INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS OF THE NDAU PEOPLE OF MANICALAND PROVINCE IN ZIMBABWE: A CASE STUDY OF *BOTA RESHUPA*

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DECLARATION

I, Tenson Muyambo, declare that:

The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research;

This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university;

This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons;

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Signed: Date: 30/11/2018

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As the supervisors, we hereby approve this thesis for submission.

ABSTRACT

Framed from postcolonial and cultural hermeneutics perspectives, this study employs the phenomenological method in conjunction with historical and sociological approaches to investigate the efficacy of IKS of the Ndau of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. The study is premised on the argument that western knowledge has been accepted as normative despite the existence of other epistemologies worldwide. Using *bota reshupa* [Ndau herbal porridge] as a case study, the thesis argues that the production of knowledge is not an act of monopolizing a part of humanity but rather, that ownership thereof is the prerogative of every person and every community. Communities generate knowledge that is context-specific but at the same time knowledge can be beneficial to all of humanity. The thesis argued that while it is important to acknowledge power relations in the production of knowledge, it is equally significant to accept that we are living in a poly-epistemic world composed of various knowledges that complement each other.

The research findings showed that IKS are used for a variety of reasons. *Bota reshupa* serves as the primary health care of the Ndau, including defining their identity, rites of passage and expression of their sense of cultural beauty (aesthetics). It was found that *shupa* serves the socio-cultural as well as the religious spheres of the Ndau.

It was also made clear that the romanticising of IKS can be risky. Using cultural hermeneutics as a complementary theory to the postcolonial paradigm, *bota reshupa* was found to contain some harmful elements such as *kuhaza* [excessive nose and mouth bleeding] which affected Ndau males who consumed *shupa* (a shortened way of saying *bota reshupa*). *Shupa* taboos are very strict and any violations of the taboos may result in death if remedial measures are not expeditiously implemented. The thesis argued that despite the negative effects of *kuhaza* (which can be (re)defined and (re)negotiated), *shupa* remained and still remains a resource for the Ndau.

The practice also demonstrated the centrality and agency of the Ndau women in matters of their health, identity as well as their culture and situation. It was found that Ndau women were the custodians of *shupa*. They prepared and administered it, thereby women agency. However, using

cultural hermeneutics lens, it was found that although Ndau women were the custodians of the practice, the real owners of culture are Ndau males.

The need for mainstreaming IKS was also emphasised. The need to research, document and preserve IKS, especially in Zimbabwe, was emphasised throughout the thesis.

The study called for more in-depth research on IKS, particularly the scientific research on *shupa* to determine its pharmaceutical compounds, so that Zimbabweans could holistically benefit from *shupa*. The thesis also called for the creation of frameworks that would enable adequate funding into research on IKS in general and IKS curricula in particular in Zimbabwe.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late father George-Joseph Mabhuya Muyambo and my mother, Gosho Muyambo, whose yearning for formal education, though they never attended any formal school themselves, found fulfilment in me. I remember them insisting that I run to school bare-foot to obtain my formal education. I humbly thank them for their astute vision, despite growing up in a community that lacked enthusiasm for formal education.

This thesis is also dedicated to the Ndau people of south-eastern Zimbabwe for tenaciously holding onto their indigenous knowledge which, among other things, is the wellspring of their existence. I salute them!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABREVIATIONS

ABCFM   American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

AIDS   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

AIKS   African Indigenous Knowledge Systems

APA   African Purchase Area

BSAC   British South Africa Company

CoA   Comic Agreement

DST   Department of Science and Technology

DST-NRF   Department of Science and Technology- National Research Foundation

EMA   Environment Management Agency

FBO   Faith-Based Organisation

HIV   Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IK   Indigenous Knowledge

IKS   Indigenous Knowledge Systems

IPR   Intellectual Property Rights

LMS   London Missionary Society

NAZ   National Archives of Zimbabwe

NdaFA   Ndau Festival of the Arts

NCHCN   National Culture and Heritage Council of Namibian

NGZ   National Gallery of Zimbabwe

NIKSO   National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office

NMMZ	National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe
NNBRI	Namibian National Botanical Research Institute
NRF	National Research Foundation
NWU	North-West University
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
THAN	Traditional Healers' Association of Namibia
TK	Traditional Knowledge
UCCZ	United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UN	United Nations
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNIVEN	University of Venda
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZAOGA	Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa
ZINATHA	Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers' Association

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Chapter One

Introduction to the study

1.1 Introduction

Zimbabwe has more than sixteen ethno-linguistic groups; the dominant group being a coalition of Shona-speaking groups. These groups have different traditional beliefs, values as well as practices that are jointly referred to as the Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). The IKS include, but are not limited to, indigenous knowledge regarding matters of health, food security, the environment and agriculture. This study interrogates the efficacy of *bota reshupa*[1] of the Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. The study is a critical investigation of *bota reshupa* as a traditional knowledge for health among the Ndau. Studies on traditional medicine have been conducted on many groups in Zimbabwe, but none have been done from the Ndau socio-religious and cultural perspective. Those studies that scrutinized traditional medicine, such as the study by Shoko (2007) on the Karanga people of Midlands province, emphasised the health and well-being of the Karanga people. Building on his study, the current study investigates the ingenuity of Ndau people on their IKS, with a special emphasis on *shupa*. The need to research *shupa* was necessitated after the World Health Organisation (WHO 2004) admitted that approximately 80% of Africa's population use traditional medicine for primary health care needs.

Despite the lack of attention paid to the indigenous knowledge systems of local communities in Zimbabwe, and as noted by Mapara (2017), IKS are still burgeoning. Recent studies in Namibia, for example, have shown that IKS are being used in curbing HIV and AIDS - related complications, (Chinsembu 2015), treating malaria (Preez, Nafuka, Mumbengegwi and Bock 2015) and cancer (Dushimemaria, Mumbengegwi and Bock 2015). The studies in question have revealed how the

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[1] This is porridge prepared using a mixture of traditional herbs soaked in water. The water, which is sweet, is used in preparing porridge. The porridge has an additive value of ensuring good health where individuals who partake of it are said to be 'immune' to a number of diseases. *Shupa* used to take the place of the modern-day BCG immunisation programmes of children under the age of five. In addition, it is said to enhance men's virility. The watery mixture is stored in a *dumbu* [calabash], which is simply referred to as *shupa*. Elders, both males and females can drink the mixture and it keeps them healthy (Muyambo 2015:65). This study uses the word shupa and the phrase *bota reshupa* interchangeably. This is because the Ndau people, who are also the subjects of the study, use them thus. *Shupa*, the container and *shupa*, the herbal porridge, have almost the same meaning (Refer to Chapter Five of the study).

knowledge gleaned from IKS has been implemented in primary health care. Studies of that nature are few in Zimbabwean communities.

1.2 Background to the study

The desire to undertake this study was two-fold. Firstly, it arose from personal experiences as a member of the Ndau community, growing up asking many questions about certain Ndau beliefs and practices. This quest for knowledge was further enhanced when my brother nearly lost his life when he was fed *shupa,* which later resulted in him bleeding [*kukotsodzwa*] after his wife was said to had cheated on him. Secondly, during my reading of IKS, particularly African beliefs and practices, norms and traditional values from African scholars such as Oduyoye (1992), Kanyoro (2002), Mapuranga (2010), Siwila (2011), Odora Hoppers (2001,2002) and Mawere (2010, 2011,2012, 2014,) the desire to interrogate the Ndau IKS became even more urgent and resulted in the current study.

1.2.1 My experiences as a Ndau male member

Growing up among the Ndau people, certain beliefs and practices which defined male and female roles in the community were taught and learnt. Although the division between Ndau males and females is not a major issue in Ndau discourse, males and females have distinctive roles. In addition to the myriads of roles the Ndau females play, particularly the older females, they also preside over the primary health care needs of the Ndau people. *Bota reshupa* has known health benefits. The Ndau administer it to prevent and cure several ailments. Among the stories told about *bota reshupa* in the community, were the beliefs that it acted as a safety valve for a considerable number of ailments, it was an immunity and virility booster and also functioned as a 'snare' for women who cheated on their husbands. Questions such as: What is this herbal porridge (*bota reshupa*) about? What is in it that makes it so unique? How does it serve as an immunity and virility booster? How does it function as a 'trap' for women who cheat on their husbands, were uppermost but remained unanswered at the time?

When I was in Form two, my brother bled [*kukotsora*] because his wife was allegedly cheating on him. The story was never made public, but I heard about it through my grandmother who mentioned the matter of *bota reshupa* and the concept of *kuhaza* [bleeding because one's wife had cheated on him]. According to my grandmother, my brother was given traditional medicine to cure

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him of *kuhaza.* Once again, the earlier questions regarding this herbal porridge resurfaced, as this information regarding my brother served to create confusion as to what this practice of *bota reshupa* actually was, particularly as it could harm my brother and at the same time created schisms between my sister-in law and my other relatives. My sister-in law who was not a Ndau, lost the trust placed in her by my family, and because she had allegedly cheated on my brother, my brother was encouraged by some members of the family to marry another wife, without divorcing her. This led to further questions, such as, had my sister-in-law received fair treatment, as she had been scorned during the discussion of this matter by the council of elders for the family, and the role of traditional practice in the Ndau society.

Secondly, the desire to interrogate Ndau beliefs and practices re-surfaced during the writing of my master's dissertation on Ndau masculinities in the HIV and AIDS era. This study revealed that the Ndau were redefining masculinity in the HIV and AIDS context and that Ndau practices such as widow inheritance were being renegotiated in the context of HIV and AIDS. Sons could 'inherit' their mothers, that is, where a young brother could marry his deceased brother's wife, was deconstructed, as sons took over and oversaw the welfare of their mothers by providing them with food, shelter and other basic needs. This appeared to be a commendable re-working of tradition, and it rekindled the earlier desire to interrogate the beliefs and practices of *shupa*. The question arose that if the Ndau could redefine and renegotiate some of their traditional practices, such as widow inheritance in the context of HIV and AIDS, why was *shupa* not being redefined and renegotiated like other traditional practices as forms of Ndau IKS? Was it because it was deemed as a safe space for all? What about the risks associated with it through *kuhaza?* Was it not oppressive to women? How efficacious was *bota reshupa?* These questions required an in-depth research of the beliefs and practices linked to *bota reshupa.*

1.2.2 Building on Other Sources Related to the Study

As preparations were made to undertake a study that would address the many questions raised above, literature on IKS was sought out and debates raged on from different perspectives. These included the efficacy of IKS in terms of food security (Mararike 2001, Ndwandwe and Mudhara 2014, Dlamini and Kaya 2016) and traditional medicine (Chavunduka 1994, Mbata 2015), to mention a few. Other studies to further interrogate *bota reshupa* included works by African female

theologians like Amba Mercy Oduyoye, Musimbi Kanyoro, Musa weNkosi Dube, Isabel Apawo Phiri, Lilian Cheelo Siwila and Praise Tapiwa Mapuranga. including male theologians such as Ezra Chitando and Sam Tinyiko Maluleke[2]. These cited scholars have brought tradition, particularly African beliefs, practices, norms and values under scrutiny, with the intent to deconstruct their life-denying properties and reconstruct their life-affirming aspects.

There is abundant literature on the efficacy of IKS and hence there is a need to have IKS included in African curricula in higher institutions of learning (Odora Hoppers 2001, 2002, Dei 2000, 2014, Ouma 2013, Khupe 2014, Kaya 2013, Mapara 2017). These scholars argue that IKS form the mainstay of a people and omitting IKS from the curriculum as defining aspects of a people is not only supporting patronising colonial thinking towards African IKS but severing African education from the African socio-cultural milieu. This kind of education is irrelevant and useless to African students. These arguments underpinned the desire to discover whether *bota reshupa* is an African practice that requires deconstruction or reconstruction. This study is therefore an appraisal as well as a critique of *shupa* as a Ndau IKS.

1.3 Research Problem

While there is a plethora of research available on IKS which focuses on disciplines such as environment, agriculture, medicine, education and many others there is a void on how IKS address the geopolitical and socio-cultural dimensions of communities in the field of Religious Studies and Theology. Available studies emanating from the discipline of social sciences, have focused on the role of traditional medicine (Chavunduka 1994,) traditional healing (Shoko 2007, 2016), IKS in education (Odora Hoppers, 2001, 2002, Dei 2014, Kaya 2013), IKS and Science education (Khupe 2014) and pregnancy and childbirth (Hlatshwayo 2017). For example, Nimoh (2014) suggests that the life expectancy in countries such as India, China, Japan and Singapore is higher than those in the US and other European countries. The reason for this extended life expectancy can be ascribed to the use of IKS in traditional medicine for the people's primary health care. Despite such findings and the earlier admission by the WHO (2004) regarding the use of IKS in traditional medicine,

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[2] The two male theologians are known for their unwavering support for the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians whose works are on the interface among culture, religion and gender. For Ezra Chitando, culture must be critiqued to deal with its excesses such as patriarchy and masculinity whereas for Sam Tinyiko Maluleke the trinity of culture, religion and gender is unholy.

literature including empirical research on IKS deny the efficacy of IKS as different type of science. In addition, very little research, if any, has been conducted that holistically emphasise the multi-dimensional nature of IKS as a science, not as perceived by the hard sciences such as Biology, Physics and Chemistry. Literature that exists concentrates on one dimensional prism of IKS, which could be on IKS and environment, agriculture and so forth. On another level there is no any noticeable practical steps by the Zimbabwean government to mainstream IKS such as *shupa*. Therefore, a gap exists, and it is the intention of this thesis fill in the gap by holistically acknowledging and promoting the efficacy of IKS, particularly in terms of IKS and primary health care needs, identity as well as aesthetics. The thesis' key question was: How efficacious is *bota reshupa* among the Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe?

1.4 Objectives and research questions for the study

The objectives that guided this study are as follows: The first objective was to explore the Ndau people' perceptions on *shupa*'s efficacy as a resource (or lack thereof). It discussed the efficacy of *shupa* as an agency for the Ndau people's survival. The question for this objective was: What significance does *shupa* have for the practitioners? The practitioners' perceptions were considered in answering the overarching question of the study: How efficacious is *bota reshupa* as resource among the Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe? The second objective was to examine the Ndau people's understanding of *bota reshupa*. The study was an attempt to conceptualise *shupa*, that is, its nature, preparation, purpose(s), administration as well as its sanctions as a Ndau IKS. The objective sought to answer these questions: What is *bota reshupa*? What are its ingredients? How is it prepared and administered? Who administers it? The participants' views on these questions shed insights into the beliefs and practices of *shupa.* The third objective was to examine the challenges and opportunities of *shupa* to ascertain its status in 21st century Zimbabwe. The objective addressed the question: What are the challenges and prospects of *shupa* in 21st century Zimbabwe? This is done with a view to examine how *shupa* as Ndau IKS is pitted against challenges such as modernisation. The objective sought to find out the practice's prevalence against a plethora of mitigating factors as discussed in Chapter six of the study.

The questions raised above were not exhaustive as they did not cover all the research questions, hence the need for the current research on Ndau *shupa* beliefs and practices. However, the research questions offered a comprehensive guide to the study of the IKS of the Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The purpose of my research study was to explore and document, from interaction with the Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe, their indigenous knowledge systems, particularly *bota reshupa*. The study's aim was to explore the efficacy of *bota reshupa* as a resource for the Ndau. The study had several purposes. Firstly, the study established how *shupa* contributed to the primary health care needs of the Ndau people, how it creates an identity, is an expression of art (aesthetics) and functions as a rite of passage. Secondly, the study described *shupa* in detail with the intention to understand the practice, that is, its preparation, administration and purposes. Thirdly, the study documented the practice for its preservation, protection and promotion in a context where IKS are under threat of being lost due to factors such as the death of the custodians of the IKS, and globalisation. Fourthly, taboos were also explored with the intention to establish how *shupa* may endanger people's lives should these taboos be violated. The study critically interrogated *shupa* to deconstruct its undesirable elements whilst reconstructing it in order to establish its positive attributes for the survival of IKS in Africa.

1.6 Significance of the study

This current study was important from several perspectives. The literature review revealed that there was no literature that chronicled the practice of *shupa*. Although the researcher published an article on this practice in 2015, the article was not a detailed documentation of the practice. There was no systematic documentation of *shupa* as one of the most important IKS for the Ndau. This study provides a much-needed and detailed description of *shupa* with the intention not only to document it, but also to preserve it as an essential resource for the Ndau. It contributed to literature on IKS, particularly in respect of studies on traditional medicine. Another contribution of this study was that it informed societal policy makers as well as planners of the need to preserve a people's heritage, collectively referred to as IKS. This did not only mean documenting IKS but required suggestions for the preservation of IKS policies and statutes for future generations.

Apart from the above, the study was significant in that it proclaimed the significance of IKS, particularly *shupa*, and the need to take IKS seriously. The call to have IKS (in its variant forms) included as part of the curriculum (Odora Hoppers 2001, 2002, Dei 2014, Kaya 2014, Khupe 2014, Gwekwerere 2016) has been deafening. However, lack of research on IKS defeats this call. IKS must be researched on and documented for it to become part of the curriculum at institutions of learning in Zimbabwe. This study sets out to study *shupa* and document it. It was also meant to conscientise Zimbabweans in general and the Ndau in particular to be proud of their IKS in which their heritage and culture find expression. The study also echoed Mapara (2017)'s concern at the lukewarm approach to IKS by the Zimbabwean Government. It was also a clarion call for the Zimbabwean government, stakeholders and institutions of learning to prioritise IKS as the foundation of a people's existence. This study, therefore, is carried out against the context of the dominance of western knowledge in Africa to recover, reclaim, and re-position indigenous knowledge which has been marginalised, despite the fact that it forms an integral part of the daily survival strategies of the African people (Shonhai 2016, Hlatshwayo 2017). This thesis, using a case study of the Ndau *bota reshupa*, demonstrates that IKS play multifarious roles in human existence, ranging from health and wellness, identity, rites of passage to a people's sense of aesthetics. All these roles have been demonstrated by one IKS, *bota reshupa*, a holistic dimension which is lacking in literature. This study fills this lacuna by combining the socio- religious and cultural-political aspects of IKS in *bota reshupa*.

1.7 Limitations and delimitations of the study

The study is primarily limited to research on the efficacy of *bota reshupa* as a practice of the Ndau. There have been arguments that IKS are on the resurgence after decades of vilifications. This research attempts to discover the extent to which IKS, particularly the Ndau *bota reshupa,* is a resource that people depended on for their socio-religious and cultural- political survival from time immemorial. What is central in this study is the investigation of the efficacy of *bota reshupa* practice as a resource for the Ndau. The study does this by obtaining rich descriptions about *bota reshupa* including its preparation, administration and its purposes. The intention was not to obtain information from across the province of Manicaland, but from the Chipinge district. Although Chimanimani is yet another Ndau district, the study focused on Chipinge, more particularly in the Mutema, Musikavanhu and Garahwa chieftaincies. The study confined itself to the geo-political

and socio-religious nature of the herbal porridge as well as to its primary health care provisions. It did not delve into the medical tests of the herbal porridge for the simple reason that the study wanted to capture the herbal porridge as perceived by the practitioners themselves and that the researcher is not a hard science scientist (chemist, biologist or physician) but a social scientist whose interest in the study was to investigate the efficacy of the porridge from the practitioners' point of view. Be that as it may, the thesis recommended for further research, where medical tests of the herbal porridge could be investigated in a laboratory, in Chapter Seven.

The sample was drawn from elderly males and females in the said chieftaincies, as their age, and by implication their experiential knowledge, made them rich data sites (Patton 2002). The study was also confined to professionals such as Ministers of Religion, university lecturers and teachers of Ndau origin. These are professionals born and bred according to Ndau IKS.

The study was presented with some challenges during the research process. As the research sites were over vast distances and provinces, transport and upkeep costs while in the field were considerable.

1.8 Definition of key terms

It is prudent at this point to provide working definitions of key terms. Mapuranga (2010:30) maintains that "scholarship lives by its quarrels"; there is no one way of understanding terms and as such contextual definitions of terms become imperative if one wants to avoid being misunderstood.

Various scholars have suggested a variety of definitions for terms such as 'indigenous knowledge systems', 'tradition' and 'culture', 'science', terms constantly used in this thesis. To contextualise the research, brief definitions of the terms are provided. Under this chapter a cursory treatment of the terms is given for a more detailed analysis is provided in the literature review chapter.

1.8.1 The phrase Indigenous Knowledge Systems

There are contestations as to what indigenous knowledge system means as a term. The difficulty is because the phrase 'indigenous knowledge system' is made up of three key terms 'indigenous', 'knowledge' and 'system(s)'which are variously defined by scholars. Another difficulty in this phrase is whether to refer to indigenous knowledge system in the singular or plural. Hence these

terms are defined individually before coining them together to form the phrase 'Indigenous Knowledge System(s)'.

1.8.1.1 The term 'Indigenous'

Loubser (2005:76) argues that the term *indigenous* is internationally misunderstood, especially by Europeans, as being synonymous or related to 'traditional', 'aboriginal', 'vernacular', 'African', 'Black' and 'native American'. Already the definitions alluded to thus far illustrate deep-seated differences owing to the perspectives in defining the term. The term 'traditional', from a European perspective, is often associated with 'primitive' as well as 'backwardness' (Idowu 1973, Shonhai 2016). Similarly, the term 'aboriginal' carries some negative connotations meaning backward and underdeveloped. But taken from its Australian reference, it means people who are members of the Aboriginal race of Australia, indigenous to mainland Australia. A European understanding offered by Loubser (but obviously not subscribing to it himself) to the term *indigenous* is not only racist but also prejudicial. It is a definition that erroneously associates non-Europeans with backwardness, uncouth and the Europeans as the opposite (although not all Europeans subscribe to this view). This binary view creates problems, which are beyond the purview of this discussion, which have resulted in IKS being referred to as an undervalued resource (Fernandez 1994). Having given this background to the term *indigenous*, Loubser's (2005) understanding of the term as populations or communities native to a particular given geographical area is helpful for this study. This is a non-racial description of the term *indigenous.* The term *indigenous* simply means being native. This non-racial meaning is adopted for purposes of this study.

Contrary to the above international misunderstanding of the term *indigenous*, Odora Hoppers (2001) adds her voice as she sees nothing sinister or unpalatable about the word *indigenous.* For her the term is well-intended and well-meaning. According to Odora Hoppers (2002) indigenous refers to the root, that is something which is natural. In other words, it is "something natural or innate (to)" (Odora Hoppers 2002:9). It simply refers to be an integral part of a culture. From this understanding Europeans and non-Europeans, alike, are *indigenous* but under different contexts and circumstances. For purposes of this study the term *indigenous* refers to that which is aboriginal, native and traditional. This means the term *indigenous* refers to a treasure that is passed on from one generation to next.

1.8.1.2 The term 'Knowledge'

Like the term *indigenous* above, the term *knowledge* is not without contestations. The contestations revolve around the question of what constitutes knowledge. The term *knowledge* must not be narrowly understood. Arguments have been advanced that *knowledge* can never be *indigenous* (Horsthemke 2004). Arguably, the understanding of *knowledge* as a socio-cultural and historical construction, as argued by Turnbull (1997), informs the study's understanding of the term 'knowledge. Knowledge is never knowledge simply because it has been verified and validated in a science laboratory. Knowledge in its true sense is that which serves a purpose within a people's socio-cultural and political milieu. Once people have tested their knowledge through trial and error and proved to be useful that knowledge becomes equally acceptable. For this reason, Khupe (2014) argues that all societies, therefore, can produce knowledge. This implies that there are cross-cultural variations of knowledge. In other words, knowledge should not be normative to one community as has been the case where the western countries are erroneously believed to be the only knowledge producers.

The Westernisation of knowledge was brought about by colonisation. Colonisation not only propelled the dissemination of western knowledge to others who were not western but aided in thwarting the diffusion of alternative knowledges (Khupe 2014). This led to the monopolising of knowledge. Knowledge is something that everyone possesses (Studley 1998). The understanding of *knowledge* as argued from a non-Western perspective by Aikenhead and Ogawa (2007) is that the noun 'knowledge' is not found in indigenous languages, therefore they prefer the equivalence or closest translation of knowledge as 'ways of knowing'. Knowledge, therefore, in this study, refers to ways of knowing, where knowledge is inseparable from the knower (Khupe 2014:47). It is the sum of what an individual or community knows.

1.8.1.3 The term 'System(s)'

 System(s) refers to a set of complex patterns of knowledge and technologies. They are knowledges and technologies that are not haphazard but patterned and systematic. Referring to this knowledge as a 'system' suggests that it is a closely woven pattern of knowledge that ensures continued existence of knowledge. Because this knowledge is a system, it implies that it comprises the interconnectedness of a people's values, norms, beliefs and practices for survival.

