AN ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL NAMING IN THE MOLETJIE AREA OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE: AN ONOMASTIC APPROACH

By

KGABO LAWRANCE MPHELA

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

TRANSLATION STUDIES AND LINGUISTICS

in the

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR **:** **PROF R.N. MADADZHE**

2010

DECLARATION

I, **KGABO LAWRANCE MPHELA**, hereby declare that the dissertation, **AN ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL NAMING IN THE MOLETJIE AREA OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE: AN ONOMASTIC APPROACH** is my own work and that all materials that I have used have been duly acknowledged.

....

SIGNATURE   **DATE**

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to five people in my life, my father: Moshiga Wilson Mphela; my mother: Kwena Salminah Mphela; my younger brother: Ramaesela Mphela; my uncle: Kgoboko Samuel Mathobela and his wife Mavis Mathobela.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to analyse personal naming pertaining to the Bapedi of Moletjie, Limpopo Province. The study has indicated that personal naming is regarded as a very serious matter among the Bapedi of Moletjie; and is in most instances influenced by the context that prevails during the birth of children. Thus, names are given to children taking into account issues such as status, marital wealth, health, biological and social relationships, nature, and the environment.

The study concludes by indicating that naming is part and parcel of human existence and is thus going to be with us forever.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Naming is regarded as an important aspect in people's lives. Naming, among other things, includes the following: personal naming, place naming, town naming, and geographical naming. This study is, however, going to concentrate on personal naming.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Personal naming is a fascinating subject that varies much around the world and tells us much about a country or society. Everywhere names mean something, but often the meaning has been lost or obscured by time (Suzman, 1994:353). There is a great deal of difference from one culture to another on how names are given. Names are part of every culture and they are of enormous importance both to the people who receive names and to the societies that give them (Middleton, 1961:34). Some cultures have a need for people's names which have some form of religious significance. For example, in Israel as one of the Middle Eastern countries, as one would expect of a Jewish population, first names are frequently taken from the Old Testament of the Bible (Suzman, 1994:111). On other the hand, in Africa there are cultural trends towards, almost always, naming a person after a family member from previous generations (Mathamangwane and Gardner, 1998:74).

Naming plays an important role in any human society. It portrays the cultural values and traditions of a particular society. Generally, the approach used in naming varies from one society to another. In the ancient world, particularly in the ancient near-east (Israel, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Persia) names were thought to be extremely powerful, in some way, as a separate manifestation of a person or deity. This viewpoint is responsible both for

the reluctance to use the proper name of God in Hebrew writing speech, as well as the common understanding in ancient magic that magical ritual had to be carried out in someone's name.

The importance and origins of naming can be traced back to the old biblical story of creation:

> Now that Lord God had formed out the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air, He brought them to the man to see what he would name them and whatever the man called each living creature that was its name (Genesis 2:19).

In the Old Testament (Genesis 2:19), the names of individuals are meaningful. For example, Adam is named after the earth (Adam) from which he was created. The general trend in the world is that characters are given names at birth that reflect something of significance or describe the course of their lives. For example, Solomon meant peace, and the king with that name was the first whose reign was without warfare.

In East Asian cultures, parents follow a naming convention when selecting names for their children. Some have chosen alphabetical names by birth order. Also, in some East Asian cultures, it is common for one syllable in a two syllable given name to be a generation name which is the same for immediate siblings. In many cultures it is common for the son to be named after the father or a grandfather. In certain African cultures, such as in Cameroon, the eldest son gets the family name and one would thus end up with a name such as "*Thomas Thomas*". The same happens even in Sepedi, for example, "*Tladi Tladi*".

Among the Batswana of Botswana in Southern Africa, they also consider the circumstances prevailing at the time of naming the child. For example, if a child is born at the time when a

loved one has passed away, he or she will be named *Mogomotsi* (one who brings comfort during a sad time). In this case gender is not considered because of the circumstances at the time of the child's birth. It might happen that the name *Mogomotsi* will run through the family for many generations and can be given to both boys and girls (Mathamangwane and Gardner, 1998:56).

Naming in Sesotho is both a cultural and linguistic phenomenon (Mahome, 1972:106). The meaning attached to names by Basotho plays a significant role in the definition of 'personhood', because it is believed that a given name does not only serve as an identity, but also determines the type of person the individual will be. Setiloane (1975:48) notes that among the Basotho, children are regarded as a gift of *badimo* (ancestors). Failure to conceive, for instance, is attributed primarily to the disfavour of *badimo*. Thus a child who has been born a long period after the mother has been married is named *Mpho* (gift) or *Kelebogile* (I am grateful) for both boys and girls. It can happen that such a child is the one who should be named after his grandfather or her grandmother, and as such a child can thus carry two names (both his grandfather's or grandmother's name and the name of the circumstances of its birth).

In some African cultures gender plays a significant role when coming to personal naming. It is known even before birth that the child who is conceived will take a name of his or her grandparents (the grandfather is usually named first). When the child is supposed to be named after the grandfather and it happens that the child is a girl, then the granddaughter may, for instance, be named *Mmakgabo*. In this case the morpheme *mma* denotes femininity. But if the child is a boy then he will simply be named *Kgabo*.

Bapedi also have their own way of naming. Children may be named after the circumstances that happened before or that happened during childbirth. A child may be called *Mapule* (from *pula* which is rain) (usually for females) or *Modupi* (which means *soft rain*) (usually for males) as the child would have been born during this incident (Monnig, 1967:34). Children may also be named after famous people. A parent may name a child Nelson (after Nelson Mandela former South African president) even when there is no such a name in the family clan. People can also be named for their outstanding physical features. For example, a child can be named *Ratsebe* (for boys) or *Mmatsebe* (for girls) for his or her long ears. The morphemes *ra-* and *mma-* denote males and females respectively.

Bapedi of the Moletjie area of the Limpopo Province, differ remarkably from other cultures. When naming a person in Moletjie, the issue of gender does not seem to play a major role these days. Both sexes (male and female) may share the same name. For example, the name *Tlou* (an elephant), may be given to both male and female individuals.

There seems to be a fair amount of confusion amongst people about how names are given. In certain cultures there are names that are suitable for a particular gender, whereas in others gender does not play a major role in naming. For example, in the Bapedi of Ga-Mamabolo a name such as *Matome* is meant for a male and a name such as *Mokgadi* is meant for a female.

In Moletjie it is common for people to be named after wild animals such as *Kgabo* (monkey), *Tlou* (elephant), *Phuti* (springbok), *Kwena* (crocodile), *Nare* (buffalo), *Pitsi* (zebra), and *Tau* (lion). To an outsider, this may seem strange, but to Bapedi these names are of great significance as they are associated with   totems   of the different clans. They cannot just be

regarded as mere names referring to animals. The owner of such names carries them with great honour and pride.

Democracy in South Africa has also introduced some changes, especially among women. Today, some married women prefer to retain their maiden names, something which did not exist among African women in the past. Such women use double surnames because they do not want to lose their identity, for example, *Connie Masilo-Ferguson* (an actress) and *Zenani Mandela-Dlamini* (Mandela's daughter). Some female politicians and doctors also retain their maiden names. This tendency is also prevalent among some Sepedi speakers. For example, *Angy Mathole-Motshekga* (MEC for Education, Gauteng Province and Chairperson of the African National Congress Women's League).

In the light of the foregoing, it is evident that more research is needed as far as personal naming is concerned to unearth the rich traditions of African culture.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1   Aim

The aim of this study was to explore the personal naming in the Moletjie area of Limpopo Province. In order to achieve this aim, the study has attempted to answer the following research questions:

- What is the role of gender with regard to personal naming?
- What is the role of culture with regard to personal naming?
- What is the role of the community with regard to personal naming?

1.3.2   Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To compile criteria for personal naming in the Moletjie area.

- To investigate the nature of personal naming.

- To determine the impact of gender on personal naming.

1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

While extensive research has been done on naming in general, it is important to study personal naming in the Moletjie area of Limpopo Province as it will provide people with new information. This is important as personal naming is one of the crucial aspects in people's lives.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it will highlight naming practices and patterns in the Moletjie area. The study will benefit the linguists with information that they may have not been aware of with regard to personal naming. Moreover, this study will help the community of Moletjie to understand their traditions better and evidently to appreciate them. Lastly, the nation at large, as it is composed of different cultures, will gain knowledge about personal naming in this part of the world. In other words, the study will be valuable as reference material for scholars interested in this field.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Hoberg (1999), the research problem indicates how data will be gathered with regard to either a quantitative or qualitative research design. In the light of this, the research method that was utilised in this study is qualitative in nature. Among other things, "qualitative research is based on naturalistic enquiry where the researcher uses multimethod strategies to gather data. Data are collected by interacting with research participants in their natural settings" (Hoberg, 1999:76).

1.6.1 Collection of data

The researcher used the following methods of collecting data.

1.6.1.1 The primary method

Primary sources provide first-hand information. These have been collected by the researcher himself. With regard to this method, data were collected through consultation with the residents of Moletjie.

The tools that have been used in the primary sources are: questionnaires, interviews, observations, and experiments. In this study the researcher will use interviews. "Interviews are important because they are 'often the primary source of data during a qualitative research approach' (Hoberg, 1999:48). In other words, the researcher spoke to the participants and obtained direct information. Unstructured questions were posed to the respondents and these were generally derived from the following main ones:

- Who gave you the name?

- How did the name-giver arrive at the name?

- How do you feel about the name?

The sample population which was selected randomly was as follows:

- 20 elderly men.

- 20 elderly women.

- 10 young men.

- 10 young women.

- 4 male educators.

- 4 female educators.

- 5 language professionals.

1.6.1.2 The secondary method

Through this method, the researcher has consulted library books, articles from journals, dissertations, and the Internet. The purpose of using this method was to utilize relevant information already supplied by previous scholars.

1.7 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The research was conducted in the Moletjie area approximately 40 km outside Polokwane. Moletjie comprises of many villages, but the researcher was interested in the following villages: Ga-Phaudi, Ga-Phago, Marowe, Kanana, and Lehlohlong, as they are the most densely populated villages.

