

**NAMING, IDENTITY AND GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ZEZURU PERSONAL
NAMES**

BY

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degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Education,
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DECLARATION

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I, MARADZE VIRIRI, hereby declare that this thesis with the title: NAMING, IDENTITY AND GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES, submitted by me for the Doctor of Philosophy in Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal of South Africa is my own independent work and has not been previously submitted by me at another university. All the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ABSTRACT

Names given to individuals among the Zezuru are not arbitrarily given but are rather carefully given to individuals based on one's gender status. Personal names among the Zezuru do carry gender connotations. This study focused on how names reflect the gender status of the name bearer and obtained most of its insights from semantics, the critical discourse analysis theory, the backing theory, and the gender theory. Sources which included school registers, questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were used to collect personal names which were in turn used for this study. The names that were used were from the period before Independence (1975-1979 to 1980 to date). This study recognized the already existing naming categories used by previous researchers, and went on to come up with new or alternative naming categories best suited for the study. The study found out that gendered names have far reaching effects on the bearers of the names. The descriptive backing, critical discourse analysis, and semantic and gender theories were found to be the best theories in coming up with the gendered meanings of the personal names used in this study. This study argues that it will make significant contributions to the body of knowledge in disciplines such as onomastics, semantics, pragmatics, anthropology sociology and others.

KEY TERMS

Identity

Gender

Culture

Patriarchy

Socialization

Personal

Name

Anthroponyms

Stereotyping

Stigmatisation

Critical Discourse Analysis

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my wife, Eunitah Viriri, who inspired me to continue with my academic career.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDA – Critical Discourse Analysis

ZANU – Zimbabwe African National Union

LIST OF TABLES

Table 5.2.1 Sex of respondents	132
Table 5.2.2 Age range of participants.....	132
Table 5.3.1 Level of education of the participants.....	133
Table 5.4.1 Names per source.....	134
Table 5.5.1 Category of names.....	136
Table 5.7.1 People who are responsible for naming.....	141
Table 5.9.1 Gendered personal names which are common to girls.....	146
Table 5.9.2 Personal names common among boys.....	147
Table 5.9.3 Names which are unisex.....	148
Table 5.10.1 Factors which influence personal name choice.....	153
Table 5.18.1 Conflicts associated with naming.....	161

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ABSTRACT.....	ii
KEY TERMS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER 1	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
PREAMBLE.....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	3
1.2.1 ZEZURU	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2.2 PERSONAL NAMING	3
1.2.3 GENDERED NAMES.....	4
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
1.3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	6
1.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	6
1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	6
1.5 PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTION	8
1.6 MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION	9
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	9
1.8 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES.....	10
1.9 DATA COLLECTION METHODS	10
1.10 QUESTIONNAIRES	11
1.10.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE	11
1.10.2 THE INTERVIEW	11
1.11 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS.....	12
1.12 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	12
1.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	12

1.14 LIMITATIONS	14
1.15 DELIMITATIONS	14
1.16 DEFINITION OF TERMS	15
1.17 STRUCTURE OF THESIS	16
1.18 CONCLUSION	16
CHAPTER 2	16
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW	17
2.1 INTRODUCTION	17
2.2 WHAT IS NAMING	18
2.3 TRENDS IN ANTHROPONOMASTICS	24
2.3.1 WORLD TRENDS IN ANTHROPONOMASTICS	24
2.3.2 AFRICAN ANTHROPONOMASTIC TRENDS	27
2.3.3 ANTHROPONOMASTIC TRENDS IN ZIMBABWE	31
2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME	34
2.5 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NAMING?	44
2.5.1 WORLD TRENDS	44
2.5.2 IN AFRICA	45
2.5.3 IN ZIMBABWE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6 GENDER, PATRIARCHY AND STEREOTYPING	47
2.7 NAMING AND IDENTITY	57
2.8 GENDER AND NAMING	60
2.9 CONCLUSION	64
CHAPTER 3	65
3.0 CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	65
3.1 INTRODUCTION	65
3.2 PRAGMATICS	67
3.3 SEMANTICS	69
3.4 DESCRIPTIVE BACKING	72
3.5 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS THEORY	75
3.5.1 THE TENETS OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS	78
3.5.2 THE CONTRIBUTION OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS TO NAMING AND GENDER	86
3.6 GENDER THEORY	87
3.7 CONCLUSION	91

CHAPTER 4	92
4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	92
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	92
4.2RESEARCH PARADIGM.....	93
4.3RESEARCH APPROACH.....	96
4.4RESEARCH DESIGN	97
4.5QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	98
4.6CASE STUDY DESIGN.....	102
4.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS	105
4.8 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS	105
4.9 INTERVIEWS	106
4.10 ADVANTAGES OF USING THE INTERVIEW	108
4.11 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS/INTERVIEWS	109
4.12 QUESTIONNAIRES	112
4.13 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	113
4.14SAMPLING	115
4.15THE SAMPLING OF SCHOOLS	118
4.16 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING OF INTERVIWEES.....	118
4.17 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	119
4.18DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS	120
4.18.1i. Using multiple data sources.....	120
4.18.2ii. Verifying raw data.....	120
4.18.3iii. Greater trustworthiness in coding data.....	121
4.18.4iv. Stakeholder checks	121
4.19ETHICAL ISSUES	122
4.19.1a. Ethical review and research permission.....	122
4.19.2b. Informed consent	122
4.19.3c. Confidentiality and Anonymity	123
4.19.4d. Integrity	123
4.19.5e. Publication of research findings	124
4.20 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES	124
4.21CONCLUSION	126
CHAPTER 5	127

5.0 PRESENTATION OF DATA/RESULTS	127
5.1 INTRODUCTION.....	127
5.2 BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS	128
5.3 LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS.....	129
5.4 PERSONAL NAMES COLLECTED FOR THE STUDY	130
5.5 A SCHEME OF CLASSIFICATION	130
5.6 SHONA NAMING.....	134
5.6.1 NAMING CEREMONY	134
5.7 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NAMING?	135
5.8 THE ATTRIBUTES OF A NAME GIVER.....	138
5.9 IMPORTANCE OF NAMING	140
5.10 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE PERSONAL NAME CHOICE.....	148
5.11 GENDER/SEX.....	149
5.12 RELIGION.....	150
5.13 HISTORICAL/POLITICAL EVENTS	151
5.14 FAMILY EXPERIENCES.....	153
5.15 GLOBALISATION.....	153
5.16 HEREDITARY (FAMILY NAMES)	154
5.17 NAMES AND GENDER.....	155
5.18 CONFLICTS ASSOCIATED WITH NAMING	156
5.19 EFFECTS OF GENDERED NAMES.....	158
5.20 REASONS FOR GENDER BASED NAMES	158
5.21 CONCLUSION.....	159
CHAPTER 6	159
6.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA.....	159
6.1 INTRODUCTION.....	160
6.2 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA.....	161
6.2.1 RESEARCH THEMES ADDRESSED	161
6.3 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE NAME CHOICES AMONG THE ZEZURU.....	161
6.3.1 GENDER.....	161
6.3.2 HISTORICAL EVENTS	163
6.3.3 RELIGION	165
6.3.4 GLOBALISATION	166

6.4 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NAMING	166
6.5 IMPORTANCE OF NAMING	170
6.6 CONFLICTS ASSOCIATED WITH NAMING	179
6.7 THE MORPHOLOGY OF ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES	180
6.8 CLASSIFICATION OF NAMES	181
6.9 STEREOTYPICAL MALE GENDER MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN BOYS' NAMES	186
6.10 GENDER STEREOTYPICAL MESSAGES IN FEMALE ANTHROPNYMS ..	190
6.11 THE EFFECTS OF GENDERED PERSONAL NAMES	195
6.12 GENDERED DIVISION OF LABOUR	196
6.13 COMMON GENDERED MALE AND FEMALE NAMES AMONG THE ZEZURU	197
6.14 POPULAR GENDERED NAMES IN GIRLS	199
6.15 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES	201
6.16 SOCIALLY GENDERED MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES.....	202
6.17 ECONOMICALLY GENDERED MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES	203
6.18 POLITICALLY GENDERED MESSAGES IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES...	204
6.19 EFFECTS OF GENDERED NAMING	204
6.20 SHIFTS IN THE NAMING TRENDS AMONG THE ZEZURU	208
6.21 CONCLUSION	211
CHAPTER 7	212
7.1 CONCLUSION	212
7.1.1 INTRODUCTION	212
7.1.2 A SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS	212
7.1.3 A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	215
7.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	220
7.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	220
7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES	221
7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS	221
7.6 CONCLUSION	222
REFERENCES	Error! Bookmark not defined.

LIST OF APPENDICES242

CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“One is not born but becomes a woman”(de Beauvoir, 1949:3).

PREAMBLE

Personal names are more than just tags of identity. With them, society can group its members based on their gender status. Makondo (2012:1) asks the following questions: “Who names whom? When are names given? Why do people have names? How do people feel about their names?” These and other related questions guided the scope of this research of the Zezuru people of Buhera South in Zimbabwe, because such a plethora of questions reflects the significance of personal names. The Zezuru, like any other society, have used names since time immemorial. Makondo (2012:1) states that “the Zezuru people of Zimbabwe predominantly prefer culture-bound, meaningful first names that act as badges of identity.” The identity aspect entails the gender status of the name bearer. Wittenberg (2002:2) expresses that these names also act as a web of signification, while Evans-Pritchard (1939:237) states that personal names are “...social documents which fix a person’s position in social structure.” While expounding on the gender problem in Africa, Mazrui (1993) regards personal names as cases of benign sexism which acknowledges gender differences. Having made these observations about the richness of personal names, this study focused on how personal names reflect the gender status of the name bearer. The study collected and analysed personal names in Buhera South. Critical Discourse Analysis, Descriptive Backing, and Gender Theory together with insights from Semantics and Pragmatics were used in the analysis of these names –in an attempt to unravel the gender connotations enshrined in these personal names. Personal names collected from various sources which included school registers, interviews and focus group discussions, were put into nine categories to enhance easy analysis of these names. The study found that personal names, as forms of identity, can go as far as reflecting the gender status of the name bearers, and have the power of advantaging or disadvantaging the name bearer in various spheres of their lives. It is possible to ‘read’ gender relations in the Zezuru society by analysing the meanings of these personal names. Generally, the father of the house has the power to name

newborn babies in his family, which makes the entire naming process gendered as well. Other family members may provide names, but it is the father of the child who has the final say.

This means that the father, being masculine, will obviously give a name which in most cases has a gender bias to his side. The other observation is that personal names are rich repositories through which society is organised along gender lines, as is enshrined in the meaning of most of the Zezuru personal names. Personal names are therefore useful discourses used to differentiate individuals in society along gender lines.

The findings of this study, analysed within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis and Descriptive Backing, indicated that personal names derive much of their meaning from the gender status of the name bearer and the society's norms and values. Personal names among the Zezuru are a major source of socialization in as far as directing the newborn into their respective gender roles expected of them in society. The Zezuru society being a patriarchal society gives more respect to men than women.

In the analysis, the meanings of these personal names as they relate to gender, semantics and pragmatics were instrumental in the appreciation of the gender message conveyed by personal names. This study makes an important contribution to onomastic research in the sense that its findings can inform the people who are responsible for personal naming in other places, so that they avoid giving names that carry gender connotations which may end up stigmatising the name bearer along gender lines. This study provides background information on how personal naming was done in Buhera South before and after Independence. This makes it significant because it provides insights on personal naming in various societies in Zimbabwe before and after Independence.

This chapter gives background detail on the entire study. It begins by describing who the Zezuru people are and explains their historical background. The study then outlines its aim in which the focus is to demonstrate how given personal names can be a barometer of knowing one's gender status. The study argues that certain personal names are gendered as such that they carry gender connotations, which makes the bearers of these names prone to being stigmatised and stereotyped in society. This chapter proceeds by delineating its objectives and significance. The chapter reserves the review of related literature to chapter two.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.2.1 ZEZURU

Zezeru is one of the Shona dialects spoken by many people in Zimbabwe. The term is used to identify people who speak one of the Central Shona dialects in general. Compared to other Shona dialects in Zimbabwe, Zezeru has a large following and the people who speak it are dotted in most parts of the country because of the land redistribution after 1980. Makondo (2009) states that the Shona language dominates in seven of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe; namely Mashonaland East, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland West, Harare, Masvingo, Manicaland and Midlands. Buhera South is in Manicaland and the Zezeru dialect is also dominant there; though in the early seventies, Zezeru was known to be mainly concentrated around Mashonaland. The resettlement of people after Independence witnessed movements of the Zezeru speaking people to other parts of the country in search of residential places. The Zezeru speaking people are now the dominant group in Buhera South. Makondo (2009) asserts that Zezeru is mainly found in the central mainland of Zimbabwe; however this research has established that it is also common in Buhera South. The other varieties of Shona are Hwesa, Barwe, Manyika, Karanga and Korekore (Chebanne et al., 2006:7). Today, the name Shona is used to cover a great number of related dialects spoken by people in Zimbabwe. The Zezeru speaking people constitute the largest number of the Shona speaking people in Zimbabwe. The findings of this study will therefore be representative enough of the Zezeru scenario as Zezeru is spoken by many people across the country of Zimbabwe.

1.2.2 PERSONAL NAMING

Naming among the Zezeru has been around since time immemorial, and personal naming in particular is a major form of identity among the Zezeru. The Zezeru world view can best be understood in terms of the names they give to their children. The name gives identity to the name bearer. The custom of giving names to human beings was and is determined by many factors which include social, economic and political conditions prevailing at the time when the naming is done. Gender is a factor which falls under social factors and which greatly influences name choice. It is in this light that this research was undertaken to study the relationship between names and the gender status of the name bearer. Shona naming has been a subject of considerable debate and controversy since the arrival of missionaries and

settlers in Zimbabwe (Kahari, 1990). Pongweni (1983) is of the view that Shona naming is to a large extent related to the political history of the country. Before colonialism, the Zezuru used to give their children names that reflected their cultural values and beliefs, just like other cultures in African countries. With the arrival of white people into the country, there was a major shift from the norm of giving culture-bound names to opting for Christian names instead. The Christian missionaries associated the culture-related names of the Shona with heathenism, and therefore insisted that converts adopt the new faith by changing their culture-bound names to biblical-related names. Although the Zezuru embarked on the new naming crusade, they continued with their culture of giving gender-based names though with faith-related themes.

The relevance of the Zezuru naming system is that it encompasses and reflects the Zezuru people's view of life which includes their beliefs, values, practices and rituals. Through the naming process, the Zezuru bring meaning to whatever they encounter, desire, and fear in life. Zezuru names are derived largely from a community's language and as such, they are inevitably an extension of cultural product. Because naming is very important among the Zezuru, a lot of interest has been generated on the topic of onomastics, but not much has been researched on the potential and ability of names to reflect the gender status of an individual. According to Makondo and Pfukwa (2013), interest on the subject in Zimbabwe started in the 1930s. The period stretching from 1931 to 1977 was dominated by European researchers. Zimbabwean writers began writing about the subject in 1979, when writers wrote about the categories of Shona names and their morphological structure. With the passage of time more articles were published on onomastics, but not much if anything has been written on the connection between names given to people and their gender status. Gender stereotyping, which is very common in the Zezuru culture, can be attributed to the names given to people. Naming is a sure way of ascribing identity. Apart from enabling the Zezuru people to identify and differentiate themselves as people, names play a very important role in conveying the historical, social, economic and religious values of these people. This research was occasioned on the connection between personal names and the gender status of the name bearer among the Zezuru people of Buhera South in Zimbabwe. The study sought to take a more focused approach by looking at personal names within a particular Shona group, with the aim of investigating the link between naming and gender.

1.2.3 GENDERED NAMES

Like many societies across the globe, the Zezuru have names which are specifically regarded as either masculine or feminine. Names as forms of identity are therefore used to differentiate the two genders. It is in this light that most Zezuru personal names enshrine gender connotations in their meanings, which will result in the stigmatisation of the name bearer in various circles of their lives. Through gendered personal names, the Zezuru children grow up knowing what is expected of them as boys and girls and later as men and women respectively. Sue and Telles (2007:1383) state that certain names have great influence on the name bearer. As labels, personal names have a bearing in moulding the personality of their bearers, as most of these children will behave according to the dictates of the meanings of their names. Rubaya and Viriri state that “given personal names condition the minds of the children to the socially prescribed gender roles and the name bearers will be ready to act these social roles unconsciously, without even noticing the attendant oppression that accompanies that conformity” (2012: 1).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study centred on the relationship between the name given to an individual and the gender status of the name bearer. The study sought to find out whether there is any connection between the name of a person and one's gender. The research's point of departure was that names are not arbitrarily given but that gender influences the choice of one's name. In contextualising the research problem, the researcher argues that personal names given to some individuals in the Zezuru society can reflect the gender status of the name bearers because they carry gender connotations. Given such a scenario, personal names can therefore stigmatise individuals along gender lines; thereby advantaging or disadvantaging a certain gender group and derailing the development of the society as a whole. Naming among the Zezuru is not merely accidental but it has a lot of significance. There seems to be a connection between the names given to people and their gender status. Naming among the Zezuru may stereotype and stigmatize an individual along gender lines because certain names carry gender connotations. It may also be a way of labelling; thereby affecting the bearer of the name to a certain extent and resulting in the individual failing to fulfil certain duties in society. Roles within the Zezuru society are ascribed to individuals depending on their gender status. There are roles which are regarded feminine and roles which are masculine. Through their naming, members of a particular sex may be deprived of the chance to have a say in some important societal activities. Given such a

scenario, the naming process ceases to be an innocent act, but rather becomes a way through which a certain gender is stigmatized and labelled along gender lines.

1.3.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the significance of personal names among the Zezuru.
2. To establish the relationship between naming and gender constructions among the Zezuru.
3. To examine Zezuru naming practices in the pre-independence and post-independence era.

1.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the importance and significance of naming among the Zezuru?
2. What are the linkages between naming and gender constructions among the Zezuru people?
3. What influenced the naming patterns among the Zezuru people before and after independence?

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research was being carried out within the framework of onomastics. Descriptive backing as a theory formed the basis of this research. Pfukwa (2007) says that the concept of descriptive backing takes into account the various contexts that surround the name. Thus, the name derives its meaning from the context in which it is found and used. Meiring (1993) in Louwrens (1994) regards descriptive backing as everything that is associated and attached to the name in the environment in which the name is used. McDowell (1992) says that descriptive backing consists of several propositions concerning the identity of the name bearer. These propositions are like indices of identity. In this respect, descriptive backing is usually associated with issues of naming and identity, thereby making it the most ideal theory to form the basis of this research. This theory conveys that names can express semantic meaning and that these names reflect the conventional beliefs of a group of people. Suzman (1994) captures the essence of descriptive backing in a social framework as she explains that the social context in which the name is found becomes part of the name. This kind of descriptive backing is based on individual experiences

and knowledge about a place, person or object bearing the name, and holds together the different streams of onomastics enquiry. Within the framework of this theory, each meaning is seen as an aggregate of speculations that exclude certain attributes associated with the name in question. Through descriptive backing, names become an integral component of the cultural and historical narratives of a community. It was the researcher's conviction that given the broadness of this theory, it was relevant and gave direction to the study. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory also informed this research since it views names as texts or discourses that capture the intentions of the name giver. In other words, it captures the worldview of the name giver. Since this study focused on names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer, the theory greatly informed this research.

In the analysis of the meanings of personal names, semantics and pragmatics were useful. Pragmatics together with semantics informed this study as they advocated for the need to look at the context in which a word is found. This context helps when making deductions about the meaning of a word. Crystal (1992) views semantics as a field within linguistics that "focuses on the literal meaning of words, phrases, and sentences; it is concerned with how grammatical processes build complex meanings out of simpler ones." Mamvura proclaims that "semantics studies meaning without making any reference to the speakers and hearers" (2014: 118). Pragmatics is an analytical approach in linguistics that involves itself with contextual considerations when coming up with the meaning of a name. It studies how people comprehend and produce communicative acts (Pearce, 1931). Both semantics and pragmatics provided the researcher with the necessary keys to unlock the gender connotations enshrined in personal names.

Gender theory gave direction to this research as it informed why there are different roles assigned according to gender among the Zezuru. McKinnon in Kramarae and Treicher (1985) regards gender as the allocation of duties in society along gender lines, and this division of labour according to whether one is male or female is seen as the major source of male dominance over females. McKinnon (1985) adds that gender theory looks at facts which account for the gender differences that exist in society and which result in gender inequality. Personal names among the Zezuru are a major form of socialisation by which name bearers are channelled into their respective gender roles. Most personal names among the Zezuru are gender specific and carry gender connotations. Bannon and Correia (2006) say that gender is mainly concerned with the way social structures give men power over women, resulting in the marginalisation of women in various spheres of life. Krige (1974:112) states that "gender is

realised in all the realms of life which include the social structures such as the workplace where people learn to act like secretaries and managers.” He goes on to say that this trend will be realised later in life when people are adults and when they assume gender roles associated with their gender status. As people grow or age, they continue to learn new social behaviours regarding what is required of them in being men and women. In line with the issue of gender is the idea of stereotyping, which is very rampant among the Zezuru people. Bannon and Correia (2006:316) state that the idea of stereotyping is usually common in the portrayal of women in literature and society in general. They go on to add that stereotyping entails attributing certain depressing character traits which are usually inflated. Herbert (1994:96 in Peter 2010) states that stereotyping is very common in the meaning of personal names. He indicates that personal names usually carry messages that stereotype their bearers. According to Herbert’s assessment, boys will often receive names that reflect the hopes and aspirations of the family while girls are usually recipients of names that advertise them to potential lovers; and at times the names will express what is expected of the name bearer as a woman. Nuessel (1992:4 in Peter 2010) states that “from their perspective, it may be said that you are what you are named.” Murphy in Likaka (2009:5) confirms a psychology that reinforces the claim that a name shapes the behaviour of the name bearer. He says that certain names have a huge bearing in moulding the behaviour of the bearer and that a name can influence the way you are viewed by other people in the society.

1.5 PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTION

Naming among the Zezuru is not merely accidental. It has certain significance much like their literature, which they believe is not just “art for art’s sake.” In the same vein, naming among the Zezuru carries with it a lot of messages about their understanding of the world around them. There is therefore a connection between the names given to people and their gender status. Naming can stigmatise an individual along gender lines. Names given to people among the Zezuru can be a way of labelling, which may affect the bearer of the name and result in the individual failing to fulfil certain duties in society. Among the Zezuru, roles within their society are ascribed to individuals depending on their gender status. There are roles which are regarded feminine and roles regarded as masculine. This means that through their naming, members of a particular sex will be deprived of the chance to have a say in certain activities because of the

names given to them. Given such a scenario, the naming process ceases to be an innocent act but rather becomes a way through which certain sexes are stigmatised and labelled.

1.6 MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent do the names given to people among the Zezuru reflect the gender status of the name bearer?

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research made use of the qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research enables the researcher to fully understand the problem being researched. Through qualitative research, people will be able to get full knowledge about the social world in which they live and will have good reasons for justifying the status quo. Qualitative research seeks to answer questions such as Why? How? and In what way? (Best and Kahn, 1993:72).

This research utilized a qualitative research strategy and used interviews, questionnaires and document analysis for the collection of data. Documents which were analyzed included provincial registry records and school registers to get the names of children and adults. Interviews were carried out with different generations of men and women to get their views on how they perceive the role and significance of personal names. Thus, the descriptive survey was useful for this study. Babbie (2007), Borg and Gall (1990), and Collins et al (2003) share the same sentiment that the qualitative paradigm is very ideal when dealing with research that requires detailed explanations about the features of a population. This design was ideal for this study because it employs a variety of instruments for gathering data, thereby making it possible to compare the data from various data collecting strategies. Thus, by triangulating data, the researcher validated his research findings through various research methods which gave credibility to the research. Terre Blanche and Durkheim (2006:128) explain that “triangulation enables the researcher to approach a research problem from several different angles which increases chances of ‘homing’ in on correct or useful findings.” The qualitative research approach is very suitable when dealing with a social problem because it gives opportunity to the subjects to participate in the research rather than regarding them as observers in the

research. In this regard, the participants will be very co-operative and the researcher will get reliable data.

1.8 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

In choosing a sample, the researcher employed the purposive sampling technique. This was seen to be the most suitable when carrying out exploratory research. The researcher purposively selected people with Zezuru personal names which were gendered because they were relevant to the study. Robson (1998) supports purposive sampling because it enables the researcher to select a sample that has the necessary qualities for his or her research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) share the same sentiments with Robson (1988) when they say that the characters chosen by the researcher for the research will be chosen on the basis that they possess the necessary qualities needed in the research. Thus, the honor lies with the researcher to assess and choose people who will provide useful, relevant and reliable information (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007). In the case of this research, only families of Zezuru speaking people participated in the study. Sampling was purposively done at different levels for the different instruments. One registry office and ten schools from Buhera South were analyzed to attain the records of personal names from 1975 to present day. Interviews were conducted with a total of 20 families; 10 of which were established during the pre-colonial period, and the other 10 families established after independence up to the year 2014. Family trees served as a source of information to show the different forms and directions Zezuru names have taken over the years up to 2014.

1.9 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The research design chosen by the researcher helped in coming up with the suitable research instruments used in collecting data (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006). The research employed questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis for the collection of data.

1.10 QUESTIONNAIRES

1.10.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Chiromo (2009), a questionnaire is a document that contains questions aimed at eliciting appropriate data for the study. When constructing the questionnaire, one must ensure that the questions are precise, straightforward and unambiguous (Leedy, 1983). According to Best and Khan (1993), questionnaires are quite convenient to use because they provide a wide coverage of what is being studied over a limited period. Questions in a questionnaire must be diversified to cater for all research objectives. The questionnaires that were used in this study entailed matrix questions in which respondents were expected to choose from the given options. Babbie in Chiromo (2009) points out that matrix questions are space efficient and easy for respondents to fill in. Open ended questions were used and spaces for additional views and suggestions were provided at the end of the questionnaire. The respondents were given room to put forward their views which were otherwise not catered for in other parts of the questionnaire.

1.10.2 THE INTERVIEW

Creswell (2013:87) regards the interview as “a data-collection method which uses personal contact and interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee (respondent).” Borg and Gall (1990) state that an interview is a discussion that is aimed at soliciting data. During an interview, one person talks whilst the other listens. The conversation is guided by a list of questions on an interview schedule. This research made use of the interview method which according to Anold (1981:103) “is a face to face interpersonal role situation in which an interviewer asks respondents questions designed to obtain answers pertinent to the research.” The use of an interview had a lot of advantages because it allowed the researcher to be flexible during the interview session when asking questions on gendered personal names. During interviews, the researcher had the opportunity to probe the interviewee where necessary. The interview enabled the interviewer to note certain important aspects such as the gestures of the respondents, which reflected the feelings and attitudes of the respondents towards what

they were discussing. Throughout the interview, the researcher was able to experience the environment in which the respondents live in.

1.11 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

People were put into groups in which the researcher held discussions on personal names. Every participant in the group was given the opportunity to voice their view on the subject. The researcher led the discussion. From these discussions, the researcher was able to get certain information which did not come out clearly in the responses from the questionnaires.

1.12 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Official documents from schools such as school registers and records from the registry containing people's names were obtained and used in this research. The analysis of the names contained in the respective records helped enormously in this research.

1.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is significant in several ways. A great deal of research on personal names has been done, but not much has been studied about the relationship between the name given to an individual and the gender status of the name bearer. The issue of gender discrepancy is a topical issue, so much so that the current Zezuru society is fighting for gender equality and parity in all spheres of life. Hence, the results from this research intend to inform namers and policy makers on how best they can achieve gender equity and equality. The research therefore comes in to close a gap that exists in Zimbabwean study of anthroponyms, in as far as it unravels gender connotations enshrined in some Zezuru personal names. Personal names among the Zezuru are not just arbitrarily given, they are given in such a way that one's gender can be known through them because of the gender connotations enshrined in the names. There are various reasons why the Zezuru place a lot of importance on personal names, and marking

one's gender status is one of the reasons why personal names are regarded highly among the Zezuru. Before 1980, research on personal names was done by non-Shona speakers who dwelled much on topics about the names of chiefs for example. After 1980, many Shona language speakers demonstrated great interest in onomastics and anthroponomastic studies (Makondo, 2008:10). However, the research that was conducted did not go deeper into personal names like this present study does. Makondo (2009:12) states that "most of these researches did not delve deeper into Shona personal names in the envisaged manner." In fact, their researches studied the names of chiefs, commissioners, literary characters, nicknames and the influence of Christianity on Shona nomenclature. This research is therefore useful and important because it looks deeper into personal names and unearthes gender messages which are enshrined in the personal names. Makondo (2009:12) says that such efforts like the present research are "welcome as first names are a minefield of meaning as they project the worldview of the namers, the bearers and their society". Zimbabwean scholars should be "actively involved in the interrogation and redefinition of the various images of themselves, not as an alternative voice but as a fulcrum in the process (Pfukwa 2007:90).

This research sought to ascertain the importance attached to these personal names as forms of identity and modes of communication. This entails establishing the various factors that gave rise to them – one of which is gender. The study categorized the personal names based on the factors that influence the choice of the name. This approach has received the least attention hence its worthiness. The contributions by Pfukwa (2007) and Makondo (2009) are worth mentioning in as far as they look at personal names; with the former looking at war names which at times can be regarded as nicknames, and the latter looking at the importance and morphological composition of personal names.

The study on personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer, is a springboard for wider onomastic research related to gender discrepancies due to the stereotyping brought on by gendered personal names. The findings of this research will most definitely make namers become aware of the names they give to their newborns, lest they give them names that will affect them negatively in life. The wider society can draw lessons from this study such that a personal name is an important tag which must be chosen carefully so that it is free of any gender connotations.

This study regards gendered Zezuru personal names as the major cause of gender stereotyping which creates gender inequalities in the Zezuru society. The results of this research may well

apply to the entire Zimbabwean situation. As such, the findings of this research will go far in eliminating gender streamlining which results in gender inequality in society.

1.14 LIMITATIONS

The researcher faced time constraints and was not able to fully commit to the research as he would have desired because of his profession as a full-time high school teacher. Inadequate resources like time and money to travel frequently to all the areas in Buhera South resulted in a narrower coverage of the research than what the researcher initially hoped. Parents' commitments in responding to interview questions also caused problems as some viewed it as a mere waste of time and a disturbance to their daily chores. All this impacted negatively on the outcome of the study. However, to counter some of the limitations, the researcher conducted the study during weekends and vacation periods when there was no pressure from work. The research was restricted in Buhera South to enhance accessibility. And the objectives as well as the purpose of the research study were fully explained to the participants.

1.15 DELIMITATIONS

The study was carried out in Buhera South. Buhera South stretches from Mudanda Primary School in the North to Devuli Primary School in the South. The Save and Nyazvidzi rivers form the eastern and western boundaries of Buhera South respectively. Five primary schools that were built during the 1970s, five secondary schools built after 1980, and parents around these respective schools were chosen as the sample of participants for this research. The schools and parents were chosen using the purposive sampling technique and were representative of the schools and parents in Buhera South. Based on the assumption that they would provide relevant information for the study, the researcher selected pupils with gendered names as well as parents of pupils with gendered names as his key interview subjects. The names which were considered for this study were Zezuru personal names with gender connotations. The study focused on personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

1.16 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Naming – The act of giving a person a name.

Personal name – A name given to a person soon after birth and is usually regarded as the first name.

Name bearer – the recipient of the personal name.

Identity – A tag which is put onto an individual because of the name given to him or her.

Gender – This refers to the attributes which are regarded as male or female as dictated by society. Gender roles vary from one society to the other, but in most patriarchal societies gender roles are usually the same. Peter (2010:13) states that “gender in most cases is characterized by unequal power which sometimes assigns specific entitlements and responsibilities to men only.” Kwatsha (2009:128) regards gender as “the socially defined capacities and attributes assigned to persons on the basis of their sexual characteristics.” From these definitions, it can aptly be concluded that roles assigned to different genders are usually dictated by society and they vary with each society.

Culture – These are the norms and values of a given society. The South African Concise Oxford Dictionary (2002:282) defines it as the “customs, institutions and achievements of a particular nation, people or group.”

Socialisation – the process through which members of a society learn the norms and values of their society.

Patriarchy – This is a social system where men dominate their female counterparts in almost all domains of life. Patriarchy gives a lot to men at the expense of their female counterparts. Peter (2010) states that in patriarchy men have more status than women in their social set up. Under this system man is given the mandate to make decisions on how the family operates and dictates almost everything in the family operations. Under patriarchy women are expected to take instructions from men as men are higher in the social power stratum. Men therefore are given most of the privileges under this patriarchal social set up.

Gender Constructions – These are creations of fixed impressions about roles and relationships between men and women. Most of these fixed impressions are not correct.

Zezeru – A dialect of the Shona language which is spoken by people in Buhera South.

1.17 STRUCTURE OF THESIS

This study comprises seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the research and provides the backdrop of the investigation on personal names, and how these names can reflect the gender status of the name bearers. The second chapter reviews literature in relation to the topic being studied. The third chapter discusses the theoretical framework that informs the study. This includes the Critical Discourse theory, Descriptive backing theory, and Semantics and Pragmatics. The Critical Discourse theory aided by Semantics forms the basis of the analysis of the meanings of personal names, as the research unveils the gender connotations enshrined in these names. The fourth chapter provides the methodological considerations of the study. This entails a thorough discussion of the research strategy, the research design, data collection methods, and the ethical considerations of the study. The fifth chapter presents the data gathered through various data gathering instruments. The sixth chapter analyses and discusses the data. A detailed discussion on personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer is given, with several personal names being analysed and their gender connotations being exposed. The seventh and final chapter concludes the research by providing a synopsis of the findings and offering recommendations.

1.18 CONCLUSION

This chapter laid down the foundations for this study. It provided a detailed introduction to the study through the presentation of a comprehensive backdrop of the study, a concise discussion of the literature review, an outline of the theoretical framework that informs the study, a presentation of the research objectives and research questions, the justification of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, and finally the breakdown of all the thesis chapters. Chapter two presents the reviewed literature for the study.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review is indisputably a significant component of any scientific inquiry. The primary objective of undertaking such a process is to contextualize the research study and provide a justification for its significance. It is within this background that this chapter analyses literature based on the aspects of naming from a global, regional and local context. This chapter explores significant literature published on issues regarding naming and gender. The major aim was to show the points of departure by showing how this study contributes to an existing body of onomastics knowledge. There were some studies which were insightful to the present research and therefore act as a spring board upon which arguments raised in the following chapters are anchored. The emphasis is on the ways in which these other studies shed light on the present study. A sociological inquest into naming practices provides an excellent opportunity to study the complex social processes of the gender relations that exist among the Zezuru people in Buhera South.

This chapter sustains arguments to be raised in the discussion and analysis of the research findings in chapter 6. The first section looks at what naming is all about. The second section describes the different trends in naming beginning with the global trends, then the African trends, and lastly narrows it down to the Zimbabwean situation. The third section of the chapter looks at the importance of giving a personal name; this comprises of a detailed discussion on the significance of giving a person a name. The fourth section of the chapter focuses on the people who are responsible for naming from a global, African, and Zimbabwean context. The fifth section looks at gender, patriarchy and stereotyping as enhanced through various gendered names. The sixth section looks at naming and identity. The final section of this chapter looks at the relationship between the name given to an individual and the gender status of the name bearer. It is worth noting that while the study of naming may provide important information for a wide variety of sociological theories as expounded by the mentioned scholars, this area particularly has been greatly overlooked and underestimated. Many authors have written on onomastics in general but not much has been written on the relationship between gender and naming. It is important to define what naming is when one is conducting a study on onomastics.

2.2 WHAT IS NAMING

Likaka (2009:21) states that “having a name is living; and there will be nothing where there is no name.” This testifies that every individual must have a name to be identified with. From an African point of view, a person needs a name in order to share life with the living. Lombard (1977) adds that each name must become a living person to him; someone with a personality and character filling a specific place and significance in a family and society. Allen (1983) observes that to name is to control, redefine and demystify. Similarly, Gilmore (1982:698) states that “naming something is to make it knowable, thus we disarm a threatening exterior universe of hostile others.” Davies (1989a) argues that the language we use daily promotes and perpetuates the social structure along gender lines. He adds that in passing on language to our children, we are also passing on a relative entrapment in the social order we might well want to move beyond, and this language usually carries with it loaded gender connotations. Enshrined within the Zezuru personal names is the fact that people are either male or female. The importance of names is insightful to the present study, in that names can go as far as reflecting the gender status of the name bearer.

Odelle (2012) states that names are a complex tapestry comprised of several interpretive threads, each requiring a distinctive unravelling. Odelle’s observation is very insightful to this study because it points to the fact that personal names are rich with information which needs to be unearthed; and gender, which is at the core of this study, is a big component of this information. The semantic transparency of personal names is not always apparent. Kimenyi (1989) in Batoma (2006) states that the linguistic meaning of a name may be opaque due to several factors which include that a name may be a loan-word, that is, a word borrowed from a foreign language; African personal names are usually brief and figurative; and that figuration and brevity characterize oral discursive practices. According to Diagne (2005, 2006), nouns are used in the verbal act of naming among the Bantu people. The scholars that have already been mentioned have looked at the composition of names in relation to their meanings. This study goes further by looking at how the meanings of these personal names relate to the gender status of the name bearer.

What is unique about personal names is that the linguistic meaning does not exhaust the onomastic meaning of the name; it can only assist to construct, deconstruct or understand it. Ntohombaye (1983) in Batoma (2006) state that the linguistic structure of a name offers a basis

for the first level explanation from which the other levels will branch off. This first level is interchangeably called the first meaning, semantic meaning, denotative meaning, or literal meaning. Pfu kwa (2007) quotes Crystal (1980:109) by stating:

“Denotation is a term used in semantics as part of the classifications of types of meaning; as opposed to connotation which involves the relationship between a linguistic unit and the non-linguistic entities to which it refers...it is thus equivalent to referential meaning. Denotation points to an object being referred to. A name can have referential properties or meaning where it points to or denotes a person or an object.”

Crystal’s definition is in line with Meiring’s (1980) argument that the importance of a name lies in what it refers to. Crystal (1980) calls denotative meaning “referential meaning” – i.e. to denote is to refer to. In a way, denotation can be seen as a transitional point in the transformation of a lexical item into a full onomastics item.

The second level is called the explanatory or connotative meaning. In this post-lexical phase, a name assumes referential functions and begins to collect connotations. Crystal (1980:82) defines connotation as:

“A term used in semantics as part of a classification of types of meaning; as opposed to denotation. Its main application is with reference to the emotional associations (personal or communal) which are suggested by, or are part of the meaning of a linguistic unit especially, a lexical item. Alternative items for connotative meaning include effective and emotive. The underlying feature of this term is “association” which carries affective qualities. The meaning of a name loses its clear-cut literal and referential qualities that are found in lexical and denotative meaning. It moves to the abstract and psychological realms that are more difficult to configure. The lexical item by now has lost its semantic link with its referent and it becomes an onomastic label. At this stage, connotation is now firmly saddled in the onomastics realm where names carry their meaning and significance by association with or sometimes by the emotions they evoke.”

This second level is of paramount importance and is reached through the reconstruction of the motivations behind a name; that is, the reasons why a name has been bestowed on a name bearer. This level of meaning can be called the cultural meaning of the name, for it is the window into the history and philosophy associated with the name. Van Langendonck (1987,

2001) describes this as “associative meaning” which has social and cultural implications while Raper (1987) calls it pragmatic meaning. Van Langendonck (1987) states that associative meaning can be cultural, emotive, or social. Pfukwa (2007) states that most onomasticians – like Meiring (1980, 1993), Nicolaisen (1987), Raper (1987) and Neethling (1995) – link connotation with onomastics. To quote Nicolaisen (1978:43), “naming is a process by which words become names through association...using a name involves knowledge of the appropriate association.”

Descriptive backing informed this study as well. Pfukwa (2007) states that the concept of descriptive backing extends the meaning of a name by viewing it as a loose collection of “all associations” around the name. According to Meiring (1993) in Louwrens (1993:4), descriptive backing “amounts to the collective content of all conventional beliefs and connotations attached to a name.” These beliefs and connotations can include even the wildest speculations. They may have a link with the original meaning of the name or they may not.

Leslie and Skipper (1990:279) argue that “the meaning of names is socially negotiated.” There are no final arbiters for the meaning of personal names. This means that we construct the meaning of personal names through social negotiation rather than taking them as epiphenomena to living. The meaning of a name can be viewed as an aggregate of speculations that include and simultaneously exclude certain attributes associated with the name in question. Thus, the Zezuru share common meanings to the gendered names they give to their children. Through descriptive backing, from Meiring’s point of view, names become an integral component of the cultural and historical narratives of a community.

Meiring’s view on descriptive backing sheds light on the present study through the idea that for us to arrive at the true meaning of a name, we must consider the conventional beliefs of the society in which the name is found. This means that when we want to know the meaning of Zezuru personal names and to identify the names which are appropriate to a particular gender, patriarchal beliefs must be taken into consideration. These scholars’ views on how to arrive at the different meanings of names are very relevant to this research. However, this study wanted to find the gendered messages enshrined in Zezuru personal names.

The views of Kimenyi (1989), Neethling and Crystal (1980) certainly shed light on this research in that it is in the connotative nature of Zezuru names that gender connotations are engulfed. As such, African names with Zezuru names included must not be taken for granted. These names are pregnant with meaning which needs to be unearthed. For one to know the true

meaning of a name, one must have linguistic and sociological knowledge of the name. It is not only the traditional linguistic onomastics means of interpreting names which is required, as the connotational artistry must also come into play for one to obtain the real meaning of a name.

Lawson (1988) regards names as primary texts of personal identity. They occupy a privileged and strategic place within the language and are rich with information pertaining to the identity of the name bearer. The aim of this research was to investigate how names given to individuals inform people about the name bearer's gender status. Lawson adds that by naming a child, you fulfil the positive function of giving a sense of who they are and of belonging to a community – in the absence of which, one can feel a sense of alienation that can bring disastrous consequences. Lawson's views were very helpful to this study in establishing that names as another form of identity can go as far as reflecting the gender status of the name bearer.

Pfukwa (2013:57) states that “a personal name is a social statement reflecting the bearer, the namer and the social environment in which the name is found.” Pongweni (1983) articulates that Shona personal names can be classified into six categories, depending on the circumstances prevailing in the family or clan at the time of one's birth. The categories are as follows:

- (a) *Zita remudumba* – the maternity home name; i.e. the name given to a child in the excitement of the moment, to welcome the new arrival and to congratulate the parents.
- (b) *Zita regombwa* – the name “surrounded by the spirits”; i.e. a lineage or titular name.
- (c) *Zita rejemedza* – the name given to a child at the diviner's suggestion after the child's incessant crying.
- (d) *Zita remadunhurirwa* – a nickname, descriptive of character or inclinations. Such a name is obviously given to a grown-up person in addition to their original name in any of the preceding categories.
- (e) *Zita rechihani* – a name given to a child to mark an important event.
- (f) *Zita rekudzadura* – a name adopted by an individual to replace any of the above, for example if the original is regarded as embarrassing.

Koopman and Zungu (2013:61) declare that the names in the Zulu anthroponymic system can be categorized as follows:

- (a) The personal name given to a child soon after birth (*igama lasekhaya*).
- (b) The colonial or European-origin name which a child may later get in life (*igama lesilungu*).

- (c) The clan-name (*isibongo*).
- (d) The clan-praise(s) (*isithakazelo*).
- (e) The nickname (*isidlaliso*).

The categories given by Pongweni (1983), Koopman and Zungu (2013) differ from the present study in that they only look at the categorization of names, whereas this study looked at how the names given to individuals can be gendered. These works however did inform this study especially regarding the first category given by Koopman and Zungu which deals with the personal name given to a child soon after birth (*igama lasekhaya*); this relates to the present study's investigation of how personal names can be gendered. It is most likely that the names found in the various given categories might also be gendered.

Thipa (1984 and 1986) in Neethling (2005:12) puts forward six categories that he identifies for classifying personal names:

- (a) Belief in and a response to the supernatural:

The Basotho and amaXhosa do not regard the birth of a child a result of any physiological actions. Instead, they regard the birth a result of some supernatural benevolence. To the Xhosa people who are Christians, such gratitude will go towards God, known as *uThiso*. To non-Christians, such gratitude may go to *uQamata* or the ancestors. According to Thipa, this category accommodates many Xhosa personal names. Koopman (2002) expresses that this category of personal names is very prominent among the Zulu people and describes them as "names referring to the perceived role of God in the birth."

- (b) "Rocking the boat":

This deals with the birth of illegitimate children. According to Thipa (1984:112), "traditional Basotho and Xhosa have a fundamentally religious attitude to sex." He adds that a sexual offence "rocks the boat" and harms the smooth relationship in the home, the community, and between the community and the supernatural. Neethling (2005) states that the irony in such names is that the poor innocent child is burdened with a name that will forever remind him or her of the unfortunate circumstances surrounding his or her conception and birth.

- (c) The expectation of parents for their children:

This category is very common and represents the largest category in the Xhosa society. Koopman (2002:34) states that these names usually reflect the state of mind of the parents at the time of naming the child.

(d) Reincarnation:

Thipa (1984) states this has to do with naming children after prominent persons in society or in the world. The hope is that the good qualities of the prominent person will continue through his namesake. Politicians come into play in this regard. Thipa (1984) articulates that “with the rise of a Black Consciousness movement and also with the rise of African nationalism brought about very largely by political independence, the pattern of naming seems to be changing.”

(e) Names which refer to historical and other memorable events:

Neethling (2005) expresses that this category is not prominent at all among the Xhosa people.

(f) Names which have something to do with death:

Thipa states that death with its many unfathomable mysteries, plays an important role in most societies. And just like other societies, the death of a child among the Xhosa brings traumatic moments. Usually, if a child is born after the parents have experienced the death of another child, the new child may be given a derogatory name to convince the evil forces responsible for the previous death that nobody really cares about this new child and therefore should not be interested in the child. De Klerk and Bosch (1995:70) refer to such names as ‘derogatory protective’, because they serve as distracters in making the ancestors believe that the new child is unwanted.

Neethling (1995) adds two other categories to the categories given by Pongweni (1983), Koopman and Zungu (2013), and Thipa (1984 and 1986). He adds what he calls the ‘Composition/Extension of the family.’ On this, Neethling states that parents are fond of giving children names that refer to the structure of the family – for example, the sex of the child or the number of children. In his study of Zulu names, Koopman (2002) found that this category constituted 31% of his collected names. De Klerk and Bosch (1995:78) state that this category of names is usually a social comment on the size and composition of the family, the number of children, and their respective sexes.

Neethling (1995) states that Thipa (1983) left out a very common category which has to do with special circumstances in the family or community just prior to or during birth.

It was in the interest of this research to find out if the categories given by Pongweni (1983) and Thipa (1984) could correctly accommodate the personal names given to Zezuru people, and go further to assess these names to see if they have gender biases. Fortunately, the research benefited a great deal from the categories of personal names provided by the various scholars,

in that they it looked at how the names in these various categories reflected the gender status of the name bearers.

Makondo (2009) states that Shona people's selection and use of personal names is not ad hoc as it entails several interrelated factors that require one's undivided attention to decipher them. He adds that one must consider the context that gave rise to the various given names the Shona people have. Makondo (2009) identifies eleven interrelated factors which influence the choice of names among the Shona people. These are age, gender, education, namers, residential area, religion, profession, birth order, historical and birth circumstances. The latter encompasses political, economic and social issues amongst others. The factors identified by Makondo greatly shape one's perceptions, priorities, worldview and inclinations. From his research, Makondo established that different age groups, genders, namers and people from various residential areas preferred various types of names. It was also established that a name may be a result of more than one factor, which is an indication that these factors should not be looked at in isolation. Neethling (1995:957) comprehensively discusses the role played by socio-cultural circumstances. Brender (1963) in Lawson (1988) states that there are motivational factors in the naming process which include psycho analysis, family tradition, religion, fashion, and the desire for uniqueness. These are all sources from which namers derive names. Kahari (1990) opines that the significance of names arises from socio-historical circumstances. Sengani and Ladzani (2014:34) state that "names are purported to be a deliberate reflection of events and the people's circumstances related to history." It was in the interest of this research that the researcher sought to find out the extent to which personal names given to Zezuru people mirror gender in society.

From the views of the various scholars, it appears that there are several factors which influence name choices. This research intended to further investigate these factors by looking at the personal names given to people and the circumstances which led to the names. While the abovementioned scholars dealt with various factors that influence name choice, this study was mainly concerned with gender as one of the factors in as far as it is reflected in Zezuru personal names.

2.3 TRENDS IN ANTHROPONOMASTICS

2.3.1 WORLD TRENDS IN ANTHROPONOMASTICS

This literature review realizes that the uniqueness and meaningfulness of personal names becomes apparent when some insights are drawn from American and European scholars who have made important and notable contributions in onomastics studies. The consulted literature reveals that considerable research has been done on personal names in different parts of the world. According to Pfukwa (2007), American scholars have been very active in the study of personal names; for example, Lawson (1973), Nicolaisen (1978), McGoff (2005), Bright (2005), Smith (in McGoff 2005), Lance (in McGoff, 2005) and Callary (in McGoff 2005). Van Langendonck (1987, 2001) and Eichler (1987) have spearheaded European research on personal names while Lawson (1988) has worked on Jewish onomastics. This existing research on personal names has dwelled extensively on the meanings of personal names and its related aspects such as the motivation behind naming, but very little has been written on naming and its relationship with gender.

Scholars in America and Europe have made significant contributions to onomastics studies; focusing on personal names as well. English people choose names based on variables such as the historical or religious links of the personal name. This research looks at how personal names can be gendered.

According to Dunkling (1981), the English people also consider family traditions (i.e. using grandparents' names) when naming. Ferguson in Rosenthal (2005) is concerned with the etymology of family names in France, England and Germany as these are related to the Teutonic name system. Ferguson states:

“The etymology of proper names is the only branch of the subject which can in any sense be popular, for what men, even those who care not to enquire the language they speak, feel some interest or curiosity in knowing the meaning of the names they bear” (Ferguson in Rosenthal, 2005: 3).

A study of Dutch personal names by Van Langendonck (1987, 1983) sheds valuable light on the use of the semantic theory in the characterization of personal names. This study on Shona personal names as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers hoped to benefit greatly from the semantic theory. Van Langendonck (2001) observes that personal names constitute the most diversified category of proper names for they fulfill the functions of addressing and identifying a wide possibility of categorizations based on gender.

Henning (1995) in Makondo (2009) identifies two prominent naming orders; the Western order and the Eastern order. The family name is commonly known as the western order and is usually used in most European countries like Britain, America, Australia and Zimbabwe. The first name is called the Christian name after the Norman Conquest in Britain. Theophonic names are very popular among Arabic, Semitic and many other languages. France, Germany and Scandinavia have lists of approved first names to be given to children or else they will not be legally recognized. It was therefore the mandate of this study to assess if the same practice is found among the Zezuru naming system.