1.8.1.4 The phrase 'Indigenous Knowledge Systems' (IKS)

The phrase 'indigenous knowledge system(s)' is often referred to as Indigenous Knowledge (IK). Although Semali and Kincheloe (1999) look at the derogatory associations attached to the term 'indigenous knowledge' like 'primitive', 'wild' and 'natural' which resulted in indigenous knowledge labelled the 'native' way of knowing, Odora Hoppers (2002:9) describes this phrase as a "combination of knowledge systems encompassing technology, social, economic and philosophical learning, or educational, legal and governance systems". She further argues that IKS is "characterised by its embeddedness in the cultural web and history of a people, including their civilisation, and forms the backbone of the social, economic, scientific and technological identity of such a people" (Odora Hoppers 2001:77). Mugwisi (2017) conceptualises IK simply as knowledge that is locally developed and locally accumulated, over time, by a community. The knowledge is then passed on from one generation to the next. This knowledge is grounded in most facets of human activities, that involve agriculture, traditional and alternative medicine, human and animal health, forestry and botany. The current study agrees with the views held by Odora Hoppers (2001) and Mugwisi (2017) of IKS/IK above. It is indeed the foundations and information hub of a society (Maila and Loubser 2003). IKS is the aggregate understandings, cumulative skills, and collective philosophies that are developed by societies which have protracted histories of interacting with their immediate natural environs (UNESCO 2009-2014).

For the purpose of this study, IKS is understood in its singular form to mean a collection of a people's beliefs, values, norms and practices that have been adopted and adapted to changing circumstances. It is a collection of tangible and non-tangible elements of a people's tradition and culture passed down over generations by word of mouth. It can either be IKS or IK and these will be used in the study interchangeably.

1.8.2 The term 'Tradition'

The term 'tradition' is conceptually misunderstood. A possible reason is that the term has assumed two very differently polarizing perspectives. The first is the negative perspective, which associates the term with 'static', unchanging and belonging to a 'frozen past' (Graburn 2001). This sense of the word is linked to aspects of 'primitivity' and 'backwardness'. Tradition is erroneously understood to be the opposite of modernity. The other understanding is the positive sense of the

word. Graburn (2001:6) succinctly explains the understanding of tradition as "those cultures features …. continued to be handed on, thought about, preserved and not lost". Horner (1990:28) insightfully argues that all tradition contains aspects of invention handed down from one generation to the next. Chidester (1996) sums up the positive sense of tradition by stating that tradition is that which is handed down and taken up by subsequent generation. Put simply, tradition in this study refers to a collection of a people's or community's actions, behaviours and habits that define who they are. It is a wholesale collection of elements that determine how individuals within that community relate to one another, relate to nature and to other communities that they co-exist with. This forms part of the community's customs and norms that are handed on from one generation to another.

1.8.3 The term 'Culture'

The term 'culture', in scholarship, is not a straightforward term to define. Culture holds different meanings to different people. However, for the purpose of this study the definition given by Kangwa (2017) suffices. He refers to the term 'culture' as containing unique patterns of ideas, beliefs, and norms of any given group of people. In other words, culture reflects the way of life of a society or a group and the relationship among its members. The definition provided by Ferrante (2015: 48), that culture is "the way of life of a people" is fitting as culture does indeed encompasses people's ingenuities in adapting and responding to their surroundings. Culture includes a people's lifestyle which in turn reflects their beliefs, values, norms and symbols.

1.8.4 The phrase '*Bota reshupa*' (herbal porridge)

This term refers to the indigenous herbal porridge made by the Ndau people. Muyambo (2015) defines *bota reshupa* as a herbal porridge which is prepared by using a concoction of traditional herbs soaked in water. The watery substance, which is kept in a calabash (or *dumbu* in Ndau language) is then mixed with millet or rapoko to prepare the porridge. This herbal porridge forms the subject of this study in terms of IKS.

1.8.5 The term 'Science'

The term science refers to knowledge accumulated over many centuries. This implies that we have many sciences which can be categorised as western and non-western science. Non-western science

is the subject of this thesis because it is the science that has been marginalised at the expense of western science, under unjustified reasons to do with knowledge validation. In the thesis, we argue that IKS as grouped under non-western science is a different type of science. The difference must not be understood to imply inferiority. It is a difference in generation, validation and usage of that science as circumstances dictate.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the orientation of the study on indigenous knowledge systems of the Ndau of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe, this being a case study of *bota reshupa*. This introductory chapter presented the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives and the critical question that underpinned the study. The purpose and significance of the study, limitations and delimitations as well as the definitions of the key terms of the study were outlined. In order to critically respond to the research question, that is, how efficacious is this porridge, *bota reshupa* as a resource of the Ndau, Chapter Two focused on the literature review on IKS. It discussed the conceptualisation of IKS and its efficacy in different disciplines such as climate change, agriculture, food security and primary health care needs. This placed the study of *bota reshupa* as a case study into context. The chapter contains a trajectory survey of other existing research material on IKS which illustrated how IKS discourses have been viewed and discoursed on from different perspectives. These discourses are juxtaposed against the findings of this current study.

1.10   Chapter Outline

This study consists of seven chapters. Chapter **One** contains the general introduction as discussed above, placing the study into perspective, sets the tone of the study.

Chapter **Two**, as discussed above, focused on literature review on IKS. It is a trajectory survey of IKS in general with the intention to demonstrate that IKS are a resource. The chapter also traced the status of IKS internationally, regionally and nationally. This was done to find out whether other nations were at the same footing in terms of promoting and preserving the IKS.

Chapter **Three** turned to the research methodology and theoretical frameworks. Postcolonial theory formed the lenses through which this study was undertaken. The theory presupposed that African values, ideas, beliefs and practices had been distorted by the colonialists. The theory

suggested correcting such misinformation, and untruths that IKS are not based on superstitious beliefs but functions as an effective resource to ensure and promote the survival of the people. To avoid romanticising IKS, the study also employed cultural hermeneutics as an analytical tool in conjunction with postcolonial theory. This was done from the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) perspective to deconstruct those elements in *bota reshupa* that might impinge on people's rights as well as reconstructing the practice for it to be able to affirm life. The chapter further detailed the methodology used in the study. The phenomenological approach in collaboration with the historical and the sociological approaches, was implemented in this study.

Chapter **Four** focused on the Ndau people of Chipinge. This focus was essential as the chapter was an attempt at understanding who the Ndau people were. This included their culture, traditions and customs which collectively formed the background to the Ndau IKS. The chapter traced the historical background of the Ndau people before colonisation and Christianisation. It further analysed the impact of colonisation and Christianisation on Ndau beliefs, ideas, values, customs and traditions. This was done to ascertain whether the colonisation and Christianisation of Ndau communities was a welcome development. This set the tone for Chapter **Five** which discoursed on the Ndau perceptions of their IKS, particularly in terms of *bota reshupa.*

The research findings from the respondents are presented in Chapter **Five**. The chapter provided a detailed account of the Ndau perceptions on *shupa*. This chapter is a response to the first objective of the study, that is, to explore Ndau people's understanding of *bota reshupa.* The chapter addressed this objective by providing a detailed description of *bota reshupa,* its nature, administration and purposes as understood by the Ndau. The chapter also explored the emerging themes and patterns evident from the respondents' views regarding *bota reshupa.* This chapter also had as its objective the assessment of the efficacy of *bota reshupa* for the Ndau. The chapter illustrated that *bota reshupa* was a resource to ensure the Ndau's survival.

It was also prudent to discover the prospects and challenges of *bota reshupa* in 21st century Zimbabwe. This was addressed in Chapter **Six** of the study. The objective of this chapter was to examine the status of the practice in the current technocratic society of the 21st century. This chapter recorded the prospects and challenges of the practice as recounted by the respondents. The chapter answered the question, what is the future of IKS in Zimbabwe? Chapter **Seven** concludes

the thesis. All the concepts and views developed from the study were synergized in this final Chapter to serve as the conclusion and to provide possible areas of research as an attempt to close the research gaps identified in the study.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One provided a general introduction and background, the problem statement, the justification, the aim and objectives, the research questions and the delimitation and limitation of the study.

This chapter considers the available literature on Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), with the focus on *shupa* as an indigenous resource to the Ndau people of the Chipinge district in Zimbabwe. There is a paucity of literature on the Ndau and their beliefs and practices pertaining to the use of *shupa* as a resource for them. For this reason, the chapter focuses on the literature pertaining to IKS in general as well as IKS and development, emphasising the efficacy of IKS to confront challenges such as climate change, agricultural issues, food insecurity and primary health care. This is to illustrate the efficacy of IKS compared to other studies which have been carried out elsewhere. The chapter considers literature that define IKS, followed by reviewing what has been said about IKS in terms of sustainable development, with the emphasis on the efficacy of IKS in addressing the said global challenges; and also attempts to combat the often-negative western interpretation of indigenous ways knowing of indigenous communities. This serves to situate the study in a context that enables a critical exploration of the use of *shupa* in addressing the socio-cultural and well-being matters of the Ndau. This resonates with one of the investigative objectives of the study. It is, therefore, prudent to focus on the available literature on IKS as a resource for sustainable development. Since IKS are on the resurgence, after decades of vilification and marginalisation by western epistemologies and ontologies, it is also important for this chapter to explore literature on how IKS discourses have been accepted and embraced by organisations such as the United Nations despite its background of western annihilation, thus providing a global perspective on IKS. This literature also includes writings on IKS from countries such as South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe in the Southern Africa Development Committee (SADC), thereby adding a SADC perspective on IKS. This enables an assessment of Zimbabwe's stance on IKS which assists in analysing the use of *shupa* against an authentic background of how IKS are generally understood in Zimbabwe and particularly among the Ndau. South Africa and Namibia

have been selected for this study, not only because of their proximity to Zimbabwe, but because they are known to have played leading roles in crafting IKS policies meant to protect, promote and preserve IKS in the SADC region. The next section is an attempt at understanding IKS as debated in scholarship. Although some of the terms were explained in chapter one under section 1.8, this chapter further provides more detailed discussions of the terms and phrases as discoursed in various scholarship. This must not be understood to be repetition but to provide a more nuanced analysis of the terms which could not be done in chapter one which only introduces the thesis.

2.2 Indigenous knowledge Systems (IKS)

For the purpose of the study, the subject of IKS cannot be fully understood unless one considers the cautionary note sounded by Khupe (2014) who advises that the concepts of indigenous knowledge systems and indigenous knowledge are complex and not easily defined. For Khupe, the first complexity is the lack of consensus as who and what qualifies as indigenous. Secondly, there is no consensus on what exactly constitutes knowledge. These two complexities form the entry points to this chapter. The terms 'indigenous' and 'knowledge' are essential to any study that addresses indigenous knowledge systems, which are often referred to as indigenous knowledge (IK) in most of the scholarly discourses on IKS. To illustrate the complexities, it is necessary to define the terms 'indigenous' and 'knowledge' as provided by scholarship. This does not only clarify the said complexities but also the misconceptions contained therein. Mawere (2014) concurs that the concept of indigenous knowledge is a combination of two terms 'indigenous' and 'knowledge' and should be individually scrutinised prior to any analysis.

2.2.1 Indigenous

The word 'indigenous' is most often conceptualised differently, which creates a multifarious understanding of the concept, depending on the definer's perspective. Apart from the localised understanding of the term 'indigenous' which usually refers to local, traditional, non-western beliefs, practices, customs and worldviews (Horsthemke 2004), the term is said to be problematic in that it implies belonging to or originating from an area, or naturally living or growing in an area (Khupe 2014). This, according to Ogunniyi and Ogawa (2008), creates problems in that human beings migrate, and therefore referring to the word 'indigenous' in absolute terms is problematic. This implies that the word 'indigenous' is relative. The questions that arise from this are: How

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does an entity become indigenous? What period of time should a people be domiciled in an area for them to become indigenous? In a bid to answer these questions, the World Council of Indigenous People (WCIP) firstly addresses the matter of identity of indigenous people. This perhaps is because the word 'indigenous' is closely related to the phrase 'indigenous people'. Understanding indigenous people first becomes imperative. The Council defines indigenous people as:

> …population groups who from ancient times have inhabited the lands where we live, who are aware of having a character of their own, with social traditions and means of expression that are linked to the country inherited from our ancestors, with a language of our own, and having essential and unique characteristics which confer upon us a strong conviction of belonging to a people, who have an identity in ourselves and should be thus regarded by others (IUCN Inter-Commission Task Force on Indigenous Peoples, 1997: 27).

Although the above definition is not specific on the length of time a people must be domiciled in a place for them to be regarded as indigenous, the definition sheds light on identifying who indigenous people are. Although Khupe (2014) criticises the use of 'ancient times' for not being specific in terms of time, the definition offered is quite informative in understanding that indigenous people have a common identity, they are linked (even though they may be away from their land of origin) to the country or land of their ancestors and have a language of their own. These factors point to indigenous people as being a distinct group.

Even if Ogunniyi and Ogawa (2008) argue that the migratory characteristics of people render the term 'indigenous' fluid, as people and their knowledge and practices change with circumstances, it is evident that indigenous, as argued by Mawere (2014:4) literally means "original, first, native to a place or aboriginal people to an area". This negates the western view of indigenous as superstitious, primitive and static. As circumstances surrounding a people change so does their IKS, implying that IKS are dynamic. Mertens, Cram and Chilisa (2013) posit that indigenous people, therefore, are those who are descendants of those who inhabited certain lands before the lands were occupied and dominated by others. Whether these people have been displaced due to socio-economic and geopolitical reasons, they remain the indigenous people of a certain area. Even those of the diasporic disposition maintain their roots to which they relate and hence are considered

indigenous people of their descendants' places of origins they trace back to as their roots define their origins. For example, Africans in America trace their origins to Africa after decades of slavery. This renders them as indigenous people to Africa even if they have not the slightest idea of what it means to be African or have never set foot in Africa. This resonates with Kapoor and Shizha's (2010) argument that Africans never refer to themselves as indigenous people, but that they are people of African origins and are therefore African, and not because of being by-products of colonial regimes. The West's understanding of 'indigenous' as being synonymous with 'primitive', 'naïve' and 'unscientific' (Khupe 2014:45) is prejudicial and does not objectively depict the nature of the indigenous people. The migratory characteristics of people alluded to by Ogunniyi and Ogawa above does not always render a people rootless. Although the question of the length of time a people's stay at a specific place is a determinant factor to one's understanding of being indigenous, it does not mean that people must have a fixed abode to qualify as indigenous. When they migrate that does not make them forget where they came from, as this information is handed down orally from one generation to the next and in some instances recorded for the literate communities. In this study 'indigenous' refers to native and aboriginal, meaning belonging to, inhabitant to. This study takes the stance that the word 'indigenous' refers to the populace of a place who have close ties to the land, often depending on it for their livelihood. The Ndau of the Chipinge district are therefore indigenous people of the land or place, designated as Chipinge.

2.2.2 Understanding the term Knowledge

Equally contentious is the concept of knowledge. The questions that arise are what constitutes knowledge and is knowledge unanimously accepted as knowledge? These questions have been necessitated by the divergent views on what should qualify as knowledge. According to Agrawal (1995a) the western worldview understands knowledge as rational/scientific knowledge. This western worldview qualifies knowledge as that which can be verified in a science laboratory; knowledge that has not gone through the verification and validation process is viewed as irrational and unscientific and hence does not constitute knowledge. Fatnowna and Pickett (2002) state that this binary understanding of knowledge does not provide for indigenous people their rights as the producers of knowledge but dismisses their knowledge as colloquial and commonplace knowledge. Once a knowledge that is taken as knowledge *per se* and on the other hand, a knowledge that is *quasi* knowledge, are acknowledged, this creates tension as to what precisely

constitutes knowledge. This is the question that Agrawal (1995a) attempts to answer on his 'Dismantling the Divide between Indigenous and Scientific knowledge'. For him the divide is imaginary, as knowledge remains knowledge. In the same vein, Horsthemke (2004) argues that there is no need to identify knowledge as indigenous because it is difficult to ascertain the nature of indigenous knowledge. While Horsthemke accepts the purpose of IKS studies and discourse on indigenous knowledge projects, she is of the view that its legitimacy, validation and use as a remedy is completely misguided. She further argues that by referring to knowledge as indigenous and as fundamentally different, unique, incommensurable or incompatible with modern knowledge, clearly shows a misunderstanding of what knowledge entails. According to this scholar knowledge is knowledge if it conforms to the philosophical nature of knowledge. While this view is an attempt to present the binary categorisation of knowledge as both rational/scientific and as irrational/unscientific knowledge, Horsthemke seems to be oblivious of the realities that this knowledge acquired by the indigenous people has gone through difficult times during colonisation and its attendant forces such as globalisation. Once the 'Othering' of other people's knowledge is dealt with decisively, then Horsthemke's views may be acceptable. It must also be remembered that knowledge is context-based. The inevitable categorisation of knowledge as indigenous knowledge and modern knowledge is clear here. It is again problematic to homogenise knowledge, as Horsthemke attempts, given the different experiences of societies. Knowledge therefore is viewed as a socio-cultural construction (Turnbull 1997). This implies that all societies can produce different knowledges to address different experiences.

What then qualifies as knowledge depends on the ways in which societies categorise, code, process and impute meaning into their experiences (Studley 1998). Given this truism, absolutising knowledge by the west is, therefore, not only erroneous but a show of power when declaring their knowledge as normative, and all other forms of knowledge as superstition. It is this 'othering' of other knowledges that have seen indigenous knowledge deemed inferior and relegated to the peripheries. The process of colonisation, with its political and ideological domination, did not only propel western knowledge into the global and temporal arenas, but was also instrumental in thwarting the diffusion of other knowledges. This study argued that all societies, including that of the colonised or the colonisers possess knowledge (Studley 1998), hence the concept indigenous African knowledge (Higgs 2008). The western epistemologies and ontologies have been

epistemologies and ontologies for their own sake while African philosophy is used to address particular social issues. Concomitantly, the understanding of knowledge by Mawere (2014) informs this study. He understands knowledge without delving into philosophical sophistications. According to him knowledge is simply a personal belief that is somehow justified and has the capacity to influence one's thinking, actions and behaviour. This definition suffices for the understanding of knowledge to investigate the efficacy of *shupa* as an IKS. Indigenous knowledge reflects a people's values, beliefs, practices and norms which they have upheld and passed on from one generation to another orally or in written form. It refers to those values, beliefs and practices upheld by a community from time immemorial. This knowledge is constantly adapted as people's circumstances change but remains useful in the socio-economic, political and cultural milieus of these people.

2.2.3 The term Systems

Loubser (2005) states that the concept system(s) is equally elusive in IKS discourses. According to this scholar this concept refers to a compendium of systems that include both knowledge and technologies. These knowledges and technologies are not haphazard but patterned and systematic. Referring to indigenous knowledge as system(s) suggests that the knowledge is scientific and serves certain purposes which may not need to be necessarily compared to other knowledges such as western knowledge. It is not spontaneous but undergoes lengthy periods of trial and error. It is ingenuity turned into knowledge passed on from one generation to the next. This knowledge is a system comprising an interconnectedness of a people's values, norms, beliefs and practices for survival.

2.2.4 Indigenous knowledge systems and indigenous knowledge

Having alluded to the debates surrounding the words 'indigenous' and 'knowledge', it is also important to understand the concepts of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) and indigenous knowledge (IK). This does not only facilitate the location of *shupa* as an indigenous knowledge system, but also as an indigenous knowledge system that the Ndau have been upholding for decades. Indigenous knowledge is known by different terminologies within academia. Such terminologies include 'indigenous knowledge/technology' (Maluleka, Wilkinson and Gumbo 2006), 'traditional ecological knowledge' (Turner, Marianne and Ronald 2000),

'indigenous/science knowledge' (Aikenhead 2006a), among others. Crossman and Devisch (2002), in their article, 'Endogenous knowledge in anthropological perspective' understand indigenous knowledge to mean 'endogenous knowledge'. All these terminologies point to the fact that indigenous knowledge is a way of knowing that indigenous people use in dealing with their day-to-day challenges. For Flavier, Navarro and Warren (1995) indigenous knowledge forms the information pivots of any society that facilitates communication and decision-making for that society. These are in turn continually influenced by internal ingenuities and experimentation as well as through contact with external systems. It is knowledge people have learnt from their elders and continue to use in their present circumstances as they move into the future. This implies that this knowledge is dynamic. Its flexible and tenacious properties have enabled this knowledge to endure debilitating factors such as colonialism and globalisation. It is intergenerational, that is, it is passed from one generation to the next by primarily the elders of a society (Mawere 2014).

Atteh (1992) refers to indigenous knowledge systems as a cohesive pattern of human knowledge, beliefs and behaviour. These include, but are not limited to a people's language, beliefs, ideas, taboos, customs, rituals, ceremonies and folk narratives. Khupe (2014) includes into the understanding of IKS not only the indigenous people's crafts and dances, but also the intrinsic meaning embedded in these dances and artefacts. Nel (2005) conceptualises IKS as an orderly reference to the people's knowledge and practices. This includes the local people's belief systems and practices as well as customs. IKS are systematic and hence are an alternate knowledge system.

Although the World Bank (1998) admits that there is no single definition of IKS due to several factors which include, among others, the divergent backgrounds, views and perspectives of the authors who attempt to define IKS, Warren (1991) conceptualises indigenous knowledge as localised knowledge – knowledge that is exclusive to a culture or society. It forms the basis for local decision-making. These could be decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management and many other activities in rural communities.

Mwaura (2008) argues that indigenous knowledge is the aggregate sum of all facts that a community knows, which has been obtained through involvement or learnt through observing the knowledge being put into practice. As such communities identify themselves by the indigenous

knowledge they hold. This in turn enables communities to live harmoniously side by side with their environments for generations (Chirimuuta, Gudhlanga and Bhukuvhani 2012). Similarly, Eyong (2007) understands indigenous knowledge to be that knowledge which indigenous people have come to know and do. It also includes what they have known from their past and for future generations. For Melchias (2001) these are practices that became established through trial and error and have proven flexible enough to cope with change. For Flavier et al (1995) indigenous knowledge is the societal knowledge reservoir, the facilitator of communication in all decision-making processes.

 While the World Bank accepts that defining indigenous knowledge depends on differing perspectives, Chirimuuta, Gudhlanga and Bhukuvhani (2012) similarly agree that defining indigenous knowledge depends on whether one is an educationist, social scientist, representative of traditional religions, an agriculturalist, environmentalist, a medical practitioner and so forth.

From the information above, it becomes apparent that there are as many definitions of indigenous knowledge as there are scholars who attempt to define it. What is common to most definitions, is that indigenous knowledge is heterogeneous, as communities differ in terms of their knowledge. This fact renders attempts, especially by the western epistemologies and ontologies, to homogenise knowledge with western knowledge as the normative, futile and mischievous. Indigenous knowledge systems are the sum of a community's culture and tradition, including their beliefs and practices. While knowledge can be shared, it cannot be imposed upon another alternative type of knowledge. When that happens it is violence and lack of respect.

The terms 'indigenous knowledge systems' and 'indigenous knowledge' are used interchangeably in this study because "… we cannot sensibly talk of IK without mentioning indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) from which the former derives its meaning…" (Mawere 2014). Since IKS and IK refer to an indigenous people's beliefs, values, norms, practices and language(s), terms which are difficult to use in the singular sense, the terms are used in their plural forms in this study.

It must also be noted that this type of knowledge system differs from western knowledge which, in most cases, is generated through universities or the academy, government research centres and private industry. To distinguish between indigenous knowledge of indigenous people and universal knowledge derived from scientific research by universities and other institutions, Kaya (2013)

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states explicitly clear that his research focuses on a specific knowledge system. He refers to this knowledge as African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS) and contextualises indigenous knowledge to an African context. According to him AIKS are traditions that have withstood the test of time and practices that are culturally specific to local communities. This, according to Kaya, include the skills, innovations, wisdom, teachings, experiences, beliefs, language and insights of the people, produced and accumulated over years and applied to maintain or improve their livelihood (Kaya 2013). This knowledge, according to Mawere (2014:7), in Zimbabwe is referred to as *ruzivo rwevana vevhu*[3] [knowledge of the children of the soil]. It is, in most cases, enshrined in the minds and hearts of its practitioners. The definitions by Kaya and Mawere inform this study. The study is not about indigenous knowledge systems in general but is about a specific belief and practice of a specific African group of people, the Ndau.

2.3 The usefulness of IKS

Discourses on IKS have been on the resurgence since the twentieth century. Horsthemke (2004) states that discourses on indigenous knowledge have gained currency recently. It has been the subject of many foras such as conferences, congresses, meetings as well as numerous papers, articles and reports (Horsthemke 2004). One may well enquire as to this sudden recognition. Having been at the mercy of colonialism with its associated western imperialism and arrogance, as Altieri (1995) argues, IKS have refused to succumb. In Africa, IKS continue to be useful despite colonial onslaught. This is so because IKS are used to sustain human life and that of the environment. Therefore, Mawere (2014) accepts that IKS are enduring and dynamic and as such they have survived the test of time and history. There is a plethora of literature on the usefulness of IKS. This includes literature on development programmes that have proven that community-based development is sustainable. Studies have shown that development, that does not use the local communities' indigenous epistemologies and ontologies are likely to fail even before they

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[3] The phrase *ruzivo rwevana vevhu* (knowledge of children of the soil), echoes 'son of the soil' a phrase popularly used during the liberation struggle fought in Zimbabwe (the then Rhodesia) where indigenous people in the struggle were referred to as *mwana wevhu* (Son of the Soil). This had the net effect of bringing people together against an adversary. For knowledge discourse, it is against the inferiorisation of indigenous knowledge of the indigenous people by western epistemologies that are erroneously regarded as normative. See also Zolani Mkiva's poem, Son of the soil http://www.poetryinternationalweb.net/pi/site/poem/item/658 Date Accessed 29/7/17. See also Wilson Chitiyo's Novel: *A Son of the Soil,* London: Rex Collings, (1976).

start (Sithole 2014, Muyambo 2018). This has not only been proven through the development programmes of local communities' but has also been extended to issues such as climate change, agriculture and primary health care as will be illustrated below.