1.8 CONCLUSION

Naming is part and parcel of human existence and is thus going to be with us forever. It is for this reason that it should not be taken lightly as its impact on communities can either bring about reconciliation or hostility. Lastly, naming is an identity of all aspects of people's lives and it will be an identity for almost everything.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is about literature review based on the works of various scholars who have conducted studies in naming. Such scholars comprise the following:

2.1.1 De Klerk (1996)

According to De Klerk, naming is a specifically a linguistic act, intimately linked with hopes, fears, values and events in people's lives. Naming is concerned with the culture of people. She continues by outlining that the name-givers in both the Xhosa and English cultures can either be a father or a mother or both. But in the culture of Xhosa, the grandmother, grandfather and other family members can also give names. Personal naming practices offer important insights into the patterns of social and cultural organisation of communities and can be a key to broader cultural changes. A name can send a message, express a hope or prayer, perpetuate a cultural or religious tradition, or simply sound interesting or euphonious.

De Klerk also indicates that English speakers place heavy emphasis on nuclear family whereas extended family settings still play an important role among Xhosa speakers. The emphasis in Xhosa naming is on meaning which, is not the case in English naming. The Xhosa naming practice is similar to that of the Bapedi because among the Bapedi name givers can either be a father or mother or even some other family member. Xhosa naming is the same as that of Bapedi because focus is on meaning.

2.1.2 Chauke (1992)

Chauke mentions that 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. Names serve as symbols which will remain with people throughout their 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.

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, people must be familiar with names as valued memories or wealth, which will stay on as historical evidence of man's existence on earth.

The Bapedi, like other Africans, 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, and religious beliefs.

2.1.3 Lombard (1997)

Lombard states that it is interesting to recognize the origin of a name and the period when it becomes a definite family name. He also states that family names are created in various ways. They may be derived from a person's place of origin. For example, Van Deventer and Van Dyk are of one's occupation, Visser and Smith are from physical characteristics, Moody and Goedhart are from people's names.

A family name is common in Sepedi. Surname or family name is inherited from the father and grandfather. In other words, a name cannot be integrated as a surname or family name. Furthermore, a family name cannot be changed, but is rather carried from one generation to the next.

2.1.4 Kofi (2006)

Kofi outlines that the Akan of Ghana regard naming as an important aspect of the Akan society. He considers names as not being arbitrary labels but sociocultural tags that have sociocultural functions and meanings. The Akans attach much importance to names and naming practices. The Akan names give insight into Akan culture, environment, religion, and culture. In logical and philosophical sense, a name refers to a different element of human experience among the Akan. Names are therefore purely referential.

In addition, he also mentions that African and Ghanaian names are quite different from those of the West where people take their fathers' last names. While Western names are predictable, African names are commonly not predictable, for until the child is born and

under what circumstances it is born, the name cannot be determined with accuracy. In every culture, names have cultural and social contexts that identify the bearer.

2.1.5 Neethling (2007)

Neethling outlines that personal naming or names of people, known as anthroponymy, is often dictated by an existing tradition or convention of name-giving in any given culture or community. Once this tradition has taken root, most members belonging to that particular culture or community will tend to stay within the general parameters. Surnames or family names are, generally speaking, hereditary, and hence remain stable over long periods of time. This is probably true for most communities. First names, by contrast, are not as stable, and it is in this area that name-givers at times "deviate" or even "experiment" when it comes to the choice of a name. Hereditary aspects may play a role here too, such as patronymics, for example, where the father (or grandfather) of a child might be commemorated through naming.

In modern-day society, particularly in the West, some parents seem bent on choosing unusual or unique names. This is understandable: there is a direct link between name and identity, and choosing such a name is the first step in trying to establish a unique identity to distinguish the name-bearer from others.

Again, Neethling concentrates on naming patterns. According to him, naming can be influenced by personal consideration such as naming a place according to one personal circumstances or naming it after an existing street or farm. In addition, one may simply give a name due to the existing circumstances in a particular area or use a name from foreign origin. This practice demonstrates the tendency of using names which are Eurocentric and totally

foreign to South Africa. Neethling also reveals that there are names that are inspired by view or location as well as those which are inspired by literature.

2.1.6 Gornley (1996)

According to Gornley, New England first settlers bore names of three various types. These included those of English origin, and those that intended to have a moral significance. He says that old English names, connected with the Church of England, were not favoured by Puritans. Puritans named their children differently to that of other English speaking settlers who preferred Biblical names. He mentions that some parents shut their eyes, opened Bible and pointed to a word randomly.

He also says that other New England onomastic practices included obscure references and names that commemorated an occasion, such as the case of *Oceanus Hopkins* who was born on the Mayflower in 1620. Early settlers seemed to favour names for their associated moral qualities. Among girls names whose owners led godly lives are namely, *Patience, Silence* and *Comfort*. Again he outlines that in many families, the first names of the father and mother were given to the first born son and daughter.

In Sepedi, children are given second names when they are baptized in church. They prefer to use English names such as *Joseph* and *Moses* for boys and *Maria* and *Elizabeth* for girls.

2.1.7 Katakami (1997)

Katakami mentions that the Mbeere name the newborn after another person, and to reflect in the name its sex, its place in the birth order, the time of marriage negotiation and generation

sets, which are two chronologically alternating sets. Deaths and events during pregnancy also affect the basic naming principle. Successive neonatal deaths often cause parents to name the latest newborn after a thing of importance. Parents are obliged to name a baby after some memorable event that happened in their lives.

He goes on to say that according to the traditional naming custom of Mbeere, a baby is named by a midwife at birth who in most cases is an old woman in the homestead. However, more parents name their babies since the 1960s when maternity wards became familiar.

According to the Mbeere tradition, there are three basic Mbeere personal naming characteristics: Firstly, most people have Christian names in addition to given names. Christianity is the dominant religion among the Mbeere. But the given name is the main subject in this article because not all Mbeere have a Christian name. Secondly, Mbeere personal name, as seen elsewhere in Africa, is not usually accompanied by the family name. A man would add his father's given name to his name. But a woman usually bears the name of her husband if she is married and that of her father if she is not. This depends on where she lives. Thirdly, people have full legal names, which is a set of baptismal or given names, and a middle or tribal name with a surname or tribal names of the father. The basic principle of naming among the Mbeere is to name the newborn after another person. It is important to name a baby after its grandparent. Most names are given and used by those around the person, for example, the parents, relatives, friends, and neighbours. Names reflect a person's habit, character, and behaviour.

2.1.8 Saarelma-Maunumaa (1999)

Saarelma-Maunumaa reveals that the personal naming system of the Ovambos, in Namibia, is based on the idea of name sharing. He indicates that when a child is born, he or she is first given a temporary name, a birth name that usually indicates the time of the day the baby was born. For example, *Angula* (boy) and *Nangula* (girl)- (morning); *Usiku* (boy) and *Nuusiku* (girl)-(night), or events occurring at the time of birth, for example: *Unkongo* (boy) and *Nuukongo* (girl) (hunting).

He furthermore mentions that after a few weeks' time a child is then given a real, permanent name, which is used together with a patronymic name. It is always the father who chooses the name. Moreover, he remarks that the prevalent custom is to name a child after a close friend of the father and the name becomes public only after the father visits the child to greet him or her. If the parents die, the namesake is expected to take care of the child.

Sometimes name sharing is also applied in Sepedi. Different members of a family or clan can share the name of their ancestors. However, temporary names are not applicable in Sepedi, but rather real, permanent names are given when the child is born.

2.1.9 Mthobeli (2001)

Mthobeli's view on naming is that names are more than a word or words by which a person, animal, place or thing is known, and does fundamentally connote designation, reputation, or identification, separation of one individual from the other. Among the Basotho in Southern Africa names and the naming process is a socio-cultural interpretation of historical events. They embody individual or group social experiences, social norms and values, status roles and authority, as well as personality and individual attributes. Cultural meaning of personal names and their relationship is based on historical events.

According to this scholar names and the naming process in this society serve as socio-cultural clarification of the concepts of self, person, and individual. Cultural meaning of personal names, teknonyms and teknonymous names and the application of names in male and female initiation rituals are applicable among the Basotho.

It is common even among the Bapedi that a person is given a name based on historical events. For example, a person can be named *Pula* (rain), because during the time of birth there was a heavy rainfall.

2.1.10 Mahome (1972)

Mahome is of the view that naming in Sesotho is both a cultural and linguistic phenomenon. The meaning attached to names by the Basotho, plays a significant role in the definition of personhood, because it is believed that a given name does not only serve as identity, but also determines the type of person the individual will be. Names are believed to have influence on the character of the bearer.

He carries on to state that the system among the Basotho of naming children after their paternal or maternal relatives serves to keep alive the names of ancestors, and it brings grandparents and grandchildren closer to one another. Alternate generations of grandparents and grandchildren are linked together.

Ashton (1967:32) in Mahome (1972) has noted that among Basotho, names are not often chosen at random and usually recall a grandfather or other important relation. Sometimes they commemorate an important or unusual event or somebody. There is a proverb that refers to the influence of names on character: *Bitso lebe ke seromo* (a bad name is ominous). Thus the names given to individuals refer to historical events, experiences, emotions, status relations, clan and kinship relations, as well as authority.

2.1.11 Mashiri (1999)

Mashiri's perception in as far as naming is concerned is that terms of address in Shona derive from a multiplicity of sources, both modern and traditional. Proper names, nicknames, titles, pronouns and prefixes are commonly used. Shona names and other forms of address, their origins and context in which they are used create an awareness of the identity and the sociolinguistic history of the Shona.

This scholar stresses that names and other terms of address and shifts in them are important because a language has certain well-defined functions for the people who create and use it. Shifts over time in the naming and addressing patterns may provide a very powerful indicator of profound social shifts.

He emphasises that in Shona, not only pronouns but also other sets such as names or nouns and nominal morphemes are used. Peers, in particular age-groups among children, adolescents and adults in a joint pattern, use first names. Among peers in informal situations, first names are used in alternation with nicknames, names of endearment and pet names. When people become very good friends, the exclusive, mutual use of first name no longer seems enough to symbolise the friendship. They address each other using multiple names: sometimes using first name or last name, sometimes using totems or praise names or nicknames.

These multiple names are used in free variation. Friends of the younger generation may use the slang version of their first names to show solidarity. For example, *Farai* would be addressed as *Fatso* and *Peter* as *Pets*, among others (Mardhaugh, 1998:236).

