaires. The main advantage of an interview schedule is that the researcher has "control" over the line of questioning (Creswell, 1994:150).

However, a disadvantage of this research technique is that it may be intimidating. It may also be time consuming when the recording of data is done by hand. Interviews are sometimes subjective and demanding while the researcher's presence may bias the responses. It should also be borne in mind that not all people are equally articulate

and perceptive (Creswell, 1994). Using a cassette tape recorder also proves to be problematic in that the interviewees may feel intimidated.

In this research project, both structured and non-structured questions were used. A total of fifty respondents were visited with the aim of eliciting information from them through interviews. Each interviewee was expected to spend at least 60 minutes with the interviewer. With the permission of the interviewees, all the responses were both recorded by tape recorder and in writing.

Having discussed all the methods of collecting data which were used in this study, it is essential to describe how the data collecting instruments were pre-tested in the pilot study.

6.3 **THE PILOT STUDY**

The aim of a pilot study is to test the research instruments before the actual research is conducted. Treece and Treece (1977), in Babane (2003:136), describe pretesting as

> ... the process of measuring the effectiveness of the instrument, whereas the pilot study is a preliminary small-scale trial run of the research study.

Netshikweta (1999:51) furthermore indicates that "pretesting is a small sample of the population, but not the same group who will eventually form part of the sample group". The overall purpose of the pilot study is to reduce any ambiguities that might arise from the questions.

A pilot study was done in the researcher's home village, Saselamani, in the Thulamela Municipality, Limpopo Province. All the items in the questionnaire were first tested with the group which was similar to the sampled groups. The questionnaire had to be modified several times following constructive criticism by the sampled groups before it was considered satisfactory for the purpose of this study.

Almost all the respondents participated willingly in the pilot study as they felt it would contribute to the reconstruction of their changing cultural and traditional practices of name-giving.

6.4 THE FIELD OF RESEARCH AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

This research study was conducted in the former Gazankulu homeland in the Limpopo Province.

6.4.1 Sampling procedures

The required number of respondents, namely fifty, were randomly selected from the former five districts of the then Gazankulu homeland.

6.4.2 Problems encountered with the fieldwork

6.4.2.1 Problems encountered with the questionnaire

Although all the questionnaires were safely returned, not all sections were completed. Some of the respondents were initially reluctant to participate in the completion of the questionnaire, alleging that the research project would earn the researcher a fortune. After explaining the general purpose of the study, all the randomly selected respondents were, however, willing to complete the questionnaire.

6.4.2.2 Problems encountered in answering the interview schedules

In the process of conducting the interviews the researcher tried to maintain the highest possible level of objectivity and authenticity, although a few problems were encountered. Some of the respondents expected the interviewer to help them in answering the interview questions. The researcher was in some cases forced by circumstances beyond his control to make use of telephonic interviews to gather data

from the randomly selected participants, such as from Xitsonga language practitioners and traditional leaders. This was necessitated by the tight schedule of the respondents which made it impossible for a meeting. However, the telephonic method proved to be very effective despite its taxing effects.

Although it was a priority to explain the general purpose of the study to the respondents, some of the respondents expected to receive monetary rewards in return for their participation in the interviewing process. In spite of all the problems encountered the researcher managed to obtain a commitment of co-operation from all the respondents who participated in the interviewing process of this research project so that the interviewing process may be regarded as successful.

6.5 BACKGROUND TO THE RESPONDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

Tables 1-6 show the percentages of respondents in respect of factors such as education, religion, occupation, and place of residence.

Table 1 below reveals the religion affiliation of the respondents who participated in the completion of the questionnaire. The table further divides the respondents in respect of their level of education which ranged from no formal education to tertiary education.

TABLE 1: THE RESPONDENTS' EDUCATION VERSUS RELIGION

			Religion		
			Christian	Non-Christian	Total
Education	No education	Count	5	1	6
		% with Education	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% with Religion	11.6%	14.3%	12.0%
		% of Total	10.0%	2.0%	12.0%
	Primary Education	Count	5		5
		% with Education	100.0%		100.0%
		% with Religion	11.8%		10.0%
		% of Total	10.0%		10.0%
	Secondary Education	Count	2	1	3
		% with Education	86.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% with Religion	4.7%	14.3%	6.0%
		% of Total	4.0%	2.0%	6.0%
	Tertiary Education	Count	31	5	36
		% with Education	86.1%	13.9%	100.0%
		% with Religion	72.1%	71.4%	72.0%
		% of Total	62.0%	10.0%	72.0%
Total		Count	43	7	50
		% with Education	86.0%	14.0%	100.0%
		% with Religion	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	86.0%	14.0%	100.0%

These statistical data clearly reveal that the majority (86%) of those who completed the questionnaire were Christians while only 14% were non-Christians. From the Christians (86%) who completed the questionnaire 10% had no formal education. According to Table 1, 10% of the Christian respondents went beyond the level of primary education while only 4% had received secondary education. Nearly two-thirds (62%) who had graduated at tertiary institution were Christians. The above table also reveals that 14% of the respondents were non-Christians of whom 2% had gone to school and 2% received secondary education. The remaining 10% were non-Christians who had received tertiary education. The above table thus shows that there were no non-Christians with primary education who participated in the completion of the questionnaire.

Table 2 below table indicates the place of residence versus the level of education of the respondents. The table divides the respondents into groups in accordance to their place of residence as well as their respective educational backgrounds.

The table reveals that 14% of the respondents hailed from cities/towns, 12% were found to be township dwellers while 74% were dwelling in villages.

From the table we notice that of the respondents residing in cities/towns 2% had no education at all, 2% had gone to secondary schools and 10% had received tertiary education.

TABLE 2: EDUCATION VERSUS PLACE OF THE RESIDENCE OF RESPONDENTS

			Place of residence.			
			City/town	Township	Village	Total
Education.	No education.	Count	1		5	6
		% within Education.	16.7%		83.3%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.	14.3%		13.5%	12.0%
		% of Total	2.0%		10.0%	12.0%
	Primary education.	Count			5	5
		% within Education.			100.0%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.			13.5%	10.0%
		% of Total			10.0%	10.0%
	Secondary education.	Count	1		2	3
		% within Education	33.3%		66.7%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence	14.3%		5.4%	6.0%
		% of Total	2.0%		4.0%	6.0%
	Tertiary education.	Count	5	6	25	36
		% within education	13.9%	16.7%	69.4%	100.0%
		% within place of residence	71.4%	100.0%	67.6%	72.0%
		% of total	10.0%	12.0%	50.0%	72.0%
Total		Count	7	6	37	50
		% within education	14.0%	12.0%	74.0%	100.0%
		% within place of residence.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	14.0%	12.0%	74.0%	100.0%

According to table 2, all the township residents (12%) who completed the questionnaire had received tertiary education while 74% of the villagers who participated in the completion of the questionnaire, 10% had managed to attend primary schools while the remaining respondents (50%) had received tertiary education.

TABLE 3: EDUCATION VERSUS MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

			Marital status.				
			Married	Single	Divorced/separated	Widowed	Total
Education.	No education.	Count	4	1		1	6
		% within Education.	66.7%	16.7%		16.7%	100.0%
		% within Marital status.	8.9%	100.0%		33.3%	12.0%
		% of Total	8.0%	2.0%		2.0%	12.0%
	Primary education.	Count	5				5
		% within Education.	100.0%				100.0%
		% within Marital status.	11.1%				10.0%
		% of Total	10.0%				10.0%
	Secondary education.	Count	3				3
		% within Education.	100.0%				100.0%
		% within Marital status.	6.7%				6.0%
		% of Total	6.0%				6.0%
	Tertiary education.	Count	33		1	2	36
		% within Education.	91.7%		2.8%	5.6%	100.0%
		% within Marital status.	73.3%		100.0%	66.7%	72.0%
		% of Total	66.0%		2.0%	4.0%	72.0%
Total		Count	45	1	1	3	50
		% within Education.	90.0%	2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	100.0%
		% within Marital status.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	90.0%	2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	100.0%

Table 3 depicts the level of education and marital status of the respondents. This table shows that 90% of the respondents who participated in this study were married, 2% single, 2% divorced or separated, and 6% widowed.

In addition, 12% of the respondents had no formal education. Out of this 12%, 8% of the respondents were married, 2% single, and 2% widowed. The table further reveals that 10% of the respondents were minimally educated with primary education as their highest qualification. At least 6% of the respondents had received secondary education. The last group comprised respondents (72%) with the highest qualifications. Out of the total number of the respondents with tertiary education, 66% were married, 2% divorced or separated, and 4% widowed.