2.3.1 IKS and sustainable development

The Cultural Dimension of Development: Indigenous Knowledge Systems, edited by D. Michael *et al*. and *Indigenous Environmental Knowledge and its Transformations: Critical Anthropological Perspectives*, edited by Ellen *et al* are two important works of literature that focus on development from an indigenous knowledge perspective. The contributions by the cited literature have proven that IKS -based development, that is, development which is community-based using indigenous knowledge, has been shown to be sustainable. Arguing from the same viewpoint, Sithole's (2014) research *nhimbe* [work party] as a community-based development has discovered that local communities in Chipinge, Gwanda and Tsholotsho in Zimbabwe use *nhimbe,* known by various terms in other African communities, as a work party that makes communities pool resources for sustainable development of their communities. *Nhimbe* is an IKS that has been used by local communities from time immemorial. Communities come together to carry out a task and is commonly used in agriculture. *Nhimbe* is traditionally used during the weeding and harvesting seasons, where families come together and help each other in weeding or ploughing each family's field. Work that can take a month is completed in a day or two. This does not only save time but ensures that the workload is minimised, and food security is achieved. It has even been extended to other work parties such as building schools, clinics and resourcing schools by pooling resources such as computers to improve the quality of education in African communities. Muyambo (2017) emphasises this in his study on the Ndau where one of the findings was that the concept of *nhimbe* can be extended to resourcing local schools. The Old Students Associations under the concept of *nhimbe* are ensuring quality education. *Nhimbe* as an IKS, has equivalence in *Zunde raMambo*[4] in Zimbabwe, *Harambee*[5] in Kenya and C*hilimba*[6] in Zambia. These indigenous

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[4] This refers to a chief's field, a food security arrangement in a polygamous family (See Vambe,2011).
[5] *Harambee* is a Swahili word which means 'Let us all pull together'. This has become a way of life for the Kenyan people. It acts as a social cushioning and support system in the community.
[6] *Chilimba* is a Bemba term that refers to a musical instrument. In Zambia C*hilimba* has become a resource mobilization and sharing community scheme practised in both rural and urban areas mostly by low income earners, business women and those in informal settlements (See Copestake, 2001 as well as Sithole, 2014).

work parties have become safety valves for local communities. They have tremendously improved the livelihoods of people for the respective local communities in which they are in use. They have not only transformed livelihoods, but this activity has resulted in sustainable development as clearly local communities do have indigenous ways of ensuring health, food security and environment management.

In a study conducted in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, Dlamini and Kaya (2016) discovered that indigenous Zulu chickens were reared mostly by women, using locally available resources for the communities' livelihoods. These chickens were resistant to diseases and were sold locally, reducing expenses on transportation to the market and greatly improved the diet of the local people. They also learned that the leafy vegetables that were farmed using indigenous knowledge were sold along the roadsides and local communities, especially women, were able to earn money to sustain their families. Their socio-economic status improved greatly from the income realised from home-grown projects using indigenous knowledge. Basing their conclusion on the efficacy of indigenous knowledge systems, the researchers agreed that that people, especially women in poverty-stricken and marginalised communities, depended on these IKS for a living.

Mawere (2014) in his publication *Culture, Indigenous knowledge and development in Africa,* reflects on the nexus between indigenous knowledge, culture and development. He maintains that indigenous knowledge must be revived and reinstituted to steer and promote sustainable development in Africa and beyond. This call is even more urgent in the context where western scientism has failed humanity. Indigenous knowledge, without romanticising it, is not a challenge to western science but rather, complements western science in areas of human health, environmental issues and sustainable development.

2.3.2 IKS in Climate Change

Climatic challenges and IKS have not escaped global debates. The youth in Africa have added their voice to the debates. In a book edited by Kaya and Seleti, *African Indigenous Knowledge Systems in climate change adaptation and mitigation: An African Young Scientists Initiative,* the youth are shown to have tapped into indigenous knowledge to address issues of climate change. This has also been applied to food insecurity and health care. In the Preface, the editors point out that the publication of this work by the African Young Scientists Initiative on Climate Change and

Indigenous Knowledge Systems is based on the understanding and acknowledgement that African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (AIKS) that have been locally tested and are culturally acceptable, have sustained the lives of African people over centuries against the adverse effects of climatic change such as drought, famine, and diseases. Locally available resources such as cow dung are used as fertiliser to improve agricultural produce to ensure food security. Intercropping has proved to not only reduce soil erosion but has improved soil fertility. It is with similar conviction that this study approaches *shupa* with the intent to discover its uses as a health asset for the Ndau, thereby adding a voice to the current debates of the efficacy of IKS as panaceas for global challenges.

2.3.3 IKS as self-definition and determination

Another valuable reference for the current study is *What is Indigenous Knowledge? Voices from the Academy*, edited by Semali and Kincheloe. This work focuses on what it means to belong to the margins in terms of indigenous knowledge production. It refutes the argument that the marginalised possess knowledge that is not only primitive but unscientific. The authors in this book take a postcolonial stance which, according to Young (2003), seeks to change the way people think and the way they respond towards a people's IKS. Building on this, the study, using postcolonial lenses to investigate the efficacy of *shupa* as one of the Ndau indigenous knowledge practices that has not only weathered the 'colonial mower' (Bakker, Hulme and Iversen 1994), that is, the western practices that denounce IKS, but continues to sustain the Ndau cosmology.

Arguing from a similar position is Catherine A. Odora Hoppers' I*ndigenous Knowledge and the Integration of Knowledge Systems: Towards a Philosophy of Articulation*. Most contributions in this book examine the issue of indigenous knowledge systems against the backdrop of colonialism in Africa. More telling is Ntuli's argument that:

> Africa is neither Europe nor America. Africa's problems are not European or American problems. Africa's solution to her problem cannot be anybody's but Africa's. If we accept these truisms, we then accept that Africa has to find her own indigenous ways to define, identify and address her challenges (Ntuli, 2002:53).

Although the current study intends not to argue from the same perspective (that of exclusivity), the underlying issue is that indigenous knowledge systems, of which *shupa* is one, are constantly

striving to find solutions to challenges that confront communities, such as climate change, diseases and droughts.

Patrick Ngulube's writings *Handbook of Research on Social, Cultural and Educational Considerations of Indigenous Knowledge in Developing Countries,* and *Handbook of Research on Theoretical Perspectives on Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Developing Countries* are masterpieces on the efficacies of IKS in developing countries. The former calls for indigenous people to reflect on their ways of knowing before the advent of colonialism, so that they draw on that wisdom in the conduct of their social, cultural and educational activities. Bernard Matolino's (2017) contribution "Return to the Source? Challenges and Prospects" in Ngulube's *Handbook of Research on Social, Cultural and Educational Considerations of Indigenous Knowledge in Developing Countries* aids the current study to appraise *shupa* from the perspective that every society has a past (a history which includes a people's IKS) that it cherishes. During crises Matolino (2017:1) argues that "…. there could be invocation or calls to return to that history either as informant of correct practice or an inspiration of what current practice should be". The nostalgia is not to say all about the past is blameless. On the contrary the return to the past is an attempt to reconnect with those sustainable IKS that help us shape the present and map the way for the future. This study illustrates that the time is now to return to that history by appraising *shupa* as a useful health asset among the Ndau. There is an acknowledgement by most African writers that indeed the use of IKS have increased and have become popular. Of interest in the latter edition by Ngulube is Mapara's (2017) contribution to the Zimbabwean situation, where IKS are casually approached with no serious   intent on the part of the Government. Apart from requesting that the Government earnestly heed matters of IKS, the current study does not only intend to showcase *shupa* as a health asset but also demonstrate the ingenuities local communities had and still have in combating outbreaks of disease, contrary to the negative western labelling of local communities' ways of knowing as odd, bizarre and irrational (Ntuli 2002).

2.3.4 IKS and Health care

Health matters are central to humanity. The wellness of a community depends on the community's health and well-being. These realities have not only made local communities in Africa deeply aware of matters of health and well-being but have made health issues a priority. Health care is

simplistically understood as the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases, illness, injury and other physical and mental impairment in humans (Rankoana 2012).

In African communities, falling ill is not taken lightly. In Shona tradition, there is a proverb '*pane chariwana, zizi harifi rega'* ['something has killed the owl, it cannot just be the wind']. According to Machinga (2012), besides overt physical signs, there are some causes of disease and misfortunes that are not often visible. Machinga argues that because of this understanding, there is a need for the sociological, psychological and spiritual exploration of illnesses. One may be afflicted by an illness or misfortunes because one has angered the spiritual realm. Unless and until this estranged relationship with the spiritual world is restored, the illness or misfortune will continue. Other causes of illness and misfortunes may be of social and natural origins. One may be ill because of quarrels and conflicts with other people. Naturally, one may become ill from bacteria, insect bites and natural substances, as Magesa (1997) argues. These arguments point to a multiplicity of factors that can cause illness or misfortune. Likewise, remedies for such illnesses and misfortunes are multidimensional. This explains the centrality of traditional medicine in Africa.

It is argued that in Africa 80% of the population resort to traditional medicine (Rankoana 2012). The failure by many people to access primary health care and the inadequacies inherent in western knowledge on health issues have caused many people in Africa to resort to indigenous knowledge on issues about their health. Apart from the failure by western medicine to address some of the diseases and illnesses in Africa and other developing countries, the cost of western medicine is often beyond the reach of many people. Nguemo (2015) concurs when she postulates that most rural dwellers have no proper access to conventional medicine. She further argues that a fair percentage of the rural populace have a penchant for solving their problems by consulting traditional healers. She maintains that the rising cost of imported medications in Africa has become a problem (in local people failing to access western medicine) hence local people resort to the traditional way of accessing medicine-thereby necessitating the continued use of traditional medicine by local communities. Hlatshwayo (2017) argues that the continued use of traditional medicine can be explained by its accessibility, adaptability, acceptability and affordability (what she refers to as the 4As). Another reason that renders traditional medicine enduring and sustaining is its holistic approach to disease or sickness (Shonhai 2016). Traditional medicine and traditional

practitioners address the spiritual, physical and mental dimension of the patient to holistically diagnose the patient's medical problem.

Having noted the efficacy of indigenous knowledge regarding traditional medicine, Murray and Chavunduka in their writings, *The Professionalisation of African Medicine*, call for the integration of traditional medicine with western medicine in health delivery The current study does not only build on Murray and Chavunduka's (1986) arguments, but broadens the arguments by particularising *shupa* as one of the traditional practices of which the medicinal aspects should be recognised and accepted as medicine. It has, after all, been in use from time immemorial by the Ndau.

An equally important work for this study is a PhD thesis on "Health and Well-Being: A Phenomenological Quest for the Essence of the Karanga" by Tabona Shoko (1993). Though not addressing *shupa per se*, Shoko's thesis argues from a Karanga indigenous knowledge systems perspective, where he discusses at length issues on maternal health, Karanga rituals, ceremonies, and taboos that define the Karanga people. Using the same insights, this study investigates the efficacy of *shupa* not only as a health asset, but also as a quest for the recognition of IKS as a resource of the Ndau.

Writing on maternal health, Siwila (2015) clearly demonstrates that IKS are a useful resource. She argues that IKS on childbirth have become useful and significant in a period where maternal and infant mortality rates are high. Expectant mothers participate in several rituals to ensure a healthy baby. A pregnant mother's health lies at the core of the community, hence the need for rituals intended to protect both the mother and baby. Similarly, Hlatshwayo (2017) excellently points out how indigenous knowledge, beliefs and practices play a significant role in the Ndau 's perceptions of pregnancy and childbirth.

As noted earlier, literature on Ndau indigenous knowledge systems have not been well researched. Notable scholars on the Ndau people are Mapuranga (2010), Matikiti (2012), Maposa (2013) and Konyana (2016) and more recently, Hlatshwayo (2017). Mapuranga's PhD thesis "A phenomenological investigation into the effects of traditional beliefs and practices on women and HIV & AIDS, with special reference to Chipinge district, Zimbabwe," argues that there are certain positives that can be derived from Ndau traditional practices in the HIV and AIDS context. While

she considered Ndau concepts of motherhood and care as resources for combating HIV and AIDS, this study expands on her argument by investigating the Ndau *shupa* with the view to establishing its efficacy (or lack thereof), as it is one of the indigenous practices of the Ndau. Konyana's thesis is an evaluation of the Ndau practices such as marriage in the context of the Domestic Violence Act in Zimbabwe. He argues that when culture and law collide, with reference to the Domestic Violence Act, it is culture that triumphs, meaning that culture, which embodies IKS needs to be considered when enacting laws for communities. Though Konyana is not discussing Ndau *shupa,* his conclusion that culture endures is relevant to this study. Culture endures because of its tenacity. Other works on the Ndau people by Maposa and Matikiti are not directly linked to this study, but they provide vital information on the Ndau people's cosmology and their encounters with Christianity. This information is essential for Chapter Three as illustrated later. More recently, Hlatshwayo's (2017) PhD thesis on 'Indigenous knowledge, beliefs and practices on pregnancy and childbirth among the Ndau people in Zimbabwe*'* confirms the efficacy and agency of IKS in people's lives. According to her, there are pregnancy and childbirth rituals that are life-affirming and have drastically reduced mortality rates among Ndau infants.

2.4 The status of IKS

The section discusses how IKS are mainstreamed by United Nations (UN) bodies and agencies and by Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region where the research site is located. This section reviews the various policies and agencies or bodies that have been established to protect, promote and preserve IKS for posterity. In order to link the current study to what is generally occurring in IKS studies, the study compares the status of IKS in the United Nations bodies and agencies and SADC countries such as South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This purpose here is to:

- identify emerging trends in the protection, promotion and preservation of IKS in the world
- explore the status of IKS in the SADC as exemplified by South Africa and Namibia
- assess Zimbabwe's position on IKS protection, promotion and preservation.

2.4.1 United Nations and IKSs: A brief survey

By all accounts, IKS appear to have positive implications in the global market. The United Nations, through several of its platforms, has instituted mechanisms to protect, promote and preserve IKS. It has been noted that for the protection, promotion and preservation of IKS to be effective, indigenous people who are the custodians of their IKS, must undoubtedly be acknowledged. Having defined indigenous peoples as a populace that inhabit the world across all continents, from the Arctic to the Pacific, via Asia, Africa and the Americas (UN 2013), the UN, through a number of foras, promulgated certain statutes and policies that are intended to provide indigenous people with not only self-definition and determination, but also rights to possess, own and practice their IKS. Of significance to this study is the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). It was enacted and adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 2007. It is a statute that contains the minimum standards for the recognition, protection and promotion of indigenous peoples' rights. Self-determination is central to this Declaration which empowers indigenous people to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development (UN 2013). The Declaration recognises the dignity and self-respect of the indigenous person and therefore is deserving of rights that must be respected worldwide. This has not only enabled indigenous people to lobby for participation at world foras but for their IKS to be accepted as a resource in its own right which is important to their development and sustenance (Lwoga, Ngulube and Stilwell 2017). The importance of indigenous people and their IKS is further enshrined in several UN agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The vision underpinning UNESCO's sustainable development efforts considers cultural diversity as the roots of this development. In order to promote this cultural diversity, UNESCO's legal instruments, such as the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions were adopted to acknowledge the rights of indigenous people as well as their contribution towards sustainable development. These legal frameworks have not only motivated indigenous people to use their indigenous knowledge to participate in the world's sustainable development but have also ensured that indigenous peoples' self-determination remains inviolate. This has culminated in UNESCO fully endorsing the UNDRIP. This Declaration also calls upon member states to consult

indigenous people to obtain their free and informed consent prior to approval of any project affecting their lands and resources (UNESCO 2011). This is done for purposes of the Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) for the indigenous people, which means that indigenous people are permitted to own and possess indigenous knowledge. The enactment of these legal frameworks ensures that indigenous knowledge by the indigenous people is recognised by world bodies such as the UN.

Some member organisations in the UN, such as SADC, have made commendable efforts to ensure that indigenous people and their indigenous knowledge are not only respected, but protected, promoted and preserved for sustainable development and community livelihoods. This is being done through research and adopting IKS into school curricula. The section below is an examination of how IKS are prioritised in some of the countries in the SADC region. This section provides a necessary background for the study in that it illustrates the way IKS are understood in the region in general and Zimbabwe in particular. This creates a suitable platform from which *shupa* may be investigated.

2.4.2 The SADC region

SADC consists of fifteen countries whose main objective is to synchronize the social, political and economic policies of member states for the benefit of the citizens of southern Africa (Saurombe 2017). Members states such as South Africa have demonstrated that with the right political will member states can protect IKS through the development and implementation of relevant policies and legal instruments. Saurombe observes that in 2002 SADC held a workshop on IKS policy development and cooperation, but to date very little progress has been recorded in many SADC countries who are not advancing on their country's specific policies that are meant to inform a broader SADC policy. This was the foundation for ensuring that SADC countries work in unison in terms of the protection, promotion and preservation of IKS.

2.4.2.1 IKS in South Africa

With the acknowledgement of the efficacious nature of the indigenous peoples and their IKS in sustainable development by world bodies such as UN and its agencies, the SADC region has seen South Africa presenting a number of mechanisms to ensure that IKS are protected, promoted and preserved for the livelihood of the local communities. The Department of Science and Technology

(DST) in South Africa has been at the centre of ensuring that IKS in South Africa in particular and Africa in general are accorded the recognition they deserve.

South Africa's history, like the history of most African nations, is steeped in negative memories of the Apartheid era. The era was not only characterised by political and socio-economic hurdles, but the religio-cultural aspects of South Africans were equally affected. This emerges from the IKS Policy of the country that acknowledges that under Apartheid, IKS in South Africa, as well as practitioners within such systems, were marginalized, suppressed and subjected to ridicule[7]. IKS were dismissed as a science and was viewed as mere superstition and belief (a debate that is beyond the scope of this study). However, since then research and experience have indicated that IKS, in their holistic nature, are efficacious in not only local communities of South Africa but also in the rest of communities in Africa and elsewhere. Buttressed, therefore, by the pronouncements and resolutions made at world foras such as the UN and its agencies' general assemblies, the South Africa government saw it fit, under the DST to introduce robust IKS programmes that were intended not only to offer indigenous people a platform to showcase their IKS, but legislate statutes that will protect, promote and preserve IKS.

The DST has presented an IKS policy which was adopted by the South African Cabinet in 2004. The policy, according to the then minister of Science and Technology Mosibudi Mangena, was mandated to recognise, affirm, develop, promote and protect indigenous knowledge systems in South Africa[8]. It is a policy that recognises the legitimacy of systems of knowledge other than Western or scientific knowledge[9]. The policy has become an excellent example to neighbouring countries of South Africa and has set the benchmark for a more productive approach to knowledge and learning[10]. Having realised the mammoth task ahead of the adoption of the IKS Policy, DST included a number of variables that would ensure a sustainable IKS Policy. Among these variables are the IKS Bill, (that enshrines the National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office (NIKSO)),

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[7] DST (Department of Science and Technology) *Indigenous Knowledge Systems.* Policy Document. Pretoria: DST. www.dst.gov.za/images/pdfs/IKS_Policy%PDF. [Date accessed 25 May 2017].
[8] Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore, ninth session, Geneva, April 24 to 28, (2006), 1.
[9] Hays, J. 'Learning indigenous knowledge systems' www.hsrcpress.ac.za, 194.
[10] Ibid.

IKS Fund, Advisory Committee and IKS centres, just to mention a few. These were formulated to ensure a comprehensive IKS programme in South Africa, as evidenced below.

2.4.2.1.1 IKS Bill

The Bill was introduced in 2014 to regulate how IKS and their holders and practitioners should be understood, protected, promoted and preserved. The main objectives of this Bill are to provide for the protection, promotion, development and management of indigenous knowledge systems, the functions of the National Indigenous Knowledge Systems Office, the management of the rights of indigenous knowledge holders, the establishment of the Advisory Panel/Committee on indigenous knowledge systems, access and conditions of access to knowledge of indigenous communities, registration, accreditation and certification of indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners[11].

This is a compressive Bill that is meant to ensure that IKS are awarded their rightful place after years of being dismissed as irrelevant and inferior (Scott 1998). It is a Bill that celebrates the fluidity, diversity and adaptability of IKS. The Bill is a demonstration by the South African Government that it takes indigenous knowledge, its holders and practitioners seriously; indigenous knowledge has not only been proven to be essential in the socio-economic development of communities but that indigenous knowledge, as held by its holders and practitioners, is indeed, 'a way of life' (McGregor 2004) of many South Africans. The Bill is an indisputable indication of South Africa's commitment to ensure that IKS play a crucial role in the development of the South African people as well as the African region. To ensure its efficiency and effectiveness the Bill enshrines NIKSO's terms of reference as shown below.

2.4.2.1.2 NIKSO

According to DST (2004) this is a non-juristic entity under the auspices of the DST. Its main functions and duties, among others, are to protect indigenous knowledge systems and restore the recognition of indigenous knowledge systems relating to and owned by the indigenous communities of the Republic; facilitate redress of indigenous communities in the rights and benefits of which they have been deprived without recognition or commercial benefit, facilitate

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[11] Protection, promotion, development and management of indigenous knowledge systems Bill, 2014 www.gpwonline.co.za 51. Date accessed 26/05/2017.

and coordinate the development and innovation of indigenous knowledge systems, manage the national recordal and documentation system, registration, accreditation and certification of indigenous knowledge holders and indigenous knowledge practitioners, mobilise indigenous communities through education and awareness campaigns to enable them to recognise and value indigenous knowledge systems for cultural and economic benefit.

These functions as enshrined in the protection, promotion, development and management of indigenous knowledge systems Bill of 2014, mean that IKS are approached in South Africa from a holistic perspective. To illustrate the South African Government's commitment to the IKS, the Minister of DST appoints the head of NIKSO. The appointment procedure is clearly delineated in the Bill and it is a meticulous exercise. This demonstrates that IKS in South Africa are taken seriously as it that does not only address the socio-economic setup of a once deprived nation, but that IKS are relevant mechanisms that nations such as South Africa require to alleviate poverty, unemployment and cultural imperialism. This explains why South Africa sets aside huge sums of money for IKS-related research and other programmes.

2.4.2.1.3 IKS Ringed Fund

Funding is an essential component to effective and efficient programme implementation. Having realised the significance of IKS in South Africa and setting up a department that supervises IKS under NIKSO, the DST decided to further reinforce its IKS activities by creating an IKS Fund. This was after realising that IKS initiatives in South Africa should have a credible financing component for IKS to develop[12]. The principal objectives of the Fund, according to the Intergovernmental Committee on intellectual property (2006) are, among others, to support institutions that will assist indigenous and local communities in the categorisation and characterisation of their biological resources, innovations, practices and technologies, provide a wide range of grants and incentives principally to cater for the medium- and long-term needs of agricultural and industrial enterprises, particularly in the rural areas, with emphasis on small and medium-sized industries, fund linkages and access to existing programmes that will augment grassroots innovations by providing opportunities for experimentation, scaling up, prototype

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[12] Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore, ninth session, Geneva, April 24 to 28, (2006), 20.

development and establishing relevant infrastructure, support tertiary institutions in the establishment of IKS Centres and IKS laboratories, and assist existing ones in the promotion, development and protection of IKS.

That the government of South Africa expends much money on IKS demonstrates that IKS have proven to be worthy of the financial support. IKS have seen themselves into South Africa's mainstream economy such that it has been incorporated into the country's curriculum. Some Institutions of higher learning in South Africa have embraced the teaching and learning of IKS with much money being channeled towards realising this goal. Kaya and Seleti (2013) celebrate the introduction of IKS into South Africa's institutions of higher learning which hitherto have been dominated by eurocentrism. The curricula that used to be taught at institutions of higher education in South Africa were generally exclusively based on western epistemological systems. In order to make education relevant to an African in South Africa and Africa, there was a need to reclaim an African identity (Higgs and Niekerk 2002). That African identity finds consumption in IKS, where the thoughts, technologies and activities that are unique creation of African hands and minds, is an affirmation of the importance of IKS. The incorporation of IKS in institutions of higher education is pedagogical in that children 'learn more effectively' if information is presented to them in a language and context that they can relate to and if their areas of competence are valued rather than denigrated (Dei 2000). It is these insights that saw IKS receiving unprecedented attention in South Africa, thanks to the advisory panel/committee of the Minister of the DST.

2.4.2.1.4 IKS Advisory Committee

The panel/committee is established by the Minister of DST. It comprises members with an impeccable record in terms of qualifications, skills and experience and advise NIKSO accordingly. The members are experts in their respective fields. They are members who willingly extend advice to Government on relevant matters regarding IKS. The two principal roles of the panel/committee are to provide expert and strategic advice to NIKSO regarding the protection, promotion, development and management of indigenous knowledge systems and assisting with the mobilisation of indigenous communities for purposes of pursuing specific activites conducted by NIKSO. The panel is provided with a budget to commission relevant activities, including policy research in support of its programmes. To ensure that IKS receive the recognition they deserve,

IKS centres, such as the Centre for Excellence in IKS at the University of KwaZulu Natal (Mkhize and Ndimande-Hlongwa 2014) and the Department of Science and Technology-National Research Foundation (DST-NRF) in IKS have been created in South Africa.