In Shona society, the nonreciprocal use of first name is determined by age, social and occupational status, kinship and attitudes. Parents address their young children using their first names. Usage is often underpinned by naming conventions, thus a son or a daughter named after a grandparent could be addressed semijocularly as *baba* 'father' and *amai* 'mother' respectively by their own father (Fasold, 1990:10).

2.1.12 Eileen (1998)

Eileen reveals that among the Zulu there is no special ceremony when the child is named. The name may be given at any given time, though this is usually done when the child is a few weeks old. The father or grandfather will state before few people the name of the child. This is the *igamu*, true or great name, the name by which this child will always be called by his or her parents and people of the parent's generation, even after he or she has received a new puberty name or a regimental name. This author continues by saying that in Zulu society the mother may give the child a pet name. A man does not name his child without consulting the other members of the   kraal. Zulu names are nearly always of historical importance in the life of the kraal. They either refer to some event or recall to memory different ancestors.

2.1.13 Lupenga (1996)

Lupenga reveals that personal naming is an interesting opportunity to describe and account for the morphological and semantic processes involved in naming. He has examined the naming practice in Zulu. Lupenga further explains that there are many ways in which names in Zulu are constructed, depending on the semantic significance that the name-giver wants to convey. The process of naming is largely based on the deployment of a network of affixes that are harmonized by the relevant phonological rules.

In the morphological processes, the noun or verbal conjugation is the main source for deriving meaning, and this poses an interesting question of how meaning can be best implicated through the linguistic process. Context affects the interpretation of linguistic items such as names.

He goes on to state that most of the names in Zulu culture result from the process of verbal conjugation, where derivational affixes turn specific categories of morphemes into corresponding morphemes in another category. These affixes can be as small as a single vowel:

themb and *a*, result in *Themba* (trust)

According to Lupenga, names in Zulu society are also morphologically related to other grammatical categories. In the following example, the derivational process affixes (o) or (i) as a final vowel to verb stems:

Vusa (revise), *Vuso* (revival) and *hlaza* (embarrass)

The study indicates that the majority of names in Zulu, however, are derived from the process of verbalization by which a verbalizer suffix is attached to the verb stem to indicate the state of the action denoted. The three most popular suffixes used in Zulu community are the causative extension (**-***se*), the applicative extension (**-***le*), the simple passive suffix (*-we*), and passive suffix (*-ka*). There are two observations to be made about verbalizers, however.

First, each verbalizer behaves uniquely and second, some verbalizers are more frequent than others. Note also that although both (*-se*) and (*-ka*) are causative extensions and are used to name or define a quality in the individual bearing the name, there is a qualitative semantic distinction between them in the way they indicate capacity or potential for something.

2.1.14 Rwasi (2000)

Rwasi mentions that personal naming of Bono society in Ghana have been linked to social status, or may have cosmic or religious significance, or may assume gender dimensions. Personal names may be of little consequence in various contexts. Personal names support human interaction as a vehicle for communication. Naming thus, plays a role in social interaction, at the root of which is communication.

Beidelman (1974:19) in Rwasi says that the Kaguru of Tanzania indicated that the Bono share aspects of the social significance of personal names. According to Beidelman, among the Kaguru, the name which one uses for a person reflects not only the particular social tie which one wishes to exploit, but also one's degree of familiarity. This has theoretical implications for communication in terms of name use or non-use in a societal context.

Rwasi goes on to explain that a name seems to have signalled some kind of aversion which could have derived from past experiences. Among the Bono, lawmakers are much interested in the social consequences of names parents choose for their children. According to him personal names present an opportunity to determine meaning among the Bono.

Proper names of women usually have a man's name as the root plus a suffix which reflects **a**, *aa* or *wa*. Also known as *Koa* names (Ahinful, 1997:22), *akradin* are thought to have originated from the Akan belief.

The impression given so far is that the Bono have a simple naming system. However, such an assumption would not accurately represent the Bono name structure because, whereas a first name, which is almost recognised, may have one simple format, *din pa* are of different types. *Din pa* may be given, acquired or even bestowed from among several alternatives (Danquah, 1928:241).

2.1.15 Garwood (1976)

Garwood points out that the Edo naming system is dynamic with an ever changing format which has altered over time. Originally, the naming procedure was simple: a father would select a name for his child. Principles guiding the selection included the birth order by which a first child was given his paternal grandfather's name. The second child was given the paternal grandmother's name, the third went by the maternal grandfather's name. Today, many offsprings adopt their father's personal names, as opposed to the name which was selected by the father but hardly ever the father's own name.

She also mentions that a name, a nickname or an appellation may also transform into a legitimate and acceptable to user, family and community name. A name may further be acquired on the basis of extraordinary birth circumstances including unusual place of birth, weather or other conditions prevailing at the time of birth.

An obvious implication of personal names for communication is the notion of identification. A name proclaims the identity of a person. Personal names are inseparable from the issue of identity in human affairs. Through identity, personal names also become enmeshed in matters such as ideology, ethnicity, religion, sexual differences and social mythology. Edo personal names may actually be of historical value. Edo personal names further serve the purpose of establishing individuality (Mazrui, 1986:253).

Another indication of individuality as far as the Edo naming system is concerned is that wives do not adopt husbands' names. Edo, like other Akan, can be counted among most African societies in which a wife's adoption of her husband's name upon marriage is an alien custom (Mazrui, 1986:253).

According to Mazrui, birth order names constitute an example of Edo personal names with messages. They tell the order in which one was born on the mother's side. In unusual births such as twins, a distinctive birth order criterion is used. Similarly, in other abnormal situations such as *abawu* (successive deaths of children), children are given names which expose them to public ridicule, mockery and humiliation.

Names describe the circumstances of birth among the Edo society. These can be grouped into names that are associated with geographical place, unusual weather conditions or object names. Should one be born in a place other than the hometown, that individual could be assigned the name of the town of birth. Occasional names may be weather-related or not. A person born on a windy day was named *Mframa* (wind). Names also perform an important communication within the Edo society (Egblewogbe, 1985:10).

It is a similar system even among the Bapedi that a name given to a child reflects a particular event or unusual moment. That particular name given to a child will keep on reminding family members or members of the community about such unusual moment.

2.1.16 Cohen and Kliot (1992)

Cohen and Kliot have written about how place names are a reflection of an ideological struggle in the naming of places in the administered territories of Israel, namely the Golan heights, Gaza Strip and Western Bank captured in the war of 1967. There were two dominant groups, one wanted to name places in those territories after biblical names and thus re-inforce the Israeli community is bond with their land. The other group wanted to name and reflect the modern Zionist settlement values. The two ideologies therefore competed for domination in the administered territories.

The first category refers to place names with rural or abstract connotations that have been selected with the support of biblical verses. They state that these place names present problems of accuracy and site appropriateness and thus have no identification. Despite geographical uncertainty, some biblical names with no identified location were adopted and stood as symbols for the return to the land of Israel and the accuracy of location is hardly needed.

The importance of the work of these two scholars lies in the fact that they have established that ideologies can, in some instances, influence place naming.

2.1.17 Cabral (2008)

Cabral shows that naming processes carry with them implications concerning what a person is and how he or she is placed in the world. The different ways people are named have different implications for their social construction as persons. We often believe that in our contemporary age, our names are all constituted in the same way, but that is not the case and the implications behind the different naming traditions that today can be observed around the world are considerable.

According to Cabral, the Hindu personal name appears to function in much the same way as a Portuguese personal name, as an English personal name or as a Moroccan personal name. Not so long ago, personal names were so different that they would not have operated as names do today. The Iberian use of personal names, for example, is significantly different from the Anglo-French system. Names, therefore, differentiate but they also allow increasingly for the participation in modes of sociocultural engagement.

2.1.18 Dakubu (2000)

Dakubu mentions that personal names and naming practices of the Dagomba people are based on their traditional or historical distinctions. The naming of a child shortly after birth is regarded as a public announcement of the child's birthright as a member of a recognised group. Such a name is regarded as the primary name according to Dagomba people. Names are given at birth or under culturally specified circumstances.

Dakubu further writes that in the traditional ceremony of giving a child a name, the child's hair is shaved. The name may alternatively be the name of a holy being or place of worship *Buguli* (buyub). Names given through a soothsayer are regarded as the main primary Dagomba names. However, there are a number of names that deal with circumstances pertaining to birth. Such a name is the only one a child is given in such situations. The names must therefore be classed as primary names.

In addition, a child is given the facial scarification of the tribe the child is named for. The procedure apparently removes the child from the danger of being named for the wrong spirit.

There is also the practice of giving names to protect a child born after the mother has suffered several infant deaths. The Dagomba names are not intended to make the child appear ugly or otherwise undesirable to the spirit it incarnates. A child who is born on a special day, is then usually named for that day. *Chimsi* (cimsi) the lunar month and its feast day, and *Damba* (damba) a major festival, are common names of this kind.

Dakubu also outlines that a child may be named for the time of day at which it was born. The following names are based on the stem *Neen* (neen = brightening) and indicate that the child was born at dawn, which is considered an auspicious time for a birth, *Nendo* (nendd) or *Naniendo* (naaniendoo) (for boys), and *Nenpaga* (nenpaya) or *Niena* (niena) (for girls). Names used as day names in Dagomba context do not form a complete system, especially for males. These day names can be given as the sole names, and hence primary names. However, it seems that this is not the usual practice, and they are not regarded as central to the Dagomba system. It will be seen that they are quite different from the day names normally given as primary names.

Yet, another alternative is that the father may choose to give a name referring to events in the family. This practice is less common than it once was, according to informants. These names are usually proverbs, or based on proverbs. Some examples follow: *Tunteya* (tiinteeya), based on *tua* (a spreading gourd plant). This name is given to indicate that the family is expanding. *Zantale* (zantaale = take someone's fault). The name is given in reference to family quarrels, when people tend to bring up the faults of others (Awedoba, 1996:8).

He also stresses that male twins are given Thursday names. The eldest is *Al-Hassan* (alalsarii) or (alaasa) and the younger *Husayn*, (fufeni) or (fuseeni) depending on dialect, frequently shortened to *Sheini* (J&ii) or *Seini* (seem). This pairing of names is surely related to the fact that in Arabic, one is a diminutive form of the other. Female twins receive feminine versions of the same names, in the same order, *Al-Hassana* (asana) or (sana), and *Husayna* (fiilseena).