TABLE 4: OCCUPATION VERSUS RELIGION OF THE RESPONDENTS

			Religion.		
			Christian.	Non-christian	Total
Occupation.	Professional.	Count	32	5	37
		% within Occupation.	86.5%	13.5%	100.0%
		% within Religion.	74.4%	71.4%	74.0%
		% of Total	64.0%	10.0%	74.0%
	Skilled	Count	4	1	5
		% within Occupation.	80.0%	20.0%	100.0%
		% within Religion.	9.3%	14.3%	10.0%
		% of Total	8.0%	2.0%	10.0%
	Unskilled	Count	4		4
		% within Occupation.	100.0%		100.0%
		% within Religion.	9.3%		8.0%
		% of Total	8.0%		8.0%
	Unemployed	Count	3	1	4
		% within Occupation.	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within Religion.	7.0%	14.3%	8.0%
		% of Total	6.0%	2.0%	8.0%
Total		Count	43	7	50
		% within Occupation.	86.0%	14.0%	100.0%
		% within Religion.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	86.0%	14.0%	100.0%

The above table gives the statistical data of the respondents in relation to their occupation and religion. The table shows that 74% of the respondents who had completed the questionnaire were professional people. It further reveals that 64% of these professionals were people who had accepted the Christian faith, whereas 10% were found to be non-Christians. Moreover, 10% of the respondents who participated in this research project were skilled people. As far as the skilled people were concerned, 8% of those who participated were Christians and 2% non-Christians. Only 8% of the respondents were classified as unskilled. Most interestingly, all of them were Christians. Whereover, 8% of the respondents who were unemployed, 6% were of the Christian faith and 2% non-Christians. As indicated before, the majority (86%) of the respondents were Christians while only 14% were non-Christians.

TABLE 5: OCCUPATION VERSUS MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

			Place of residence.			
			City/Town	Township	Village	Total
Occupation.	Professional.	Count	5	6	26	37
		% within Occupation.	13.5%	16.2%	70.3%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.	71.4%	100.0%	70.3%	74.0%
		% of Total	10.0%	12.0%	52.0%	74.0%
	Skilled	Count	1		4	5
		% within Occupation.	20.0%		80.0%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.	14.3%		10.8%	10.0%
		% of Total	2.0%		8.0%	10.0%
	Unskilled	Count	1		3	4
		% within Occupation.	25.0%		75.0%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.	14.3%		8.1%	8.0%
		% of Total	2.0%		6.0%	8.0%
	Unemployed	Count			4	4
		% within Occupation.			100.0%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.			10.8%	8.0%
		% of Total			8.0%	8.0%
Total		Count	7	6	37	50
		% within Occupation.	14.0%	12.0%	74.0%	100.0%
		% within Place of residence.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	14.0%	12.0%	74.0%	100.0%

The above table indicates the occupation and place of residence of the respondents. As indicated earlier, 74% of the respondents who participated in the completion of the questionnaire were professionals. Out of these 74% respondents, 10% resided in cities/towns, 12% in townships, and 52% in villages.

The total percentage of skilled people who completed the questionnaire was 10%. Of this total percentage, 2% resided in cities/towns and 8% in villages.

The above table also gives the statistical data of unskilled people who participated in this research project. Based on the information captured earlier, there were at least 8% unskilled people. Out of this 8%, 2% were living in cities/towns and 6% in villages.

The total percentage of the unemployed people, as shown in table 4, who formed part of this project was 8%. All 8% of the respondents who comprised the unemployed were village dwellers.

The next table shows the occupation and marital status of the respondents. As indicated earlier, 90% of the respondents were married, 2% single, 2% divorced/separated and 6% widowed. It is also interesting to note that 74% comprised respondents who were professionals, 10% skilled, 8% unskilled, and 8% unemployed.

Of the 74% professionals, 64% were married, 2% divorced/separated, and 2% widowed.

TABLE 6: OCCUPATION VERSUS MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

			Marital status.				
			Married	Single	Divorced/separated	Widowed	Total
Occupation.	Professional.	Count	34		1	2	37
		% within Occupation.	91.9%		2.7%	5.4%	100.0%
		% within Marital status.	75.6%		100.0%	66.7%	74.0%
		% of Total	68.0%		2.0%	4.0%	74.0%
	Skilled	Count	5				5
		% within Occupation.	100.0%				100.0%
		% within Marital status.	11.1%				10.0%
		% of Total	10.0%				10.0%
	Unskilled	Count	4				4
		% within Occupation.	100.0%				100.0%
		% within Marital status.	8.9%				8.0%
		% of Total	8.0%				8.0%
	Unemployed	Count	2	1		1	4
		% within Occupation.	50.0%	25.0%		25.0%	100.0%
		% within Marital status.	4.4%	100.0%		33.3%	8.0%
		% of Total	4.0%	2.0%		2.0%	8.0%
Total		Count	45	1	1	3	50
		% within Occupation.	90.0%	2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	100.0%
		% within Marital status.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	90.0%	2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	100.0%

Within the skilled category which consisted of 10% of the total number of the respondents, 10% of the participants were married. The unskilled category registered 8% who were married. From the 8% of the unemployed 4% were married, 2% single and 2% widowed.

6.6 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In this section the data that were collected is analysed, interpreted, and findings made. While the researcher collected data using different data gathering procedures, the data were continuously analysed, as Bogaan and Biklen (1992:72) advise when they maintain that "data analysis is a constant comparative method where formal analysis begins early in the study and is nearly completed by the end of the data collection."

The following table shows the results of this analysis in terms of certain rules which the respondents followed in naming a child. These results reveal that 59,2% of the respondents followed certain rules when they decided on the name of the newly born child.

They advanced a variety of reasons why they followed certain rules when naming a child. Some of the respondents indicated that they took into account the period or situation in which the child was born, while other respondents pointed out that certain practices, which they followed, gave them guidelines in naming their children. As indicated earlier, names have to relate to particular occurrences and events which we need to remember as time goes on.

In this respect 40% of the respondents indicated that they did not follow rules when they gave their children names. However, these respondents further indicated that they were sometimes guided by circumstances taking place prior to the birth of their children.

There was thus a clear difference of opinion among the respondents on the issue of

following certain rules when naming a child. An interesting response to this question came from 59,2% of the respondents who indicated a preference for using rules/practices in naming a child. This indicates that a greater proportion preferred to use rules when naming a child when compared to the 40,8% who did not follow rules.

TABLE 7: RULES/PRACTICES IN NAMING A CHILD

			Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		
			Yes	No	Total
Place of residence.	City/town	Count	2	5	7
		% within Place of residence.	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	6.9%	25.0%	14.3%
		% of Total	4.1%	10.2%	14.3%
	Township	Count	5	1	6
		% within Place of residence.	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	17.2%	5.0%	12.2%
		% of Total	10.2%	2.0%	12.2%
	Village	Count	22	14	36
		% within Place of residence.	61.1%	38.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	75.9%	70.0%	73.5%
		% of Total	44.9%	28.6%	73.5%
Total		Count	29	20	49
		% within Place of residence.	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%

This question elicited interesting answers in that 40,8% of the respondents had dual preferences. Some of the reasons advanced for these dual preferences were as follows:

- Not all the time since it depended on whether there was something quite remarkable to remind one of such an occurrence/event.
- No, there are no specific rules but some names are sometimes used to express particular feelings, such as Mihloti (sorrow), Mikateko (appreciation), Ndhambi (a child born during heavy rains) or naming a child after the parents.
- No rules/practices except that a name given to a child can have a motive behind it, such as Jele (prison)- a child born during the time when a close relative/a family member/ the mother was imprisoned.

The conclusion may thus be drawn that irrespective of the place of residence people feel obliged to follow certain rules when deciding on the name of a child. The data generally suggest that a preference is given to certain rules or practices when a name is decided upon.

As indicated earlier, the above table shows that 59,2% of all the respondents followed certain rules in naming a new born. It was also revealed that the same situation was true for respondents from both rural areas and townships since 61,1% and 83,3% of the respondents from these areas respectively indicated that they were following certain rules in the naming of a child.

In the light of the foregoing discussion it can be concluded with reasonable certainty that although 59,2% of the respondents believed that namegivers should follow certain rules when deciding on the child's name, the rules should be accepted as mere guidelines and not as something that should be strictly and rigidly adhered to.

TABLE 8: THE influence OF EDUCATION ON NAMING

			Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		
			Yes	No	Total
Education.	No education.	Count	4	2	6
		% within Education.	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	13.8%	10.0%	12.2%
		% of Total	8.2%	4.1%	12.2%
	Primary education.	Count	3	2	5
		% within Education.	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	10.3%	10.0%	10.2%
		% of Total	6.1%	4.1%	10.2%
	Secondary education.	Count		2	2
		% within Education.		100.0%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		10.0%	4.1%
		% of Total		4.1%	4.1%
	Tertiary education.	Count	22	14	36
		% within Education.	61.1%	38.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	75.9%	70.0%	73.5%
		% of Total	44.9%	28.6%	73.5%
Total		Count	29	20	49
		% within Education.	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%

The data in the foregoing table reveal that irrespective of the level of education attained, 59,2% of the respondents follow certain rules in naming a child. The remainder (40,8%) of the respondents thus did not follow rules in naming a newborn.