Bright (2003) in Pfukwa (2007) uses an anthropological linguistic approach to study the names of North American Indians. He unearths the myth behind descriptive names which are often termed anthroponyms (personal names) and toponyms (geographical names) in the field of onomastics. Hansen (1948) in Lawson (1988) studies nicknames and relates them to feelings of inferiority. Dexter (1948) in Lawson (1988) carries out research which finds that those with nicknames are more popular. James (1979) in Lawson (1988) also devotes his research to nicknames. The work on nicknames is insightful to this study because nicknames have an influence on the name bearer much like gendered names do. However the study on nicknames differs in that this current study investigates the personal names given to individuals upon birth in the Zezuru culture.

Personal names are used by Euro-Asian-American people to define the world, develop cultural identities, and pass on certain feelings. Arno (1994) conducts extensive research on the use of first names in Fiji and among the Hopi people in America. Fieldman (1990) states that for the Penan and Inuit people of Canada, personal names are inherited from the dead. He adds that the Inuit people stand above others for regarding the chosen name as entering and merging with the child's soul at birth. This study benefits from the views emanating from the world trends in that the Zezuru society – like any other society – cannot resist borrowing aspects of the global naming trends such as the fact that personal names reflect the cultural identities of the name bearers. It is in this cultural aspect that gender stereotyping is usually found. This study benefited greatly from these world trends; especially the fact that there are factors that come into play when choosing a personal name for an individual.

The Quran (49:11) dictates that Muslim personal names should not be distorted, mutilated or corrupted into something else, as they are expressive of a whole history, culture, religion and

realm. This study wanted to establish the importance of personal names among the Shona and see the extent to which these names reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

According to Dumisani in Lieberson (2000), some languages do not have separate names for men and women. While in other languages, regular inflections are used respectively on the names for grammatical gender difference to indicate the gender status of the names. So that “John and Jane” for instance, who are both from the same Hebrew name, are represented as “Johann and Johanna” in German respectively. These world-naming trends considerably informed this study; in that while the existing research establishes that there are separate names for men and women, this study wanted to find out exactly what in Zezuru personal names make them gendered. For his research, Dumisani in Sue and Telles (2007) studies the naming practices among the Italians and Jews in the United States in 1910. It emerges that the names Mary and Joseph were popular among the female and male Italians as Sara and Louis was among Jewish females and males respectively.

The colonization of many parts of the world, including Zimbabwe, significantly affected or influenced world anthroponomastic trends. Early settlers brought with them ‘imported names’ of foreign or exotic origin into the new areas they settled in, thereby injecting their “...alien culture...” Ramose (1999:130). These personal names were also used for subordinating and assimilating people. Additionally, personal names were used as a form of claiming and confirming possession over space (Neethling 2005). Frederikse (1982) remarks that only those bolder in opposition to white dominance maintained their names. Hudson (1980:78) states that “those who adopted new names did so through learning from the colonizers by direct instruction or by watering their behaviour.” Some names were chosen for sentimental, humorous, literacy, religious or high cultural reasons. This is the reason why some Zezuru names cannot be traced locally. This research gained some meaningful or insightful views on the study of personal names from other continents.

2.3.2 AFRICAN ANTHROPONOMASTIC TRENDS IN GENERAL

Pfukwa (2007) states that Southern African researchers have been very active in the field of personal names. She identifies Koopman (1990, 2004), Raper (1983, 1987), Neethling (1994, 1996), Meiring (1980, 1993, 1994, 1996), Moller (1998) and Jenkins (1994). In Pfukwa’s view, these scholars developed a platform upon which other scholars such as De Klerk (1998), De

Klerk and Bosch (1995), Haron (1999), Mabuza (1997), Molefe (1999) and Prabhakaran (1999) later built on. Koopman writes about female names among the Zulu, but this present study looks at gender and naming among the Shona. Koopman looks at Zulu female names in terms of their linguistic structure, whereas this research focused on the meanings of Zezuru names – both the denotational and connotational meaning of the names.

This section explores the notable contributions to the study of names across Africa. Makondo states that Cloete (2000) deliberates on names and spaces in Kenya with reference to Wambui Waiyaki Otieno. Willis (1994) conducted research on personal names and the construction of social ideas among the Bondi and Giriama. Molema (1920) in Makondo (2009) studies the naming trends among the Bantu. Monning (1967) in Makondo (2009) examines the situation amongst the Pedi people. Alia (1990) studies women, names and power. Research on onomastics and the Igbo tradition of politics was conducted by Ebeogu (1993). Ekpo (1978) study the structure in Ibibio names. Ramose (1974) studies how the Sanuma acquire their names and Lieberson and Bell (1992) conducted a thorough study on children's first names. The above mentioned studies informed the present research by providing important information for the analysis of gendered personal names.

Msiti (1970:213) states that “from an African point of view the naming ceremony is a big social event because a personal name executes multiple functions.” The Swahili people in Tanzania, Kenya, Somalia and the Comoros Islands have a proverb that says if you inherit a name you must also adopt its affairs (Finnegan, 1970; Ibekwe, 1998 in Makondo, 2009). Musere and Byahutanga (1998) in Makondo (2009) state that the use of Buganda personal names demonstrates that those traditional names have deeper meanings than is generally apparent and are summaries of the society's philosophy. Among the Banyoro people, the first-born male twin is commonly named Singoma while the female is named Nangoma. The different names point to gender difference between the twins.

Nissim (1973) in Makondo (2009) studies the naming system of African societies in Chad, Togo, Cameroon, Mali, and Upper Volta and tries to show how traditional names reflect the ritual relationships between God and the people. Weiner (1976) in Makondo (2009) describes names as having the potential of denoting cultural identity. Folom (1958) in Faik-Nzuji (1974) analyses selected personal names of people among the Bakongo of Lower Zaire. Faik-Nzuji (1974) states that Luba personal names are a result of a social-cultural motivation, and not a random fact. The research conducted by the mentioned scholars informed this study because

personal names are rich in and can carry information concerning gender, which is the thrust of this research.

Neethling (1995:957) notes that name-giving among African cultures reflects the socio-cultural circumstances of the group or clan. In Angola, Angolan Ovimbundu women's names convey the thought patterns of a people. For instance, the given name *Vihemba* is meaningful as it denotes a child whose birth was difficult and required the use of change. The Huli and the Wim people of New Guinea use peathonyms (sorrow name) (Glasse, 1987:204 in Neethling 1995). The Nyoro people of Uganda who name their boys and girls after four and three months respectively, use personal names to express the names' "...state of mind..." as they are illusive, and their understanding demands some knowledge "...of the web of thought, imagery and metaphor" (Beatrice 1957:100).

Odebode and Onadipe (2011) use a pragmatic approach to study the naming patterns of the Obiku among the Yoruba. They find that certain politeness phenomenon are either violated or obeyed during the course of naming the Abiku children; this is reflected in the meanings of some of the personal names. It is established that Abiku names are usually short and thereby economical, as more is communicated (within a few strands of letters), but the names were also found to be rich in meaning. The study is generic and sociocultural and is very relevant to this research. The research by Odebode and Onadipe is general in nature and is different from the current study which aimed to study the relationship between the names given to individuals and their gender status.

The introduction of Christianity was observed by Saarelma-Maunumaa (1996) in Namibia among the Eling Okakoa and Oshigambo congregations who abandoned their traditional names for biblical and Finnish ones. It emerges that the phonotactics of the Ovombo written languages namely, Oshindoga and Oshikwanyama, accounts for the etymological shift of European and biblical names like Mary (Luke 10 :38-42; John 11 :1-7) to Martha, Marta (the popular female name) and John to Johannes, Johannes, Johannes (the popular male name).

After analyzing English and Xhosa naming practices De-klerk and Bosch (1995:69) conclude that the African cultures are significantly different from the English in terms of the motivation for naming among the English, there is a wide range of information available on naming practices (Herbert 1994). What is noticeably absent in most cases is reference to the meaning or etymology of the name. In some western societies naming is primarily a system of reference not symbolization and for English speakers; proper names typically differ notably from other

words in their lack of sense or meaning in relation to the total linguistic system to which they refer.

Koopman (1990:43) concludes that in Zulu society, givers and bearers are always aware of the meaning of the name and the literal meaning of the name is always directly related to the reason for giving it. The ability to read between the lines as it were depends upon a cultural continuity in much language is embedded and which is not open to all. Only those who grow up within the community can perhaps, participate fully in this expanded communities interaction. Beatrice (1957:37) reiterates by saying, “It is well-known that African names have meaning.” De Klerk and Bosch (1995:69) say, “African names retain their meaning –bearing function and are much less arbitrary, their meaning generally being transparent and accessible and often recording complex details about their bearers”. De Klerk and Bosch’s views on the characteristics of African names will give direction to the present study in that this study wants to establish the extend to which Zezuru personal names can categorize the bearers of the names along gender lines.

Koopman (1998) says that the effects of western acculturation, religion and economic pressures on the Zulu people of South Africa is reflected in male names like Umziwenhlanhla (house of fortune), Uzwelabantu (country of blacks) and female names like Untombikamina (girl of her motives). Koopman (1998) identified six reasons behind the Zulu personal names that shed valuable light to this research. Koopman and Suzan (1994) focused on factors behind Zulu personal names used in the rural and urban settings and concluded that names, culture changes with social changes. She observes that Zulu children have two personal names their *amagama asekhaya* (home names) and their English or school names. Still on the Zulu people, Turner (1992) in Herbert (1994) posits that names perform various psychological functions when they express tension, discontent and censure. Within these contexts, names minimize friction by providing a means to redress problematic issues in society.

Turner’s (1992) realization that the message insinuated in names thrives only in its ‘native’ climate is vital for a study that seeks to understand the given names from the perception of their users. Neethling (1998) identified five factors behind the use of personal names by the Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana and Pondo people of South Africa. These are religious symbolic names (explicitly mentioning God, spirits or ancestors), commemorate names (marking an event, date or person), delegatory protective names (used as destructors to make the ancestors think the child is not wanted, owing to pronouns deaths or misfortune in the family names encode social

commentary (Thipa, 1984) and names which record physical characteristics of the baby or emotions such as joy or gratitude. Herbert (1994) realized that the South African Tsoya people use personal names to keep their history, protest socio-political discriminatory practices like apartheid. These scholars' observations were handy as this study sought to establish the relationship between naming and gender among the Shona in Zimbabwe.

Neethling (1995) has it that that name giving among Bantu cultures reflects the social- cultural circumstances of the group or clan. Moyo (1996) observed the Ngoni-Tumbuka speaking people of northern Malawi who prefers names with a historical importance that respectively comment on the family and clan condition. Koopman (1990) found out that in Zulu society name givers and recipients of the names are usually aware of the meaning of the name and the literal meaning of the name is always related to the context in which it is given. Mbiti (1970) says personal names in Africa execute multiple functions. For instance, to the Twi or Akan people in Ghana, a personal name is given as a way of finding out on evildoers while among the Nuer people of Sudan, personal names are used to define people's relations with other members of the society. While the observations by various scholars looked at many other aspects which relate to personal naming in the African onomastics landscape they did not look at how personal names relate to gender hence this study seeks to establish the relationship between names given to Zezuru people and their gender status.

2.3.3 ANTHROPONOMASTIC TRENDS IN ZIMBABWE

The anthroponomastic history of Zimbabwe dates back to the 1930s when Roberts (1931) studied fifteen personal names. With the passage of time interest in the field also grew as was evidenced by the increase in number of researchers who wrote about the subject. Mharapara in 1954 dealt with twenty-one WaZezuru boys' and seven girls' names and their meanings. In 1957 Jackson studied the names that Shona people prefer and the reasons for their choices. Pongweni (1983) wrote on Shona nomenclature. Kahari (1997) came up with the broad categories of classifying Shona personal names. In 1998 Chitando also looked at Shona naming patterns. Makondo in (2009, 2010, 2010a, 2010d) wrote a lot on the anthroponomastic discipline.

Makondo (2013:81) says that the period 1931-1977 was dominated by European researchers while since 1979 Zimbabwean first language speakers have taken the initiative in the field of

onomastics. The first categorization of Shona personal names into four groups; namely, names derived from family quarrels, death related names, descriptive names and lastly new order names was done by Jackson in 1957. Kahari (1997) moved a step further from what Jackson had done and identified two broad categories which he subdivided into four groups of Shona names. In 1983, Pongweni looked at the linguistic structure of Shona personal names. Chitando in 1998 looked at Shona naming patterns. In 2007, Pfukwa wrote on Zimbabwean war names. Makondo in 2010 wrote on Shona anthroponomastics. There are several papers which were presented during various conferences with regard to Zimbabwean anthroponomastics. These works gave direction to this study in various ways as they will form the bedrock on which this current study will be anchored on. To date a lot has been written on personal names dating back to the period in the 1930s to date but none has looked at the relationship between naming and gender which is at the core of the present study.

Makondo (2009:208) adds that there are phases in the naming patterns among the Shona. He came up with what he called the 'decisive' political phases that greatly impacted on the Shona first names. He was building on earlier works by Pfukwa (2003) and Chitando (1998) who identified two and four phases respectively. The propounded phases are as follows:

- (a) Pre-1890 era – During this period, Zimbabweans had contact with the outside world through the Muslim, Arabs and Portuguese and Nguni groups that left South Africa during mfecane. During this period, names were predominantly in the local languages.
- (b) 1890-1950s – This period saw outright moves at the ---erasure--- Pfukwa (2007:105) of Shona naming patterns. The idea was to deny and degrade the Shona people of their Africanness through the popularization of Western oriented English and Christian names. Rennick (2005) in Makondo (2009) also talked about the effect of colonization on names. This period saw the mushrooming of names whose etymology suggests that they are of foreign origins. There was the modification and readaptation of Shona names as the namers battled to safeguard their legacy.
- (c) 1950s-79 – This was the era of resistance to all western oriented nomenclature forms and the Zimbabwean war of liberation was a decisive factor. Zimbabweans went on a massive campaign to obliterate the western oriented naming patterns. Zimbabweans had realized that names were powerful barometers of social relations (Allen, 1983, Herbert 1994). This era saw the reinstatement and redefinition of Africanness as the parochial calculated western version was discarded. Through these names, a preferred vision was designed that rallied Zimbabweans around the liberation struggle. Some

people opted for Shona names suppressing their western names so that they match the popular trend of at least having a Shona name resulting in people having more than one name.

- (d) 1980-90s – Makondo calls the euphoric period or era that was characterized by the declaration of independence. Names of conformity were popularized as almost everyone wanted to be associated with the ruling party. Shona, Christian names and English names proliferated within this era.
- (e) 1990-to date – The fifth era is characterized by a lot of disillusionment due to economic and political meltdown in Zimbabwe. People resorted to the use of names that project their perspectives on the status quo. The study found out that people resorted to names which reflected their disgruntlement in their quest for a better life.

Pongweni (1983) says that the Shona nomenclature trends are closely related to the political history of the country. Before the coming of the Pioneer Column in the 19th century, the Shona were known of giving their children names derived from their culture just like in other cultures. Pongweni (1983:2) says “the Christians missionaries associated such names with ‘heathenism’ and therefore insisted that converts to the new faith should abandon at the font and choose new ones from the bible.” During that time, Christian and other western names were viewed as outward signs of the convert’s acceptance of God’s grace. Moyo (2012) says that with the advent of Christianity and colonialism in Malawi and Southern Africa as a whole, it meant that the colonized had to be absorbed in the new establishment. He went on to say that employees renamed Black Africans with European names. The other reason for the change in names was that the Whites found African names rather difficult to pronounce. Machaba (2002) says that indigenous African names were also associated with sins, backwardness, darkness, etc. The adopted names, it would appear suited the prevailing socio-cultural and political environment. In South Africa, among the Xhosa speakers, Neethling (2003:47) found out that with the introduction of Christianity and education in churches and schools respectively Xhosa speakers in the early 19th century there came a new development where people changed names. English names were bestowed upon Xhosa children by the missionaries (at baptism) as a sign of being born again in Christ and by teachers (at school). These names were referred to as ‘church’ and ‘school’ names respectively and these names became popular.

Moyo (2012) says “naming practices have been in contact with colonialism in Malawi and the rest of Southern Africa, with the result that this has affected the socio- cultural ideologies which were traditionally embedded with naming practices. The result was that names bestowed on

individuals or places changed with the historical times. At times they remained indigenous, were westernized or fused indigenous and other African names.” This study gets a lot of insights from Moyo’s ideas especially the idea that naming patterns underwent some changes. The current study wants to establish gender connotations enshrined in the Zezuru names before and after western influence.

The coming of African nationalist movements which resisted colonial domination saw a paradigm shift in the naming pattern with many people rejecting names associated with colonialism. Pongweni (1983:2) says “Christian names were rejected in favour of Shona names”. Herbert (1994-99:224) suggests that there have been four stages in Southern African naming patterns namely, stage 1 were people had an African name only, stage 2 with African name + English name, stage 3 English name + English name and lastly stage 4 comprised of African name + African name. Neethling (2005:77) says that the bestowal of an English name came about with the introduction of Christianity as well as education to the Xhosa through the efforts of missionaries. The same scenario was also experienced among the Shona people. Some Shona people included took the names voluntarily associating English names with civilization. Herbert (1994:6) says, “The ‘so called Christian names were never well- integrated into the indigenous systems of naming in Southern Africa’ because such names lack the meaningfulness criterion”. With reference to the Shona people, these names were accepted and integrated in their naming system in the early days but with the passage of time people reverted to their indigenous names. Although there has been a tendency to opt for indigenous names at the expense of the western names, whether integrated or not, the system of resorting to western names have become part of the name giving patterns in many parts of Africa with Zimbabwe included. While the above scholars looked at how western names influenced the naming patterns in Africa, without looking at whether the names had gender connotations, the present study however will be confined to Zezuru personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

2.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME

“Behind every name, there lies a story”(Algeo, 1985:94).

Choosing a name for child represents an important cultural resolution and personal names in most cases reflects one's identity, particularly the identity to do with one's gender statut. The first name, which comes after birth, is important in identifying the particular new entrant as well as exposing the expectations of the family around a number of issues. Personal names usually carry with them long-term consequence because personal names as labels usually influence the socialization of children and contribute to the development of personal identities and at times their behaviours in life. Barthes (1994) says, "names, like voices, like odors, would be the terms of a languor: desire and death: 'the last sigh which remains of things'" Derrida (1995) in Makondo (2009) says "my proper name outlives me. After my death it will still be possible to name and speak of me."

The worldview of the Zezuru people can be understood in terms of their indigenous names. Relevance of the Zezuru naming system is that it encompasses the namers' spirituality which consists of beliefs, norms, values, practices and rituals concerning the meaning of life and the universe, and includes lifestyle practices that bring meaning to the life of an African. In short it can be said that Zezuru names are a synopsis of the way they view life. Marieme (2011:46) has this to say:

"In West Africa, your 'name says it all'. It is not a random choice, but a strategic decision to personify hope, a positive self-image, and self characterization."

Allport (1937) in Lawson (1988:97) says "one's name is the most important anchor point to selfhood". Clarke in Lawson (1988) adds that names were easier to recall than faces because the name of a person will remain years after the death of its bearer. Names are important source of information. They can indicate gender, marital status, birth place, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and position within a family or even within society. Personal names are viewed to be very important in various aspects and as such these views will shed light to the present study which seeks to study how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

Yanga (1978) in Zaire discovered that personal names are not merely used distinguish people from each other; rather they also function as linguistic indicators of socialization in that they are usually a reflection of various social relationships within a family and at times society as a whole. At a more general level, they play an indexical function of reflecting the sociocultural changes or events in the family and in the community as well. These views by Yanga (1978)

in Lawson (1988) will be handy to the present study which looks at how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer in that if personal names can have the potential of acting as agents of socialization they can as well socialize people along gender lines. Barthes (2003:68) says:

“The human person is born into a world that includes both language and community of language users and upon being thrust into the world, the individual does not immediately exist as a member of such a community. Rather, she/he must become a member of that community through the acquisition of language.”

Generally, the acquisition of language does not simply involve gaining the ability to use language, but also being deemed a member of the community of language users itself and this is achieved through being given a personal name. What happens in most cases is that, one must be named before one is allowed to gain access to the community and through that name one will be identified as being masculine or feminine.

Ramaeba and Mathangwane (2014) say that African names have meanings as they are chosen to communicate some message that could be related circumstances of the family at the time of birth, an event that took place at the time of birth or even religious belief of the parent. Thus, African names speak volumes about the lives of the namers and the named as is reflected in their meanings. A person's indigenous name most probably offers the first insight to his cultural origin. Koopman and Zungu (2013:63) say, “Names do not function in a vacuum; instead they function in a society. There is a strong link between naming and society”. They go to say that in any anthroponymic system, the wider context of naming is a socio- cultural one which reflects the norms, the practices, the dynamics, the conflicts, and the pressing issues of a particular society. They give an example of the Zulu anthroponymic system where personal names may be linked to inter-clan relationships, marriage negotiations, patrilineal descent, friction between co-wives, current events affecting the family, and a number of other issues. Faik- Nzuji (1974) says, “Among the Luba the power of the name consists of the belief that the name represents the soul of the individual. Therefore, to inherit or to receive someone's name is to inherit or receive at the same time his qualities, faults and even his destiny”. Zelensky (1970) in Sue and Telles (2007) is of the view that naming patterns and name choices may be an ideal measure for analyzing spatial and temporal variation in total cultural systems as it very much possible to know the culture of people through analyzing the meanings of their personal names. The study of naming practices provides a window into parental visions with

regard to their attitudes and expectations towards their children taking in consideration the gender status of the children. Sue and Telles (2007) say, “Naming practices represent behaviors which are much more concrete measures than attitudes and opinions”.

Makondo (2009) says that Shona first names have meanings that their users can readily identify through the associations of the object, action or concept projected by the names. In line with this Roberts (1931:89) in Makondo (2009) says “Shona people used to be called by names in the vernacular that conveyed some definite idea. These names incidentally were generally long and a stumbling block to those ignorant of the language, who were also careless in listening to the sounds emitted.”

Kahari (1991:282) says that Shona first names are “situation-tied.” Shona first names are pregnant with meaning and as a result they need not be taken for granted. Hodza quoted by Frederiskse (1982:23) if one’s to know the true meaning of Shona personal names, there is need to look at both the surface meaning and underlying meaning. The surface meaning is only there to brag while the underlying meaning deals with what is behind it. This is the entrenched meaning that is not immediately clear to a lay man. This meaning is the most important one because the Shona people usually pass their messages in veiled ways, for instance, through the use of figurative expressions (Pongweni 1996).

Personal names have the potential of indicating an individual’s relationship with the physical and social environment as is reflected in the meanings of some Zezuru personal names. Through personal names, one’s religion and belief system can be known and as such personal names play a very important role in society. Personal names thus are an indicator for measuring changes in attitudes and moral codes at specific historical epochs and periods in life.

Pongweni (1983) says that most cultures seem to agree that the relationship between the name and the thing, i.e. between symbol and referent, is so close and intimate. Potter (1950:142) in Pongweni (1983) goes further to say, “In Europe it was strongly and widely believed that the frivolous or malicious handling of a name in speech might imply insult or injury”. This usually will be emanating in most cases in the meaning of the name. Peter (2010) says, “A name is assumed to have the most significant effect on an individual’s ego”. He goes on to add that there is a strong relationship between a person’s name and the whole psychological on females. Peter (2010) is of the idea that names contain a certain kind of power that determines the

distinctiveness and uniqueness of each individual and can even influence the behaviour the bearer of the name.

Merleau-Ponty (1968:67) says, “As has often been said, for a child the thing is not known until it is named, the name is the essence of the thing and resides in it on the same footing as its color”. Ndiga Mbo (2004) states that Congolese anthroponyms are linguistic expressions reflective of Congolese thought, belief system, and philosophy. He conceives of them as texts decipherable to those who have the linguistic competence and cultural knowledge to interpret them. Koopman’s 1989 article on the etiology of Zulu personal names quotes Evans-Pritchard on the subject of personal names saying: “names of all kinds are social documents, which fix a person’s position in the social structure and define his relations to other members of society. Koopman and Zungu (2013:64) say, “Names are more meaningful within a society and particularly within a family, the context within which they are most often used”. Names are very sacrosanct among the Zezuru as is usually reflected by the respect which is given to the namers and the naming process. The Zezuru believe that there is a strong link between one’s name and the spiritual realm. When one is given a name it means that there is some form of bond on the name and its bearer and this in turn is transmitted to the spiritual realm. This is why when the Zezuru are performing various rituals which entails the living and the dead they mention the name of the person who is seeking help from the powers from above because they believe there is a lot of power in calling the name of the one who needs the intercession. While the above scholars look at the importance of personal naming in general the present study will be looking at one of the major function of Zezuru personal names, that of reflecting the gender status of the name bearer.

From African onomastic point of view proper names according to Batoma (2006) the onomastics meaning of a name is a cluster of several layers of meaning. The three layers are the linguistic which is also called literal or denotative meaning, the cultural layer which is sometimes confused with the etymological meaning and which is beyond the name givers’ motivations that it describes. This layer can provide the socio- cultural and philosophical precepts of a linguistic community. Finally, there is the pragmatic or interpellative layer, which indicates the meaning that a name takes on in the context of its use, be it an interpersonal, a situational or a social context. The three layers noted by Batoma informed this research which is aimed at how naming can be gendered since the study will look at the semantic meaning of personal names given to both male and female people.

Batoma(2009) says the Kabre of Northern Togo like many other ethnic groups in Africa, have developed a verbal strategy that involves the use of personal names and animal names to indirectly communicate their feelings and opinions, particularly in conflict- laden situations.

Mutemaand Njanji (2013) say that Shona personal names are repositories of human experiences as the name givers expose their joys, sorrows, perceptions on life in general as well as their gratefulness to the giver of life, God. However, some of the names especially those that show animosity, have a negative impact on the named such as embarrassment as well as promoting low esteem on the name bearer. The unfortunate part about the whole act is that it is the innocent child who will be burdened by the negative name. Sentiments raised by Mutema and Njanji (2013) that names are a source of venting out Shona people's feelings, sorrows and joys and that certain names are a burden to the name bearers came in handy to this research as the analysis of names in terms of their meanings was done to assess the relationship between the meaning of the name and the gender status of the name bearer.

African personal names have a high and potent cultural content which makes them to be culture specific. They are not just descriptive tags intended to separate one individual from another rather they are more than that for they can even personify the individual. Abernathy's in Olawale (2005:9) says, "There is much meaning in a name. If you are given the right name you start off with certain indefinable but real advantages." In an interview with a diviner, Berglund (1975:287) in Neethling says that the name is the person. He goes on to add that the name and the person are the same. The name is the word whereby that person is known so, the person and the name are one. The diviner suggests that harm can be done by an *umthakathi* (a witchdoctor) to a person if he knows the name of the person. Name and the name carrier appear to be interlinked that one cannot distinguish between them. Neethling (2005) says to 'do off your name' in an African society would be equal to laying down your identity, you cease to exist. Goethe in Zabeeh (1985:5) quoted by Neethling (2005) says, "A man's name is not like a cloak that merely hangs around him, it grows over him like his very skin .One cannot scrape and scratch at it without injuring the man himself. Neethling (2005:11) says, "Names in African context are furthermore usually 'meaningful' without fail". In most of the instances, speakers of Bantu languages in Southern Africa use the lexicon of the languages they speak to come up with a wide range of names which give to their children. Zezuru personal names are so much connected to the belief system of the Zezeru people. Neethling (2005) adds that semantic transparency is a major feature of African names. Neethling's observation is very true of Zezuru personal names and it informed this research to a greater extend. Most meanings of Zezuru

personal names point to the gender status of the name bearer as they give hints on how the name bearer is expected to behave in the Zezuru society.

Maybury-Lewis (1984:7) has it that personal names in Central Brazil not only function as forms of identity individual but in addition to this identity function they also transform individuals into persons. Thus, usually a person is expected to behave as to the dictates of the meaning of his or her name. Rosaldo (1984:22) says, “The semantic content of Ilongot names relates more profoundly to the interpersonal play of assertion and reply than to the structural properties individuation and differentiation”. This research which looks at how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer benefits a lot from the above line of thinking of associating certain names with a lot of advantages. If there are names which are gendered that will mean a particular gender group will be advantaged while on the other hand the other will be disadvantaged because of naming.

It is in light of the strong relationship between the Zezuru culture and names given to Zezuru people that this research embarked on investigating the linkage between the gender status of an individual and respective personal name accorded to him or her. Wasosa and Mareva (2014), say that in African culture just like in other cultures of the world, names in general are symbols of some meanings. They go on to add that names are an integral part of people’s culture, the ways of interacting amongst themselves and their environment. Pongweni (1983) says that Shona names, like those of other African cultures usually express the experiences or attitudes of the namers and society at large. He goes on to say that in analyzing these names, one has to be careful because it is not a simple task since one will be essentially engaging in a linguistic investigation, with social and political messages predominating the composition of most of the names. Through these names one must remember that he or she will be handling language data, mainly speech that has certain well-defined functions for the people who create and use it as a way of relaying this important information.

Sengani (2014) says that for one to understand the meaning of one’s name, he or she must speak the language of the bearer of the name, understand the culture or have the background knowledge about the name. Ndlovu (2014) regards a name as a significant instrument of studying the beliefs and values of a society. He makes reference to negative naming among the Shona which he thinks is used as a means of communication to control the behaviour of individuals as it influences thought and perceptions of members of the society on certain issues. The names can allude to a story about the family or the parents of the bearer. In a broader sense

it signifies the values, the hopes and fears and the conceptions of the ethnic group to which the person belongs. Makondo (2009) says that Shona first names have meanings that their users can readily identify and associate with various objects, animals, actions or concepts as contained and projected by the meanings of the names. Roberts (1931:89) quoted by Makondo (2009) says, “Shona people used to be called by names in the vernacular that conveyed some definite idea”. It is in light of such line of thinking that this research wants to find out the connection which is there between a name given to an individual and his or her gender status. Mbiti (1975:92-95) in Makondo says, “Most Shona parents gave their children names that reflected their own situation, ideals and frustrations”.

Biyela (2013) says that it should be remembered all the time that a name is given by an ethno-linguistic group in Africa usually depicts a significant character as well as an exposition of the circumstances of the name-bearer or the namer. On the other hand Likaka (2009) says, “A name or identity is a powerful thing. It is a descriptor that allows people to make quick judgments and assumptions about us”. From the views of these two scholars it would mean that by knowing the meaning of one’s name, one is usually tempted to come up with certain assumptions about the personality of the name bearer or the namers. Among the Zezuru one can come up with the behaviours expected of the two genders through the meanings of personal names given to people respectively. While naming can stigmatize the name bearers, it is a fast way to categorize individuals in society along gender lines and these names carry with them lot of information with regard to the culture of the named and the namer. Our names describe what we are currently and at times these names are a representation of how we perceive ourselves in this world. Makondo (2009) says that the Inuit people regard the chosen personal name as entering into and merging with the child’s soul at birth. He further posits that among the Inuit people, the name strengthens and protects the bearer thereby suggesting an incipient form of the Greek concept of the individual’s “daemon” that remain with the dead person but is reborn in the new name bearer whom they believe it protects.

Mpasha (2014) views personal naming as part and parcel of human mode of communication and which will be with us as long as we live. He goes on to say that African names and naming process is influenced by the socio-cultural interpretation of historical events which we experience in our lives. He gives the example of Northern Sotho culture where names are regarded as pointers to people’s hopes, dreams and aspirations. To the Sotho people, names can also reflect people’s religious beliefs, their geographical background as well as their philosophy of life and death. According to Mpasha’s view, the different names which are given

to people have various implications for their social construction as persons. He goes on to say that it can be concluded that the names and meaning attached to these names by Northern Sotho people plays a very important role in influencing the “personhood” of the individual, because it is believed that a given name does not only serve as a form of identity, but also influences the behaviour of the name bearer and determines the type of a person the individual will be in life. Neethling, (2005; 79) says that a scenario where a name given to a child influences the life or behavior of the name bearer can best be seen on the life of the late Nelson Mandela, the world renowned statesman who became South Africa’s first president after the democratic elections in 1994. The Xhosa name given to Mandela at birth was Rolihlahla, literally meaning ‘pulling a branch off a tree.’ In some sense the colloquial meaning of the name is ‘troublemaker’. Neethling says that it appears Mandela’s father had made a prophetic vision when he named him Rolihlahla. Mandela wrote in his autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994):

“I do not believe that names are destiny or that my father somehow divined my future, but in later years, friends and relatives would ascribe to my birth name the many storms I have both caused and weathered” (p. 3).

This research stands to benefit from the idea emanating from Mandela’s words that the meanings of his names seem to have influenced or prophesied his later life. Peter (2010) says “people are given names that will be a self – fulfilling prophesy i.e. the child will have the attributes and powers attached to the name.” He also shares the same sentiments of viewing names as having the power to influence the life of the name bearer. Nuessel in Peter (2010) says “You are what you are named.” In the same vein, this study wanted to establish whether the gendered names given to children in Zezuru society will not influence the lives of their name bearers as well. It would rather be absurd to talk about the personality of an individual without putting in consideration the gender status of the person in question. This study therefore sought to establish whether personal names can go as far as reflecting the gender status of the name bearer.

Mbiti (1975) says that most Shona parents make their own situations, hopes, fears, ideals and frustrations known through the names they give to their children. Murphy in Likaka, (2009) argues that given names and assumed names have play important roles in the development of a person, and often give clues to their attitudes and relations toward themselves and others with whom they associate with in their day to day living. Mbiti (ibid) and Murphy (ibid) have talked

about what names can do to the name bearers and the name givers but it seems very little if not nothing has been said with regard to the potential of names in perpetuating gender stereotyping and stigmatization in any society. It is the researcher's assumption that names do reflect gender status of the name bearer.

Rubaya (2014) says that names are not arbitrarily given but are given to mark one's biology thereby transforming naming into a salient medium of instruction in the education of children to accept their socially defined gender paths. He goes on to say that naming is not an innocent act as it reflects the thinking of the 'namer' who can use it as a tool to make a political or social statement or awaken gender consciousness in children to create variations of experience for the two sexes. Wasosa and Mareva (2014) say, "Names vary from those revealing genuine endearment to those that portray women as sex objects, as people without order and being reckless with their lives. They go on to say those names given by men to women to a larger extent denigrate women and entrench men's interests particularly their sexual desires which makes them subordinate to men. Gaidzanwa (2014:11) says, "Some names place unnecessary burdens on their carriers and perpetuate feuds and negative relationships that can often have little to do with the carriers of the names. Ndlovu (2014) says that certain names are derogatory and unpleasant and are meant to degrade targeted individuals. To Ndlovu (2014), such names are often discriminatory and even sexist. Negative naming is in most instances driven by positive social and cultural expectation of a society. It can lead to violation of the rights of the people affected and can even hamper issues of development and nation building. It is in light of such views that this research will be undertaken to find out the connection between names and the gender status of the name bearers and assess if gendered names does not affect the name bearers in various spheres of life.

Gilmore (1982) has it that the act of naming can be a form of indirect personal message, messages that would be impossible to communicate directly. Some argue that humans and their names are not divisible (Wellek and Warren 1978), and this belief is common in African cultures. In traditional Shona society with the Zezuru included, as in most African societies, individuals identified closely with their culturally given names. Since gender can be culture based and it is the researcher's assumption that Zezuru personal names can reflect one's gender. Joseph (2004:46) says, "There is an undeclared belief that the name significantly influences the life of the bearer". He goes on to quote the popular statement which says "he lives up to his name". In most cases, a name is selected for the good meaning it conveys. Children normally receive gender specific names with the occasional exceptions of neutral names.

2.5 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NAMING?

2.5.1 WORLD TRENDS

This component situates the present study within the global trends. The word ‘world’ in this study is used to refer to regions other than the African continent. The review finds it very relevant and paramount to get insights on who is responsible for naming from these far away areas for it will also give direction to the present study. This review recognizes that the uniqueness and relevance of Zezuru personal names become apparent when some insights are drawn from American and European scholars who made significant contributions in general and world onomastics studies. The responsibility to name a newborn depends with the culture in question. In the western world the naming of a newborn is done by both parents. Rothman (1989) in Sue and Telles (2007) has it that in United States among the Mexican American immigrants the naming of the boy child is usually done by the father and the wife is can also be given the responsibility to name the girl child. Rossi (1965) discovered that American middle-class parents often choose names which have their traditional roots (kin names) for boys. She went further to add that girls’ names usually reflect their mothers’ contemporary social relations and interactions whereas boys’ names reflect tradition which is often can be traced to the past. In a research carried by Sue and Telles among the Hispanic immigrants in America, it was found out that fathers named their sons while mothers named daughters. Sue and Telles (2007) say that among the Hispanic parents who stay in Los Angeles County the father usually has a disproportionately great say in the naming of sons than daughters. Among the Hebrew community, the father was also given first preference in the naming of the newborn as was evidenced in the Holy bible following the birth of John, the Baptist when Zacharia was asked to name his child. Of course, other members could come in and name only if given the green light to do so by the father of the child. These naming trends came in handy for this study in as far as they gave direction as to whether the naming among the Zezuru is gendered towards man.

Radcliffe-Brown (1950) in Lawson (1988) has it that among the Chinese the naming is usually done by the father of the newborn who will be well versed with the family lineage because Chinese people name their children after family members. With the Chinese, everyone has

three names. The first is the lineage or family name, the second indicates the generation to which he belongs, the third is his distinctive personal name. From the second part of the name any member of the lineage can tell which generation an individual belongs.

2.5.2 IN AFRICA

In Africa as was reflected by various scholars the responsibility to name the newborn is often given to the father of the newborn. Biyela (2013:16) says, “The naming of a newborn is a vital rite of passage in many cultures and members of the community often congregate at the newborn’s home to congratulate both parents and to witness the official naming of the newborn.” Saarelma-Maunumaa (1999) reports that among the Ovombo of Namibia the father of the newborn bestows its name during a ceremony known as ‘eluko’.

Suzman (1994) says that among the Zulu all community members come with presents to give the child. Koopman and Zungu (2013) say that it is generally acknowledged that naming among the Zulu is a communal event and not just about the parents of the child and the individual child being named. They say that this is reflected in a well-known Zulu saying ‘*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*’ (a person is a person because of other people). Others also come to name the child but it is the principle that there should be a specific name coming from the child’s father. During the ceremony which will be punctuated with beer drinking the father gives thanks and then takes up the child to give it the name he wants his child to be called by and then he kisses the child.

Bryant (1949:613) quoted by Biyela also describes what he had observed in the official Zulu naming ceremony:

“While a fragrant odor was rising from the hearth (whereon an impepo plant was burning) and beer has been set before former midwives, the father and grandfather entered the hut to see the newborn baby, to congratulate its mother, and to feast...And *Maziyana* raised the infant in his hands and gave it a smacking kiss...When later, friendly neighbors flocked in to offer their congratulations, one of the first things they did, was to ask the baby’s name. *Maziyana* replied, *uPumeni*.

After the biological father of the child has publicly pronounced his child’s ‘true’ name then the entire house will applaud with great excitement. Bryant (1949) is of the idea that the father

was responsible for bestowing a name on a newborn baby'. Such insights are going to help the current study for it wants to establish examine the source of gendered names.

From Angola, the husband is given the honor to name the newborn and it also emerges that Ovimbundu women's names convey thought patterns of a people. Makondo (2013) says among the Huli and the Wiru people of Guinea, naming is predominantly done by the father of the newborn. In addition, the Nyoro people of Uganda, being a patriarchal society, also give priority to men in the naming process

Nuessel (1992:3) says, "Those who give names often occupy positions of power and authority in their families." Among the Zezuru, the person with power and authority in the family is usually the father. Nuessel quotes Bosmajian (1974a) who found out in his research that the ability to name is an important sign of power in society. Peter (2010) says that when you are named by someone who is in a powerful position socially, economically and politically it is most likely that the name-giver is always likely to exert some control over the existence of the person whom he or she will have named. Alford (1987) and Herbert (1999) say literature on naming seems to indicate that fathers are more likely to give names to sons and mothers are more likely to give names to daughters. The same scenario is found among the Zezuru where the boy child is given a lot of respect at the expense of the girl child. The views by these scholars on who is responsible for naming helped this research in that it gave a clue on why there are gendered names among the Zezuru. The reason might lie with the people who do the naming.

Bosmajian in Nuessel (1992:3) says:

"The power that comes from names and naming is related directly to the power to define others, individual race, sexes, ethnic groups. Our identities, who and what we are, how others see us, are greatly affected by the names we are called and the words with which we are labeled."

While Bosmajian looks at the power that comes with naming in as far as they differentiate individuals on race, sexes and ethnic lines, the present research will want to find out how Zezuru personal names do reflect the gender status of their name bearers.

Among the Shona, in Zimbabwe, just like in other African societies, the naming of a newborn was predominantly a privilege given to the biological father. It was the right of the father to name the newborn. Other close relatives would take the responsibility of naming in the absence

of the biological father. Pfukwa (2007:45) states that the naming of a newborn has to be officiated over by the head of the household, who has an authoritative responsibility to tell the society about the newborn. Batoma (2009:19) adds that, as being a ‘family priest’, the father had to respectfully, “commit himself to his child’s metaphysical origins, mission in society and his or her personal development” for a communal approval of respect for and compliance with the social rules. Batoma (2009) goes on to say that breaching the principle of respect by the father is an unbearable shame and humiliation which might impact negatively on his personal profile and deprive him of the authorship of his child’s name. Zondi (2010) demonstrates how women from Zwelibomvu who are in polygamous unions find naming their children to be one of the strategies of dealing with what goes on on closed doors. Thus, through naming their children, they perceive themselves as empowered to have a say about their lives. In this community women are therefore given the right to name their children.

Joseph (2005) points that being named is “enacted identity” which is most relevant to the bestowal of the official name of a newborn by its father during a naming ceremony which is marked by the presence of the community who regulate the naming patterns and process. Biyela (2013:18) says, “Naming the child becomes an aspect of incorporating the child into the community of the living and the dead and also inculcating in the child a sense of acceptance related to its family and society of the living as well”. Saarelema-Maunumaa (2003:35) emphasizes that it is the father who affirm the child as a legitimate member of a group. Pongweni’s (1983) grouping of personal names will also give direction to the present study because this study will want to know the people who were behind the naming and establish the gender status of the name givers. Kahari (1990) also built on Pongweni’s works and came up with other categories of personal names but what is very common in their researches is that the father of the child was always the main player in the naming process although other relatives could come up in the naming process. Among the Zezuru people, the naming of a newborn is normally the responsibility of the father. These, researches will be helpful in this study which is looking at how names reflect the gender status of the name bearers in that the gender status of the name bearers might have a bearing on the nature of the names,

2.6 GENDER, PATRIARCHY AND STEREOTYPING

“One is not born a woman but rather becomes one” Beauvoir (1952:249).

Lawson (1988) says, “Stereotyping is a general way of thinking about various objects, concepts, people, or ideas”. This way of thinking is at times subjective. Gender stereotypes are defined by Galombok and Fivus (1994) as “organised sets of beliefs about the characteristics of all members of a particular group”. Gender stereotypes according to Kwatsha (2009:130)

“Are sets of beliefs about what it means to be female or male and include information about physical appearance, attitude and interest, psychological traits, social relations and occupation? Most important, these various dimensions are interrelated; simply knowing that an individual is female implies that this person will have certain physical characteristics (soft voice, dainty, graceful actions and certain psychological traits like being nurturing, dependent, weak, emotional) and will engage in particular kinds of activities (childcare, cooking, gardening).”

Gender stereotyping is usually common in patriarchal societies. When discussing matters to do with gender stereotyping, patriarchy usually plays a very important role. In a patriarchal society like the Zezuru society which is understudy, gender stereotyping is very rampant. Pilcher and Whelehan (2004:93) say that patriarchy literally means “rule by the male head of a social unit.” It also refers to the elder who has power over others in the social unit including other men, women and children. Feminists have used the term to refer to the social system of male domination over women Walby (1990) defines patriarchy as, “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women”. She identifies six situations in which patriarchy is often exercised namely: household production, paid work, the state, male violence, sexuality and culture. Some of these structures especially sexuality and culture will inform this study which looks at how personal names reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Gender stereotyping is found in a culture and it is often confused with sexuality; the two will come in handy in the discussion about the meanings of personal names in as far as they divide people along gender lines. Kambarami (2006) says that in Shona culture, patriarchal practices are so extreme that they are seen to shape and perpetuate gender inequality and strip women of any form of control over their sexuality to the extent of reducing them to the position of children in the family. According to Lightfoot-Klein (1989:47) cited by Okome, (2003:71):

“Custom in Africa is stronger than domination, stronger than the law, even stronger than religion. Over the years, customary practices have been incorporated into religion,

and ultimately have come to be believed by their practitioners to be demanded by their adopted gods, whoever they may be.”

Walkerline and Lucy (1989:205) in Kambarami (2006) state that “patriarchy is not a ‘monolithic force which imposes socialisation on girls... [instead it] produces the positions for subjects to enter’. It is necessary therefore to bear in mind the notion that there are multiple discourses of masculinity and femininity”. Most of these discourses are relayed through the names which are given to individuals. The views by Kambarami (2006), Walkerline & Lucey (1989) and Lightfoot- Klein (1989) about the power and influence of culture as enshrined in patriarchy will inform this study very much because this study which deals with how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer will also be guided by the fact that the Zezuru through their personal names can as well reflect their cultural beliefs.

This gender stereotyping in most cases result in gender division of labour especially if people do differentiate their roles along gender lines. Marcus (1976) in Lawton (1988) emphasizes the power of the name stereotyping and how the perception of a name can influence the behaviour of an individual. The effect of stereotyping which comes through naming is clear. Gender stereotyping plays a major role in promoting social inequality. In life some people behave as to the dictates of their names. They even acknowledge that their way of living is greatly influenced by the meanings of their names. By doing so they will be creating a boundary between themselves and others (male and female). Among the Zezuru personal names are often used to communicate these gender differences.

Several empirical investigations have been carried out with the aim of finding out the relationship between naming and stereotyping. In Britain, Sheppard (1963) in Lawson (1988) confirmed the earlier work of Schoenfeld who looked at first names. Wober (1970) in Lawson (1988) looked at stereotypes of personality characteristics associated with some first names by English school girls. Stereotypes of names have at times been used in relation to the physical appearance of the name bearer. Garwood, Cox, Kaplan, & Sulzer (1980) in Lawson (1988) proved that in the study on the choice of a campus beauty queen and it was found that a candidate with a beautiful first name received more votes. Results from this research come in handy for this study for it is showing that there are names which can be gendered.

Bruning and Husa (1973) in Lawson (1988) proved that children can rate names as early as the third grade. Busse and Helfrich (1975) showed the influence of name stereotypes with children in grades 2-11. Knechtel (1973) in Lawson (1988) was able to conclude that first names of college students can influence life roles of these college students to a large extent. Marcus (1976) in Lawson (1988) proved that name stereotype has a great influence on the name bearer and how the perception of a name can change the behaviour toward the bearer of that name. The investigation of Harari and McDavid (1973) in Lawson (1988) is very relevant to the current study which looks at how personal names among the Zezuru people in Buhera South reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Harari and McDavid (1973) in Lawson (1988) created a platform where essays allegedly written by ten-year-olds were graded. Each paper had attached the name of a conjured author depending upon the design of the project. It came out that essays which received higher grades were those with desirable names. These findings serve to show that the meaning of a name has a lot in it. It can put you on an advantage or it can pull you down depending on its meaning. This research goes further than what was covered by these various scholars by looking at how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

Garwood (1976) in Lawson (1988) carried out a research where teachers branded boys' names as either desirable or undesirable. From the research, it came out that higher marks on objective measures of achievement and personality were significantly higher for those with names which were grouped as desirable. Nelson (1977) in Lawson (1988) was able to confirm Garwood's research findings with women college students, but not with men. Busse and Seraydarian (1978) in Lawson (1988) established and confirmed significant correlations in elementary and secondary school children between name appeal and school vigilance, IQ, and attainment. These researches are very insightful to the current research as they show that certain names can place a certain gender group at an advantage or disadvantage in various spheres of life. From the researches it also came out that there are names which are regarded as good and some bad and that stereotyping which comes as a result of certain names can also result in behaviour change on the part of the name bearer and the way other people view and associate with the name bearer. Such ideas will also inform this study which is looking at naming and gender.

Treichler and Krammarae (1985) view gender as a social construction organized around biological sex. They go on to say that individuals are born either male or female, but they acquire over time a gender identity, that is what it means to be male or female and this is usually

acquired through socialization. This definition implies that there are two different kinds of relationship between two genders (masculine and feminine) and that between gender and society. Oyewumi (2011) says, “Social differences between males and females are located in social practices and not simply in biological facts”. Research has shown that differences in terms of gender cannot be confined to nature but rather it is historical. In this respect the patriarchal aspect comes into play. This patriarchal aspect is the one which brings about gender stereotyping which is enhanced through personal naming among the Zezuru and is at the core of this present research.

Given the fact that gender is a society’s interpretation of maleness and femaleness that society will determine what should be male and female characteristics and roles, Hatfield (2000) says that girls and boys growing up in that society are therefore, encouraged to adopt these characteristics and to fulfill these roles. They will be rewarded for being appropriately feminine or masculine and this in turn helps to reinforce their behaviour. Hatfield (2000) goes on to define gender as that package of expectations which a society associates with each sex. In the Western society, which is predominantly Judeo- Christian, characteristics which are valued as male are assertiveness, dominance, aggression and logic. These kinds of behavior are nurtured in play and study, just as compassion, cooperation and emotion are rewarded in girls. Whilst a person might be born into a particular sex, people acquire and are socialized into a set of behaviors and characteristics which constitutes gender. Because socialization informs everything that we do and experience, such as through school, the media and community organizations, it has pervasive long-term effects which cross generations. Socialization among the Zezuru is made possible at times through personal names given to individuals at birth.

Showalter in Bannon and Correia (2006) says, “Gender was in use within the Anglo-Saxon discourse to stand for the social, cultural, and psychological meaning imposed upon biological sexual identity”. Oyewumi (2005) also says “gender refers to the non-physiological aspects of sex, a group of attributes and/or behaviors, shaped by society and culture that are defined as appropriate for the male and female sexuality”. The two definitions point to the same idea that gender is a social construction. Feminist theory views gender as an important category of analysis, one with cultural, political, anthropological, historical and other implications, depending on what on what aspects of gender the theorist is most interested in elucidating. For some feminists, gender is a system of meanings within cultures used to categorize male and sexuality in hierarchical terms. These feminists dispute that men supported by patriarchal

ideologies control women's reproductive and sexual capacities to such an extent that, women are ensnared by their biological anatomy and by a dogma of compulsory heterosexuality. This assertion seems to be in line with the Zezuru set up where men are at the apex in determining the values to be observed by entire society. In the Zezuru society, men call the shots in as far as determining what is to be adhered to by the society at large. This study will be looking at how personal names can reflect gender differences among the Zezuru people.