2.1.19 Edward (1996)

Edward remarks that names are a part of every culture and that they are of enormous importance both to the people who receive names and to the societies that give them. Despite their universality, there is a great deal of difference from one culture to another in how names are given. Among most preliterate peoples, names are determined according to very definite and specific rules. Generally, in cultures with a keen sense of ancestry, children get their names from the totems and family trees of their parents.

He also mentions that in some cultures, names are taken from events which happen during the pregnancy of the mother or shortly after the birth of the child, and in others, names are divined through magic and incantation. In some cases, the name given at birth is only the first of several names a person will bear throughout life. When this happens, the new names are given either to mark important milestones in life or to ward off evil spirits by tricking them into thinking that the person with the old name has disappeared. Regardless of when, why, or how often it happens, though, the giving and receiving of a name is an event of major importance.

The significance of names is emphasised by elaborate rituals that almost always have deep religious meaning. One rather dramatic example of this is the naming ceremony of the Khasi people in Africa. Among these people, children are named within a day of their birth. The ceremony of giving name begins when a relative of the child prepares a sacrifice by pouring rice meal into small dishes and filling a gourd with rice liquor. After an invocation, the relative pours the liquor into the rice meal while reciting a list of names. The name the child will have is the one the relative recites during the pouring of the drop of liquor that takes the longest to leave the bottle. Once the name is "discovered" in this way, they anoint the baby's feet with the meal-and-liquor paste, and the parents and relatives eat the paste (Charles, 1951:11).

According to Charles, name and identity is a kind of symbolic contract between the society and the individual. Seen from one side of the contract, by giving a name the society confirms the individual's existence and acknowledges its responsibilities toward that person. The name differentiates the child from others; thus, the society will be able to treat and deal with the child as someone with needs and feelings different from those of other people. Through the

name, the individual becomes part of the history of the society, and, because of the name, his or her deeds will exist separate from the deeds of others.

Charles also states that the names parents choose for their children reflect the relationship between name and identity that the symbolic contract seals. This is particularly true of the names of twins, for whom the establishment of a unique identity is often difficult. Parents tend to think of twins as a single person who happens to have two bodies, and they often choose names for them that reinforce the idea that the twins have a single, shared identity.

Charles concludes by saying that a sense of personal identity and uniqueness that a name gives is at the heart of why names interest us and why they are important to us as individuals and to society as a whole. In spite of their importance, though, most people know very little about names and about the effects they have on us and on children in everyday life. In a very real sense, people are consumers of names, with a need and right to know about the psychological, magical, legal, religious, and ethnic aspects of names.

2.1.20 Rachel (2001)

Rachel points out that personal names in any culture are a potential gold mine of information about social relationships, identity, history, and linguistic processes. In deaf communities around the world, members are commonly referred to by sign names given to them by other deaf people at various stages of life, which are different from the spoken language names given by parents at birth.

The study of sign name provides a window on the relationship between sign language, social interaction, and identity, in this case within the New Zealand deaf community. Because they are bestowed by other deaf peers through a period of close acquaintance, name signs both signal and construct a person's identity as a recognised member of a deaf community, which is often regarded by members as an extended family (Monaghan, 2001:463).

Rachel further states that the acquisition of a name sign may mark a person's entry to a signing community, and its use reinforces the bond of shared group history and alternative language use in relation to mainstream society. Thus, using name signs is a linguistically efficient means of personal reference and is culturally important for interactions in a signing

community because social networks tend to hinge on connections with other deaf people rather than one's family of origin (unless the family is also deaf).

Lastly, the form of name signs and the particular social values and practices associated with them vary considerably among different sign languages and deaf cultures around the world. The analysis of name signs contributes to a linguistic understanding of lexical creation and sources in a signed language.

2.1.21 Obeng (2001)

Obeng reveals that names in African cultures are pointers to their users' hopes, dreams and aspirations; they may reflect their users' geographical environments, their fears, their religious beliefs, and their philosophy of life and death. Children's names may even provide insights into important cultural or socio-political events at the time of their birth. The circumstances surrounding a child's birth may be considered when a name is being chosen.

The day of the week of the birth, the time of day (dawn, morning, dusk, afternoon, evening, night), the season of the year, the order of birth, the location a person is born, the specific circumstances relating to the child and to the child's family, the attitude of the parents as well as the gender of the child all play significant roles in the overall naming process and in the actual name given. If one's parents suffer or suffered from child mortality, one is likely to have a funny, survival or death prevention name believed to be capable of preventing and eliminating totally such deaths since it has the power of preventing parents in the underworld from causing the death of such children.

He furthermore mentions that names in African societies may even be important indicator of the bearers' behaviour and as pointers to the name-bearers' past, present, and future accomplishments. Personal names in sub-Saharan Africa are therefore not mere labels showing which person (particularly, which father) is responsible for a child's birth. There is also a close identity between the name and the name bearer such that the name links to the name-giver's overall experiences.

In addition, African names range from single words, phrases, and sentences, to units larger than the sentence. Ethnopragmatically, African personal names may involve indirectness and implicitness. They may consequently be indirect reactions to problematic situations in the

lives of the name-bearers, their parents or their communities at large. The greater the communicative difficulty involved in the circumstances surrounding the name-givers' world, the more indirectness involved. The indirection and ambiguity involved in African naming traditions may be due to the consequences of candor and hence the need to have an escape route should the name-givers be questioned by powerful elders or superiors.

2.1.22 Williams (2004)

Williams mentions that personal naming of children is a fascinating subject that varies so much around the world and communicates much about a country or society. Everywhere names mean something, but often the meaning has been lost or obscured by time. A personal name is known as onomastics. Naming tells us so much about history, geography, tradition and culture.

He states that in some cultures, the relationship between names and vocabulary words is transparent, that is, the names are just special uses of ordinary words. This is not the case for English names or for those in most Western European languages. English names are mostly difficult, that is, the meaning is not obvious and is to be found in languages other than modern English, often ancient languages no longer spoken (such as Latin or Ancient Greek).

Furthermore, he mentions that parents choosing an English name for their child rarely do so because of the meaning of the name, but for reasons of polyphony (they like the sound of the name) or personality as the name reminds them of a relative, close friend or person in the public domain. In spite of this opacity, virtually all English names do have definite meanings which reflect their origins.

Williams again reveals that the first source for names used in Britain and throughout the English speaking world is Bible names such as Adam, Benjamin, David, Jacob, Joseph and female names from the same source such as Deborah, Eve, Rebecca, Ruth, and Sarah. In fact, Sarah has given rise to other names such as Sadie and Sally, both started as pet forms of Sarah and then became names in their own right. The New Testament gave the names of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the apostles, principally Peter, James, Andrew, Thomas, Philip, Bartholomew, John and Simon.

Another source of English names is the Celtic tradition. Barry, Brian, Bridget, Donald, Duncan, Ian, Kenneth, Kevin, Neil and Sheila come from Irish and Scottish Gaelic, while Gareth, Gladys, Gwendolen and Trevor come from Welsh, all these being Anglicisations of the original Celtic names. Other English names were brought to the country through invasion. Scandinavian exports include Eric, Arnold, and Ronald. The Normans of north-west France brought many names to England as a result of the invasion of 1066.

This invasion was the route for many pre-Christian Germanic (usually male) names to reach England such as Charles, Henry, Robert, and William. For example, first name Roger was brought to England by the Normans, it comes from two Germanic words meaning fame. The name Richard was brought to England by the Normans and comes from two Germanic words meaning power and strong. Incidentally, such Germanic names are known as dithematic, that is, they consist of two vocabulary elements. English female names with this Germanic origin are much fewer in number, but include Alice and Emma.

According to Williams, some names have been adopted from family names, for instance the name Digby. This is sometimes used (mainly by middle-class families) as a first name but started as a surname. It refers to Digby in Lincolnshire and comes from Old Norse words *diki* (meaning ditch) and *byr* (meaning settlement).

2.2 CONCLUSION

From what the above mentioned scholars stated, it shows that naming is indeed an important aspect of life. This is why everywhere in the world each object or a living thing goes with an identity which is mainly expressed through naming. The works of these various scholars have also indicated that names are not just identification tools but also bear meaning.

CHAPTER THREE

OVERVIEW OF NAME-GIVING

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher focuses on the overview of name-giving and their meaning in the Moletjie area of Limpopo. Each society has its own way of giving names. People from different cultures use different patterns or approaches in naming their children. This is why Mbiti (1990:115) points out that the naming of children is an important time that is frequently marked by ceremonies in many societies.

In this chapter, different aspects of name-giving will be dealt with, those aspects are as follows:

- names given at birth
- family names
- character names
- praise names
- nicknames
- names given when getting married
- names based on beliefs
- names given at the initiation school
- names given when starting school
- names given during baptism

3.2   NAMES GIVEN AT BIRTH

Birth names are the names children receive immediately after birth. Names are not just given randomly. Grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members are the ones accountable for the giving of names. Mbiti (1990:107) states that the birth of a child is the concern not only of the parents, but of many relatives, including the living and the deceased. In Moletjie, most children are given names at birth. In this way people will be able to identify who the person is and where he or she comes from. Mbiti (1990:108) further indicates that, nature

brings the child into the world but the society creates the child into a social being, for it is the family that must protect the child, feed him or her, bring him or her up, educate the child and in many ways incorporate the child into the wider community.

During birth time many things do happen, things such as death of one family member, or a family member being involved in an accident, etc. A name given looking at such incidents is important in that family members and members of the community at large will not forget what was happening. It will serve as a reminder for many people and that particular name will not die or get forgotten easily.

The Bapedi of Moletjie give a name to a child immediately after birth. Their belief is that the name will protect the child as he or she grows up in the community. Matsimela (1997:31) notes that 'ngwana o phela go ya ka leina leo a reilwego lona', meaning that a child lives according to the name given to him or her. Charles and Linwood (1973:10) mention that a name is more than a label. Examples of such names are as follows:

Mpho (Gift)
The child is given the name because the child is regarded as a gift.

Mahlatse (Blessings)
The child is given this name to show that his or her birth has brought good things in the family. For example, unity or joy among family members.

Tebogo (Thanksgiving)
The name is given to a child in order to thank God for bringing the child in the world.

Thabo (Joy)
The child is given the name because he or she brought joy in the family. The reason may be that in the past joy did not exist among members of the family.