A fair majority of the respondents followed rules when deciding on the names of their children. These responses confirm the assumption that there are still some Vatsonga who subscribe to traditional naming conventions. One may thus conclude that 40,8% of the respondents represent the contemporary Vatsonga who have moved away from the traditional naming conventions.

In spite of the infiltration of Western influence on Xitsonga naming conventions, the table above reveals that 61,1% of the respondents with the highest qualifications (tertiary education) still took cultural patterns of naming into account when they decided on their children's names. This clearly implies that Western influence has not eroded every aspect of the Xitsonga social system. However, these statistical data do not mean that there is no indication of Western influence on the Xitsonga personal naming system.

The following table reveals another interesting aspect by showing that even Christians (58,1%) were following certain rules when giving their children names. From the statistical data, we notice that 41,9% of the Christians followed certain rules in naming a child.

TABLE 9: RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE ON NAMING SYSTEM

			Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		
			Yes	No	Total
Religion.	Christian.	Count	25	18	43
		% within Religion.	58.1%	41.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	86.2%	90.0%	87.8%
		% of Total	51.0%	36.7%	87.8%
	Non-christian	Count	4	2	6
		% within Religion.	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	13.8%	10.0%	12.2%
		% of Total	8.2%	4.1%	12.2%
Total		Count	29	20	49
		% within Religion.	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%

A fairly high proportion of the non-Christians (66,7%) took cultural customs and traditions into account when they decided on their child's name, while 33,3% of the non-Christians indicated that they did not follow any rules in naming a child. Some of the respondents, irrespective of their religious affiliations or not, took cultural customs and traditions into consideration when they decided on their child's name.

TABLE 10: INFLUENCE OF RESIDENTIAL PLACE ON THE NAME-GIVER

			Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?			
			Grandparents	Parents	Other	Total
Place of residence.	City/Town	Count	2	4	1	7
		% within Place of residence.	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	9.1%	17.4%	20.0%	14.0%
		% of Total	4.0%	8.0%	2.0%	14.0%
	Township	Count	4	2		6
		% within Place of residence.	66.7%	33.3%		100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	18.2%	8.7%		12.0%
		% of Total	8.0%	4.0%		12.0%
	Village	Count	16	17	4	37
		% within Place of residence.	43.2%	45.9%	10.8%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	72.7%	73.9%	80.0%	74.0%
		% of Total	32.0%	34.0%	8.0%	74.0%
Total		Count	22	23	5	50
		% within Place of residence.	44.0%	46.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	44.0%	46.0%	10.0%	100.0%

Considering the table above, it is noticed that 44% and 10% of the respondents were dependent on or would consult either the grandparents or someone else before a child is named. This indicates that certain cultural customs are still followed in naming a child irrespective of the place of residence.

Only 46% of the parents in the survey indicated that they would give names to their children. Amongst those living in towns, 51.7% of the parents named their children without consulting someone. It also shows that almost 48% of the parents in towns would consult someone outside their family before a child is named.

An analysis of the namers in terms of the place of residence further reveals that the rural dwellers reserved the right of naming exclusively for grandparents (32%) and parents (34%) respectively.

Considering the data in the following table below, it is clear that amongst the Christians, only 46.5% of the parents would name their own kids, whereas the rest would consult someone before naming (see also table 21).

TABLE 11: THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON NAME-GIVING/ NAMEGIVER

			Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?			
			Grandparents	Parents	Other	Total
Religion.	Christian.	Count	19	20	4	43
		% within Religion.	44.2%	46.5%	9.3%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	86.4%	87.0%	80.0%	86.0%
		% of Total	38.0%	40.0%	8.0%	86.0%
	Non-christian	Count	3	3	1	7
		% within Religion.	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	13.6%	13.0%	20.0%	14.0%
		% of Total	6.0%	6.0%	2.0%	14.0%
Total		Count	22	23	5	50
		% within Religion.	44.0%	46.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	44.0%	46.0%	10.0%	100.0%

TABLE 12: THE INFLUENCE OF RESIDENTIAL PLACE ON CULTURAL PATTERNS OF NAMING

			Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		
			Yes	No	Total
Place of residence.	City/Town	Count	2	5	7
		% within Place of residence.	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	6.9%	25.0%	14.3%
		% of Total	4.1%	10.2%	14.3%
	Township	Count	5	1	6
		% within Place of residence.	83.3%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	17.2%	5.0%	12.2%
		% of Total	10.2%	2.0%	12.2%
	Village	Count	22	14	36
		% within Place of residence.	61.1%	38.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	75.9%	70.0%	73.5%
		% of Total	44.9%	28.6%	73.5%
Total		Count	29	20	49
		% within Place of residence.	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%

The respondents were asked if they took cultural patterns of naming into account when they decided on the child's name. As revealed in Table 12, a large percentage of the respondents indicated that culture played a very important role in name-giving. The responses to the question revealed that 59.2% of the respondents, irrespective of

their place of residence, still attached value to cultural patterns of naming when they chose the child's name. It was also revealed that the same situation was true for respondents from both rural areas and townships with 61.1% and 83.3% of the respondents from these areas respectively believing in following certain rules of naming a child.

The majority of the respondents residing in the urban areas did not follow any rules since 71.4% of them indicated that they did not follow any rules.

The data in the table below reveal that, irrespective of the level of education attained, 55.2% of the respondents followed certain rules in naming a child.

TABLE 13: INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION ON CULTURAL PATTERNS OF NAMING

			Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		
			Yes	No	Total
Education.	No education.	Count	4	2	6
		% within Education.	66.7%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	13.8%	10.0%	12.2%
		% of Total	8.2%	4.1%	12.2%
	Primary education.	Count	3	2	5
		% within Education.	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	10.3%	10.0%	10.2%
		% of Total	6.1%	4.1%	10.2%
	Secondary education.	Count		2	2
		% within Education.		100.0%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?		10.0%	4.1%
		% of Total		4.1%	4.1%
	Tertiary education.	Count	22	14	36
		% within Education.	61.1%	38.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	75.9%	70.0%	73.5%
		% of Total	44.9%	28.6%	73.5%
Total		Count	29	20	49
		% within Education.	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide on child's name?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	59.2%	40.8%	100.0%

Considering the different levels of education of the respondents, one major observation is that 44.9% of the most highly educated respondents still considered culture as the most important aspect when they decided on the child's name. On the

contrary, 28.6% of the respondents with tertiary education indicated that culture does not feature prominently when naming a child. This clearly suggests rather that the Vatsonga, despite their exposure to Western ideas and demands, still attach serious importance to name-giving as a special way of advancing their language and nationality. The conclusion to be drawn is that the Vatsonga as a people still uphold tradition and culture in giving names to children.

TABLE 14: CHILD AS A GIFT

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	48	96.0	96.0	96.0
	No	2	4.0	4.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 14 exposes the results of the survey on the respondents' opinions on whether a child is regarded as a gift or not. As expected, the overwhelming majority of the respondents regarded the birth of every baby as a special gift since 96% of all the respondents indicated that a child is regarded as a gift. However, 4% of the respondents opposed the general view that a child is a special gift.

Though echoing the same view (96%), some of the respondents were of the opinion that a child is either a gift from God or the ancestors. Those who regarded a child as a gift from God gave names such as *Nyiko* (gift), *Nkateko* (blessing), *Khensani* (be thankful) or *Musa* (mercy) to their children whereas those who regarded a child as a gift from the ancestors do not give any preferred name associated with their belief. The respondents' view is also echoed by Dickens (1985:25) when she states that the Zulus regarded a child as a gift or a blessing to be sought and prayed for as the birth of a child was often seen as an indication of being favoured by the powers that be.

It can be tentatively concluded that in spite of differences in opinions/views, the overwhelming majority of the respondents stated that a child is a special gift. On the other hand, only a small percentage firmly believed that a child is a blessing from their ancestors.

TABLE 15: CEREMONY

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	29	58.0	58.0	58.0
	No	21	42.0	42.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

This table reflects the views on the ceremony which is performed to inform the family of the birth and naming of the child.

An analysis of the frequency of performance of a special ceremony to inform the family of the birth and naming of a child reveals that 58% of the respondents were aware of the name-giving ceremonies. In contrast, 42% of the respondents indicated that they did not know and associate themselves with name-giving ceremonies.

The follow-up interviews revealed that the traditional Vatsonga used to hold a special name-giving ceremony known as Hojahoja. On this special occasion the child was open for viewing by the general public. They sang, ran around the hut and threw roasted mielie seeds mixed with groundnuts at the child. It was on this day that the sex and name of the child were made known to the general public.