Muhwati (2004) views gender as mainly used when referring to socially given attributes, roles, activities and responsibilities connected to being a male or a female in any given society. He goes on to say that gender relations refer to relations between men as a sex and women as a sex as well. Oyewumi (2011) realised that in most societies gender has been seen as a play of power relations between men and women that offers men's and women's activities as public and domestic respectively. Such a mentality has been seen as a major reason why the organization of production and labor being turned into male and female categories thus giving rise to division of labour along gender lines. This way of thinking is strongly reflected in the Zezuru naming trends. These definitions of gender are pointing to the fact that gender is a creation by society and as such society can create gender through the names given to boys and girls. These definitions on gender will obviously give direction to the present study which is looking at how personal names given to individuals reflect their gender status.

Bannon and Correia (2006) say a central premise of gender and development discourse since the 1970s has been the way in which women are dominated by men through the use of power given to them by the patriarchal set up resulting in inequalities, discrimination, and the subordination of women. Gender as a way through which certain social structures and authority give men power over women, is found to be a major cause for the marginalization of women in various circles of life. Momsen (2004) views gender as a socially acquired notion of masculinity by which women and men are identified. Momsen (2004) goes on to add that gender identifies and is flexible therefore it is prone to change. Giddens (2009) also views gender as one of the reasons why there are different social roles and identities between men and women. It has been that differences in terms of gender are never neutral and that gender is one of those forms of social stratification which perpetuates inequality between men and women. Giddens (2009:614) says, "Gender is regarded a critical factor in structuring the types of opportunities and life chances faced by individuals and groups, and strongly influences the roles they play within social institutions from household to the state". In light of such assertion this research is poised to assess the extent to which names given to individuals in Zezuru society

perpetuate gender parity. Throughout the world it has been seen that women are often disadvantaged by men in various spheres of life even though the roles of men and women vary from culture to culture. There is no known instance of a society in which females are more powerful than males except in matters to do with the kitchen. In light with this notion, naming among the Zezuru is no exception as it is mainly controlled by the father of the new born baby and in most of the instances the father will come up with a name for the new baby. It is in the interest of the present study that this research will want to find out the degree to which the personal names among the Zezuru are gendered.

Giddens (2009) says that as a sign of men's dominance in society, men's roles are generally more highly treasured and rewarded than women's roles. He goes to say that in most societies, women bear the primary responsibility for childcare and domestic work, while men have traditionally borne the responsibility of being the breadwinners for their families. The current division of labor between the sexes in areas of production has led to men and women assuming unequal positions in terms of power, prestige and wealth. These differences in occupations may to some extent be influenced by the names given to people who can stigmatize the name bearer on gender lines. Gender inequality has become a topical issue in most societies with the Shona society included. These views definitely gave direction to the present study as it looked at gendered names and how these names advantage or disadvantage the name bearers.

The dominance of men over women in life have been an area of concern over the years and theories have been advanced to explain men's enduring dominance over man in the sphere of economics, politics, the family and other realms. There is the functionalist approach which views society as a system of interlinked parts of which men and women are part of it which when in balance, operates smoothly to produce social unity. The functionalists are of the view that gender differences contribute to social stability and integration only if they are in harmony to each other. Parsons (1956) quoted in Giddens (2009:97), a leading functionalist says, "The role of the family in industrial societies was particularly interested in the socialization of children and argued that stable, supportive families are the key to successful socialization". Parson (1956:43) added, "The family operates most efficiently with a clear-cut sexual division of labor in which females act in expressive roles, providing care and security to children and offering them emotional support". Another functionalist John Bowlby (1953) in Giddens (2009:123) says, "The mother is crucial in the primary socialization of children. If the mother is absent, or a child is separated from the mother at a young age, a sense referred to as maternal deprivation will occur resulting in the child being inadequately socialized." The Zezuru society

which is under study seems to marginalize women and as a result this approach is likely to result in serious social and psychological difficulties later in life including anti- social and psychopathic tendencies on the part of children. The functionalist theory will inform the present study of Zezuru personal names because socialization is made possible through communication and giving a person a name is another form of communicating as well.

Parsons (1953) in Giddens (2009:113) says, “In many societies men usually perform instrumental roles such as being the breadwinner in the family. Because of the stressful nature of this role, women’s expressive and nurturing tendencies should also be used to stabilize and comfort men”. Those who believe in patriarchy are of the view that the division of labor springs from biological differences between sexes, and as such men are always seen as superior to women as is reflected in their dominance in the naming process. The functionalist theory in as far as it talks about the different roles between men and women are relevant to the present study because because it would shed light on why men dominate naming among the Zezuru.

There are feminist theories which try to answer gender inequalities among different societies. These theories have tried to give explanation on gender inequalities through a variety of deeply embedded social processes such as sexism, patriarchy and capitalism which are seen to be common in most societies. This research argues that naming perpetuates these social processes. There are three major types of feminism namely liberal, social or Marxist and radical feminism. These three types vary on the way they view gender inequalities in society. Liberal feminists look for the explanation of gender difference as emanating from social and cultural attitudes of people in every society. It is some of these cultural attitudes which will be reflected through names given to new born babies and these names go a long way in mirroring gender imbalance. Liberal feminists are of the view that women’s subordination is not part of a larger system or structure, rather, they draw attention to many separate factors which perpetuate inequalities between the two genders. These inequalities may also result in conflicts between men and women which are reflected through names given to people. The liberal feminists are credited greatly for the emancipation of women worldwide with the Zezuru society included. The views by the feminists will definitely informed the present study as it sought to find out how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

The socialist or Marxist feminists also give their own causes to gender inequality by pointing their fingers to patriarchy and capitalism as the major causes of this inequality. Engels in Giddens (2009) says that in capitalism, factors which include economic and material ones are

the major cause of women's subservience to men, because patriarchy has its roots in private property. Engels (ibid) argued that capitalism intensifies patriarchy – men's domination over women by concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a small number of men. He goes on to add that capitalism relies on women for cheap labour to labor in the home doing work such as caring and cleaning. According to Engels, capitalism both men and women were exploited by paying low wages for men and by paying no wages for women. Under such conditions, people will name children with names which reflect their difference on gender lines.

There is also radical feminism which blames men for the exploitation of women and they say that men gained a lot through the exploitation of women. Giddens (2009) says that to radical feminists, patriarchy, which methodical domination of females by males is the major cause of the oppression of women by men. Radical feminists regard the family as one of the principal sources of women's oppression in society. They argue that men exploit women by relying on the free domestic labor that women provide in the home. According to the radicals, men are responsible for the absence of women in the political realm. They argue that men go to the extent of controlling women even in matters to do with reproduction and child bearing. Radical feminists even dismiss popular conceptions of beauty and sexuality because they believe that they are imposed by men on women in order to produce a certain type of femininity which will be to the advantage of men. They also site the way women are reduced to the level of being regarded as objects through the media, fashion and brand advertising as emanating from men. They say that such activities turn women into sexual objects whose main role is there to provide entertainment to men. Such qualities given to women can be reflected in the names given to women. It will be of greater interest for the present study to find out if naming is also used as a means to oppress a certain gender group through gender stereotyping.

Earth (2008) in Bark (2012) gives an example from Polynesia where in families without daughters, one son may be selected when very young to be raised as a girl to fulfill the family's needs to undertake a daughter's roles such as care of siblings and housework. Such a notion seems to concur with the Ethiopian proverb quoted by Sweetman (2003) in Bark (2012) which goes "A woman and an empty house are never alone for long." This proverb reinforces the Shona patriarchal belief which views the woman and the kitchen as unseparable. Bark (2012:56) says, "The identification of oneself as male or female is a foundation stone of a self-identity". Among the Zezuru people are easily identified as being male or female and one sure way of making this possible is through ascribing gendered personal names to people. The fact that people are categorized as male and female also means that people will be assigned duties

basing on their different gender status. Sweetman (2003:17) says, “Men are commonly held to be more naturally domineering, hierarchically oriented and power-hungry, while women are seen as nurturing, child rearing and domestically inclined”.

Gender roles and differences, because they are societal/cultural-based, are subject to change from time to time and across cultures. On the other hand, gender stereotyping is the creation of fixed impressions about roles and relationships between men and women. In most cases, these fixed impressions are not correct and are a result of gender bias. Gender has been seen as a state of understanding masculinity and femininity as cultural constructions rather than the influence of biology. Lott (1991) views gender as the social or cultural condition of being male or female. Gender refers to male-female differences which are not biological but prescribed by society and culture. Bark (2012:323) says, “Sex and gender are said to be a result of social constructions that are essentially implicated in matters of representation and at times it is very difficult to draw a clear line between them”. They are matters of culture rather than nature. There is a strand of feminist thinking that stresses the essential differences between men and women. Sexual identity is usually thought to be determined by the biological make up of an individual.

Bark (2012) on the images of women says the concept of the stereotype occupies a prominent place within the images of women perspective. Stereotyping involves the reducing a person to a set of exaggerated, usually negative character traits. He goes on to say that through stereotyping one will be marking the boundaries between the normal and the abjected. Hatfield (2000) says that in western society, which is predominantly Judeo-Christian, characteristics which are valued as male include assertiveness, dominance, competitiveness, aggression and logic. These kinds of behavior are nurtured in play and in study, just as compassion, cooperation and emotion are rewarded in girls. Through the names given to children these behaviors which are socially constructed are reinforced. From Hatfield’s views, it appears that although we may be born into a particular sex we acquire and are socialized into a set of behaviors and characteristics which constitute gender.

It appears socialization informs everything that we do and experience, such as through school, the media and community organizations. The influence of such institutions has pervasive long-term effects which cut across generations. Hatfield (2000) opines that it is apparent the qualities, characteristics and forms of behavior which are gender based are not isolated, but defined in relationship to each other. That is, what is female is specifically that which is not

male, and vice versa. It is therefore meaningless to talk about one gender without reference to the other. Since gender is socially constituted, when talking about it, we are talking about the relationship of women and men to society.

This research on Zezuru personal names examines the explicit and implicit meanings of personal names and assesses the extent to which they promote gender stigmatization. Some of the personal names reflect gender insensitivity. Bark (2012:23) says, “Women across the globe are constituted as the second sex, subordinate to men”. That is women have subject positions constructed for them that confine them in the work of domesticity and beautification associated with the patriarchal mentality. He went on to add that women in post colonial societies carry the double burden of having been subordinated by colonialism and native men. In the Zezuru culture like in other societies, there are marked differences in male- female gender roles. Diana Meehan’s (1983) analysis of women on US television is an example of the images of women approach. She said that on television women who are regarded as ideal and good are those who are submissive, sensitive and domesticated while those who are regarded as bad are those who are rebellious, independent and selfish. Meehan also discovered that American viewers spent most of their time watching male heroes and their adventures, muddled visions of boyhood adolescence replete with illusions of women as witches, bitches, mothers and imps. Gallagher (1983) in Bark (2012) in his survey of women in the media suggest that the continuous global portrayal of women as commodified and stereotyped into double images of good and bad is not good at all as meant that women will always be stereotyped and then sidelined in matters of decision making. In the same vein, the names given to people among the Zezuru normally perpetuate the gender bias and imbalances which exist in the Shona society hence this study is going to look at how personal names among the Zezuru can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

2.7 NAMING AND IDENTITY

Deluzain (1996) says that the fact that personal identity and uniqueness is often reflected by a name is the major reason why names are of great interest to us and this is why every individual in the society has a name to be identified with. Deluzain (1996) goes on to add, “In spite of their importance, though, most people know very little about names and about the effects they have on us and on our children in everyday life”. Names given to individuals among the Zezuru

are very rich with information to the extent that when you analyse them you will know about the psychological, magical, legal, religious, and ethnic aspects of the Zezuru people. While Deluzain (1996) looked at the importance of personal names, the present study will be very specific as it looks at how Zezuru personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

The child's name is an important and unique marker of the child's identity. Lieberson (1992) says naming is an even more important marker of identity than the finger prints or the DNA, which may also work as useful forensic marks of identity later on in a person's life. Biyela (2013) regards identity as a creation and edifice just like gender. Deluzain (1996:56) says:

“the bestowal of 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.”

Deluzain's ideas are very relevant to the present study especially the idea that the name is a form identity because gender is another form of identity. This research does not end on mere identity rather it goes further by looking at how a personal name can identify a person on gender lines.

Algeo (1985a) says that the concept of naming as a process whereby animate or inanimate objects are usually given forms of identity for them to be easily identified and recognized. Identity stems from the self (personal) and then extends to macro level where others can identify you with your name. In being personal it is unique and in being relational it may imply either similarity or difference. Algeo (1985a:134) says, “Social identity is established through one or other form of comparison. Identity denote ‘being’ or ‘belonging to’ and/or ‘acceptance of.’ Some of the markers of identity include name's’, gender, language, culture and a lot others”. Freud and Shakespeare in Smith, (1973) discovered that there is a strong connection between name and identity. The relationship is so strong that the misrepresentation of a name

is tantamount to a misrepresentation of the person. The present study will therefore want to look at how Zezuru people are identified along gender lines through their personal names.

According to Merleau-Ponty's theories, naming does not only occupy an important position within language use that implies dynamics of power and identity in so far as the first name not only grants one a specific identity as a language user, but also directs who that person will be through the name's physiognomy and reference to the world. Merleau-Ponty (1964:19) says, "The name is both liberation through identity and a powerful order of limitation through its physiological and referential bondage". The names parents choose for their children usually is a summary of what the parent hope and yearn for their child. Their hopes for the child will also be greatly influenced by the gender status of the child. Parents among the Zezuru have certain attributes which they expect from their children and they usually reflect this through the names which they give to their children. The present research which looked at how personal names reflect the gender status of the name bearer got a lot of insight from the views of Merleau-Ponty (1964); especially the point that in a personal name lays the dynamics of power and identity. Gender as a form of identity is reflected through personal names among the Zezuru.

Merleau- Ponty (1964) says that the name given to an individual is "pregnant with meaning". This assertion is very true when one is looking at Zezuru personal names which are rich with information. Information pertaining to the gender status of the name bearer is contained in most of the names. Merleau-Ponty (1964:67) explains that "a name not only allows an individual to be 'grasped' as an object of knowledge, but determines what that object of knowledge is through the emotional essence of the name that is delivered onto the individual". Pfukwa (2007) says a concept closely linked to name giving is identity. He goes on to mention Joseph (2004), Dundes (1983) and Edwards (1985) as some of the notable scholars in the field of language and identity. Joseph (2004) states that Edwards (1985) was the first to lay a general synthesis of approaches to language and identity. Dundes (1983) cites the role of Erikson (1968) in setting out the main issues of identity from a social perspective. Names as forms of identity with gender connotations enshrined in the meanings of these names formed the backbone of this research because this research is based on the assumption that names given to people have a gender bias which will eventually give the name bearer an identity based on gender lines.

Joseph (2004) points out that being named are an 'enacted identity'. He went on to say that identity is a mutual process that operates at two levels. Firstly, it operates on how the individual or group project or perceives itself. Secondly, it operates on how the reader or recipient

perceives the projected identity. Pfukwa (2007) says that the self has an image it perceives and seeks to project and this is the projected identity. The recipient or the public have their own perceptions, and this is what Joseph (2004) calls receptive processes in identity. The two processes in identity do inform this research to a greater extent in that through Zezuru personal names, one will be able to identify the name bearer on gender lines because most of the personal names are pregnant with gender connotations.

2.8 GENDER AND NAMING

Gender is a term used to refer to social, cultural and psychological aspects of maleness and femaleness as viewed by members of any given society. Zinsser (1999:54) in Kwatsha (2009) defines it as, “A constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between sexes, the knowledge that establishes meanings for bodily differences”. Kwatsha (2009:23) defines it as, “The amount of masculinity or femininity found in a person”. Stanley in Jackson&Scott (2002:31) says, “Gender refers to culturally ascribed notions about “femininity” and “masculinity”. From these definitions, gender seems to be regarded as something which refers to differences between female and male as perceived by the society and it is these differences between males and females that lead to certain tasks to be allocated along gender lines and this hinders meaningful development to be realised in society. This study wants to show how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer and how these names can perpetuate gender stereotyping as well.

Among the Zezuru, once people know your gender status they interpret everything you do in the light of this status irrespective of how you are going to perform or behave. In the back of their minds they have already mastered what they expect of males and that of females. What they expect from the two respective genders is reflected in the meanings of names they give to their children. Most of these personal names carry gender connotations. Through gendered names, socially defined capacities and attributes are assigned to persons on the basis of their sexual characteristics. Personal names are one of the major means through which people are identified with along gender lines.

Sue and Telles (2007:1398) declare that “given names have obvious long – term consequences; as labels they influence the socialization of children and contribute to the development of

personal identities”. Parents choose names for their children being guided by social and cultural factors. Gender being one of the products of social constructions, will obviously influence the choice of names for both boys and girls. Sue and Telles (2007) in their study on assimilation and gender among the Hispanic parents who migrated to Los Angeles County in 1995 found out that gender plays a very significant role in the assimilation process especially during the naming of their children. The authors found out that Hispanic parents are to assimilate while maintaining a connection to their ethnic origins through names which they give to baby boys. In addition, they found out attitudes favoring assimilation are particularly great when naming daughters when mothers usually give girls English names. From the research, it came out that Hispanic couples tend to give sons Spanish names, but they often give daughters English names without Spanish reference. These gender differences persist even among US-born Hispanics married to non-Hispanics where the father will give sons names with his ethnic connections. From the research it came out that females assimilate faster than men. In their research, they found out that immigrant parents are more likely to give sons ethnic names, as Witkins and London (1994) in Sue and Telles (2007) found for Italians and Jews in 1910 and Lieberman (2000) showed for Mexicans and Asians in recent decades. The present research will be looking at how Zezuru personal names can reflect the gender status of their name bearers.

Another research carried out by Lieberman in 2000 established that gender differences give rise to different names altogether. Lieberman (2000:123) says, “Gender differences led to different names given to sons and daughters”. Lieberman argued that other factors which include fashion and premigration linguistic tastes come into play in influencing the differential treatment of sons’ names compared to daughters. The findings demonstrate how names can also be an indicator of gender dynamics that occur within families, both between mother and father and the gender of the child. Based on these findings tend to agree with Rossi 1965, Lieberman and Bell 1992, and Stahl (1992) in Sue and Telles (2007) that males are, more likely to be carriers of the family line, both in the symbolic sense of parents giving Spanish names to sons and in the tendency for fathers’ ethnicity to be more influential in naming both sons and daughters. The role of gender in influencing the naming trends among the immigrants as was seen by Sue and Telles will give direction to the current study which looks at the gendered process of naming among the Zezuru.

Rothman (1989) says that gender theorists argue that men represent family continuity and tradition. Zulu (2001:328) says, “From patriarchal society’s point of view, being male and hero is part of the psychology of a patriarchal society”. Such a patriarchal psychology is expressed

by the male/female binary thought where victory is seen as the culmination of male activity, and defeat is considered an aspect of female passivity. Browner (1986) in Sue and Telles (2007) in a Mexican migrants' case study found out that women often have less interest than men in maintaining their tradition as was evidenced by their high rate of assimilation. This was reflected by the desire for women to adopt new personal names found in the area in which they will have migrated to while for men usually they continue naming their male children names from their native countries. Research shows that migrant parents, especially fathers, opt for traditional names for boys. Rossi (1965) found that American middle-class parents more often choose kin names for boys. Rossi (ibid) argues that girls' names usually symbolize their mothers' contemporary social relations whereas boys' names reflect tradition which is rooted in the past. Lieberson and Bell (1992) in their analysis of 1973 and 1985 New York birth records of White and Black newborns, also conclude that boys' names represent tradition. While these scholars seem to be too general as they look at tradition and personal naming, the present research will look at how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

Makondo (2013:13) says that personal name usage and taste varies depending on the gender concerned. In a study which he carried out he found out that almost all given names have subtle or otherwise traces of this gender influence in its bid to capture its deep feelings and thoughts against the perceived Shona patriarchal dominance. This male dominance can also be seen in decision making of which naming a newborn is one of the incidents where fathers are the name givers. According to Makondo (2013:115) most popular Zezuru names are a result of a number of factors that influence the namer or namers before they come up with a name. When coming up with a name, the namer must communicate an important message through the meaning of the name. From his research, it came out that when coming up with most popular female names the namers were so creative so as to come up with meaningful and charming names as if it was a marketing strategy to enhance the marketability of the bearers of the names. With such a nature of names it the gender status of the bearers of the names can easily be identified.

There are works of Allen, Brown, Dickinson, and Pratt (1941) in Lawson (1988) who found out that most men usually opt for common names while on the other hand women prefer fashionable names. In addition, women tend to take up names which are very unique and nice sounding. Among the Zezuru, girls were not casually named, instead, the namers among other things had to make sure that they coined meaningful and charming names. Not all girls received these charming names. Peter (2010) says, "Names convey various cultural attributes which

characterize females in different ways. Some attributes displayed by a name point to the current sexual roles.” This research benefited from Peter’s idea that a name given to an individual can be a pointer to the sexual roles the name bearer will have in society. If a personal name can have the capacity to determine the sexual roles of an individual it automatically means that personal names have the potential of reflecting one’s gender. Merleau-Ponty (1962) says that through the personal name one is identified. He goes to add that for one to be recognized as a person or to be a member of a community, it is necessary that the person be named, and therefore identified. The idea of giving name can also allow one the freedom of personhood through association with other members of the community who will identify you with your name.

Makondo (2013:115) gives what he calls the top five most popular personal female names. These names are *Chipo* (Gift), *Tendai* (Be thankful), *Tsitsi* (Mercy), *Chiedza* (Light) and *Vimbai* (Trust). It emerges from the study that the name *Chipo* is a shortened version of the name *Chipochangu* (My Gift), *Chipochedu* (Our Gift), *Chipochedenga* (Heaven’s Gift), *Chipochamwari* (Gift from God), *Chipochatapiwa* (The gift we have been given). All the extensions of the name *Chipo* (Gift) are given to a child who is usually born with a certain deformity hence the namer will be declaring that despite the deformity the child might have, the namer is going to accept the child. In the Shona culture, children are regarded as a gift from God. Failure to bear children on the other hand is regarded as a curse from God. Makondo (2013) added that these names draw from the Christian exposure afforded to Africans by the missionaries. Makondo’s views definitely informed the current study, especially his idea that girls were given gloomy-laden names because normally girls among the Zezuru do receive names which sort of advertise them as if they are goods on the market. While Makondo just looked at the meanings of the personal names which are popular among girls, this study will want to find out why certain names are said to be gender specific and will go on to look at the gender connotations which are found in both male and female personal names given to various people among the Zezuru people.

In his study of male and female names in Zulu, Koopman (2007) came up with names specifically for males and females respectively. He looked at the differences between male and female names by examining the derivational sources of these names. He also looked at the linguistic structures of both male and female names and he concluded that male and female names are inflected differently. Koopman (2007) states that “male names are unrestricted in their choice of the lexicon whereas female names are for the vast majority based on words that

already indicate the feminine in their meaning.” In other words, from Koopman’s point of view male names were derived from nouns that are either masculine or neutral. Female’s names on the other hand are derived from nouns that are feminine. He goes on to talk about names derived from nouns that are in turn derived from verbs and he said this is only possible for male names only. From his research he concluded that one of the things to be noticed about female Zulu names is that they are restricted in their distribution and that several structures which lend themselves easily to the derivation of male names are not permitted at all in the derivation of female names. Koopman’s the linguistic analysis of Zulu names will also inform this study in that all Shona names are also derived from nouns and some from verbs respectively. The only notable difference from Zulu names is that the linguistic structure of both male and female Shona names is basically the same. There are no inflections found on the names which are for a specific gender group as is found among the Zulu. Koopman’s study was done on Zulu names but the present study will be on Zezuru personal names and it will not be looking at the structure of Zezuru names but the meanings of these names as they reflect the gender status of their name bearers.

2.9 CONCLUSION

Chapter two has presented an exhaustive literature review of a variety of aspects with regard to personal naming. This chapter is divided into seven sections, the first section focused on what naming is all about. The second section outlined the different trends in naming. The third section looked at the importance of personal naming drawing some insights from the world in general and then went on to look at it in the African context before and then watered down the importance of personal naming to the Zimbabwean context. From the African anthroponomastic trends, it came out that personal names are taken seriously for they are a form of identity and convey messages which are relevant in their day to day living. It was also noted that African personal names were capable to give a clue about the gender status of the name bearer because these names were not just given but that they were gender specific. The fourth section focused on the people who are responsible for naming in society. Gender, patriarchy and stereotyping constitute section five. The sixth section looked at naming and identity and lastly section seven focused on naming and gender which is at the core of the present study. This chapter also found out that certain names put a certain gender group at an

advantage or disadvantage in all the spheres in life because certain names do stigmatize the name bearers on gender lines. The review also established that there were some shifts in naming patterns especially in Africa with the coming of missionaries and colonialism with people shifting to biblical and other western names. It was also noted that the Zimbabwean anthroponomastic landscape was pioneered by European researchers who dominated the period up to 1980. These researches concentrated on place names. The period after 1980 saw researchers writing on war and Christian personal names. The study now proceeds by discussing the theoretical framework which forms the bases of this study.

CHAPTER 3

3.0 CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to use the relevant theories as a way for analysis of personal names as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers. This will be done by using the

relevant theories extensively in the analysis of Shona personal names. Creswell (2014:64) says, “Researchers increasingly use a theoretical lens or perspectives in qualitative research, which provides an overall orienting lens for the study of questions of gender, class, and race (or other issues of marginalized groups). This lens becomes a transformative perspective that shapes the types of questions asked, informs how data are collected and analysed.” Creswell (2014) goes on to add that the theoretical framework guides the researcher on what issues are important to examine and it also show how the researcher positions himself or herself with regard to the qualitative study which will be undertaken.

A number of theories guided and placed this research in its rightful context. The descriptive backing, the critical discourse analysis and the gender theory have been accessed as necessary theories that will inform this study. However, the current study being highly interdisciplinary and multi-faceted area of study will also benefit from various disciplines and theories. It will be myopic on the part of the present researcher to confine himself to only three theories. In support of such a holistic approach, Pongweni in Makondo (2000:123) notes, (...a study of such material has of necessity to have a multi- disciplinary approach to the extent that a single scholar espousing one specialism cannot cope...” In light of such views; the present study will draw analytic insights from the disciplines of pragmatics and semantics. According to Nicolaisen (1987:10) “names are more, much more, than linguistic items, and....their non-linguistic aspects are not the proper domain of the linguist.” Similarly, Raper in Pfukwa (2007:113) is also against the idea of analysing a name linguistically when he says: “When a lexical item becomes an onomastics item, it can no longer be analysed effectively. In light of the complexity of personal names that the present research will incorporate, a number of theories will be employed in trying to give direction to the study. Of course, the descriptive backing theory which is also incorporated in pragmatics, the critical discourse theory and gender theory will no doubt form the theoretical bases for the current study. Supporting the multi- disciplinary approach when dealing with topics such as present topic, Pfukwa in Makondo (2009) question “...should we use semantic, the pragmatic or morphosyntactic criteria?” Van Langendonck (2001) gives advice by saying, “from a universal viewpoint, a semantic- pragmatic factor maybe the best basis for characterization.” The semantic- pragmatic factors will definitely aid descriptive backing, the critical discourse analysis and gender theory in giving direction to the present study.

The theories mentioned earlier were used to understand personal names as forms of identity which have the power of categorising people on gender lines. This chapter therefore presents

the theoretical framework that was used in this study. The theoretical framework is premised on the understanding of personal names as capable of expressing identity gender lines. This chapter shows how the adopted theoretical framework can be used in carrying out sociolinguistic analysis of personal names.

3.2 PRAGMATICS

This study argued that personal names do reflect the gender status of the name bearer and benefited a lot from the insights of pragmatics. Pragmatics is an analytical approach in linguistics which involves itself with contextual considerations when coming up with a meaning of a name. It studies how people comprehend and produce a communicative act (Pearce, 1931). Name giving is another form of a speech act. Pfukwa (2007) says that pragmatics considers the speakers' intended meaning and the receivers' perceived meaning. Pragmatics is a vast term that overlaps into socio-linguistics, psycholinguistics, syntax, morphology and semantics. Pragmatics brings important dimensions in this study as it looks at personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers. Mamvura (2013:119) says "Pragmatics aims to explain the way factors outside of language contribute to the meanings which speakers communicate using language." Pragmatics entails the speakers' intended meaning and the receiver will perceive the message sent to him or her. By giving a person a name among the Shona, the namer is also guided by the gender status of the person to be named. This suggests names can be analysed pragmatically and the work of Van Langendonck (2001) reflects the significance of pragmatics in onomastics analysis. The present study used pragmatics as a tool for analysis and discussion of gendered personal names.

Using pragmatics, the present study draws a lot of insights from the concepts of presupposition, deixis, performative, implicature, conversational maxims and speech acts. There are various forms of pragmatic meaning which comes in handy on this research on how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Presupposition as a concept under pragmatics refers to what is taken by the speaker to be "...common ground" (Stalnaker, 1978:321 in Makondo 2009) of the hearers in the naming process or to be accepted without challenge. Makondo (2009) says this happens only when speakers rely on shared assumptions and expectations. Deixis refers to what a certain statement means in a communication act under a given context (Grundy, 2000 in Makondo, 2009).

Performative as a concept found under pragmatics implies that by each utterance a namer does not only say something but also does certain functions like giving information. Yule (1996:132) says that names are speech acts that execute actions like requesting, commanding, questioning and informing. Makondo (2009) has it that naming generates various kinds of meanings and consequences, both personal and social. It is this capability found in names that the present study looks at how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Jacobs (1990) says that personal names are more than merely identification tags, encoded in them are, above all, our particular life stories, and narratives in which we have our individual being. The potential of names of telling our life stories and individual being means that personal names have the potential of differentiating people on gender lines. Zezuru personal names such as *Rudo* (Love) for girls and *Simba* (Power) for boys respectively do categorise people along gender lines. From a pragmatic point of view, naming is an important socio- linguistic act and the word chosen to refer to a new baby has enormous symbolic power. It identifies the person sending messages to members of society about who an individual is. Alford (1987:51) in Makondo (2009) says, “The name expresses hope, prayer, perpetuate a cultural, religious tradition of the name bearer”.

Pragmatic implicature as a concept refers to a situation when a namer uses names (...imply, suggest or mean, as distinct from what the other speaker literally says (Grice 1975, Sperber and Wilson 1986/95:182) in Mavhura (2014). According to Makondo (2009) an implicature is a proposition not explicitly communicated by utterance. It studies the invisible, or how one recognizes what is meant even when it is not actually said or written. This is often called the connotative or inference meaning under semiotic and semantic disciplines respectively (Makondo, 2009).

The cooperative principle argues that formulated namers adhere to four maxims of quantity (informativeness), quality (truthfulness), relation (relevance) and manner (clarity) (Parkers and Riley, 2000:12-13 in Mamvura 2014).

Makondo (2009) says that the four maxims are self encompassed in Shona personal names. He gave the example of the masculine name *Tonderai* (Remember) which reminds an individual or group of whatever has happened in their lives. The feminine name *Sekai* (laugh at) denotes joyous moment usually marked by laughter. Pragmatics shares a lot with semantics by looking

at the use of context to make inferences about meaning. The theory of operationalism has it that the meanings of words or names are deduced in the contexts in which they are used. Akwanysa (1996:23) in Makondo (2009) refers to this process of deducing the meaning of a word using the context in which it is used as a theory interpretation. Epstein and Kole (1998:266) refer to this prerequisite condition as “context of situation or context of utterance”. From Epstein and Kole’s views, by context of situation it means that every utterance occurs in a culturally determined context of situation. With reference to Zezuru personal names this means that the meaning of a name can only be understood if the context in which the naming occurs is understood. It is this context which determines whether a name is feminine or masculine resulting in gendered names being given to people as forms of identity. Leslie and Skipper (1990:273) say, “Taking the context in consideration when trying to come up with a meaning of a name is imperative as the meanings of names are the result of complex social negotiations, learned, interpreted and reified through socialisation”. Obeng (1998) in Makondo (2009) also emphasize the importance of the social context in naming when he says: “Names in Akana as in other cultures are pointers to their users’ hopes, dreams and aspirations. They reflect geographical environment as well as fears, religious beliefs and 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”. It is through socialisation that the element of gender comes in which will give rise to gender-based names. Gender is a result of social construction and it is then reinforced through naming as individuals are given names which suit their gender status.

3.3 SEMANTICS

Saaed (1997:3 in Mamvura, 2014) defines semantics as the “study of words and sentences). Portner (2006:137) views semantics as a field within linguistics which “focuses on the literal meaning of words, phrases, and sentences; it is concerned with how grammatical processes build complex meanings out of simpler ones.” Mamvura (2014:118) says, “Semantics studies meaning without making any reference to the speakers and hearers. The present study on personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer obtained a lot of insight from semantics that studies ‘significant meaning’ since the meanings of personal names will be looked at as they relate to gender. It deals with what a namer might want personal names to reflect and in the present study the namer will want the name attributes to do with gender.

These attributes are normally determined by society in which the namer is found and after all names are only “matters of convention, convenience as there is no necessary relationship between the sound/shape of the word and what the word stands for (Condon, 1975:33 in Makondo, 2009).

In the present study the meaning of personal names was looked at in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers. Semantics differs from pragmatics which relates to speakers, hearers and context. Saaed in Pfukwa (2007:134) says that semantics looks at meaning abstracted from users. Pfukwa (2007) says semantics is a complex phenomenon involving different perspectives and approaches, for example, there is the linguist’s approach, the philosopher’s approach and the onomasticians approach. Louwrens (1993) in Pfukwa (2007) says that the linguist usually focuses on the first three levels of semantics, the lexical, the denotative and the connotative level. The onomasticians is mainly interested in the three levels of semantics but goes beyond into descriptive backing which is one of the main theories which informs the present study and is closely related to pragmatics which is also handy to this study. According to Mamvura (2014) semantics treats the name as lacking sense, but have a special kind of meaning which marks a great distinction between them and common nouns. It is this ‘special kind of meaning’ which is found in personal names which may contain gender connotations. Semantics comes in handy in the analysis of the referential role and denotation of names because according to Saaed (1997:27) “the simplest case of nominals which have reference might seem to be names”. What is obvious is that semantics acknowledges that names have some symbolic meanings in addition to their obvious referential role.

The lexical meaning of a word is the basic or original meaning and is also called literal meaning (Louwrens, 1994 in Pfukwa, 2007). When studying personal names, usually the literal meaning of the name should be the starting point, other aspects about the name follows. Pfukwa (2007) says the lexical meaning of a name is concerned with the original meaning, before the word becomes a name. During this level the name is still regarded as a pure linguistic item which can be analysed linguistically (Koopman, 1994; Louwrens, 1993 in Pfukwa, 2007). However, Nicolaisen (1976:6) says, “As soon as a word becomes a name it is cast loose from its lexical and semantic moorings”. Pfukwa (2007) says that when a word acquires onomastics attributes, its semantic properties change and one of these changes is described as denotation.

Denotation is defined by Crystal (1980:109 in Pfukwa) as:

“A term used in SEMANTICS as part of classifications of types of meaning; as opposed to connotation...involves the relationship between a LINGUISTIC UNIT...and the non-linguistic entities to which it refers...it is thus equivalent to REFERENTIAL meaning. Denotation points to an object being referred to. A name has referential or meaning where it points or denotes a person or an object.”

This definition by Crystal (1980) is in line with Meiring's (1980) argument that the importance of a name lies in what it refers to. Denotation can be seen as a transitional point in the transformation of a lexical item into a full onomastics item. John Stuart Mills' (1806-1873) in Meiring (1980:67) says, “Proper names are not connotative; they denote the person's personality, and this is very important”. Nicolaisen (1978: 40) says, “Words connote, and names denote.” Personal names which were found to be common among girls such as *Sarudazai* (choose) *Nyarai* (Be ashamed), *Sekai* (scorn), *Rowesai* (one who causes othersto be bewitched). Such names, through their meanings, seem to paint women with certain attributes as reflected in the meanings of the names. On the other hand, personal names such as *Shingai* (Be brave), *Farai* (Rejoice), *Pindukai* (Prosper) were very common for boys and they have denotative meanings which are very clear as what is expected of boys in the Zezuru society.

Pfukwa (2007) says in the post-lexical phase name assumes referential functions and at this stage it begins to collect connotations. Shona personal names are pregnant with gender connotations. Crystal (1980:82) defines connotation as:

“A term used in SEMANTICS as part of classification of types of meaning; as opposed to DENOTATION. Its main application is with reference to the emotional associations (personal or communal) which are suggested by, or are part of the meaning of a LINGUISTIC UNIT especially a LEXICAL ITEM...Alternative items for connotative meaning include AFFECTIVE and EMOTIVE.”

When looking at connotation, the meaning of a word loses its clear-cut literal and referential qualities that are found in lexical and denotative meaning. It moves to the abstract and psychological realms that are difficult to configure. The lexical item by now has lost its semantic link with its referent and it becomes an onomastics label. Pfukwa (2007:49) says, “At this stage connotation will now be firmly saddled in the onomastics realm where names carry their meaning and significance by association with or sometimes by the emotions they evoke”. In the case of Zezuru names, it is these emotions that will be gender controlled that will bring

about gendered names such as *Shingai* (be courageous) for a boy child. Such a name is normally given to a baby boy and it will be expressing the parents' wish to see their family rising to the occasion in terms of their economic well-being. Thus, it will be encouraging the family to work hard for them to improve their lives. On the other hand, the baby girl maybe given a name like *Nyarai* (be ashamed). This name will convey a strong message to those people who will be wishing the family bad luck, but the family go on to overcome all odds and prosper.

Many onomasticians, for instance Meiring (1993), Nicolaisen (1987), Raper (1987) and Neethling (1995) link connotation with onomastics. On this idea Nicolaisen (1978:48) says, "Naming is a process by which words become names through association...using a name involves knowledge of the appropriate associations."

In connection with the idea of connotation and association, among the Zezuru people, the element of association is also gendered to the extent that a person is given a name which is associated with his or her gender group. It is in connotation that the concept of descriptive backing comes in which extends the concept of meaning of a name by viewing it as a loose collection of "associations" around the name (Pfukwa 200

3.4 DESCRIPTIVE BACKING

Pfukwa (2007) says descriptive backing is a concept that takes the study of meaning fully into the onomastics realm as observed by Leslie and Skipper (1990:276) says, "Descriptive backing consists of a number of propositions concerning the identity of the name bearer". He goes on to say that these propositions are similar to the indices of identity of a person and gender which is at the core of this study happens to be one of the indices. In this respect, it can be seen that descriptive backing as a theory is closely related to the issues of naming and identity. According to Meiring (1993) in Mamvura (2014) the notion of descriptive backing can be attributed to Strawson (1950) in his theory of reference and Searle (1958; 1969) in Mamvura (2014). According to Mamvura it was Donmellan (1960) who first applied the concept of descriptive backing to the study of names by noting that a name is nothing without a backing of descriptions which can be produced on demand to explain the application. Meiring (1993:274) says descriptive backing, "Amounts to the collective content of all convectional beliefs and

connotations attached to a name. These beliefs and connotations can include even wildest speculations. Leslie and Skipper (1990:279) argue that “The meanings of names are socially negotiated. There are no final arbiters for meanings of names”. Pfukwa (2007) says that in the framework of descriptive backing, each meaning can be seen as an aggregate of speculation that include and simultaneously exclude certain attributes associated with the name in question. Through descriptive backing, names become an integral component of the cultural and historical narrative of a community. Descriptive backing entails that all connotations associated with a name regardless of grammatical accuracy (pragmatics). The cultural aspect with reference to the current study will entail gender stereotyping resulting in certain children being given gendered names such as *Tsitsi* (mercy), *Chenai* (be perfect) for girls and *Simukai* (Arise), *Simbarashe* (God’s power) for boys respectively.

According to Pfukwa (2007:50), several important points can be extrapolated from the descriptive backing theory in the naming process. The points are as follows:

1. Once a word moves from the lexical domain and picks up onomastics attributes it loses its lexical meaning(s).
2. Connotation and association are very close in terms of meaning.
3. Names go beyond strict linguistic analysis and pick up non- linguistic associations or connotations.

These associations or connotations may have no link with the original meaning of the name especially where the name has moved from one language to the other. By then the name will have lost its lexical meaning as it went through the ‘continuum’ of meanings.

Descriptive backing uses a subjective approach as it is based on individual experience and knowledge about a place, person or object bearing a name. Pfukwa (2007:49) supports this argument by observing that descriptive backing extends the meaning of names by viewing it as a loose collection of “associations” about the name. Pfukwa adds that descriptive backing makes it possible for names to be indispensable socio-historical narratives of a society. Searle (1969) argues that descriptive backing which he also calls descriptive presupposition enables names to be used predicatively because they are logically connected with characteristics of the objects they refer to. Searle posits that descriptive backing consists of a number of propositions concerning the identity of the name bearer. According to Searle’s understanding, descriptive backing is not a single set replicated as it is throughout society but rather a social composite. A concept which is found in descriptive backing is connotation. Nicolaisen (1978) notes that

names can function connotatively, and they are not expected to have lexical meanings. For instance, personal names in Shona such as *Kurai* (grow/mature) connotatively urge people to realise that they are now mature rather than behaving like toddlers or adolescents. Jespersen (1965) cited in Lyons 1995:220 is right in observing that proper names are rich in connotation and personal names being proper names are rich in connotation as well. According to Mamvura (2014) under descriptive backing all connotations surrounding a name come into play when an analysis of a name is done. This aspect of descriptive backing is very relevant to the current study because it is through such a thorough study of a name that one can realise that a certain name may have gender connotations. The name's potential in positioning an individual along gender lines cannot be underestimated. Descriptive backing therefore helps to show how names convey connotative meanings. These connotations may entail information which is gendered.

McDowell (1981:7) in Pfukwa (2007) says that descriptive backing consists of a number of propositions concerning the identity of the name bearer. He goes on to say that these propositions are similar to the indices of identity that are used to determine the identity of a person and gender is one of them. In this respect it can be seen that descriptive backing is closely related to the issues of naming and identity. According to Pfukwa (2007) descriptive backing as a theory can work outside the confines of structural linguistics and can be extended to the work of the sociologists and anthropologists such as McDowell (1981), Brandes (1975), Gilmore (1982) and Parkin (1989). These scholars take a holistic approach when studying society and they do advocate for the use of descriptive backing when studying the meaning of names. Suzman (2002) in Pfukwa (2007) says that when studying the meaning of a name through descriptive backing, the social context where the name is found becomes part of the name. This means that we cannot come up with a relevant meaning of a name when we do not know the social context surrounding the name. The importance of the social context as advocated by the descriptive backing is insightful to the present study because gender being a social construct is usually reflected in naming practices among the Zezuru.

Pfukwa (2007) says that descriptive backing holds together different streams of onomastics inquiry and it is very useful when one is carrying out a study on meanings of names and how these meanings can have gender connotations. Pfukwa (2007) adds that the concept of descriptive backing extends to the concept of meaning by viewing it as a loose collection of "all associations" around a name.

3.5 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS THEORY

Van Dijk (1998a) says, “Critical Discourse Analysis is a field that is concerned with studying and analyzing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias”. Critical Discourse Analysis examines how spoken or written text are maintained and reproduced within particular social, political and historical settings. Van Dijk (1998a) says, “Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context”. Through such researches, critical discourse analysts take clear position, in order to understand, the situation then expose, and ultimately resist social inequality that will be existing at a given time.

Jaworski & Coupland (1999:7) say, “Discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about a topic”. They go on to regard a discourse as a group of statements which are joined to bring desired meaning. Wetherell (2001:194) regards a discourse as the use of a language and language-like sign systems as agreed by members of a given society. Davies and Harre (1990:47) say, “A discourse is a set of social practices that make meaning”. In the same vein Zezuru personal names do have meaning related to norms and values of the Zezuru people.

van Dijk (1988:2) says “Discourse is not simply an isolated textual or dialogic structure, rather it is a complex communicative event that also embodies a social context, featuring participants as well as production and reception process.” When coming up with the meaning of Zezuru personal names the social contexts in which these names are found has to be considered first so as to come with the true meaning of the name as intended by the namer and the society as a whole. Fairclough (1989) says that discourses are diverse representations of life. The lives of men and women are represented through different discourses in the social spheres of life. Naming can also be regarded as a complex communicative event that is performed in a social context because naming as a form of communication is done during the presents of family members who will be witnessing the naming act. This name which will be bestowed to the new born will act as a form of identity which will identify the name bearer as being male or female.

Jaworski & Coupland (1999:7) say discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. They go on to regard a discourse as a collection of statements which cohere together. Wetherell (2001:194) regards a discourse as the institutionalised use of a language and language-like sign system.

Language users when using the correct discourse are not isolated individuals; rather they are engaged in communicative activities as members of groups, institutions or cultures which enable them to relay important information in the group. Through naming the Shona people will be communicating certain messages relating to gender and the roles which individuals are expected to play in society based on their gender status.

Fairclough (2003) says, “Critical discourse analysis subsumes a variety of approaches towards the social analysis of discourse which differ in theory, methodology, and the type of research issues to which they tend to give prominence”. Critical Discourse Analysis borrows a lot from a critical theory of language which views language use as a prerequisite for social interaction. Naming is part of this social interaction because through these names the Zezuru will be relaying messages. Gender relations are perpetuated or discouraged through personal names given to individuals in the Zezuru society.

Fairclough (1989, 1985) gave a model for Critical Discourse Analysis which can be used when analysing given texts. This model is made up of three inter-related processes of analysis: These three dimensions are:

1. The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts).
2. The processes by means of which the object is produced and received (writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects.
3. The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

According to Fairclough each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis. These analyses might be text analysis (description), processing analysis (description) and social analysis (interpretation). This strategy is very informative because it helps us to focus on the signifiers that constitute the text, the specific linguistic selections, their juxtapositioning, their sequencing, their layout and so on. There is also a need to identify the historical determination

of these selections and to understand that these choices are tied to the conditions of possibility of that utterance. Texts or statements used by people are socially regulated and determined by people who both produce and receive them. Zezuru personal names, as texts are also socially regulated. Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis is useful to the present study because it provides multiple points of analytic entry in the study of personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

Critical discourse analysis's focus is on language and discourse is mainly centred on the meanings of various texts as they are used in different contexts within society. Fowler et al (1979) says, "Critical discourse analysis has counterparts in critical developments in sociolinguistics, psychology, and the social sciences". Naming falls under sociolinguistics and as such Critical Discourse Analysis comes in handy in unearthing gender messages contained in some Zezuru personal names.

Critical discourse analysis questions the existence of inequality in society. Among the Zezuru, this inequality emanates from the gendered names given to people. These names do stereotype individuals on gender lines leading to discrimination.

Through the gendered names given to individuals in Zezuru society, women are usually excluded in various important occasions in the society just because it is regarded as a tradition that the women's place is the kitchen.

Fairclough (1993:135) views Critical Discourse Analysis as a package which methodically tries to investigate relationships of causality and determination between the following:

“(a) discursive practices, events and texts and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony.”

In short critical, discourse analysis aims at making transparent the connections between discourse practices, social practices, and social structures, connections that might be opaque to the layperson. Wetherell, (2001) says that Critical Discourse Analysis stems from a critical

theory of language as intergral part for social interaction. He went on to add that all interactions are influenced by certain contexts. Critical discourse analysis is interested in how the text is positioned or positioning? Whose interests are served by the positioning? Whose interests are negated? What are the consequences of this positioning? –thatrelates discourse to relations of power. Where analysis seeks to understand how discourse is implicated in relations of power, it is called critical discourse analysis. Naming as another situation where discourse come into play also do comply with the tenets of critical discourse analysis. Through gendered names, a certain gender group will be advancing its own interests at the expense of the interests of another group.

3.5.1 THE TENETS OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Fairclough and Wodak (1997:271-80) summarise the main tenets of critical discourse analysis as follows:

1. Critical discourse analysis addresses social problems.
2. Power relations are discursive.
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture.
4. Discourse does ideological work.
5. Discourse is historical.
6. The link between text and society is mediated.
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory.
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

Fairclough (1995) says that critical discourse analysis represents an aid in the analysis of language-based data. Van Dijk (1997) says, “Critical Discourse Analysis involves the use of discourse analytic techniques, combined with a critical perspective, to interrogate social phenomena”. Naming, being a way of communicating in a social set up, is also a social phenomenon which needs such interrogation to bring out gender connotations contained in these names.

Critical Discourse Analysis focuses mainly social issues with the aim of coming up with reasons for the status quo. More explicitly, Critical Discourse Analysis looks at the means through which discourse structures enact, confirm, legitimate, reproduce, or challenge relations

of power and dominance in society. Critical Discourse Analysis does not end at looking at discourse structures; instead it goes further by giving explanations about the factors that will have influenced the use of a certain discourse in a particular context. When looking at Zezuru personal names especially those which are gendered, there is need to look at factors which gave rise to those names.

Under critical discourse analysis, discourse refers to the system of signification (semiotic) such as language and images. Critical discourse analysis has three dimensions and every aspect of language uses these indexes as a communicative event consisting of the following dimensions according to Mamvura (2014). The dimensions have it that a discourse as a text; it is a discursive practice which involves the production and consumption of texts and that it is a social practice. In the same vein personal names can be regarded as texts and that the act of naming is a social event which very important among the Zezuru.

According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2006), in critical discourse analysis, the term 'text' is used to refer to written and spoken language as well as to images. Personal names in this study as linguistic entities are treated as texts which speak volumes about their bearers including the ability to reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) say that Critical Discourse Analysis together with other domains of discourse analysis are and other forms of discourse analysis are commonly used in the social sciences to study issues to do with identity. This study to a larger extent is dealing with identity in as far as it looks at how individuals are personal names can reflect one's gender. Gender in itself is a major form of identity just like the personal names.

The current study uses the critical discourse analysis as its theoretical framework because the "the model is an analytical framework for----- research on communication and society" (Jorgensen & Philips, 2002; 68) in Mamvura (2014). Mamvura (2014) says critical discourse analysis examines the social processes which motivate the production of a text, and the social structures and process in which human beings, individually or collectively as active subjects, create meanings in their interaction with texts (Fairclough 1995).

Fowler et al (1979:188) say, "A central tenet of critical discourse theory is that speakers make choices regarding vocabulary and grammar, and that these choices are consciously or unconsciously "principled and systematic". In most of the cases the choice of diction is

influenced by so many factors with the context as the major one. According to Fowler et al. (1979), the connection between form and content is not arbitrary or conventional, but rather form signifies content. In short, language is a social act which is guided by the norms and values of the people involved in the dialogue. Naming among the Zezuru serves a very important role in as far as it groups people along gender lines. It is not an innocent act because it stigmatizes the name bearers according to their gender status.