Tenego (Disgusting)
The child is named *Tenego* due to a certain incident that perhaps happened during the birth of the child, for example, a family member being involved in a car accident and everyone being preoccupied with the situation.

Sabatha (Sabbath)

The child is given this name because he or she was born on the *Sabbath*. Of course this is apt to those families that follow Christianity as their religion.

Tshepho (Trust)

The name is given to a child as a sign of trust in God. The family in this case believes that whatever happens is due to the will of God. It is therefore prudent for everyone to put his or her trust in God.

Tshegofatjo (Blessing)

The child is named *Tshegofatjo* because he or she brought blessings in the family.

The abovementioned names are the ones which the bearers will live with until they become old.

Giving a name to a child during birth is to prevent other people from being confused with others and naming a child during birth becomes an important matter because during birth something good or bad might happen. A name derived from good or bad experiences will help family members and the community at large to remember what happened during the time of birth, for example:

Female names

Madimabemang (What kind of a misfortune)

In this case, the child might have been born when there was a death in the family.

Dikeledi (Tears)

The name might be given to a child who was born when one of family members passed away.

Moleko (A witch)

A child can be given the name *Moleko* if he or she was born after difficult conditions whereby the mother was very sick during pregnancy and people believed that she was bewitched.

Mathata (Problems)

The mother might have experienced serious problems during pregnancy, such as being involved in a car accident while pregnant. In order to show the difficulties that she has experienced, the mother might bestow such a name to her child.

Ganne (Refuse)

The father denied pregnancy for various reasons.

Male names

Dimakatjo (Surprise)

The family might have been through some surprises, such as winning the lottery or someone in the family achieving a notable thing.

Mehlolo (Miracles)

The family might have experienced a blessing.

Kgolego (Prison)

The mother or father might have been placed under arrest when the child was born.

All these examples confirm that names of most Africans have a specific meaning, usually related to something that happened, either when the mother was pregnant or during the birth of the child.

In Moletjie names given during birth time play an important role to family members as well as to members of the community. For that reason the family will be showing respect to the child and the ancestors will thank God for giving them a new born baby. For example:

Female names

Mpho (Gift)

The parents hope that the child will be a gift to everyone.

Phetolo (Reply)

The parents give thanks to God for giving them a child.

Botse (Goodness)

This name is given to a child whose mother was very sick while pregnant but survived through God's goodness.

Lerato (Love)

The child brings love to the parents.

Nyakalala (Rejoice)

The parents are joyful to have a daughter.

Male names

Hlatse (Witness)

The parents waited for a long time to have a child, and at last God has heard their prayers. The child is their witness, a testimony, in other words.

Gauta (Gold)

The child is everything to the parents. He or she is valuable.

Kgaugelo (Gracious)

The mother was seriously ill during pregnancy, but now has a son through God's grace.

Lehlogonolo (Blessing)

The child is a blessing to the family.

Lehumo (Treasure)

The child will be his father's successor.

The abovementioned names show that a name can be given guided by the circumstances prevailing during birth, or the circumstances prevailing when the mother was still pregnant. The name will serve as a reminder of those particular circumstances.

The practice of giving names is constantly changing due to the changes naming in modern times occurring in our societies and country. The same happens even among the Bapedi of Moletjie. Naming practice is no longer the same as it used to be. Nowadays children may be named after famous people or celebrities. The following are examples:

Male names

Mandela (Because they want the child to become a good leader like *Mandela*)

Mandoza (The child is named *Mandoza* because they want the child to sing like *Mandoza* does)

Doctor (*16 v*) (The name is given to the child in hope that he becomes a good soccer player as Doctor, who used to be a good soccer player.

Mzambia (The child is named after *Mzambia* because he must be active and gifted like *Mzambia* who is a singer.

Female names

Brenda (The child is given the name *Brenda* so that she can become a good singer like *Brenda*).

Mshoza (The name is given to the child in order to be involved in the music industry).

Madikizela (The child is named *Madikizela* so that she can become a brave leader like *Madikizela* Mandela, ex-wife of Nelson Mandela).

This shows that the naming of children has acquired a new dimension. As times change, traditions also respond to these changes.

3.3 FAMILY NAMES

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991:181), family refers to parents and their children, a person's children, set of relatives, group of related plants or animals, or of things that are alike. Family names are names that are suitable for a particular family. Family names were initially a genealogical history of the family where one generation was connected to another (Duckling, 1983:41). Among the Bapedi of Moletjie, there are family names; those names are family names that are likely found in the following families in Moletjie. The discussion that follows concentrates on family names that are mostly found among the following families:

Mphela's family
Mathobela's family
Papola's family

Mphela's family

Male names

Kgabo (Monkey)
The child is given the name *Kgabo* because he or she is as clever and faster as a monkey.

Kgomo (Cow)
In the old times a family which had many cows, was regarded as rich. A child born in such a family could be given the name *Kgomo*.

Tshipu (Spring-hare)
Tshipu is a small but tall animal. A tall child is very likely to be named after this animal.

Female names

Mmajwala (Mother of beer)
The child is given the name *Mmajwala* because the child's mother drank a lot of alcohol when she was carrying a baby.

35

Nare (Buffalo)

The name *Nare* is given to a child born with big nose and quite black.

Tokisho (Preparation)

During the birth of a child the family was preparing something.

Mathobela' family

Male names

Tumelo (Faith)

Tumelo is given to a child whose family had faith that one day God would give them a child or something valuable.

Sefako (Hail)

At the time the mother was pregnant a lot of hail fell.

Seithati (Egoist)

If in the family there is one member who loves himself or herself rather a lot ,the child would be named *Seithati.*

Female names

Motshabi (Runaway)

If it so happens that the father to the child has run away whiles his wife is pregnant, the likely hood is that the child would be named *Motshabi*.

Mokgadi (Assistant leader)

The child is named *Mokgadi* because her mother was elected leader of women in church while pregnant.

Papola's family

Male names

Matete (Wonders)

When the child was born, there was lot of joy in the family.

Matima (One who is selfish or does not like to give things to others)

The child would be named *Matima* because his father or mother is rather economical with things.

Lerole (Dust)

When the mother was giving birth or during her pregnancy there was a lot of dust.

Female names

Monni (One who sits)

Whilst the mother was giving birth, her husband was sitting with her.

Morongwa (Angel)

The mother was not aware that she was pregnant until a stranger told her so. When the child is born, the name *Morongwa* would be given to her.

Tsebang (You must know)

The family was struggling to get a child. *Tsebang* informs the people that the family, finally, has a child.

3.4 CHARACTER NAMES

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991:78), character is quality making a person. Character names are given taking into account the character the person displays.

The following character names are applicable amongst the Bapedi of Moletjie:

Ditshego (Eversmiling)
The person is given the name *Ditshego* because of his or her constant lovely smile.

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

Malobishe (Disloyal)
The name *Molobishe* is given to a person to show lack of loyalty.

Mponeng (Show-off)
The individual is given the name *Mponeng* because he or she shows off.

Kgwara (Armadillo)
The name *Kgwara* is given to a person who likes doing bad things.

Kgwele (Hockey)
The person is named *Kgwele* because he or she likes playing hockey.

Khupa (Secret)
The name *Khupa* is given to a person who is too secretive.

Kokopa (Giving a small bit (of food))
The person is named *Kokopa* because he or she gives out rather too little to other people.

Koreka (Correct)

The name *Koreka* is given to a person because he or she likes judging weather others are doing bad or good things.

Kuane (Hat)

The person is named *Kuane* because he or she loves wearing hats.

Koma (Eat something soft)

The name *Koma* is given to a person because he or she likes eating soft things such as powder milk or soft porridge.

Lamola (Rescue)

The person is named *Lamola* because he or she likes rescuing others during difficult times.

Mathata (problems)

The name *Mathata* is given to a person who is troublesome. The person is in many instances involved in verbal or physical quarrels.

3.5 PRAISE NAMES

Praise names are names given to children in the family in order to praise them. Praise names refer to names that are full of respect and dignity. These names are given to the child immediately after birth. In addition, the meaning behind praise names is to show respect to the person whom the child is named after. Sometimes the person whom the child is being named was a hero or the person fought for something important. So, a praise name is given to a baby in order to show respect to the ancestors. Praise names are divided into two categories, namely, those for males and those for females. The following discussion deals with the examples of praise names that exist among the Bapedi of Moletjie:

Male praise names:

Phogole

The name shows the child is a hero or will be a hero.

Hlabirwa

The name *Hlabirwa* shows the child is wise.

Ngwato

The name *Ngwato* is frequently given to boys during birth. It is a sign that shows peace among the people.

Mogale

Mogale is a male praise name that shows that the person was a brave man.

Rasewete

The name implies that the child will grow fast.

Female praise names:

Mologadi

The name *Mologadi* shows that the child is wise or will be wise.

Mahlako

The name shows that the child will be respected.

Modirwadi

Modirwadi indicates that the child will be brave.

Moedi

The name shows that the child will like to fetch water from the valley.

Nkwe

The name shows that the child is brave or will be brave.

3.6   NICKNAMES

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991:344) defines a nickname as a name given humorously to a person or thing. One may also say that a nickname is a name that is added to or derived from the real name. Nicknames are names which are given to person due to things that he or she does. Nziyane (2004:41) points out that a nickname is an extra name to the real name of a person.

An individual can be given an informal name at anytime. Nicknames can be given to children at home by parents, relatives or even by friends during play time at school or in the community in which he or she lives.

Nicknames are based on the following categories:

3.6.1 Nicknames based on physical characteristics

Lenawana (Small leg)
This name is given to someone who has one cripple leg.

Kgopana (Very small)
The name *Kgopana* is given to a very short individual.

Tshehlana (Whitey)
Someone who is light in skin would be given the name *Tshehlana*.

Raihlwana (One eye)
The person is given this name because he has one eye.

Monyama (Black)
This name is given to someone who is very black in colour.

3.6.2 Nicknames based on behaviour of a person

Lenala (Thief)

Someone is given the name *Lenala* because of his behaviour of stealing. Lenala is used here in its figurative sense as its denotative meaning refers to a finger.

Radijo (Eating very much)

An individual is nicknamed *Radijo* because of his behaviour of liking food.