However, some respondents expressed contrasting views by indicating that a goat was slaughtered, especially in the case of a first-born child. The goat's skin was specially treated, dried, softened, and used to carry the baby on the mother's back.

Some of the of respondents expressed the following views:

- After birth, the child must stay indoors without being taken out for a period of one to three months depending on the sex of the child. During this period a selected few are allowed to enter the hut in which the mother and the child are staying. They would only go out on the day when the *Hojahoja* ceremony is performed.
- Yes, the elderly sing a cultural song called *thimbyarimbya-thimbyarimbya ku veleka i vukosi* while dancing. In this way every family member is informed of the new child.
- There is a special ceremony which is organised by the church with the purpose of blessing and welcoming all children born during a particular month.
- After the birth of the child elderly women come together and celebrate as well as name the child. This sometimes takes place when the child is shown to the rest of the people after a month (if it is a boy) and three months (if it is a girl).

The follow-up interviews revealed that all the respondents were aware of name-giving ceremonies but their religious affiliations or persuasions did not allow them to participate in or hold such ceremonies. Generally, the data revealed considerable differences in factors which influence the performance of a special ceremony. The minimally educated respondents viewed the holding of name-giving ceremonies as a rebirth of their traditional way of celebrating and recording the birth of a new child. On the other hand, the more highly educated did not consider the ceremony as that important in that Western influence has eroded Xitsonga culture.

Addressing the question of who names the child, many of the respondents indicated that the parents (46%) are the most common name-givers, followed by the grandparents (44%), and the other (10%) (which may be interpreted as referring to either family members, namely, aunts, uncles, older children, and in some cases neighbours or friends.)

TABLE 16: NAMEGIVERS

			Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?			
			Grandparents	Parents	Other	Total
Religion.	Christian.	Count	19	20	4	43
		% within Religion.	44.2%	46.5%	9.3%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	86.4%	87.0%	80.0%	86.0%
		% of Total	38.0%	40.0%	8.0%	86.0%
	Non-christian	Count	3	3	1	7
		% within Religion.	42.9%	42.9%	14.3%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	13.6%	13.0%	20.0%	14.0%
		% of Total	6.0%	6.0%	2.0%	14.0%
Total		Count	22	23	5	50
		% within Religion.	44.0%	46.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within Who should be accorded the opportunity to name newly born children?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	44.0%	46.0%	10.0%	100.0%

This study has revealed that naming is in one way or another a shared family responsibility in which both parents participate actively. Although the incidence of "other" as name-giver is relatively low (10%), the respondents indicated that there is a possibility of seeing a considerable increase due to factors such as hospitalisation because children are bound to have names immediately after birth for purposes of entering their names in the official birth register.

The follow-up interviews too revealed that parents were the most common name-givers. The interviewees too pointed out that urbanization is making it practically impossible for the grandparents to assert their authority in name-giving because they are no longer part of the newly created families of the younger couples.

In summary, based on the statistical variation given above, parents emerge as the most common name-givers. Consequently, it may well be concluded that parents have gained the upper hand in name-giving, as opposed to the traditional practice in

which it were the grandparents, especially the grandmothers who were the most frequent namers by virtue of being the midwives.

In similar vein, Koopman (1985:32) states that name-giving was fairly evenly split between the mother and father, with the father giving 50% of the names and mother 41%. The remaining 9% were split between the grandmother (5%), the grandfather (2%), and various other relatives, including uncles, aunts, and older children in the family (2%). Herbert (1995:5) too observes that parents are the most common name-givers, followed by grandparents, relatives, and non-family members.

It is also interesting to note that De Klerk and Bosch's (1998) findings reveal considerable cross-cultural differences: all the English informants reserved the right of name-giving exclusively for the parents of the baby. In contrast, the Xhosa informants allowed the grandmother to make the choice. These findings suggest that English speakers emphasise the nuclear family, while the extended family still plays a role among Xhosa speakers.

These findings do not reveal a huge difference in contrast to the present findings in that parents are the most frequent namers, followed by grandparents and other relatives, such as aunts, uncles, older children in the family, and friends/neighbours.

TABLE 17: TIME OF NAMING A CHILD

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	Before Birth	12	24.0	24.0	24.0
	One week	33	66.0	66.0	90.0
	Two weks	1	2.0	2.0	92.0
	Three weeks	2	4.0	4.0	96.0
	Five weeks	1	2.0	2.0	98.0
	36 weeks	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100	

This table reveals the results of the analysis in terms of the period the family takes to name the newly born child. Generally the data suggest a great degree of freedom for the namegiver to give the newly born child a name as 24% of the respondents indicated that they had actually decided on the name of the child before birth. This kind of development indicates that two different names are decided upon, covering both sexes because the sex of the expected child is often unknown.

The majority of the respondents (66%) indicated that they gave a newborn child a name within one week. The remaining percentage (10%) took two to 36 weeks to decide on the name of the child.

In contrast to the above findings, Dickens (1985:125) reports that there is a common superstition amongst the Zulus that naming a child before birth is bad luck. The traditional Zulus would also not buy clothes in preparation for the birth of the child. However, modern mothers are not as afraid to prepare for the birth of a child.

Although the majority of the respondents indicated that a child can be given a name within a week, there were contrasting views concerning the actual period which a family would take to name their newly born child. Some of the respondents indicated that the period that the family takes, depends on whether the child was born at either a clinic/hospital or at home. They indicated that if the child is born at a local clinic or hospital, the child is bound to have a name immediately after birth for the following reasons:

- Five days: But because of hospitalisation children are bound to have names immediately after birth.
- It may take nine months to think of a name to give a newly born child or immediately after birth.
- After returning home from hospital.
- When the mother is two months pregnant.
- Without knowing the sex of the child - the name is always there.

- The name should be given immediately when the umbilical cord falls off and leaves a navel. This may be within six to seven days and when the mother is then allowed to resume her normal family shares.
- Before delivery.

Dickens (1985:154) concludes that the Zulu children are named after birth (see also Bryant (1949), Krige (1936), and Lee (1941)) and never before birth because prior naming would bring bad luck. The naming of children before birth thus proved to be the exception rather than the rule (p.154).

TABLE 18: PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN IN NAME-GIVING

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	23	460	59.0	59.0
	No	16	32.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	39	78.0	100.0	
Missing	Total	11	22.0		
		50	100.0		

This table indicates that although most parents (52,1%) would allow their older children to take part in naming, a reasonable number of parents (47,9%) as well would not allow their children to participate. This shows that the influence coming from the older children is not that significant and will only be respected by some parents.

TABLE 19: THE BESTOWAL OF NICKNAMES ON CHILDREN

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	0	23	46.0	62.2	62.2
	1	3	6.0	8.1	70.3
	2	7	14.0	18.9	89.2
	3	1	2.0	2.7	91.9
	4	2	4.0	5.4	97.3
	6	1	2.0	2.7	100.0
	Total	37	74.0	100.0	
Missing	Total	13	26.0		
		50	100		

One may tentatively conclude that peer group members either use nicknames as a form of friendship or mockery. This view is supported by Turner (2001:451) when she points out:

> In Zulu society the practice of composing derisive names often embedded with humour, can provide the individual with an acceptable but allusive way of astutely airing a conflict or source of discontent.

From the following table, it is clear that the majority of the respondents viewed nicknames as being important. Contrary to the general view that nicknames are of great value, a small fraction of the respondents argued that no value is attached to nicknames.

TABLE 20: THE IMPORTANCE OF NICKNAMES

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	23	46.0	59.0	59.0
	No	16	32.0	41.0	100.0
	Total	39	78.0	100.0	
Missing	Total	11	22.0		
		50	100.0		

Although 59% of the parents viewed nicknames as being important, only 37.8% (see table 19) were willing to give such names to their kids.

In follow-up interviews, the overwhelming majority of the respondents felt that there was no need to give nicknames to their children in that nicknames are associated with bad omen. They further elaborated that it is the sole responsibility of their children's peers to give them nicknames. Resultantly, most of the respondents also pointed out that there was no pressing need to know whether their children had nicknames or not.

TABLE 21: THE USE OF DEROGATORY NAMES

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Comulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	16	32.0	32.0	32.0
	No	34	68.0	68.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

An analysis of the frequency of the occurrence of derogatory names reveals that 32% of the respondents were in favour of the bestowal and use of derogatory names. This leaves the remainder (68%) of the respondents as completely opposed to derogatory names.

With regard to the use of derogatory names, 68% of the respondents contended that derogatory names would only help to make the bearers feel inferior and alienated from society. They further argued that protective names, such as *Nyamayavo* and *Vusiwana* often reflect the negative attitude associated with them. These respondents summed up their arguments by asserting that modern parents prefer assigning names which reflect a positive attitude for the family in terms of love, wishes, and hopes for the future of the child.