Wodak (2001) in Mamvura (2014) says critical discourse analysis is characterised by three indispensable concepts namely (i) ideology, (ii) power, and (iii) history. For the purposes of the present study the concept of power will come in handy. The concept of ideology in critical discourse analysis is understood as, “meaning in the service of power” (Fairclough 1995:14). In light with this study the issue of power may be reflected through difference in terms of gender where a certain gender group is assumed to have power another gender and this gender classification is perpetuated through gendered names given to individuals among the Zezuru people. Power is a key tenet of critical discourse analysis in so far as it considers language use by those in power who are the architects of [racial, sexual or class] inequalities.

According to van Dijk (1984), critical discourse analysis aims at critiquing social inequality. Gendered names, which are very common among the Zezuru, are a major source of gender inequality. Many people are discriminated along gender lines. Critical discourse analysis focuses on the role of discourse in the reproduction and question dominance. Van Dijk (1984) says, “Dominance is the exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups that results in social inequality including political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality.” This research argues that gender stereotyping which results from gendered names may perpetuate gender inequality.

Wodak (2001a:11) in Mamvura (2014) argues that “power is about relations of difference, and particularly about the effects of differences in social structure.” Among the Shona not everyone is given the responsibility to name a child, rather it is the responsibility of someone who holds some form of power in the family to name the child and in most cases it is the father who is given this responsibility. Mamvura (2014:147) says, “Critical Discourse Analysis as a theory is mainly concerned with the use of any discourse as it is usually manipulated by the power holders to communicate and transmit the dominant ideology into the minds of the dominated”. With reference to the present study, the father of the child, being the head of the family and

sole name giver usually gives a name which reflects his gender desires. These gender-loaded names may disadvantage or advantage the name bearer in life. This is as a result of the fact that the basic understanding in critical discourse analysis is that of discourse as a concrete manifestation of social action which is largely conditioned by social variables. Among the Zezuru, with their strong belief in patriarchal tradition which is characterised by male domination, the aspect of discourse comes in handy in as far as it is used as conduits for communicating a dominant ideology with the principal of maintaining the status quo. The present study is exploring how personal names are used to differentiate people along gender lines resulting in women being disadvantaged in various aspects in life.

Using Wodak (1996), personal names are regarded as texts which are capable of reflecting the gender status of the name bearer. Wodak (1996) says discourse has a quality of situatedness which makes it possible to situate discourse in time and space. Zezuru personal names do conform with time and space in that the naming patterns change with time and change of geographical location.

This study is anchored on the idea that personal names as forms of identity are spatial discourses that play an important communicative role among the Zezuru, communicating important information such as reflecting the gender status of the name-bearer. Critical discourse analysis represents a valuable way of approaching the study of identity. Gender being another form of identity will be studied as it is being reflected through the personal names given to Shona people. The language we use daily during our interactions is institutionalized; shaping social practices and setting new practices into play and that is how society operates. It is through personal names that messages about gender roles and expectations are relayed among the Shona people.

Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) say, “There are different approaches within discourse analysis: some focus on the micro level of language use whereas others discuss discourse at a much broader phenomenon as a way of communicating about a particular topic”. In this study discourse analysis is going to be used in the analysis of names with the aim of wanting to find out how these names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Hacking (2000) says, “Discourse analytic approaches share a common attention to the significance and structuring effects of language, and are associated with interpretive and reflexive styles of analysis”. Critical discourse analysis therefore involves looking at language use as a way of social

practice that shapes society by constructing versions of social order (Candlin in Mamvura 2014:149).

Critical discourse analysis as a theory offers a repeatable method capable of tackling data regardless of where and when it is applied and who is applying it. Fairclough (1992) says discourse analysis plays an important role in the processes that go towards 'making up' people as new categories of people and 'new ways of people to be' are brought into being. Hacking (2000:223) says, "The ascendance of statistics in the nineteenth century in America was particularly influential in creating classifications for previously unknown people". These classifications then affected the "possibilities for personhood" for those targeted by and enumerated according to such categories. The naming of people with gendered names can as well categorise people on gender lines. Discourse analysis thus involves an interest in the ways social members categorize themselves (Van Dijk, 1997). This categorization can be achieved through gendered names which are given to individuals which may have adverse effects to the name bearers in their day to day lives.

Critical discourse analysis offers forms of analysis that cannot be intelligibly disputed. This is made possible because critical discourse analysis offers a possibility of a dialogue between the non- linguistic and the linguistic precisely, but the latter remains at the core of the analysis. This tenet of Critical Discourse Analysis is very relevant to This research because the way to come up with the meaning of the gendered names there need to look at both the linguistic meanings of personal names and the social connotative meaning of the name. Wadak (1996) says that the non- linguistic, however can very fruitfully inform the findings of the language analysis and offer ways in which to interpret them.

Critical Discourse Analysis focuses upon the social meanings of linguistic structures, whether lexical, syntactic or others. Zezuru personal names can effectively be analysed using critical discourse analysis since they are lexical items. In such a way, critical discourse analysis offers a checklist of a number of aspects of language that can be systematically investigated. Critical Discourse Analysis offers the opportunity to look closely at personal names with the aim of coming up with gender connotations enshrined in these names and offering insights that are capable of giving acceptable results for any social phenomena under study like that of naming among the Zezuru.

When using critical discourse analysis in the investigation of of linguistic items like names, one will be required to go deeper and further than the boundaries of the syntactic or semantic

form of the name or statement according to Fairclough (1995). Under critical discourse analysis, the lexico-grammatical resources of the language system will be of great importance in all the utterance in any given context. Van Dijk (1997:74) says, "Critical discourse analysis is not only interested in the formal (phonological or syntactic) aspects of discourse, or language use but rather the focus is also on the social and cultural contexts". This study benefited from this important characteristic of critical discourse analysis in that Zezuru personal names were studied in their social context and meanings of these names were looked at beyond their semantic meaning.

Hacking (2000:132) says, "Critical discourse analysis approaches identity as an ongoing process accomplished through social interaction particularly language and communication." Zezuru people's understanding of gender is articulated through their language choices and naming is one such way through which they express gender relations. Ainsworth and Hardy (2004:32) say, "Discourse is a shared social resource that constructs identity as individuals lay claim to various recognizable social or shared identities". Gender being a product of social construction and a form of identity can best be explained through using critical discourse analysis. Wadak (1996:67) says, "Central to the process of discourse analysis is social categorization as various classifications of people are brought into being, with practical effects for those targeted by these categories as well as those involved in their construction". The way people come up with identity using discourse is the same way they can also construct meaning and relationships in texts.

Van Dijk (1997:78) says, "Critical discourse analysis discusses constructs of identities by defining groups, their interests, their position within society and their relationship to other groups. With Discourse Analysis, all attributes of gender which are contained in Zezuru personal names will be exposed and explained. Fairclough (1995) offers some of the major characteristics of critical discourse analysis. These are as follows; discourse analysis is concerned with language either in its written or oral form. This language has to be studied in the context in which it is used so that the meaning of this language will be easy to relate to its context. In the same way the meanings of Zezuru personal names must be studied in the context of the Zezuru society in which these names are used and found. When language is used in society it is agreed upon by members of the society so that meanings and interpretations will be known by every member of that society.

Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) say that the social constructionist assumptions that underpin discourse analysis do not reject the material existence of reality independent of human consciousness but assert that the truth behind every statement can only be knowable through social processes of meaning making. This meaning-making is made possible through the gendered personal names ascribed to members among the Shona people. The study on Zezuru personal names will be done using names given by the name bearers and from reliable sources such as names from the registry department, school registers, responses from questionnaires and interviews.

Meanings of personal names for the Zezuru people can fully be known when one considers the settings, participants and their communicative and social roles, goals, relevant social knowledge, norms and values, institutional or organisational structures. All these factors mentioned are very important when using discourse analysis in coming with the meaning of given texts. The study of how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer was done in Buhera South where the Zezuru people have common norms and values. Howarth and Stavarakis (2000:124) say, "Discourse creates identities that individuals must take up to make sense of the discourse, and in so doing, individuals subject themselves to its disciplinary effects". In other words, rather than these autonomous subjects use discourse to construct identities. It is discourse that produces knowledge relations within which subjects are positioned and identities are constructed.

Ainsworth and Hardy (2004) say critical discourse analysis uses systematic and detailed forms of textual analysis, institutional dialogue, pragmatics and a lot of other tools to examine texts. Ainsworth and Hardy (2004:65) say, "In the context of identity, texts are seen as 'empirical materials that articulate complex argument about social identities of race, class, gender, sexual orientation and age'. Personal names are forms of texts as well which can say a lot about gender dynamics in the Zezuru society. What is needed is to analyse the meanings of these names carefully considering the context in which they are used.

Wadak (1996:87) says, "Discourse analysis is interested in levels or layers of discourse and their mutual relations. These levels of discourse represent distinct types of construction units (sounds, words, syntactic forms) and also different dimensions of discourse operation (linguistic actions, forms of interaction)". Some Zezuru personal names are so long and at times breaking these names into smaller linguistic units might require a special linguist. However,

the longer the name the richer it will be in terms of meaning. Personal names are linguistic structures which can also be analysed just like other linguistic constructions which are found in any language. Wodak (1996:89) says, "Language users and analysts are interested in meaning and in particular in two types of question; namely 'what does it mean in this situation?' and why is this being said or meant in this situation." In connection to the present study most Zezuru personal names do have meaning associated with gender traits. Mamvura (2014:148) says, "Critical Discourse Analysis is important in studying identity because of the salience of identity in producing and sustaining power relationships between different social groups". He goes on to add that social identity is a social construct which is relative to the identity and position of others.

Wodak (1996: 126) considers racial and gender identity as 'discourses of difference' because discourse about others is always connected with one's own identity, which is how we see ourselves. The construction of one's identity is a process of differentiation, a description of one's own group and simultaneously a separation from others. In the current study therefore it would mean that identity is created on gender lines through naming when individuals are given names which are regarded as feminine and masculine respectively. Critical discourse analysis is concerned with competing discourses in varied public domains and spaces and this will be reflected through power relations found within a given society. These power relations are realised through the use of language and naming is another example where language is being used. Mamvura (2014) says language is a powerful tool that expresses power. Through gendered names, certain individuals will be disadvantaged in Shona society. Critical discourse analysis therefore examines how power is anchored in social reality, who exercises it, over whom and by what means it is exercised (Wodak, 2001). Such ideas help in the appreciation of the role of personal names in showing gender differences in the Shona society and how these differences do affect a certain gender group in accessing resources within society. Identity is very important for the purposes of this study because identity in terms of being male or female helps to understand the power behind personal names as forms of identity.

Critical discourse analysis participates in the politics of domination and general power struggles in a society characterised by inequalities. In Shona society, women are excluded in some economic, social and political events just because they are women. Critical discourse analysis examines how power is anchored in social reality, who exercises it, over whom and by what means it is exercised (Wodak, 2001). These arguments help in the appreciation of the

role of personal names in showing gender differences in the Shona society. Identity is important for the purposes of this study because identities in terms of being a man or women helped in appreciating how personal names influence in the inclusion and exclusion of individuals in various realms of life on gender lines. Among the Zezuru, identities are made possible through giving people personal names. Thus, personal names as discourses of sameness and difference can reinforce gender differences by making the imagined differences very visible.

FairClough (1995:189) says, “Critical discourse analysis mediates the connection between language and social contexts. It carries us beyond simple examinations of verbal and written interaction”. This will definitely help a lot when coming up with the meaning of any verbal or written text. Wodak (1996) says that this approach has been used in a number of studies of identity that are collectively termed discourses of difference. Gender being one form of identity as it is reflected through personal names is at the core of this study and will be looked at using critical discourse analysis. Studies associated with identity explore the discursive construction of identity of marginalised groups, especially gender and ethnic/racial identities. This research has explored how personal names as forms of texts construct, reproduce and perpetuate masculine and feminine identities.

3.5.2 THE CONTRIBUTION OF CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS TO NAMING AND GENDER

Critical discourse analysis helps a lot in exploring not only the products of social construction such as gender which is a form of identity, but also to the processes of construction that give rise to them and the material effect that follow them. The current research is interested in how certain personal names reflect the identity of the name bearer on gender lines. The research is also interested in looking at how stereotypes associated with such personal names arise and affects the name bearer both in the positive and negative ways in socio, economic and political spheres in life.

Critical discourse analysis can reflect on gender constructions and the embedded cultural assumptions that for example present a certain gender group as weak, docile and shy while on the other hand depict the other gender as al-conquering, agile, strong and active. Critical discourse analysis can be used in several ways to explore processes of social construction

(Ainsworth and Hardy 2004). As an example, work on discourses of difference provides frameworks that can be applied to the current study. Work on discourses of difference explores the operation and reproduction of negative stereotypes, especially those concerned with socially constructed categories such as gender which is the thrust of the current study. Women are always negatively portrayed and this often reflected through the names given to them.

3.6 GENDER THEORY

McKinnon in Kramarae and Treichler (1985) says, “Gender is the division of women and men caused by the social requirements of heterosexuality, which institutionalises male sexual dominance and female sexual submission.” Gender stereotyping is perpetuated through personal names among the Zezuru people.

Gender theory is very relevant to the present study for it informs why we have roles which are defined in gender terms in the socio-economic and political spheres. These gender differences will then be perpetuated through the names given to individuals in society. Kramarae and Treicher (1985:123) say, “Gender theory can be regarded as the systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations accumulated in order to identify and understand social imbalances based on gender” In the early stages, gender theory first emerged as a feminist theory was used as an analytical tool for understanding gender reform but with time it became a major theory to explain all matters to do with gender and identity. Gender theory came into limelight just before political feminism in United States and Western Europe during the 1960s. Political feminism was mainly concerned with the rights of women in present-day societies, their identities and how these women are portrayed in various books of literature. It was also concerned about the position of women in cultural societies like Zezuru society under study.

Bannon and Correia (2006) say that gender is mainly concerned with the way social structures give men power over women resulting in the marginalisation of women in various spheres of life. Butler (1990:19) gives an example of a boy who imitates the way his father swaggers and sticks out his chest when walking. The young boy will be behaving just like his father and to him that will be to be like a man. Butler (1990:86) says, “Chances are high that his father was not swaggering but the boy is creating a person that embodies what he admires in his adult male role model”. Butler (1990:86) that girls on the other hand imitates their mothers as well

and he gave an example of a girl who imitates her mother by putting on high-heeled shoes, applied make-up and moves around the house. What can be noted from these behaviours of the two children is that the actions they are imitating are what they think are the ideal traits of a father and mother respectively. Butler (1990:23) says, “The chances are that when these children are fully grown, they will not swagger and mince respectively, but childhood performances contain elements that will no doubt surface in their adult male and female behaviour patterns”. Thus gender behaviours which are socially constructed and usually child are socialised of these behaviours through the gendered names which they are given by their parents.

Moser (1989:112) says “Gender is realised in all the realms of life such as work places where people at times imitate the behaviours of secretaries and managers”. Thus, some people will be imitating secretaries in terms of the way they walk and for managers they usually imitate the way they give orders or instructions to their subordinates. Moser (1989:113) says, “People come to understand their gender roles as wives, husbands, mothers, daughters, fathers and uncles as they grow or age”. People acquire new social behaviours about what is expected of them as females or males. Eckert and McConnel-Ginet (2003:10) says, “Gender is not a convection with which people are doing, and it is not something people have, but something people do and perform”. Thus, the gendered names which are given to Zezuru children will socialise them to behave as to the dictates of the meanings of their names.

In line with the issue of gender is the idea of stereotyping which is very rampant among the Shona people. Bannon and Correia (2006:316) say, “The concept of stereotyping occupies a prominent place within the images of women”. They go on to add that stereotyping usually reduces an individual to a set of larger-than-life negative character traits. Among the Shona, women are normally portrayed as passive, weak and other attributes which are not worthy admiring while on the other hand men are portrayed as the stronger sex which is associated with all the positive attributes. Names among the Zezuru contain many cultural traits which characterise males and females differently. The difference in the way men and women are portrayed through personal names perpetuate inequality between the two sexes. Some of the attributes enshrined in most of the names, point to the current sexual roles played by individuals in society.

Among the Zezuru people the responsibility to name children is given to the father of the child if he is there. Nuessel (1992:3) noted that “those who give names often occupy positions of power and authority in the families. Consequently, the act of naming implies that the naming group has a measure of control over those who will be named”. What this reflects is that the namer will always expect to be respected by the one whom he or she will have named. Among the Zezuru, men being the dominant breadwinners of their respective families still dominate the naming processes but the trend seems to be changing now with a number of women now being educated and gainfully employed. Women now have a say in the naming just like in Western societies and among the Zulu in South Africa. Bosmajian (1974a) said that the ability to name is a reflection of having important power. More specifically Bosmajian (1974) says:

“The power that comes from names and naming is related directly to the power to define others- individual race, sexes, and ethnic groups. Our identities, who and what we are, how others see us, are greatly affected by the names we are called and the words with which we are labelled. (Bosmajian, 1974a in Nuessel, 1992:3).

Among the Zezuru, being a patriarchal society, the men are the major breadwinners of their respective families and as such they dominate the naming processes although these days there are cases when women are given the right to names. These are rare cases and when they happen they are usually among the educated and working couples who have enshrined the issue of equal rights.

Names among the Zezuru names vary and each name determines the distinctiveness and uniqueness of each person. Among the Zezuru the namers are people who command a lot of respect in their respective families. Men are often the sole name-givers to their families and they always provide names that reflect their hopes and aspirations as a family. The namer will be hoping that the name will be a self-fulfilling prophecy, i.e., the child will have the attributes and the powers attached to the name. Nuessel (1992:4) says, “From their perspective, it may be said that you are what you are named.” There is a strong belief among the Zezuru about the power in names which confirms a psychology that a name shapes the behaviour of the name bearer. Murphy in Nuessel (1992:113) says, “Given names, and assumed names have numerous important significances in the development of a person, and often give clues to their attitudes toward themselves and others with whom they have been closely associated.”

Gendered names which are given to Zezuru people often do influence the behaviour of the name bearers who often behave to the dictates of the name. The name could also influence the attitude of people around the name bearer. Thus, the name *Tsitsi* (Mercy) for girls always paints the picture of women as people who are very considerate and very concerned about the plight of others. On the other hand a name like *Shingai* (Be brave) which normally given to boys portrays men as people who are determined to face any challenge they may come across in life. It can therefore be argued that names have a great influence in shaping the behaviour of people among the Zezuru.

Herbert in Peter (2010) says that stereotyping is very common in naming children. He indicates that the naming of boys is most significant. According to his assessment, boys are more likely to be recipients of names commemorating family members or acknowledging roles within the family. From this view it is clear that males' names are linked to an ancestor or to the roles that the baby boy should later assume in life. This naming trend among the Zezuru can be traced back to the traditional Shona society which was greatly influenced by patriarchal mentality which celebrates men at the expense of women in all spheres of life.

Patriarchy is seen as the major source for gender inequality among the Zezuru. Rich in Kramarae and Treicher, (1985:323) says, "Patriarchy not only refers to the preventing of women from occupying powerful positions in society, it also creates the negative social view which men attach to women". Under patriarchy men are always seen dominating women and this is one of the reasons why naming among the Zezuru is dominated by men. Kramarae and Treicher (1985:232) say, "Patriarchy as a way of structuring reality in terms of good/evil, redemption/guilt, authority/obedience, reward/punishment, power/powerless, have/have-nots, and master/slave". Women assume the role children in a patriarchal society where they wait to be given instructions by men in all respects. Peter (2010:102) says, "Patriarchy shows that females are regarded as non-human beings". He goes on to say that patriarchy is the norm in most traditional societies. Men are always at the helm of decision making while women will be recipients to these decisions. Patriarchy is therefore not simply hierarchical organization, but a hierarchy in which a particular gender fills particular places. Under patriarchy, power is solely on the shoulders of the man, whose decisions are not criticized. His powers can be seen through the naming of children in the family whom he usually gives names that promotes patriarchal traditions.

Diana Meehan's (1983) analysis of women on United States television is a good example of women are often portrayed on gender lines. She says that representations on television cast 'good' women as submissive, sensitive and domesticated while 'bad' women are rebellious, independent and selfish. Gallagher (1983) in Bannon and Correia (2006) carried a survey on women in the media and it came out that there is a trend world wide where women are depicted as commodified and stereotyped in varied ways. Krishman and Dighe (1990) in Bannon and Correia (2006) carried out a research on representation of women on Indian television. Results from their research showed that women are often portrayed as passive and subordinate, that is, being tied to housework, husbands and children. They also found out that women often shun public spheres, particularly in relation to work. Men on the other hand are always presented in decision making positions. These characteristics are well demonstrated in some of the Shona personal names which paint the picture of man and woman differently.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the theoretical framework used in this study. The descriptive backing and the Critical Discourse Analysis theories aided with the concepts of pragmatics and semantics have been discussed showing how they will contribute to the present study. The theoretical framework also incorporates insights from pragmatics and semantics. The two sub-fields of linguistics namely pragmatics and semantics point to the fact that personal names carry meaning, at least in the onomastics sense. Pragmatics has shown that name-givers can stereotype individuals through the names they give. A distinction between denotation and connotation in semantics is important in demonstrating the descriptive backing of personal names. Personal names are statements that are pregnant with meaning and have the potential of categorising people along gender lines. As such analysing Shona personal names needs a multi-disciplinary approach. It is in light of the complexity of personal names that the present research has embarked on a multi-disciplinary in coming up with a theoretical framework which informs the present study. It has been noted that due to the richness of personal names, no one theory can best explain their existence as such this is the reason why this study has opted for more than one theory to inform this current study.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter predominantly discusses how research data was gathered. It starts by identifying its domain of operation before outlining how data will be collected from the respondents. This chapter presents the methods that were used in carrying out this study. The methodology is employed in the research of any particular area is dependent on the nature, aims and goals of the study itself, and may thus vary “from methods and techniques of sampling, to data-collection methods, to methods of data analysis” (Babbie 2001:49). The methodology discusses the qualitative nature of this research, the research design, paradigm, sampling techniques, methods of data collection and the method of data analysis. The discussion makes it clear that the study is mainly qualitative in nature. The location of the study is also described together with the population under study. The way participants were selected was outlined and justified: data collection methods and procedures are presented together with methods of analysing data. It will proceed to examine the data gathering methods that were used in the study and at the same time noting their accompanying strengths and weaknesses of these methods.

The research is a case study of how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer. This research is located within the interpretive research paradigm. It seeks to provide answers to the “why?” and “how?” of the whole onomastics enterprise during the period under study. Personal naming among the Zezuru people is a very complex process where names given to individuals have a lot of significance. In order to maintain focus, this study focused on personal names of the Zezuru people in Buhera South. The next section examines the research design for the study.

4.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The present research fits within the interpretive research paradigm. A paradigm, in simple terms, is a set of suppositions about how we know the world and what we do when we conduct research. Haase and Meyers (1988) define a paradigm as a philosophy science or a worldview that embodies a research approach and assumptions that are directly linked to that worldview. A research paradigm is described as consisting of a combination of fundamental assumptions and philosophies that provide an interpretation as to the perceptions about the world and therefore creating an intellectual framework which directs the conduct of the investigator (Jonker & Pennink 2010). Geertz (1973) in Ndebele (2015) says that interpretivism originates from a hermeneutic tradition whose major interest is in the interpretation of meaning in discourse as presented in narratives that are personal and the behaviour and activities that are observed. Creswell (2013) says that interpretivism can be described as social constructivism and through it individuals it seeks to understand the world around them. People come with different interpretations and meanings on experiences which they encounter in life. He goes on to add that these meanings are diverse resulting in the researcher to seek for more intricate explanations on the researched phenomena. Through this interpretivism, the goal of research will be to depend on the participants in the research for accurate information. Very often slanted meanings about different phenomena in society are negotiated socially and historically.

Under this interpretive framework, there are theories which answer issues to do with feminism, gender, disabilities and race. In these theories, reality is known through the study of social structures and it is also based on power and identity struggles. Privilege or oppression based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, mental abilities and sexual preference are expounded. Thus, this study is looking at personal names in as far as the meanings of these names reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Naming falls within the Zezuru discourse. Geertz (1973:2a) in Ndebele (2015:112) says, "The essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions but to make available to us answers that others, guarding other sheep in other valleys, have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said".

Guest et al (2013) say, "An interpretive research paradigm is grounded upon the assumption that the pre-occupation of qualitative research determinations are the divulging of various

aspects of reality rather than the searching for a single reality that is objective”. Denzin (2010) adds that through interpretive approach you will be in the position to capture an in-depth understanding and multiple validities about the phenomena under study. Wahyuni (2012) in Ndebele (2015:114) says, “Interpretivists hold the belief that social actors are responsible for the creation of the truth or reality and their views about that reality”. In studying any given phenomena, interpretivists know and accept the different backgrounds of participants that may result in different ways in which they view and comprehend reality. Cohen et al (2013) say, “Interpretive researchers generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them”. The interpretivist perspective is based on assumptions which include the idea that the human mind is the purposive source or origin of meaning and that human life can only be understood fully from within. The present research gains a lot of insight from such interpretive ideas.

This research looks at personal names in an attempt to unravel gender connotations enshrined in them and as such interpretive paradigm is very ideal for this study since according to Neuman (2012) interpretive researchers use descriptions when looking at particular social phenomena. The narrative form of analysis which was used in analysing personal names is supported by the use of interpretive techniques which give a detailed narrative for the phenomena to be understood fully. Interpretivists use a technique that show the insider’s viewpoint regarding social phenomena like personal naming through the study of participants as a virtuous source of knowledge with regard to social phenomena which will be under study. Ndebele (2015:113) says, “The major aim the interpretivist is to investigate individual and collective perceptions, thought patterns and their social values”. Personal names among the Zezuru do reflect their thoughts and values with regard to gender differences and as such through interpretive strategy, gender connotations in Zezuru personal names were brought to the surface. Blaike in Ndebele (2015:112) sums it up when he says that:

“Interpretivists are concerned with understanding the social world people have produced and which they produce through their continuing activities. This everyday reality consists of meanings and interpretations given by the social actors to their actions, other people’s actions, social situations, and natural and humanly created objects. In short, in order to negotiate their way around their world and make sense of it, social actors have to interpret their activities together, and it is these meanings, embedded in language that constitutes their social reality.”

Manson (2002) says, “An interpretive philosophical assumption therefore views social actors or people as primary data sources and captures their views”. In this study participants helped in giving information about their personal names. Henning, Van- Rensburg&Smit (2004) say that when using the interpretive paradigm the understanding of a phenomena and social action hinges on the ability of the researcher to give correct interpretation of the data gathered considering social context under which the data was gathered. Garrick (1999:149 in Mamvura 2014) gives the various assumptions of the interpretive research paradigm as follows:

- The fact that individuals cannot be viewed as passive mediums in the social, historical and political relationships but possesses the ability to make personal judgement, insights and independent decision making.
- The belief in the multiplicity of interacting factors, processes and events that could provide an explanation to an event or action.
- The notion that the goal of research is to cultivate a clearer comprehension of distinct circumstances as opposed to making universal generalisations.
- The notion of the world as constituted of manifold authenticities that can be interpreted as a unit while also recognising the importance of the context of the experience.
- A recognition of the fact that it is extremely difficult to attain a complete reality especially with regards to observing social actors such as humans who are capable of interpreting and making meaning of events from different individual perspectives.
- The recognition of the notion that inquiry is characterised by various value systems which unavoidably impact on the designing, direction and handling of the research process.

The present research is informed by the assumptions of interpretive paradigm in carrying out this research. The researcher investigated the Zezuru personal names with the aim of finding out the gender connotations enshrined in these names.

It is always important to discuss other competing research paradigms in the social sciences to justify why in this research I opted for interpretive paradigm over the other research paradigms. Positivist paradigm is one of these competing paradigms. This research paradigm is the direct opposite of the interpretive research paradigm because according to Glesne (2011) in Ndebele (2015) this paradigm which is often called the logical empiricism paradigm strives for law-like generalities. Creswell (2009) says that the positivist paradigm is of the idea that researchers

observing the same phenomena must come up with the same results especially if they are employing statistical methods in the research. Wahyuni (2012) says, “Positivists hold a common belief in the existence of universal knowledge whose application is relevant across different contexts and as such has been referred as naive realism”. Post-positivist is another competing research paradigm. Racher and Robinson (2002) say that the emergence of post-positivism is associated with the rejection of the early premises of the positivist approach by most researchers. Creswell (2013:24) says that post-positivism has the elements of being reductionistic, logical, empirical, cause- and –effect oriented, and deterministic based on priori theories. Cohen et al (2011) says that this approach is usually used by people with prior quantitative research training as such it could not fit in this research which is wholly qualitative in nature.

What is very common with interpretive researchers according to Maree (2007:59) is that they start out with the assumption that access to reality is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings. Zezuru personal names and their meanings are a result of social constructions as well and they are found within the Shona language.

4.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

This current research will definitely use the qualitative research approach in soliciting data from the participants. However there will be cases where the researchers will also use the quantitative approach for instance when coming up with the most common gendered names among the Shona people. The current study is predominantly qualitative and interdisciplinary (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:11). This study on how Shona personal names reflect the gender status of the name bearer is committed to the naturalistic perspective as it focuses on understanding of research phenomena in-situ and interprets meanings of personal names in terms of the meanings that participants will give them. Thus, this study on personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer will be looked at in the context of the Shona people. In support of this idea, O’Leary (2004:49) says that this subjective, interpretive and constructive approach is beneficial as it is concerned with discovering the meanings as perceived by those being researched. In other words, this will involve understanding people’s mental categories, interpretations, perceptions, feelings and motives. This current research which is qualitative in nature seeks answers to processes, meanings, on how social experiences

such as naming influence one's gender identity. Using the qualitative approach in the current study is ideal in that qualitative research is forward looking as it develops theory from gathered findings. Cases where the quantitative approach will be used will be limited because the study is wholly narrative hence the use of the qualitative approach in explaining how Zezuru personal names are gendered has been greatly preferred in this study.

4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design can be understood to be a structure of the research. Kothari and Garg (2014) are of the view that the research design “stands for advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in their analysis.” This automatically means that data collection methods and data analysis techniques are determined by the research design. Durrheim (2006:37) says, “A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research”. The research design can be regarded as a strategy for collecting and analysing data which is likely to produce reliable results. For one to carry out a successful research there is need for prior planning and this salient feature of research makes it different from ordinary observations of immediate environment. Instead, research is all about “systematic observation” (Durrheim, 2006:34). A research design gives structure to the research as it outlines how all the significant parts of the research collaborate in trying to answer the research questions. The research design is comprised of the plan for data collection and analysis. The current study is a sociolinguistic analysis of Zezuru personal names in Buhera South in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

The nature of study calls for the use of a case study as a qualitative research design as it is not feasible for the researcher to cover all Shona personal names in Buhera South. Qualitative research designs are not concerned with breadth but depth and it is appropriate for the present research which looks critically at how Zezuru personal names can be gendered thereby stereotyping the name bearers resulting in them being advantaged or disadvantaged in various spheres of life. This study is predominantly qualitative and interdisciplinary (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:11 in Makondo). It is ethnographic in nature and is committed to the naturalistic perspective as it focuses on understanding of the research phenomena in-situ and interprets phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them. O'Leary (2004:99) in Makondo (2010) says that this approach is subjective, interpretive and constructive hence it is beneficial

as it is concerned with discovering the meanings as perceived by those being researched. The meanings of Zezuru personal names with regard to gender are confined to the Zezuru culture which dictates which names to be given to a particular gender group. This qualitative research on Zezuru personal names seeks to answer to processes, meanings and questions that stresses on how social experiences are created and given meaning.

4.5 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research has its origin from anthropology, sociology and the humanities. Various books have been written on different aspects with regard to qualitative research. Clandin and Connelly (2000) wrote about what narrative research do. Monstakas (1994) looked at the philosophical tenets and stages to be followed of the phenomenological method in qualitative research. Wolcott (1990) summarised ethnographic procedures and many faces and research strategies of ethnography which is another type of qualitative research. Stake (1995) and Yin (2009, 2012) gave steps to be followed when carrying out case study research. The present study is more of a narrative research which entails a lot of ethnographic procedures in soliciting data from the participants.

Narrative research involves research into human experiences and in most cases it requires the researcher to interrogate some of the participants to give their own life narratives. Riessman in Creswell (2014:72) says, "Narrative research is a design of inquiry from the humanities in which the researcher studies the lives of individuals and asks one or more individuals to provide stories about their lives". In the case of the present study, individuals will be asked how they feel towards having gendered names and the namers will also be asked the motives for giving children such names. The information got from participants concerned will then be used to write a narrative chronology about personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Riessman in Creswell (2014:76) says, "The narrative combines views from the participant's life with those of the researcher's in a collaborative narrative".

This research with its qualitative nature uses phenomenological approach to get indepth information on personal names. Moustakas, (1994:46) says, "Phenomenological research is a design of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants". This

narrative usually results in a lot of information coming from different people who will have gone through the same experience. This design has a strong philosophical underpinnings and typically involves conducting interviews. This research design requires the researcher to conduct interviews as a way of soliciting information.

When carrying out a research on ethnographic studies like the present study, the qualitative approach is regarded as the best design. This study took a qualitative approach which allowed for the holistic investigation of the Zezuru personal names at six schools in Buhera South. The study took this approach because the researcher was concerned mainly with analysing, describing and interpreting Zezuru personal names as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

The qualitative approach was also considered appropriate for this study because the researcher wants to investigate the circumstances surrounding these names. It centred mostly on describing and analysing Zezuru personal names in Buhera South. The reasons for giving gendered names will also be analysed. The approach will also allow the researcher to closely look at the personal names and come up with best explanations with regard to the motives behind giving people such names. A study of this nature which looks at practises that prevail such as naming, particularly requires a research design that takes into consideration the real life context of the phenomenon to be investigated hence the preference for the qualitative research design.

Those who advocates for the qualitative research approach argue the dead hand of numbers and statistics was no way to understand anything significant about people and their problems (Mamvura 2014:125). Qualitative research is mainly concerned with providing explanations for social phenomena such as that of naming and gender. In this endeavour qualitative research tries to explain the social world in which people live and how things are the way they are (Moustakas 1994). Mamvura (2014:124) says, “Qualitative research concentrates on the qualities of human behaviour, that is, qualitative aspects not quantitatively measurable aspects of human behaviour”.

In carrying out qualitative research, the researcher is the main research instrument because objectivity is defined in qualitative approaches as gaining trust, establishing rapport with the view to generate truth and credible inter-subjectivity (Babbie and Mouton, 2002). Qualitative

research designs locate the researcher at the centre of the research as a “key instrument”, (Creswell, 2009). Qualitative social research methods are preferred ahead of quantitative research methods because of the following characteristics which best suit the current research as advanced by <http://www.ukessays.com/essays/psychology/the-role-of-organisational-theory-psychology-essays-php>; quoted in Mamvura (2014).

- Findings are presented in non-numerical form where little or no use of numerical data or statistical analysis will be employed. In the present study most of the data will be presented in prose form. Thus, most if not all the information will be explained.
 - An inductive logic is used starting with data collection from which theoretical ideas and concepts,
 - The design of the research emerges as the research is carried out and is flexible throughout the whole process,
 - The social world is viewed as a creation of the people involved. Reality is subjective,
 - Contexts are seen as important. There is a need to understand phenomena in their setting,
 - It is ideographic because it aims to understand the meanings people attach to everyday life,
 - Considers that the whole is more than the sum, and
 - Captures and discovers meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data.
- Creswell (2014, Hatch 2002, and Marshall and Rossman 2011) give what they regard as the major characteristics of a qualitative research design. These characteristics are:
- Natural setting: Thus, in qualitative research the researcher collects data from the site where participants in the research are found and are fully aware problem being researched. In this nature of research information is gathered directly from the people who have first hand information about the research. Information is collected by communicating directly to people and watching them behaving and acting within their context and this is the main attribute of qualitative research. In the present study, the researcher will be asking the bearers of Shona gendered names and the namers in their natural setting with the aim of finding out how they feel for having such names.
 - Researcher is the key instrument: In qualitative research the researcher collects data by himself or herself through examining documents, observing behaviour or interviewing participants. He or she may use a protocol as an instrument for collecting data but the researcher will be the one who actually gathers the information. In this the researcher

will analyse the Zezuru personal names with the aim of finding out how the meanings of these names relate to gender.

- **Multiple sources of data:** Researchers usually use several sources of data, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual information rather than rely on a single data source. The researcher will then reviews all data, make sense of it, and organise it into themes for easy analysis.
- **Inductive and deductive data analysis:** When analysing data qualitative researchers need to establish patterns and themes which make it easy when analysing the data. This inductive process illustrates working back and forth between the themes and the data base until the researcher has established a comprehensive set of themes. In the present study, the researcher established themes based on Shona people's view with regard to the concept of gender and how these views are reflected in their personal names. Through deductive approach, the researchers then looks back at the data from the themes and try to assess if there is need for more evidence to support each theme.
- **Participants' meanings:** The researcher when carrying out the research must depend on the meaning given by the participants about the problem or issue not his or her meaning or meaning derived from texts in the literature review. In the present research, the researcher is going to look at what the participants mean when they talk about gender and how they reflect their views on gender through their personal names.
- **Emergent design:** The research design for qualitative research needs not to be rigid. The original plan for the research may need to be changed when one is on the field depending with what will be required in the field. Thus, there might be need to alter some of your questions, forms of data collection may change and sites to be visited may need to be altered as well depending on the situation on the field. The key idea behind qualitative research is to learn about the problem or issue from participants and to address the research to obtain that information.
- **Reflexivity:** Qualitative researchers are expected to divulge how their personal backgrounds, culture and their experiences may influence their interpretations and meaning of the data which they will be dealing. Thus, usually the background of researchers has a huge bearing in shaping the direction of the research.
- **Holistic account:** In qualitative research, researchers are expected to be thorough in every respect during the period of data gathering. Creswell (2014:184-186) says, "Qualitative researchers try to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue under

study. This involves reporting multiple perspectives, identifying the many factors involved in a situation, and generally sketching the larger picture that emerges”. In the present study, there might be many factors that influence the process of personal naming and gender is definitely one of them. The present study will then look at how gender comes into play when choosing the name of a new-born baby.

4.6 CASE STUDY DESIGN

Merriam- Webster’s dictionary (2009) cited in Flyvbjerg (2011:301) defines a case study as “an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment”. From this definition it can be deduced that in a case study there a thorough analysis of a particular phenomenon that will be under study. In the case of the present study, the phenomenon under study is that of Zezuru personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

Case study research is one of the qualitative research designs, others being conceptual studies, historical research, action research, ethnography and grounded theory (Creswell, 1998:2009).Marre and van der Westhuizen (2007) in Mamvura (2014:128) say that the methods used in qualitative research can be divided into two classes; interactive studies and non-interactive studies. Case studies fall in the category of interactive studies. Creswell (2009:13) defines a case study as “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process or one or more individuals”. This in depth analysis of a phenomenon makes it possible to come up with a more sound generalization of a subject matter under study. For the purposes of this study, the case study research is conceptualised as a concentration on a particular case because a case study is a detailed examination of a single example (Flyvbjerg, 2007 in Mamvura 2014).Mamvura (2014) says that while a case is generally understood to be a person, case studies do not necessarily have to study individuals because a case can be virtually anything (Creswell 2009).Robins (2011) says that case studies can be done on a group, on an institution, on an innovation, on a decision, on a service, on a programme and on many other things. The study of Zezuru personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers stands as a case study of the process of personal naming. Personal naming is a common phenomenon among the Zezuru people in Buhera South. The present case study holds the qualities of the descriptive/intrinsic case study which describes

analyses and interprets Zezuru personal names with the aim of wanting to find out how these names can categorise individuals on gender lines.

Maree, 2007; Yin, 2003) say the case study design has been selected because it has the following strengths:

- the researcher gets a clear understanding and knowledge on the social issue under investigation; in this case the extend to which Shona personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.
- the design allows for the use of multiple sources of information which provide a large amount of information and detail.
- enhances thorough investigation because of the few cases selected. In this case not all namers and name bearers will be interviewed and this will enable the researcher to concentrate on the chosen participants thereby getting detailed information with regard to the research problem.
- it provides answers for the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions asked in this study,
- in such studies that investigate on social issues, it helps in examining behaviours that cannot be manipulated and need thorough analysis of subjects,
- is helpful in such researches that focus on contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts.

A strength in the use of a case study as a research design for this study is its use of multiple sources and techniques in the process of data gathering. As compared to other technical designs such as experiments which are used in a deductive research which start with general theories to be tested, case studies make use of several data gathering strategies Mamvura (2014). Yin (1994) posits that case studies make use of the following tools of data gathering; interviews, documentation review, surveys and even collection of physical artifacts. Getting information from a variety of sources ensures that the researcher can draw valid conclusions from the gathered data. This is the best way of ensuring the balance and representativity of the gathered data. The case study research design has the advantage of allowing new ideas and hypotheses to emerge from careful and detailed observation (Yin, 2009). In the case of the present study new ideas with regard to how people regard gender roles in Shona society will emerge as the research unfolds.

Case studies are mostly used in qualitative research, but it may marginally include quantitative data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c). Despite the many strength of the case study as a research design, it has its own limitations. The major limitation case studies noted in literature is their dependence on single cases (Mamvura 2014). It is claimed that generalisations cannot be made from single case studies (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c; Linderger, 2006, Flyvbjerg, 2007; Rose, 1991). Contrary to these criticisms, research carried out in research methods refutes such claims. Nieuwenhuis (2007c) is one of those who refutes the criticisms levelled against the case study as a research design as he advances that case studies are not primarily concerned with providing platforms for making generalisations rather they are aimed at gaining greater insight and understanding of the dynamics of a specific situation.

In supporting the use of a single case as an object of study; Hamel, Dufour and Fortin (1993) cited in Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:76) describes such singularity as a concentration of the global in the local. Thus, he is saying that the case study with its emphasis on intensity will definitely produce credible results which can be generalised to represent the majority. In the same vein, a thorough study of Zezuru personal names in Buhera South will obviously provide the researcher with credible results on how these names reflect the gender status of the name bearer and these results can be generalised on the country as a whole. Flyvberg (2007) in Mamvura (2014) proves that it is not true that a case study cannot provide reliable information about the broader class. He concludes this in his list of misunderstandings about case studies. One significant metaphor that is often used in the social sciences is that a properly selected case constitutes the dewdrop in which the world is reflected. It is a fact that case studies offer a researcher an opportunity for engaging in a deep and focussed analysis of the phenomenon under research because the concentration is on a particular case.

After all generalisation and transferability of data gathered using a case study will be enhanced by:

- the generalisation of theoretical propositions not populations.
- the creation of “ thick description of the sending context so that someone in a potential receiving context may assess the similarity between them and the study” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 125 cited in Merriam, 2009).
- varying the sites and participants in the study sample to broaden the range of application by readers or consumers of the research (Merriam, 2009)

- The belief that “every case is in certain aspects, like all other cases, like some other cases, and like other case” Wolcott 2005:167 cited in Merriam, 2009). This statement implies that information obtained through case studies can as well contribute to the horizontal accumulation of knowledge (Merriam, 2009).

4.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection in research refers to “to the gathering of specific information aimed at providing or refuting some facts (Kombo and Trompo, 2006). With regard to the current study, data on Shona personal names and how they reflect the gender status of the name bearer will be gathered in schools in Buhera South. In this part, the researcher presents the procedure to be followed when collecting data, the research instruments to be used, the participants and setting. The guiding principle of collecting qualitative data is to work with data in context which has to be natural setting without creating artificial conditions. Qualitative research approach adopted in this current study calls for the research to take place in natural settings and not in artificially created contexts such as laboratories.

There are steps which will be followed in collecting data for the present study. These steps will include the setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information from documents in this case school registers for pupils will be the source for the personal names to be analysed. Information will also be collected through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires as well as establishing protocol for recording information (Creswell, 2009). This triangulation strategy where data is collected through different means is likely to bring credible results. Creswell (2009) says this strategy builds and brings a coherent justification for themes. Maree (2007) quotes Stake (2000:443) who describes triangulation as “A process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation”. The findings from questionnaires were triangulated with findings from the interviews to enable verification of findings.

4.8 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

This sub-section discusses the instruments to be used to gather going to be data, how they are going to be administered and the justification for their selection in the present study which looks at Shona personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer. The methods chosen for data collection in the present study address the research question. In supporting this idea, Stake (1995:169) says, “Research question(s) is the driver for caring out research. It is always expected that the methods of data collection should be appropriate to the research question being asked”. The types of data collection methods in this study were document analysis, individual interviews, focus-group interviews and questionnaires.

4.9 INTERVIEWS

Maree (2007:87) says, “An interview is a two- way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant”. Through this research instrument, the researcher will be able to solicit information directly from participants, thus giving greater significance to the interviewees as reliable sources of information on how Zezuru personal names can be gendered. This study used semi-structured interview schedule which is drafted for parents with Shona names and for the pupils who are bearers of these names. The semi-structured interview schedule has the advantages that it is flexible as it contains both open and close-ended questions which enable the gathering of in-depth information and detailed understanding of the issue under study (Maree, 2006). For this research which is qualitative in nature, interviewees who participated in this research were purposively selected. Participants who are purposively selected help the researcher in understanding the research problem and questions.

Interviews are going to be used in the present study because:

- They are “good in accessing people’s perceptions, meanings, and definitions of situations and constructions of reality” (Marshall and Rossman, 2006:168).
- They give the researcher an opportunity to observe participants and conditions that influence their responses.
- They assure more reliability than questionnaires and
- Interviews are flexible and encourage interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee.

The interview seeks to establish the motive behind giving gendered names. These interviews were administered on parents who had pupils with gendered names and on pupils who are bearers of the names. On pupils who are bearers of the gendered names, the interview sought to establish the effect of these names on the pupils. Interviews for this study especially those with parents took the common type of individual, face to face verbal interchange since these are mature participants. Only parents whose children possess gendered names participated in the interview because they knew the reasons why they gave their pupils such names. The parents who were interviewed had sufficient information for this research. The interview was structured with both closed and open-ended questions to maximise standardisation. Interviews for this study were conducted by the researcher only to enhance reliability in the data gathered.

For the success of interview, the following communication techniques were respected:

- Ensuring that participants do most of the talking but being controlled,
- Paraphrasing participants' responses to enhance meaning,
- Seeking clarification on unclear responses,
- Reflection on important contributions and seek expansion,
- Encouragement on participants to pursue lines of thought,
- Commenting in order to stimulate participants into revealing more,
- Making reflective summaries of the interviewees' responses,
- Probing for more information'
- Showing understanding and allowing time for elaboration,
- Acknowledging participants' answers to show attentiveness,
- Posing single, direct, clear and open-ended questions to get more information.
- Key questions should be repeated throughout the interview,
- Explaining questions to participants whenever they fail to understand and
- Procuring details to see if more information can be obtained (Monette et al, 2005:178; Okun, 1982:61-63 cited in de Vos, 2011: 345-346).

Before the researcher embarked in the actual interview session, a pilot study was carried out for the researcher to familiarise with the process and get prepared for the real interview. The actual interviews were audio recorded to capture all relevant data for close examination with

permission from participants. The researcher then made field notes which de Vosetal (2011:359) suggests that they should be “full, and accurate, including what the researcher hears, sees, experiences and think about in the course of interviewing, her emotions, preconceptions, expectations and prejudices”. Such steps in data gathering will definitely provide credible information for the research and will also enable honest presentation and judgement of data.

Venues and time for interviews with pupils and parents were arranged in advance. As for the venues and time with school pupils, this was arranged in liaison with the school authorities and those with parents, the researcher made prior arrangements with parents concerned which could saw the researcher visiting the parents at their homesteads. Reminders were given to potential participants by the researcher before the dates for the interview. Participants were given the option of choosing their favourable times and environments to carry out the interview.

During the interview session English and Shona languages were used as languages of interaction and this depended on which language the participants were comfortable with. The participants were given the option of choosing the language they would want to be used during the session. The researcher also code switched when he found it necessary.

4.10 ADVANTAGES OF USING THE INTERVIEW

The interview was chosen as one of the data gathering tools for several reasons and this was guided by literature in the area. Nachimas and Nachimas (1992), Johnstone (2000), Wray et al. (1988) and Nunan (1992) quoted in Pfukwa (2010) among others express the strengths of the interview for this kind of research. The interview was therefore selected for this study because of the following advantages:

- It is widely used in onomastics research.
 - The interviewer identifies closely with the subjects.
 - The interviews yield a large body of background information about the subjects and this is useful information from the bearers of the names themselves.
 - Data is analysed as each interview is written up and this shapes the next interview.

- Interviews give both parties flexibility and this enables relevant adjustments as conditions change rapidly during the data gathering process.
- The method is essentially interactive in that it allows active participation of the interviewee. The interview schedule can be adjusted to meet the requirements of specific individuals (Borg and Gall 1983; Nachimas and Nachimas 1992)
- There is immediate feedback where the interviewer can rephrase a question or change the orientation of the questions depending on the attitude of the interviewee. In other words, the researcher can always determine progress as he or she goes along and it yields more data once rapport has been established with the interviewee.

However, this method has its own problems and these were taken into consideration:

- One weakness of this method is the danger of subjectivity and possible bias (Borg and Gall 1983).
- Another weakness is the danger of selecting a small sample that is not representative of the whole population.
- The predisposition or attitude of the interviewee. Thus, some interviewees can be indifferent to the whole exercise or in some cases, they can be openly hostile (de Vos, 2011).

4.11 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS/INTERVIEWS

Maree (2007:95) says, “Focus group discussions are carefully planned and designed group discussions aimed at obtaining information on the participants’ beliefs and perceptions on a defined area of interest”. In the case of the present study discussions centred on personal names and how these names reflect the gender status of the name bearer. A focus group discussion guide with open-ended questions was prepared to solicit information and guide the discussion during the session.

The researcher employed face to face verbal group interviews with parents mainly because they were key participants in the study because by virtue of being the main namers among the Zezuru society they knew the names which are gendered. The researcher had the opportunity

to explore their thoughts and feelings towards gendered personal names. Focus group discussions also catered for those parents who were reserved and shy to open up during face to face interviews. This method of data collection is also more effective than the one- to –one interview because of the group dynamics which act as a catalytic factor in bringing forth information (de Vos et al, 2011). Before the interview, the researcher conducted a screening interview with the potential participants especially recipients of Zezuru names to ensure that they are the right participants.