2.4.2.1.4 IKS Centres

The South African Government through the DST has realised that for its programmes on IKS to succeed, there is need for the establishment of IKS centres. These centres could be located in universities as centres of higher education or at community centres. The centres act as a facilitating and enabling mechanism for the dissemination of IKS information. Some of the services offered at these centres include research, information access and preservation of indigenous knowledge systems. The indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners participate and collaborate with these centres.

The South African scenario set above is meant to explore how IKS are understood by the South African Government. The described efforts by the DST shows that there is unparalleled political will by the political leaders of South Africa to ensure that IKS is afforded their rightful place in the development of the country. The Government has created a conducive environment for the protection, promotion, development and management of indigenous knowledge systems. The legal framework as outlined in the Bill ensures that IKS in South Africa are not a mere talk show, as is the case in several other African countries, but a reality that has seen IKS becoming part of curricula in institutions of higher education. Curricula at universities such as the University of KwaZulu - Natal and the University of North West have been mainstreamed in special sections that deal with IKS (Mubangizi and Kaya 2015). For example, Kaya (2013) demonstrates that the North-West University, Mafikeng Campus, has been at the forefront of integrating AIKS into higher education in South Africa. Mubangizi and Kaya (2015) note that North-West University, at the time of their writing, had an accredited and well-coordinated IKS teaching programme at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Recently the Department of Science and Technology-National Research Foundation (DST-NRF) centre in IKS has been established which is in partnership with five South African Universities. These are the University of KwaZulu- Natal (UKZN) as the hub, North-West University (NWU), University of Limpopo (UL), University of South Africa (UNISA) and the University of Venda (UNIVEN). This not only illustrates how, in

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the past few decades, IKS have found their way into the curricula of higher education institutions but are also evident in the ongoing calls for communities to use their local ingenuities informed by their IKS to address world challenges.

Notwithstanding the challenges, the Government of South Africa, as illustrated above, and its various departments have been consistent in their commitment to IKS. South Africa has committed itself to ensuring that IKS become a "major point of emphasis within contemporary South African governance" (Green 2007:131). South Africa is leading the way in assisting other SADC countries to craft their own IKS policies and other statutes that ensure IKS are protected, promoted and preserved for the livelihood of the communities

2.4.2.2 Namibia

South Africa and Namibia have been selected in Southern Africa because of the existence of statutes that prove that the respective governments acknowledge IKS. Apart from creating enabling environments for IKS mainstreaming, the Governments of South Africa and Namibia have acknowledged that IKS are a resource for not only the socio-economic development of their communities, but also for the maintenance and development of their religio-cultural activities. African identity, which is an element of IKS, was negated during colonisation and is under siege from globalisation, hence the need to protect, promote, develop and manage IKS. IKS discourse in Africa is aimed to achieve several related objectives. These include, according to Semali and Kincheloe (1999: xiv) and Odora Hoppers (2002:6), the reclamation of cultural or traditional heritage, decolonization of mind and thought, recognition and acknowledgement of self-determining development, protection against further colonisation, exploitation, appropriation and/or commercialisation, legitimation of, or at least caution against, the subjugation of nature and general oppressiveness of nonindigenous rationality, science and technology.

To emphasise the need for the interplay of indigenous Namibian knowledge systems with western science and the need to protect Namibian IK from exploitation by foreigners at the expense of the local population, it suffices to quote the then Head of State, Sam Nujoma's speech at a Windhoek symposium on Devil's Claw (a plant used for the treatment of rheumatism and arthritis) in 2001:

> I believe that while scientific research is necessary to improve the way in which our natural resources are exploited…our people must not be completely disowned …of resources that they

have possessed for generations. It will be a sad day when the medicinal formulas of Devil's Claw are patented by big pharmaceutical companies and thereby become depleted and unavailable to the natural owners of the resource (Chinsembu 2015:9).

This speech does not only demonstrate the political will of the Namibian government but is a call for the integration of indigenous knowledge systems with other knowledge systems as well as cautioning indigenous Namibians to jealously guard their indigenous pharmaceutical plants from outsiders who may benefit from their indigenous knowledge without the local people's consent thereby disadvantaging local people from benefitting from their traditional knowledge. It is for this reason that one can argue that IKS should not become general knowledge for there are greedy people who may prey on other people's knowledge systems to benefit them at the expense of the knowledge holders.

It is against this background that Namibia, being a country well known for its exceptional climate, ecological profile and excellent biodiversity, comprising wild and cultivated species and varieties[13], has decided to take the issue of IKS and legislation seriously. The lack of legislation has not only resulted in traditional communities losing their ways of existence and livelihood, but they have lost vast sums of money in revenue amassing from the use of their traditional, authentic knowledge by international companies who have appropriated these knowledge systems without any authority or permission[14]. In Namibia there are many instances where the country and local communities have lost revenue and essential knowledge to foreigners who simply arrived and plundered their resources without their consent and without them benefitting from their resources. These include the Hoodia plant and Devil's Claw, just to mention two. In order to illustrate how Namibian people was deprived of benefitting from their IKS, a brief account concerning the said plant species is provided.

2.4.2.2.1 The Hoodia plant

The Hoodia plant has been used by the San of the Namib desert and the Nama people for the treatment of illnesses that include high blood pressure, diabetes and gout, to mention a few.

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[13] See Krugmann, H., *Namibia's thematic report on the Benefit-sharing mechanisms for the use of biological resources* (2001) 5-6.
[14] See Shikongo, T., *Intellectual Property, Traditional Knowledge and Genetic Resources, Access to Genetic Resources: Will Traditional Knowledge Survive This Millennium?* (2001) 5-6.

Additionally, the Hoodia plant has been used to suppress hunger during either hunting and during times of drought.

It is reported that the active ingredient in Hoodia (P53, the appetite suppressant compound), was patented as a hunger suppressant by external organisations without recognising the San and Nama people's traditional claims of the Hoodia and its uses[15]. When this hunger suppressant is then sold back to African countries, the product is out of the reach of many. The proceeds do not develop Africa but other continents. The indigenous people who are the original owners of the knowledge do not benefit. This demonstrates that in the absence of regulating statutes, indigenous people will continue to be exploited.

2.4.2.2.2 The Devil's Claw

This plant has been used for its medicinal properties for many years by the indigenous groups in Namibia, Botswana and South Africa to treat rheumatism and arthritis. The San people who originated from Eastern Namibia hold the plant medicinal properties and apply it for their livelihood. Because of the medicinal properties of this plant the San no longer have any rights over its medicinal usage. The medicinal properties have been patented to companies in Germany and the United Kingdom[16]and the San people have not benefitted in any way from their plant and the indigenous knowledge thereof.

These two examples indicate that indigenous people's knowledge about their herbs and plants benefit other communities at their expense. This anomaly led to a decision by Namibia to create certain mechanisms that would   protect the people's indigenous knowledge from outsiders and at the same time serve to benefit the local communities. Once these communities realise that there are benefits to be had from their indigenous knowledge, the Namibian society will begin to develop this intervention. To realise this, the Namibian Government announced the country's vision for 2030 which addresses issues of IKS. The Government has since established the Traditional Healers' Association of Namibia (THAN) to deal with herbal medicine practices and applications (Saurombe 2017).

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Krugmann, H., 6-7.

In addition to the above, there is the National Culture and Heritage Council of Namibia (NCHCN) which deals with IKS and folklore. Once these are dealt with at national level under the tutelage of a national council, IKS and folklore are documented, promoted and preserved for future generations. People no longer want to rely solely on memory and oral tradition, but on documented information stored as records by the NCHCN. The information is stored in databases which are kept at the Namibian Museum. It is argued that Namibia also has a digitalised archive system kept at the National Library of Namibia (Saurombe 2017). As argued by Cheikhyossef (2011) Namibia is in the process of developing an IKS policy[17]. Other organisations and programmes that have been established in Namibia in recognition of IKS are the Namibian National Botanical Research Institute (NNBRI), which carries out research on IKS and National Science, Technology and Innovations, integrating IKS, science and modern technology for the upliftment of the Namibian society.

Namibia has done much work in the field of IKS, particularly through studies that have shown that indigenous herbs can indeed mitigate the adverse effects of pandemics such as HIV and AIDS and cancer. In his study on local Namibians, Chinsembu (2015) found that some Namibians are turning to the use of medicinal plants to manage opportunistic infections related to HIV and AIDS. He further argues that in many parts of Namibia indigenous knowledge has become the cornerstone of resilient households and communities that continue to defy the negative impact of HIV and AIDS. Other studies in Namibia have shown that certain plants are used to cure malaria (du Preez, Nafuka, Mumbengegwi and Bock 2015), cancer (Dushimemaria, Mumbengegwi and Bock; 2015) and many other ailments and diseases that have either been too expensive to treat with western medicine or those that western medicine has failed to cure. This has resulted in the unprecedented support of IKS in different aspects of Namibian lives.

However, despite these commendable efforts by the Government of Namibia in the recognition of IKS, there is still much to be done when compared to the South African scenario. Traditional medicine has not been fully embraced in Namibia as there is a "lack of official government and

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[17] Ahmad Cheikhyoussef, Martin Shapi, Kenneth Matengu and Hina Mu Ashekele 'Ethnobotanical study of indigenous knowledge on medicinal plant use by traditional healers in Oshikoto region, Namibia, *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine (*2011) https://doi.org/10.1186/1746-4269-7-10 . Date Accessed 2/8/17.

'day-time' recognition'' (Chinsembu 2015:9). Chinsembu (2015:9) cites a traditional healer from Ogongo who stated outright that "in the night, big men from Windhoek come to see me to get treatment for erectile dysfunction". This implies that there are high placed Namibians who clandestinely seek out   traditional healers and their cures. The 'big men' referred to obviously do not wish to be seen supporting traditional healers and their indigenous medicine for fear of being labelled 'traditional'[18] or worse. Having discussed the status of IKS in South Africa and Namibia, the next section assesses the status of IKS in Zimbabwe. It creates an appropriate background to the study of *shupa* as one of the IKS of the Ndau.

2.4.2.3 IKS in Zimbabwe

While the subject of IKS has become part of national agendas in South Africa and Namibia, as discussed above, it is not the case in in Zimbabwe. While IKS has been s an endangered concept under colonialism and globalisation, it is gaining momentum in Southern Africa and globally. Zimbabwe, being a signatory to several of the world's organisations has also taken some steps towards the recognition of IKS as a socio-economic factor for the development of local communities.

The Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage created by the Zimbabwean Government, directly addresses issues pertaining to the promotion and preservation of culture, which broadly speaking, also includes IKS. Its primary mandate is to ensure that all Zimbabweans value and safeguard their culture and heritage. Given the Ministry's mandate, the Government of Zimbabwe is indeed aware that culture and heritage, under which IKS resort, need to be promoted and preserved for future generations. It is for this reason that other countries in the developing world have instituted legal frameworks and policies to ensure that IKS, which includes Zimbabwe, resorting under the umbrella of culture and heritage, are protected, promoted and preserved for the benefit of the communities that uphold them.

Zimbabwe has many bodies such as the National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe (NMMZ), National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) and National Gallery of Zimbabwe (NGZ). which fall under the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National

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[18] The use of the word here is meant to show that while it is sometimes derogatorily used to mean 'primitive', 'backward' and 'savage', the word simply means aboriginal, native to or inhabitant of. See.

Culture and Heritage. The said Departments are required to engage with issues pertaining to the protection, promotion and preservation of culture and heritage in one way or the other. The respective mandates of these departments indicate that efforts by the Zimbabwean Government are ensuring that the people's IKS, as enshrined in their culture and heritage, are mainstreamed. The mandates are briefly outlined below to illustrate how IKS in Zimbabwe are received nationally.

2.4.2.3.1 The Department of National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe

The NMMZ is mandated to create the basis for sustainable preservation of museums and monuments. It gathers and disseminates knowledge on historical monuments and objects and sets standards for the protection and conservation of Zimbabwean heritage. This department also raises public awareness of the Zimbabwean cultural heritage to preserve it for future generations. It is also mandated to keep a record of all museums and monuments in Zimbabwe. The objective is to protect, promote and preserve the collective Zimbabwe heritage for future generations. There is the possibility that in the aftermath of colonisation and in the context of globalisation, the Zimbabwean heritage may become extinct if not preserved by the efforts of the Department of National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe.

2.4.2.3.2 The National Gallery of Zimbabwe

The NGZ is dedicated to the presentation and conservation of Zimbabwe's art and visual heritage. It has been mandated to take charge of national culture, folk art, rural antiquities, home craft products, paintings, drawings and all forms of visual art[19]. The NGZ plays a key role in coordinating and facilitating the development of Zimbabwean contemporary art. It seeks to encourage initiatives to strengthen management, research, dissemination of and innovation in the visual arts[20].

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[19] *A Manual for combating Heritage Crime and Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property,* 11. http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Harare/pdf/cltnmmzmanual.pdf Date accessed 28 May 2017.
[20] Ibid.

2.4.2.3.3 The National Archives of Zimbabwe

This Department is responsible for the collection, storage, regulation, management and preservation of the country's documentary heritage[21]. The documentary heritage is the archives which form the primary records that have accumulated over the course of an individual or organisation's lifetime and have been selected for permanent preservation because of the important historical, legal and evidentially fiscal value they convey[22]. The main function of NAZ is to record and document all the cultural aspects pertaining to Zimbabwean society.

The above bodies, NMMZ, NGZ and NAZ resort under the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage. In terms of having departments and a ministry that oversees the promotion and preservation of Zimbabwean culture and heritage, Zimbabwe ensures that IKS are protected, promoted and preserved. What is surprising is that IKS in Zimbabwe are not coordinated as is the case in other countries such as South Africa. This has resulted in individualised and uncoordinated efforts to research IKS and document the results. Universities in Zimbabwe have a decidedly lackadaisical approach to IKS. For example, the Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) has culture and heritage as its niche. This university, situated near the Great Zimbabwean Monuments, mainstreams culture and heritage in all its activities. What is surprising is that there seems to be no clear national policy on how culture and heritage in the university should be managed. This lack of a clear vision affects the entire nation when it comes to the recognition of IKS, which form an intrinsic part of the Zimbabwean people's culture and heritage.

Individuals who have made some efforts to research and document IKS include Jacob Mapara (2009,2017) and Munyaradzi Mawere (2012, 2014). Despite their efforts, research on IKS in Zimbabwe remains on the periphery. Mapara outlines some of these militating factors. Chief among these are the lack of political will, colonial-minded researchers and euro-centric and ill-funded institutions of higher learning.

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[21] Ibid, 12.
[22] Ibid.

Lack of political will

The Government of Zimbabwe has mandated a Science, Technology and Innovation policy. It was established in 2012 under the Ministry of Science and Technology Development. The Ministry is a duplication of the Department of Science and Technology in South Africa. The Science, Technology and Innovation policy has noble intentions and some of its goals are to, *inter alia*, search for scientific solutions to global environmental challenges, mobilise resources and popularise science and technology and accelerate the commercialisation of research results[23]. Without detracting from this policy, the first two goals promote the assumption that science is the only valid knowledge, hence the need to popularise it. This assumption trivialises all other forms of knowledge such as indigenous knowledge and denies its existence. This demonstrates that, from inception, the policy was established under the erroneous assumptions that science is the only acknowledged form of knowledge. Secondly, the policy is aimed at mobilising resources and popularising science and technology, however, the allocation of financial resources has been minimal.

Given the above scenario, the policy has remained text as it is not being implemented. No noticeable efforts have been made to ensure that the policy becomes implemented. It is against this background that Mapara (2017) argues that Zimbabwe does not have an IKS policy, unlike in South Africa. He states that the Science, Technology and Innovation policy only refers to IKS in passing and deplores the lack of commitment by the Zimbabwean Government in this regard. There is no effort made on the part of the Government as well as its research institutions to carry out serious research on IKS (Mapara 2017). The reference to IKS on the Science, Technology and Innovation policy appears to have been an afterthought. The section on IKS emphasises the efficacy of IKS in the rural areas but does not relate it to the urban areas, thus reflecting a mentality which does not only prioritise western science but denies IKS its rightful place in the development of nations.

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[23] Second Science, Technology and Innovation Policy of Zimbabwe, March 2012. https://www.healthresearchweb.org/files/Zimbawesciencetechpolicydocumentnew.pdf Date accessed 13/6/17.

Eurocentric researchers

In Zimbabwe, researchers who should be on the forefront of ensuring that any research on IKS finds its way into academia, are alleged to be eurocentric (Mapara 2009, 2017). These researchers were taught that validated knowledge refers to western knowledge and does not include indigenous knowledge. This has resulted in very little research on IKS. What has exacerbated the situation is that those researchers who choose to validate indigenous knowledge and carry out research on this topic do this as

> … lone rangers and risk being ridiculed by those who believe that indigenous knowledge is the *forte* of those who have failed in the 'real' sciences and should not be seen to be attempting to bring in a type of knowledge that is perceived as belonging to the dust bins of history (Mapara 2017:3).

This demonstrates how the west has absolutised western knowledge as the only acceptable knowledge to the detriment of indigenous knowledge. This eurocentric mentality has resulted in what Mapara describes as the relegation of IKS to the peripheries of the academic world. Western knowledge has labelled IKS as the myths and superstitions of indigenous communities. This negates the notion that every community, be it in developing countries or developed ones, possesses its indigenous knowledge upon which people build their livelihoods. If Zimbabwean academics understand IKS as not scientific then research into IKS will remain not worthy of academic attention.

Ill-funded institutions of higher learning

The whimsical stance towards IKS in Zimbabwe has been worsened by not only the lack of commitment by Government, but also by the lack of funding. South Africa, for example, has expended huge amounts of money in capacitating the DST that administers the IKSO and has committed itself to ensuring that IKS research and activities are well-resourced. This has not been the case in Zimbabwe. Apart from Government's unenthusiastic approach to funding IKS activities, western funders usually fund research that is of interest and benefit to them and not to indigenous communities (Mapara 2017). Institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe which form the hub of research, face the same dilemma of seeking to confirm and validate western knowledge rather than indigenous knowledge. Furthermore, these institutions are not well-resourced to carry out most research, let alone research on IKS. Mapara (2017) clearly points this out when he admits

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that the Zimbabwean Government does very well in establishing universities but does very little about funding research in these same institutions. There is a total of thirteen universities in Zimbabwe, seven being state universities while the other six are private universities, and more are said to be on their way. Among these universities there is a single university, Great Zimbabwe University (GZU), which is said to have a centre that has prioritised IKS on its curriculum. But the visibility of this centre remains very minimal. Apart from GZU, none of has created an IKS unit within its departments or faculties, despite the Science, Technology and Innovation policy goal to craft courses on IKS that are appropriate for addition to the school curricula. This is contrary to what is happening in South Africa and Namibia, where the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and the University of Namibia (UNAM) respectively have not only accepted IKS as part of their research areas but have set up IKS units within their university structures where meaningful research on IKS is taking place.

With the establishment of private universities, it was hoped that meaningful research among these universities would improve. What is emerging, though, is that these private universities, the majority being church-related institutions, carry out research that prioritises the research interests of their funders. Mapara (2017) observes that private universities prioritise research that benefits the university funders, and do not promote indigenous knowledge. As these private universities are church-related institutions, their main focus is the Christian faith. If institutions of higher learning are nurtured from these perspectives, it is not surprising that Zimbabwe lags behind other SADC countries in terms of the protection, promotion and preservation of IKS as a knowledge base.

While arguments could be made that Zimbabwe has no legal framework for the protection, promotion and preservation of IKS, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act 2013, being the supreme law of the country, does acknowledge IKS. Chapter 1 section 33 of the Constitution clearly spells out the measures that must be taken by the State in the preservation, protection and promotion of IKS. It states thus:

The State take measures to preserve, protect and promote indigenous knowledge systems, including knowledge of the medicinal and other properties of animal and plant life possessed by local communities and people[24].

The legal framework exists, but Zimbabwe lacks a comprehensive IKS policy of its own that coordinates IKS activities. Wherever IKS is mentioned, it is done either with reference to some other policies like the Science, Technology and Innovation, or in passing. Even though IKS in Zimbabwe are applied in agriculture, health, industry and the environment, very little effort is made to ensure their preservation. No meaningful research has been carried out in areas where the Government sets aside a budget that is specifically allocated towards research on IKS. Research on IKS in Zimbabwe still needs to be prioritized. This study is an attempt to address these gaps, especially on IKS and health matters.

2.5 Zimbabwean Scholars on IKS

Having discussed the lack of adequate research on IKS in Zimbabwe, it is prudent in this section to cite a few scholars whose works are pivotal to improving research on IKS in Zimbabwe. The section demonstrates how individuals have carried out research on IKS in Zimbabwe. Those who have remained steadfast on the usefulness of IKS in Zimbabwe have had to endure ridicule that their research was based on superstition. Below are scholars who have done some research on IKS in Zimbabwe.

In his 'Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Zimbabwe: Juxtaposing Postcolonial Theory,' Mapara (2009) demonstrates that indigenous knowledge systems are a way of fighting the vestiges of colonialism. The former colonised are challenging the erstwhile colonial powers and their knowledge systems.

In his 'Binarism as a recipe of lukewarm research into indigenous knowledge systems in Zimbabwe', a chapter in Ngulube's *Handbook of Research on Theoretical Perspectives on Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Developing Countries,* Mapara (2017:1) complains about the lack of serious research into IKS in Zimbabwe. For him this lack of application is caused by the colonial mindset that places western knowledge in an advantage position over indigenous

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[24] *Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment* (No.20) Act 2013, 23.

knowledge. Some Zimbabwean scholars believe in the myth that knowledge comes from the global north and not from the global south.

In his other works, Mapara continues to cherish the efficacy of indigenous knowledge systems. In his *Shona Sentential Names*, Mapara (2013) draws on the case of the Shona and other peoples of Africa. He argues that Shona names do not only serve as identity labels but are important religio-cultural symbols of the people who allocate and bear the names. Names among the Shona are important as part of the distinctive repertoire of Shona cultural heritage. Mapara has been consistent in his argument that IKS are an integral cultural heritage of an African people which should not only be researched on and documented but preserved for current and future generations. Despite his advice, very little research on IKS has been done in Zimbabwe that informs policy, as in other countries.

Munyaradzi Mawere is another accomplished scholar of IKS in Zimbabwe. He has written a variety of articles and books; Some of these include, among others, *The Struggle of African Knowledge Systems in an Age of Globalization, African Belief and Knowledge Systems: A critical perspective and Between Rhetoric and Reality: The state and use of indigenous knowledge in post-colonial Africa*. Some of his articles include 'Indigenous knowledge systems' potential for establishing a moral, virtuous society' Mawere 2010) and 'Possibilities for cultivating African indigenous knowledge systems (Mawere 2011)'. All these works are underpinned by Mawere's argument that the IKS are an essential element of a people's existence and hence should be taken seriously. He argues that the IKS are useful in issues of peace, harmony, environment, culture and heritage. He also demonstrates the resilience and tenacity of IKS in the context of colonialism and globalisation. The enduring nature of IKS has enabled it to withstand the test of time. The IKS are dynamic and innovative against negative western thinking, that they are static, illogical and superstitious (Mawere (2010). According to Mawere IKS have gained prominence against marginalisation in the context of colonialism and globalisation, due to the role IKSs are playing in the preservation of biodiversity and social systems in some African cultures (Mawere 2012). Mapara (2017) concurs when he argues that indigenous knowledge is fundamental to the decision-making process regarding daily activities such as hunting and gathering, fishing, agriculture, water conservation and human and animal health. He further states that IK in traditional (indigenous) medicine and medicinal practices have made important contributions to human healthcare in the

local communities from which they emanate (Mapara 2017). Mawere's contribution towards IKS in Zimbabwe demands attention and the recognition of IKS. In terms of informing how IKS should be protected, promoted and preserved, Government and relevant authorities' efforts have remained disengaged despite the incisive research done by Mawere.

Another acclaimed scholar and theologian-cum historian who has written some works on IKS is that of Maposa. In a co-authored article 'Indigenous Weather Forecasting: A phenomenological study engaging the Shona of Zimbabwe', Muguti and Maposa (2012) argue that despite the technological advances in the use of modern scientific equipment to predict and manipulate weather, the scientific methods of weather forecasting are flawed. They further argue that it should not be forgotten that from time immemorial, indigenous Africans relied on close observations of environmental phenomena regarding weather forecasting. This was based on observing natural phenomena and celestial objects to predict the imminence of the agricultural season with a high degree of reliability.

In another co-authored article, 'Linking culture and water technology in Zimbabwe: Reflections on Ndau experiences and implications on climate change' Muyambo and Maposa (2014) argue that the Ndau people have indigenous knowledge systems that can be tapped into for the implementation of water resource management. The study found that some Ndau beliefs and practices on water resources can be used as environment management tools in order to do justice to climate change. These include the use of gourds in fetching water from a well and not killing the frogs in the well. Once these indigenous knowledge practices are maintained, wells will not dry up even in seasons where there is not enough rainfall.