Some of the respondents who preferred assigning derogatory names did so for the purpose of recording the circumstances related to the birth of the child:

- If a mother dies after giving birth, the surviving child will be called *Rifumuni*. This question-in-a-name expresses the bewilderment of the family while names such as *Maxangu* usually cause suffering to their owners as the name suggests. It thus depends on the circumstances while circumstantial names should not be given without thorough thought.
- Some names have sentimental value to the givers, and give the namegivers a right to give whatever name they prefer.
- Namegivers name children according to the circumstances of the family. If the child's birth coincides with a death in the family, the child may be named *Rifumuni*. If the couple has lost a number of children in infancy, it is logical to name the new arrival *Telakufa*.

Some reasons advanced for the non-approval of the use of derogatory names are:

- Names such as derogatory ones can have a negative influence on the personality and behaviour of the child. They may spoil the child.
- No, I do not prefer to give my children derogatory names because they tend to be unpleasant especially when the name bearers come to know their meanings.
- A person's life is to a certain extent influenced by his/her name. So, if names that are given to people are of this nature, the name-bearers will always be faced with bad things throughout their lives.

On the contrary, a small fraction of the respondents still found comfort in derogatory names which embody misfortune and suffering. They strongly believed that derogatory names protect their children from witches and malignant spirits. Consequently, one may assume that the use of derogatory names is strongly associated with people who still believe in the existence and power of ancestral spirits. To conclude, derogatory names will cease to exist in the near future because they tend to make the bearers feel disillusioned and insignificant.

TABLE 22: DEMOCRACY AND NAMING

			Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?		
			Yes	No	Total
What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	Relevant	Count	26	1	27
		% within What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	96.3%	3.7%	100.0%
		% within Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?	86.7%	25.0%	79.4%
		% of Total	76.5%	2.9%	79.4%
	Not relevant	Count	4	3	7
		% within What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?	13.3%	75.0%	20.6%
		% of Total	11.8%	8.8%	20.6%
Total		Count	30	4	34
		% within What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	88.2%	11.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	88.2%	11.8%	100.0%

The above table exposes the results of the survey on the respondents' opinions on whether there is a noticeable return to Xitsonga personal naming or not. In this regard, 88.2% of the respondents stated that democracy has in a way influenced a return of naming in Xitsonga while it is also interesting to note that 86.7% of all the respondents indicated the relevance of Xitsonga personal naming during the information age in a democratic South Africa.

The majority of the respondents felt that Xitsonga personal naming is extremely relevant in the information age with 79.4% of all the respondents in support of this idea. In contrast, 11.8% of the respondents revealed that they were not aware of the return to Xitsonga personal naming. With regard to the return to Xitsonga personal naming, some of the respondents expressed the following opinions:

- The Vatsonga are shifting away from Western culture in search of their roots through the naming of their children. Names, such as Thomas, Sarah, Maria and John are no more popular amongst the Vatsonga.
- Yes, having realised that Western culture in the past had no full meaning to us, people have now turned back to reality and Xitsonga names with meaning are now given and used by their children from time to time, even at schools or in workplaces.
- Yes, Afrikaner names are now being replaced by Xitsonga names such as *Mahlamba-Ndlopfu*. Rivers, mountains, bridges, dams, and schools are fondly renamed in Xitsonga.
- Yes, to a lesser extent, names such as *Ntshuxeko*, *Rixile*, *Nhlangano*, and *Vulombe* bear testimony to the return to Xitsonga personal naming. The dawn of democracy has, to a great extent, given birth to names of other ethnic groups linked to those of people who contributed immensely to the struggle against apartheid, such as *Thabo* (Mbeki) and *Siphiwe* (Nyanda).

From the data elicited from follow-up interviews, it was observed that a high number of the respondents attested to the contention that there is indeed a return to Xitsonga personal naming which can be attributed to the political awareness of the Vatsonga. The interviewees further stated that the return to Xitsonga personal naming signals the total rejection of Western names. They further argued that in terms of the principle of African Renaissance, it is of paramount importance for each tribe or nation to take pride in its own culture.

This is to a large extent similar to the conclusion made by Neethling (2000:208) when he points out:

> With the demise of apartheid and democracy now firmly in place, the wealth of African names is not coming to the fore strongly in all areas of social life, but has already begun to influence naming in other cultural groups.

In spite of the noticeable return to Xitsonga personal naming, some of the respondents strongly argued that the use of Xitsonga personal names had been adopted long before the dawn of democracy. However, the apartheid bureaucracy insisted on the use of both Western and African names, with special preference of the Western ones. One peculiar naming pattern found among the respondents was that the Western names, which found their way into Xitsonga families, were the direct result of the labour migration system adopted by the apartheid government whereby employees were apparently given new names by their employers.

The above findings thus reveal that despite these mixed responses, it is quite clear that the Vatsonga as a people strive to use their personal names to uplift and reaffirm their culture. In the light of the preceeding paragraphs it can be concluded with reasonable certainty that there is indeed a noticeable return to Xitsonga personal naming.

Considering the following table, it is noticed that 83,7% of the respondents attached much importance to naming a child as 91,8% of all the respondents attached meaning to the names of their children (see Table 13).

The overall percentage of parents who attached both meaning and much importance to naming was found to be 91,1%.

It is thus that, with the demise of apartheid and democracy now firmly in place, names with identifiable meaning have begun to make their presence felt. It is evident from the following statistical data that meaning plays a very crucial role when naming a child.

TABLE 23: SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMING

			Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?		
			Yes	No	Total
What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	Relevant	Count	26	1	27
		% within What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	96.3%	3.7%	100.0%
		% within Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?	86.7%	25.0%	79.4%
		% of Total	76.5%	2.9%	79.4%
	Not relevant	Count	4	3	7
		% within What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	57.1%	42.9%	100.0%
		% within Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?	13.3%	75.0%	20.6%
		% of Total	11.8%	8.8%	20.6%
Total		Count	30	4	34
		% within What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the infomation age?	88.2%	11.8%	100.0%
		% within Do you think the dawn of democracy in S.A. has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	88.2%	11.8%	100.0%

The data elicited from the formal interviews reveal that many parents, especially the educated ones, prefer to use Xitsonga names because of their identifiable meaning. However, we need to note that despite the overwhelming support for giving names with meaning, there was a small number of the respondents who chose names for

aesthetic appeal or personal whim. Upon enquiry, many of these informants claimed that English names are less meaningful than Xitsonga ones. They indicated that Xitsonga names are easy to pronounce, write, and understand. One major observation is, therefore, that Xitsonga names may help preserve Xitsonga culture and language. Some of the reasons advanced for the preference of names with meaning are as follows:

- Yes, a name means more than the name itself. A name should evoke memories of love or fondness within family members. The name should have meaning that will last for ever.
- Yes, we usually name children after some events such as *Xihluke*, the name that is given to a child who was born immediately after the death of his/her grannies.
- Yes, I cannot give a child a name that will make him/her feel ashamed of himself/herself. I will always look for a name that motivates my child to do good.
- Yes, I prefer a name having meaning, more especially in my own language so that we may preserve the culture and the value of our language.

The responses thus indicate that the informants preferred Xitsonga names in that they have identifiable meaning. This means that the informants were able to understand and identify with the language from which names are derived. This is to a large extent similar to the observation made by Dickens (1985), namely, that many of her informants preferred Zulu names in that they have meanings. Dickens' observation is similar to that of Herbert *et.a.l* (1990:3) who contend that "it is well known that African names have meaning and speakers readily identify with that meaning". Judging from the fact that 91,8% of the respondents opted for the use of Xitsonga names because of their meaningfulness, it can be assumed that the next generation will desist from using foreign names which, in most cases, are less meaningful.

6.6.1 **Responses on the use of names**

Regardless of their level of education, religion, place of residence, marital status, and occupation, all the respondents indicated that names are used for the purpose of identification. Some of the respondents further elaborated that names have a deeper meaning to a family than mere identification. They maintained that names convey the history and culture of a family because through the use of names, some respondents concurred that names act as symbols of remembrance of some people they were dearly loving.

Some of the respondents in turn indicated that names can be used to differentiate human beings from other creatures of God. However, there were some who claimed that names are used to identify individuals with the aim of recording events that took place during their birth.

As a result of the above belief, some of the respondents used names to expose their feelings at the time the baby was born or to relate the current situation to their forefathers. Some felt that names are used to wish the new-born child a bright future and to have a meaningful life in the family, the community, the country, and the world.

In essence, this analysis of the reasons underlying the use of names has revealed that all the respondents generally agreed that they used names mainly for identification purposes. However, one may also point out that some of the respondents linked the use of certain names to their religious beliefs.