For the focus group discussions to be fruitful, the researcher did the following:

- Created a conducive (non- threatening) atmosphere which encourages participants to “share perceptions, points of view, experiences, wishes and concerns without pressurising participants to vote or reach consensus “ (Barbour and Kitzinger, 1999:4,5; Krueger and Casey, 2000:4; Monette et al, 2005:186 cited in de Vos et al 2011:360),
- Guided discussions making sure participants focus on raised topics and give each other turns to express their views and feelings,
- Correctly captured the seating arrangements, the order in which people speak to aid voice recognition, non-verbal behaviours, themes that are striking and conversations,
- Summarised lessons from the participants,
- Used small groups of five so that everyone participates and have enough time to exhaust their experience and perceptions. The study used focus groups, one from each of the six schools selected for the study. Only secondary school pupils participated in the focus group discussions and in this case three secondary schools are participating in the study. Group discussions were administered on secondary pupils only because they are now mature to participate in discussions of this magnitude while on the other hand primary pupils were excluded because they were still young to participate in such discussions. Secondary school pupils were chosen for the three secondary schools which are participating in the study. Selected parents from all the six schools held focus group discussions giving a total of six focus groups that were held for this study.
- Used of open-ended questions to yield a variety of perceptions,
- Prepared a written question guide with simple questions to maintain focus,
- Sought permission before interview dates to avoid embarrassment,
- Set the locations, dates and times for the sessions. The researcher will implement this using Morgan’s (1998) three-step strategy.

- Made contact with participants two weeks before the actual group,
- Sent a confirmation one week before the interview and
- Made a follow-up at the school on every participant on the day of the focus group (de Vos et al, 2011).

The researcher found it important to informally carry out a pilot study with some of the parents who have pupils with gendered names and some secondary pupils with gendered names to:

- Establish trends,
- Find out whether relevant information can be obtained from the respondents,
- Look for unclear areas,
- Establish relationships with respondents,
- Establish effective communication,
- Make estimations of time and money needed for the study and
- Pre-empt problems that may arise during actual interviews (de Vos et al, 2011)

Focus group discussions have been preferred in this study because of the following strengths;

- they supplement data from the one-on-one interviews with teachers and survey questionnaires,
- allow for the examination of various perceptions towards personal names and gender,
- participants freely disclose their views and feelings,
- provide multiple viewpoints in a shorter period of time,
- participants share and compare ideas,
- allows for diverse views,
- they are a powerful way of exposing reality and of investigating complex behaviour,
- the technique is motivating as members feel empowered and supported in a group situation and
- pupils share more in the presence of colleagues than when interviewed separately (de Vos et al)

Parents were interviewed at their homesteads and this was very convenient to them and pupils were interviewed at school. Both parents and pupils were allowed to code-switch to Shona if they find speaking in English challenging. The researcher then gave English translation when transcribing.

4.12 QUESTIONNAIRES

A questionnaire is defined by Babbie (2007:246) as “A document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis”. In a questionnaire, information is collected through the completion of statements and the answering of questions on the spaces provided. In the case of the present study questions were soliciting information about personal names as they relate to gender. The questionnaire for this study had closed and open ended questions. Open ended questions which include statements and completion questions whereby respondents were given the freedom to express themselves were captured. According to Neuman (2006:287), open questions permit “an unlimited number of possible answers, adequate answers to complex issues and creativity, self-expression and richness of detail”. This type of questions therefore, allowed for the collection of very rich data on personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

Questions were borrowed from the quantitative paradigm which according to Huberman and Miles (2002:123) seek “factual information, background, and biological information, knowledge and behavioural information) and measures of attitudes, values, opinions and beliefs” that are useful in evaluating the extent to which personal names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer. For this study, the same questionnaire was administered to parents and to secondary school pupils. All the questions contained in the questionnaire were soliciting information pertaining to personal naming and gender. Questions with structured response categories and open-ended were employed in this study aiming at comparing findings from these questions against those from the interviews and focus group discussions. The questionnaire was used to compliment the interview and the focus group discussion. Primary school pupils were exempted from completing the questionnaire because the researcher felt that they were still young to fill in the questionnaire on their own.

All questionnaires were hand posted by the researcher to selected pupils in all the three secondary schools and to parents with Zezuru personal names in both the three primary and

three secondary schools. Delivering questionnaires by hand to concerned participants has the following advantages:

- hand delivery saves time,
- response rates are raised because of the personal contact with respondents,
- the researcher can easily make appointments for collection,
- if respondents face challenges with questions, they can be clarified by the researcher on his return and
- it will be easy for the researcher to select the interview sample (de Vos et al,2011)

Arrangements as to when the questionnaires will be collected were made by the researcher in consultation with the participants concerned.

Questionnaires have been selected for the present study as a data gathering tool because:

- they are easy to administer,
- They save time'
- They ensure confidentiality,
- Information can be collected from a large sample and
- They do not give room for researcher bias since they are presented in paper format (de Vos et al, 2011; Maree, 2006).

The researcher conducted pilot testing exercise with the potential respondents to improve the face and content validity of the instrument, to assess reading levels of respondents and to estimate how long it takes to complete the questionnaire (ibid, 2011).

4.13 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Documentary sources involve the use of data sources in some written or otherwise format. When using documentary sources, focus should be on all types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomenon that you are investigating (Niewenhuis, 2007c). For the purposes of this study, concern was on school registers with pupils' namelists. From these registers, the researcher was interested in pupils with Zezuru personal names especially those with gender connotations. This approach of using names from certain records like school registers is common in onomastic research like in the present research. According to Pfukwa

(2010) names can be drawn from different sources. For personal names, some researchers have used telephone directories (De Klerk and Bosch 1995; Prabhakaran 1999).

Mouton (2001) says that documentary sources can also be known as archival sources. They include historical sources, letters, diaries, official memoranda, annual reports, among others. School registers are also part of these documentary sources as they contain official statistics of schools enrolments. Some researchers on personal names consulted hospital records, registers in government departments, voters' rolls, dictionaries and wordlists (Prabhakaran 1999; Allen 1983). Musere and Byakutaga (1998) have used school registers, factory records, hospital records, clan records and court histories. Makondo (2010) used university graduation booklets.

According to Creswell (2007) (cited in Creswell, 2009:180) and Kelly (2006) the main merits of using such documents are that;

- They enable a researcher to obtain the language and words of participants,
- They are an un-obstructive source of information, because the researcher can have access to them at any time convenient to them'
- They are easier as compared to conducting interviews or doing participant observation'
- They represent data which are thoughtful in the sense that due attention would have been made during the process of compiling them, and
- They are written evidence, which saves the researcher's time in transcribing the data.

However the use of documents as a source of data collection has its own demerits such as;

- Not all people are equally articulate and perceptive'
- Not all documents are easily available to the public since some are deemed to contain classified information, for example the researcher was denied access to name lists from the registry's office.
- Requires transcribing or optically scanning for computer entry,
- Requires the researcher to search for information in hard to find places. It will not be easy for the researcher to find school registers covering the period 1975 to 1980. They might have been destroyed.
- They require very careful management if the researcher is not to be swamped by the sheer volume of material, and
- Some material can be incomplete.

- They require very careful management if the researcher is not to be swamped by the sheer volume of material, and
- Some materials can be incomplete.

4.14 SAMPLING

According to Kombo and Tromp, (2006:77) sampling is regarded as “the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study”. Sampling involves the process of indicating how the target population was selected for analysis and observation. The present research followed a well defined process in choosing participants and schools for study. From this choice of participants a sample is then used for the study. A sample is basically those units/elements that are incorporated into the study (Blansh, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). Sampling as a principle in of qualitative data gathering, is a flexible exercise done in accordance with the principles of data saturation which points to the recurrence of previously collected data and information (Flyvberg, 2007; Kelly, 2006; Holliday, 2010; Gobo, 2007 in Mamvura 2014). Webster (1985) says that a sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. The main idea behind sampling is the selection of units from a population with the intention of generalising results from the analysis of the sample back to the population from which they were chosen. A population is a totality or aggregate from which samples are drawn for analysis. Morgan, (1998) defines population as all the cases and a sample as a selection from the population. Judgements and inferences about the whole population can be made on the basis of analysing the sample.

The sample for this study was comprised of a number of individuals and schools selected from a population holding the characteristics of the entire group (Maree, 2006 in Mamvura, 2014). In selecting the sample for this study, the researcher considered issues to do with accessibility, diversity and representativeness. The chosen sample was found to be accessible to the researcher. In the present study, the researcher chose primary schools which were established in the 1970s which probably provided the researcher with naming trends of the pre-independence period and there secondary schools which were established in the 1980s. The three secondary schools furnished the researcher with naming patterns of the post-independence period in Zimbabwe. Parents of pupils who reside near the chosen schools will

also constitute the sample for the study. The choice of schools which were built during two different historical periods will bring diversity to the study with regard to personal naming as it relates to gender. The researcher also ensured that the sample is representative of the total population of schools.

In sampling the population, the researcher considered both qualitative and quantitative methods procedures. It then means that sampling methods were selected from both the probability (quantitative) and non- probability (qualitative) designs. Kombo& Tromp (2006) says in literature the stage of sampling is often known as sampling design. Sampling designs are divided into two categories, namely; probability designs and non- probability designs. Of the two designs the probability sampling design is guided by the principle of random selection where each unit in the population has an equal chance of being selected. There are four strategies of probability sampling namely simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. These methods of sampling are not going to be used in this study hence they are not going to be discussed further in this study. Qualitative research design which informs the present study uses non- probability sampling designs. By using the non- probability sampling design, the researcher will be mainly interested on the repetitiveness of the concepts in varying degrees. The researcher opted to select samples deliberately because he new the nature of participates who will provide him with the information which he wanted. Non- probability sampling uses four sampling procedures, namely; purposive sampling, quota sampling, the emblematic case and the snowball sampling (Gobo, 2007 in Mamvura, 2014).Of the four non- probability sampling procedures, this study used non-probability sampling strategy because the researcher will be searching for people with Zezuru gendered personal names. As the name purposive sampling implies, this sampling method is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind in order to satisfy specific needs in a study (Marie &Pietersen; 2007) Purposive sampling was used in this study since the researcher was looking for Zezuru people with gendered names. Thus, the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind that of selecting Shona people with gendered personal names. The main idea behind purposive sampling is that of selecting a sample thought to be typical and representative of the population. According to Gobo, (2007) typical samples are usually information –rich cases whose analysis can reveal all possible situations of the total population. The major guiding principle was to get the richest possible source of information which was generalised to represent the entire population. Sampling for the present study was done in such a manner that the information that was drawn from the sample provided answers to the research

questions and in turn achieved the research objectives. In support to this idea, Patton (2002:169) says, “logic and power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information- rich sources for study in depth. Information-rich sources are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term purposive sampling”.

When carrying out purposive sampling of schools which were used for this study, the researcher was guided by some of the strategies proposed by Patton (2002) for selecting information-rich samples which are as follows: extreme/ deviant case sampling, intensity sampling, maximum variation sampling, homogenous samples, typical case samples, stratified purposive sampling, critical case sampling, chain sampling, criterion sampling, theory-based or operational construct sampling, confirming or disconfirming cases, opportunistic sampling, purposive random sampling, sampling politically important cases, and convenience sampling.

In all the fifteen strategies given by Patton (2002) the major silver lining common amongst them is the ultimate goal of selecting information-rich cases that purposively fit the present study. Patton is of the opinion that all sampling techniques in qualitative research may fit under the broader term of “purposive sampling” because “qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected purposively” (Patton, 1990 in Mamvura 2014).

In the field of onomastics purposive sampling has been used of late. Pfukwa (2007) in his study on war names used purposive sampling to choose participants for his study. Mamvura (2014) in his study on colonial names of schools used the same sampling technique to choose the schools with colonial names. Laskowki (2010) while doing a study on how identity is symbolically communicated through women’s post-marital name retention, collected data through interviewing 23 women who had retained their maiden names after marriage. The participants for the study were identified through purposive sampling. Gorter (2007 in Mamvura 2014) used a sample comprising 4 different neighbourhoods with a total of 12 different streets which is not a random sample but a purposive sample where those neighbourhoods were selected based on their characteristics in order to reflect a certain degree of variation and diversity.

4.15 THE SAMPLING OF SCHOOLS

The schools chosen for the study met requirements for the study in terms of period of establishment. The primary and secondary schools chosen for the study were found to provide the necessary information required for this research. The primary schools chosen were established in the 1970s, a period when the Shona naming patterns were still greatly influenced by the Shona traditions. On the other hand the secondary schools chosen were found to provide the naming trends which were common in the 1980s. Thus, pupils were given names which reflected the Shona's beliefs in various facets of life including what they thought of about being male and female and the duties which were supposed to be performed by these different sexes in their day today survival. These beliefs were often reflected in their naming patterns especially in personal names. Secondary schools were chosen on the grounds that these were established in the 1980s, a period when the naming patterns among the Shona had also undergone some form of metamorphosis due to western influence such as Christianity, urbanisation and western education.

4.16 PURPOSEFUL SAMPLING OF INTERVIEWEES

The interviewees were parents of pupils with the gendered personal names and the secondary pupils with gendered Zezuru personal names. The interviews definitely gave the researcher some insights into the social variables that influenced the naming patterns among the Shona such as the factors that give rise to gendered names. Creswell (2014:189) says that the researcher needs to purposefully select sites or individuals for the proposed study. He goes on to say that the motive behind qualitative research is to carefully select participants and sites purposefully that will best help the researcher understanding the problem being researched. Miles and Huberman in Creswell (2014) gives four aspects which need to be considered when choosing the site and participants for a study. These aspects are: (a) the place where the research is going to be carried out (setting), (b) the people who will be interviewed or observed (c) what will be observed by the researcher or what will be interviewed (events), and lastly (d) What the actors will be doing within the given setting (the process). These four aspects definitely informed the present study in identifying the right participants for the study. The participants for the study were those Zezuru people with Zezuru personal names which had gender connotations and the people who were responsible for giving such names.

4.17 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Kombo and Tromp (2006:117) define data analysis as the “examination of what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences”. Several scholars have propounded a number of procedures in the analysis of data. Huberman and Miles (2002) have suggested a framework with six stages involved in the process of data analysis namely familiarisation, identifying thematic framework, indexing, charting and mapping, and interpreting. Marshall and Rossman (2011) in Ndebele (2015) have argued for seven typical analytical procedures namely organising data, immersion in the data, generation of categories and themes, coding of data, provision of interpretation through the use of memos, searching for alternative interpretations and finally, writing up of the report. What is worth noting is that the two procedures namely that proposed by Huberman and Miles (2002) and the one postulated by Marshall and Rossman (2011) share a number of features. This research however, adopted Huberman and Miles’ (1994) framework because despite the fact that the framework appears to be too orderly thereby runs the risk of being mechanical, the framework generally gives the researcher the sole responsibility and capability to produce meaning, interpret significance and establish relationships in the collected data. In this research content analysis came in handy in the analysis of Zezuru personal names in an attempt to show gender connotations enshrined in the meanings of these names. Content analysis is defined by Maree (2007:101) as, “A systematic approach to qualitative data analysis that identifies and summarises message content”. Sometimes content analysis is used when analysing qualitative data responses from open-ended questions on surveys, interviews and focus group discussions. In this research, gender connotations in personal names was brought to the surface thereby rendering Zezuru personal names as forms of identity which can reflect one’s gender status.

Transcribing of data in this research was done by the researcher with the help of an assistant researcher. The assistant researcher was briefed on how to transcribe the interview and focus group discussion responses. During this transcribing even extra linguistic features like gestures were noted and included in the process. In this research, interpretation of data was done through triangulation once all the data was collected, captured, processed and results condensed (Creswell, 2003). Codes were created for each new idea and themes that were found to be conceptually similar in nature or related in meaning are grouped together as concepts. The researcher used emerging thematic frames in both presentation and data analysis. The themes

were drawn directly from the research questions. Responses from all the data gathering tools were analysed to produce qualitative data. The responses from the interviewees and questionnaires' responses were systematically coded into different categories, producing variables which were presented using tables. All data collected was analysed using descriptive method.

4.18 DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS

Maree (2007) says trustworthiness is of the utmost importance in qualitative research. Terms such as truth, value, credibility, applicability, consistency and confirmability are used when referring to criteria for evaluating the scientific merit of a qualitative research like this one. Assessing trustworthiness is the acid test of your data analysis, findings and conclusions. When carrying out this research therefore it was mandatory for this researcher to the procedures that were going to be used for assessing the trustworthiness of the data analysis in mind. To come up with a research which is credible there are pointers that were used to enhance the trustworthiness of this study. To ensure that trustworthiness is achieved in this research, the researcher is going to undertake the following measures:

4.18.1i. Using multiple data sources

Using data from different sources can help in this research to check my findings. The researcher is going to combine information gathered through individual interviews, focus group discussions and analysis of material from records. If information from these different sources “arrive at the same conclusions, you will have more confidence in your results (Maree, 2007)”.

4.18.2ii. Verifying raw data

At the completion of interviewing or other data collection strategies you should submit your transcripts or field notes to the participants to correct errors of fact. In this research, the researcher allowed the participants to go through the notes collected during interviews so that they verify the data gathered in earlier interviews. The researcher also wanted the participants to verify whether his interpretation of what they have shared with him was correct.

4.18.3iii. Greater trustworthiness in coding data

Maree (2007) says qualitative research is more defensible when multiple coders are used in the research. In this research, the researcher assigned an independent coder to code some of his data. The researcher provided the independent coder with the research objectives and some raw text to guide the coder in coding the data. The coder coded and developed categories which i later on compared with the ones which i had come up with also.

4.18.4iv. Stakeholder checks

To enhance the credibility of the findings of this research, the researcher allowed participants and other people who had interest in the research to comment or assess the research findings, interpretations and conclusions. Stakeholder checks were carried out on the initial data gathering tools and on the data interpretations and findings. Stakeholders were also encouraged by the researcher to conduct the further checking progressively during research project, both formally and informally.

Merriam (2009:229) has it that for a qualitative research to be credible it has to be carried out taking into consideration the following aspects:

- Triangulation- use of many data collection methods to validate emerging issues.
- Member checks- going back with data collected to the people who were participants for them to verify it it is authentic and plausible.
- Adequate engagement in data collection- taking enough time while collecting data such that the data is “saturated” and this may entail looking for discrepant or negative cases.
- Researcher’s position or reflexivity- critical self- reflection by the researcher regarding assumptions, worldview, biases, theoretical orientation and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation.
- Audit trail- a full narration of the methods, procedures and decision points to be used in the research.
- Rich, thick descriptions- providing enough description to contextualise the study such that readers will be able to determine the extent to which their situations match the research context, and, hence, whether findings can be transferred.

- Maximum variation- purposefully seeking variation or diversity in sample selection to allow for greater range of application of the findings by consumers of the research (Merriam, 2009:229)

The aspects being advocated for by Merriam (2009) gives direction to the present study so as to give it credibility which is needed when carrying out a research of this nature.

4.19 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical issues are very critical and important in social sciences research since most of these researches deal with human beings who need to be protected. In the current research, the researcher will consider ethical factors in data collection and data presentation and analysis. de Vos et al (2011:114) says, "Ethical issues are a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations which are correct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students".

The critical function of research ethics is to give protection to research participants and enable them to understand their responsibilities as ethical scholars and it also includes areas such as scientific misconduct and plagiarism (Blanch, Durrheim and Painter 2006:61, Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole, 2013:28).

This study on Shona personal names in as far as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers will respect the following moral principles: ethical review and research permission, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, integrity and publication of research findings.

4.19.1a. Ethical review and research permission

Ethical approval was sought from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the University of Kwazulu Natal in order to carry out the study. The proposal was reviewed to ensure that the study will uphold the ethical standards during the research. Permission to conduct the research in schools was sought from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, Zimbabwe.

4.19.2b. Informed consent

In most researches, participants need to be respected by providing adequate information regarding their involvement in the research process. The researcher made use of a written informed consent to inform participants on the purpose of the study, reasons for choosing them as participants, the nature of their participation and the benefits of participating. The researcher clearly explained what the study entails and the role which the participants will play. Participants signed the consent form to show understanding. They were informed that participation was voluntary and as such they were free to withdraw from the study if they like not wanting to continue. All information supplied to subjects was correct and no information was withheld from the participants. All recordings which were done during the interviews were done with the permission from the participants.

4.19.3c. Confidentiality and Anonymity

Sensitive personal information concerning participants will be kept private. In order to achieve this, code numbers and pseudonyms were assigned to the participants' data in place of their names for anonymity. Information solicited will be handled in a confidential manner. With regard to anonymity, there should be no way in which a link can be made between data and its source. It is a requirement when carrying out a research that a researcher should devise methods and ways of protecting the identities of research participants. Halliday (2010) underscores that at the most basic level the privacy of the people taking part in research must be preserved at all costs. However, the nature of the research determines the level of anonymity to be maintained in terms of the identities of the interviewees. In the case of the present study, the information to be handled cannot be classified as sensitive as such the requirement of protecting the identity of research participants is not very significant. Hard copies will be stored safely under lock and key and will be shredded upon completion of the thesis. Recordings will be destroyed too.

4.19.4d. Integrity

Throughout the study, the researcher will avoid plagiarism as it is a very serious misconduct. In data analysis and presentation, there is need for the researcher to uphold integrity by being honest and objective when presenting and interpreting findings. The researcher will be accurate in capturing the findings and avoid untrue, deceptive or doctored results (Kombo and Tromp, 2006; de Vos, 2011)

4.19.5e. Publication of research findings

Research findings will be made accessible to the subjects as it is their right to be informed of the results. De Vos et al (2011:126) postulate that “the findings should be revealed to the subjects as a form of recognition and to maintain future good relationships with the community concerned”. A report on the findings will be submitted to the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in honour of their assistance in giving me permission to access their schools and in that the findings from the research might also be handy to future policies. In publishing the results, credit will be given to all contributors in the form of acknowledgement.

4.20 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Data analysis involves examining what has been collected during the stage of data collection over a long period of time in a natural setting. Mouton (2001:108) views data analysis as:

Breaking up data into manageable themes, trends and relationships. The main aim of the analysis is to understand the various constitutive of one’s data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, constructs and variables, and to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated, or to establish themes in the data”.

Creswell (2009) says that data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. He goes on to liken data analysis to the act of peeling back layers of an onion. In this study of Zezuru personal names a deep analysis was done on them with the aim of wanting to find out how these names can reflect the gender status of the name bearer. In line with Creswell (2009)’s thinking of likening data analysis to peeling of layers of an onion, some of the Zezuru personal names are very long that you have to analyse them closely for you to get their meanings just like one who will be peeling an onion. For Mouton (2001) all fieldwork culminates in the analysis and interpretation some set of data. He defines data interpretation as the synthesis of one’s data into larger coherent wholes. One interprets (and explains) observations or data by formulating themes under which data will be categorized and analysed so that it could make sense. Interpretation calls for the researcher to relate results and findings

to existing theoretical frameworks or models, and showing whether these are supported or falsified by the new interpretation. Interpretation also means taking into account rival explanations or interpretations of one's data and showing what levels of support the data provide for the preferred interpretation.

In qualitative research, different research designs give birth to different methods of analysing qualitative data. As opposed to quantitative data analysis which uses deductive data analysis, qualitative data analysis uses inductive analysis allowing research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data without restraints imposed by a more structured theoretical orientation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c in Mamvura 2014). The inductive method of data analysis helps in understanding how participants construct meaning of issues under investigation. The participants' attitudes, perceptions, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences are useful indexes in the way participants construct meanings from the process of giving Shona people personal names that are gendered both in the pre-independents and post-independents era among the Shona in Zimbabwe.

The first stage in data collection involved the compilation of gendered names from school registers and from the interviews carried out with parents. This process involved both qualitative and quantitative paradigms. These names were classified into themes which characterise the concept of gender according to the Zezuru culture. This categorization was informed by studies of Hierstedt (1987), De Klerk (1998), Koopman (2002) and Pfukwa (2007). Thus, names obtained from school registers and from interviews were analysed using content analysis. Content analysis is an unobstructive method of data analysis because the researcher will be interacting with what people produce and in some cases what have been left by people (Mamvura 2014). In the case of the present study, the researcher was dealing with information regarding personal names as they relate to gender and was also be informed with what the namers were saying pertaining to the gendered names. In doing content analysis, the researcher does not necessarily have contact with the people. The researcher may just analyse information from secondary sources such as the analysis of books, magazines, brochures, poems, newspapers, transcripts, news reports, visual media, laws and constitutions, as well as any components or collections thereof (Babbi& Mouton, 2001). Nieuwenhuis, (2007b) says that content analysis as a qualitative research analytic method, it is a deductive process of looking at data from many angles with the aim of identifying keys in the text that will enable us to understand and interpret the the data.

In doing content analysis, the form of a document whether written or spoken material will be systematically described and analysed. The researcher may devise a classification system to record information when using content analysis as a way of data analysis. In such an exercise, an indication of importance, attention and emphasis is indicated by the frequency with which a symbol or ideas appear Mamvura (2014). A number of dimensions are employed in analysing each source of data. In the present study personal names were critically analysed with the aim of finding out how they reflect the gender status of the name bearer. The researcher used the method of using names found in school registers and those he got from interviews. These names were then exposed to a classification system. An example of this exercise was the classification of the names which depicts women as beautiful thereby painting women as commodities on the market which needs to be advertised through names given to them. The researcher classified the names on the bases of their meanings. These meanings are related to how the concept of gender is viewed among the Zezuru. This study is concerned with personal names in as far as they can reflect the gender status of the name bearer.

4.21 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave an outline of the methodology and the research paradigm to be used in this study. The interpretive paradigm was looked at in relation to other competing paradigms as the paradigm which informed this study. The research strategy for this study, which is a research qualitative approach was also reviewed and deliberated on against the quantitative approach. It has been pointed out that this study used interviews, documents and questionnaires as data gathering techniques. The strengths and weaknesses of these data gathering techniques have been outlined. The sampling type, which constitutes purposive sampling, was also discussed. The study identifies six schools in Buhera South and parents of pupils in these respective schools as its source of data. The discussion points out that this is a qualitative ethnographic research as it seeks to understand the relationship between personal names and the gender of the name bearer. This approach provides answers to the questions raised in chapter one. The chapter outlines how the participants were chosen for the study and how questionnaire and interview questions were administered. The case study as one of the major research design was looked at; both its strength and weaknesses were looked at. The chapter discusses how permission was sought from relevant officials at the same time outlining how a pilot testing was done using fifty respondents. This chapter made it clear that a study of this nature need a comprehensive data gathering mechanism so that its findings could be representative enough to enable the generalisation of the data attained in the research. It was

noted that data analysis must be appropriate to the research design used in the study. Finally, the chapter looked at ethical issues surrounding data collection and the data analysis procedures were also discussed. The next chapter is on data presentation, analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 PRESENTATION OF DATA/RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents results from interviews, focus group discussions, and documents. For this study, personal names were drawn from school registers and some were solicited through questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. This research presents various personal names which do reflect the gender of the name bearers. These names are categorized according to the various tenets which do reflect gender and as a result lead to gender stereotyping in theZezuru culture. The categorization of names for the sake of analysis is informed by Lewinsky's (2002:248) call for onomasticians to move "beyond or around the most rudimentary of scholarly endeavours" and progress to an exercise of "cataloguing and arranging [of] all the objects under investigation into some logical, coherent classificatory scheme." The idea of classifying names for the sake of analysis is also supported by Holland (1990), Leslie and Skipper (1990), Pfukwa (2007), and Makondo (2009).Pfukwa (2007) states that there are as many classifications of names as there are of authors, and each author classifies his collection of names to meet a specific purpose. For this study, personal names were classified based on how each name reflects gender stereotyping. This classification made the

analysis of these personal names easy and manageable. However, there is no consistency in the classification of personal names since each study adopts its own method of classification which is determined by its aim and objectives. As such, the present study uses a classification which brings the desired results. The first part of the presentation consists of data from primary sources which includes responses from questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. Data from secondary sources included school registers which was also presented and analysed respectively. This chapter contains some tables which graphically summarise the research findings.

5.2 BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

TABLE 5.2.1: SEX OF RESPONDENTS N=500

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
FEMALE	120	52.2
MALE	110	47.8
TOTAL	230	100

The research made sure that the number of people who responded to the questionnaires was gender balanced so as to have views from both sexes regarding names and gender. Two hundred and thirty pupils and fifty parents responded to the questionnaires. As seen on the table, of the two hundred and thirty pupils, one hundred and twenty were girls and one hundred and ten were boys. Of the fifty parents who were interviewed, thirty were women (60%) while twenty were men (40%). The results from the table show that there were more girls who responded to the questionnaire than boys. One reason might be because there are more girls in secondary schools in Buhera South than boys. The trend was the same with the parents who participated in the research; there were more women than men who participated. The reason for more women than men might be that most men are away from their rural homes due to work commitments in various cities in Zimbabwe.

TABLE 5.2.2 AGE RANGE OF PARTICIPANTS N=500

RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
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STUDENTS	18-25 years	250	83.33
PARENTS	26-35 years	10	3.33
	36-45 years	20	6.67
	45+ years	20	6.67
TOTAL		300	100

The students who participated in this research were between 18 and 25 years of age while the parents who participated were of varying ages. Ten of the parents were between 26 and 35 years of age, twenty were between 36 and 45 years of age, and twenty were above 45 years old. This trend seems to suggest that most participants were above 18 years of age and as such, they had relevant knowledge on the significance of personal names.

5.3 LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

TABLE 5.3.1 LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
STUDENTS AND PARENTS	PRIMARY	7	2.33
	SECONDARY	270	90
	COLLEGE	15	5
	UNIVERSITY	5	1.67
	OTHERS	3	1
TOTAL		300	100

This table shows that 90% (270 out of 300) of the participants who responded to the questionnaires had ordinary level as their highest academic qualification. Fifteen of the participants (5 %) had diplomas and degrees as their highest qualifications. The other 3 % of the participants had unspecified qualifications. These results seem to show that most of the

participants had ordinary level as their highest academic qualification and as such, they did not encounter major challenges in completing the questionnaire.

5.4 PERSONAL NAMES COLLECTED FOR THE STUDY

A total of 500 hundred personal names were collected from the school registers, questionnaire responses, the interviews, and the focus group discussions. Only Zezuru personal names were collected since this study was specifically looking at Zezuru personal names. Most of the names appeared regularly in all the four data gathering tools used for this study. The school registers contributed many of the names used in the study.

The table below shows the number of personal names collected for this study. This is followed by a brief discussion of the sources:

TABLE 5.4.1 NAMES PER SOURCE

SOURCE	NUMBER	%OF TOTAL COLLECTED
SCHOOL REGISTERS	300	60
QUESTIONNAIRES	150	30
INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS	50	10

The major source of personal names for this study was school registers which contributed 60% (300 out of 500). This was followed by questionnaires which contributed 30% (150 out of 500), and lastly interviews and focus group discussions with 10% (50 out of 500).

5.5 A SCHEME OF CLASSIFICATION

After the collection of the personal names, they were sorted into some form of classification. The same procedure was done by Pfukwa (2007), Makondo (2009) and earlier on by Kabweza (1979). Holland (1990) and Leslie and Skipper (1990) also advocate for the need of some

classification when looking at data which involves names, and they came up with tentative classification models on names. Pfukwa asserts that there are as many classifications of names as there are of authors. Every researcher who studies names is likely to come up with his or her own classification which best suits his research. This study borrowed a lot from the classifications done by Makondo (1997) and Pfukwa (2010), but proceeded to add some aspects on these classifications to suit the needs of the study. The criteria used by the previous researchers are very similar in that they look at meanings of personal names, but Pfukwa (2007) deviates a little because his study looks at war nicknames. The common thread in these studies is that they all look at the meanings of the names. The present study benefited from these previous studies because it also looks at the meanings of personal names, but goes further by looking at the extent to which the meanings of these personal names reflect the gender status of the name bearers. The name categories given by Makondo (2009) and Kabweza (1979) are the same in that they have five categories:

The first category is */Zitaremudumba/* (maternity home name). A name which is given to a newborn baby just after birth, and before the child can come out of imba or dumba (birth room) (Kabweza, 1979). This is the first name every Shona child is given.

The second category is made up of imitative or emulative names */chenza/* (Roberts 1931:90). Children with emulative names are named after other family members or famous national personalities.

The third category is of ancestral spirit names */mazita egombwa/* (Bourdillon 1976:216; Aschwanden 1982:38). Names in this category are chosen by the spirits of the deceased and passed on to the family by diviners.

The fourth category comprises of */Mazita edzinza/* (lineage names) These names will have been used successfully in a family genealogy (Makondo 2009:207). Fortune (1988:43) refers to lineage names as titular names of chiefs/headmen like Mangwende and Svosve of Mashonaland East. The personal names in this category are also gendered because most of the chiefs were men, and on very few occasions were women given the opportunity to rule as chiefs.

The fifth and final category is of diviner-suggested names */mazita ejemedzwa/*. According to Kahari (1997:125), these names come as a result of some supernatural interventions that caused the child to refuse to suckle from the mother, to sleep badly, to cry unnecessarily, or to fall ill (Makondo 2009:210).

Holland (1990) also proposes the following classification of personal names:

- a) Physical or personal characteristics
- b) Habits
- c) Geographical or place of origin
- d) Lineage
- e) Events
- f) Occupation
- g) Traditions
- h) Cultural stereotypes
- i) Other associations.

The two classifications given above greatly influenced this study and shaped the classification that was developed for the study. The classification used for this study borrowed some aspects from the two classifications. It borrowed most from Holland's (2000) classification but its primary focus was on the aspects which point to gender as reflected in Zezuru names.

Table 5.5.1 CATEGORY OF NAMES

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF NAMES	% OF TOTAL
PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	56	11.2
HABITS	65	13
OCCUPATION	25	6
HISTORICAL EVENTS	70	14
BIBLICAL INFLUENCE	50	10
FLORA AND FAUNA	55	11
AMBITIONS/ASPIRATION	60	12
REGRETS	44	8.8
PRAISE	45	9
PREJUDICE	30	5

In the table above, category 1 is constituted by names which point to physical appearance. Names such as *Chiedza* (light), *Runako* (beauty) and others seem to top the list and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Category 2 has names which point to the habits of the name bearer, such as *Shupikai* (be in trouble) and *Nekairai* (be active).

Category 3 has names which point to occupation such as *Mukoti* (nurse), *Dhokotera* (doctor), *Tera* (tailor) and others.

Category 4 has names which reflect historical events such as *Hondo* (war), *Chimurenga* (liberation struggle), *Rusununguko* (independence) and others.

Biblical influence is category 5 and names like *Tsitsidzashe* (mercy of the Lord), *Tafadzwanashe* (the Lord has made us happy) and *Rudorwashe* (love of the Lord) feature frequently.

Category 6 is occupied with names which are influenced by the surrounding environment. Names such as *Ruva* (flower) and *Magen'a* (hare) are found in this category.

The personal names in category 7 point to ambitions and aspirations. Names such as *Pfumai* (get rich), *Tonderai* (remember) and many more will be discussed in the next chapter.

Names which show regrets in life are found in category 8 and they include names such as *Takarwireyi* (why did we fight), *Makaiteyi* (why did you do it) and others.

Category 9 is occupied with names which reflect praises such as *Tafara*, *Tafadzwa*, *Tanyaradzwa* and more.

The tenth and final category constitutes of names which show prejudice such as *Sarurai*, *Semai* and others which will be analysed in the next chapter. Names which fall in this category are very few compared to names in other categories.

It is worth noting that some of the names fit into more than one category. This made it difficult at times to draw a clear line between some of the categories. Thus, certain names were very difficult to classify because of the overlap between categories. These names however, remained very relevant to the study because they do reflect gender stereotyping in the Zezuru society, and were therefore looked at independent of the abovementioned categories, and referred to as miscellaneous.

5.6 SHONA NAMING

5.6.1 NAMING CEREMONY

Personal interviews conducted on the 20th of September 2016 established that naming among the Zezuru was a celebrated occasion which attracted members of the entire clan. One of the interview respondents asserts that:

“Mwana anotumidzwa zita mushure menguva pfupi achangozvarwa” (A baby is named shortly after birth).

Regarding the naming of a newborn, the Zezuru usually name the baby a day after birth. This is done during the presence of the biological father but in cases where the father is not known, the naming can be done by the mother of the child or any other relative who might be given this responsibility. One respondent maintains that:

“Panotumidzwa mwana zita hama dzose dzepedyo dzinouya nezvipo zvekupa mwana” (During the naming ceremony all close relatives come with presents to give to the child).

During this naming ceremony, these relatives will be given the chance to come up with their preferred names for the child. At times, one who will have given a present which is valued highly might have their name choice stand above all, but the decision ultimately lies with the father of the child. He might decide to name the child on his own or he can give the honours to one of his relatives. In relation to the naming ceremony, one respondent maintains that:

“Vamwe vehukama vanouya nezvipo uye vaine mazita avo ekutumidza mwana asi baba vemwana vanofanira kududza zita rinofanira kupiwa mwana” (Others come to name the child, but it is the principle that there should be a specific name coming from the child's father).

According to one of the respondents, the naming ceremony among the Zezuru involves members of the lineage and all members of the clan living in the vicinity because clan solidarity is essential in binding a newborn to living relatives. The relatives will be happy that their clan will be growing with the coming of the newborn, for the Zezuru believe in numbers in whatever they do. However, despite the presence of clan members at the naming ceremony, the father of the newborn remains with the responsibility of naming the child. One interviewee says that by naming the newborn, the father will be incorporating the child into the community of the living, and also inculcating in the child a sense of acceptance related to its family and society. It is

recorded that during this naming ceremony, there is also a lot of celebrating. After drinking beer, the father of the child will give thanks and take up the child to give it the name he has chosen, thereafter he kisses the child. After this moment, all members present will ululate and applaud.

The personal name is the one which informs the whole community about the arrival of a new member. While commenting on the significance of a personal name, one of the respondents asserts that:

“Zita ndiro rinoita kuti vanhu vazive kuti tava neimwe nhengo yawedzera mumhuri” (The name will enable family members to know that they have increased in numbers).

The name will usually reflect the gender status of the newborn as well. Thus, among the Zezuru, there are names which are meant for males and females respectively. These names will go on to influence the roles which the name bearer will play in society. One interview respondent indicates that if by mistake a boy is given a name which is normally associated with girls, the name bearer will be subjected to a lot of ridicule by his fellow peers at school or even those in the community. When such incidences occur, the respondent says that the child will resort to changing the name or opt for another name; resulting in the person having two names and the latter name becoming the ideal name.

5.7 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NAMING?

From the interviews and focus group discussions, it was revealed that Shona naming is a family occasion. 92% (230 out of 250) of the responses from the questionnaires indicated that the father has the sole responsibility to name the child. Only 4% (10 out of 250) indicated that the mother is responsible for naming the newborn. Questionnaire responses also revealed that other family members can also name the child, but their chances of naming are limited, as is reflected by their 4% (10 out of 250) contribution in the naming process. One interview participant said that in the past, women among the Zezuru were not given the opportunity to name children. But with the passage of time and the advent of the highly publicized human rights among other variables, Zezuru women are now having a say in the naming process. There were also responses which pointed out that the naming is done by the father, but only after

consulting the mother of the child. Few responses from the questionnaires – 2% (5 out of 250) – indicated that both parents are frequent namers of their children.

From the interviews and responses from questionnaires, it was established that among the Zezuru, parents may jointly name their children unless some special circumstances prevail that would allow only one parent to name. From the interviews, instances like when the father denies responsibility of the pregnancy were identified as one of the few cases that would give the mother the right to name the child. Conversations from the interviews and focus group discussions indicated that other family members, especially the brothers of the father of the child, were also given the responsibility to name the newborn, but only with blessings from the father of the child. It was revealed in focus group discussions that other family members can only name the newborn when the father of the child is not around due to work commitments for instance, or the father might decide to give this important responsibility to his brother as a sign of showing respect. Responses from the questionnaires revealed that among the Zezuru, men always determine the names of their children, and they usually come up with names that give hope to the family, especially if the name bearer is a boy. They do this in the hope that the person will live up to the meaning of his or her name. Thus, they hope that the child will behave according to the dictates of the name. These results seem to suggest that the naming process among the Zezuru is gendered because the father is the one who names the newborn child; giving him the chance to express his beliefs, norms and values through the names he chooses.

Focus group discussions and interviews indicated that on very few occasions, the couple may mutually agree on preferred names before they announce it to the other family members, but without identifying the original namer. However, most respondents asserted that the father was responsible for naming the child, and this stems from the fact that the Zezuru society is a patriarchal one.

It was revealed from the interviews that the brothers to the biological father of the newborn can name the child especially if there are good relations between the brothers. Generally, this research found that among the Zezuru, the father of the child is the main name giver in the family. It was also revealed that the mother of the child and other family members can take the duty of naming the newborn when the father is not there. It emerged from the interviews that other family members were significant namers, as shown by a total of ten (10%) respondents. Among the Zezuru, this category of other family members is very broad because it encompasses several significant family members of the couple. According to Makondo (2009),

these relatives usually bring setnames which the couple must ponder and voluntarily accept or deny. On the issue of other family members who come with names to name the child, one interviewee reported:

“Zita romwana rokutanga raitumidzwa nambuya vakamugamuchira. Kazhinji pazita apa vanenge vachirondezera nhuna dzavo. Asika zhinji zita iri handiro rinozodanwa mwana uyu nokuti vabereki vake vangangodawo kumupa rimwe zita ravanoda”

(The midwife gave a child’s first name. Through it, the midwife echoed her labor experiences. At most, this name was not the one to be popularized as the parents were at liberty to give other names).

The interviews also revealed that names which are given by the midwives are free from any gender connotations, but names which are given to the child by his/her parents usually carry gender connotations. The fact that parents usually name the child after the midwife has named the child explains why most children among the Zezuru end up with more than one personal name.

Based on the responses from the questionnaires, the following table shows the people who are responsible for naming:

Table 5.7.1. PEOPLE WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR NAMING

Options	Number of responses
Father	230
Mother	10
Other family members	10

These results show that among the Zezuru, the responsibility of naming a newborn in a family lies largely with the father. According to one interviewee, fathers are the solitary namers as it is a means of showing their fatherhood and ownership of the children because they pay bride riches. This speaks volumes about the patriarchal dominance among the Zezuru people in

BuheraSouth. However, one interviewee indicated that the mother of the child may also be given the opportunity to name the new baby if she has some complications during childbirth. The interviewee said that she was given the responsibility to name her baby boy when she gave birth to him through caesarean incision and named the child *Nyasha* (Grace), meaning that it was out of grace that she and her baby are alive.

Responses from the focus group discussions indicate that the father of the child is responsible for naming the child and that other members of the family can do so only if the father is absent, is late, or was never identified. On the same issue, one respondent from the focus group expressed that:

“Nekuuya kwakaita nyaya yekodzero dzemadzimai vakadzi vavakungotumidzawo vana mazita kungofanana nevarume” (With the coming of equal rights which cater for women, women now have the right to name newborns just like their male counterparts).

Makondo (2012) concurs with the above respondent and asserts that with the advent of equal rights and other vehicles of change such as Christianity and western education, women now have a say in the naming process because such progressions have given them a voice to speak out.

The focus group discussions revealed that whoever is responsible for naming the child is expected to conform to the dictates of the Zezuru society, which impose that names for boys must be carefully chosen so that they communicate important messages regarding the desires of the family –for the boy child represents the continuity of the family. On the other hand, when naming a girl, one is usually expected to come up with a name which is just a form of identity and does not place a lot of emphasis on the hopes of the family. Koopman (2007) supports this idea and says that during his research on male and female names among the Zulu, informants indicated that it is possible to give a completely meaningless name to a girl as long as it sounds pleasant. This points to the idea that the naming process is gendered. The Zezuru people are a patriarchal society which seems to give preference to males.

5.8 THE ATTRIBUTES OF A NAME GIVER

Responses from the questionnaires show that the name giver among the Zezuru people must be a person who is mature and respectable. Most of the responses established that the father, being a respectable figure in the family, is always given the first priority to name the newborn. Out of the two hundred and fifty responses, all 100% (250 out of 250) indicated that the father is responsible for naming the newborn. Some of the responses from the questionnaires on the attributes of a name giver were:

“Someone who is responsible and respectable.”

“Should be a responsible man.”

“A caring person.”

“A respectable and economically sound person.”

“A morally upright person.”

These responses seem to point to the fact that the name giver must be a person who has the right ideals and one who commands some respect in the family. Among the Zezuru, these attributes are usually given to the father of the family.

Responses also indicated that the mother can also name the child if given permission by the father of the child. It is only during his absence that the mother or other respectable relatives can name the child. Responses from some of the interviewees indicate that even though other relatives such as the aunts and cousin brothers can be given the opportunity to name the newborn, if the relative is known for bad traits like prostitution and witchcraft, they will not be given the chance to name the new child. On the same note, cousin brothers who are known for traits such as stealing and laziness are also denied the opportunity to name the newborn after their own names. The fear will be that the child will follow in the footsteps of the name sake or name giver.

From the focus group discussions and responses from the questionnaires, it was revealed that due to changes in their society, the one who is financially sound in the family influences all the major decisions in the family. Such people can be given the privilege to do the naming. Responses from some of the questionnaires also show that the name giver is supposed to be a very close relative who gets along well with the family in question. Being given the opportunity to name a newborn when you are not the direct parent of the child is regarded as a great honour among the Zezuru.

About 50% (250 out of 500) of the questionnaire respondents indicated that the name giver is supposed to have “unhu” which according to the Zezuru is a summation of all the positive traits that every Zezuru is expected to have. Some of the responses to this effect were:

“*Anofanirwa kuva munhu ane unhu*” (Must be a person with good morals).

“*Ngaave munhu kwaye*” (Must be a good person).

This applies to situations when someone who is not the parent of the child wants to name the child. Another common response in many of the questionnaire was that the name giver must be a mature person.

The interviews also revealed that if someone wants his name to be bestowed on the newborn, they must be a morally upright person. The belief among the Zezuru is that the newborn will inherit the traits of the original name bearer especially if he or she is given the name of someone with bad traits. The responsibility to name among the Zezuru is not given to outcasts within the family but to highly respected family members. The Zezuru place a lot of importance on the personal name. This aligns them with the popular belief that a name is powerful enough to influence the behaviour of the bearer. From the results, it can be concluded that a name giver among the Zezuru must be a person who commands a lot of respect in the family. It is in line with this thinking that several respondents from the focus group discussions indicated that names given to either boys or girls can influence them to behave to the dictates of their sex as expected by the Zezuru society. Therefore, it can be concluded that namers among the Zezuru must be morally upright, command a lot of respect in the family, and be financially stable.

5.9 IMPORTANCE OF NAMING

Responses from the questionnaires indicated that the main reason a person is given a name is for identity purposes. Out of the 250 participants who completed the questionnaires, all the responses indicated that names are a form of identity:

“*Zita rinoita kuti uzivikanwe kuti ndiwe ani*” (A personal name enables you to be known).

Gender is one of the major forms of identity and is at the core of this study. Being a social construction, gender is found in the culture of a group of people. Responses from the interviews

and focus group discussions ascertain that naming serves the purpose of giving the name bearer an identity.

One interviewee said that by naming an individual you are defining that individual. This attests to the power in naming because by giving a gendered name you are defining the name bearer. Thus, through Zezuru names, one can easily know the gender status of the name bearer and the traits associated with that gender because at times the name will be self explanatory. One interviewee said that the way people view and regard them is to a large extent influenced by their personal names. A certain gender group is usually looked down upon or respected because of the names which are given to the members of that gender group. Peter (2010) concurs by stating that there may be a grain of truth in the belief which most people have that a name contributes to the way other people see you. Your name can propel you or pull you down. This depicts a strong relationship between a person's name and the whole psychological perspective of the name bearer. A personal name is assumed to have the most significant effect on an individual's ego and it is this ego which drives an individual to succeed in life. Names contain a certain power which differentiates one person from another.

One interviewee said that personal names are important because they are used to express people's experiences in life, their hopes, beliefs and values. Another respondent added that through personal names, one can come to know the cultural beliefs that characterise the two sexes. It is this power which is endowed in Zezuru names that gives rise to gender stereotyping, thus giving rise to gender inequality between sexes. Some attributes contained in certain names point to the current gender roles found among the Zezuru. Despite the multitude of roles which personal names are expected to fulfil, these names are usually pregnant with gender connotations as well. Thus, while these names can express the values, culture and attitudes of the namers among the Zezuru, they are usually gendered in every aspect because the Zezuru people are notoriously gendered in almost every aspect of their lives

One interview respondent said that by bestowing a name on an individual, the Zezuru people are introducing the individual to the society and the individual will be known and identified with that name in the community. The respondent goes to add that by naming an individual, the society will be confirming the introduction of a new member into its community and acknowledging that it is increasing in numbers. Her sentiments seem to agree with responses from the questionnaire which point out that personal names are important in as far as they

enable the name bearer to be known. The name differentiates the child from others. The Zezuru names do separate people in terms of their gender status.

TABLE 5.9.1 BELOW SHOWS GENDERED PERSONAL NAMES WHICH ARE COMMON TO GIRLS.

NAME	TOTAL/ FREQUENCY
TSITSI	20
RUDO	19
CHIDO	16
YEMURAI	15
ROPAFADZO	12
SARUDZAI	8
FADZAI	9
CHIEDZA	6
SHUPIKAI	5
CHIEDZA	5

The table above shows the names which were very popular with girls as was reflected in the school registers, responses from the questionnaires, focus group discussions, and the interviews. These names are arranged according to their frequency, with those that appeared more frequently at the top of the table. Responses from the focus group discussions asserted that there are certain names which are gender specific. Names such as *Rudo* (Love), *Chiedza* (Light), *Sarudzai* (choose), *Yemurai* (Admire) and *Rowesai* (one who causes others to be bewitched) were cited as gendered names which are usually given to girls. Some focus group participants indicated that there are feminine and masculine names to choose from such that it is not expected for a namer to give a boy child a feminine name or vice versa. These results show that there are certain gendered names which are very popular among the Zezuru and are usually given to girls.

TABLE 5.9.2 BELOW SHOWS TOP 10 PERSONAL NAMES COMMON AMONG BOYS

NAME	TOTAL/ FREQUENCY
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TONGAI	25
SIMBA	23
SIMUKAI	21
SUNGANO	17
PINDUKAI	17
TINOTENDA	20
SHINGAI	18
TAKWANA	12
TAFIRENYIKA	11
GARIKAI	10

The names in the table above were popular among boys as was reflected in the school registers. The names are arranged according to their frequency. Names like *Tongai* (rule), *Simba* (power), *Simukai* (prosper), and *Sungano* (unity) were mentioned in most responses as names which are common to boys. The name *Simba* was very common among the participants. From the interviews, it was established that names which are given to boys usually spell out the hopes and aspirations of the parents. The names' characteristics which are usually masculine are expressed in the male personal names. The conversations in the interviews also revealed that if by accident you are given a name of the opposite sex, you are likely to be a target of ridicule by people in your society.

The names from the school registers frequently appeared in the responses from the questionnaires. The same names were also mentioned during the interviews and focus group discussions. These results seem to suggest that there are certain names which are regarded as purely for boys and as such they were found to be very popular among the Zezuru communities in Buhera South.

From the focus group discussions, it was established that a personal name enables the society to differentiate people, thereby making it possible to treat people accordingly. Thus, through naming, the Zezuru people make sure that gendered names such as *Chenai* (be presentable) and *Shupikai* (be in problems) are for girls and *Simba* for boys. In some sense, these Zezuru personal names do have some gender connotations as people become known on gender lines because of their names. However, there are certain names among the Zezuru which are unisex such as *Tendai*. Such names were conveyed in the responses from the questionnaires.