Maposa (2011) also demonstrates how IKS are the hallmark of a people's identity. In a study among the Shangani people of Masvingo province in Zimbabwe, Maposa discusses a traditional practice known by the locals as *hoko* [the rite of circumcision]. He found that *hoko,* which is largely an indigenous knowledge system practice, "constitutes a vital socio-religious syallabus of existential life for the initiates to develop a wholesome pattern of behaviour through education which enables them to live a stable life in society" (Maposa 2011:483). *Hoko* in contemporary Zimbabwean society has proven to be useful in the context of HIV and AIDS. It has proven that indigenous knowledge from the elders could be solutions to problems afflicting societies. What is

needed, therefore, is more research into these indigenous knowledge systems in order to link them to solutions for existential problems. Male circumcision or *hoko* according to Maposa's research, is a hallmark of the Shangani people's identity but more so, research has proven that male circumcision reduces HIV infection from male to female by 60%. This means a cultural practice that has been in existence from time immemorial has provided a well sought-after solution to HIV and AIDS in the world. More practices of this nature should become topics of investigation and research as humanity continues to search for answers to existential problems.

In a study done by Marashe (2014) on the role of traditional leaders in the fight against HIV and AIDS in the Chipinge district, traditional leaders, as custodians of IKS, play a significant role in ensuring that the HIV and AIDS pandemic is contained. The study found that although polygamous marriages were still prevalent, the traditional leaders were advocating for monogamous marriages in the context of HIV and AIDS. This shift in marriage practices shows that despite the allegation that traditional communities and their IKS are conservative, tradition as espoused in IKS is not set in stone. This behavioural change as urged by traditional leaders goes a long way in curbing the spread of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Similarly, Muyambo (2011), in a study on the impact of HIV and AIDS on Ndau masculinities, found out that the Ndau are redefining and renegotiating Ndau masculinities in the context of HIV and AIDS. The two examples cited indicate that Ndau IKS are adaptable, flexible and amendable to suit prevailing circumstances, without losing their essence. This again proves that IKS in general are dynamic and   context-dependent.

2.6 Research in traditional medicine as IKS in Zimbabwe

Most countries in SADC have taken research in traditional medicine seriously. In Namibia, for example, research into traditional medicine and HIV and AIDS has created hope for the Namibians. Chinsembu (2015) states that Namibia has a rich diversity of plants and a long tradition of ethnomedicinal usage of plants. He further argues that the Namibian plant diversity presents a wealth of resources from which to tap traditional medicines, including for the treatment of HIV and AIDS. Whilst the Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers Association (ZINATHA) has received some recognition, much work is still required to bring it up to par in medical circles. Although traditional healers in Zimbabwe are consulted, they are consulted clandestinely, particularly after hours. This clearly reflects on the status of   the traditional healer in Zimbabwe.

It is ironic that 80% of people in developing countries still rely on traditional medicine for their primary healthcare needs (WHO 2004, Rankoana 2012), yet there is this ongoing reluctance to openly declare their reliance on this type of healthcare.

Research into traditional medicine remains minimal in Zimbabwe. This has resulted in Zimbabweans needlessly having to suffer from ailments that indigenous knowledge can effectively remedy. For example, Namibia has not only accepted research into its diverse plant species but has provided viable solutions for chronic diseases and conditions such as HIV and AIDS and cancer. Research in Namibia has proven that indeed HIV and AIDS related opportunistic infections can be managed using herbal plants. In Zimbabwe, any claims by traditional healers that their herbal plants can be useful in the management of HIV and AIDS have been dismissed with contempt. The traditional healers who claim that HIV and AIDS- related conditions can be managed are either not taken seriously or are accused as bogus healers who have turned the pandemic into an opportunistic money-making scheme. This is what Richter (2003:13) refers to as 'AIDS opportunism' or 'AIDS entrepreneurship'. In Namibia, the Government has dissolved the Traditional Health Council of Namibia owing to loss of public confidence in traditional healers, especially after publications in the media that clients of some traditional healers were urged to have intercourse with minors to rid themselves of HIV and AIDS. Notwithstanding the fact that there are some unscrupulous traditional healers who would go to extremes to make money like most contemporary prophets in Zimbabwe, there are those dedicated old-school traditional healers who still prioritise people's health and wellbeing; this perhaps explains why traditional medicine in Zimbabwe is still being supported. Given that traditional medicine is still used in Zimbabwe despite its vilification by western medicine, there is a need for serious research to ensure that Zimbabweans benefit from their indigenous knowledge of traditional medicine. A paucity of research in this regard have been individualised to some extent but no meaningful and well publicised results of such research have been placed in the public domain. What is even more threatening to this vital indigenous knowledge in traditional medicine is that traditional practices, especially medicines, are dying out along with their holders (Dzenga 2017). This is an irretrievable loss as the traditional practices in the use of traditional medicine hold solutions to the problems that are plaguing most Zimbabweans. It is the realities of this dilemma that creates an urgent need for the inclusion of IKS into the Zimbabwean education curriculum. This will ensure that

indigenous knowledge, unlike the elders, does not become extinct as well. Once IKS find inclusion into the Zimbabwe school curriculum, from primary level to higher education institutions as suggested by Dzenga (2017), then IKS will not be lost. However, to do this, research into IKS is imperative and this should be noted by the Zimbabwean government

In a study titled "'Bondswomen of Culture': A gender critique of *Bota reshupa* and *kuhaza* among the Ndau people of Chipinge, Zimbabwe", Muyambo (2015) argues that while IKS, *shupa* to be specific, is a health asset, its *kuhaza* aspect risks the lives of both men and women. Apart from dehumanising adulterous women by parading them before the elders' council, the belief and practice also risk the lives of men. If men, whose wives have cheated on them, are not attended to on time. they may lose their lives. The practice is useful but requires deconstruction and reconstruction. The *kuhaza* element needs to be re-examined to make *shupa* a life affirming IKS. Muyambo (2015) argues that IKS, like *shupa,* should not be holistically embraced before interrogating its undesirable elements such as *kuhaza,* using the lens of cultural hermeneutics. Although the position taken by Muyambo in the cited study is accepted, it is the intention of the current study to investigate the effectiveness of *shupa* as a health asset after deconstructing the element of *kuhaza* which is perhaps the only undesirable element that some Ndau communities attach to the belief and practice of *shupa* as an indigenous health asset. The study by Muyambo (2015) does not deal with the health aspect of *shupa* but critiques the practice from a gender perspective. The current study investigates why the belief and practice that has a life-threatening aspect of *kuhaza* is still accepted among the Ndau.

2.7 Conclusion

Evident in several studies discussed in this chapter, much of the reviewed literature is concerned with the content of indigenous knowledge in agriculture, climate change, food security and medicine. The protection of IKS by international as well as regional bodies like UN and SADC was discoursed. SADC countries such as South Africa and Namibia have made commendable efforts in ensuring that IKS are practically promoted through statutes and policies. South Africa is taking a lead in this regard with institutions such as the University of KwaZulu- Natal, North-West University, University of South Africa and University of Venda ensuring that serious research and teaching and learning of IKS are prioritised. The chapter has also provided a survey of the status

and number of researches on IKS in Zimbabwe. Apart from uncoordinated research on IKS in Zimbabwe, the country lags far behind other SADC countries like South Africa and Namibia in mainstreaming work on IKS. There is little research done on IKS in local communities of Zimbabwe. By focusing on *shupa* among the local community of the Ndau, this study does not only aim to increase the research on IKS and their (IKS) efficacy but to also ensure the documentation of such IKS for the benefit of the local communities in solving problems relating to their health, environment and food. Given that there is only one study done among the Ndau on *shupa*, the emphasis being placed on the gender dynamics of the belief and practice, the current study investigated the practice from a holistic perspective.

The next Chapter Three turns to research methodology and theoretical or conceptual underpinnings of the study. The research methodology and the theoretical frameworks were combined for two reasons. Firstly, this arrangement is premised on the understanding that the theoretical framework (s) determine how data is gathered and analysed and hence determines the methodology employed in the study. Secondly, the study is not purely a methodological study that would require a separation of the two.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology and Theoretical Frameworks

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discoursed on literature pertaining to the efficacy of IKS. The chapter made a trajectory survey of the conceptualisation of 'indigenous', 'knowledge', and 'systems' to holistically comprehend the concept of 'indigenous knowledge systems'. To trace the significance of IKS, the chapter traced the importance of IKS in terms of agriculture, health and environment. The survey adopted a global perspective by discussing the involvement of the UN in IKS discourses, a regional perspective by focusing on SADC activities on IKS and a national view point by assessing the status of IKS in Zimbabwe. This approach enabled a focused approach to *shupa* as an IKS of the Ndau.

The current chapter looks at the research methodology and the theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. It must be noted that because of the nature of the study, which is a qualitative research design, a poly-methodic approach was adopted. Although the qualitative research design, where interviews are a predominant tool for gathering data, was adopted for this thesis I was alive to its limitation that as a researcher I had no control of the outcome of the conversations with interviewees. It was the interviewees who determined the information communicated which guided my thoughts. The poly-methodic stance taken was informed by the observation that there is no one method or discipline that can lead to an exhaustive and all-encompassing understanding of man's (sic)religious aspects (Mapuranga 2010). Using one approach in a study of this nature will not do justice to the study. Since the study is about the Ndau people and their indigenous practice of *bota reshupa*, a historical approach to the study cannot be avoided. At the same time the Ndau are a social ethnic group and an attempt to study them cannot avoid the sociological approach. In addition, the Ndau people are believers of their own practices hence the phenomenological approach as a method that represents a people's beliefs, practices and values, is indispensable. A combination of the historical, sociological and phenomenological approaches was used in the study as shown below.

3.2 The Historical approach

Collingwood (1946) states that the historical methodology began in the 19th century pioneered by Germany. It is a popularised methodology in the social sciences (Maposa 2013) which tries to tap into knowledge of the past. In this section the historical approach is used as an empirical and scientific methodology. Its conceptual explanation thrust and applicability as a worthwhile method to explore Ndau people's history, their IKS as well as the history of ABCFM church that established itself in Chipinge district in 1893 is considered. It is through the historical approach that Chapter Four of the study brings to the fore what happened when the ABCFM came into contact with the Ndau culture which includes their IKS.

3.2.1 The Historical Thrust

Maposa (2013) instructively argues that the historical method is a systematic collection and evaluation of past data. According to the German Leopold von Ranke, considered to be the 19th century father of historicism, "the historical method is an idiographic science of description, describing facts of the past" (Collingwoood 1946:363). Gall, et al. (1996) defines the historical method as a process of systematic searches for data to answer a past phenomenon for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of present situations, trends and issues. Of importance in the historical method is the recurring term 'past'. The focus of the historical method is "the quest for the past" (Maposa 2013:50) which concerns itself with finding data of the past to explain the present and also determine the future (Sidhu 1984).

Sibanda (2014) states that the historical approach applies to all fields of study because it traces the development of human societies in space and time. The historical approach, according to Mapuranga (2010), can be understood as the history of religions approach. This point is affirmed by Streng (1985:220) who states that the history of religions is "…an examination of religious people, their ideas, beliefs and practices within concrete historical epochs". In other words, the historical approach is making an analysis of any given aspect of a people's belief or practice from its past or history. Thus, Streng maintains that the historical method is to systematically organise and classify material. Shafer (1969) supports this view by defining the historical method as a systematic investigation and interpretation aimed at securing the most accurate account possible of any event or series of events providing a coherent and meaningful discussion.

According to Ranger and Kimambo (1972) historical studies have often focused on politics or administrative bureaucracies. This means that in pre-colonial Africa, it was only the political institutions which had a history, or worthy of being studied historically, unlike other dimensions of society. According to Mapuranga (2010), this was proven to be a fallacy as every aspect of human society has a past and is worthy of study. The fact that every society has a past that shapes the present and determines the future, means that the historical method is helpful to a study of this nature where the primary aim is to investigate the efficacy of a Ndau IKS, *bota reshupa* in the context of the call by scholars (Odora Hoppers, 2001, 2002, Ntuli 2002, Dei 2000, Kaya 2013, Chinsembu 2015, Mapara 2017) to make use of IKS for sustainable development. In the context of this study, the historical method is helpful in establishing what actually took place (Matikiti 2012). It is used to study the encounter between the Africans, particularly the Ndau and the Western missionaries under the ABCFM Church during the christianisation process. In addition, the method is helpful in interrogating documents that were written about the Ndau in terms of who they are, their beliefs and practices as well as tracing the interface between African value systems and the Western epistemologies and ontologies. This grounds the study historically in order to discover whether the christianisation of the Ndau people had an impact on their IKS. The method enabled the study to be placed into context and placed into its natural setting. Accordingly, Mapuranga (2010:23) argues that the historical method seems "appropriate in studying previous cultures and traditions".

However, the historical method does have its shortfalls. Information is usually passed on orally and is reliant on memory. Thatcher (1981) warns that the researcher must deal with oral history very careful since it depends on human memory which is sometimes unreliable. Another shortfall, according to Matikiti (2012) is that the history is not always completely reliable because it is shrouded in cultural, personal, religious and intellectual bias which serve a certain purpose. To wholly rely on this is therefore a flawed approach. This informed the researcher to use the method with caution fully aware that the origin of a historical account must be scrutinised, as to whose history and by whom.

Notwithstanding the historical method's shortcomings such as its over- reliance on oral tradition, the method was quite useful to this study in that it facilitated the tracing of *bota reshupa'*s historical journey as it was practised then. Even though the death of elders resulted in the loss of information

(Mapuranga, Chitando and Gunda 2013), using the historical method enabled a systematic organisation of the historical background of the Ndau people, exploring their IKSs which included their values, beliefs and practices such as *bota reshupa* within concrete historical epochs. Additionally, the approach reconstruct the Ndau history as discussed in Chapter Two. As has been argued earlier on, no one method is sufficient in the study of phenomena. Given this truism, the other approach used for this study to counter the limitations of and complement the historical approach was the sociological approach.

3.3 The Sociological Approach

The sociological approach is often referred to as the sociology of religion. Sibanda (2014) understands the sociology of religion as the study of beliefs, practices and organisational forms of religion by employing the tools and methods of the discipline of sociology. At the centre of the sociology of religion is society. Smart (1996) defines the sociology of religion as the study of human relationships and interaction. This points to the inseparability of religion and society. The sociological approach emphasises the extent to which society influences individual and group status and behaviour in a particular context. The founding fathers of the sociology of religion include classical figures such as Karl Marx (1818-1883), Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and Max Weber (1864-1920) whose focus were on religion as an opium of the oppressed, the social cohesion force of religion and the religious ethic respectively. Emile Durkheim's views are fundamental to the current study.

For Durkheim the sociological approach deals with religion and class, gender, economics, change and various aspects of society (Smart 1996). Given that the study is on the belief and practice of *bota reshupa* among the Ndau people, who not only interact among themselves but also with their beliefs and practices and other external forces such as colonialism and globalisation, the sociological approach promoted the understanding of the religio-cultural, social and medical aspects of *shupa*. The practice has deep religio-cultural elements such as its place among the Ndau's religio-cultural ceremonies of ancestor veneration. The use of interviews and focused group discussion in the study as methods of data collection (which will be explained later) is informed by the sociological approach. This approach also facilitated the interaction with the Ndau society to find out what it means to be Ndau and how effective are Ndau IKS such as *bota reshupa*.

Additionally, the purposive and snowball sampling methods used for the selection of the research participants, were crucial aspects of the sociological inquiry.

However, the sociological method has been criticised for its emphasis on the centrality of religion at the expense of others aspects of human existence and its focus on society at the expense of the individual (Mapuranga 2010, Maposa 2013, Sibanda 2014).Though the sociological approach emphasises the centrality of religion and society at the expense of other aspects of human existence and on society at the expense of the individual, it remains one of the approaches this study benefited from. Another approach that the study used to counter the limitations of the sociological approach was the phenomenological approach.

3.4 The phenomenological approach

To begin with, Maposa's (2013) caution must be re-emphasized that there is no standard definition of phenomenology. According to Bleeker (1963) phenomenology as a research method has received criticisms from numerous scholars. Some scholars have gone as far as denying its existence. But before tracing its trajectory, attempts to understand it have been made by many scholars. The term 'phenomenology' is derived from a Greek word, *phainomenon,* to mean 'that which shows itself (Shoko 1993, Cox 1996, Maposa 2013) or that which manifests itself or that which appears (Allen 1987). Phenomenology has been understood from two perspectives. The perspectives, according to Spiegelberg (1971), are the philosophical and non-philosophical. This study pursues the non-philosophical strand because it is this strand that emphasises the descriptive rather than the explanatory understanding of the phenomenon. In addition, this strand of phenomenology appears in the systematic and comparative study of religions when researchers formulate typologies (Maposa 2013). Clearly the strand of the non-philosophical nature of phenomenology is crucial to the present study, especially considering the fact that the belief and practice of *bota reshupa* requires 'thick' descriptions for easy comprehension.

Spiegelberg (1982) avers that phenomenology resembles a 'moving' rather than a 'stationary' philosophy. Out of the non-philosophical nature of phenomenology emerged the phenomenology of religion which has been popularised as both an academic discipline as well as a methodological approach. Its definition is not immediately perceptible hence the difficulty in coming up with an

all-encompassing definition. There are as many phenomenologies as there are phenomenologists (Chitando 1998). It is because of this observation that Jackson maintains that:

> The phenomenology of religion has been presented in different ways by different authors. The phenomenology of religion is a family of approaches rather than a tightly definable single approach (Jackson 1997:7).

The foregoing points to the difficulty that scholars encounter in trying to define the phenomenology of religion as an all-encompassing definition is elusive. Arthur succinctly points to the difficulty by stating:

> …anyone who wants to find out what phenomenology of religion is and how it is applied 'will find the search a frustrating one'. To illustrate the cause of such a frustration would not be difficult, for rather than any embarrassing silence it is the sheer number of conflicting replies to the question 'what is phenomenology of religion?' which makes it so difficult to reach a satisfactory answer (Arthur 1992: 150).

3.4.1 Aims and Historical Development

The aim and task of the phenomenology of religion are essentially to 'describe' and not to explain religious phenomena (da Silva 1982). da Silva argues that one of the most important tasks of the phenomenology of religion is to describe religion in such a way that its 'uniqueness' can be preserved and not 'reduced' to anything else. Its main aim is to portray religious phenomena from the stand point of the insiders (Arthur 1995).

Phenomenology, as both a philosophical as well as methodological enterprise, experienced a slow development. It started as a German movement which was inaugurated at the Munich and Gottingen universities (Allen 1987). It remained exclusively in German circles up to the end of the Second World War when the centre tilted towards the French circles where it found its niche at the Sorbonne and Paris universities. It is argued that it was during its (philosophical phenomenology) sojourn in France that it was blended with existentialism (Maposa 2013). With these general observations, it is important to briefly explore contributions of particular phenomenologists. Suffice to say, Edmund Husserl's phenomenology deserves a special mention because of his particular status as the most influential philosopher of the phenomenological

movement upon which subsequent writers in the field were to some extent, inspired by. (Spiegelberg 1982).

3.4.2 Descriptive phenomenology

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was a German philosopher and mathematician whose contributions to the phenomenological method are significant for the study. Shoko (1993) argues that Husserl, when he began to write in 1905, noticed defects that originated in mathematics that dominated his philosophical interests and encouraged him to react vigorously against 'positivism' as exemplified by natural science. For Husserl the science of renaissance had lost the human face (Chitando 1998). Accordingly, for Husserl there was a 'crisis' where positivism in natural science was a 'danger' to an anti-reductionist approach to phenomena. To deal with this 'crisis' Husserl argued that there was need to have a rigorous engagement of reason to overcome what he calls the 'danger of dangers' (Husserl 1965:191). For this reason, Husserl regarded phenomenology as a 'rigorous science' which, in his view, carried the potentialities to mitigate the 'scientific crisis' (Shoko 1993:14). The dictum '*zu den sachem*', that is 'to the things themselves' demonstrates Husserl's determination to transform mere philosophical concepts to the direct description of phenomena as they appear in the immediate experiences (Allen 1987). Husserl's phenomenology was formulated as a quest to 'go to the roots', that is, to the philosophical foundations of all knowledge, situated in things inherent in objects. The quest for philosophical phenomenology with its scientific rigour has prompted Husserl to formulate what has now become the phenomenological mantra: 'Back to the things themselves' (Chitando 1998).

3.4.2.1 *Epoche*

To clearly demonstrate his passion to have phenomena 'speak' for themselves, Husserl, influenced by his mathematical background, propounded an essential feature of the phenomenology of religion, *epoche*. In order to make phenomena speak for themselves Husserl, in the early 1900s, popularised the concept of *epoche* which the current study used in data collection. *Epoche* is a word derived from Greek *epecho* meaning 'I hold back' (Sharpe 1986:224). This means 'stoppage', suspension of judgement, the exclusion from one's mind of every possible presupposition (Sharpe 1986). In other words, *epoche* was a way of 'suspending' or 'putting out of action' the uncritical accepted notions about the world of phenomena which must be bracketed

(Spiegelberg 1982). By this concept, Husserl was searching for a philosophy which would identify with deeper human concerns. In other words, this is "a powerful concept in that it encourages researcher and scholars of religion to approach all religions with open minds" (Chitando 2010:266). *Epoche* is linked to empathy. It is argued that *epoche* does not only involve suspension of one's belief but 'involves an active participation in the experience which is being encountered, unencumbered by pre-existing or superimposed ideas, beliefs, presumptions or suspicions' (Sharma 2001).

Notwithstanding *epoche*'s challenges in terms of its practicality and applicability (Segal 1989), the concept was conceived as a methodological aspect that calls for training and conscious self-criticism. In the study of religion, it means that the researchers must observe religious phenomena as they "manifest rather than as they are understood through pre-conceived opinions formed prior to observation" (Cox 1992:27). In a Husserlian understanding, *epoche* was seen as an indispensable tool "to grasp *verstelen*, that is, an understanding of human transcendence" (Allen 1987:277).

This principle enabled a particular approach to the Ndau and their beliefs and practices, *bota reshupa* in particular, objectively as an 'outsider-insider' given that the researcher is an outsider to the Ndau carrying out research on, about and with them and yet at the same time an insider[25] having been born and bred in the Ndau community. It enabled entry into Ndau territory as both an 'insider' and 'outsider' researcher. This double social position provided easy access and acceptance into the Ndau community as well as keeping a researcher's distance while gathering data. The principle of *epoche* as applied in the phenomenological methodology assisted in maintaining an unbiased 'insider-outsider researcher' position whose intention was to obtain information from the believers' and practitioners' point of view. This means studying the practice with an 'open mind' (Chitando 2010:266). The principle of *epoche,* with its limitations such as questions on its impracticability, created an objective lens' and promoted a well-informed and justified interpretation of the practice under study. It is stated that being objective enables

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[25] As a Ndau myself the temptation was to enter the community with knowledge about *bota reshupa* which could compromise how I conducted the research. I would have made a lot of unsubstantiated claims. Because of *epoche* I entered the research site with the intention to get the information about *bota reshupa* from the Ndau people's point of view.

researchers to "…listen to believers and approach them with minimum presuppositions" (Taringa 2013:97). It is with this warning in mind that the study was carried out on the Ndau of the Chipinge district of Zimbabwe. Another principle of the phenomenology of religion approach is *eidetic intuition.*

3.4.2.2 *Eidetic* intuition/vision

The word *eidetic* is derived from the Greek word *eidos* to refer to 'form', 'essence' or 'meaning' of religion (Sibanda 2014). This principle expresses the 'whatness' of things, that is, the necessary and invariant features of phenomena. This is a principle that seeks to attain an intuitive insight into essential forms, structures, and patterns of religion (Sibanda 2014). The principle helped in deriving salient features of *bota reshupa* such as its composition, meaning and purpose for the Ndau. It enabled the carrying out of the study with the objective to understand the meaning the Ndau people attach to the practice of *bota reshupa.* For example, through *eidetic* intuition an understanding into why *bota reshupa* is presented during rituals such as birth rites was achieved. Closely related to *epoche* and *eidetic* vision is empathy.

3.4.2.3 Empathetic Interpolation

This is what is often referred to as entering into the experience of the adherents under investigation. In Husselrian terms this is entering the phenomena of experience to increase understanding, matching that of the believer (Cox 1992). Cox (1992) further argues that empathy involves the cultivation of a 'feeling for' whereby the researcher identifies with the attitudes, thoughts and activities of the adherent without necessarily being converted; looking into and through the mind of the believer. For Chitando (2010), this is cultivating empathy. Chitando summarises cultivating empathy thus:

> The major argument for promoting an empathetic understanding of religion is that the focus of religious studies is fellow human beings. Unlike other disciplines that tend to concentrate on inanimate objects, the study of religion dwells on human beings, who have emotions and feelings of their own. The duty of the scholar of religion is to respect these feelings and emotions (Chitando 2010:269).

Like Husserlian's rigorous science project, this principle encourages researchers to 'feel for and feel with' followers of the religion under study. The phenomenology of religion recommends

'methodological conversion'. This 'conversion' is a matter of methodology for the researcher to access data. It is temporary and once the research is done, the researcher must distance him/herself from the immersion. It is only intended to overcome the distance between the researcher and the focus of his/her research. Though being embedded in empathy is the danger of being immersed totally, practising this principle of empathetic interpolation enabled an approach to the Ndau with their practice of *bota reshupa* with compassion. This compassion does not mean being apologetic and sympathetic but approaching them with what Chitando (2010:269) calls a 'feeling for' and 'feeling with' attitude. Once this empathetic approach was adopted, rapport was established between the researcher and the participants. This resulted in trust and the participants freely provided information.