6.6.2 **Responses on name preference: Xitsonga/Western**

The overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated that they preferred Xitsonga names. An interesting response for the Xitsonga preference is that Xitsonga names

are easily pronounced and understood by both the educated and the uneducated. The respondents further maintained that Xitsonga names are well loved by their bearers (owners). Another remarkable aspect about Xitsonga names is that they have cultural and historical meanings. The following are some of the reasons advanced for the preference of Xitsonga names:

- I like Xitsonga names because I think in the past we were not allowed to use them at school. I think now we have an opportunity to express ourselves.
- I prefer Xitsonga names, as they are the source of pride of our culture and heritage.

In spite of the fact that the majority of the respondents indicated that they preferred Xitsonga names, there were still some of them who chose Western names for their children. The reasons given for the preference of Western names are as follows:

- Western names are used so that other nationalities may be able to pronounce our names with ease.
- We are proud of our Western names because our parents were teachers who taught us that development came to our shores owing to the efforts of the Whites.

Furthermore, some of the respondents indicated that they disliked Western names because of their association with the apartheid government:

- We do not actually like Western names, but the colonisers imposed them on us. That is why we could hardly know their meanings. They are now part of us as we are now known by our Western names as if we are foreigners.
- I dislike Western names because they perpetuate Western tradition and values and thus are of no value.

Lastly, a small percentage of the respondents indicated that they were in favour of both Xitsonga and Western names. The dual preference was undoubtedly basically influenced by factors such as schooling, religion and employment. More importantly, dual preference, as the respondents claimed, gained its popularity during the apartheid era. Some of the respondents indicated that during the apartheid era the the Vatsonga were forced to use both Xitsonga and Western names when applying for identity documents and maintained that school authorities forced children to use both Xitsonga and Western names especially when registering them for external examinations whereby certificates would be issued. The conclusion to be drawn from this discussion is that the use of Xitsonga personal names has become more popular than ever before.

6.7 **CONCLUSION**

The chapter has discussed the data gathering process, analysis and interpretation of the data.

The analyses show that the Vatsonga as a people, despite their exposure to Western influence, still attach serious importance to naming practices. From the data derived from the questionnaire and interviews, it is clear that a large percentage of the respondents indicated that name-giving is an important part of the creation of an identity which induces a sense of belonging to both the named and the namer. The above information confirms Golele's (1993) view that "names reflect the society or community in which they are found".

According to the informants, Xitsonga names have deep meanings which have spiritual, religious, and philosophical significance for the name-bearers.

With regard to namers, parents were found to be the main name-givers, followed by grandparents and "other" (other family members, relatives, friends or neighbours). It

has also been observed that education, religion, and place of residence of the respondents did not influence them to abandon their naming customs. It is interesting, however, to note that there is a small fraction of the respondents who felt that they simply did not rely on any naming practice or trend when bestowing names on their children.

The chapter has also revealed that 32% of the respondents still believed in the use of derogatory names and that the respondents agreed that names are used merely for identification purpose. Also worth noting is that a relatively high number of the respondents revealed that they gave their children names which are meaningful and symbolic. This infers that the Vatsonga as a people do not merely give names for the sake of name-giving.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief overview of the study, conclusions drawn from this study, and a list of recommendations for further research.

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The naming conventions of the Vatsonga have been discussed in different sections in the preceding chapters. The aim of this research was to examine some of the dynamics of change affecting personal names and naming practices of the Vatsonga as well as the significance of names and naming practices in Xitsonga as already indicated in Chapter One (1.2).

In a nutshell, the preliminary considerations, the objective(s) of the study, the rationale for the study, different research methods used, the significance of the study, literature review and the key terms were discussed.

Xitsonga personal names in relation to their morphology were examined with the aim of gaining better insight into what Xitsonga personal names entail. The study also discussed different naming practices which gave rise to the different types of names. It was also observed that Vatsonga as a people use nicknames to record their approval or disapproval of a person's behaviour.

Furthermore, in the study the names of geographical features which included natural and man-made entities were examined. However, in the chapter dealing with geographical features, special attention was paid to place names. Lastly, the study has provided the findings of the research.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion drawn from this study in that naming in Xitsonga culture was not an arbitrary exercise but a practice that was carefully considered in advance. The study has shown that naming was considered to be of profound significance among the Vatsonga in that the namegiver chose a name that identified the child as a person. The Vatsonga as a people had a tendency to enshrine any memorable event in a name. Names were, therefore, chosen for their beneficial influence on the life and character of the bearer.

As already indicated, the Vatsonga, like other African people, made use of different naming practices to give names to their children. Interesting feature was that the Vatsonga did not regard a name as an ordinary label provided for the sake of convenience to distinguish one person from another. Rather, names came through the machinery of naming, determined by a variety of uncontrollable factors. Due to a variety of factors affecting the lives of the Vatsonga, names have been classified into the following categories:

- Politically-inspired names
- Initiation names
- Ancestral names
- Christian names
- Names relating to family/birth circumstances
- Names which describe the child's or family's background
- Protective names
- Western names
- Names of celebrities.

The study has further revealed that during the colonial and missionary eras paternal and maternal grandparents played a leading role as name-givers of children. However, there was a strong belief that women, especially grandmothers, were the main participants in name-giving. The conclusion drawn from the present study was that parents were the main name-givers, followed by the grandparents and the "other" (other family members, relatives, friends, and neighbours). It is also interesting to note that the study has established that, in some families, older children were allowed to participate in name-giving.

This study has too shown that there was a direct return to the traditional naming practices. There were names which reflected the social circumstances surrounding the birth of the children, for example, Langutela (the one who was expected), a name given to a first child after a long period of waiting during which the mother was accused of being barren and Ntshunxeko (freedom), a child named to mark South Africa's new-found freedom.

The study has also revealed that there is a noticeable return to Xitsonga personal naming. The return to Xitsonga personal naming is attributed to the political awareness of the Vatsonga. It is interesting to note that Xitsonga names have deep meanings which invoke spiritual, religious, political and philosophical significance in both the name-givers and the name bearers.

As already indicated in this study, the Vatsonga made use of Western names. These names revealed the profound influence Western encroachment has had on the Vatsonga's lives. This implies that naming practices were in one way or another characterised by an acceptance of a hybrid culture in which transcultural forms have become the norm.

In spite of the infiltration of Western influence on Xitsonga naming conventions, the Vatsonga still took cultural patterns of naming into account when they decided on

their children's names. This clearly implies that Western influence has not eroded every aspect of the Xitsonga social system.

With regard to the rules/practices in naming a child, the Vatsonga as a people made use of naming practices as guidelines when giving names to children. Another interesting trend is that even educated Vatsonga followed certain rules when naming children.

Generally, the study has also revealed that, irrespective of their religious affiliations and places of residence, the Vatsonga still took cultural customs and traditions into consideration when deciding on the names of children. It can also be tentatively concluded that, despite their different religious affiliations, the overwhelming view was that the child was regarded as a special gift. The only difference was the child might be a blessing from either God or the ancestors.

Another central issue that was addressed in this research related to the time of naming the newly born child. The findings showed that there was no actual time designated for naming the newly born child.

With regard to ceremony the research revealed that the Vatsonga were aware of name-giving ceremonies but no mention was made to indicate their participation in the ceremony. It seemed most probable that name-giving ceremonies were not common. There is good reason to believe that the practice of viewing the newly born and introducing him/her to the general public and the family in a well-organised ceremony called Hojahoja was becoming unfamiliar. The practice would possibly cease to exist in the near future.

Finally, the study has also proved that the Vatsonga as a people have no vested interest in using friction or protective names. These names have particularly been discouraging because they were almost exclusively critical of the behaviour of the

other members of the family and they do not contribute towards building good relationships.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that the Vatsonga should give Xitsonga personal names to their children with the express aim of promoting their mother tongue.

- It is also recommended that the study of names should form part of the school curriculum.

- It is recommended that the Vatsonga should form societies for different names with the express aim of establishing a database for personal names, nicknames, place names or anything relating to the study of names.

- Names should be taken very seriously. Once you show disrespect for other people's names you are disrespectful of their culture and tradition.

- When it comes to naming people should have freedom of choice. Whatever choice people have, it is important to acknowledge that a name denotes the type of character the name bearer has.

- The current thinking is that Africans should have African names but that does not mean that if they do not have African names they are less African in character.

- We have recently had people who have Western names whose behaviour has been beneficial to many South Africans, for example, Nelson Mandela, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

- Though naming is very important we should not use names to judge the worth of people.

- Names on their own mean little without positive action. We have had African leaders such as Idi Amin of Uganda and General Sani Abacha of Nigeria who had African names but their names were associated with murder and greed.

- It is, therefore, the responsibility of all Xitsonga speakers to ensure that Xitsonga names are continuously used in all spheres of life to develop and promote their language.

7.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- Research should be conducted on the impact of urbanization on the naming practices of the Vatsonga.

- Research should also be undertaken to discuss the dynamics of place names with special reference to the renaming of rural and urban settlements.

- Future research could address the importance of indigenous names of plants.

- It would be interesting to carry out cross-sociolinguistic research on the effect of intercultural contact in post-apartheid South Africa with reference to personal names and naming practices.