TABLE 5.9.3 NAMES WHICH ARE UNISEX

NAME	TOTAL/ FREQUENCY
TENDAI	25
TAFADZWA	20
TINOTENDA	19
NYASHA	18
FARAI	16

The table above shows a list of names which belonged to both girls and boys in most of the school registers that were used for this study. The participants from the questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions often cited the same unisex names that were found in the school registers. One interviewee said that such names are usually common to Christians. He said that Christians normally give praise names to their children without taking into consideration the gender status of the name bearer. These results show that there are certain names which are unisex among the Zezuru. From the research, it was noted that these names were very common during the period starting from the 1980s to date. The period before 1980 was characterised with names which were much more gendered.

Responses from interviews and questionnaires also indicate that names such as *Chiedza* (light), *Rudo* (love), *Sharai* (Make a choice) and *Yemuri* (Admire) are usually for girls, as was reflected in their high frequency of appearance in school registers and questionnaire responses. Lawson (1988) states that there are certain names which are stereotypical. Thus, the names which the researcher has singled out do stereotype women on gender lines. In this regard, one respondent asserts that:

“*Mazitaevasikana anofanirwa kuva achinakidza kushevedza*” (Girls’ names must sound good).

Another interviewee articulated that “*Mazita echikadzi anofanira kutaura nezverunako rwavo*” (Women’s names must comment on their beauty).

Thus, most names for girls refer to the physical appearance of the name bearer. They label women as human beings who are always displayed on the market like “goods” on a shelf ready to be purchased by would be “buyers”.

On the other hand, boys have names which label them as people who are forward-looking, determined, powerful and focused in whatever they do in life. This is evidenced by the responses from the interviews. One interviewee asserts that:

“Pakutimidza mwanakomana kazhinji mubereki anopa zita rinonojekesa shuviro dzake muupenyu” (When coming up with a name for a boy child, parents usually come up with a name which spells out their hopes and aspirations in life).

Algeo (1985:94) asserts that the saying “behind every name, there lies a story” seems to hold water among the Zezuru, because their personal names give history about how men and women are separated on gender lines through these names. The issue of gender stereotyping has a history among the Zezuru which dates far back and is enhanced through personal names given to individuals in the Zezuru society. These names are pregnant with gender connotations which end up advantaging or disadvantaging a certain gender. From the responses, it can be concluded that Zezuru personal names are rich with information pertaining to the beliefs and norms of the Zezuru people.

One interviewee claims that “A personal name is a powerful thing which must not be taken for granted.” He continues to add that a personal name enables people to make quick judgements about us. Another interviewee expresses that “Our names speak volumes about our lives and how we perceive ourselves in this world.”

The issue of how we perceive ourselves also brings about the issue of gender which is often reflected in Zezuru personal names. Regarding how personal names can reflect how one perceives themselves, among the Zezuru it is not the name bearer who chooses a name for him or herself, but it is the father, mother, or other family members who name them when they are born.

100% of the respondents from the questionnaires indicated that personal names function as forms of identity. Sue and Telles (2007) support this idea and assert that a name as a form of identity makes it easier to be identified by others in society. They also add that the name is usually loaded with information that relates to the name bearer or the namers. Thus, through Zezuru names we can easily get information about gender perceptions and responsibilities as

they are aptly reflected in the names. Assumptions which are usually based on the meanings of Zezuru personal names also furnish us with information about the gender dynamics in their society. According to one interviewee, Zezuru names as forms of identity describe who they are currently as a people. These names are a modern representation of how they perceive themselves in this world.

One interviewee articulated that naming is done in order to remind the namers of their history as a family and a society. His views concur with responses from the questionnaires which indicated that family events usually influence name choice. He said that there are events which occur in families that are good and bad, and that family members will name their children after such events and such names will remind the namers of the events.

6% (20 out of 500) of the responses from the questionnaires indicated that names among the Zezuru are taken as an important way of expressing people's hopes, dreams and aspirations. After all, names in general are symbols of some meanings. From the interviews, it was established that personal names can also reflect people's religious beliefs, their geographical background, as well as their philosophy of life and death. It is in the philosophy of life that gender is found, and people are given certain names to promote this gender philosophy. It can be concluded that the meanings of most Zezuru personal names play an important role in reflecting the Zezuru's attitude towards men and women in their society, because it is believed that a given name usually carries some gender connotations. This therefore means that the gendered personal names given to Zezuru people can affect them to the extent of influencing various spheres of their lives.

Conversations from the interviews revealed that world over, personal and group identities are socially constructed as such that they cannot be immune from being gendered. Names are fingerprints of identity among the Zezuru people and these names categorise people on gender lines. From the interviews and focus group discussions, it was stated that when you see a name written somewhere, you can easily tell if the name belongs to a man or woman. Names such as *Tapiwa* (we have been given), *Tongoona* (let us wait and see), *Tawanda* (we have increased in numbers), and *Tungamirirai* (lead) were said to be names for boys. While names such as *Shamiso* (one who brings surprise), *Chengetai* (look after us), *Nyemudzai* (tease), and *Nyaradzai* (comforter) were said to be names for girls. The reason put forward by interview participants for gendering these names was basically to bring order in their society by making sure that individuals are fully aware of their gender roles and positions.

Names among the Zezuru culture are regarded as pointers to people's hopes, dreams and aspirations. These hopes and dreams are also gendered, thus the giving of names which are gender specific. Names among the Zezuru reflect their philosophy of life. Categorizing people on gender lines is part of the Zezuru social life. This shows that the way the Zezuru people name each other has various implications for their social constructions as persons. Mphasha (2014) states that for the Northern Sotho people, names play an important role in defining one's personality because it is believed that a name has a great influence in moulding the behaviour of an individual.

Names give people identity, and labelling them on gender lines is one of the ways through which Zezuru people identify themselves. Generally, names among other things portray the social rudiments of individuals in society. Names in general are symbols of some meanings and these meanings are not immune to gender connotations. Naming itself is a social act which portrays the norms and values of a group of people. One respondent from the focus group discussions said that she can easily know if a person is male or female through the name ascribed to the person. She also says that among the Zezuru, giving a male child a feminine name can affect the name bearer negatively amongst his peers, as he will always be jeered by them – for females are always looked down upon in the patriarchal Zezuru society.

One interviewee indicated that messages carried by children's names may play an influential role in the construction or deconstruction of gender consciousness among the Zezuru children. Rubaya (2014) says that names among the Shona, of which the Zezuru are part of, are not arbitrarily given but are given to mark one's biology, thereby transforming naming into a salient medium of instruction in the education of children to accept their socially defined gender paths. This is also supported by responses from the questionnaires, which shows that the naming of a newborn is the sole right of the father and that other members can only perform this act with the blessing of the father. The fact that the father has greater say in the naming of the child makes the whole process of naming a gendered process.

In his 1989 article on the aetiology of Zulu personal names, Koopman quotes Evans-Pritchard on the topic of African names by stating that all names of all kinds are social documents which fix a person's position in the social structure and define his relation to other members of society (1939:237). Responses from the questionnaires and interviews indicated that through personal names, the Zezuru can easily categorise individuals on gender lines by simply reading the name

on paper, because most of the names are generally gender specific. However, this research established that some names are unisex; such as *Tendai*, *Nyasha* and *Tanyaradzwa*.

This research also found that the Zezuru use personal names to communicate their hopes and aspirations. Names such as *Shingai*, *Pindukai* and *Garikai* for boys were singled out by interviewees as names which communicate the parents' hopes and aspirations in life. The interviews also established that names give the name-bearers purpose and something to live up to. An example was given of the Zulu society, where a girl with the name Nompulelo ('mother of success') will grow up striving for success and this spirit of success would have come from the meaning of the name. Responses from the interviews confirmed the importance of names as sources of socialisation because through personal names, the Zezuru people can easily take their gender positions in society. Social roles at family and societal level are usually determined by one's gender status among the Zezuru.

5.10 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE PERSONAL NAME CHOICE

Several factors were highlighted as influencing the choice of personal names. These were revealed during the interviews, focus group discussions, and in the questionnaire responses. These factors are shown on the table below. They are arranged according to their frequency. The factors which were common included gender, religion, family experiences, and historical events.

TABLE 5.10.1 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE PERSONAL NAME CHOICE

FACTOR	FREQUENCY
SEX/GENDER	220
RELIGION	100
FAMILY EXPERIENCES	80
HISTORICAL EVENTS	60
CELEBRITIES	20
GLOBALISATION	10
TECHNOLOGY	10

5.11 GENDER/SEX

From the questionnaires, gender was mentioned as the major factor which influences name choice among the Zezuru, and appeared very frequently in the responses. This affirms that the Zezuru society is very much divided along gender lines in whatever they do.

During the research, the participants were confusing sex and gender. In fact, most of the participants took the two to be one and the same thing. However, the researcher explained that sex is biological, and gender is a social construct. One interviewee said that above all other factors, gender/sex is the major factor which influences personal name choice. Her sentiments were heavily supported by responses from the questionnaires which pointed to sex as a major factor in influencing personal name choice.

Sex was articulated during the focus group discussions and interviews as one of the factors which influence the choice of personal names. Responses from questionnaires also testified to the influence of sex in the choice of a personal name. All the responses from the questionnaires also indicated that sex is a major factor which influences the choice of a name. During the interviews and focus group discussions, all the participants concurred with the responses from the questionnaires regarding how the sex of the newborn determines the personal name to be ascribed to the newborn. One respondent said that girls are often given names which are attractive and sort of inform would-be husbands about their availability on the market. While other participants from the interviews and the focus group discussions said that boys are usually given names which articulate the vision of the family, as they are touted to ensure the continuity of the family line among the Zezuru. As a result, many of the names collected for this study have subtle traces of this gender influence, in order to capture its deep feelings and thoughts against the perceived Shona patriarchal dominance. This male dominance dictates that women remain aliens and inferior in various set ups in the Zezuru society.

From the interviews it was established that among the Zezuru, males receive greater attention and respect than females. Zezuru society associates femaleness with failure and inferiority while associating maleness with achievement and superiority. This is because the Zezuru society is patriarchal in nature.

5.12 RELIGION

Religion also featured as one of the prominent factors which influence the choice of Zezuru personal names. Responses from questionnaires show that personal name choice was and is greatly influenced by one's religious affiliation. Makondo (2012:70) says that almost every human being is religious in one way or the other. He goes on to add that religion deals with the acknowledgement of a greater force outside the self that shapes a people's destiny. In order to promote and be reminded of such reality, naming after the religion's cherished tenets has become one negotiating tactic. 230 (92%) out of 250 participants indicated that religion plays a pivotal role in influencing the choice of personal names among the Zezuru. Their views concurred with the conversations from the interviews and focus group discussions where participants said that the introduction of Christian churches greatly influenced the naming process among the Zezuru. One interviewee claims that:

“Vanhu vazhinji havachadi kupa vana vavo mazita emadzisekuru nekuti vavakupinda church nekudaro vavakupa vana mazita echikirisitu” (Many people no longer want to name their children after their grandparents because they are now Christians and they now give their children Christian-oriented names).

Of the same opinion are Dudley-Evans and St-John (1998:66) in Makondo (2012:70) who state that “... religion shapes one's culture.” Naming is part of culture just like gender, which is also a cultural construction. This research established that although the Zezuru personal names are influenced by religion especially Christianity, most of the Christian-influenced Zezuru names were also gendered. It emerged from this research that Christianity, as one of the popular religions among the Zezuru, commands a large following and as a result it has a strong influence in the naming process. From the interviews it emerged that most Christians derive personal names from Jewish and Hebrew cultures.

The interviews revealed that most Zezuru Christians name their children with names that reflect their faith in Christ. Girls' names which were common in the questionnaire responses were *Chidochashe* (God's wish), *Ruvarashe*, (the rose of the Lord), *Vimbainashe* (believe in the Lord), *Tsitsidzashe* (the mercy of the lord), and *Kudzaishe* (praise the Lord). And common boys' names were *Simbarashe* (God's power), *Panashe* (where there is the Lord), *Tavongashe* (we thank the Lord), *Tinashe* (we have the Lord) and *Danaishe* (call the Lord). These results bore resemblance to those of the school registers which reflected that many pupils now have

Christian-oriented names. Most of the names which were found in the school registers from the five schools have a Christian influence. This trend concurs with the views of one interviewee:

“*Vanhu vavamakirisitu nekudaro vavakuda mazita anechekuita nechitendero chavo*” (People are now Christians and as such they now prefer names which reflect their doctrine).

What is worth noting is that even though both boys and girls are given Christian names, the messages enshrined in these names will always carry some gender connotations. This is the reason why Simone de Beauvoir (1971:219) says that Christian ideology has contributed nonetheless to the oppression of women. In the early church period, women were treated with relative honour when they submitted themselves to the church of Paul, who based the subordination of women to men upon both the Old and the New Testament. Most of the women in the Bible are known for playing insignificant roles and if a woman is named after such personalities, she will likely be viewed in the same manner. However, men who are named after great personalities from the Bible are likely to receive significant respect in the society. To reinstate the point that naming among the Zezuru is gendered; if they happen to name a newborn after a certain personality from the Bible, they will make sure that if the name bearer in the Bible was male then the new bearer of the name should also be male. The same also applies to the names of female personalities from the Bible; that the recipients of such names among the Zezuru should also be females. One must bear in mind that the Bible is not immune to gender bias because it appears to cover events by men at the expense of women. Most of the stories from the Bible are about men and very little of women. The few women who are written about are negatively portrayed.

5.13 HISTORICAL/POLITICAL EVENTS

The responses from the questionnaires and interviews indicated that historical-political events such as wars, independence and persecution do influence the naming of Zezuru personal names. From the interviews and the focus group discussions it was established that most Zezuru names, especially from between the 1970s and the 1980s, were politically influenced. These politically influenced names included guerilla names which were used as pseudo names by fighters during the armed struggle. From the questionnaires, names such as *Struggle*, *Hondo* (war), *Resistance*

and *Tafirenyika* (we died for this country) were cited as common for boys. These guerilla names influenced the naming process among the Zezuru. Makondo (2012:85) states that the war of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe left a legacy that Zimbabweans cannot easily forget. As a result, personal names after the likes of popular political figures were and are still common. These personalities were among the renowned war strategies of the liberation struggle. A notable and disturbing aspect of these names is that they are also gendered because only the names of male guerilla fighters are talked about; as if to say female guerilla fighters did not participate in the struggle. This research found out that only the name of *Joice Teurairopa Mujuru* features regularly together with those of her male counterparts. Responses from the interviews indicated that naming after liberation icons is an acknowledgment of the important role played by these people in the struggle. However, by concentrating on the names of male guerillas, there is a danger of gendering the liberation struggle. One interviewee said that through naming children after liberation heroes, the namers will be modernising and immortalising these liberation personalities. According to Leslie and Skipper (1990:273) in Makondo (2012), these names signify“...status, achievement, privilege and meaningful social status organisation as they communicate social status and social prestige.”

This research established that female guerillas usually had names such as *Chiedza Mabhunu* (light for you boers) and *Tsitsi Mabhunu* (mercy for you boers). While the men were given names such as *Urayai Mabhunu* (kill the boers) and *Tichatonga Mabhunu* (we will rule you boers). All these names have a lot of gender connotations. Historical events are a major source of Zezuru names. Pfukwa (2012) states that “behind a name are social attitudes and perceptions: a vast social matrix that gives the name wider shades of meaning.” The interviews and focus group discussions revealed that historical events such as the fight for independence became a major source for most Zezuru personal names. Personal names which were greatly influenced by the events before, during, and after the struggle are those of political activists and their family members. Even though they used an historical epoch as a source of their influence, these names are not immune to gender influence. According to Joseph (2004) in Pfukwa (2007), gender is one of the key indices in negotiating identity. Holland (1990) supports the idea of names acting as a way of separating people on gender lines and opines that nicknames, which are also a form of identity, are more common among men than women. Nicknames play a pivotal role in life for they may act as a source of motivation to the name bearer. This privilege is only given to men who usually receive these nicknames. Most of the names given to women are more conventional than men’s names. In his research on guerilla names, Pfukwa (2007)

found that women often chose the conventional names themselves, be they Shona or English and for example *Rutendo* (gratitude) and *Sarudzai* (choose). Edwards (1985) in Pfukwa (2007) points out that women prefer prestige varieties, and these prestige varieties tend to be standard or conventional like their names.

5.14 FAMILY EXPERIENCES

The results and responses from the interviews, focus group discussions and the questionnaires pointed to family experiences as one of the factors which influence the choice of Zezuru personal names. One participant said:

“Zvamunosangana nazvo semhuri mukurarama zvinoita kuti mutumidze mwana zita rinokurangaridzai zviitiko izvi” (What you encounter in life as a family normally influences you to name a child after such incidences so as to remind you of the incident).

Family feuds were also highlighted as examples of social incidences which influence the naming process. The names which were mentioned as a response to family experiences in the interviews include *Rowesai* (one who causes us to be bewitched), *Chemedzai* (one who causes us to cry) and *Sekai* (mockus) for girls and *Tafara* (we are happy), *Takwana* (we are now enough), *Takudzwa* (we have been honoured), *Tavonga* (we have praised) and *Tawanda* (we have increased) for boys. The same names were common during the document analysis as they featured frequently in almost every school register. One focus group respondent said that naming a child after certain events in the family will help the family to remember such incidences because the name will act as a reminder to them.

5.15 GLOBALISATION

Responses from the questionnaires reflected that the outside world has a great influence on Zezuru personal naming. Zezuru people now resort to naming their children after celebrities from around the world. The responses from the questionnaires revealed that names of prominent footballers are a common phenomenon among the Zezuru. One interviewee said that the role of celebrities in this world cannot be ignored and, in most cases, some of the namers

prefer certain names without directly linking their choices to the personalities behind them. In the same vein, the Zezuru people choose names from internationally renowned celebrities and sportspersons. The names of these personalities are usually found in various advertising channels, making their names become iconic and a marvel to the viewers. Names of popular soccer players like Ronaldo, Rivaldo, and Neymar were common for boys in most school registers. Names of popular musicians were also common such as Celindion, Yvonne and Rebecca. The first names of former popular political figures in Africa like Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere, Samora Machel, and Robert Mugabe were very popular for boys. These names were also a common feature in the responses from the questionnaires. A closer look at the school registers during 1980 and a period soon after 1980 revealed that the name Robert appeared very frequently for boys. This research noted that namers made sure that the names of popular male and female personalities were given to children of the same sex respectively. It is from this respect that this study argues that although these names are foreign in the Zezuru culture, they are not immune from being gendered. It is very unusual to find the name of a female celebrity being bestowed upon a male child and vice-versa.

5.16 HEREDITARY (FAMILY NAMES)

Results from the interviews and focus group discussions indicated that some Zezuru people prefer to name their children after certain family members. However, responses from the questionnaires indicate that the number of such people is dwindling. Only 7% (20 out of the 300) indicated that the Zezuru do name their children after family members. These are family members who might have passed away or are still living. The responses from the interviews and focus group discussions suggest that only family members who had or have admirable attributes will have their names adopted by the present family members. The belief among the Zezuru is that whoever takes the name of a respected family figure will also have the traits of the original name bearer. A senior family member who desires to have a newborn baby named after him usually pays a present which is a sign to show his interest in having the new child be named after him or her. Normally, a relative who pays more will have his name stand as the name for the child. It is like bidding, where the highest bidder will have the chance to name the child. Responses from the interviews indicate that boys are the ones who are usually given

family names because they are expected to carry the family's tradition. Girls on the other hand, inherit the names of their aunts, mothers and sisters. However, the interviews and focus group discussions revealed that present-day girls are no longer in favour of such names. In instances where the girl is given such a name, with the passage of time, she will change the name and acquire another name of her choice. In their research on assimilation and gender in naming among Hispanic parents in America, Sue and Telles (2007) found that attitudes favouring assimilation are particularly great when naming daughters. Thus, girl children take up English names while boys are given Spanish names which reflect the father's ethnicity. These results recognise a shift in the naming trend of the Zezuru in which the current Zezuru are no longer favouring hereditary names. In instances where these names are found, they are usually more common for boys than girls.

There are many factors which influence name choice among the Zezuru, but gender has been established as the major factor. Other factors which influence name choice are also influenced by gender in one way or the other. Being patriarchal in its set up, the Zezuru society makes sure that the roles of men and women are clearly laid out along gender lines, with men occupying the upper level and women playing second fiddle to them.

5.17 NAMES AND GENDER

The responses from the questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions revealed that most of the personal names among the Zezuru society are gendered. Only a few names are unisex and the names which are gendered have gender connotations. These names reflect that parents have certain expectations regarding the sexes of their children. One interviewee asserts that:

“Zitarinofanira kuratidza kuti iri nderemukadzi kana kuti nderemurume” (A name must reflect that it is for a female or male person).

In contrast, another interviewee said that some of the names given to girls are meant to unlock women from unequal treatment and recognition. Such names seem to urge men to be gender sensitive. This is not a surprise among the Zezuru given the fact that their society is gender skewed towards men. Women are therefore now crying for their space in all spheres including the political, social and economic spheres. Some of the names are seen as a form of protest

against being gender-stereotyped and the male-dominated Zezuru society. Thus, names such as *Farai* (rejoice) and *Tendai* (appreciate) have now become popular with girls when in the past they were regarded to be names for boys only.

In speaking about patriarchal societies like the Zezuru, Zulu (2001:328) states that:

“Being a male and hero is part of the psychology of a patriarchal society. Such a patriarchal psychology is expressed by the male/female binary thought where victory is seen as the culmination of male activity, and defeat is considered an aspect of female passivity.”

In line with this is the dominance of names such as *Shingirirai* (persevere) and *Takunda* (we have won). The meanings of these personal names tend to be very elusive and require careful interpretation based on the social context of the Zezuru society for one to understand the gender messages enshrined in them. These names carry connotative meanings which require one who is gender sensitive to understand the messages enshrined in them. These names help one to understand gender parity among the Zezuru. Thus, Zezuru names cease to be mere identification tags, and rather show the namer’s intention and standpoint on various issues. Zezuru personal names reflect the namer’s attitude towards socio-political inequality based on sex and gender differences. Feminism postulates that gender differences are a social construct, and so society must be blamed for ever thinking of females as being physically and mentally challenged or impaired.

5.18 CONFLICTS ASSOCIATED WITH NAMING

TABLE 5.18.1 CONFLICTS ASSOCIATED WITH NAMING

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
YES	350	70
NO	150	30
TOTAL	500	100

The table above shows that of the five hundred participants who completed the questionnaire, 70% (350 out of 500) said that there are some conflicts associated with naming. While 30% (150 out of 500) indicated that there are no conflicts during naming. The results from the interview and focus group discussions were also mixed however a majority indicated that conflicts do arise in the naming process. The naming process among the Zezuru is a family event as such that all family members are involved in the process. Conflicts may arise if the father decides to name the child after one of his relatives who might be known for bad behaviour. In such cases, the mother of the child or other relatives may resist such a move. The responses from the interviews indicated that such a case can be resolved by other relatives who will then be given the responsibility to name the child. While elaborating on this issue about the conflicts associated with naming, one respondent argues that:

“Mazuvano zvekupa mwana zita rehama hazvichaiti nekuti anozotakurana nemazimweya aemuridzi wezita iroro” (These days naming a child after a certain family member is no longer good because certain names will be associated with badspirits).

Most of the responses from the questionnaires indicated that conflicts usually arise because of the meaning of the name which can be given to the newborn.

Women are often against giving children names which are loaded with a lot of meaning while the men on the other hand do favor names which are pregnant with meaning. This is the reason why Zezuru children opt to change their personal names later in life. Names loaded with meaning were very common in the 1970s but faded in the 1980s. One interviewee says that in cases when the father and the mother disagree over the name to be given to the child, they may decide to give the child two names – one from the father and the other from the mother. Responses from the questionnaires indicated that nowadays, conflicts also arise in the naming itself with mothers wanting to name the newborn as well. One interviewee said that conflicts about who must name the newborn are common in families which are well-bred or educated and in which both parents want their voices heard when it comes to heading the family. It was also revealed from the focus group discussions that families that respect the rights of women do give women the opportunity to name the child even when the father of the child is present. Even though the child is named by the father or mother, the fact remains that these names are not free from being gendered. The fact that there is a lot of gender stereotyping in personal names is one of the reasons why some of the name bearers change their names later in life, because they regard those names as archaic.

5.19 EFFECTS OF GENDERED NAMES

The responses from the questionnaires revealed that a gendered name has a great influence on the bearer of the name. All 100% (500 out of 500) of the questionnaire respondents indicated that naming has an effect on the name bearer. One respondent pointed that a name can dictate the behaviour of its bearer. Another respondent indicated that gendered names label their bearers. These sentiments were echoed during the interview sessions where most of the participants argued that gendered names influence their bearers to behave to the dictates of their names and gender. There were unison responses from the questionnaires regarding whether a name influences the behaviour of the bearer.

“Yes, because their behaviour will be in line with the meaning of their names.”

“Yes, a name like ‘Nhamo’ (poverty) is associated with poverty and because of that the bearer may not live a rich life since it is believed that words are powerful.”

One interviewee responded “Yes, because some people will act according to the meaning of their name.”

It can be concluded from these results that gendered personal names do have an effect on their bearers.

5.20 REASONS FOR GENDER-BASED NAMES

96% (480 out of 500) of the responses from the questionnaires pointed to the fact that people use gender-based names for identity purposes. These are some of the responses from the questionnaires regarding the main reason for giving people gendered personal names:

“So that they know their gender roles.”

“For them to know their responsibilities.”

“For identification.”

“For easy identification of a person’s sex.”

“For identity purposes. Culturally, there are names which are meant for females and males respectively.”

The interviews uncovered that gendered names bring order in society for they enable easy classification on gender lines. One interviewee said “*Mazita anoita kuti uyu mukadzi uyu murume*” (Personal names enable us to know whether one is a man or woman). It was also revealed that personal names as forms of identity place people in social positions based on their gender status. From the interviews and focus group discussions, it was established that names enable people to know that they are not the same. All these responses seem to suggest that the major reason for giving people names is for identity purposes.

5.21 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented the findings gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires and from documents. It was noted that data presentation needs to be appropriate to enable analysis and discussion. The information gathered was grouped using the thematic approach. Personal names were classified into categories which made the analysis of the names manageable. The next chapter delves into the analysis and discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER 6

6.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses the data on Zezuru personal names as they relate to the gender status of their name bearers. The analysis of data is a vital component that involves the engagement of the researcher with the interpretive act, thus providing meaning to massive amounts of data (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). The act of interpreting the gathered data generates meaning in terms of relevant data and further demonstrates the meaning by a means of a written report (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). The personal names which were analysed were gathered using four data gathering methods discussed in chapter four. The presentation of the names was done in chapter five. A total of five hundred personal names were gathered and will be analysed in this chapter. The analysis of the personal names begins with a discussion of the various categories adopted in chapter five for the grouping of the personal names. The salient features of the different categories are examined along with the common features across the categories. It is important to mention that nine categories were established and were used to categorise the personal names as they relate to gender. This chapter discusses the research findings of chapter 5. As alluded to in the first chapter, this study explored the factors which influence the choice of personal names among the Zezuru, of which gender was found to be a major factor.

This chapter discusses the findings from the research methods which include the questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis guided by the sub-themes of the research. The discussion is had in the context of both scholarly and general contemporary perceptions of the relationship which usually exists between a name and the gender status of the name bearer. In this chapter, the patterns of responses captured in chapter five are collated, synthesised and discussed in light of the emerging phenomenon of existing knowledge based on other research studies related to the present study. This chapter further discusses the research findings by linking them to the theories discussed in chapter three. It examines the meanings of the personal names as they reflect gender stereotyping, which is rampant among the patriarchal Zezuru society. The meanings of personal names and their implications are informed by the idea that the Zezuru society is a patriarchal society and as such, all meanings of personal names will be based on this assumption. Insights gained from other disciplines such as sociology and anthropology prove handy in the analysis of the meanings of the personal names as they relate to gender.

6.2 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

6.2.1 RESEARCH THEMES ADDRESSED

The analysis and discussion of the research results is based on the themes and categories that emerged from the gathered data through the questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis in chapter five.

6.3 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE NAME CHOICES AMONG THE ZEZURU

This research established several factors that influence name choices among the Zezuru as shown in table 5:10 in chapter five. These factors include gender, religion, family experiences, historical events, celebrities, globalisation and technology. Gender was found to be influencing all the other factors in one way or another. This consequently means that everything the Zezuru society does is gendered in some respect. The results from the research however point to the fact that gender alone is the major determining factor that influences name choice among the Zezuru. During the data collection process, gender and sex were loosely taken to mean the same although they are different – the former being a social construction while the latter is biologically determined. As was indicated in most of the questionnaire responses, other factors like historical events, circumstances surrounding the birth of the child, and religious beliefs were found to be influential in name choices among the Zezuru of Buhera South District. However, although these factors influence name choices, this research has established that gender plays an equally important role even to the extent of influencing these other factors as well.

6.3.1 GENDER

This research has established that gender influences name choice among the Zezuru people in Buhera South. This was reflected by its higher percentage in the responses from the data gathering techniques. The responses indicated that there are gender specific names and that the

gender status of a newborn is a major determining factor in the choice of a name among the Zezuru. Kwattsha (2009:56) states that:

“Gender identity means to feel like a female or a male. This refers to an individual’s own feelings of whether she or he is a woman or a man, or girl or a boy.”

Biyela (2013) explains that children normally receive gender-specific names with the occasional exceptions of neutral or unisex names. It must be clarified that for this present research, the word gender is often used interchangeably with the word sex though the two terms are slightly different. Gender can be regarded as those character traits expected of a certain gender group and it is often confused with sex. Yorburg (1974) in Jones and Olson (1991:202) states that “all women are brought up from the very earliest years in the belief that their ideal character is the very opposite to that of men.” Certain personal names given to men and women are meant to tame them to behave to the dictates of their respective gender group. Mazrui (1993) states that the socialization of the female is observably inculcated through the culture of naming. Mazrui gives examples from the Igbo society where names such as *‘Nwanyibuiife’* (woman is something) and *‘Nwanyibuego’* (woman is wealth) do not extol womanhood as is implied in the names, but rather they objectify women and hint at female commodification while at the same time underscoring marriage as the ultimate goal for women.

These gender attributes are often reflected in the personal names which are given to individuals among the Zezuru people of Buhera South. In patriarchal societies, women are regarded as inferior to men. Papanek in Tinker (1990:180) says:

“...though these conviction seeds of inequality are planted deep in the consciousness of women and men, often by other women, who perceive their self interest to lie in the hands of men rather than other women. But since inequality depends on social learning in the first place, it can also be unlearned.”

Rubaya and Viriri (2012) express that through socialisation, children grow up and accept their gender prescribed roles and that naming is one of the agents of socialisation. Lott (1991:6) defines socialisation as “the process of learning those behaviours that are appropriate for members of a particular group distinguished from others on the basis of certain ascribed and/or achieved status.” It is apparent that socialisation distinguishes the dos and don’ts between male and female children. Rubaya and Viriri (2012) also add that socialisation is a powerful tool in entrenching gender conformity. Certain personal names which are gendered will condition

children to socially prescribed gender roles and they will be ready to act out these social roles unconsciously, without even noticing the attendant oppression that accompanies that conformity. This research has observed that personal names are gendered in nature. Gender specific names were found to be rampant among the Zezuru people of Buhera South and respondents highlighted that these names are feminine and have docile connotations which make women appear weak.

6.3.2 HISTORICAL EVENTS

Although the historical armed struggle for independence in Zimbabwe was fought by both genders, it appeared to be much more gendered towards the men and this was reflected in the naming as well. Evidence from the school registers, questionnaire responses, interviews, and the focus group discussions indicated that most pupils, especially boys, were named after certain male icons of the liberation struggle and very few if any were named after prominent female guerillas. The reason might be because female guerillas usually retained their conventional personal names (Pfukwa, 2007).

When the country attained independence in 1980, many newborns were named after prominent personalities of the struggle for independence. The personalities were mostly men and their names were given to boy children. Very few girls if any were named after the liberation icons even though women participated in the struggle as well. Lyons (2002) states:

“During the 1970s, Zimbabwean women guerrilla fighters were hailed internationally as women who rose above traditionally subordinate gender positions in order to fight equally with men in the struggle for national independence.”

Lyons (2002) quotes Robert Mugabe, who by then was the president of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), and who stressed the importance of women in the struggle by saying “I learned through the liberation struggle that success and power are possible when men and women are united as equals.” On the other hand, Nhongo-Simbanegavi (2000) says that the armed struggle was gendered and that women’s participation in the guerrilla war did not change gender inequalities in society. Nhongo-Simbanegavi (2000:19) says that the popular slogan for women during the war was “Forward with the cooking stick!” along with other sayings which continued to enshrine the nurturing or material roles of women during the liberation war.

McCintock (1991a) says that all nationalisms were gendered and dangerous because they represented relations to political power and in doing so legitimized and limited women's access to rights and resources. The war of liberation in Zimbabwe greatly influenced the naming pattern in the country; although the names which were adopted and celebrated most were of the male soldiers, and this was reflected by their high frequency in school registers than the names of their female counterparts.

Upon attaining independence in 1980, there were a lot of disparities between men and women in terms of opportunities in Zimbabwe and the government found that if these disparities were allowed to continue, they were going to pose a serious impediment to sustainable development and the attainment of equality and equity between men and women. Gender equity, being a core development issue and a development objective in its own right, was seen to be one of the new government's priorities. According to the gender policy, women in Zimbabwe by 1980 constituted over 52% of the total population and their participation in the economy was confined largely to subsistence agricultural production, and domestic roles which were labour intensive and essential for household survival such as child bearing and rearing, as well as fetching water and firewood. Women were also a source of solace for men who usually spent most of their time in industries, farms and mines. These roles were stereotypical for Zezuru women and their position was fostered through the gendered personal names which were given to girls, and these names acted as socialisation agents which channelled girls to accept their gender specified roles. Examples of names which were found to be common for girls include *Rindai* (look after), *Tsitsi* (mercy), *Tsungai* (persevere) and other names which portray women as docile and patient in the family and society at large. On the other hand, men were dominating in the major economic sectors of the society at the expense of their female counterparts, and this was enhanced by their names which actively socialise them to dominate women in every respect in the economic and political sphere. Boys' names such as *Tungamirai* (lead us), *Tongai* (rule), and *Simukai* (prosper) were very common in school registers and they reflect men as having leadership qualities which cannot be found in women. The fact that historical events do influence name choice concurs with Neethling (1995) who notes that name giving among the Bantu cultures reflects the social-cultural and historical circumstances of the group or clan. In this case, the choices of names for the children were influenced by the historical circumstances which happened in their environment. From this research, the findings from the questionnaires and interview responses show that historical events are one of the factors which influence name choice among the Zezuru.

6.3.3 RELIGION

Religion was also noted as one of the major influences in name choice among the Zezuru, as was reflected in the responses from the questionnaires and the interviews. The names from the school registers which exhibited religious influence were also a testimony of the influence of religion in personal name choice. Thus, this research established an increase in Zezuru personal names which are linked to religion, especially Christian names such as *Tadiwanashe* (we have been loved by the Lord), *Tsitsidzashe* (the mercy of the Lord), and *Mutsawashe* (Lord's mercy) for girls. The stereotypical characteristics of women are still contained in the names but the idea of praising the Lord is reflected with the use of the word "ishe" (Lord) at the end of every name. Boys' Christian names included *Tafadzwanashe* (the lord has made us proud), *Tatendaishe* (give praise to the Lord), and *Isheanesu* (The Lord is with us). A closer look at the meaning of the names shows that there is a lot of praising in the names of boys suggesting that they are regarded more highly than girls. There are connotations of bias in names given to boys which points to the fact that boys hold a higher social position among the Zezuru. This research found that religious beliefs do influence name choice among the Zezuru just like in any society world over. Religious influence was evidenced by the high frequency of Christian oriented names found in the responses from the questionnaires and from the school registers. People adopted the naming trends from the Bible. Names such as *Nyashadzashe* (mercy of the Lord) for boys and *Rudorwashe* (love of the lord) for girls were very common in the school registers. Makondo (2009) states that most Christians and non-Christians alike derive their names from Jewish, Hebrew, Greek and Canaanite cultures among others as most biblical stories revolved around these communities. Like other African communities, the Zezuru were influenced in their naming patterns by the new religious beliefs, but in doing so the element of gender sensitivity in their naming practices can easily be identified. Mbiti (1970) states that Africans are notoriously religious in whatever they do and through giving their children personal names which reflect their religious orientation, the Zezuru people can express their religious and social ideologies which entail gender connotations as well. Thus, gender influence can be noted in these religious names. The Zezuru praise the Lord when a baby boy is born in the family. This was evidenced by the high frequency of the name *Faraimunashe* (Rejoice in the Lord) for baby boys; as they are regarded highly among the patriarchal Zezuru society which believes that family continuity lies in boys (Sue and Telles 2007).

6.3.4 GLOBALISATION

The last three factors which include celebrities and technology can best be discussed under globalisation. It is worth noting that these factors have a passive influence on naming choices as is reflected by their low percentages in table (5.10.1) of chapter five. Giddens and Sutton (2013) define globalisation as the increasing interconnectedness of the globe to become a global village where territorial boundaries are bridged through technology and social media. Sue and Telles (2007:1412) highlight that with the increasing interconnectedness of culture through technology, popular American girls' names are now a common feature and the exposure to the English language through mass media is influencing naming patterns. This observation by Sue and Telles (2007) also applies with the naming of Zezuru girls who were found to have western names more than boys. Though their influence is minimal, the major factor gender is also seen influencing these smaller factors. Now that the world has become a village because of modern technology, the Zezuru have greater access to names from across the world, and as such they adopt these names but also make sure that they maintain the gender pattern of the names. Thus, names which are common to men are given to boys and those of women are given to girls. In most instances, the Zezuru name their children after prominent personalities like sports persons and musicians. On very few occasions do we find names for boys given to girls or vice-versa; such a choice will only bring ridicule to the name bearer in society.

6.4 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NAMING

The findings from the data gathered across all the data gathering instruments established that the father is the main name giver in the family; although other family members such as the mother, uncles, aunts and others may also be responsible for naming as is shown in table (5:7:1) of chapter five. However, the overall responsibility to name a new born among the Zezuru lies with the father of the child. The results also testified that whosoever may preside over the naming beside the father of the child, can only do so with the blessing of the father of the child. Pfukwa (2007:45) states that the naming of the newborn must be officiated by the

head of the household, who has the authoritative responsibility to tell the society about the newborn. One interviewee said: “*Baba vemwana ndivo vane kodzero yekutumidza mwana zita sechiratidzo chekuti mwana ndewavo*” (The father of the baby has the right to name the newborn as this is a sign to show that he is the father of the baby). Biyela (2013) states that among the patrilineal Zulu society, naming a newborn was predominantly a biological father’s right.

Among the Zezuru, having the father of the child be responsible for naming is one of the social norms and values which show that the father has accepted the child as his. Batoma (2009:19) adds that as the “family priest”, the father must respectfully commit himself to his child’s metaphysical origins, their mission in society, and his or her personal development, for a communal approval of respect and compliance with social rules. Makondo (2012) notes that even if the father is away because of work commitments for example, the family will wait for him to return home and name the child, that is if they had not finalized the name during the gestation period.

According to Saarelema-Maunumaa (2003:35), the personal name must be given by the father of the child as this act stresses that he accepts responsibility of being the father of the child and it also affirms the child as a legitimate member of the family. The responses from the questionnaires and interviews clearly concurred that the father is responsible for naming a newborn among the Zezuru. That the father of the child has the overall say on the naming of the child points to the gender skewedness of the naming process among the Zezuru.

The responses gathered from the questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions revealed that grandfathers and grandmothers will takeover the naming in the absence of the father. Other family members such as the aunts and the brothers of the biological father can also name the child in instances where the father is not around – for example if he is late or has gone abroad. Likaka (2009:24) states that in societies with matrilineal ancestry like the Bemba, it is the grandmothers who name the babies. Whereas in bilateral societies, a child would receive two names, with the father providing one name and the mother providing the other one.

The findings of this research generally indicated that the father of the child is the one who dominates the naming of the children. These results are harmonious with Sue and Telles (2007) who found that in most cases, fathers have greater authority in as far as deciding children’s names. However, there were also indications that as of late, women and mothers to be specific are now having a say in the naming of children. Sue and Telles (2007) articulate that among the immigrants in the USA, mothers are given the responsibility to name baby girls while fathers

name the baby boys. Makondo (2012) states that mothers are now having a say in the naming of children in the family because of the much-publicized human rights among other variables. Consequently, mothers are almost claiming equal naming rights with their husbands. There were also indications from the findings, although few, which point to the fact that both parents unanimously agree on the name to be given to the newborn.

This research established that the patriarchal Zezuru society gives great respect to men and because of this the father always dominates in the naming process. It is the father who determines the ethos of the entire family. Through the names given to children, the father communicates important messages regarding his family, especially through boys' names. Chitando (1998) in Makondo (2012) states that names are chosen with care and usually serve to summarize the feelings of the parents, the child's habit, the economic status of the parents, the circumstances surrounding birth, and various other considerations. The responses from the interviews established that sometimes both parents can mutually agree on a name for the child "without identifying the original name coiner" (Makondo 2012:76). Table (5:7:1) in chapter five indicated that although the father is the main name giver, other family members can also name the newborn. With reference to the Zulu society, Neethling (2005) states that the parents are the main name givers, but suggestions from the grandparents and other relatives or even friends may be entertained. Hudson-Weems (2004:21) states that naming, proposing a name, imposing a name, and accepting names can be a political exercise which carries political connotations. 1960s political activist Moore, in Hudson-Weems (2004: xix), expresses that slaves and dogs are named by their masters yet free men and women name themselves. The message in this statement refers to power differentials regarding the namer and the named. This means that the one who names has authority over the one who is named. The fact that the father of the child among the Zezuru has the overall control in the naming process means that the whole process is gendered. These indications show that the naming of children is an honour which is given to the father of the child and it serves to confirm the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society.

The responses from the interviews indicated that members besides the father of the child who are economically sound in the family can do the naming. Being economically sound in the family automatically commands one a lot of respect from the other family members who depend on the financial and material support. Such members among the Zezuru are usually male, as they own the means of production and control the family income whilst most of the women stay at home to look after the children and engage in domestic tasks. Most men are the

breadwinners in their families which consequently gains them respect from their fellow family members. This research found that the majority of namers among the Zezuru are males because of their economic power in their respective families. This can be attributed to the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society. Nuessel (1992:3) states that “those who give names often occupy positions of power and authority in their families.” This then means that in most cases, the one who is named will always have to respect his or her namer. It is in consideration of such sentiments that the present study found that naming among the Zezuru is dominated by male members; which makes it prone to gender bias because since the namers are male, their sentiments, hopes, beliefs and aspirations will be expressed through the personal names given to the children.

This research established that boys are given names that inspire and give hope to both the namer and the named in life. Their names are often aggressive and are statements of intent regarding progressing in life. On the other hand, girls are given names which in most cases, comment on their physical appearance and thus reducing them to mere commodities being advertised on the market. Names such as *Runako* (beauty) and *Chiedza* (light) were very common for girls. The meanings of most of the names given to girls are meant to socialise them to be less aggressive, to be docile, subordinate and nurturant in life. This was reflected in the popular girls’ names *Rindai* (look after) and *Tsitsi* (mercy) amongst others. Boys’ names are more assertive in nature which empowers them to achieve big in life. Names which appeared frequently for boys are *Shingirirai* (persevere) and *Simba* (power) amongst others. The meanings of these names in contrast to those given to girls reflect the parents’ wishes as a family. From the name *Pindukai* (prosper), it is the hope of the entire family that with the birth of a baby boy the family will achieve greatness; for the Zezuru believe that any meaningful development in the family can only be achieved through male children. This is the reason why couples who have girls only are often looked down upon in the Zezuru society. The mother who bears girls only is often called by the derogatory name “*Vachibarakusekwa*” (one who bears what is prone ridicule).

Participants from the interviews and focus group discussions shared the same sentiments regarding how namers usually name with the belief and hope that the named will live up to his name, thus they believe in the self-fulfilling prophecy. Suzman (1994) adds that from the perspective of the namers, it can be said that you are what you are named. Because they are patriarchal in whatever they do, Zezuru namers always believe that the future of the family lies with the boy child and as such, names which are given to boys will often be a summary of the family’s hopes and aspirations. Hebert (1994) in Peter (2010) states that the naming of boys is

most significant in African societies. Boys are regarded highly in Zezuru families for they are deemed the carriers of the family line. Hence, they are often given names which represent the family ethos and hopes. Names such as *Garikai* (live pretty), *Shingirirai* (persevere) and others which contain positive messages in the lives of the namers were very common in the findings of this research. The Zezuru believe that giving children such names will be like giving a self-fulfilling prophecy which will come to pass in the future. And that the bearers of these names together with the namers will work hard, in the hopes that the name bearer will live up to his name by bringing the much-awaited good living to the family. The names also reflect the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society where great respect is given to males.

In most cases, boys are given the names of their fathers and/or relatives so that the family brand is kept alive through this relaying of family names. This research established that the names of relatives who were known for good morals and achieved success in life are usually given to newborns, to align them with the achievement of the original name bearer. For example, girls can be named after their well-married aunts so that they may marry well just like their namesakes. This research also found that girls usually have conventional names which convey messages of love, forgiveness, passiveness and many other attributes associated with Zezuru women. Such names stereotype women as the weaker sex which can never do something notable without the help of men. This is confirmed by the meanings of the various names given to girls. Most of the names just comment on the physical structure of the name bearers. This study found that the messages enshrined in girls' names are very trivial when compared to the messages in boys' names, which are loaded with messages that profess the hopes and fears of the namer.

6.5 IMPORTANCE OF NAMING

The results from the research indicated that personal names function as a major form of identity markers. The responses from the questionnaires established that the major function of names is to distinguish an individual from others, thus the identity function. All 250 out of 250 (100%) respondents concurred that personal names are identity tags by which individuals are identified with. Personal names as forms of identity enable people to be known as individuals. Joseph (2004) points out that being named is an “enacted identity.”

Gender is a major form of identity among the Zezuru and is usually reflected in personal names. Merleau-Ponty (1968) conveys that “as has often been said that thing is not known until it is named, the name is the essence of the thing and resides in it on the same footing as its colour.” Peter (2010:63) articulates that “names contain a certain kind of power and each name determines the distinctiveness and uniqueness of each person.” Among the Zezuru, this distinctiveness and uniqueness is usually found in the gender status of the individual which is reflected in their personal name, as was established by this study. Merleau-Ponty (1968) goes on to express that one’s personal name will influence their behaviour in some way or another. Thus, among the Zezuru, a person is usually expected to behave according to the dictates of the meaning of his or her name. Merleau-Ponty (1968:78) states that “the act of naming allows the freedom of personhood through its determination, just as the mute world of perception allows the cacophony of thought, and just as the body is granted its intentionality through its status within the world.”

This research established that gender is one major form of identity by which individuals are known among the Zezuru. Pfukwa (2007:41) conveys that a concept closely linked to name giving is identity. According to the scholars Joseph (2004), Dundes (1983), and Edwards (1985), the indices of identity include language, ethnicity, nationalism, religion, gender, age, culture and political affiliations. Gender stereotyping, which is at the core of this study, is very common in the culture of the Zezuru people of Buhera South as a major form of identity. This research established that various names in the Zezuru society are gendered and because of this, their bearers usually get labelled in the society and are at times advantaged or disadvantaged in various circles of life because of this labelling. Gender, being a social construct, usually places a certain gender at an advantage over the other gender group.

This research established that personal names as forms of identity among the Zezuru were found to have the power of even controlling the personality of the name bearer. Tschaepe (2003) states that a name has the power to stigmatize you, but it can also place you at an advantage. The gender policy in Zimbabwe clearly confirms that women are at great disadvantage when it comes to issues that have to do with the economy. Certain names which are given to girls stereotype them and block them from participating in the fruitful economic activities of life. The Zezuru commonly believe that a person usually lives up to his or her name. Thus, this research revealed that names such as *Kundai* (triumph) and *Sunungurai* (liberate) were common to boys, while names such as *Yemurai* (admire) and *Tsitsi* (mercy) were common to girls. A closer look at the meaning of the name *Kundai* (triumph) given to a boy, reveals that

the namer, who in most cases is the father of the child, wishes and aspires for the child to succeed in whatever he pursues in life.

The name *Sunungurai* (liberate) was obviously influenced by the struggle for independence which was fought in Zimbabwe. The namer in this case is gender biased in that he believes it was only because of the men that the much-awaited independence was achieved. It is from such a mentality that this research argues that the liberation struggle was very much gendered. Names like *Yemurai* (*Admire*) for girls invite would-be husbands to admire the girl possibly because she is beautiful or because she is morally upright. Such names reduce girls as if they are only there to be admired by men or be seen as sex objects; yet women are also capable of doing important assignments in life as well as if not better than men. The name *Tsitsi* (mercy) labels women as people who are very merciful and who lack the aggressive trait which is usually attributed to men. The difference in the naming of boys and girls is so apparent that one could notice the gender bias which is reflected by the difference in the meanings of the names.

In most societies, parents were found to be very cautious when choosing the names of their children and especially the boy child. Sue and Telles (2010) state that as labels, names influence the socialisation of children and shape the development of their personal identities. This research established that names which are given to boys usually motivate them to achieve greatness in life. This is contrary to the names given to girls which usually comment on their physical build-up – for example, the name *Rujeko* (one who brings light). Some of the names reflect stereotypical characteristics associated with women. For example, the name *Netsai* (one who causes trouble) was very common among girls in the school registers that were analysed for this research. Such a name has a lot of connotations and is likely to affect the name bearer negatively in terms of her personhood. The name labels girls as troublesome in terms of their behaviour. Thus, it is through names like these that women are often labelled as passive troublemakers.

This research established that through naming, the namer exhibits his power over the one who will be named; as those who name are the ones who are respected in the family either because of their sound financial position or because they are the oldest. Carter (1987) in Makondo (2012:89) states that to name is to “. . . own and control” and that the initial act of naming has a motive that can only be confirmed by the name giver. Gilmore (1982:698) in Pfukwa (2007) observes that to name an object is to control it. By naming a thing we make it knowable, and we thus disarm a threatening exterior universe of hostile others. Nuessel cites Bosmajian

(1974a) by stating that the power that comes from names and naming is so great that it should not be undermined. The power in naming can be attested to because by giving a name you immediately hold some sort of control over the person you have named. Through naming, one's inclinations are cemented and the named becomes an embodiment of the namer, as the former has been given a lifetime defining tag. Within this realm, it is worthy to note the predetermining role that some names execute. For example, some respondents divulged that some people named *Muchaneta* (you shall give up) and *Mozondidii* (what will you do to me?) end up being troublesome individuals in life as if to fulfil the prophetic message enshrined in the names. These names imply that the parents will eventually give up their parental reprimands to the child because of her naughtiness. These names were also found to be very common among girls as if to suggest that boys are perfect and proper.