Despite the danger of possible conversion to the participants' religion during the research process, empathy did not only create trust between the researcher and the participants, but the participants were eager to share their knowledge without any restraint. Coupled with *epoche,* empathy helped to treat the participants with respect as they were important to the search for information. The concept of empathy works hand in hand with that of *epoche* and it is only when a scholar suspends his/her bias and prejudice that empathy should be cultivated (Chitando 2010). Taringa (2013) concurs by arguing that the method of empathy brings us into contact with the anti-reductionist thrust of the phenomenology of religion.

From the above it is evident that Husserl's goal of anti-reductionism in *epoche, eidetic* vision and empathetic interpolation, is to allow researchers to deal faithfully with 'phenomena as phenomena' and so become aware what phenomena can reveal in their full intentionality. As a result, many of the 20th century phenomenologists were fascinated by many of his insights. Accordingly, other influential phenomenologists of religion whose style of thinking have decisively shaped the scope of the present study are discussed hereunder.

3.5 Comparative study of religions

Chantepie da la Saussaye (1848-1920) was a Dutch Professor of Theology who originated the term 'Phenomenology of Religion' in his article, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*. According to Shoko (1993) Chantepie da la Saussaye contended that a serious study of any religion must logically embrace the phenomenological investigations, given that when one studies the history of

religions, one may not separate religions in their constituent entities, but compare one religion. He further states that Chantepie da la Saussaye believed that any effort towards the comparative study of religions would pay attention to what he called 'ideological connections' that will contribute to the meaning of religious phenomena, say, sacrifice, prayer or magic. This insight is instructive for the present study, given that the intention is to discover the meaning of *bota reshupa* as a resource for the Ndau.

3.6 Intentionality of religion

According to Shoko (1993:19) Gerardus van der Leeuw (1890-1950) was a Dutch theologian and was widely known as a scholar of religion who engaged psychology as an experiential method to guide intuition to arrive at an immediate '*Verstehen'*, that is, an understanding of religion. In line with this view Waardenburg had this to say:

> Van der Leeuw developed a phenomenology of religion which was methodically based on the experience of understanding…In his broader interpretation of religion, van der Leeuw became interested in the problem of anthropological structures, in the relationship between religion and art, and in the interpretation and theological appreciation of man's being a *homo religiosus* (religious man). Phenomenology of religion, for this scholar, led both to anthropology and theology (Waardenburg 1973:57)

Van der Leeuw, in his work *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (1933), defined the assumptions, concepts and stages of his phenomenological methodology. He asserted that any researcher must respect the specific intentionality of religious phenomena and describe it as 'what appears into view'. Van der Leeuw (1933) suggested five methodological steps, namely, assigning names to phenomena, interpolating experiences with one's own life, exercising *epoche*, clarifying and comprehending data and testifying to what has been comprehended. These methodological steps do not only give direction on how this research was conducted among the Ndau, but insights on how to attach meaning to Ndau experiences on *bota reshupa*.

Another essential contribution Van der Leeuw made which is relevant to the present study is that any phenomenological approach must be blended with the historical research method, as an essential component in the study of the History of Religions (*Religionswischennchaft* in German). For Van der Leeuw, the historical method comes first as it provides sufficient historical data for

the researcher. To detach the phenomenological method from the historical method is 'empty fancy' for Van der Leeuw. Although criticised for failing to distinguish between the significance of a phenomenon for the believers concerned and the meaning the phenomenon acquired from the understanding scholar, Van der Leeuw's insights are instructive in a study of this nature. His insights do not only guide the way research must be carried out but also informs how a researcher derives meaning from his/her study.

3.7 Phenomenology as empirical Science without philosophical aspirations

 Another phenomenologist whose contribution to the phenomenological method is instructive for the present study is Dutch theologian Claus Jouco Bleeker (1898-1983). He added new insights to the development of phenomenology of religion which takes religion seriously. According to Shoko (1993:23) Bleeker claimed that the problem of phenomenology is that it appears to be 'hybrid' between the history and the philosophy of religion. However, Bleeker (1963:7) observed that phenomenology is an "empirical science without philosophical aspirations". He identified three types of phenomenology of religion. The first is the descriptive phenomenology which attempts to systematise the phenomena of religion. The second one is the typological phenomenology that attempts to formulate types of religion and thirdly, specific phenomenology that attempts to investigate the essential structures and meaning of religious data. Bleeker adopted the Husserlian *epoche* and *eidetic* vision to gain insights into the core of religious structures (Maposa 2013:39). Bleeker's methodological paradigm is interesting because it has some fundamental principles that are vital in the endeavour to study *bota reshupa* as religious phenomenon, *sui generis.*

3.8 The sole right of the believer

William Brede Kristensen (1867-1853) was a Norwegian *guru* in Oriental languages and religions (Maposa 2013). For Kristensen phenomenology is descriptive rather than normative. His point of departure is the mantra: 'the believer is always right' which endorses the faith of the believer as declared by Sharpe, thus:

> Let us not forget that there exists no other religious reality than the faith of the believer. If we really want to understand religion, we refer exclusively to the believer's testimony (Sharpe 1986:228).

The above statement by implication means that one must "forget' oneself in order to surrender oneself to the faith of other people" (Shoko 1993:22). This echoes the cultivating empathy principle of Chitando (2010). Kristensen, like Husserl, embraces the principles of *epoche* and empathy as key methodological tools in the study of religion. Once this is done researchers will appreciate the absolute value that followers of any religion ascribe to their faith. Despite the criticism that 'believers themselves' may err "in the way they internalise their faith" (Sharpe 1986:229), Kristensen's insights are stepping stones towards achieving the integrity of the believers. In this case the Ndau religious beliefs and views on *bota reshupa* must be respected *vis-à-vis* the Western epistemologies and ontologies on African IKS.

3.9 Hermeneutical phenomenology

Joachim Wach (1898-1955) was a renowned American sociologist of religion who argued that the fundamental quest for the phenomenological approach was the need to understand other people's faith other than one's own. Outlining Wach's main contribution, which is relevant to the study, Waardenburg states:

> In 1924 Wach published a basic methodological work on the study of religion as a systematic discipline…He thereby took religious experience as his point of departure and made the attempt to interpret the religious data as expression of such religious experience, action, or human fellowship. Wach distinguished himself also, by keeping an eye open for the philosophical problems raised by the results of the discipline and by the fact of man's apparent religiousness (Waardenburg 1973:63)

For Wach, the phenomenology of religion, if properly undertaken, served "to broaden the *sensus numinis*, that is, to deepen one's own faith and to encourage a new experience of what religion actually is and actually means" (Shoko 1993:25). Of significance in Wach's contribution to phenomenology of religion is his belief in the hermeneutical key as a useful methodological principle in the phenomenological approach. For him hermeneutical phenomenology takes a step further from descriptive phenomenology in that instead of only giving 'thick' descriptions of phenomena (as does descriptive phenomenology), hermeneutical phenomenology "answers the question of the meaning of existence" (Denscombe 2007:76). The researcher moves from the description to the interpretation of that which is under study.

Furthermore, in his publication, *Sociology of Religion* (1944), Wach claimed that "the inquirer must feel an affinity to his subject, and he must be trained to interpret his material with sympathetic understanding" (Sharpe 1986:239). Despite the criticism that Wach did not know where comparative religion ended, and theology began, his methodological paradigm is instructive to this study as it engages the hermeneutical key towards an interpretation and understanding of Ndau IKS, particularly *bota reshupa*.

3.10 The irreducibility of religion

Rudolf Otto (1869-1937), a German theologian, was one of the phenomenologists, who exerted worldwide influence through his investigation of man's experience of the religious experience. He is known as an ardent critic of the reducibility of religion. He advocated for anti-reductionism whereby he argued that anti-reductionism respects the unique, irreducible 'numinous' which points to the quality of all religious experiences (Allen 1987:277). Otto argues that in trying to uncover the essential structure and meaning of all religious experiences, the 'numinous' element is a unique *a priori* category of religious value. In his estimation, Otto posited that it is this "numinous that creates the *sui generis* character of any religious experience as the wholly other (*ganz andere,* in German) which is seen as qualitatively unique and transcendent" (Allen 1987:277).

The above insights from Otto explain how he conceived the irreducibility of religion. In other words, Otto emphasised the autonomy of religion. This concept of an autonomous religion made Otto the greatest phenomenologist of all times. Using Otto's insights, the present study approaches Ndau IKS, *bota reshupa sui generis.* This approach enables phenomena to speak for themselves thereby making *bota reshupa* unique, irreducible and an IKS in its own right.

3.11 The sacred and the profane

Mircea Eliade (1907-1986) was another professor of the History of Religions in the School of Divinity of the University of Chicago from 1957 to 1977, whose contribution to the phenomenological methodology is important to the study. The centre of Eliade's scheme of phenomenology of religion, as illustrated in his publications, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (1958) and *The Sacred and the Profane* (1959), is the dichotomy between the sacred and the profane. For Eliade the human being is *homo religiosus* and aim of the *homo religiosus* being is to transcendent the profane world. The sacred, for him, is irreducible and takes the form of the

phenomenological *epoche* (Maposa 2013). Like Joachim Wach, Eliade adopted the hermeneutical key to expose the essence of religion.

However, Eliade encountered criticism from Segal (1989:6) who accused Eliade of double standards. On the one hand Eliade claimed to be a scholar of the history of religions, but at the same time, through his concept of the sacred, assumed a neo-theologian status. Despite this criticism, the present study does not lose sight of the insightful contribution that Eliade made in linking the phenomenology of religion with the historical method. He made it clear that there is a mutual fecundity between the history of religions and the phenomenology of religion paradigms.

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that the phenomenologists cited above offered tremendous insights that directs the present study. The insights find common ground in the Husserlian *epoche* where the researcher is called upon suspend pre-conceived views to religious truth and practice. Cox is instructive in this respect when he argues thus:

> The phenomenologist argues that a non-believer can appreciate the meaning of religion in the believer's own terms because he has suspended his own personal or academic presuppositions by temporarily placing them within brackets (*epoche*) thus permitting him to cultivate a feeling for the believer's own faith position (Cox 1996:56).

Whatever the above phenomenologists submissions were, the fundamental issue that emerges is the need to approach the study of religion faithfully, with no presuppositions and ensuring the irreducibility of the phenomena. The present study approaches *bota reshupa* as a Ndau IKS from such a phenomenological grounding. Having discussed the three approaches that informed the study, the next section looks at how the three approaches are interrelated for the benefit of the study.

3.12 The relationship of the three approaches in this study

Bearing in mind the fact that no one method is sufficient on its own, the methodology was triangulated in order to deal with the limitations of each method. The use of the three approaches, that is historical, sociological, and phenomenological, culminate in the interdisciplinary approach adopted for the study. The approaches, though different in scope, are interdependent and have provided for the different dimensions that *bota reshupa* displays. This also provided insights on

the belief and practice from different standpoints and assisted in obtaining a holistic understanding of *bota reshupa* as will be illustrated in the following chapters.

The poly-methodic approach has not only informed approaches to the study of *bota reshupa* but has provided the lenses used in the appropriate data collection techniques. Furthermore, the poly-methodic approach has also ensured that as the approaches were used simultaneously, they corrected errors on both sides. Mapuranga confirms this point when she states "…no one method can do justice to the study of religion. Each approach seeks to correct the limitations of the other, hence, the interplay of the various methods…" (Mapuranga 2010:27). The Ndau IKS *bota reshupa* was explored through the historical method in particular. This enabled an exploration of its past, an examination of its present status and provided a prediction of its future in the context of global challenges like globalisation. The sociological method enabled an understanding of the social milieu within which the belief and practice of *bota reshupa* evolved. An interpretive and descriptive nature of the study on *bota reshupa* was achieved through the phenomenological approach.

The study has proven that phenomenologists cannot do without the early approaches such as the sociology of religion and the history of religions. The ahistorical nature of phenomenology of religion has been supported by other approaches such as the historical method. This means that although the approaches have different foci, there exists a symbiotic relationship among them, which the study benefitted from. Where one approach presented challenges, the other could be relied on. For example, when the historical method had problems in that most of the elders, who are the custodians of indigenous practices such as *bota reshupa*, are dying, the study drew on the sociological method. The sociological approach enabled an interaction with the deceased elders' progeny to whom they had bequeathed vital knowledge about their IKS during their lifetime. In turn the siblings had to pass on the information to other generations. This has enabled knowledge about *bota reshupa* to survive to this day.

Although the methods used in this study are essentially different and independent from each other, they are by no means self-sufficient in their contributions towards this study. During the 1970s, Werblowsky (1975) observed that there was a fundamental problem in the academic study of religion regarding proper methods of studying religion. This confirms that no one method is

sufficient on its own to study a people's belief, practices and religion. Thus, through the integration of the historical, sociological and phenomenological approaches the study of *bota reshupa* was guided by Pummer (1975:176)'s observation of a "rounded approach involving history, phenomenology (and) sociology". As such the triangulation method was useful in order to fully understand *bota reshupa* among the Ndau people as one of their sustaining IKS. In this study, the phenomenological method was found to be the most useful approach as it encompassed other approaches.

3.13 Population, Sample and Sampling procedures

The concept 'population' in research is understood as "the group of interest to the researcher, the group to whom the researcher would like to generalize the results of the study" (Fraenkel and Wallen 1996:92, Sibanda 2010:35). This is an incisive definition that points to the population of the study, which in this case consisted of the elderly members of the Ndau communities and some professionals[26] who are Ndau by origin. The professional participants included university lecturers, school teachers and nurses who were living within and outside the research site. The elders were part of the study population because they were presumed to be rich information sites (Patton 2002) for *bota reshupa* given the fact that it is one such practice that is intergenerational. It has been in existence from time immemorial and passed on orally from the elders to the young. The elders ranged from illiterate and semi-literate to literate. This was taken as an important variable given that traditional beliefs and practices find greater expression in illiterate and semi-literate elders of communities. This could be because of less interaction with outside influences unlike the literate people whose exposure to formal education could have a bearing on the way they perceive IKS. The professionals of Ndau origin were also targeted to provide their views on *bota reshupa*. Their views were necessary in the study to investigate the extent to which colonisation and other forces such as globalisation have impacted or not on IKS, and on *bota reshupa* in particular. Since it was impossible to include the views and experiences of all the Ndau people of the Chipinge district, sampling was used to identify and select the research participants.

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[26] These included sons and daughters of Ndau origin like university lecturers, ministers of religion, primary and secondary school teachers and nurses. These could be living the research site or elsewhere.

3.13.1 Sampling

Sampling is the method by which a desired number of participants are selected from a defined population to represent the population (Borg and Gall 1989, Sibanda 2010). Purposive and snowball sampling methods were used because of their respective advantages and appropriateness to the study.

3.13.2 Purposive Sampling

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) conceptualise purposive sampling in qualitative research as a method where researchers select the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement of the typicality or possession of a particular characteristic being sought. In other words, purposive sampling is composed of elements which contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population. Purposive was used whereby participants were those that not only volunteered, but those who were deemed as information-rich and knowledgeable (Sibanda 2014) about *bota reshupa*. Purposive sampling helped in finding representatives of participants across the age spectrum, the level of education and gender among the Ndau.

3.13.3 Snowball Sampling

The study used snowball sampling on the participants who were purposively sampled. Snowball sampling is whereby "each successive participant or group is named by the preceding group or individual" (MacMillan and Schumacher 2006:381, Sibanda 2014:35). According to Sibanda (2014), snowball sampling is anchored on one participant recommending another participant deemed suitable. In other words, in snowball sampling researchers identify a small number of individuals who have the characteristics in which they are interested. These participants are then used as informants to identify or put the researchers in touch with others who qualify for inclusion and these, in turn, identify yet others (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007). Since the practice under study was assumed to be the preserve of the elderly, purposive sampling was used to identify those participants who had the necessary information sought after. Although snowball was helpful for the study the researcher was not blind to its limitation that by asking for references people tend to refer researchers to people who have similar experiences with them, thereby resulting in interviewing like-minded people. This limits the possibility of getting people's different

experiences, in this case, of *shupa*. To counter this I had to probe for different experiences from those already given.

Thirty-four participants for both the in-depth interviews and a focused group discussion were selected. The sample comprised six females and two males in Musikavanhu; seven females and one male in Mutema and six females and two males in the Garahwa chieftaincies. The composition of professionals, eight males and two females, was necessitated by the fact that there were more males than females among the sampled professionals. Since the research was a qualitative one, a total of thirty-four participants were sufficient to render the study reliable and valid. The participants' views and experiences were generalisable. There were fewer males than females in the sample and this was because of the nature of the objective of study itself. As will be discussed at length later, the pilot study found that *bota reshupa* is predominantly the preserve of the females (a theme that will be discussed more broadly in Chapter Six.

3.14 Methods of Data Collection

Having established the approaches that informed the study and the sample size of the study, the matter of how data was gathered from the research participants will be discussed. Two research instruments, namely interviews and a focused group discussion were used; the details of the instruments used are given below

3.14.1 Interviews

With the study being qualitative interviews are one of the research methods that are used. Interviewing is understood as the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research, that is, a way of getting to hear other peoples' stories (Siwila 2011). Kvale's (1996) definition of qualitative interviews as attempts to understand the world from the participants' point of view and unfold the meaning of people's experiences is informative to this study. Writing in the 1990s, Holstern and Gubrium argue that:

> Interviews provide a way of generating empirical data about the social world by asking people to talk about their lives. In this respect, interviews are special forms of conversation…these conversations may vary from highly structured, and standardized, qualitatively oriented survey interviews to semi-formal guided conversations, and free-flowing informational exchanges… (Holstern and Gubrium 1997:113).

The interactive nature of the interview makes this an appropriate instrument for data collection. Having a number of interview typologies such as the unstructured, semi-structured to highly standardised or structured interviews to choose from, the semi-structured type was selected, for two reasons. Firstly, the semi-structured interviews focus on the discussions about the research subject. Although there is room for digression, the digressions are minimised. Secondly, semi-structured interviews save time and are easy to follow and at the same time allow the researcher to probe if need be. There were instances where the unstructured interview was used, depending on the situation. For example, there were instances where participants raised issues outside the semi-structured interview guide and this flexibility ensured eliciting the maximum information from the research participants. Semi-structured interviews were found to be appropriate for the study and were conducted as give below.

3.14.2 In-depth face-to-face semi-structured interviews with elders

In-depth one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with the elders in the Mutema and Musikavanhu chieftaincies. The interviews were conducted in the Ndau language. The transcripts were translated into English by the researcher. The responses were recorded in the original language in order to capture the views of the participants in their unadulterated form to avoid loss of meaning and expression. The translation included in the study is intended for non-Ndau speaking readers. It was interesting to note that the participants responded in their rich Ndau language. It was also noted that some participants could use English words in their derivative forms to express themselves, particularly by the semi-literate participants. These responses were recorded as given. Where there were grammatical errors in the responses by the participants, the errors were left unchanged.

The first set of interviews were conducted with sixteen participants drawn from two chieftaincies, Mutema and Musikavanhu (eight participants were chosen from each chieftaincy). Each participant was interviewed individually using the interview guide (see Appendix 3). The interviewees were selected basing on their age and experience in IKS. The participants were asked to consent either verbally or sign the consent form (for those who were semi-literate- see Appendix 2) In some cases where the participants were illiterate, they provided a thumb print on the consent form (see Appendix 8). The participants were asked to provide information on: (a) What they knew

about *bota reshupa.* (b) Its functions/purposes (c) whether it had been affected by colonisation (d) the challenges faced by *bota reshupa (*e) Why it was sustainable (f) How it could be preserved for future generations.

3.14.3 Semi-structured interviews with professionals

Another group of participants were university lecturers, school teachers and nurses. These professionals were either within the research sites or away from it. What is important to note is that these professionals are of Ndau origin. Most of these professionals admitted to having been fed on *bota reshupa.* The inclusion of these participants in the research was prompted by three reasons. Firstly, the study sought to establish the impact of formal education and other forces on the professionals' attitude towards the practice of *bota reshupa*. Their views in this regard were important as they had been exposed to other lifestyles that were distinct from their traditions. Secondly, the inclusion of professionals as possible inheritors from the elders when they pass on was meant to investigate the prevalence of Ndau IKS such as *bota reshupa,* given that the elders as the custodians of tradition in its variant forms, are dying off. There was need to discover the professionals' attitude towards their IKS, particularly *bota reshupa.* This attitude would then be a determinant as to whether Ndau IKS would be sustainable or not in the near future. Thirdly, the study included professionals of Ndau origin working in towns such as Harare in Zimbabwe and even as far as Nairobi in Kenya in order to determine the impact of modernity on tradition, which in this study includes IKS such as *shupa*.

This set of participants comprised ten (eight males and two females) professionals. One of these professionals was a minister of religion; others included one interviewee from Harare, three interviewees from Masvingo town (fourth largest city in Zimbabwe), two in Chipinge town, two from the Musikavanhu chieftaincy and one from the Mutema chieftaincy. As some of the interviewees had very busy schedules, appointments were made with them during the evenings or weekends when they were at home. The interviews took between forty-five and eighty minutes.

All ethical considerations were taken into account. The participants' consent was sought and obtained through the same signing the consent form or verbally. The sampling of these professionals was both purposive and snowball. As the researcher was from the same district, it was a matter of asking random professionals or persons about *bota reshupa.* If the response was

affirmative the interview would proceed after being granted consent. If the response to whether they knew *bota reshupa* was negative the researcher would be referred to someone deemed to have the information. This worked very well. Some of the questions asked were: (a) What is their understanding of *bota reshupa?* What are its functions/purposes? (c) How prevalent is the practice? (d) What is their attitude towards the practice? (e) What are the challenges faced by this practice (f) What is the status of IKS such as *bota reshupa* in contemporary Zimbabwe? (g) How can the practice be preserved for future generations?

3.15 Focused Group Discussion at Chief Garahwa's homestead

In a bid to understand focused group discussion, it is important to note that focused group discussion can be understood as a 'focus group interview' (Schurink, Schurink and Poggenpoel 2000). These scholars attempt at defining focus group interview by considering each word separately. For them the term 'group' can be defined as "a number of individuals amongst whom a distinguishable pattern of interaction exists" (Schurink, Schurink and Poggenpoel 2000:314). They go on to define 'interview' as signifying the presence of a trained moderator who could skilfully facilitate the discussion that takes place between all the members in the group to elicit information on the desired topic. 'Focus' implies that the discussion that takes place in the group will be limited to the specific theme under investigation. A focus group interview could therefore be described as "a purposive discussion of a specific topic or related topics taking place between eight to ten individuals with a similar background and common interests" (Schurink, Schurink and Poggenpoel 2000:314).

The foregoing points to the focused group discussion as a focused communication on a subject matter with the intent to obtain information from the members of a group. Amongst the members there is a trained individual who directs and guides the discussions. It is stated that the focused group discussion allows people to communicate in a more meaningful way on a particular topic (Siwila 2011).

Based on the understanding of focused group discussion given above, the Focused Group Discussion (FGD) was used in the Garahwa chieftaincy. The group comprised eight participants (six females and two males). The FGD was conducted at Chief Garahwa's homestead. A local principal was requested to set up the FGD with Chief Garahwa.

The purpose of conducting the FGD in this chieftaincy were two-fold. Firstly, there was a need to utilise group dynamics to produce new and additional data from the interviews held in the other chieftaincies. There were some individuals who had forgotten important information due to their age, hence group discussions were appropriate to fill this gap. Where an individual had forgotten something others in the group would remind him/her or give the information themselves. The FGD validated the data gathered earlier on and complemented the interview method. The triangulated data collection method was an enriching exercise. Secondly, since this chieftaincy was some distance away from the other chieftaincies studied, the FDG saved time and it was less costly, efficient and effective at the same time.

Questions that the FGD focused on were: (a) What the FGD knew about *bota reshupa?* (b) What were some of the FGD's experiences with *bota reshupa?* (c) Why was *bota reshupa* significant in the lives of the Ndau people? (d) How was the porridge prepared? (e) What were some of the taboos attached to *bota reshupa?* (f) How prevalent was the practice? (g) What should be done to preserve the practice in the context of christianisation and globalisation?

It is important to acknowledge at this point in time that while the interviews and focused group discussions were used to collect data, the researcher was aware of the human factor problem, where respondents would apportion blame on the present realities and yearn for the past. This nostalgia at times blinds respondents such that they eulogise the past as a golden era. To avoid such excesses the researcher sifted the data to avoid situations where the present is always bad, and the past is good.

3.16 Data analysis and the Theoretical Frameworks

Having discoursed on the methodology, this section focuses on how data was analysed and the theoretical frameworks that enabled data interpretation. Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the complicated mass of qualitative data that the researcher generates during the research process (Swinton and Mowat 2006). After collecting the data through taking notes and audio- recordings in the three chieftaincies, the data were typed and coded thematically. The respective codes were as follows: for interviews the participants were coded according to age, level of education and position held in the communities. For the FGD, the participants were also coded according to age and position held in the community. The gathered

data during the research was divided into three categories namely: (a) *bota reshupa* as a health asset (b) *bota reshupa* as a religio-cultural practice (c) *bota reshupa* as a form of identity. These three categories are informed by the research question: What is the efficacy of *bota reshupa*, as Ndau IKS?

In order to answer this central question, postcolonial theory and cultural hermeneutics using the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) model, were the appropriate tools to analyse the collected data.

3.16.1 Postcolonial Theory

The discussion on the postcolonial theory is presented by addressing the background to the approach and its relevance to this study and the leading postcolonial theorists.