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NEWSPAPERS

City Press, 18 July 2002.

Sunday Sun, 10 February 2002.

APPENDIX A (i)

RESEARCH QUESTIONAIRE

PART 1

1. INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE AIM OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS TO INVESTIGATE NAMING PRACTICES IN XITSONGA. YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE TREATED WITH STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY. ALL THE QUESTIONS ARE IMPORTANT FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES OF THE STUDY. NO ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO IDENTIFY THE RESPONDENTS. YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO ANSWER FRANKLY AND HONESTLY. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE ADDITIONAL PAPER SHOULD THIS BE REQUIRED. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME.

2. PARTICULARS

TICK APPROPRIATE SPACE PROVIDED

i. Gender

Male	1	Female	2

ii. Age group

20-29	1	30-39	2	40-49	3	50-59	4	60-69	5	70-79	6	80-89	7

iii. Place of residence

City/Town	1

Township	2

Village	3

iv. Marital Status

Married	1

Single	2

Divorced/Separated	3

Widowed	4

v. Number of children

vi. Education

No formal education	1
Primary education	2
Secondary education	3
Tertiary education	4

vii. Religion

Christian	1
Non-christian	2

viii. Occupation

Professional	1
Skilled	2
Unskilled	3
Unemployed	4

PART II

1. Why do you use names?

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2. Do you follow rules or practices in naming a child? Give a list of rules or practices, which you know.

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3. Do you think much importance is attached to the naming of a child?

   Expand.

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4. Do you attach any meaning to naming a child? Elaborate.

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5. Do you take cultural patterns of naming into account when you decide upon your children's names? Expand.

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6. In your opinion, who should be accorded the opportunity to name the newly born children? And why?

Grandparents	1	Parents	2	Uncle	3	Aunt	4	Other	5

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7. How long, in your experience, do you take to name a newly born child?

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8. Is there any special ceremony as a gesture of goodwill that you are aware of which is used to inform the whole family of the birth and the naming of the child?

   If yes, explain briefly.

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9. Are your children's names drawn from a stock of available Xitsonga names or are names coined freely?

   Explain briefly.

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10. Some Xitsonga names such as Tinyiko, Dumisani and Ntsako are bestowed on children irrespective of their sex. Do you support this kind of development. YES/NO.

    Why?

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.....

11. Do you think it is necessary for name-givers to give children derogatory or protective names such as **Rhukanani**, **Tekakufa**, **Nyamayavo** and **Rifumuni**. YES/NO.

Justify your answer.

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12. Do you regard a baby as a gift? Justify your answer.

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13. Do your older children participate in naming? If the response is yes, why do you allow them to do so?

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14. Do you prefer Western or Xitsonga names?

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i. Why do you prefer Western names?

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ii. Why do you prefer Xitsonga names?

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15. How many of your children have nicknames? Do you think nicknames are important in daily life? Justify your answer.

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16. Do you think circumstances surrounding birth, social aspects of the family standing, hopes and wishes for the child should be taken into account when naming a child? Justify your answer.

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17. Is naming as a strategy effective in ensuring the survival of Xitsonga culture? YES/NO

Why?

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18. What is the relevance of naming in Xitsonga in the information age?

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19. Do you think the dawn of democracy in South Africa has influenced a return to Xitsonga personal naming? Explain briefly.

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APPENDIX A (ii)

SWIVUTISO SWA NDZAVISISO

XIYENGE XA 1

1. SWILETELO

XIYA LESWAKU XIKONGOMELO XA NONGONOKO LOWU WA SWIVUTISO I KU LAVISISA MATHYELO YA MAVITO/MINTOLOVELO YA MATHYELO YA MAVITO EKA XITSONGA. TINHLAMULO TA WENA TI TA TEKIWA TI RI XIHUNDLA. SWIVUTISO HINKWASWO I SWA NKOKA KU YA HI SWIKONGOMELO SWA DYONDZO/NDZAVISISO LOWU. KU HAVA MATSHALATSHALA MA NGA TA ENDLIWA KU HUMESELA MAVITO YA VAHLAMURI ERIVALENI. U KHUTAZIWA KU HLAMULA HI VURHON'WANA NI KU TSHEMBEKA. TITWE U TSHUNXEKILE KU TIRHISA PHEPHA RO ENGETELA LOKO RI TSHUKA RI LAVEKA. U NGA TSALI VITO RA WENA.

2. VUXOKOXOKO BYA MUNHU

KHWATIHATA EKA NDHAWU LEYI FANELEKE

i. Rimbewu

wanuna	1	wansati	2

ii. Ntlawa wa malembe

20-29	1	30-39	2	40-49	3	50-59	4	60-69	5	70-79	6	80-89	7

iii. Ndhawu yo tshama

Doroba	1
Xidorobana	2
Muganga	3

iv. Xiyimo xa vukati

La tekeke/tekiweke	1
La nga tekangiki/tekiwangiki	2
La tshikiweke/hambaneke	3
La loveriweke	4

v. Nhlayo ya vana

(vi) Dyondzo

Ku hava dyondzo	1
Dyondzo ya purayimari	2
Dyondzo ya sekondari	3
Dyondzo ya le henhla	4

vi. Vukhongeri

Mukriste	1
Loyi a nga riki mukriste	2

vii. Ntirho

Loyi a dyondzekeke	1
La nga ni vutivi	2
La nga hava vutivi	3
La nga tirhiki	4

XIYENGE XA II

1. Xana hikokwalaho ka yini u tirhisa mavito?

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2. Xana u landzelela milawu kumbe mintoloveto eku thyeni ka n`wana ke? Nyika nongonoko wa milawu kumbe mintoloveto leyi u yi tivaka.

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3. Xana ku ni nkoka lowu fambaka kun`we ni mathyelo ya n`wana ke? Hlamusela.

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4. Xana u thya n`wana hi ku landza vuyimeri byo karhi ke? Nyika vuxokoxoko.

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5. Xana wa tekela enhlokweni mintoloveto ya ndhavuko loko u kunguhata mavito ya vana va wena ke? Hlamusela.

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6. Ku ya hi wena, xana i mani loyi a faneleke ku nyikiwa matimba yo thya vana lava ha ku velekiwaka? Naswona hikokwalaho ka yini?

Vakokwana	1	Vatswari	2	Malume	3	Hahani	4	Un`wana	5

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7. Ku ya hi ntoloveto wa wena, swi teka nkarhi wo leha ku fika kwihi ku thya n`wana loyi a ha ku velekiwaka?

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8. Xana ku ni nkhuvo wo hlawuleka lowu u wu tivaka lowu tirhisiwaka ku tivisa ndyangu hi ta ku velekiwa ni ku thyiwa ka n`wana ke?

Loko u ku ina, hlamusela hi ku komisa.

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9. Xana mavito ya vana va wena ya huma eka ntlawa wa mavito ya Xitsonga lama nga kona kumbe wo tivumbela/tithyela hi wexe ke? Hlamusela hi ku komisa.

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10. Man`wana ya mavito ya Xitsonga yo fana na Tinyiko, Dumisani na Ntsako ya thyiwa vana ematshan`wini yo landzelela rimbewu ro karhi. Xana wa seketela maendlele lawa ke? INA/E-E

Hikokwalaho ka yini?

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11. Ku ya hi wena, xana swa fanela leswaku vathyi va mavito va nyika vana mavito yo hlekula kumbe yo sirhelela tanihi Rhukanani, Telakufa, Nyamayavo na Rifumuni. INA/E-E.

Tiyisisa nhlamulo ya wena.

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12. N`wana un`wana ni un`wana u tekiwa tanihi nyiko. Vanyikeri ku nga va Xikwembu kumbe swikwembu. Tiyisisa nhlamulo ya wena.

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13. Xana vana va wena lavakulu va nghenelela eka timhaka ta mathyelo ke? Loko nhlamulo yi ri ina, xana u va pfumelelela yini?

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14. Xana u tsakela mavito ya Xilungu kumbe Xitsonga ke?

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i. Hikokwalaho ka yini u tsakela mavito ya Xilungu?

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ii. Hikokwalaho ka yini u tsakela mavito ya Xitsonga?

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15. I vangani vana va wena lava va nga ni mavito yo duvulela? Xana u ehleketa leswaku mavito yo duvulela i ya nkoka eka vutomi bya siku ni siku ke?

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16. Xana u ehleketa leswaku mihivani leyi khumbaka timhaka ta ku velekiwa, xiyimo xa mahanyelo ya ndyangu kumbe xiyimo xa ndyangu, ku navela ni ku navelela n`wana swo karhi swi fanele ku tekeriwa enhlokweni eku thyeni ka n`wana ke?.

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17. Xana mathyelo i ndlela leyi nga endlaka leswaku ndhavuko wa Xitsonga wu hanya wu ya emahlweni?