The conversations from the interviews revealed that personal names are more than identity tags. One interviewee expressed: "*Kubudikidza nezita rako tinodzidza zvakawanda pamusoro pemuridzi wezita*" (Through your personal name we come to deduce a lot about the name bearer). Abernathy in Olawale (2005:9) states:

"There is much meaning in a name. If you are given the right name you start off with certain indefinable but real advantages."

This seems to buttress the popular belief among the Zezuru that there are certain powers in personal names, though they are not seen. Names therefore have powers to control the behaviours of their respective bearers. In this regard, names among the Zezuru should not be taken lightly because they mirror the beliefs, norms and values of their people.

The meanings of the Zezuru names collected for this study show that they are pregnant with meanings which reflect the Zezuru's different views regarding the gender dynamics in their society. The meanings of the names show the different gender ideologies which exist among the Zezuru society. Responsibilities in the society are given to individuals based on the gender status of the person. This process of dividing people on gender lines places a certain gender group at a disadvantage while the other group benefits. The women with names that carry gender connotations were very bitter during the interview sessions. They expressed that they were looked down upon because of their gender, and they attributed their failure to pursue further education to this gender stereotyping mentality which is very common among the Zezuru and is biased towards men.

This research found that it is a great insult among the Zezuru to give a boy a name which is usually regarded as feminine. Hence, the namers usually make sure that they give boys masculine names and girls are given feminine names. Research conducted by Sue and Telles (2010) reveals that boys are more often given traditional names than girls. The reason being that parents want to maintain the ethnic identity of boys than that of girls. In their study on gender and naming among migrants, Sue and Telles find that girls easily acquire names from the new area they will be residing in, while boys are given names from their area of origin. Rossi (1965) finds that American middle-class parents usually choose kin names for boys which are inline with their tradition, while girls are given names which reflect their mothers' contemporary social relations. Stahl (1992) in Sue and Telles (2010) proves that women assimilate faster than men when he gives examples of women who replaced their foreign names with Hebrew names in the newly formed Israel, and doing so at a higher rate than men. The same practice was seen to be common among the Zezuru, where most boys were named after their fathers or other male members of the family.

These results seem to suggest that women do not worry much about the continuity of the family identity through names. This is contrary to boys who are usually given names that connect them to their ethnic roots. This is in line with Zezuru culture where the baby boy is said to carry the family identity in every respect and naming is one of the ways to achieve this objective. Boys are given names which sum up the family's hopes and aspirations, while girls' names usually describe their physical structure which seems to trivialise the position of the female gender in the Zezuru society. A closer look at the meanings of the names given to girls reveals that their names are often used to pass on messages of hatred in polygamous families, while boys' names reflect important family, societal or even important national messages – such as names which were given to boys during the colonial period. These names were protest names which carried revolutionary messages that insulted the colonisers. This is the reason why the present research argues that the struggle for independence was also gendered.

This research established that one's personal name influences his or her behaviour in various ways. Saarelema-Maunumaa (2003:35) states that it is the newborn's first name which is regarded as the 'permanent' and 'real' or 'true' name and the name by which it will be known in life and will also have a strong bearing in influencing the behaviour of the child. Bohanna (1963:20) in Biyela (2013:18) articulates that "children when they are born are without culture and hence are without personality and almost without social relationships." It is the name which opens the child to what is expected of him or her. But unfortunately, the names given to girls

are mere tags which contain nothing tangible about the namer's expectations for the named person except to advertise her to potential husbands. Gendered names socialise people to behave according to the dictates of their respective gender group. Thus, these names influence people on how to be males or females.

Responses from the interviews indicated that a personal name gives one a social position in society. One can be uplifted or segregated in society because of his or her gender status, and it is this gender status which is usually reflected in personal names. Thus, our positions within society can be predetermined by our personal names. Gender, being a social construction, gives a person a position in society. This position is socially constructed by the community through the name, since naming constitutes as one of the ways through which Zezuru children get socialised. The personal name among the Zezuru usually carries gender connotations.

This research found that the people who name and the ones who are named usually want to live by the meaning of their names. Boys are often given names which reflect positive attributes in life while the opposite can be said about the names which are given to girls. One interviewee said that a lot is taken into consideration when it comes to choosing the name of a baby boy because the boy's name is supposed to articulate the vision of the whole family.

This research noted that those who do the naming in the Zezuru society will usually command a lot of respect from those they have named. Hence the father, who is normally in charge of naming in the family, will get a lot of respect from the children he has named. As was testified by the interviewees, you owe a lot to the person who named you because that person made it possible for you to be known in the society through your name.

This research found that certain names for both genders place unnecessary burdens on the name bearers because of their meanings. Some meanings make the name bearers very uncomfortable with the names. Some of the names, especially those for girls, paint their bearers negatively by portraying women as a weaker sex when compared to their male counterparts.

Conversations from the interviews revealed that the name outlives its bearer. One interviewee said: "*Chero wafa zita rako rinoramba richiongorangarirwa nevanhu*" (Even after death your name will continue to be cherished). Barthes (1994) states that "names, like voices, like odours, would be the terms of a languor: desire and death, the last sigh which remains of things." Among the Zezuru, only the names of people who were known for their good deeds will be remembered for generations to come. Derrida (1995) in Makondo (2009) expresses:

“My proper name outlives me. After my death it will still be possible to name and speak of me.”

Thus, several responses from the interviews indicated that personal names are a kind of tag through which the name bearer can be identified.

The responses from the interviews and focus group discussions revealed that there is a lot of pride in being given a good personal name. One interviewee said that her school days were terrible as she was mocked because of her personal name *Usavi* (relish). She expressed that she wished for a better name, but her parents were against changing the name because she was named after her aunt and changing the name would offend the aunt. From the way she was speaking, one could tell that the interviewee was not comfortable with the name; she also revealed that she felt uneasy every time she was called by this name.

Abernathy in Olawale (2005:9) states:

“There is much meaning in a name. If you are given the right name you start off with certain indefinable but real advantages...”

In an interview with a diviner, Berglund (1975:287) in Neethling (2005) states that the name is the person. He adds that the name and the person are the same. Tonya Ladipo (2013) states that a name enables other people to make assumptions and judgements about one's personality. The gender connotations in some Zezuru names lead to gender stereotyping, which can affect the name bearer by excluding them from the social, economic and political activities of society. Thus, through this gender stereotyping a certain gender group is placed at an advantage at the expense of the other.

This research established that boys are given names which aspire and give hope to both the namer and the named in life while girls are given names which usually comment on their physical appearance and reduce them to mere commodities on the market. Similar sentiments from the interviews and focus group discussions indicated that namers usually name with the belief and hope that the named will live up to his name. Nuessel (1994) adds that from the perspective of the namers, it may be said that you are what you are named. Because they are patriarchal in whatever they do, the Zezuru believe that the future of the family lies with the boy child and as such, the names given to boys will often be a summary of the family's hopes and aspirations. The names also reflect the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society.

One interview respondent said that if you are given a list of names of one Zezuru family, you can easily identify the fears, hopes and aspirations of that family because they will be reflected in the personal names of the children. This is correct to an extent because for the Zezuru, and like any African culture, naming is an art. Thus, through personal names, the Zezuru can communicate important messages that have a bearing in their day to day survival. Their names are a rich source of information. Marieme (2011) states that in West Africa, one's personal name is so important that it must not be taken lightly because it is used to personify hope, to portray a positive self-image, and for self-characterization. Allport (1937) in Lawson (1988) states that one's name is the most important anchor point to selfhood. Zelinsky (2002) explains that it is easy to remember one's name than his or her face. Names are an important source of information. These views concur with the responses from the interviews, focus group discussions and even the meanings of many of the personal names. Most of the names are loaded with meanings which reflect the hopes of the name givers. This research recognized that a man, by virtue of being the head of the family, usually dominates the naming of the children in his family.

This research established that personal names are regarded highly among the Zezuru and as such one is not allowed to change his or her personal name without a valid reason. Changing a name, especially one inherited from a family relative, will mean straining relations with the original name bearer. Goethe in Zabeeh (1985:5) says:

“A man's name is not like a cloak that merely hangs around him. It grows over him like his very skin. One cannot scrape and scratch at it without injuring the man himself.”

One's name is therefore very important because it is as good as its bearer. In his 1989 article on the aetiology of Zulu personal names, Koopman quotes Evans-Pritchard (1939:237) who states that “names of all kinds are social documents, which fix a person's position in the social structure and define his relations to other members of society.” Koopman and Zungu (2013:64) articulate that “names are more meaningful within a society and particularly within a family, the context within which they are most often used.” Thus, personal names among the Zezuru are used as vehicles to pass on important messages in the family and in the community. It is through names that a family can articulate its aspirations and hopes. In the same vein, Kunene (1981: xxxv) says that in the Zulu tradition, the meaning of a name is often an expression of a wish that an individual has in life. Koopman and Zungu (2013:63) add that names are more than labels; they are in themselves part of the socialisation process.

This research established that girls are often given names which reflect the frictions that exist among family members in the Zezuru society. Hence, names such as *Rowesai*, *Sekai* and *Revai* were found to be very common in most of the school registers that were consulted for this study. From the meanings of these names, it appears that females are always blamed for most of the injustices of society. Whosoever wants to express his emotions in life will always do so through the names he gives to his baby girls. This can compromise the position of women in society. Mutema and Njanji (2013) state that Shona personal names are repositories of human experiences as the name givers express their joys, sorrows, perceptions on life, and their gratefulness to the giver of life – God. This research found that boys were given names which praise the Lord, as if to suggest that there will be more joy when a family is blessed with a baby boy than a baby girl. The Zezuru believe that the boy child will continue the family line by marrying a wife or wives who will in turn give birth to children and increase the number of family members, while the girl child will get married elsewhere.

This research observed that Zezuru personal names reflect their philosophy of life. These names mirror the way the Zezuru people view life. Pfukwa (2013:57) states that a personal name has the potential to reflect the personality of the namer, the bearer, and the social environment in which the name is found. Most Zezuru names reflect their society's line of thinking and with reference to the present study, these names show gender dichotomy in terms of the different roles which are expected of individuals in society. Ndiga Mbo (2004) states that Congolese anthroponyms are linguistic expressions reflective of Congolese thought, their belief system and philosophy. He conceives them as texts which are decipherable to those who have the linguistic competence and cultural knowledge to interpret them. Koopman and Zungu (2013:63) articulate that names do not function in a vacuum but in a society. There is a strong link between naming and society. They add that in any anthroponymic system, the wider context of naming is a socio-cultural one which reflects the norms, practices, dynamics, conflicts, and the pressing issues of a society.

This research found that the Zezuru place great importance on names and as such, not everybody is given the responsibility to name a newborn baby in the family. Only respected members of the family are given this special responsibility. Clarke (1934) in Lawson (1988) demonstrates that personal names are easier to recall than faces. His observation concurs with the responses from the interviews and questionnaires which indicated that the primary purpose of giving people personal names is for identification purposes. Allport (1934) states that one's name is the most important anchor point of selfhood. This selfhood entails the gender status of

the name bearer. Because of the personal name, one will likely behave according to the dictates of his or her gender status. The moment one is given a name, they will be influenced to behave in the manner which is expected of his or her gender in the society.

This research found that several names are influenced by historical events. From the analysis of the school registers, most of the personal names had their roots from the guerilla struggle which was fought in the country. In chapter 5, the category of names which fall under historical events tops the list of the names collected. These names seem to articulate and celebrate the exploits of men at the expense of their female counterparts. Names such as *Hondo* (war), *Chimurenga* (uprising), *Tichatotanga* (we will rule) and *Tacharwa* (we will fight) are very common among boys.

This study observed that the struggle for independence influenced the naming patterns of the Zezuru, especially children who were born during and soon after the struggle. It is worth noting that guerilla names are usually only given to boys while girls are given conventional names. Mphasha (2014) states that African names and the naming process is a socio-cultural interpretation of historical events.

6.6 CONFLICTS ASSOCIATED WITH NAMING

The results of this research indicate that there are often conflicts which arise during the naming process. Parents may clash over naming a child after a certain family member who was or is known for bad habits. Saarelma-Maunumaa (1999) describes this phenomenon among the Ambo of Namibia as name sharing, and says that a child named after a close or respected friend or relative will automatically be connected to the person with whom he or she shares the name with. The two persons carrying the same name will practically be identified with one another. The namesake relationship also carries a host of obligations, such as accepting financial responsibility for the child. The Zezuru commonly believe that the child will behave in the same manner as the original name bearer. There is a lot of power in a name, hence the Zezuru hold the common belief that a person lives up to his name. And that if you inherit a name you will also inherit the personal traits of the original name bearer.

They fear that the newborn will follow the bad traits of the original name bearer. Ntwana (1994) in Neethling (2005:67) states that some names "...can disfigure a child for life, doing a great

deal of psychological damage.” Some interview respondents said that giving children names which are loaded with meanings is a thing of the past and must be done away with. Neethling (2005:68) states that some names speak for themselves. The interviews revealed that the norm these days is the giving of Christian oriented praise names. This was confirmed with the high frequency of praise names in the school registers and in questionnaires. Names like *Simbarashe* (*God’s power*) and *Tinashe* (*we have the Lord*) for boys were very common as if to suggest that God’s power is clearly seen when a boy is born while names like *Mutsawashe* (*mercy of the lord*) and *Vongaiishe* (*Praise the lord*) were common for girls. From the meanings of the girls’ names, it seems the Zezuru believe that girls are born out of God’s grace as if to suggest that girls are inferior to their male counterparts.

6.7 THE MORPHOLOGY OF ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES

Just like other Shona personal names, Zezuru personal names have the same constructional pattern which is used when classifying other common nouns. There is no difference between the construction for male and female names. The constructional pattern of Zezuru personal names is as follows.

6.7.1 NOUN PREFIX + NOUN STEM.

Most Zezuru personal names are found in class 1a. Koopman (2007) states that the name forming process is usually the same as most names are derived from some primary source in the language. These sources usually include other nouns, other parts of speech such as verbs, adjectives, and ideophones. Koopman refers to Zulu personal names but it also applies to Zezuru personal names in terms of construction. Zezuru personal names may have either simple or compound stems. It is worthy to note that when it comes to Zezuru names, what makes the difference between names given to males and those given to females is the meaning of the name not the structure of the name. However, this study is not concerned about the constituencies of Zezuru personal names, but rather with the meaning of the personal names in

as far as they carry gender connotations which divide individuals in society along gender lines. It is worth noting that female names are the ones which usually carry hate messages such as *Bayisai* (one who causes others to be stabbed) and *Rowesai* (one who causes others to be bewitched). On the other hand, men are usually given names which articulate the aspirations and hopes of the family such as *Simukai* (prosper) and *Garikai* (live pretty) among many others. A close study of Zezuru female names reveals that most of the names compromise the image of women because they carry negative connotations. While men's names usually carry messages of hope and portray men positively – as conquerers and full of wisdom.

6.8 CLASSIFICATION OF NAMES

Borrowing largely from Holland (2000), the present study came up with a ten-classification model for the personal names gathered for this research as shown in table (5.5) of chapter five. It is worth noting that some of the personal names belong to more than one category.

The first class comprises of personal names which refer to the physical appearance of the name bearers. This category contains names such as *Rujeko* (brightness), *Runako* (beauty), *Chiedza* (Light) and *Yemurai* (Admire). These names were common among girls and according to their meanings, the names regard the girls as beautiful ladies who will illuminate wherever they are because of their physical appearance. Zola (2010) states that females are traditionally associated with traits of dependence, emotionality, nurturing, and preoccupation with their physical appearance. This is contrary to males who are associated with character traits of braveness and perseverance. These preconceptions about women give men the power to undermine females in various spheres of life.

Giving girls such names fulfils the assertion that girls are often given names which advertise them as commodities on the market. Because they point to women as people who are there to draw the attention of men because of their physical appearance, such names trivialise the position of women in society. This makes it seem as if women are only created to attract men. On the other hand, boys are given names which articulate the important objectives of the family or the nation at large. None of the boys' names refer to their physical appearance but rather to the hopes and aspirations of the namers. This naming pattern affirms the patriarchal nature of

the Zezuru society where men are always celebrated for whatever they do at the expense of their female counterparts.

The second category classifies personal names according to habits. Under this category, names such as *Rindai*, *Rowesai*, *Manzweyi* and *Tivanzwe* were found to be common among girls. Among the Zezuru, women are usually regarded as people who persevere in life, especially in marriages – as is reflected with the name *Rindai* (wait). This name was very popular among girls, as was evidenced by the responses from the questionnaires and its high frequency appearance in school registers. Zola (2010) states that females are historically regarded as the keepers of their families. The name *Rindai* (wait) implies that the woman is expected to be patient with her husband who will have gone away for a long period and left the family in the hands of the wife. It is thus through such a name that women are regarded as people who are patient and forgiving, for they will gracefully accept the husband back irrespective of the suffering they might have endured during his absence.

The Zezuru patriarchal society usually looks down on women and this often associates them with bad behaviours such as being gossip mongers. This is reflected by the female personal name *Rowesai* (someone who causes others to be bewitched). According to Marland (1993), the word “gossip” was applied to both males and females but with the passage of time it began to be associated with negative connotations and was then confined to women only. The stereotyping of women along gender lines is evident among the Zezuru, as has been reflected in the meanings of various personal names. Obeng (1998) states that in most African societies, the personality of the individual is significantly influenced by many cultural factors. This research argues that one’s personal name shapes one’s behaviour.

Gossip is often associated with women among the Zezuru and as a result, girl children are given personal names which paint them as gossipmongers. Names such as *Manzweyi* (what have you heard) and *Tivanzwe* (let us hear them) are very common among girls. Jespersen (1924) concurs with the idea that bad names have a bad bearing on the name bearer, and adds that language attacks directed at someone have a greater chance of hurting their image and damaging their self-esteem because females are already viewed as inferior, as the weaker sex, and coming from lesser positions. Naming is done using the language and as a result, naming becomes a powerful tool which is used to kill or upgrade one’s esteem among the Zezuru. The names which associate women with gossip reduce them to be inferior subjects in society.

On the other hand, names such as *Shingai*, *Simukai*, and *Simbai* portray men positively and are very common among boys. Thus, men are rarely referred to as gossipers and their conversations never seem to be regarded as gossip. Judging from the meanings of the names given to boys which were analysed in this study, men have been and are still the gender group that engages in constructive conversations and not destructive gossip. These names portray men as less prone to gossip and as people who spend most of their time doing fruitful things. Gossip among men is never accepted in the Zezuru society, although the reality is that men gossip just as much as women, only that they are shielded by their patriarchal culture – which is reflected by their personal names. Thus, the good personal names which are given to men means that men receive better community than their female counterparts.

This research established that most personal names given to girls are crisis laden names in terms of their meaning. They paint women as people who are naughty; for example, the name *Muchaneta* (you shall tire). Hurston (1969) states that even in literature, female characters are stereotypically portrayed as destructive in their gossiping and intending to cause harm. This is reflected in names like *Rowesayi* (one who causes someone to be bewitched). This name is common among women and portrays them as being capable of ruining the future of other people through gossiping and bewitching which can result in death. Among the Zezuru, females are said to engage in gossip as a way of fighting others in their day to day lives. Peter (2010) states that solidarity among females is to a large extent maintained through gossip. Hence the meanings of the names common among women point to such sentiments. Duribar (1996) adds that in most works of literature, women are portrayed as masters of gossiping. This stereotypical portrayal of female characters can be confirmed by the various personal names given to women in the Zezuru society.

The third category comprises of names which point to occupation. Boys' names such as *Dhokotera*, *Muhodhari* and *Hombarume* were common in most of the documents. While the name *Mukoti* (nurse) was common among girls. This category contained a limited number of names. It is worth noting that these names, which allude to the so-called noble professions, were found to be more common among boys than girls. This could be because the Zezuru are a patriarchal society that only allows men to venture into various professions while women remain at home looking after the kids and doing house chores. It must also be remembered that very few women are given the opportunity to pursue their academic education, hence they do not have the necessary qualifications to be employed in these noble professions. What can be deduced from the meanings of these names of professions which the Zezuru regard highly is

that they are usually given to boys more than girls. This stems from the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society where men's achievements are regarded more highly than those of women.

Historical events were one of the major categories used in the classification of personal names in this study. Most of the names referred to historical occurrences in the life of the Zezuru people. These historical events include the armed struggle and the independence period. Names like *Chimurenga*, *Mapfumo*, *Sunungurai*, *Hondo*, *Pfugamai* and many others were found to be common among boys. On the other hand, very few girls if any were given names like these. The independence period had a great influence on the naming of people in Zimbabwe. Personal names like *Pemberai*, *Farai*, *Tasunungurwa* and *Garikai* appeared frequently in the documents. The meanings of these names, especially those that refer to the armed struggle period, reflect the courage which was required during that period. These names were found to be common among boys and not for girls, as if to suggest that the struggle was fought by men only. From these findings, it can be concluded that even the armed struggle was gendered. When it comes to personal names which were influenced by the coming of independence, most of the names were found to be unisex, as they reflected the joy and euphoria which engulfed most Zimbabweans with the coming of independence.

Biblical influence is another category which was used to classify the names collected. Several names fell under this category. Names like *Chipochedenga*, *Ruvarashe* and *Tsitsidzashe* were very common among girls. The meanings of these names reflect the attitude which the Zezuru have towards women in which they are reduced to inferiority compared to men. In the name *Chipochedenga* (gift from heaven), the girl is equated to the level of a gift which is given to the family by the Almighty. The same can be said of the other names. In contrast, boys were given names such as *Simbarashe* (God's power), *Tadiwanashe* (God has loved us) and *Tafadzwanashe* (God has made us happy) which reflect the joy that filled the family upon being blessed with a boy child. In the name *Simbarashe* (God's power), the namer is showing that the Almighty displayed all his powers by creating the baby boy, which seems to suggest that the girl child is inferior to the boy child. This name was very common among boys in all the school registers which were analysed for this study.

Flora and fauna were the next category which was used to analyse personal names in this study. The names in this category revealed that girls are usually given names which are derived from flora such as *Ruvarashe* (the Lord's rose). While boys are given names derived from fauna

like those which refer to the powerful animals of the jungle. Names which were common among boys include *Shumba* (lion) and *Magen'a* (hare).

The seventh category entails names which reflect the ambitions and aspirations of the namer on the name bearer. Under this category are names such as *Yeukai* (remember), *Chenai* (be neat) and *Vongai* (give thanks) for girls. And names such as *Pfumai* (get rich), *Tendekai* (be trustworthy) and *Pindukai* (improve economically) for boys. The meanings of the names given to boys appear to be strong statements of intent to the name bearer, that he must be determined in life in order to change the fortune of the family. Many gender theorists opine that men must be given a special position in the family because they ensure the continuity of the family. The results of this study tend to agree with Rossi (1965), Lieberman and Bell (1992), and Stahl (1992) that males are the carriers of the family tradition, hence they are often given names which articulate the hopes and aspirations of the family compared to girls. Thus, names which are given to the boy child among the Zezuru society represent family ideologies.

The eighth category is that of personal names which reflect regrets. Girls' names were found to be the most common in this category. It is worth noting that girls are usually loaded with names which echo hatred and regrets, while boys are given names which give hope in life to both the named and the namers.

The ninth category comprises of names which reflect praise. The names in this category are also found in the category of names with biblical influence. The praise enshrined in these names is usually directed to the Lord by those who are Christians and to the ancestors for helping in the coming of the newborn, by those who believe in African traditional religion. Several of the names which express praise to God appeared more frequently among boys than girls.

The final category covers personal names which reflect elements of prejudice. In this category there are names such as *Maidei*, *Rowesai*, *Nhamoinesu*, *Nyikayaramba* and many others. Most of these names were very common among girls. While the names given to girls contain hate messages usually associated with polygamous marriages, names given to boys carry political protest messages as if to suggest that politics is only for men. Most of these names burden female name bearers especially because they are loaded with pessimistic messages.

6.9 STEREOTYPICAL MALE GENDER MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN BOYS' NAMES

Through various personal names collected for this study, men are portrayed and stereotyped in various ways. Stereotyping in these personal names come into being because of the gender connotations which are enshrined in these personal names. Using pragmatics and semantics in analysing the meaning of these personal names, the context under which these names are given will definitely help in making inferences about their meaning. The theory of operationalism which is found under pragmatics argues that the meaning of names is found within their context of use (Makondo 2009). Epstein and Kole (1998:266) say that every utterance occurs in a culturally determined context of situation. With reference to Zezuru personal names their gendered meanings can best be understood if the context in which they are given is known by whosoever is going to come across the name. Leslie and Skipper (1990:273) supports this when they say, “ taking the context in consideration when trying to come up with the meaning of a name is imperative as the meanings of names are a result of complex social negotiations, learned, interpreted and reified through socialisation.”

Through personal names men are portrayed as strong and determined in whatever they do in life as is reflected in name such as *Shingirirai* (persevere) which was very frequently in the school registers. The Zezuru being patriarchal society men have an overall say on most aspects with regard to economics. One respondent said that men are expected to work hard and bring food to the family as such boys are usually given names which socialise them to the daunting task which await them that of looking after their future families. Personal names which echo such sentiments include *Shingai*, *Fumai*, *Simukai*, *Pepukai* and *Simbai*. These names generally urging the name bearers to take action in making sure life improves for the better. Such a position has been existing in the Zezuru society for years. This has been attributed to the fact that the Zezuru society, being patriarchal in its set up usually sings the song of the boy child at the expense of the girl child. One interviewee concurred with this mentality when he said that the survival and continuity of the family lies with the boy child.

This research established that the names *Tungamirai* (*lead*) and *Tongai* (*rule*) are very common among boys as if to suggest that boys are the only ones with leadership qualities. Among the Zezuru, the male child is given a lot of respect than the girl child. Kambarami (2006) commenting on the Shona family says that boy is respected right from the day he is born even

he is not the first born in the family. He goes on to add that the boy is even regarded the head of the family who should safeguard his sisters. This is the reason why males do have names which sort of ordain them to be born leaders over women. This attitude is even reflected in the favours given to the boy child for example among the Zezuru, most parents prefer to educate boys to girls.

Simba (Power) This name was found to be common to males during this research as was confirmed by its high frequency in appearance in the school registers and from the responses in questionnaires. Basing on its literal meaning, the bearer of the name will be expected to show power in whatever he is will be doing in life. The meaning of this name confirms the gender role stereotyping of men among the patriarchal Zezuru society where men are always expected to have “aggressive qualities and command absolute power and authority” (Sekhukhune in Mtuzi (1994:3) in Peter (2010)). The name *Simba* (Power) seems to paint men as a powerful gender group as compared to his female counterpart. Among the Zezuru males are expected to show resilience even during trying moments in life. It is from this background that a boy child is not expected to cry even when he gets hurt. You often hear them saying, “*Usaita semukadzi*” (Do not behave like a women”. This will be in reference to a baby boy crying unnecessarily. According to Pleck (1981) living up to this gender role for men is problematic because of the high level of social expectation that males experience. In particular, expectation of strength, power and sexual competence form the basis of male roles. Pleck (1981) goes on to say that due to this gender pressure exerted on the boys by the society, they are likely to experience failure because of the contradiction between the ideal ‘role’ and lived experience.

Pindukai (Prosper) was also popular to boys as was confirmed by the questionnaire’s responses and in the school’s registers. The meaning of the name implies that the name bearer or the family must prosper in life so as to improve their living standards. It is stereotypical for males among the Zezuru to work extra hard so as to change the fortunes of themselves and that of their families as well. In line with this Haywood and Mac Ghail (2003) say that much of the work in Britain and the US operated with the role model approach where the men must be the sole breadwinner and the female being the homemaker. Among the Zezuru the trend seem to be changing now since some women have since taken over the responsibility of being breadwinners for their families due to a number of factors with death being one of the factors.

Tungamirai (lead) was very popular for boys well as was confirmed by its high frequency in appearance in school registers as well. The name is advocating for men to take leadership roles in different spheres of life ranging from the social, economic and political realm. Among the Zezuru it is their belief that men are worthy leaders than women and the women themselves seem to have accepted this as can be testified by the lesser number of women in leadership positions. Momsen (2004) says that in most countries the jobs done predominantly by women are the least paid and have the lowest status. On the other hand men occupy the most prestigious and high paying jobs. What is disturbing to note is that research has shown that women are better leader if given the chance to exhibit their leadership talents.

Shingirirai (persever) was popular among boys as was seen in the research. From the meaning of the name, it stereotypes men as people who persevere in life to achieve whatever they want to achieve. This trait in men as is believed by the Zezuru can also be seen in some of the popular sayings among the Zezuru such as *kufa kwemurume kubuda ura* (the death of a man is evidenced by the dangling of his bowels). Zulu (2001:328) says, "Being a male and hero is part of the psychology of a patriarchal society. Such a patriarchal psychology is expressed by the male/ female binary thought where victory is seen as the culmination of male activity, and defeat is considered as an aspect of female passivity." In the Zezuru society every man is expected to work extra hard in life irrespective of the socio, economic and political conditions which might be affecting the life of people. At a tender age boys grow up being socialised to work extra hard and through such names they grow up wanting to fulfil what the name will be expecting of them.

Through the name *Sunungurai* men are portrayed as liberators especially with reference to the liberation struggle as is reflected in names such as *Sunungurai* (liberate) This name seem to suggest that only men participated in the liberation struggle yet women do participated in the struggle though in smaller numbers as compared to their counterparts.

Through these names men are also portrayed as full of wisdom as can be reflected in the name *Pfungwa* (brain) which was found to be very common to boys. Such a name would paint a picture of men as people who reason constructively as compared to women who are said to be recipients of these decisions from men.

The name *Tongai* which was found to be common to boys as was reflected in school registers and in questionnaires suggests that all men are born to be rulers. The meaning of the name seems to suggest that the expectations in the Zezuru society are that whenever a boy is born

the general thinking is that he will lead in the family and society in general. This is a patriarchal mentality which is common among the Zezuru in Buhera South.

The name *Shingai* (be courageous) was also common among boys as was reflected in school registers and during interviews. The name labels men people who are very strong and determined in whatever they do. Chitauro-Mawema (2006) says that it seems to be expected (condoned), that as a man, he may need to prove his muscle.

Through the meaning of the name *Pundukai* (prosper), a name which was seen to be very common among men during interview sessions, men are seen as the driving force behind success both economically and politically in society. In the Zezuru culture, men are expected to do much of the donkey work in an effort to make sure the family finds bread and butter on the table but reality on the ground shows that this was a patriarchal mentality because women seem to be doing much of the work in an effort to make sure the family survive food wise or even in the provision of clothing.

The name *Urayayi* (kill) means that men are capable of shading blood. This name obviously emanated from the years of protest in the 1970s when the country was fighting with the colonisers and during this early period, the struggle was dominated by men only women later joined the struggle and as such the struggle was gendered towards men. The name seems to be urging all men to rise and kill all settlers as if to suggest that women cannot do the same. A research done by Pfukwa (2007) proves that quite a number of female guerrillas participated in the armed struggle and some of them even performed some heroic acts during the struggle.

Through the meaning of the name *Tungamirai* (lead us), men are regarded as people who have all the attributes to lead in life. Among the Zezuru, to be a man is to be able to lead both in the family level and at even in society. The meaning of the name suggests that the expectation of a good man is that he should be able to lead. In support of this Bark (2012:294) says “men are commonly held to be more ‘naturally’ domineering, hierarchically oriented and power hungry”. In the Zezuru society men are always on top when it comes to decision making. This is the reason why among the Zezuru, even a boy at tender age is given a lot of respect especially if he happens to be the only boy in a family that boasts a lot of girls.

A closer look at the messages enshrined in male names point to the fact that males are portrayed as a stronger sex than their female counterparts. Hatfield (2000:27) concurs with this observation when she gives an example of the Western society which is predominantly Judeo-

Christian were characteristics which are valued as male are assertiveness, dominance, competitiveness, aggression and logic while on the other hand characteristics such as passiveness, cooperation and emotional are for girls. This is testified in the meanings of personal names given to Zezuru boys. Hatfield (2000) adds that a person is born into a particular sex but acquires these set of behaviours and characteristics which constitute gender through socialization. Through the personal names, Zezuru children are channelled into already defined gender paths.

6.10 GENDER STEREOTYPICAL MESSAGES IN FEMALE ANTHROPONYMS

Messages enshrined in personal names collected for this study portray women in various ways as will be reflected in the meanings of these names. Through these names, women are labelled with those traits usually associated with women from a patriarchal point of view. Personal names such as *Rudo* (love), *Yemurai* (admire) portray women as people who are born for love only as they are only there to entice men. McDowell and Pringle (1992) in Kambarami (2006) further add that in most cases women in various societies depend on men for survival and because of that they are regarded inferior to their male counterparts. Buthelezi (2004) in Ndimande-Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:400) argues that men go to the extent of controlling women even on matters to do with language and this is seen as one of the ways that perpetuate gender differences. Buthelezi (2004) argues that Nguni language has vocabulary and expressions that convey sexist attitudes which not only reproduce but also maintain social stereotypes that lead to inequality between the male and female genders. The same scenario can be said about Zezuru personal names which are at times expressions of the society's attitudes towards the two gender groups.

Through the name *Rindai* women are portrayed as people who will always wait for men despite the fact that the men will have gone away for a long period without any form of communication painting a picture that women cannot do without men. Through a name such as *Rindai* which was very common to girls as was established by this research, girls with such a name will grow up being socialised in that docile manner as is contained in the meaning of the name. Kambarami (2006) says that it is through patriarchy women are socialised to respect men and accept their compromised position in society. Ndimande-Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:406) say:

“House chores and decision making are divided according to gender and that men and women have embraced this cultural concept because they believe it is what the African culture wants. Furthermore, these cultural teachings foster a dependence syndrome this is why most African women depend heavily on their husbands for support. As a result, once a husband dies, the woman quickly remarries so as to find another pillar of support to lean on.”

Through such personal names such as *Rindai* (look after), *Teerai* (listen) women are portrayed as docile figures who cannot do anything on their own. Such names paint women as people who are emotionally dependent on men for survival.

A close look at the meanings of most popular girls' names show that these names portray women as having qualities that include calmness, passivity, submission and striving to please men. Women are portrayed as if they were created to be the opposite of their male counterpart. Among the Zezuru, women illuminate the house through their joyous smiles to their respective husbands or any visitor to the home. A woman who fails to do so is often accused of witchcraft. In the Zezuru culture, a girl's teachings at home usually centre around pleasing her future husband as if to suggest that women's only destiny is marriage. Boroditsky (2009) in Ndimande-Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:395) says that language reflects one's culture and can shape the way one views the world around him or her. Prewitt-Freilino et al (2011:281) quoting Mrtyna (1980) say that gendered language has an influence on how one makes decisions in life and they attribute the present social inequalities to this gendered language. Gendered names thus have far reaching effects on their bearers.

From the interviews it came out that even personal names which were used during the struggle for independence do carry gender connotations. This research established that soon after the war most Zezuru people named their children after well-known male guerrilla fighters while very few were named after their female counterparts. Names which were given to guerrilla fighters during the liberation struggle were gender biased. Most female guerrillas retained their first conventional personal names while their male counterparts changed their names completely. Male guerrillas took up names which were pregnant with war messages and which painted the fighters as invincible. This naming of male guerrillas was carried over from the patriarchal Zezuru society where men are portrayed as subjects who are above women in all respects. The male names point to male guerrillas as people who were so mighty and all-conquering. Names which feature in this category include *Urayayi mabhunu* (kill the boers),

Chekai (kill), *Gamba* (hero), *Nhongo* (he goat) and *Muchapera mabhunu* (you will perish you boers). On the other hand the female guerillas were given names which were passive as if to say that the women also played a passive role in the struggle. From the research it was established that most female guerillas retained their conventional personal names and then changed the surname. Thus, conventional names such as *Tsitsi* (Mercy), *Chenai* (Be smart), *Rudo* (Love) were very common amongst female guerillas. From the research names it came out that most female guerilla fighters retained their first names unlike their male counterparts who changed their first names as well as their surnames in favour of names which portrayed them as a dominant force in every aspect of the war. This is one of the reasons why some people are of the opinion that the liberation struggle was also gendered.

The name *Rindirai* (be patient) was very popular among girls. The name stereotypes women as people who have a long heart and who are very patient especially in marriage. Basing on the Zezuru culture, the name seem to have emanated from the marriage set up of the Zezuru people which is usually characterised by them men going to the city to look for employment leaving the wife at home nursing the children. At times the husband will go to the city and neglect the wife and children while enjoying in the city. The name therefore will be encouraging wives to be patient and wait for the return of the husband even if it means returning after some decades. This trait of having patience is expected from all married Zezuru women.

The name *Muchaneta* (you shall give up) stereotypes girls as people who are naughty especially with regard to having affairs. Among the Zezuru girls are often given a stigma of being sexually restless during their puberty and because of that belief such a name is often given to girls as a message to parents who have girl children that no matter how much they may try to safe guard the girls child all their efforts are going to come to nothing and they will eventually give up. The same name could also be a message to enemies of the family that they will surrender in their pursuit because the former will never succumb to the desires of his enemies.

Through the name *Tsitsi* (mercy) women are stereotyped as people who are very merciful and as such the responsibility of looking after children at home is usually regarded as the domain of women among the Zezuru. This idea of regarding women as people rooted in the society and it also helps to change the attitudes of men towards women so that they should respect them. The trait of being merciful is also found in the bible as enshrined in one of the beatitudes.

The name *Chipo* (gift) was popular among girls and this name portrays women negatively for it equates women to goods which can easily be given to fellow members as gifts. This idea of

objectification of women is very common in the Zezuru culture. This mentality compromises the position of women in life. It can be traced back to the patriarchal practises of the Zezuru society who used to take girls as forms of gifts to whoever they will have desired. Such a name through its meaning stereotypes women as a gender group which do not have the right to say “no” to any form of decision just like what we do with the gifts which we give to our own relatives.

Rujeko (that which is bright) is the version of the same name include *Runako* (beauty). This name was very popular among girls. From the meaning of the name it gives the impression that to be a woman you need to be beautiful so that you attract the attention of men. Such kind of thinking paints a picture which is not good for women because it will appear as if women are like ornaments which must be polished now and again so that they can catch the attention of people. What is disturbing is that very little is said with regard to the physical built up of men. Usually women are described as that type of sex which can do everything in the book to make sure they look presentable.

This study has found out those most male personal names positively stereotype men while on the other hand a majority of the personal names analysed in this study negatively stereotype women. It has been noted that the names which were analysed for this study were influenced by the patriarchal mentality in the Zezuru society were names which were given to women portrayed them rather negatively while on the other hand men are portrayed positively. This research is therefore challenging the cultural stereotypes of strong masculinity and weak femininity as is reflected in the personal names selected for this study.

Sarudzai (choose), this name portrays women as commodities on the market displayed so that men could choose. This name reduces the position of women society to sexual objects as if to suggest that they cannot play any important role in society other than to be chosen by men for love only. Such a name compromises the position of women in society. The name appeared so frequently for girls in all the school registers proving that it was very common among girls.

The name *Fadzai* (intertain) paints women as people who are meant to provide entertainment to men thereby compromising the position of women as well. From the meaning of the name it seems as Zezuru women were only created to provide entertainment to men. This can also be further evidenced by the way women are portrayed in most Zezuru literature books.

Tafara (we are happy). This name was common among boys. One interviewee said this name is given to a baby boy in a family which will have experienced a situation of bearing baby girls only. Responses from the questionnaires also showed that the name. These results confirm the patriarchal belief among the Zezuru which gives a lot of respect to baby boys at the expense of girls for they believe that in boys lie the continuity of the family line. Because of this line of thinking women who bear baby boys are given a lot of respect than one who bears baby girls among the Zezuru women who bears girls is often called with the derogatory name *Vachibarakusekwa* (one who bears that which causes her to be ridiculed). The Zezuru society does not see anything positive about the girl child except that they are there for marriage. It is this mentality which has seen then burdening girls with all sorts of names which denigrating women to the fringes of the society thereby excluding them from profitable socio-economic and political activities of their time.

The name *Rindai* (look after) was also found to be popular among girls. This name seems to paint women who are very passive who wait for their husbands to come back from the city even if it means coming back after some decades. Through the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society, women often portrayed as playing a passive role in their society in almost all facets of life. Through the name *Pfumisai* (one who brings wealth) which was found to be common among girls, women are regarded as a source of wealth among the Zezuru. This idea as contained in the meaning of the name is also contained in the Zezuruproverb, “*Mwanasikana ndimapfumise*” which literally means that the girl child is a source of wealth. What it means among the Zezuru is that girls are only respected as cash cows for the benefit of the entire family. Thus, girls bring wealth to the family through lobola upon getting married. The Zezuru culture also makes sure that girls submit to injustices committed against them in the guise of culture like in cases when they are forced into early marriages for the sake of bringing food on the table for the family. The girls are made to accept this as normal, thus the family is given first priority and their rights are subsidiary.

Through the name *Manzweyi* (what is that which you have heard) women are regarded as masters of gossip whose lives are bend on gossip only. This name replicates the traditional Zezuru stereotyping of women where women are often portrayed as the sole conveyors of gossip in society. Such a name seems to exonerate men from the gossip ‘business’ yet men do gossip as well just like women. This name negatively portrays women as they will be seen as the major sources of all the gossip that causes friction in the Zezuru society.

The name *Mirirai* (wait) paints women as people who have a long heart of being patient with their husbands even if the husband goes away they will wait till he comes back. This trait can also be reflected in the way they raise their children. Women among the Zezuru are known to be very patient and accommodative in all aspects of life. In education at primary or nursery schools women are usually given infant grades as if to confirm their patient's trait since infants need people who are patient in whatever they do. The present research is advocating for a positive shift in the naming trend where names which have gender connotations must be done with because they are a threat to equal participation of both genders in the socio-economic and political activities in the society as they can segregate name bearers on gender lines. Gender disparity as can be enhanced and promoted by gendered names are pose a major threat to development.

6.11 THE EFFECTS OF GENDERED PERSONAL NAMES

The responses from the interviews and questionnaires indicated that names such as *Chiedza* (light), *Rudo* (love), *Sharai* (Make a choice) and *Yemurai* (Admire) are usually for girls. Lawson (1988) states that there are certain names which are stereotypical. The names which the researcher has singled out do stereotype women on gender lines. They label women as commodities displayed on the market and ready to be purchased by potential "buyers." Schoenfeld (1942) in Lawson (1988) gives evidence that stereotypes of personality characteristics are associated with specific names. Rubaya (2014) states that names are not arbitrarily given but are given to mark one's biology thereby transforming naming into a salient medium of instruction in the education of children to accept their socially defined gender paths. Algeo (1985:94) asserts that "behind every name, there lies a story." This is true for Zezuru personal names because they give history about how men and women are separated on gender lines through personal names. The issue of gender stereotyping has a history which dates to time immemorial and is made possible through the personal names given to individuals in the Zezuru society. These names are pregnant with gender connotations which end up advantaging or disadvantaging a certain gender. Browne (2004:65) states that in society, the pattern of power relations between people at a micro and macro level benefits men more than women.

It was established during the interview sessions that certain names shape the behaviour of their name bearers. Thus, some individuals tend to live up to the meanings of their names. Davies in

Browne (2004) concurs and states that the language we use promotes the social inequality because it is through this language that people are socialised to accept already defined gender roles in society. In the same vein, certain names that are given perpetuate gender imbalances in the society. The name *Netsai* (one who bothers) was very common among girls. One interviewee said that girls with this name were a nuisance in society and in their families. Peter (2010) states that in most cases, parents give their children names that will be a self-fulfilling prophesy, so that they will live up to the meanings of their names. Nuessel (1992:4) articulates that “you are what you are named.” Murphy in Nuessel (1992:5) explains that “given names, and assumed names have numerous important significances in the development of a person, and often give clues to their attitudes toward themselves and others with whom they have been closely associated.” Faik-Nzuji (1974) states:

“Among the Luba, the power of the name consists of the belief that the name represents the soul of the individual. Therefore, to inherit or to receive someone’s name is to inherit or receive at the same time his qualities, faults and even his destiny.”

The interview sessions also established that Zezuru personal names often have meanings that are hidden and which the namers are required to interpret. These names are a result of certain situations which later influence the naming. Hodza quoted by Frederiskse (1982:23) states that “if one’s to know the true meaning of Shona personal names, there is need to look at both the surface meaning and underlying meaning.” The surface meaning of the name is only there to blag while the underlying meaning deals with what is behind it. This is the entrenched meaning that is not immediately clear to a layman. This is the most important meaning because the Shona people usually pass their messages in veiled ways, for instance, through the use of figurative expressions (Pongweni, 1996).

6.12 GENDERED DIVISION OF LABOUR

Through personal names, the roles between men and women are clearly divided; with women being apportioned to occupations which are less rewarding yet demanding. Mazumdar and Shamdar in Tinkler (1990) observe that the gendered division of labour has been considered a key variable in the analysis of women’s subordination. Feminist scholars have expressed that while the man occupies the citadel of power, the woman has been thrust to the lowest rungs of

the social ladder, where she has been taught to be submissive and subordinate to her male counterpart (de Beauvoir, 1949). The name *Chengetai* (take care of) was found to be very popular among girls, however it reduces women to mere dependents who look upon men for survival. Work in the Zezuru society is divided according to people's gender. This is due to the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society. Browne (2004) asserts that according to evolutionary biologists, gender differences exist because of our role more than 10 000 years ago as hunter gatherers. Men were the hunters who roved far and wide to find food and protect the community. While the women stayed close to home, caring for the children and gathering food within the immediate locality. Because of this set up, men therefore needed to be strong and powerful, be willing to take physical risks, and have well-developed spatial skills. While women on the other hand needed to be nurturing and more skilled at interpersonal interactions. In support of the division of labour, Gurian (2001:39) states that "... in order for the human species to survive, divergence in sex roles was necessary." The other way in which patriarchy is reflected in the Zezuru society is through the division of roles between women and men. Children grow up knowing that there are gender specific jobs. Through these gendered personal names, boys and girls grow up knowing exactly what is expected of them in society. Girls will know that most of their time will be spent working in the kitchen. Krige (1974:184) expresses:

"On the whole, the rougher tasks requiring strength are done by the men, while to the women falls the work that requires more continuous attention. The housework naturally falls within the sphere of women's activities, and cooking and beer making, sweeping, washing of utensils and the fetching of firewood and water are the work of women. In this, they are helped by their daughters, who at an early age begin to fetch water, sweep, and look after their baby brothers."

The meanings of most of the Zezuru names that were collected for this study bear testimony to the division of labour along gender lines. These names harness their bearers so that they will grow up knowing what is expected of them as men and women.

6.13 COMMON GENDERED MALE AND FEMALE NAMES AMONG THE ZEZURU

The responses from the interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires indicated that there are names which are for males and names which are for females. This is because names are not randomly given among the Zezuru. Rather, the meanings of these names determine whether the name belongs to a man or woman. It is from this standpoint that the Zezuru usually give their children gender specific names.

This research established that certain gendered names were common to males and females respectively. The results of the research indicated that there are names which are very common among boys. A closer look at the semantic meaning of these names reveals that they point to certain attributes which are associated with the male gender. The name *Tafara* (we have been made happy) was common among the boys as it appeared frequently in all the school registers and the questionnaire responses. Conversations from the interviews revealed that this name is given to a baby boy to celebrate the joy of him being born. This is because the Zezuru are a patriarchal society which believes that the growth and continuity of the family lies in the boy child. A woman who gives birth to baby girls is regarded lowly among the Zezuru. The name *Takudzwa* (we have been respected) was also common among the boys. The meaning of this name alludes to the fact that due to the coming of the boy child, the family will have been greatly honoured, and as per the Zezuru belief, whoever is blessed with a baby boy will command great respect in the society; for the boy child ensures that the name of the father will continue to exist because he will carry it through to his own offspring.

What is salient about most Zezuru names is that they carry certain messages which are gendered in nature; this is a major characteristic of the Zezuru society. A closer look at the meanings of these names shows that the society is divided along gender lines. Most male names act as a source of motivation to the name bearers for they encourage them to achieve in life. This is reflected in names like *Takunda* (we have succeeded or won), *Simukai* (Prosper), *Budirirai* (Be successful) and *Pindukai* (Change for the good). All these names have a clear intention of urging the name bearer to achieve in life. The rampant belief among the Zezuru is that the boy child is the one who carries the hopes of the family to achieve in life. All family members look forward to baby boys in the family to carry the family name forward by achieving in all spheres of life. The interviews established that the name for a boy child in a family is carefully chosen, for the child is regarded with high esteem among the Zezuru. The name *Tafara* (we are joyed) reflects that the family is very happy about having the boy child. One interviewee said that she decided to name her son *Tafara* because she already had four girls in succession, and she finally gave birth to a baby boy whom she named as a sign to show her joy. Among the Zezuru, boys

are given more respect than girls and this stems from the fact that the society is very patriarchal in its set up. Dover (2005) states that men in Africa are described as hard working and persevering. They are regarded as determined in whatever they do and cannot be easily swayed from their purpose. He adds that a boy is expected to be strong in all aspects.

6.14 POPULAR GENDERED NAMES IN GIRLS

Throughout the findings of this research, there were names which were found to be popular among girls and these names have meanings which do carry gender connotations. Most of the names negatively portray women. Some of the gender messages enshrined in these names depict women as gossipers, witches, ornamental subjects, and sources of confusion within families etc. Names like *Tsitsi* (mercy), *Sarudzai* (choose), *Chenai* (be presentable) and *Yemurai* (admire) were very common among girls. The common message enshrined in these names regards women as commodities on the market ready to attract potential buyers who are obviously men. The name *Tsitsi* (mercy) portrays women as very soft, forgiving and caring. Makondo (2009) states that Shona female names are influenced by various factors. From this study, it emerged that the most popular female name was very appealing, like a product on the market waiting to be bought. Names like *Sarudzai* (choose) and *Yemurai* (admire) objectify women and “hint at female commodification while at the same time underscoring marriage as the ultimate goal of women” (Mazrui, 1993: 87). Thus, girls are commodified through such names.

In the past, girls were highly respected among the Zezuru as almost everyone of marriageable age was expected to marry (Kabweza et al: 1979). Girls were not casually named and the namers, among other things, had to make sure that they coined meaningful and charming names. The naming of the girls was like the branding of a product; it was meticulously done in order to augment its marketability (Makondo, 2009). Views from the interviews indicated that in most cases, women are given names which are attractive in terms of their meaning so that their presence will be marked on the marriage market. Peter (2010) states that this objectification of females for man’s pleasure is very common.