3.16.1.1 Background

According to the well-known postcolonial scholar, Edward Said (1978), the focus of postcolonial studies is to examine the long-standing impact of cultures in contact with each other and with a particular emphasis on Western colonial interactions with non-western countries. One of its main aims is to uncover local knowledge that may have been side-lined due to the privileging of western traditions. Quayson (2002:2) conceptualises postcolonial theory as a theory that "involves a studied engagement with the experience of colonialism and its past and present effects, both at the local level of ex-colonial societies as well as at the level of more general global developments thought to be the after effects of empire." In other words, postcolonial theory is a means of defiance by which any exploitative and discriminative practices, regardless of time and space, can be challenged (Rukundwa and van Aarde 2007). It is a theory that offers a critical perspective to the study of social phenomena particularly issues surrounding power relations between various groups in society (Velautham 2015). For Quayson (2002) the effects of colonial power did not end with independence. Instead, as Velautham (2015) argues, current social practices which have been established as a result of the colonial encounter such as inherited governments, law, media, journalism, business and a range of other interactions are fraught with issues that stem from unequal power relations.

The postcolonial theory is an area of cultural and critical theory that has been used in the study of literary texts (Mapara 2009). In literary texts, the theory deals with the reading and writing of literature written in previously colonised countries. It can be literature written in colonising countries but about colonisation or the colonised people. It is a theory that focuses largely on how the literature by the colonisers distorts the experiences and realities of the colonised and inscribes the inferiority of the colonised while at the same time promoting the superiority of the coloniser (Mapara 2009). What the theory emphasises at this point is that the colonised's experiences and realities have been distorted for the coloniser to justify the colonisation of the colonised. For example, when missionaries came to Africa, Africans were described as 'barbaric', 'primitive' and 'uncivilised'. The missionaries had a civilising mission in Africa which eventually resulted in the taking way of the African land, distortion and adulteration of African cultures and languages.

On the other hand, postcolonial theory is also about the colonised and formerly colonised announcing their presence and identity as well as reclaiming their past that was lost or distorted because of being othered by colonialism (Mapara 2009). In other words, postcolonial theory is a realisation by the colonised or formerly colonised that what had been said about them is incorrect and hence the need for the colonised or former colonised to correct the misinformation, untruths and half-truths about them. It is a theory that does not only focus on the dilemmas of the colonised in attempting to develop national identities after the demise of colonial rule, but also deals with the way in which writers articulate and celebrate that identity (Mapara 2009). It is a theory anchored on binary oppositions, where white is presented as superior and   black as inferior.

3.16.1.2 Relevance

It has been argued that postcolonial theory has long been applied to the study of literature (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2002). It has been extensively used in literature by writers such as Franz Fanon (1952), Chinua Achebe (1985) and Ngugi waThiongo's (1997). Franz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* suggests that colonialism, because of its explicit promotion of white racial superiority over non-white colonial people, has created a sense of division and alienation in the identity of the colonised. This has made the history, language, culture, customs as well as belief systems of the coloniser not only universal but normative. This weakens the coloniser's sense of self-identity as the colonised continues to lose his/her history, language, culture and belief systems.

As the colonised sense of being, expressed in his/ her history, language and culture, is pushed to the periphery, the coloniser takes the centre stage. This results in the colonised assuming the coloniser's identity as theirs, hence *Black Skin, White Masks* by Fanon (1952). The coloniser's language, culture and customs are assimilated by the colonised subject. This results in the colonised being alienated from their cultures and some even attempt to lighten their skins to emulate that of the coloniser's (Mapara 2009). Therefore, Fanon calls upon the colonised to fight for the liberation of their nation. It is only when the nation is free that the formerly colonised can reclaim and reconstruct their own history and culture.

Apart from being utilised in literature, the theory is increasingly being used in other fields of study such as management studies (Frenkel 2008, Ozkazanc 2008). Frenkel (2008), for instance, argues that the transfer of knowledge has been done by multinational companies through the use of a western model as the benchmark. This was done at the expense of local knowledge and culture. Through postcolonial theory the present study centres IKS which have been marginalised by the western model of knowledge transfer and consummation. This study, therefore, potentially benefits from the application of the postcolonial theoretical approach. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2002) stress that postcolonial perspectives are increasingly becoming relevant in today's world considering the rapid growth and development of the quest for sustainable knowledge. Mapara (2009:143) confirms that IKS as postcolonial theory "attempts to put the record straight on several issues…." These issues include African history, education, architecture, philosophy, language and science. The theory corrects this by stating that the formerly colonised have either been misunderstood or were deliberately ignored, because if they and their knowledge systems had been acknowledged by the colonisers, there would have been no justification for colonialism (Mapara 2009).

Postcolonial theory sheds light on cultures and contexts that cannot be explained by European theories because European theories operate on the false assumption of 'the universal' (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 2002). According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2002), postcolonial theory offers insights into unearthing the effects of colonialism. The theory aims to bring new perspectives where African IKS, Ndau *bota reshupa* in particular, are also privileged as and acknowledged as alternative forms of knowledge. By taking this approach, issues such as the efficacy of IKS in addressing existential problems were examined. The theory does not only bring

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to the surface the power relations that existed between the formerly colonised and the formerly coloniser but also led to self-awareness and the struggle for self-determination and individual identity of any nations that were previously subsumed (Velautham 2015) in the superior and inferior binarity.

This study utilises the insights that are embedded in postcolonial theory. Through the postcolonial theoretical lens, the study uncovers the ways in which the formerly coloniser maintained and perpetuated an ideology of dominance and superiority over African IKS. An interrogation of this nature paves the way for an inclusive acceptance of knowledge- the western as well as the non-western knowledge(s). Hence postcolonial theory is a relevant theoretical paradigm for a close investigation of the efficacy of Ndau *bota reshupa*. Apart from re-claiming, re-affirming and re-valuing IKS, postcolonial theory provides for western epistemologies and non-western ones to complement each other on an equal footing. No form of knowledge is more important than the other. To demonstrate the theory's relevance, it is also prudent to discuss the leading postcolonial theorists.

3.16.1.3 Leading Postcolonial Theorists

As pointed out earlier, postcolonial theory is the appropriate theory in the study of African IKS. This is so because the theory offers critical lenses to interrogate colonial suppression of IKS while privileging western epistemologies and ontologies as 'universal' knowledge. Broadly speaking postcolonial theory has been understood from three perspectives or what Velautham (2015) refers to as strands. The first strand refers to studies on *representation* where the East (non-western) is represented by the west in a range of activities in society. This is the strand that Edward Said discusses at length as will be demonstrated below. The second strand is the *subaltern,* or the marginalised groups in society where a notable scholar, Gayatri Chakravorthy Spivak (1988) observes that our knowledge of the subaltern is confined to representations created by the dominant group in society who continue to perpetuate the social divide between both groups (dominant and the marginalised), in order to maintain power. The third strand of postcolonial theory draws on the work of Homi Bhabha (1994) who posits that the colonial encounter has resulted in a hybrid due to the mixing of values, beliefs and culture between the colonised and the coloniser. In the section below, an overview of the key concepts of postcolonial theory as put forward by the leading

postcolonial theorists is provided. The views provided by Said, Spivak and Bhabha will be discoursed on.

3.16.1.3.1 Edward Said

Said was a Palestinian-American and a pioneering scholar in the field of postcolonial studies (Velautham 2015). According to Bhabha (1992), Said's seminal work *Orientalism* (1978) launched the postcolonial field. Arguing from the same perspective Spivak (1993) stated that Said's writing demonstrates that the marginal can speak, be spoken of and even be spoken for. Said's major argument is that western representations of the East were based on western knowledge and stereotypical assumptions. His theoretical and analytical concepts (discussed below) are beneficial to this study in demonstrating how African, Ndau IKS, in particular, are represented. In the sections below, Said's contributions to the postcolonial field is discussed by grouping his ideas under the subheadings: knowledge and power, binaries and representation.

3.16.1.3.1.1 Knowledge and power

Said's argument on knowledge and power borrows from the Foucaultian theory of knowledge and power (Foucault 1977). Foucault believed that power is everywhere in institutions and is demonstrated through claims of knowledge(s) as truth. Said's main idea is on western power and dominance. In his *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Said argues that the drive for power by the west originates from the belief system that does not only condone dominion over less powerful groups but also supports the contention that there are territories and people who require dominion. This belief system, according to Said, has resulted in the penchant of the west to study the East. For him the west studies the East by dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. This portrayal of the East has not only created an inferiority complex in the East but a knowledge system of the East that is subjugated and regarded as *quasi* knowledge.

Said, therefore, argues that it is fundamental for postcolonial scholars to unpack these accepted ways of studying and representing the East in order to unearth local knowledge which has been silenced (Velautham 2015). Said's (1985) aim is therefore, is to deconstruct the muteness imposed on the Orient as object. Consistent with this, it can be argued that the marginalisation of other societies' local knowledges by the west has silenced *bota reshupa* as a resource for the Ndau. Thus, in this study, the central concern is to expose the rich narratives that illustrate the efficacy

of *shupa* using the postcolonial perspective with the intention to illustrate that all knowledges, western and non-western, complement each other.

Said's (1978) focus in *Orientalism* is on the inherent power structures that are embedded within commonly held beliefs of what constitutes knowledge and the way that knowledge is constructed, positioned and disseminated. According to him, one needs to be wary of who is in charge of creating popular notions of what is deemed to be knowledge. The tendency by the west has been to eschew the knowledge of non-western societies. Said is concerned about the west's domination by the west over non-western knowledge. He cautions "if the knowledge of Orientalism has any meaning, it is in being a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, of any knowledge, anywhere, any time" (Said 1978:328). He is against the debasement of non-western knowledge as he asserts that knowledge should be utilised to serve society. For Said (1978:30) the role of knowledge is to facilitate the development of society, which he views as "a fundamental human and intellectual obligation." This study utilises this view as it investigates how local knowledge such as *shupa* could be utilised for the local people's survival in a sustainable way.

3.16.1.3.1.2 Binaries

The east is portrayed in Said's *Orientalism* as being different from the west whereby the west is regarded as the point of reference for what is considered the norm (Velautham 2015). Everything is based on western standards and perceptions. In Said's view this type of portrayal places the non-western countries' epistemologies represented as the east, as subordinate to the west. Velautham (2015) argues that this is an ideology steeped in a perverted sense of superiority over the east. For Said (1978) this creates an imbalance in power relations between the east and west where the opposing qualities between the two are emphasised. The east is depicted in relation to the west as old versus new or traditional versus modern. Velautham (2015) avers that in binary juxtaposition the east always appears as lacking and in need of western support to achieve similar levels of development and modernity.

These notions by Said were also applied in other disciplines. For example, Aparicio and Chavez-Silverman (2000)'s project of *Tropicalization*, which refers to descriptions of countries located in temperate and tropical parts of the world, is an extension of Said's *Orientalism*. Where Said refers to the east and west without any particular allusion to specific continents *Tropicalization* by

Aparicio and Chavez-Silverman specifically identifies the countries in the Caribbean and Latin America. Just like Said, Aparicio and Chavez-Silverman argue that cultures located in tropical countries are exotic and lag behind those located in the temperate countries. The defining feature of countries in both Said and Aparicio and Chavez-Silverman is the fact that they have had a history of colonialism where phenomena was and is still looked at from opposing standpoints, a bi-polar scenario which has had a history of othering.

However, this concept of binaries did not end with colonialism. Velautham (2015) argues that the use of a structure of hierarchal binaries to represent the east in relation to western norms still prevails even though the colonial period is over. This continued hierarchical binarism still finds expression in post- colonies in the form of language, culture and IKS. According to Mapara (2017) this binarism has also spilled into some institutions such as research into IKS where IKS are seen as *pseudo-science*. These limited perspectives underscore how the west continues to perpetuate an ideology of superiority over the world at the expense of other ways of thinking and knowing in the world. This ideology is echoed by Mills (2004) who states that the colonising cultures use a structure of hierarchical binaries to construct divisions in relation to the level of progress achieved by the former colonies. For Mills (2004) this ideology of binarism highlights the popular technique of labelling the former colonies as 'developing countries' or 'pre-industrial' to emphasise that these countries are locked in the past and have failed to achieve the same level of progress as the west (Velautham 2015). Accordingly, IKS like *shupa* were inferiorised as *pseudo knowledge*.

3.16.1.3.1.3 Representation

In his writings on colonial representation, Said (1978) observes that native populations were portrayed as primitive to reinforce the idea that the British were a modern, developed culture. Gandhi (1998) further observes that one of the strategies adopted to manage power structures in social representation is by expanding or decreasing the level of representation accorded to a particular group in society. The use of such terms as 'primitive and ', native' by the west referring to the peoples of non-western societies was meant to decrease their representation thereby expanding that of the west. Velautham (2015) argues that these images and discourses were used and spread far and wide across the empire to justify the view that the colonial enterprise was valid and even necessary. Said observes:

Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient; translated into his text; this location includes the kind of narrative he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kind of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text-all of which add up to the deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient and finally representing it or speaking on its behalf (Said 1978:20).

What this points to is that when people are represented from other cultures, the selection of images and discourses is based on the knowledge the presenter has about the represented. This has resulted in a skewed knowledge of the colonised during colonialism. The colonised knowledge was incorrectly represented, such that it lost its efficacy among its practitioners (Mapara 2009, 2017). Based on literature on IKS of the post colonies, African IKS are portrayed from the perspective of the prestige and power of the coloniser. They (African IKS) are represented as *pseudo knowledge* that is not only regraded as superstition but unscientific (Ntuli 2002). Said's concept of representation helps this study to show the deep-seated inferiorisation of *shupa* at the expense of its efficacy for the Ndau. Although Said made his observations in 1978, the slanted representations of minority groups and their IKS continue to surface.

3.16.1.3.2 Gayatri Chakravorthy Spivak

Spivak is another renowned scholar of postcolonial studies. Born an Indian but currently staying in the United States, Spivak resorts under the *Subaltern Studies*. *Subaltern Studies* focus on the experiences of the colonised rather than both the coloniser and the colonised. Etymologically, Smith (2002) traces the term *subaltern* to British colonial times. The term was used then to refer how to address low ranking military officers (Velautham 2015). However, the term has acquired a new status in academia as it is now used to engage in studies of groups that have been subjugated by the coloniser. Sarkar (2012:55) observes that *subaltern* encompasses "women, children, colonial subjects, the poor, the illiterate, the proletariat or the religious ethnic minority."

For Sarkar (2012), Spivak is most renowned because she highlights the fundamental component of the subaltern identity which is the systematic silencing of the subaltern. Spivak has become to be internationally acknowledged because of her 1988 essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' The essay became a defining text for subaltern studies because it encapsulates her thoughts on the life of the subaltern. The essay is about Indian women in colonial archives and the ways they are portrayed

through the eyes of the coloniser, leaving no room for self-representation (Velautham 2015). It is argued that next to Said's *Orientalism,* Spivak's essay is probably the most influential work in the field of postcolonial theory (Maggio 2007). The essay's popularity emanates from its message that the coloniser failed to comprehend the experiences of the colonised in colonial discourse (Maggio 2007). Whereas Said's *Orientalism* (1978) concentrates attention and study on the injustices of the coloniser, Spivak's work shifts attention towards the people of colonised territories and their right for self-determination (Velautham 2015). Another important issue Spivak addresses is the concept of feminism. She brings to the fore the long-standing historical relationship between colonialism and the subjugation of women. She observes that to learn enough about Third World women, a First World feminist must learn to stop feeling privileged as a woman. To contextualise her arguments the section below discusses the key components: knowledge and power, othering and deconstruction.

3.16.1.3.2.1 Knowledge and power

Like Said, Spivak, too aims to unearth the way in which knowledge that was constructed by the powerful served to concretise the subjugation of the subaltern. She argues that western academia has a role to play in the silencing of the minorities. In short, western academia has relegated the subaltern to a place of silent immobility for the west to achieve its lofty ambitions during colonialism (Velautham 2015). This is achieved through the representation of the subaltern by western authors. The subaltern culture is portrayed as 'strange', 'bizarre', 'weak', 'immoral' as well as 'irrational' whereas the western culture is seen as 'normal', 'morally superior' and 'rational' (Said 1978). As the subaltern was being subjugated into silence, so was its knowledge systems. Similarly, the Ndau, who are a minority of the Shona-speaking people of Zimbabwe, were subjugated by the dynamics of colonialism as discussed in Chapter Three. With the attainment of independence, most African communities could not extricate themselves from the vestiges of colonialism. The west had defined knowledge in western terms. African knowledge, therefore, was subjugated to virtually a zero-knowledge status. Spivak's views are insightful to the study in that her views position subaltern knowledge with any knowledge of the world. Just as western knowledge commands respect and recognition so is non-western knowledge such as the Ndau *shupa*. The suppression of the non-western knowledge also applies to African IKS, the Ndau

shupa in particular. Using the knowledge and power conceptualisation by Spivak, this study investigates the efficacy of *shupa* as a resource for the Ndau community.

In her essay "How to Teach a Culturally different Book" (1991), Spivak critiques the intermingling of politics and pedagogy. She calls for the inclusive writings by non-western authors at university level. This is a call made by scholars such as Odora Hoppers (2001, 2002), Dei (2000), Kaya (2014) as well as Mapara (2017) who regret the lack of inclusion of IKS in curricula of higher learning. For Spivak knowledge is constructed in such a manner as to promote western economies at the expense of the non-western ones. This is a clear demonstration of power on knowledge construction and dissemination. Spivak therefore calls for the Subaltern to be heard, a position the current study takes as it seeks to unearth how the Ndau construct, perceive and disseminate their IKS, particularly *shupa.*

3.16.1.3.2.2 Othering

The concept of 'Othering' is yet another strategy the west used and continue to use in subjugating other societies. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2002) state that a vital contribution by Spivak is her identification of a discursive strategy known as 'othering' which brings to the surface some of the colonial processes at work in texts. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (2002:97) point out, "the rise of any culture is not just coincident with the demise of other forms and possibilities, it involves the active suppression and/or annihilation of forms of 'Otherness'. It closes off alternative tropes and modes." The 'othering' of minority groups does not only silence them but blocks the possibility of other 'tropes' that capture alternative realities (Velautham 2015). This is the strategy that the west used and continue to use in 'othering' non-western epistemologies as *pseudo knowledge* in relation to western knowledge. For example, most African ways of knowing in the field of health, agriculture, education and art were relegated as not knowledge. Decades of such 'othering' resulted in the African ways of knowing either inferiorised or abandoned altogether. The current study focuses on Ndau *shupa* as one of such 'othered' IKS with the intention to assess its efficacy in an era, where despite the 'othering', most IKS have proved to be important to their practitioners in a number of fields such as agriculture and the environment, as discussed in Chapter Two.

3.16.1.3.2.3 Deconstruction

Spivak's 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' (1988) borrows much from Jacques Derrida's ideas on deconstruction (Velautham 2015). Spivak applies Derrida's ideas to reveal the assumptions, strategies and rhetoric through which a given narrative, whether political, literary, historical or theoretical is grounded and mediated (Moore-Gilbert 1997). For Moore-Gilbert (1997), Spivak views deconstruction as a channel to generate awareness of and possibly help in the liberation of excluded or marginalised social constituencies. Velautham (2015) observes that for Spivak the strategy of deconstruction allows the postcolonial scholar to expose and salvage that which was concealed by society's powerful elite. In other words, deconstruction questions the status quo created by binaries. For example, the juxtaposition of the traditional east next to the modern west can be made, utilising the strategy of deconstruction to ascertain whether such depictions are in fact accurate. For the once subjugated IKS to find expression and recognition, the strategy of deconstruction as discussed by Spivak becomes essential. This strategy is significant to the current study in that through deconstruction the Ndau re-evaluate their IKS such as *shupa* in sustainable health and development.

3.16.1.3.3 Homi Bhabha

Born in India and currently serving as the Director of the Humanities Centre at Harvard University, Homi Bhabha is renowned for his theoretical concepts such as mimicry, hybridity, the third space perspective and cultural difference. On a point of departure from Said where he focuses on the colonised and the coloniser, Bhabha is one of the postcolonial theorists whose focus is on how the colonised have resisted the power of the ruling elite. Like Spivak, Bhabha's work is concerned with the effects the colonial enterprise has had on current social structures and discursive formations (Mills 2004). Bhabha's concern, therefore, goes beyond unearthing the injustices meted out by the colonial experience to an analysis on its impact on the people in colonial territories (Velautham 2015). It is not only how the colonised resisted the power of the ruling elite, but how they re-evaluate their knowledge systems after decades of subjugation. This study may be viewed in alignment with Bhabha in providing a powerful and germane analysis of how *shupa* as a way of knowing is a way by the Ndau to resist the subjugation of non-western epistemologies by the

west. To demonstrate this, Bhabha's concepts of mimicry, cultural difference and hybridity will be focused on these concepts provide the lenses for this study.

3.16.1.3.3.1 Mimicry

Unlike Spivak who states that the subaltern cannot speak and that it is the role of the subaltern scholar to retrieve the subaltern voices (Velautham 2015), Bhabha reveals that the subaltern can indeed speak. Bhabha (1984) examines the impact of constructing the colonised as an imitation of the coloniser as the coloniser maintains its hold on the colonised. In Bhabha's view, the continued portrayal of the colonised as a defective version of the coloniser (Velautham 2015), enables the coloniser to continue to exercise control and domination over the colonised. This control and domination extend to the colonised ways of knowing (IKS). The awareness of the strategies employed in colonial texts to silence the subaltern is the first step in reclaiming the voices of the subaltern. IKS, therefore, as postcolonial theory (Mapara 2009) are an attempt to counter the arguments that the colonised should mimic the coloniser in order to achieve a certain level of development in relation to that of the coloniser. The use of mimicry serves to reinforce the othering of minority groups thereby perpetuating an inferiority complex. By bringing to the fore the subtleties embedded in mimicry, Bhabha conscientises people of minority groups to believe in themselves as there is no need to imitate others.

3.16.1.3.3.2 Cultural difference

In addition to his ideas on mimicry, another key contribution to postcolonial studies by Bhabha are his views on cultural difference, which counter the concept of multiculturalism where societies are made up of many cultures. The project of multiculturalism is, for Bhabha, problematic in that despite its existence, issues of racism are still rife. Therefore Velautham (2015) observes that multiculturalism has failed. There is hence the need to view multiculturalism with a new lens where there is an understanding of different cultures while being proud of one's culture. This understanding ensures that while we accept diversity of cultures, there is no culture more superior than the other.

In his rejection of cultural diversity in favour of what he terms "cultural difference", Bhabha explains:

My purpose in talking about cultural difference rather than cultural diversity is to acknowledge that this kind of liberal relativist perspective is inadequate in itself and doesn't generally recognise the universalist and normative stance from which it constructs its cultural and political judgements… With the notion of cultural difference, I try to place myself in that position of liminality, in that productive space of the construction of culture of difference, in the spirit of otherness (Bhabha 1990b:208).

The argument here is that it is possible for one to grow and express oneself without losing one's identity while embracing new ways of being in the world (Velautham 2015). For Bhabha (1990b), cultural difference is a position that recognises the unique quality of different cultures with the acknowledgement that nothing is lost in pursuing new ideas and positive values (Velautham 2015) from other cultures, especially in the 21st century globalisation. What becomes problematic is when one culture or way of knowing assumes the 'norm' status and begins to control and dominate other alternative ways of knowing. These views are significant in that they signal in this case the rich narratives from the research participants should be viewed as a window into their own unique cultural perspectives.

3.16.1.3.3.3 Hybridity

According to Bhabha (1994), hybridity operates in opposition to notions of essentialism where identities are perceived to be static and unchangeable (Velautham 2015). Under the hybridity concept, Bhabha observes that hybrid identities are born out of the values that are endorsed by dominant groups and the values upheld by the Other. According to Bhabha the key idea of the postcolonial theory is the "meeting and mixing of two cultures in one area where one influences the other (Kroupova 2008:16). This points to the interdependence between the coloniser and the colonised. Scholars such as Coombes (1994) observe that Bhabha's ideas on hybridity offer academia an avenue to explore the impact of the intermingling of different cultures. For Bhabha the binary opposites, as given by Said (1978), of the coloniser and the colonised should be transformed through hybridity as an emerging culture (Sibanda 2014).

Notably the notions of hybridity by Bhabha (1994) are in direct opposition to Said's (1978) ideas of how the west viewed the east as a fixed, immovable object. In the final analysis, Said's contribution acts as a precursor to questioning the way the west studies the east and Bhabha's

(1994) ideas on hybridity as a tool that allows postcolonial scholars to show how marginalised groups create new subject positions for themselves, thereby challenging the rigid racial stereotypes imposed upon them by dominant groups (Velautham 2015).

3.17 Implications of postcolonial theory for the study

The postcolonial theory therefore involves an interrogation of the nexus between the colonisers and the colonised societies. This interrogation not only critiques the excesses of the west on the east, but reclaims and reconstructs the colonised people's history, language and culture which have been marginalised. The call is therefore to remove the centre, as Ngugi rightly states (Ngugi 1997), as the colonised people reclaim their once lost language and culture. This is the dismantling of the old order that gives way to fresh views and interpretations of the 'other and the excluded (Sibanda 2014). Through deconstruction postcolonial theory seeks to change the world as it refuses to acknowledge the superiority of western cultures (Young 2003). The Ndau people's pride in their IKS is mirrored in the postcolonial theory call for the obliteration of the binary notion of the centre-periphery. The lenses of this theory were used to argue that the resilience and tenacity of Ndau IKS such as *bota reshupa* is a reclamation and reaffirmation of the colonised ways of knowing which were denigrated by the coloniser. Embedded in the postcolonial theory is not only a rewriting of the distorted history and culture of the Ndau during their encounter with colonialism, but an expression of the Ndau's achievements in using their IKS for their livelihood. The postcolonial theory provides a framework for understanding the Ndau people's IKS, particularly *bota reshupa,* as postcolonial theory highlights the past glories and the achievements vis-à-vis the misrepresentation of these past glories and achievements. IKS are attempts to put the record straight on several issues, among them those that relate to health and wellbeing, stating that the indigenes have either been misunderstood or deliberately ignored.