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18. Xana mathyelo ya Xitsonga ya fambelana njhani ni malembe ya thekinoloji?

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19. Xana hi ku vona ka wena ku amukeriwa ka xidemokrasi eAfrika-Dzonga swi nga va ni nkucetelo eka ku tlhelela ka mathyelo ya mavito ya Xitsonga ke? Hlamusela hi ku komisa.

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APPENDIX B

University of the North
Faculty of Humanities
School of Languages and Communication Studies
SOVENGA
0727

10 August 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

I am requesting you to kindly assist me to uncover the dynamics of naming and naming practices among Xitsonga speakers by completing the enclosed questionnaire. All data collected will be used for academic research purposes to obtain a Ph.D.

The research is aimed at stimulating scholarly efforts on perspectives of naming and naming patterns among Xitsonga speakers.

I count on your valued contribution.

Respectfully yours

M.T. CHAUKE

APPENDIX C (i)

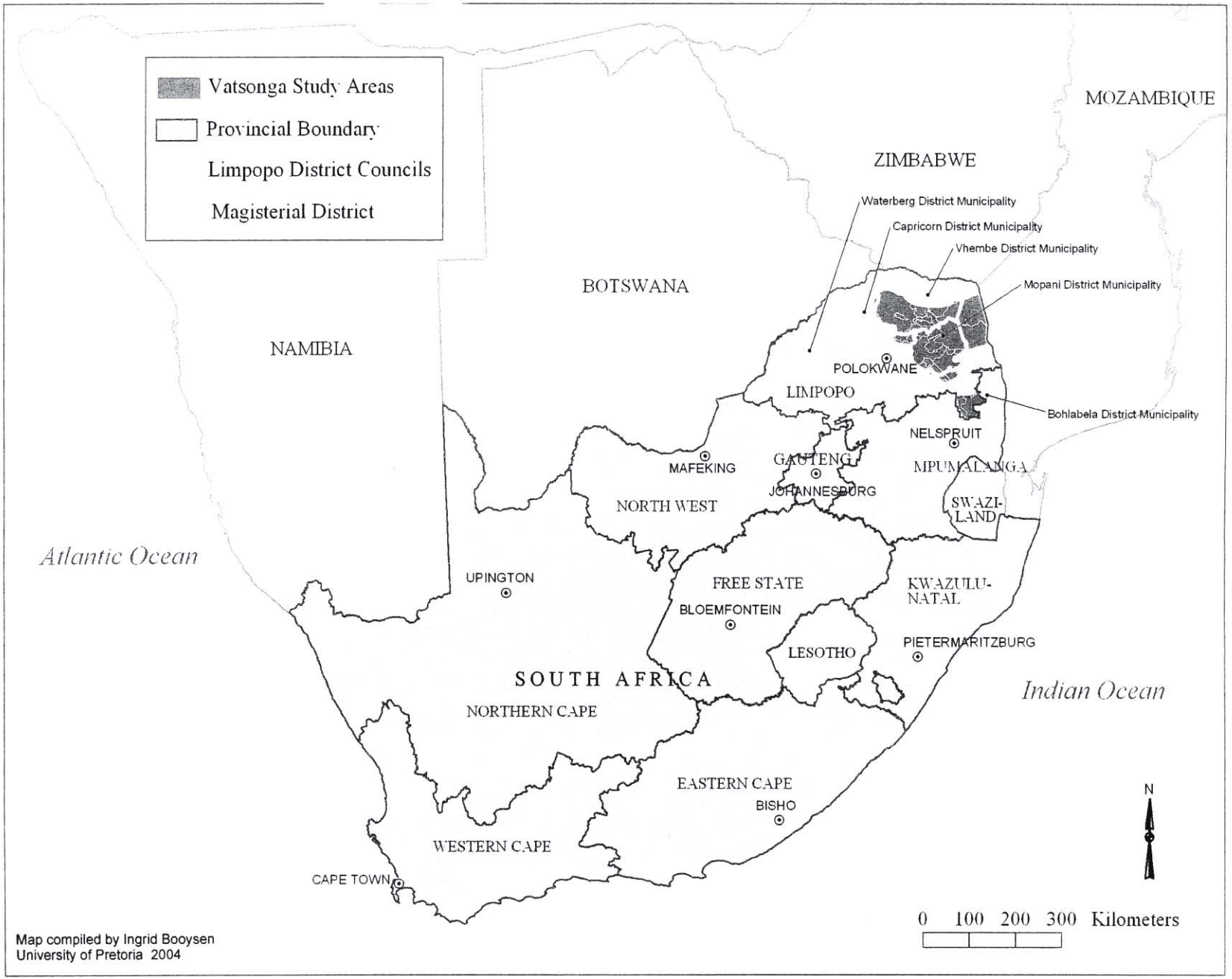

Fig 1.1: The Vatsonga Study Areas in the Limpopo Province, South Africa, 2004

APPENDIX C (ii)

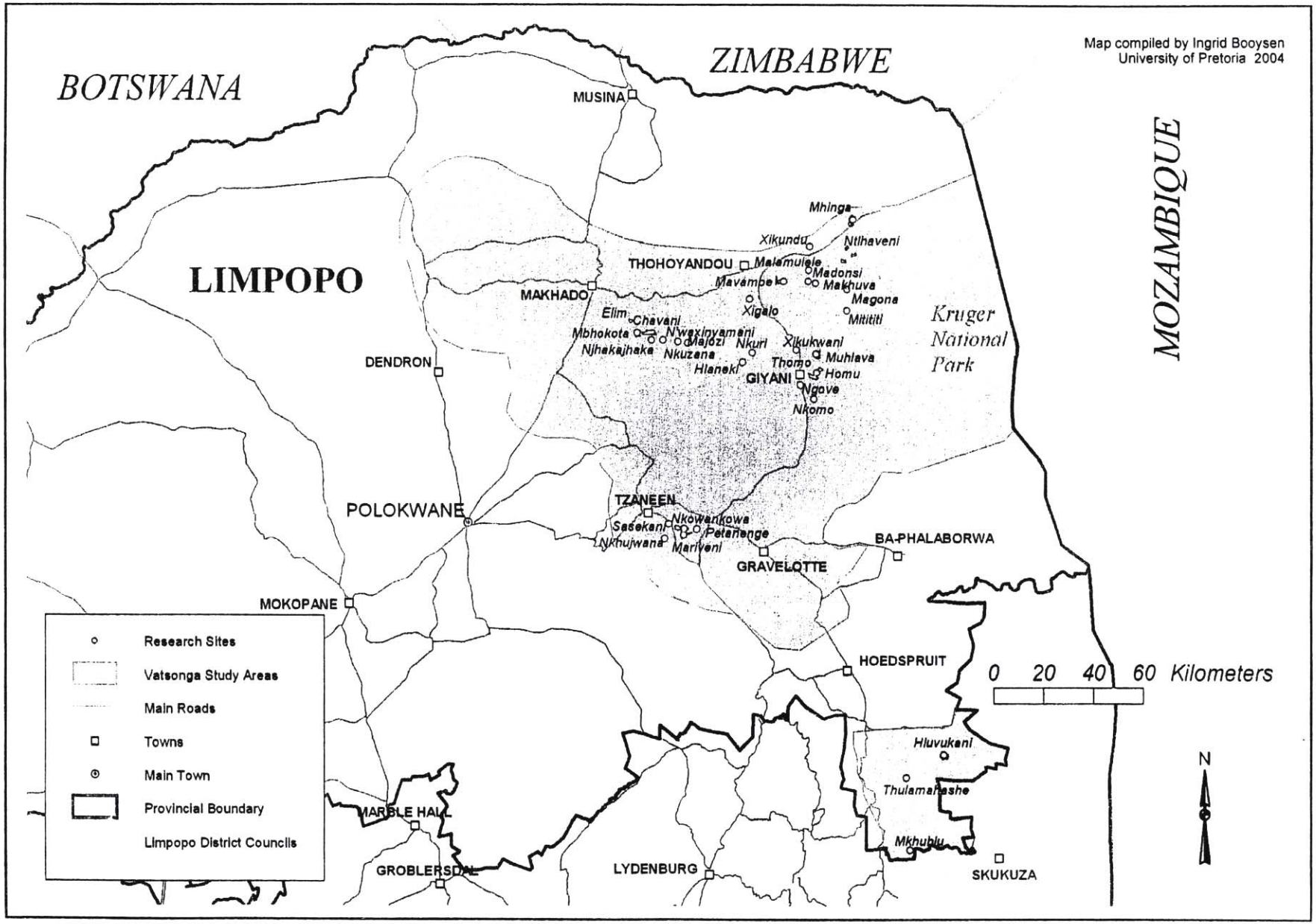

Fig 1.2: Vatsonga Research Sites in the Limpopo Province, South Africa, 2004