Sekgwari (Neat person)

The person is given this name because of his or her behaviour of being neat all the time.

Mathinyane (Not attending school regularly)

The person is given this name because of the behaviour of not attending school on a regular basis.

Maratahelele (Person who likes rumours)

This nickname is given to a person who likes gossiping about other people.

3.7 NAMES GIVEN WHEN GETTING MARRIED

Marital names are names given to a woman upon getting married. When a woman gets married, she is given a new name suitable for her new status. Among the Bapedi of Moletjie, the bride is officially given a new name by her sister-in-law (*kgadi*) during the wedding ceremony. The new name or wedding name is meant to welcome the woman officially as part of her new family. Such names start with the prefix *mma*, which literally means 'mother'. The prefix *mma* is added to an ordinary name. What follows are a few examples in this regard:

MmaKgabo (mother of Kgabo)

 MmaNoko (mother of Noko)

MmaMadimetja (mother of Madimetja)

MmaTshwene (mother of Tshwene)

MmaKwena (mother of Kwena)

MmaPitsi (mother of Pitsi)

MmaPhuti (mother of Phuti)

MmaKgwale (mother of Kgwale)

MmaMoraka (mother of Moraka)

MmaMatome (mother of Matome)

MmaNgwako (mother of Ngwako)

MmaSello (mother of Sello)

MmaNare (mother of Nare)

MmaPelo (mother of Pelo)

About marriage, Mbiti (1990:113) asserts that:

> Marriage is not fully recognised until the wife has given birth. First pregnancy becomes the final seal of marriage, the sign of complete intergration of woman into her husband's family and kinship circle. Unhappy is the woman who fails to get children for what other qualities she might possess, the failure to get children is worse than committing genocide. She has become the dead of human life, not only for the genealogical line but also for herself. When a woman dies, there will be nobody for her own immediate blood to remember her, she will simply be forgotten.

3.8 NAMES BASED ON BELIEFS

These are names that are based on the beliefs of people. Belief is to have the feeling that something is real and true (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary,* 1991:41). There are names that people believe that if one names the child, the child will live. People of Moletjie belief that the ancestors will protect the child for a long time. In most cases, belief comes from the names of wild animals. The following are examples:

Nakedi (Wild mongoose)

The child is named *Nakedi* (wild mongoose) for a reason that parents had taken a long time to get children. They believe that if they name him or her *Nakedi* then the child possibly will not die. The lives of Africans centre on belief system (Malegapuru, 1999:16).

Kgabo (Monkey)

Children are given this name by their parents not because they do not care for their children. Matsepe (1982:19) explains that animal names are also names of people for some reasons. Another belief is that when a child cries several times particularly at some stage in the night, some animal names will be called to get him or her stop crying. The name that will make the child stop crying will be given to the child.

3.9 NAMES GIVEN AT THE INITIATION SCHOOL

Initiation school name (leina la koma) is a name given to a child when he or she returns from the initiation school. Boys and girls of Moletjie adopt new names in the initiation school. They claim that *koma* is part of their culture and that children who have undergone initiation are born into a new stage of life. They are given new status and they are treated differently from those who are not initiated (*mašoboro* or *mathumaša*). In Moletjie, the belief is that children get *bonna* (manhood) and *bosadi* (womanhood) in the initiation school.

Boys are given family responsibility. They are taught how to behave as matured men, ready to be of use to the community. They are also taught tactics and techniques of defending

themselves as individuals and ways of defending the community. Girls, on the other hand, are taught about the joys of womanhood and how they should behave as responsible women. Different kinds of skills are also passed onto them as well.

In the Xhosa custom a boy becomes a man only after he is circumcised (Mandela, 1996:5). Nida (1954:165) shares a similar opinion when he highlights that "a very important part of many of these ceremonies is circumcision of the foreskin for boys". The same happens among the Bapedi who claim that *koma* is part of their culture.

Bock (1974:79) mentions that during the stage of transition, the initiate must learn the behaviour appropriate to his new status that he has mastered the necessary knowledge and skills. He adds by saying that this practice has many resemblances to basic teaching in the military. When an initiate successfully completes the initiation, he returns to the people as a new person and true man.

Below are some of the initiation names among the Bapedi of Moletjie area:

Male names

Modisha (Shepherd)
The name signifies that a person is excellent in looking after people.

Maripane (Good cutter)
The name signifies that the person is good at cutting foreskin of the penis.

Female names

Mmapitsha (Pot)
The name indicates that the person is skilled in cooking.

Seshomi (Worker)
The name indicates that the person is a hard worker.

3.10 NAMES GIVEN WHEN STARTING SCHOOL

Children used to be given English names when they went to school for the first time. The reason was that many teachers, who were of European stock, could not pronounce African names. Also, because of social discrimination, white teachers thought it was more appropriate to give children European names. It was part of cultural assimilation. And in most cases this was a requirement for admission. In his book, Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first African president writes:

> I not only got a new pair of trousers on my first day at school. I got a
> new name too. In those days, Black children were given White names
> at school because it was more civilized. My teacher called me Nelson.
> (Mandela, 1996:3)

The following English or European names are the ones which were likely to be given to children by parents. These names would of course be used in official situations:

Female names

Lynnete

Sinah

Grace

Lydia

Florence

Male names

Erick

Willies

Andries

Ralph

Norman

After being given an English name, a child would end up with two names, naturally, an African name and an English name. These two names would be used at the same time. For example, one would be called *Moshe* at home and at work or school one would be called, for instance, *Moses*. In addition, whites generally gave Black people English names or influenced them to give themselves English names. The reason as pointed out earlier, was their inability to pronounce African names (Du Preez, 1997:65)   .

3.11 NAMES GIVEN DURING BAPTISM

Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary (1991:34) defines baptism as a religious rite of sprinkling with water as a sign of purification and admission to the Church. Missionaries came to South Africa and introduced Christianity. There main aim was to convert black people into Christianity.

Most Africans changed their African names to European names during the colonial era. The reason was that Europeans made most Africans to believe that African names were related to evil. As a sign of true conversion and after baptism, an African would be given a Christian name.

Names are chosen for specific reasons. Dunkling (1983:57) outlines that "many people believe that everyone who bears a particular name will grow up to have the same characteristics". For example, Solomon means peace. The child bearing the name Solomon is expected to be a peace-maker. Christian names are likely to be given to children by priests, and examples are as follows:

Male names

Gabriel

Michael

Paul

Abel

Matthew

Abraham

Samuel

Daniel

Joseph

Female names

Elizabeth

Rebecca

Hannah

Mary

Sarah

Priscilla

3.12 CONCLUSION

Several types of naming practice have been discussed in this chapter. The chapter has shown that among the Bapedi of Moletjie, it is a common practice for a child to receive a name immediately after birth. African names are given by parents or grandparents or even by uncles and aunts. African names play an important role as they are used to depict gender, status, religion, character and wishes. Names were also given to children when they started school. These were European names and teachers were unable to pronounce African names. Children, and also adults, were given a new name when they became Christians.

CHAPTER FOUR

NAMING CEREMONIES AND THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with ceremonies that are undertaken when naming takes place among Bapedi of Moletjie.

4.2 BIRTH CEREMONY

During a birth ceremony, old people gather to give the child a name. A ritual that is performed in that ceremony is called name-giving. A birth ceremony is regarded as important in many African societies, because the society will be welcoming a new addition to the clan. Soon after birth not all people are allowed to enter the room to see the child. It is common practice among the Bapedi of Moletjie to slaughter a goat during this ceremony. The main reason for this is to communicate with the ancestors, to inform them of the birth of a child in the family.

During the ceremony, the child is washed with cold water which contains certain healing and purifying herbs. This is performed immediately after birth as a sign of welcoming the newly born child. In this ceremony they plead to their ancestors to protect them and also to bless them. Mönnig (1988:99) states that all men and impure women; the pregnant, sexually active and menstruating women are not allowed to enter as they endanger themselves, the mother and the baby.

4.3 THE ISSUE OF NAMING INVOLVES DIFFERENT PEOPLE

Van Gennep (1960:60) states that in Gabon, "at the birth of the child, a public crier announces the birth and claims for the child name and place among the living. Someone else, in a distant part of the village, acknowledges the fact and promises on the part of the people that the newborn infant shall be received into the community, and has all the rights and immunities pertaining to the rest of the people. People then assemble in the street and the

newborn infant is brought out and exhibited to public view. A basin of water is then provided and the headman of the village or family, sprinkles water upon it, giving it a name".

Mönnig (1988:103) points out that "the child will receive its babyhood name. The name is usually chosen by the mother but will finally have to be decided on by the family of the father and particularly by his elder sister". He further outlines that "the ceremony called giving names (*reela maina*), is a group ceremony, wherein all the children of the appropriate age of a particular lineage group (*kgoro*), communally and publicly receive new names with which they are introduced into the status of members of the corporate patrilineal group".

Among the Bapedi of Moletjie, a child receives its first babyhood name after birth. The child is either named by the parents or grandparents. Traditionally, the mother and child undergo a seclusion period for three months. They remain in the house for three months. After the seclusion period, a ceremony is then held during which the child is taken out of the house. The mother-in-law then announces or uses the infant's name during the seclusion period. Nowadays, parents are the main name-givers, but this depends on the family and culture of parents. In some families, names are given by grandparents or relatives. The ancestor's name plays an important role in the family. Through the child the ancestor's legacy will be remembered and preserved. This is part of cultural continuity and valorisation. Traditionally, grandparents play an important role in the Bapedi society. In most cases they give ancestors' names.

4.3.1 The child's special meal ceremony

In this ceremony, a child's first meal is mixed with *muti*, (medicine to prevent constipation). The parents of the child visit a herbalist who gives them the relevant medicine or *muti*. The mother will cook *motepa* (soft porridge), and mix it with the *muti* and give it to the child. The mother will also eat the same meal with the child. The belief is that *muti* will help the mother and child to grow and bond well because the child sucks the milk from the mother. This process is also common among the Akan people (Mbiti, 1990:115).