One interviewee expressed that females among the Zezuru are usually associated with the character traits of reliance, fostering, and worrying about their physical outlook. Peter (2010)

reasons that it is these trivial occupations that give men the power to dominate females. Bark (2012) states that in patriarchal societies, women are often seen as nurturing, child rearing and domestically inclined. This position of women is aptly described by the Ethiopian proverb: “A woman and an empty house are never alone for long.” Thus, from a Zezuru patriarchal position, the place of a woman is the kitchen. This is reflected in the names of Zezuru girls like *Rindai*, *Vimbai*, *Dzokai* and others. These names reflect the passivity and subjection of women to their husbands. This legacy of passivity and silence is enshrined in most female personal names and seems to persist, despite the changing material condition of Zezuru women. The focus group discussions revealed that the domination of women begins in the home where girls are treated differently from boys who are treated as kings. The gender belief among the Zezuru is that females should be obedient and submissive. They are regarded as inferior to their male counterparts in terms of strengths. The focus group discussions also established that females are regarded as mere minors. Dover (2005) in Ougzgane and Morell (2005) states that girls in Africa are seen as soft and vulnerable, and needing to be protected by men. The names which were popular among girls are a reflection of the character traits associated with women.

The five most popular gendered Shona female personal names in this study were *Chipo* (Gift), *Tendai* (Be thankful), *Tsitsi* (Mercy), *Chiedza* (Light) and *Vimbai* (Trust). These names appeared frequently in the questionnaire responses. These results concurred with the results of the various school registers which were analysed. The name *Chipo* (gift) labels women as people who are dispensable; like assets that can be given to relatives as gifts. The name also means the child is a gift from God, and it is usually given to a baby girl who is born to a couple that has faced many complications trying to have a baby. This usually happens among the Zezuru when the family is blessed with a baby girl.

The name *Tendai* (appreciate) portrays women as dependent on men for survival. And therefore, they must appreciate that beneficiary role and express gratitude to the men who work to provide for the family. Among the Zezuru, women are usually confined to the kitchen while men go out and search for employment in the cities.

The name *Tsitsi* (Mercy) portrays women as passionate, loving, and merciful. Zezuru women are known for this trait of love which they show to their children and even to their husbands. The name seems to have its roots in biblical narratives. It refers to the redemptive role of Jesus Christ when he was executed on behalf of humanity as recorded in Colossians 1:14, Ephesians

1:7, Galatians 3:10-13 and Romans 3:24-26 (Thompson, 1988). Makondo (2013) states such names draw from the Christian exposure afforded to Africans by the missionaries.

The name *Chiedza* (Light) refers to the physical build of the name bearer; that she is as bright as light in terms of her beauty. This implies that women are always judged according to their physical appearance, unlike men who are usually judged according to their material achievements in life. Koopman (1990) concludes that among the Zulu society, the people responsible for naming usually give names with meanings known by every member in the society.

The name *Vimbai* (Trust) calls for women to be trustworthy or faithful. As is the norm, Zezuru women are always expected to be faithful to their husbands; and so, the name *Vimbai* is a wake-up call to all women to be trustworthy in whatever they do in life. This seems to exempt men from being faithful as well especially in marriage. This is testified by the many love relations which most Zezuru men engage in.

Another popular name was *Rudo* (Love). Zezuru women are highly regarded for having true love in the marriage, as opposed to the men who are often accused of being unfaithful. Most men in the Zezuru culture are polygamous. The name *Rudo* (love) also connotes that women are just born to love, which suggests that there is nothing that women can do in life except be involved in love matters.

It can be concluded that the messages enshrined in most Zezuru female names are heavily stereotyped. According to Bark (2012:316), a stereotype reduces a person to a set of exaggerated and usually negative character traits. A stereotypical portrayal marks the boundaries between the 'normal' and the 'objected', the 'us' and 'them'. Through the meanings of most of the personal names, women are portrayed as submissive, domesticated, dependent and selfish. Meehan (1983) in Bark (2012) identifies several characteristics as common stereotypes of women. These include being rebellious, sneaky, a cheater, passive, manipulative, and a tomboy. She also gives the positive portrayal of women as being cooperative, home-centred, attractive, sympathetic, merciful and compassionate.

6.15 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES

ZeZuru names reflect that Shona people usually give their children names which carry social, economic, political and religious messages. The interviews and focus group discussions revealed that the ZeZuru usually relay their messages pertaining to their social, economic, religious and political feelings through personal names. It is because of such thinking that ZeZuru people, being gendered in every respect, usually reflect this position through the names they give to their children.

6.16 SOCIALLY GENDERED MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES

The ZeZuru use personal names as a vehicle to pass messages and interact within their society. The responses from the interviews indicated that personal names are often used to pass messages in the ZeZuru people's day to day living. These are usually messages of hate which are often found in polygamous families. One focus group respondent expresses that the girl child is usually burdened with names that contain hate messages such as *Rowesai* (one who causes someone to be bewitched). The boy child on the other hand, appears immune to such names because they are often given names which inspire the family to achieve in life; such as *Tongai* (Rule), *Pindukai* (Prosper) and *Tungamirai* (Lead). The way that namers choose personal names is what Fasold (1987) means regarding the use of language to define relationships. He states that "namers exploit the subtle aspects of language to reveal and define their social relationships with the people they are talking to, with people who can overhear them, and with people who are nowhere around (1987:1). Girls' Names such as *Revai* (*gossip*) and *Rowesai* (one who causes others to be bewitched) appeared very frequently in responses from the questionnaires. Whiles boys' names such as *Shingai* (be courageous), *Simukai* (arise) and *Garikai* (prosper) featured prominently. These names make categorical statements which denote and connote the name bearers on gender lines. A closer look at the meanings of the names reveals that they entail important messages that place individuals in positions within society based on one's gender status. Schoenfeld in Lawson (1988) states that the stereotyping of personality characteristics is associated with specific names.

6.17 ECONOMICALLY GENDERED MESSAGES ENSHRINED IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES

The responses from the interviews indicated that through personal names, the Zezuru people can reflect their expectations in the economic sphere regarding who must do what when it comes to providing for the family. Thus, all avenues that bring food or any form of livelihood are also gendered. Through the names, the Zezuru reflect what men and women should do. Being a patriarchal society, the Zezuru men have the overall say on all aspects regarding economics. The patriarchal nature of this society is reflected in names such as *Dhokotera* (doctor) and *Mudhumeni* (agriculture extension officer) which were common to boys and suggest that only men can occupy these professions. On the other hand, the name *Nesi* (nurse) was popular for girls. Among the Zezuru, nursing is regarded as a feminine profession. One interviewee responded that men are expected to work hard and bring food to the family, which is why they are usually given names that socialise them towards the daunting task which awaits them – that of looking after their future families. Personal names which echo such sentiments include *Shingai* (persevere), *Fumai* (get rich), *Simukai* (prosper), *Pepukai* (awake from your slumber) and *Simbai* (be strong). These names generally urge their name bearers to take action and make sure that life improves for the better. Such a position has existed in the Zezuru society for many years. This has been attributed to the fact that the patriarchal Zezuru society usually praises the boy child at the expense of the girl child. One interviewee concurred with this mentality when he expressed that the survival and continuity of the family lies with the boy child. While on the other hand, women are normally given names which are devoid of such expectations. Hays (1998) states that certain customs advocate for women to remain in their cocoons and be dominated by men in all respects. Thus, girls are often given conventional names which have nothing to do with the expectations of the family except for them to get married and bring 'lobola' to their parents. This research established that names like *Chenai* (be smart), *Ruvarashe* (the rose of the Lord), *Rudo* (love), *Sekai* (mock) and *Makaiteyi* (what have you done) are common for girls. The fact that these names seem to label the girl child as a commodity on the market reduces and compromises the position of the girl child in society. Lott (1991) states that children are socialized by the names they are given which stipulate what is expected of them in society. She adds that the importance of naming in gender socialization should not be underestimated. Hence, women are often given names which label them as passive subjects waiting to be fed by men. It is because of this mentality that the choice of a

personal name for a girl child is never taken as seriously as for a baby boy. This has also attributed to women's withdrawal from the public space.

6.18 POLITICALLY GENDERED MESSAGES IN ZEZURU PERSONAL NAMES

The responses from the interviews revealed that Zezuru personal names which have political connotations are also gendered. This research established that soon after the war, most Zezuru people named their children after well-known female guerilla fighters such as Joice Mujuru (former vice president of Zimbabwe). The names which were given to guerilla fighters during the liberation struggle were gender-biased. Most female guerillas retained their first conventional personal names while their male counterparts changed their names completely. Male guerillas took up names which were pregnant with war messages and which painted them as invincible. This naming of male guerillas has carried over into the patriarchal Zezuru society where men are portrayed as subjects who are above women in all respects. The male names point to male guerillas as people who were almighty and all-conquering. Names which feature in this category include *Urayayimabhunu* (kill the boers), *Chekai* (slaughter), *Gamba* (hero), *Nhongo* (he goat) and *Muchaperamabhunu* (boers are going to perish). On the other hand, the female guerillas were given passive names, as if to say women only played a passive role in the struggle. This research also established that most female guerillas retained their conventional personal names but changed their surnames. Thus, conventional names such as *Tsitsi* (mercy) and *Chenai* (be smart) were very common and popular for female guerillas. In contrast, male guerillas changed their first names as well as their surnames in favour of names which portrayed them as a dominant force in every aspect of the war. This is one of the reasons why some people argue that the liberation struggle was gendered.

6.19 EFFECTS OF GENDERED NAMING

The responses from the questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions indicated that personal names do have effects on the name bearer. Uwakweh (1998) expresses that gender politics permeates all aspects of African social life. Mazrui (1993:17) regards the culture of naming babies as a case of "benign sexism which acknowledges gender differences." The

socialisation into masculinity and femininity is enhanced through the names given to children at birth. The socialization of children of both genders among the Zezuru has been greatly inculcated through the culture of naming. Browne (2004: 34) states that “children learn about gender and develop their gendered identities through their interactions with others, and through their experiences of positioning themselves within society and being positioned by others.” The results from this research established that personal names are a major means through which children are socialized into their gender roles in society. Through these gendered names, the children grow up differentiating themselves into separate gender groups. The girls stay around the home learning household chores such as washing plates, cleaning the house, and cooking. The idea that women are expected to spend their time in the kitchen is reflected in the meanings of popular personal names such as *Chengetai* (take custody) and *Rindai* (look after). Dover (2005) states that a women’s space has to do with the home and their productive and reproductive tasks. On the other hand, boys are taught to be adventurous and this is reflected by the meanings of some of their personal names collected for this study. Gilmore (1990) states that in many cultures, boys are socialised through hardships and trials so that they will be fully prepared for the mammoth task of looking after their families when they mature. Gilmore adds that as Goba boys grow up, they are encouraged to venture into the forest to hunt rather than hang around the compound with women. Herzfeld & Hamburg (2000) in Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:390) articulate that “some gender roles are ingrained in individuals to the extent that a profession like nursing is often regarded as a woman’s profession and a man who pursues it can be mocked.”

Gendered names appear to have a negative influence on the behaviour of some of the name bearers; this was testified by some of the interview participants. Peter (2010) states that a name can greatly influence one’s personality. Barker and Gulasin’ski (2001) state that there is a strong relationship between a person’s name and their psyche. A name like *Teerera* (listen) which was common among girls conveys that women must be submissive to their husbands, as is expected in the Zezuru patriarchal society. The acceptance of their lives with their husbands reaffirms the demands and expectations of traditional culture. Cahill (2011:34) expresses that “patriarchy renders women ‘things’, thus robbing them of a host of qualities central to personhood which include among other things moral agency, self-worth and autonomy.” Submissiveness is part of the repression of the Zezuru culture. Marshallin Jarret-Macouley (1996:67) states:

“Men just see us here as breeding animals. I don’t think they see us as women who have a right to say what we want.”

This research established that gendered names do have an influence on women. Some of these personal names render women as objects. This is reflected in the meaning of a name like *Chengetai* (take custody). Beauvoir (1974) explains that objectification is the primary means by which women become defined as an inessential other, and thus as inferior. This study argues that Zezuru personal names perpetuate gender imbalance in the society, through some of their names which stereotype and stigmatize individuals along gender lines. Kwatsha (2009) states that male domination is very insidious in African society. Women are regarded as “honorary children.” He adds that the female is not regarded as a “whole” being; she is viewed as unfinished, physically mutilated and emotionally dependent. Men in the Zezuru society dominate women and this is reflected in personal names such as *Tongai* (rule) and *Tungamirai* (lead). Bannon and Correia (2006:245) state that “gender social structures give authority to men over women resulting in the marginalisation of women.” Ndimande-Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:394) state that “from a sociolinguist’s point of view gender differences in language are simply a reflection of the way society works.” Thus, the gendered messages enshrined in some Zezuru personal names reflect how the society views men and women.

From this research, it was revealed that most girls are the recipients of names which are loaded with protest messages, especially of the conflicts found in polygamous marriages. The name *Rowesai* (one who causes others to be bewitched) was very common among girls in the research findings. Beauvoir (1974:672) says the following about the life of women:

“Her life is not directed towards ends, she is absorbed in producing or caring for things that are never more than means, such as food, clothing, and shelter. These things are inessential intermediaries between animal life and free existence. The sole value that appertains to the inessential means is utility; it is at the level of utility that the house keeper lives, and she does not flatter herself that she is anything more than a person useful to her kindred.”

Some of these names denigrate women to the level where their position in society is compromised. The name *Manzwei* (what have you heard?) labels women as gossipers in society.

Gaidzanwa (2014:11) states that “some names place unnecessary burdens on their carriers and perpetuate feuds and negative relationships that often have little to do with the carriers of the names.” Ndlovu (2014) articulates that such names are often discriminatory and even sexist. Meehan (1983) in Bark (2012) states that women world over are regarded as inferior to men and are often oppressed by the men. That is, women have stereotyped roles and positions already carved for them by society, which place them in the patriarchal work of domesticity and beautification. This research found that personal names among the Zezuru are gendered, and agrees with Rossi (1965), Lieberman and Bell (1992), and Stahl (1992) that males are the carriers of the family’s hopes and aspirations; in the sense that fathers name their sons with names which signify their hopes and aspirations. This was reflected in the personal names collected for this study. Men dominate women in most respects, and this is perpetuated and promoted by these names which are a major form of socialization among the Zezuru. Lott (1991) explains that socialization is a process through which members of a society learn the behaviours which are appropriate for their group. Through personal names, the Zezuru are socialized to follow their respective gender paths as dictated by their culture. Their culture is mainly shaped by their patriarchal beliefs which shape, enhance and perpetuate gender inequality, and strip women of any form of control over their sexuality. Lightfoot-Klein in Okome, (2003:71) states:

“Custom in Africa is stronger than domination, stronger than the law, stronger even than religion. Over the years, customary practices have been incorporated into religion, and ultimately have come to be believed by their practitioners to be demanded by their adopted gods, whoever they may be.”

The patriarchal culture of the Zezuru people ensures that men dominate women in almost all facets of life as it advocates for women to remain in their cocoons. Through gendered names, the two genders are socialised into what is expected of them in society. From a feminist point of view, language serves as a carrier of ideas used to construct and maintain society. Through gendered names, the Zezuru express their thoughts and beliefs of what they expect of the two gender groups. Klopper (1999:76) argues that “communication is a meeting of minds.” Dirven & Verspoor (1998) in Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:394) state that “in many languages, words are culture-specific, and they have language-specific meanings which reflect the cultural experiences of the people who speak that particular language.” Buthelezi in Ndimande-Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014) states that language as a vehicle through which culture is reflected, is meant to reflect the beliefs of people in as far as gender relations are

concerned. Naming is part and parcel of this language use and through these names, the Zezuru can communicate important messages about what they expect of males and females in their society. Raymond in Ndimande-Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014) argues that since language is central to culture, it must reflect human attitudes as well. Personal names as a product of language reflect the cultural beliefs of the Zezuru on their understanding of gender differences. Shitemi (2009) argues that all people are insidious creations of ideologized male and female differentiation, not only practically but linguistically. Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:394) state that languages are the most important means by which people relay gender ideologies.

Burck and Bebe (1995:58) state that “gender is embedded in all institutions, actions, beliefs and desires that go along with the mapping of language use through communication, interaction, and the establishment of the social order.” This social order among the Zezuru entails giving gender specific roles which can be articulated through the meanings of personal names.

6.20 SHIFTS IN THE NAMING TRENDS AMONG THE ZEZURU

Just like other African societies, the Zezuru naming pattern has undergone some changes over time. This study noted some shifts in the naming trends between the 1970s to 1980 and the period after 1980 to date. A closer look at the school registers which cover the periods under study reflected a major shift in the naming pattern among the Zezuru. Neethling (2005: xv) supports this trend and states that “naming patterns in all societies are subject to change...” Just like in South Africa, where there were some notable shifts in naming trends, there was also a similar change in the naming pattern among the Zezuru. The period before independence was characterised by personal names which treated boys and girls as equals, as was reflected by the nature of names which appear to be free of any gender connotations. This research found that there were a lot of unisex names from this period as opposed to the period after independence. Names such as *Rutendo* (*appreciation*), *Munyaradzi* (*comforter*) and *Wadzanai* (*understand each other*) were common for both boys and girls. This seems to support Hudson Wilma’s position through her *Africana Womanism* which argues that in the past, both men and women were equals in as far as the socio-economic and political spheres were concerned. Both boys and girls could be given the same names as was reflected during the interviews where names

like *Tafara*, *Tendai*, *Fungai*, and *Wadzanai* were common to both genders. One interviewee concurred with Wilma that both boys and girls were treated as equals in the past. It was believed that whom ever will have given birth to a baby girl will also have the chance of having a boy, in the sense that when the girl gets married, the son in law will then become a son to the family he married into and vice versa. Commenting on families in Polynesia, Momsen (2004) states that in families without daughters, one son is selected when they are still very young to be raised as a girl to fulfil the family's needs for someone to undertake a daughter's role, such as taking care of siblings and doing housework. In the same vein, among the Zezuru, all children were regarded and treated equally as is reflected in the personal names given.

A closer look at some of the names given to women in the past suggests that the Zezuru used to regard women as highly as they regarded men. Hudson-Weems (2004) shares the same idea in her theory. She argues that the patriarchy mentality among the Africans was brought about by colonialism with its agents of western education, Christianity, and the urban environment which are all characterised by individualism. Thus, through these agents the position of women was compromised. This is well articulated in the feminist theories which advocate for a wholesale change of the social structure so that women are also given their rightful positions in society. Hudson-Weems (2004) argues that the traditional African society of women did not have that powerlessness that is portrayed by feminists today because they were given the platform to exercise their authority, as was reflected with the respect given to the *vatete* (aunt). She had a multitude of roles in the family set up. At times she could act as the father in the absence of her brother and would still be respected in this capacity. In chieftainship, women were given the chance to be on the throne. During children's games, children exchanged roles irrespective of their gender status. The naming itself was free of gender connotations as can be testified with names such as *mwanakomana*, *mwanasikana*, *munhurume*, *munhukadzi*. All these names are not gendered in any way for they regard both the boy and the girl equally. This is supported by the use of the term 'mwana' at the beginning of every word which refers to the two sexes as equals.

In the traditional Zezuru society, men and women were compatible and they exchanged roles harmoniously. Men did not oppress women as was the case during the period which stretches from the 1980s to date. The naming pattern of this period bears testimony to the harsh treatments that women received at the hands of men. This is the period when names that segregated and commodified women gained prominence. Names like *Netsai* (one who bothers), *Sekai* (mock us) and *Tambudzai* (trouble us) were common during this period. These names

denigrate women and regard them as subjects who are not worthy of reckoning and subject to abuse and ridicule. The general belief was that the girl child was only there to bring shame to the family through her failure to be married decently. On the other hand, the boy's faults were never talked about; making him seem like he is perfect and yet he is the one who spoils the girl child. Boys were given names such as *Munyaradzi (Comforter)* and *Tavarwisa (we have fought them)*.

According to Hudson-Weems' (2004) Africana Womanism theory, boys and girls of Africa were regarded as equals. Hudson-Weems argues that the names given to both men and women reflected the rights which the two genders had in society and according to her, African women had equal rights to their male counterparts. With the passage of time however, the naming trend changed and the Zezuru personal names were influenced by the western culture and characterised with gendered names. Thus, parents began giving their children gender specific names. This era was mainly realised during the period beginning 1975 to date. It was in this period in Zimbabwe that we also witnessed the rise in feminist movements which clamoured for women's rights, having realised that women were always playing second fiddle to men in all spheres of life and were merely confined to domestic spaces. It is also in this period that most children among the Zezuru were recipients of names which have gender connotations. Even at school, the girl child was denigrated to roles which were patriarchally assigned to women, like sweeping the classroom while the boys played outside. This further cemented the gender disparities which were reflected in their personal names. Commenting on the Zulu naming system, Biyela (2014:11) states that "Zulu naming systems and conventions have varied and changed since colonialism, Christianity and urbanisation brought new birth regulations, family lifestyles, gender policies and working conditions to Southern Africa." He adds that in the traditional Zulu society, as in most African societies, individuals identified closely with their culturally given names. Saarelma-Maunumaa (2009:198) argues that the meaningfulness of a name, which is considered a typical feature of African personal naming, also characterized pre-Christian European personal naming."

This study established that most Zezuru parents are now opting to give their children Christian-oriented personal names or names of celebrities. This was reflected by the high frequency of such names in the school registers. Makondo (2009:145) states:

"Bible-oriented names are now very popular. They are in Shona, Ndebele and English."

Makondo (2009) adds that Christianity boasts the largest following in the world, which makes it sound pleasant to be identified as a Christian. He also adds that varied Bible-oriented personal names demonstrate the Shona people's linguistic innovativeness, as they derived and devised various first names from a foreign language in their quest to modernise it. Names which were common include *Mutsawashe* (grace of the lord) for girls and *Faraimunashe* (rejoice in the Lord) for boys. Though these names were influenced by Christianity, they are not immune to gender connotations. Referring to the Zulu society, Biyela (2014: 11) states that "children normally received gender specific names with the occasional exceptions of neutral names such as Sipiwe and Thokozani." The fact that the names *Farai* (rejoice) and *Simbarashe* (the power of the Lord) were common among boys seems to confirm the patriarchal mentality among the Zezuru, which gives more respect to the boy child at the expense of his female counterpart. The name *Farai* (rejoice) seems to suggest that there is a lot of joy in the family if a baby boy is born than when a girl is born.

Giving children gendered names can have many effects on the name bearer's psyche. In most instances, the child will want to live up to the dictates of his or her name. Gendered names categorise society along gender lines and this has adverse effects on the gender group which is usually looked down upon and placed at a disadvantage, while giving advantage to the other gender group.

6.21 CONCLUSION

This chapter has analysed and discussed the personal names gathered for this study. The analysis and discussion were guided by the Critical Discourse Analysis theory, Descriptive Backing, Pragmatics, Semantics and Gender theories. A close analysis has shown that personal names as a major form of identity reflect the gender status of the name bearer. Through naming as one of its agents of socialisation, the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society has contributed to gender inequality among the Zezuru.

CHAPTER 7

7.1 CONCLUSION

7.1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a summary of the previous chapters of the research. It highlights the major contributions of this investigation and shows how the research's keystone questions and objectives were addressed. It proceeds by showing the research findings of this study, with an emphasis on how the findings worked in advancing the frontiers of onomastic knowledge. The chapter then discusses the major limitations of the study, and finally concludes with some suggestions for further research.

7.1.2 A SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one was the introductory chapter which discussed the background to this study. It gave an overview of the naming patterns among the Zezuru in Buhera South and in Zimbabwe in general. Naming patterns around the world were also looked at albeit briefly. This chapter also shed light on the shift in these naming patterns due to the passage of time.

Chapter two reviewed relevant literature on personal naming and other issues related to the subject under study. The chapter started by reviewing literature related to the importance of naming and it also looked at literature relating to gender. The major argument throughout the reviewed works was that personal naming itself is a form of identity, and that people who have access to power exercise control over the naming system. The review was done at different levels.

Chapter three discussed the theoretical framework for this study. The critical discourse analysis (CDA) was adopted as one of the theories which informed the study. This theory regards language as being shaped by social functions. Naming is a process which entails the use of language and in this process, the meaning of each name is usually determined by several factors of which gender is the major one. Thus, the meaning of each name must be related to the gender status of the name bearer. Following the views of Meyer (2001) and Fairclough (2001), this study adopted the CDA as a theory which was used in the analysis of the meanings of the personal names as they reflect the gender status of the name bearers.

Discourse is defined in various ways by different scholars depending on their own backgrounds and the purposes of their respective studies. Du Gay (1996:43) defines discourse as:

“A group of statements which provides a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. Thus, the term refers both to the production of knowledge through language and representation and the way that knowledge is institutionalised, shaping social practices and setting new practices into play.”

Chapter four discussed the research design and methodology. A case study research design was adopted for this study. There was a discussion of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. It was indicated that the nature of this study made it a qualitative study. The salience of units of analysis was shown to determine the methods of data gathering techniques. The different methods of data gathering were discussed. These were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and documentary sources.

The sampling method used for this study was also discussed. It was pointed out that the research design adopted has a bearing on the method of data analysis used. The chapter showed that CDA and content analysis were adopted as the methods of data analysis. The chapter concluded by discussing ethical considerations.

Chapter five presented the results of the study. People who are responsible for naming in the Zezuru society were looked at together with the significance behind giving people names. Personal names were put into categories according to the methods stated in chapter three. The meanings of the personal names were looked at with the aim of showing the gender connotations in each of these names. The chapter presented the personal names in eight different categories. Overlaps of personal names categories were noted but their occurrence was minimal. Some of the personal names were found to belong in more than one category. The results showed that naming among the Zezuru is usually done by the father of the child, although on other occasions other family members could do so. It was clear that naming among the Zezuru is not just a way of identification, but the identification stretches to the extent of reflecting the gender status of the name bearer. Thus, through their power, personal names put people into different classes in society and by doing so they advantage and disadvantage a certain gender. As such, naming seems to be an innocent act since it can either lift its bearer or pull him or her down.

Chapter six analysed and discussed the data presented in chapter five, using the same themes which were used in the data presentation. The personal names in various categories were analysed, showing how each of the names do reflect the gender status of the name bearers. It was noted that the names in each of the categories do have gender connotations enshrined in them. However, there were certain names which were found to belong to more than one category. And there were also certain names which were found to be unisex based on the meanings of those names.

Chapter seven constitutes the summary and the conclusion to the present research. This chapter ties all the contents of the research together and goes on to offer recommendations for further research. The chapter gives summaries of the previous chapters, and also sums up the major research findings of the study.

7.1.3 A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research on personal names is an important resource for sociologists. However, it has not been largely explored. This scenario is disturbing since personal naming practices can inform theories of sociology with gender included.

Personal names among the Zezuru are a major form of identity, and gender being an indice of this identity is greatly influenced by the names given to people among the Zezuru. Chitauro-Mawema (2006) states that the Shona vocabulary is gendered in many respects. Personal names are tags of identity through which the Zezuru people are identified with and as part of this vocabulary they are also gendered. These personal names as forms of identity carry with them gender connotations that are enshrined in the names, as was confirmed by this study.

The study established that naming itself among the Zezuru is predominantly done by the head of the family who in most cases is the father, who is male. This alone shows that the naming on its own is a gendered process. These results concur with the results found by Sue and Telles (2007). In their study of the naming practices among American immigrants, the fathers were found to have more direct influence in the naming of children in the intermarriages among the immigrants. The fathers were also found to be in favour of giving boys ethnic names from their country of origin while the girls were found to be very much prone to acculturation as was reflected with the high rate of adopting American names and ignoring their native names.

This study realises the need to know the meaning of the Zezuru personal names for one to understand the gender connotations enshrined in these names. Thus, it is the meanings of these names which reflect the Zezuru's views towards gender roles within their society. From this study, it was established that the social, economic and political activities of the Zezuru are all gendered.

The study established that there are names which are gender specific and others that are unisex, which are very few. Names which are unisex include names such as *Farai* (be happy).

It was also established that there are conflicts which normally arise during the naming process, and instances like naming a newborn after a relative known for bad traits like prostitution and stealing were likely to cause friction between partners. The fear among the Zezuru is that the child is likely to inherit the bad traits of the original name bearer. Other sources of conflicts were the meanings of certain names. This research found that women hate traditional family

names. A name such as *Hatidani* (we do not love each other) was cited as an example, and it was detested because women thought it promotes friction in the family.

From this study it was established that gender specific names stereotype individuals across gender lines. On the one hand, this will disadvantage certain individuals from participating fully in the socio-economic and political activities of their time. While on the other hand, other individuals will be advantaged just because of their gender status.

The findings from this research have also demonstrated how personal names can be an indicator of the gender dynamics that occur in the Zezuru society in Buhera South. Due to gendered names, certain individuals are denied access to important opportunities in life while others are placed at strategic positions because of their names. In Zimbabwe, there are certain professions which were regarded as the domain of men, and women were denied opportunities to join them. For example, the army was generally gendered as very few women were recruited compared to men. If your name was regarded to be feminine, the chances of being selected were very minimal since priority was given to men. Therefore, those with names which were regarded to be masculine were given priority during the selection.

This study established that names which are common to girls are those which are conventional and usually refer to the physical appearance of the name bearer. While the names of boys usually articulate the hopes of the family, society or nation. This naming conduct is attributed to the patriarchal nature of the Shona society.

This study is crucial for having recognized that the main namer amongst the Shona people is the father of the child, as testified by 81.2% of the five hundred respondents of all age groups. This confirms the patriarchal nature of the Zezuru society in most of their operations. The high percentage of responses indicating that naming is done by the father of the child is a testimony of the dominance of men in naming among the Zezuru.

By way of exemplification, 26.4% of the respondents indicated that women can name the newborn in a family. This essentially shows that women are not afforded enough clout in the naming process. Naming among the Zezuru is predominantly the duty of the father of the child in the family. It was also found that other members of the extended family, especially brothers of the father of the child, also participate actively in the naming of the newborn in the family.

In relation, it was established that grandparents (10.8%) were active namers amongst the Shona society; a cardinal point that demonstrates the unity of the society. The Zezuru society reckons that one is married into a family in as much as one marries from a family. Therefore, all significant family members have one or two things to contribute to the good of a marriage but generally, the men in the family play a dominant role in the various activities of the family. This entails that the father's naming preferences are given top priority by allowing them to communicate their deep thoughts and ideals about life through the personal names they give to their newborns. It was additionally noted that whomever was given the responsibility to name had to also consider the gender status of the newborn before coming up with the name.

This study found that the dominance of Christianity has greatly influenced the naming process among the Zezuru. The influence of Christianity is so great that most Zezuru names have some connection to the Lord. Makondo (2007) states that the Shona people have realized that this religion has become part of their life and set about to create Shona personal names from its various teachings.

The study also found that the Zezuru people place a lot of importance on personal names as forms of identity. To the Zezuru, the name is the person. Names are not randomly given to a newborn. This is the reason why the naming is done by people who hold respectable positions within the family, in the hope that the named child shall live up to the meaning of his or her name and that he or she will follow in the footsteps of the namer.

The research also established that the boy child is usually given names which articulate the hopes and aspirations of the family, for the Zezuru believe that the continuity of the family tradition lies with the boy child than with the girl child. On the other hand, girls are usually given names which sort of regard them as commodities on the market; ready to be purchased by would-be buyers. These names connote women as a weaker sex who play second fiddle to their male counterparts. This suggests that the Zezuru society is still patriarchal in its set up hence women are not given the same social, economic and political space as their male counterparts, as is reflected in their gendered personal names.

This research found that there are factors which influence name choice among the Zezuru. Broadly speaking, a blend of eleven interrelated factors were identified. These are age, gender, education, namers, nationality, residential area, religion, profession, birth order, historical and birth circumstances. The latter encompasses political, economic and social issues amongst

others. Neethling (1995:957) discusses at length the part played by socio-cultural circumstances. This study found that of the eleven variables, gender was at the top of the list in influencing the choice of a personal name for a newborn; a name which will significantly shape how the greater society will view the bearer of the name.

From this research, it was also found that the major function of personal names is to give identity to the name bearer, and this identity aspect entails the element of gender. Thus, personal names among the Zezuru give a hint as to whether the name bearer is male or female. In this process, the act of naming ceases to be an innocent act but rather one that puts individuals into certain positions in society based on their gender status.

This study realized that Zezuru given names can be put into seven broad theme-based categories. It was found that most personal names, especially for women, are commentaries on the physique of the name bearer; as if to suggest that the name bearer is a product on the market which is being advertised. On the other hand, the study established that boys are often given personal names which reflect the hopes and aspirations of the whole family. This study exclusively concludes that the Zezuru people are holistically patriarchal in the naming of their children.

This study has found that what determines whether a name belongs to a girl or boy is not the linguistic structure of the name, but rather the meaning of the name is what is important. The meaning of the name spells out the gender attributes that are associated with males and those that are associated with females. Through the analysis of personal names, this research managed to establish how both males and females are viewed in the Zezuru society, and how this leads to differences in gender roles in society.

This study also found that gender stereotyping is very detrimental to the development of the society and nation as a whole, for it marginalises a certain gender from participating fully in the day to day socio-economic and political activities of life.

Due to globalisation, this study has noted a shift in the naming patterns among the Zezuru, with most children now having English names and Christian oriented personal names. However, this shift was seen to be very common with girls' names, as if to suggest that girls seem to succumb more to forces of acculturation than boys. A simple reason for this scenario might be that among the Zezuru, boys seem to be regarded more highly than girls, for they are regarded

as figures that ensure the continuity of the family line by adopting the names of their fathers or of any other family member.

From this study, it was found that among the Zezuru, the linguistic structure of both males and females is the same but it is the meaning of the name which determines whether a name is suitable for a male or female person.

At an international level, this research will contribute tremendously to the study of naming and gender – a field that has not been given enough attention. This present study could create a new interest in this area of research. The present research established that personal names are a rich preserve of the Zezuru culture, which has the potential of placing an individual on strata within the society based on the connotations carried by a particular name. These social strata can advantage or disadvantage the name bearer based on the connotations attached to these various names. The treatment of personal names in as far as they can reflect the gender status of the name bearer was at the core of this research. However, much more can be researched about personal names. This research established that personal names can be gendered and as a result they may be used to include or segregate individuals in various spheres of life. In Zezuru, personal names lie within the culture of the Zezuru people. And gender is found within this rich cultural deposit. This research found that personal names are one area of life where ample opportunity exists for creativity, and the possibilities are endless on studying the norms and values of a group of people. The aim of this study was to show the extent to which personal names reflect the gender dynamics among the Zezuru people. From the results, it can be concluded that personal names among the Zezuru are not just mere labels denoting the individual and distinguishing him or her from others, but rather they can be aptly described as little volumes of social history in themselves which sum up the culture of the Zezuru people. Zezuru personal names and their subsequent meanings do have a lot of gender connotations which serve as a wonderful entry into the cultural life of the Zezuru speakers. The choice of a name therefore reveals a great deal about the attitude and feelings of the community towards a certain gender group. It is this attitude which can result in the stereotyping of a certain gender group; thereby putting one gender group at an advantage but disadvantaging the other gender group at the same time. Personal names are therefore pregnant with information on how the society views gender difference. This study established that men and women are moulded into different patterns in their social life because of the socialisation which comes with their personal names. Personal names with their loaded meanings are a strong form of socialisation in the Zezuru culture.

Finally, the results from this study have demonstrated that personal names are a good indicator of gender relations that occur within families and the larger societies.

7.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was subject to certain limitations. The major limitation that the researcher encountered during the process of data gathering was that some school heads were reluctant to search for school registers, especially registers which covered the period before 1980. Most of the school registers were kept in rooms which were full of other school materials, hence searching for the school registers was a mammoth task. In some cases, the school heads were new to their respective schools hence they expressed ignorance as to the exact location of the required registers.

It was very difficult to interview all the parents with pupils who have gendered Zezuru personal names. Some of the parents lived in distant areas, and this required the researcher to travel to the homes of these parents on foot because the areas were not accessible with other means of transport.

Most interview sessions were attended by women, while most of the men gave various excuses for their failure to turn up for the session. The few men who attended gave minimal cooperation because some thought there was nothing in the personal names with regard to gender. Most people treat a personal name as a mere label whose function does not go beyond the referential role. For these reasons, the research at first appeared very new and irrelevant.

In the body of this thesis, the researcher referred to how the limitations had negatively impacted on his work at different stages as the thesis unfolded. In some cases, this research managed to devise methods to circumnavigate the said challenges in order for the research to be a success. Future studies are therefore encouraged to take them into account.

7.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study submits that naming and gender is a rich and broad topic which calls for more scholarly research. The present research has explored only a part of a big spectrum and much more still needs to be unearthed on the relationship between naming and gender. Further studies

should be carried out on the importance of personal names. Naming as it reflects the gender status of the name bearer is just one reason for the importance of personal names. Research must be carried out on how personal names can stigmatise the name bearer and go on to affect the individual in the economic, social and political spheres of the day. The researcher hopes that other studies can build from the findings of this present study and that many research articles can be envisaged.

7.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The findings of this study will inform policy makers since the issues regarding gender equity have become so topical these days. The findings of this study inform and enhance stakeholders, civil society, policy makers, and researchers' understanding of the Shona people's worldview through the meanings of the personal names they have.

This study suggests that the categorization of personal names must be an on-going process which must depend on the nature of the research being undertaken. Thus, all research on personal names might come up with categorizations that are different from previous categorizations depending on what the research will be looking at. This study posits that a great deal of caution be taken when choosing personal names, because certain names can stigmatise their bearers by giving them certain connotations which can have long-term effects on the name bearers. These long-term effects could either include or exclude the individual in the day to day social, economic and political spheres. When this happens, naming then ceases to be an innocent act altogether. Much more can be written on the need to give children names which are free from any form of connotations.

7.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

Based on the findings from this research, the researcher recommends several points to be noted when attempting to mitigate gender stereotyping which arises from gendered personal names:

- The government must make it a law that when children have reached a reasonable age, they are free to choose names of their choice rather than stick to those they were given

by their parents, which at times do stigmatise them. This is reasonable because children among the Zezuru are named when they are too young to make decisions on their own and they are unable to know the consequences associated with having gendered names.

- Policies that insist on non-discriminatory forms of language applications should be created. For example, using vocabulary that does not demean, insult, exclude, stereotype, essentialize, and trivialise people (Luker, 2010 in Hlongwa and Rushubirwa, 2014:405).
- Patriarchal forms of naming that stereotype individuals on gender lines must be replaced with modern names which are neutral. Buthelezi (2004) in Hlongwa and Rushubirwa (2014:406) states that there is a need to replace words that have gender connotations with gender neutral terms.
- Gender sensitivity should be applied in the use of differentiated or devaluating terms that convey demeaning attitudes towards women. (Hlongwa and Rushubirwa 2014:406).
- Malvin (2007) states that people should be provided with adequate knowledge and information so that they participate actively in changing cultural practices that undermine gender equalities while enhancing gender inequalities.
- We should promote the use of gender-fair discourse practices to balance the representations of men and women in various platforms (WILLA, 2000). The use of gendered language in public spaces should be avoided.
- We should advocate for the establishment of egalitarian national governments that incorporate gender planning in their public policy matters affecting both genders (Uwakweh, 1998:9).

7.6 CONCLUSION

This research found that the study of personal names is an important, rich and relevant source of information for sociologists, yet it remains largely unexplored. This is unfortunate since naming practices can inform theories of gender and identity. Zezuru personal names are narratives that carry a vast collection of history, myths, legends and various other attributes subsumed in the all-embracing concept of descriptive backing and critical discourse analysis. The present research dwelled on how personal names can reflect the gender status of the name

bearer. There are many factors which influence name choice among the *Zezuru* and gender was found to be the major factor. It is important to clarify that I am not arguing that gender is the only factor which influences name choice, but rather there are a plethora of other factors. The findings from this research demonstrated how personal names among the *Zezuru* can be an indicator of the gender dynamics that occur within families and the gender of the child. This research discovered that previous scholars who studied personal names were generalising and over simplifying naming choices by categorizing them using certain variables while neglecting other important variables such as gender, which have far reaching effects on the personhood of the name bearer and the participation of the individual in various spheres of life upon receiving the name. By and large, gendered names have far reaching consequences to those who are given the names and they can derail positive development in society. Personal names are therefore important among the *Zezuru* because with them, you can reach far in life but at the same time they can be a source of stigmatization which can result in your exclusion from important life events. This has been made possible by the gendered naming process which happens to be a major form of socialisation among the *Zezuru*. Personal names are an important component in onomastics for they contain rich information about the bearers of these names. While names play an important role as forms of identity, they also enhance gender inequalities through certain connotations contained in some of the names which stereotype the name bearers along gender lines. One's gender in society can place the name bearer at an advantage or disadvantage. Personal names contribute significantly to the construction of one's identity. It is this identity which determines one's participation in the socio-economic and political activities of society. Meaningful development in a country can only be realised if all people are given equal chances to express themselves and showcase their abilities regardless of their gender status. This study has shown that names given to people are rich in information to the extent of reflecting one's gender. It was established that naming among the *Zezuru* is gendered and as a result, most of the names do carry gender connotations which affect the bearers of these names in one way or another. Naming has gender tones; just like all other materials generated in a patriarchal society. Gender inequalities within society as evidenced in gendered names continue to affect women more than men, hence, strategies of enhancing gender equality among males and females are of utmost importance.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

MALE GENDERED PERSONAL NAMES

Simbarashe – The Lord’s Power

Simba – Power

Tichatonga – We will rule

Munyaradzi – Comforter

Tungamirai – Lead

Tafadzwa – We have been made happy

Garikai – Leave pretty

Tongai – Rule

Shingai – Be courageous

Ngwarai - Be vigilant

Svinurai - Be awake

Tinotenda -We are thankful

Ushewedu - Our kingship

Takunda – We are victorious

Simukai – Arise

Pindukai – Prosper

Rufaro – Joy

Masimba - Power

Tafiranyika - We are dying for the sake of this country

Shingirirai – Persevere

Gwinyai – Be courageous

Tanaka – We are alright

Ushe – Kingship

Tichafara – We will rejoice

Tavonga – We praise

Tapfuma - We are now rich

Vurayayi – Kill

Sheunesu – The Lord is with us

Takura – We are mature

Farai – Rejoice

Tutsirai – Increase

Chengetai - Look after

Kudakwashe - The Lord's Will

Tangai – Be first

Taavanhu – We are now human

Kundai – Be victorious

Tapiwa – We have been given

Kudzai – Respect

Munonoki – One who came late

Tichasvika – We have arrived

Dhokotera – Doctor

Mudhumeni – Agriculture extension worker

Teerera – Listen

Mutongi – Judge

Sungano – Unity

Kushinga – Being brave

Tigere – We are living pretty

Tamuka – We have arisen

Chenjerayi - Be aware

Tongai - Rule

Ishendibaba – Father is the king

Pfungwa – Mind

Vengai – Hate

Tongesai - Bring us before the courts

Mapitse – Competition

Murapi – The healer

Anesu – He is with us

Zvakaoma – Unsummonable

Pepukai - Be vigilant

Rwendo – Journey

Shupai – Bother

Takunda – We have won

Tambaoga - Play alone

Taruona – We have seen death

Tachiona – We have seen it

Tonderai – Recall

Tobaiwa – We are stabled

Zindoga – The solitary

Kura – Grow up

Tanaka – We are well

Pukirayi – Declare

Paradzai – Destroy

Pedzisai – Finish

Chenjerai – Be aware

FEMALE GENDERED PERSONAL NAMES

Yemurai – Admire

Rudo – Love

Fadzai – Entertain

Sarudzai – Choose

Chenai – Be presentable

Durai – Confess

Revai – Gossip

Rowesai – Cause us to be bewitched

Nesi – Nurse

Mukoti – Nurse

Nyarai – Be ashamed

Tsitsi – Mercy

Chipo – Gift

Rujeko – Enlightenment

Mutsa – Mercy

Mutsawashe – The mercy of the lord

Vimbai – Trust

Paidamoyo – Were the lord longed

Tadiwa – We have been loved

Muchaneta – You shall give up

Netsai – Be a nuisance

Ruramai – Be perfect

Nyasha – Mercy

Nyarai – Be ashamed

Shorai – Despise

Hazvinei – No matter

Ndakaiteyi – What did i do?

Bvumisai – Make them accept

Dambudzo – Problem

Muchadura – You shall disclose

Reururai – Confess

Ruvimbo – Trust

Chido – Wish

Machivei – What have you admired

Nyarai – Be ashamed

Dambudzo – One who causes problems

Nyaradzo – Comforter

Kumbirayi – Ask for help

Vongai – Be thankful

Runyararo – Peace

Shupikayi – Be in trouble

Rindai – Look after

Tsungai – Persevere

Varaidzo - Entertainer

Chiwaraidzo – One which Entertains

Shumirai – Pray

Mutsa – Mercy

Sekesai – One who causes one to be mocked

Netsayi – Trouble

Sesedzai – Accompany them bit by bit

Nyaradzai – Comfort them

Ruvimbo – Trust

Natsai – Trouble

Dudzayi – Confess

Chengetai – Keep

Ruvarashe – The rose of the Lord

Zuvarashe - The Lord's Sun

Ruramai – Be perfect

Fungai – Reason

Rumbidzai – Give praise

Rwaringeni – It has faced me

Zorodzai – Give rest

Muchanyara – You will be ashamed

Matinetsa – You have bothered us

Mandinyeya – You have back bitten me

Mandioneyi – What have you seen in me

Mandirasa – You have neglected me

Mandisema – You detest me

Mandivavarira – You are after me

Maonei – What have you seen?

Mhurai – Despise

Misodzi – Tears

Muchadii – What will you do?

Rowai – Bewitch

Radzai – Cause to sleep

Rutendo – Faith

Sekesai – That which causes to be laughed

Shongedzai – Decorate

Shorai – Despise

Shumirai – Praise

Shuvai - Yearn

Svorai - Look down upon

Nyemudzayi – Tease

Chengetai – Keep, look after me

Cheneso – Tidiness

Revai – Gossip

Reururai – Confess

Chemedzai – Make her cry

Tambudzai – Cause suffering

Tarisai – Look at

Tsungirirai – Be determined

Tsvakai – Search for

Zvanyadza – It has embarrassed

Ropafadzo – Blessing

Ripai – Repay

Chipiwa – Gift

Betserai – Assist

Chisvipo – Spit

Bvisai – Remove

Bvumai – Accept

Miriro – Waiting for

Misodzi – Tears

Chengeto – Looking after

APPENDIX2

College of Humanities

School of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Edgewood Campus

18 May 2015

Buhera District Education Officer

Ministry of Education

P. O. Box 200

Murambinda

Buhera

Zimbabwe

Request for permission to conduct a research.

My name is Viriri Maradze and I am a PhD candidate at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, South Africa. I would like to request your permission to carry out my research in your schools using your schools' registers. The title of the research is "Naming, Identity, and Gender Construction: A Phenomenological Study of Zezuru Names in Buhera South." The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between names and the gender status of the name bearers. To gather information, I will analyze pupils' names in the class registers.

Please note that:

Any information attained cannot be used against them and the collected data will be used for purposes of the research only. Data will be stored in a secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.

Your positive response to this request will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Viriri Maradze.

I can be contacted at:

Email: vmaradze@gmail.com

Cell: 0712094501

My supervisor is Professor N. Hlongwane who is located at the school of Education, Edgewood Campus of the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. She can be contacted at:

Email: hlongwan1@ukzn.ac.za

Cell: 0833390937

Office No: +2731 2601065

You may also contact the research office:

Tel: 0312604557

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

APPENDIX3

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. What is the purpose of giving a person a name?

2. What is the significance of a name?
3. Are there gender-based names? If yes, why? Elaborate.
4. What are some of the factors that influence the choice of a name?
5. Who is responsible for naming a newborn baby and why?
6. Are there any misunderstandings which arise due to the naming process? If any, how are these conflicts resolved?

APPENDIX 4

QUESTIONNAIRE ON NAMING, IDENTITY AND GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY OF ZEZURU NAMES IN BUHERA SOUTH.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

Indicate your response by either placing a tick in the brackets or an explanation in the space provided.

SECTION A

1. Gender/Sex Male() Female()

2. Age Range 18-25 yrs() 26-35 yrs () 36-45 yrs() 45+ yrs()

3. Level of Education Primary () Secondary () College () University ()
 Other (Specify).....

SECTION B

4. Who is responsible for naming a newborn baby in your society?
 The father () The mother () Other family members () (specify)
5. What are the attributes of a namegiver?
 Elaborate.....

6. What are the sources of Zezuru names?
 Historical () Social events () Religious events ()
7. Are there any conflicts which arise during the naming process? Yes () No ()
 If the answer is Yes, How are these conflicts resolved?
 Explain.....

8. What is the importance of naming?
 Explain.....

9. Do names given to people have an effect on the behavior of the namebearer?
 Explain.....

10. To what extent is a person's character influenced by his/her personal name?
 To a greater extent () To a lesser extent () Not at all ()

11. Do names given to people reflect their gender? Yes () No () If the answer is Yes, Elaborate.....

.....

12. What are examples of gender-based names?

.....
.....
.....

13. In your opinion, what could be the main reason for giving people gender-based names?

Explain.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX5

A UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as

possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date: 16/05/16

Greeting: Dear Sir/Madam.

My name is (Viriri Maradze) from the University of Kwazulu Natal, School of Education, Edgewood Campus, tel:+27(0) 312603888, email: mthembu@ukzn.ac.za.

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research on personal naming and gender. The aim and purpose of this research is to look at how personal names reflect the gender status of the name bearer. The study is expected to enrol three hundred participants; two hundred pupils and one hundred parents. It will be conducted in Buhera south. It will involve procedure interviews, filling in questionnaires and audio recording. The duration of your participation will be two months. The study is self-funded.

There are no touchable risks associated with this study. There will be no direct benefits to the participants except that it will add to the generation of knowledge. The study will contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of onomastics which has been overlooked for a very long period. All participants will be informed beforehand of all the procedures to be followed during the data gathering process of this research.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number _____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions, you may contact the researcher at Mutiusinazita High School – Cell 0712094501, or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. Contact details are as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

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Tel: 27 31 2608350 – Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any point. In the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation, you will not incur any penalty or loss of treatment or other benefit to which you are normally entitled. If you find that you are no longer able to continue participating in the research because of your own personal reasons, may you please inform the researcher in time. There are no consequences for withdrawing from this research save to say that it will affect the researcher in his quest for data collection. The researcher will only terminate the participant from the study only if the participant requests to do so.

There are no costs that will be incurred by the participants as a result of participating in this research except the precious time they will spend during the research. There will be no incentives or reimbursements for participating in this study.

No individual names will be used in the study. Instead, pseudo names will be used to hide the identity of participants. Information gathered for the study will be destroyed after the study, but that will be after the researcher has shown the participants the transcribed data for them to verify if the information was correctly transcribed.

CONSENT (Edit as required)

I (Name) have been informed about the study entitled (provide details) by (provide name of researcher/fieldworker).

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study (add these again if appropriate).

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (provide details).

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researcher then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2608350 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Video-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Use of my photographs for research purposes YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

(Where applicable)

Signature of Translator

Date

(Where applicable)