4.3.2 Tattoo making

The *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991:542) defines a tattoo as a mark on the skin by puncturing it and inserting interesting pigments. Tattoo making is the last ceremony from their newly born. The Bapedi of Moletjie believe in protecting the child against illness that can disturb the life of the child. A traditional healer is called in the family to vaccinate the child against illnesses that are supposedly caused by witches (Mönnig, 1967:122). The parents will take the child to a *ngaka* (traditional healer), who will make incisions on the child's skin and rubbing *muti* on it. At that moment, the parents will be having *kgogo ye tshweu* (white chicken). The traditional healer, whom the family believes can see into the future, will slaughter the chicken and use the blood to inform the ancestors to protect the child against illness. Parents will be given some orders that the child should not bathe for the period of three days.

4.4 INITIATION CEREMONY

Webster's New Encyclopaedic Dictionary (1993:83) defines initiation as the process of being initiated or the ceremonies by which a person is made a member of society. Initiation at the same time marks the passage to adulthood and invests the initiate with the citizenship of the community.

An initiation school can also be described as a circumcision school wherein the initiates undergo certain instruction. This is a transitional period whereby an initiate's status changes from childhood to manhood or womanhood. Initiation schools take different forms among different cultures. According to Nida (1984:165), initiation schools take many forms, some are only informal classes conducted in the village, and others are in secluded areas in the forest. For some, these are only brief ceremonies, but for others these are months of gruelling toil, physical hardships and torturing tests. Initiation schools instruct the young in the traditions of the tribe, teach the skills of hunting, fishing, and warring, inculcating the beliefs about religion, sex and responsibility to elders. A very important part of many of these ceremonies is the circumcision of the foreskin for boys.

Generally, the Bapedi of Moletjie have initiation ceremonies that comprise two stages: a circumcision school called *bodika* (initiation school) and *bogwera* (initiation school ceremony for boys) which is no longer practised among the Bapedi of Moletjie. The boys are circumcised according to rank in *koma ya bodika* (initiation school). Mönnig (1967:67) says that *koma* (initiation school) is arranged by the chief and his councillors including the traditional healers who oversee the school in a spiritual manner. The traditional healer is responsible for the healing and protection of the initiates.

Initiation presents another form of cleansing to both men and women. The initiation school in Moletjie is done far from the villages, sometimes in the mountains or at the confluence of two rivers. The one to be initiated first is the son of the chief. With regard to this practice, (Mönnig, 1967:14) confirms that it "is a normal practice that the young chief should always be the first in a line of boys to be circumcised, which is a sign that he is a future leader".

The initiates receive names before the end of the *bodika*. After the naming process is finalised, the chief and the traditional healer will then announce the date when the *bodika* will come to an end. On the final morning, the initiates wash off their white colouring in which they were decorated during the whole process. The importance of the white colouring or ash is to keep the initiates warm during the night. Few days before the initiation is over, all the fathers of the initiates are invited to the initiation school to prepare their boys. Chedester (1992:21) says that each father cuts his son's hair and gives him a loincloth in recognition of his newly acquired status of manhood.

Boys' bodies are covered with the mixture of *letsoku* (ochre). Among the Bapedi of Moletjie, this is also practised. Boys and girls are covered with red ochre. At this stage they are known as *dialoga* (survivors). Kgatla (2003:11) points out that some children are not lucky or skilled enough to survive this period. They are lined up in rank order and ceremonially lashed for the last time. After this, all the initiates march off without looking back while the traditional healer sets fire on the *koma* (initiation compound). All the initiates arrive at the chief's place where a short ceremony is conducted after which the children are released to their respective families.

Each family will be preparing for this ceremony. A cow, sheep or goat is slaughtered and also traditional beer is prepared for the arrival of the initiates. Relatives and members of the

community in large numbers will come and join the family in the celebrations. Chedester, (1992:36) explains how the initiate is contacted once at home on the day of homecoming: "if a person wants to talk with the initiate, he or she must give him a certain amount of money or present and kneel down so that the initiate will spot you at the back, it is a sign of acceptance".

It is the tradition of the Bapedi of Moletjie that the initiate should remain with red ochre at least two to four days. After this, the initiates will then go to the river to wash themselves and come out from the river wearing new clothes and also with new names. A goat is slaughtered again at home to welcome the initiates. With the blood of the animal, they will give thanks to their ancestors for protecting their child. More festivities will follow.

4.5 MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Hanks (1984:903) defines marriage as a state or relationship of being husband, or a religious legal union or contract made by a man and woman to live as husband and wife. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991:314) outlines that marriage is a state in which a man and woman are formally united for the purpose of living together.

In a marriage a man leaves his family and also a woman leaves her family, becoming one, and are called husband and wife. Marriage is thus a sign of commitment between a man and a woman to stay together for a lifetime. In some families, a wedding ceremony is held whereby friends and relatives are invited to witness the occasion. In the culture of the Bapedi of Moletjie, like in many other cultures, a marriage is regarded as an important aspect in life. In a number of cultures, a man who did not marry is not as respected as the one who is married.

As far as marriage is concerned, Nida (1954:166) notes that it is regarded by people as being quite religious in character. Some Christians regard it as a sacrament. But for most people, marriage is a social contract. He continues to state that, though West Africans may call in a diviner to ascertain whether the intended wife is a good choice, religious sanctions are not very important.

Among the Bapedi of Moletjie, a date is set on which the bride is taken to the bridegroom's home. It is their custom that the hosting family will slaughter a cow and beer will be available

to the visitors. In the morning, the bride will remain indoors. At that moment, a bridal name, for example, *mmaPelo* (mother of Pelo), *mmaKolobe* (mother of Kolobe) will be announced to her and after that the presents will be given to her. Relatives and community members gathered will then start the festivities to celebrate the occasion. The paternal parents and relatives will call her by the new name, so will the members of community.

4.6 DEATH CEREMONY

Death is marked by elaborate ritual in most socities. The death of one member of the family causes all relatives to become ritually unclean and hence a cleansing ritual is performed at different times of the day over a number of months (Kgatla, 2003:15). The man whose wife has passed away will be called *mohlolo* (widower) and the woman whose husband has passed away will be called *mohlologadi* (widow).

The African belief is that whenever death has taken place, something evil has caused the death. The idea among Africans is that there is no natural death. After a death has occurred in the family, one member of the family will go to the traditional healer to find out what exactly caused the death. The traditional healer will speak to *ditaola* (divining bones) and ask them what caused the death. In most cases, one member of the family is the cause of the death. Even today, death ceremony is practised in Moletjie. For example, if a woman loses her husband, she is expected to shave her hair immediately after burial. This is regarded as the first stage of cleansing and applies to the whole family.

Another aspect is that the hands need to be washed immediately after the funeral service. The Bapedi of Moletjie still practise the ceremony of washing hands before entering the deceased's homestead after burial. In some religions, instead of washing hands, the mourners are sprinkled with holy water. "The cleansing rite is necessary to remove the dangerous powers, often represented as impurity, released by contact with the corpse" (Myburgh, 1991:122).

Culturally, a woman is regarded as one of dark and ritual impurity. The widow wears black clothes throughout her mourning time. In most cases, it takes a year or a year and six months.

During the mourning time, the elderly people in the family tell the widow what to do and what not to do.

A name related to death situation can then be given to one of the family members. Among the Bapedi of Moletjie for example, if a woman give birth during a death ceremony, the child will automatically be named after that particular ceremony. The following serves as examples of such names:

Lehu (Death)

Madimabe (Misfortune)

Mehlodi (Tears)

Mathata (Problems)

Ditsietsi (Problems)

4.7 THE ANCESTORS' ROLE

According to Hornby (1995:38), ancestors are any of the people from whom somebody is descended, especially those much more remote than one's grandfather and grandmother. Most Africans acknowledge the existence of ancestors, and such ancestors are thus accorded the respect that they deserve. Any unusual moment or misfortune that may arise among one of the family members such as sickness, it is a believed that the ancestors are unhappy and thereof a healer has to be consulted.

The solidarity with the living dead binds together the whole family (Mbiti, 1990:105). People sometimes say that they see departed members of their family coming and appearing to them. Among the Bapedi of Moletjie, if anything happens beyond the control of a family, the belief is that the ancestors are angry with them and something needs to be done as a sign of apology to the ancestors. For example, if a child cries a lot for some few days, it is regarded as an indication that something is wrong about the child. For that reason, the family members consult a diviner, who will inform the family if the child's problem is sickness or *o llela leina*

(cries for a name). The diviner will then advise the family if the child is to be named after maternal or paternal grandparents. With regard to *leina la badimo* (ancestor's name) this is given during ancestral ceremony. For such an occasion, beer is brewed for people to drink.

The ancestral rites in Sepedi are performed at dawn or at sunset. If the situation is tense, the family will not wait to brew African beer, but they will use *bjala-mabele* (water mixed with mealie-meal). This is regarded as emergency beer. The family will gather preferably under a tree. The leader will hold the cup full of African beer, then drink and sprinkle it over the child, while begging the ancestors to give the child peace and harmony. At such moment, other members of the family would respond by *go khunama fase* (kneeling down while clapping hands). The leader will then continue to say: *ke yo maina wa gago* (he or she is your namesake), protect him or her. The conductor promises the ancestors that a big feast will be made for them. From this day, family members will call the child by the ancestor's name.

Stearns (1981:224) supports the above discussion when he states that "a name must be formally assumed by giving a feast to the old people, a practice which is the modern equivalent of receiving names at a potlatch feast witnessed by lineages of the opposite society." From that day after the end of the ceremony, the ancestor's name becomes an addition to the child original name; two names will then be used simultaneously by the family members.

4.8 BAPTISM CEREMONY

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1991:34), baptism is a religious rite of sprinkling with water as a sign of purification, usually with name-giving. Van Gennep (1960:63) points out that baptism has most often been regarded as an illustration, a purging and purifying rite, that is a final rite of separation from the previous world, whether it is a secular world or one that is actually pure. Hanks (1984:155) concurs with the above assertion when he shows that baptism is a Christian religious rite consisting of immersion in, or sprinkling with water as a sign that the subject is cleansed from sin and constituted as a member of the church.

A child gets blessed by the pastor, evangelist, priest, reverend or bishop. Very often, a pastor's wife holds the baby while standing next to a child's mother. The one who blesses the child will give the child a Christian name. The ceremony takes place before the congregation.

Baptism can be done in two different ways. The first way is where the converts are gathered together in a church before the congregation. The converts queue in one line and a pastor scatters a few drops of water over each person's forehead, often giving that particular person a new name. Such a name in most cases is regarded as a second name and it will be used simultaneously with the first one.

The second way is when the church members gather at a river. The pastor gets into water and then the converts get into the water following each other with their clothes on. The pastor will then dip each person in the water, maybe three times and gives him or her new name. The new name will often be adopted from the Bible. Common names that are adopted from the Bible are as follows:

Joseph

Jacob

Ephraim

Moses

David

Nehemiah

Hezekiah

Zechariah

To mention but a few, these names later change and acquire to Sepedi morphological structure. In other words, they metamorphe into adoptives:

Joseph > Josefa

Jacob > Jakobo

Ephraim > Eforaeme

Moses > Moshe

David > Tafita

Nehemiah > Nehemeya

Hezekiah > Esekiele

Zechariah > Sakareya

4.9 CONCLUSION

Different ceremonies are held whereby names are given. Ceremonies help Africans not to forget their original culture and what is expected of them as Africans. By so doing they believe that their ancestors will protect and bless them, especially if children are named after important ancestors. Many Africans still believe in ancestors, and they conduct a variety of ceremonies to honour them.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the study. It contains summary of each chapter, providing the findings and recommendations of the study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One serves as the introduction of the study where the general background to the study and methodology have been presented.

Chapter Two outlines the literature review on naming. A variety of experts in naming have been cited. The works of these experts discuss several issues on naming such as nicknames, praise names, and birth names.

Chapter Three highlights the overview of name giving and their meaning in the Moletjie area of Limpopo. Each society has its own way of giving names. People from different cultures use different patterns or approaches in naming their children. Children are given names based on the circumstances prevailing at the time of birth. The chapter outlines that among the Bapedi of Moletjie it is a common practice for a child to receive a name immediately after birth. African names are given by parents or grandparents or even by uncles and aunts. Names in African culture play a crucial role as they are used to depict gender, status, religion, character and wishes.

Chapter Four discusses a variety of naming ceremonies and the ancestors' role as far as naming is concerned. Naming ceremonies include birth, initiation, marriage, death and baptism ceremonies. Ceremonies pertaining to naming help Africans not to forget their original culture and what is expected of them as Africans.

Chapter Five serves as the conclusion of the study. It presents the summary of chapters, findings and recommendations.

5.3 FINDINGS

The findings of this study are as follows:

- The practice of giving situational names still prevails in Moletjie.

- From the research, it has been discovered that the people of Moletjie are no longer interested in initiation schools which form part of their culture.

- The Bapedi of Moletjie still practise the giving of marriage names, especially to women. The women who do not have marriage names are the ones whose husbands did not pay *lobola* for them.

- The people of Moletjie do not give their children praise names. Instead, they give them totem names.

- In Moletjie people are given names after wild animals.

- In Moletjie it has now become popular for children to be given names after celebrities or famous people.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the foregoing analysis, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- The concept of retaining traditional norms and values should be taken into consideration. Each society is what it is because of its norms and values, customs and beliefs. People should live according to the norms and standards obtaining in their culture.

- It is advisable for the people to acknowledge the importance of initiation schools as such schools foster discipline and cooperation among the youth, besides preserving and promoting the culture of the people.

- The people of Moletjie must be made aware that it is not only Christian names that are of great value, their traditional names are of equal importance.

- Conferences must be held, especially for the youth to explain to them the importance of traditional names and their meanings. This will instil in the youth a sense of cultural direction and belonging. On the whole it will strengthen the cultural norms and values of the Bapedi of Moletjie.

- The elderly people in the Moletjie area should be encouraged to take part in giving names to their grandchildren as these will be passing on certain important cultural indicators of historical importance.

- Members of the community must be encouraged to give positive or dignified names to their children, names that do not undermine or belittle them.

- Name giving is an important part of African culture, this delicate practice of cultural and historical importance needs further research in order to unveil or unearth more valuable information. Such information is crucial in the promotion and preservation of the African culture in general.

REFERENCES.

Ahinful, K. 1997. Going back to African names. *The Mirror Newspaper*. Accra.

Ashton, H. 1967. The Basuto: *A Social Ttudy of Traditional and Modern Lesotho.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Awedoba, A. K. 1996. Kasern nominal gendness and names. *Research Review* 12.1/2.

Bangeni, G. N. & Coetser, A. 2000. Xhosa first names, Societal Values and Power Relations. *Nomina Africana,* 14(2): 60.

Beidelman, T. O. 1974. Kaguru names and meaning. *Journal of Anthropological Research*. 30(4): 281-293.

Bock, P. K. 1974. *Morden Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Northwestern University Press.

Cabral, P. 2008. *Personal identity and Linguistic Diversity in Cosmopolitan World*. New York: Macmillan.

Charles, L. H. 1951. Drama in first-naming ceremonies. *Journal of American Folklore*. 64: 11-35.

Charles, J. & Linwood, S. 1973. *Boys and Girls Names*. London: Harrap.

Chauke, M. T. 1992. *Mavito ni Nkoka wa Wona eka Xitsonga*. Unpublished Honours Research Paper. Polokwane: University of the North.

Chedester, D. 1992. *Religious of South Africa*. Canada: Routledge.

Cohen, B. & Kliot, N. 1992. *Place names in Israel's Ideological Struggle over Administered Territories*. Associates of American Geographer.

Dakubu, K. 2000. Personal names of the Dagomba. *Research Review New Series,* 16.2, 53-65.

Danquah, J. B. 1928. *Gold Coast: Akan Laws and Customs and the Akin Abuakwa Constitution*. London: George Routledge and Sons.

De Klerk, V. 1999. Beauty of Buhle. On changing one's name. *Nomina Africana*, 13 (1&2): 41-44

Duckling, L. A. 1983. *The Guinness Book of Names*. London: Guiness Superlative.

Du Preez, H. 1997. *Meet the Rainbow Nation*. Pretoria: Kagiso Tertiary.

Edward, D. 1996. *Treasury of Name*. New York: Harper and Row.

Eileen, J. 1998. *The Social System of the Zulus*. Longmans Green and Co. Ltd.

Egblewogbe, E.Y. 1985. The structure of Ewe personal names. *Paper in Ghanaian Linguistics*. Legon: Institute of African Studies. 5: 10-31.

Fasold, R. 1990. *The Rise of the Shona Novel*. Gweru, Mambo Press.

Garwood, S. G. 1976. First name stereotypes as a factor in self-concept and school achievement. *Journal of educational Psychology*. 68(4): 482-487.

Gornley, M. V. 1996. Colonial Homes. *Naming Patterns for Different Countries and Cultures*. Itasca, IL: Peacock.

Hanks, P. 1984. *Collins Dictionary of the English Language*. London: Collins.

Hornby, A. S. 1995. *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hoberg, S. M. 1999. *Education Management Research Methodology*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Katami, H. 1997. Personal Names and modes of address among the Mbeere. African Study Monograph, 18(3,4): 203-212.

Kgatla, S. T. 2003. *Myth, Ritual and Folk Beliefs*. University of the North: School of Social Sciences: Folklore 804.

Kofi, A. 2006. The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 15(2): 206-235.

Lombard, R. J. J. 1997. *Handbook for Genealogical Research*. Pretoria: V&R Printing Works.

Lubenga, M. 2006. *Naming and Linguistic Africanisms in African American culture*. Columbus: Ohio State University.

Mbiti, J. S. 1990. *African Religion and Philosophy*. New York: Heinemann Educational Books.

Magubane, P. 1998. *Vanishing Cultures of South Africa*. South Africa: Struik Publishers.

Mahome, P. M. 1972. *Naming in Sesotho*: *Its Socio-cultural and Linguistic Basis*. New York: University Press.

Malegapuru, W. M. 1999. *African Rennaisance*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers.

Mandela, R. N. 1996. *Long Walk to Freedom*. Cape Town: MacDonald Purnell.

Mathamangwane, J. T. & Gardner, S. F. 1998. Language Attitudes as Portrayed by the Use of English and African Names in Botswana. *Nomina Africana*, 12(12): 74-87.

Mardhaugh, R. 1998. *Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. United Kingdom. Blackwell Publishing.

Mashiri, P. 1999. *Terms of Address in Shona*: A Sociolinguistic Approach. Cape Town Zambezia.

Matsepe, O. K. 1982. *Sebatakgomo*. Johannersburg: Educum Publishers.

Matsimela, A. M. 1997. *Sefulediso*. Johannesburg: Creda Press.

Mazrui, A. 1986. The Africans: *A Triple Heritage*. London: BBC Publications.

Middleton, J. 1961. The Social Significance of Lugbara Personal Names. *Ugandan Journal*, 14: 34-43.

Monaghan, P. 2001. *Ancient Education and its meaning to us*. New York: Cooper Square Publishers.

Mönnig, H. O. 1967. *The Pedi*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mthobeli, G. 2001. The Cultural Meaning of Names among Basotho of Southern Africa: A Historical and Linguistic Analysis. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 10(3): 265-279.

Myburgh, A. C. 1991. *Anthropology for Southern Africa*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Neethling, B. 2007. Contemporary Xhosa Antroponymy: *Acta Academia Supplementum*, 2007 1: 156-175.

Nida, E. A. 1954. *Customs and Culture*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers.

Nziyane, G. T. 2004. *Naming Practice and Patterns*. University of the North. Dissertation, book.

Obeng, S. G. 2001. *African anthropology, an ethnopragmatic and morphonological study of names in Akan and some African societies*. Ghana: Ghanian Press

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary.1991. Oxford. Oxford University Press

Rachel, L. 2001. Haida Culture in Custody. Washington: University of Washington Press.

Saarlema-Maunumaa, M. M. 1999. Name Sharing in the System of Ovambo Namibia. *Nomina Africa,* 13(1 & 2): 35-45.

Setiloane, G. 1975. *The Image of God Among the Sotho-Tswana*. Amsterdam: A.A. Balkema.

Stearns, M. L. 1981. *Halda Culture in Custody*. Washington, DC: University of Washington Press.

Suzman, S. M. 1994. Names as pointers: Zulu personal naming practices. *Language in Society*, 23: 353-372.

The Holy Bible New International Version, 1993:3.

Thipa, H. 1986. *By their names you shall know them*. Raper (ed). p: 107.

Van Gennep, A. 1960. *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Webster's New Encyclopaedic Dictionary. 1993. New York, N.Y.: BD and L.