Apart from encouraging the colonised to write back to the centre, highlighting their past achievements that were disrupted, the postcolonial theory calls for the formerly colonised, of which the Ndau are a part of, to emphasise the enduring quality of some of their knowledge and belief systems (Mapara 2009). IKS are not only a display of the knowledge and belief systems of the formerly colonised but are forms of responses to the myth of western superiority. It is a way to reclaiming the formerly colonised's dignity and humanity they were robbed of by colonialism

(Mapara 2009). IKS as postcolonial theory are an effort by the colonised to show the world that they are not just the 'other' but equals the former coloniser. This accounts for the resurgence of the values, belief systems and practices formerly denigrated. The theory provided the analytical tools to understand why the Ndau people tenaciously cling to their belief systems and practices such as *bota reshupa*. The healing properties derived from *shupa* are indeed an affirmation by the formerly colonised that their traditional healing practices were not only appropriate before the arrival of the coloniser but were and are still an alternative form of health delivery in Zimbabwe. Through the application of postcolonial theory, it was clear how and why the Ndau derive pride in their belief systems and practices and why they strive to protect, promote and preserve these belief systems and practices.

Although postcolonial theory has limitations, the writings by Said, Spivak and Bhabha as the leading postcolonial theorists provided the lenses through which the study analysed and interpreted *bota reshupa*. The theory is accused of maintaining the divide between the coloniser and the colonised. This cannot be maintained as rightly observed by Bhabha's (1994) ideas of hybridity. This informed the study in that as the data was analysed and interpreted it became evident that there is no culture operating as a closed system that is pure and original. Postcolonial theory helped in data analysis as will be illustrated in Chapters Five and Six. To complement the postcolonial theory cultural hermeneutics also informed this study. The theoretical frameworks were triangulated to ensure that the theories complemented each other in data analysis and interpretation.

3.18 Cultural Hermeneutics

 To avoid romanticising Ndau IKS, and *bota reshupa* in particular the analytical tools of cultural hermeneutics were employed. Since it was not easy to separate a people's IKS from their culture, cultural hermeneutics was applied in the same manner theologians such as Kanyoro (2002), Mapuranga (2010) and Siwila (2011) applied it in their respective works. Hermeneutics refers to interpretation (Kanyoro 2002). Cultural hermeneutics is therefore putting culture "to a thorough test" (Kanyoro 2002) with the intention to discover inherent injustices. It is "the analysis and interpretation of how culture conditions people's understanding of reality at a particular time and location" (Kanyoro 2002: 9). Cultural hermeneutics is therefore an analytical tool that is used to

scrutinise culture by exploring both the potential life-threatening and life-affirming aspects of culture. Once life-threatening cultural aspects are discovered they are deconstructed or reconstructed while those that affirm life are maintained and sustained. This is a continuity/discontinuity dichotomy where harmful practices of a belief system are either abandoned or modified. Those that are useful are continued.

Although the abovementioned theologians used this analytical tool from a cultural point of view, the theory was also applicable to the study of Ndau IKS, particularly *bota reshupa.* While IKS worldwide are gaining momentum, and scholars, development experts and IKS practitioners alike, applaud them, there exists a real danger of over-valorizing and over-romanticizing indigenous knowledge in practice (Briggs 2005). IKS in general and *bota reshupa* in this study serve to empower communities by valuing local knowledge. But this must not be blindly accepted as a given (Briggs 2005). Schroeder (1999) warns that such an approach may end up romanticising such communities thereby uncritically upholding belief systems that threaten life.

Once *bota reshupa* is not problematised and is accepted as a given, it may be an unsafe haven for humanity. Briggs (2005) further argues that the view of indigenous knowledge as an untainted, pristine knowledge system is unhelpful. Putting it to the test through the analytical tool of hermeneutics provides opportunities for analysis. As found in the findings and analysis chapters, *bota reshupa* cannot be treated as a given because it has certain taboos that can, when handled wrongly, threaten life. Whilst it is a health asset it must still be put to scrutiny especially in the 21st century. Cultural hermeneutics therefore is an analytical tool that enabled the analysis of the data and find the patterns and themes that emerged in the study. The field of hermeneutics calls for not taking matters for granted; it calls for interpretation. The resurgence of IKS worldwide must be scrutinised lest they become life-denying. *Bota reshupa* is no exception. Therefore, cultural hermeneutics helped to scrutinise the practice with a view to appraise or condemn undesirable elements in it.

Closely related to cultural hermeneutics is the analytical tool popularly used in business studies, the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. This tool was used in conjunction with cultural hermeneutics. This is not treated as an isolated tool but resorts under

cultural hermeneutics, because in principle the two have much in common, only they have been used in different disciplines.

As mentioned above, the SWOT was initially developed for business and industry (Sibanda 2014) and has been used in other disciplines such as community health initiatives, education, and development initiatives. It has been used, by Faith Based Organisations (FBO) to intervene in HIV and AIDS activities (Steinitz 2005). The SWOT is understood from two senses. Firstly, it is a method of collecting and analysing data for a community or organisation. Secondly, it is an analytic frame through which one can delineate the merits (strengths) and demerits (weaknesses), which form the internal assessment, and opportunities and threats, which constitute the external assessment of an organisation or community (Steinitz 2005).

This analytical tool is gaining ground in the discipline of Religious Studies. In 2014 Sibanda used this tool in his study of Rastafarians in Zimbabwe to evaluate the dimensions of Rastafari liberation in postcolonial Zimbabwe. It is in the same vein that this tool was used in this study particularly in Chapters Five and Six to evaluate the efficacy of *bota reshupa,* not only as a health asset for the Ndau people, but as a potential threat to human life which paradoxically it is meant to protect. If the taboos of *bota reshupa* are not adhered to, the practice can be harmful. This conclusion can be reached having used the SWOT analysis. Given the SWOT analysis in which strengths must be developed, opportunities made use of, weaknesses improved, and threats controlled (Steinitz 2005), the study used the tool to analyse the results and in turn drawing conclusions. Having discussed the theoretical frameworks that underpin the study, the next section focuses on ethical considerations.

3.19 Ethical Considerations

When one is carrying out research, there are serious considerations to be made before undertaking the research. This is because there are some ethical dilemmas and ethical principles a researcher faces when investigating human beings (Sibanda 2014). There are a number of regulatory codes of research practice that have been formulated by professional bodies and agencies to determine appropriate ethical conduct. For example, all research institutes such as universities have ethical clearance procedures to ensure that research is conducted professionally and ethically. Permission for this study was granted by the University of KwaZulu - Natal Ethics Clearance Committee, (see

Appendix 1) a committee that ensures "respect for persons, beneficence and justice"[27].Permission was also obtained from the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage (see Appendix 7) under which the chieftaincies in the study fall. Equipped with these documents the research participants were selected, having notified the local leadership such as headmen, ward councillors and even chiefs, as was the case at chief Garahwa where a focused group discussion was conducted. All this was done in order not to be misunderstood in the communities. Zimbabwean communities are politically polarised and one's intention in a given community must be known lest a researcher be mistaken as a political activist.

In the study, due diligence was taken to ensure respect for the participants. Consent forms to obtain informed consent of the participants were prepared. Informed consent is the cornerstone of ethical behaviour, as it respects the rights of individuals to exert control over their lives and to make decisions for themselves (Howe and Moses (1999) cited Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011:77). Informed consent is "the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions" (Diener and Crandall (1978) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011:78). For this to be achieved, competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension are involved in the process (Sibanda 2014). All these elements were taken into consideration when the participants were informed of, *inter alia,* the purpose, content, procedures of the research, any risks involved, discomforts (if any), benefits and rewards, the right to withdraw without notice and reason, and rights to privacy and confidentiality.

To accede to participate in the research the participants were asked to provide their consent verbally (for those who could not write) or to sign the consent form (for those who could write). In one incident one illiterate, elderly woman had to thumb-stamp the consent form (see Appendix 8) after having agreed verbally. The consent forms are written in both English and Ndau languages to ensure all participants participated with full comprehension of the research. The participants were also asked to consent to be audio- recorded and they all agreed. Where names of participants

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[27] See for example, Sibanda, *HIV and AIDS-related Stigma and Discrimination,* (2010), 41, see also E.S. Wiegers, 'Gendered Vulnerability to AIDS and its research implications' PhD thesis, Wageningen: Wageningen University, (2007), 176.

are recorded as their given names, their consent was sought but most names used in the study are pseudonyms.

To ensure that the participants are protected from harm, the principle of beneficence was employed in the study. Roberts (2012:133) argues that "research should not harm the subjects". Given the fact that *bota reshupa* involves the use of certain tree bark, leaves and roots in its preparation, researching this involves obtaining information that may be the monopoly of close relatives. To obtain information of this nature requires the informant's trust. Most traditional practitioners fear that outsiders come to 'steal' their traditional knowledge and use it for their own benefit at the expense of the knowledge holders. To fully benefit from the participants, a sense of trust was cultivated with the participants. This was effected by requesting a person known to the community to accompany the researcher to the participants. In most cases teachers who were teaching in the communities did the accompaniment to introduce the participants and then leave.

 The participants were not financially remunerated but at times were given tokens as low as two Zimbabwean dollars to buy salt or snuff (*bute*) for the elders to smoke. This was merely to thank them for their time and information. The token was given at the end of the interviews as a token of appreciation. Among the Ndau, it is customary and a sign of *unhu/ubuntu* to give something small, especially to the elderly, having visited them.

The principle of justice which demands that the benefits and burdens of one's participation must be unbiased and proportionate was ensured in this study. The concept of extracting information for the benefit of the research from a community at the expense of the informant, is unjust. Researchers are often accused of 'mining' their research participants without care, hence it is important to ensure that the research remains beneficial to all the parties involved. The analogy of 'mining' is often used to explain the "stark taking of information (that) leaves very little in exchange for the (participant)" (Thesen 1994:6). Researchers are called upon to   shun treating research participants as mere research subjects. It was made clear to the participants in this study that they were welcome to communicate with the researcher at any point should they need any explanation, even after the interviews. They were provided with the mobile phone number and email address should they desired to communicate with the researcher. They were also assured that should they wanted feedback on the findings of the research, they would be provided with this

during later workshops and group discussions. Even the parent ministry that granted permission to interview the participants were welcome to feedback from the research. This is intended to inform government policy which eventually cascades down to the communities, thereby benefiting communities from the research they have participated in. It is hoped that this research will benefit the Zimbabwean community. The Ndau people of Chipinge district stand to benefit in the long run as their belief system and practice of *bota reshupa* impact on their community and as such negate the issue of having 'mined' the Ndau communities.

3.20 Conclusion

The chapter discussed them methodological underpinnings that guided the research. More specifically, the research methodologies, theoretical frameworks, research instruments, sampling procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations were expounded on. A poly-methodic approach was adopted where the historical, sociological and phenomenological approaches were constitutive of the approaches. The approaches were chosen because of their appropriateness to the study. The historical approach enabled the historical background of Ndau IKS to be traceable. While the sociological approach treated the Ndau people as engaged in intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships with their belief systems, the phenomenological enabled the Ndau to be studied as a people whose belief systems and practices must be respected. These approaches informed how the study was conducted.

The interview and focused group discussion as data collection instruments were also discussed in this chapter. The instruments were chosen because of their appropriateness to the study. The study, being a qualitative research design, also used purposive and snowball sampling as the sampling procedures, where information rich sites were sampled because of their knowledge. Other participants were identified through the recommendation of participants from other information rich sites. Data was analysed according to emerging trends/patterns and themes.

The theoretical frameworks of postcolonial and cultural hermeneutics were used as the lenses through which data was analysed and interpreted. The postcolonial theory situated the study. The postcolonial theory as IKS lenses ensured that the study was carried out with the intention to investigate the efficacy of Ndau IKS, particularly *shupa.* Using the postcolonial theory, the study investigated how *shupa* is a health asset, a religio-cultural practice and a form of identity for the

Ndau. This sheds light on how a reclamation against the making of the formerly colonised's belief systems and practices, made inferior by the former coloniser, can be explored. To ensure that *bota reshupa* is placed under scrutiny, cultural hermeneutics as an analytical tool used together with the SWOT analysis were used.

Ethical considerations, being the cornerstone of research that involve human beings were also delineated in this chapter. These included informed consent, issues of privacy and confidentiality. These ensured the trustworthiness, reliability and validity of the research. Chapter Four presents the site of the study. It is a trajectory survey of the Ndau people, their cosmology as well as their approach to issues pertaining to their environment and health. The Chapter forms a suitable background to the current study and serves to contextualise the study.

Chapter Four

Ndau cosmology and Christianisation

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the methodology and theoretical frameworks of the study. It explored how a poly-methodic approach that included the historical, sociological and phenomenological methods was used in the study. The chapter further discoursed on the research instruments that were used, these being the interviews and focused group discussion. The rationale for selecting the data collection instruments was explained. The instruments were deemed appropriate for a study that sought people's views and perceptions on a belief system and practice of their own which has been in existence from time immemorial. Sampling strategies were also explained in that chapter. Purposive and snowball sampling procedures were found to be suitable for the study. Again, the reasons for selecting these sampling procedures were provided.

 In addition to the above, the chapter also focused on the theoretical frameworks that were used as the lenses of the study. The postcolonial theory, with its emphasis on the binary opposites of the formerly colonised and the former coloniser, was clarified. Being a study on the indigenous practice of *bota reshupa,* the theory was used to analyse how Ndau indigenous knowledge, particularly knowledge to do with primary health care and wellbeing, was sustaining against the backdrop of criticism levelled against indigenous ways of primary health care by the colonisers (Ouma 2013, Muyambo 2015). Concomitant with postcolonial theory was cultural hermeneutics. This was used to analyse any excesses indigenous knowledge may have had if uncritically embraced. The theory assisted in ensuring that while indigenous knowledge systems such as *shupa* are efficacious, they must not be romanticised and absolutised (Dei 2000, Maila and Loubser 2003). Cultural hermeneutics was used from a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) perspective. *Shupa* as an indigenous belief system should be scrutinised to develop its strengths, make use of its opportunities, improve its weaknesses and control its threats to primary health care. It was through these theoretical lenses that the study was undertaken as discussed in Chapter Three. The chapter concluded by discussing the ethical considerations underpinning a research of this nature.

This chapter turns to a general overview of the Ndau people as an ethnic sub-group of the Shona people and outlines some of their indigenous beliefs, practices and values. The chapter commences by locating the Manicaland province in Zimbabwe, situating the Chipinge district as the research site, particularly the Musikavanhu, Mutema and Garahwa chieftaincies, providing an overview of the origins of the Ndau people and concluding with examining the encounter of the Ndau people with Christianity, which arguably impacted on the Ndau worldview. The Chapter, more importantly, examines the effects of christianisation on the Ndau IKS. This is done to assess the effects (both positive and negative) of the christianisation on Ndau practices such as marriage and its associated aspects of polygamy and bride price (*roora/lobola*). The assumption made is that the effects of the christianisation on Ndau IKS such as its conceptualisation of polygamy and *roora/lobola*, for instance, has a direct bearing on how *shupa* as an IKS is perceived by the Ndau. This enabled an assessment of whether the Ndau attitude and perception of *shupa*, especially by the professional interviewees, have a link with how *shupa* has been spared or marginalised. The rationale for this approach is two-fold: firstly, to understand how the Ndau lived before christianisation. This helps to determine whether christianisation had an impact on the Ndau indigenous beliefs and practices. Secondly, this assists in understanding whether the lowly status of IKS such as *shupa* among the Ndau in Zimbabwe, as discussed in Chapter Two, was necessitated by western forces such as christianisation. This creates the basis for "recovering, reawakening and the reclaiming the Ndau indigenous ways of knowing and knowledge production" (Hlatshwayo 2017:113).

4.2 The Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe

Before discussing the Ndau people of Manicaland it is important to briefly discuss Manicaland as the eastern province of Zimbabwe. Etymologically, the term 'Manicaland' is the Anglicised word for Manyikaland (Mapara 2013), inhabited by the Manyika people of eastern Zimbabwe. Its capital city is Mutare. It is inhabited by a total population of 1 752 698 out of Zimbabwe's population of 13 061 239 (ZimStat 2012). It covers an area of 36, 459 km^2. The province consists of seven districts, these being Mutare, Nyanga, Makoni, Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, and Mutasa[28].

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[28] http://www.pindula.co.zw/Manicaland_Province Accessed 16/7/16.

The Ndau inhabit the Chimanimani and Chipinge districts that are collectively referred to as Gazaland, named after the Gaza-Nguni who once occupied the land, and which stretches into the western parts of Mozambique. The study is situated in Manicaland province among the Ndau people of Chipinge district in the south-eastern part of Zimbabwe as illustrated below.
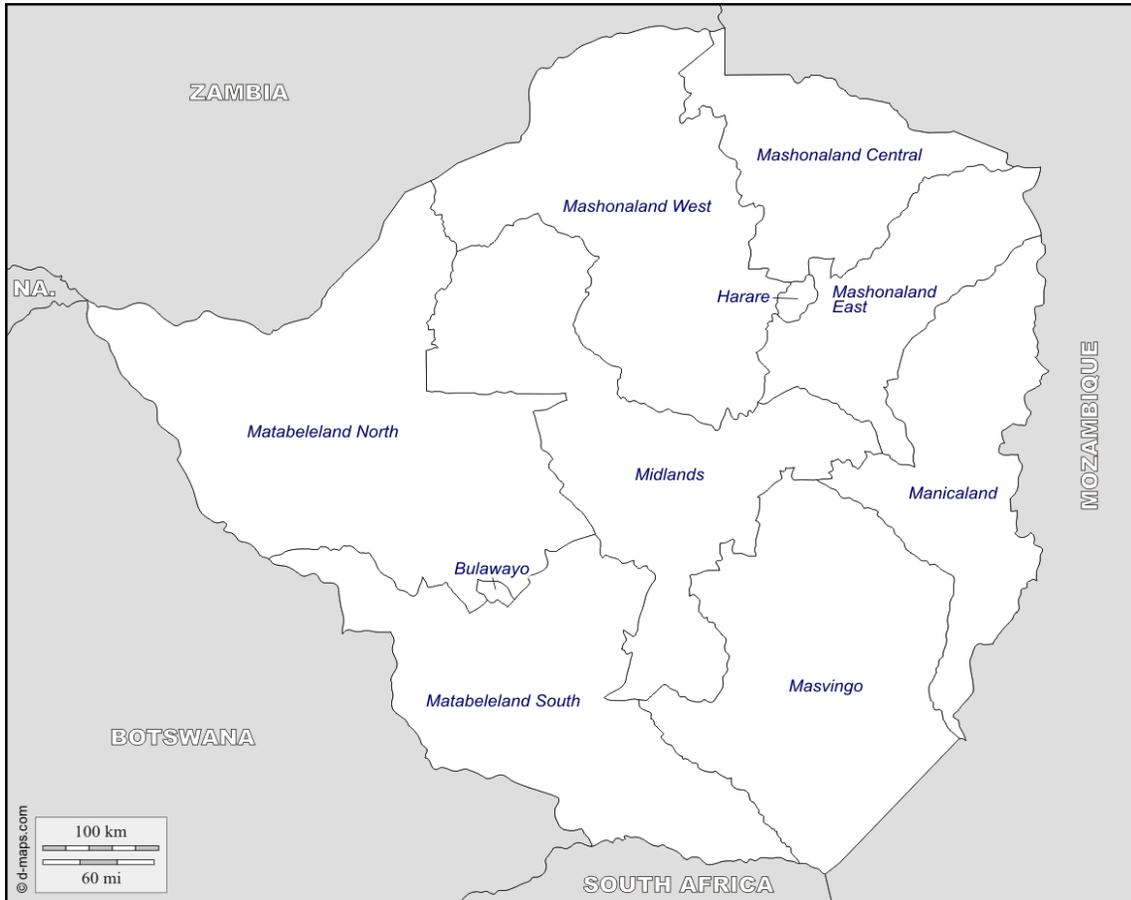
Figure1: Provinces in Zimbabwe (source: http://www.d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=36871&lang=en)

The Chipinge district is inhabited largely by the Ndau-speaking people. Due to several factors that include but not limited to resettlement programmes, employment and marriage, the district also includes inhabitants from non-Ndau origins. For example, areas in the highlands such as Clearwater and Mafumise to the north of Chipinge town have been predominantly inhabited by people from the Masvingo province. These were allocated plots and farms during the 2000 land

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reform in Zimbabwe. The study does not focus on these people as they are not indigenous Ndau people; the focus is on the indigenes of the district whose majority reside in the rural areas such as Mutema, Musikavanhu, and Garahwa chiefdoms. The next section attempts to reconstruct who the Ndau are.
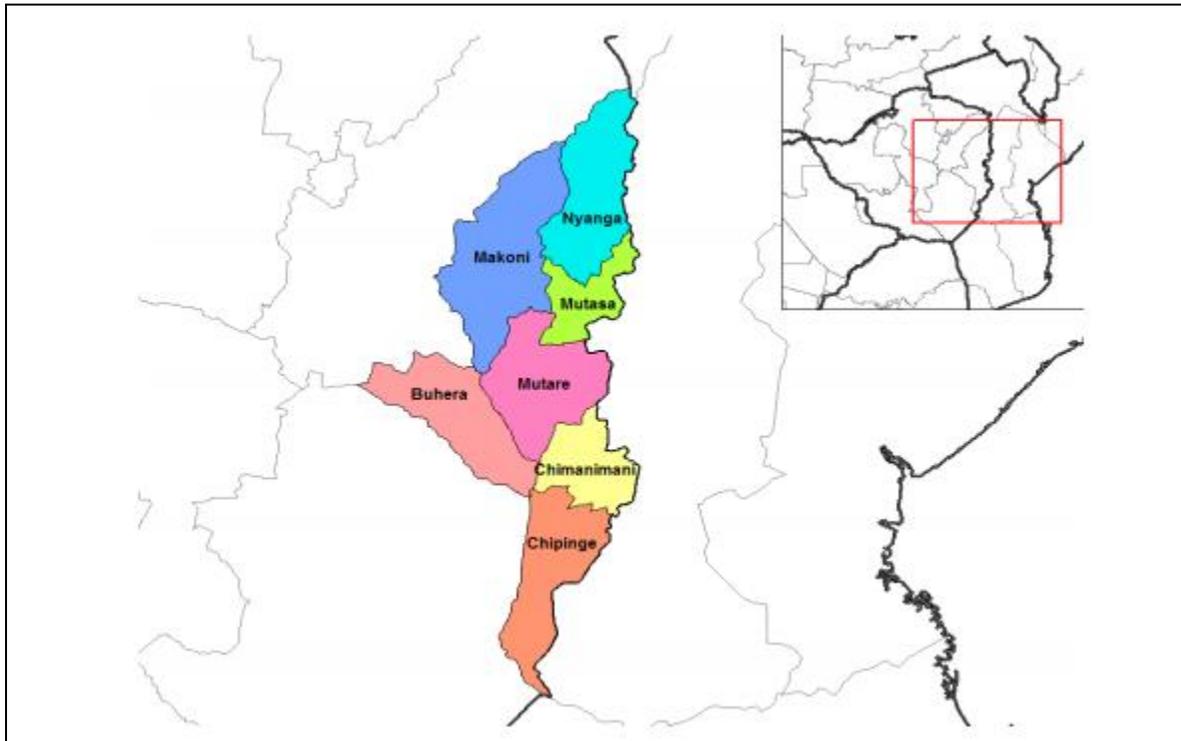
Figure 2: Districts in Manicaland Province. Source: Adapted from O. Rusinga & R.S. Maposa, Traditional religion and natural resources: A reflection on the significance of indigenous knowledge systems on the utilisation of natural resources among the Ndau People in South-eastern Zimbabwe, (2010), 203.

4.3 Origins of the Ndau people

It must be noted that there are no written records on the Ndau people by the Ndau themselves. The few that are in existence are unfortunately compiled by outsider anthropologists and historians. These documents were far from providing an authentic Ndau history. Hlatshwayo (2017) admits that the Ndau people have a limited written genealogy. Nevertheless, the Ndau people had and still have a history, albeit difficult to reconstruct.

However, David Beach's (1990) attempt to trace the origins of the Ndau people sheds some insights onto the origins of the Ndau ethnic group. Beach states that the history of the Ndau dates back to the times of the Rozvi Empire which existed from 1684 to about 1833/4. Patricio (2011) concurs when she points out that the Ndau identity is deeply rooted in the Monomutapa Empire and that their identity as an ethnic group dates to the pre-colonial period before the establishment of the Zimbabwe- Mozambique border at the partitioning of Africa in 1884. This implies that the Ndau is an ancient ethnic group of Zimbabweans who co-existed with other groups.

The narrated historical account by Rennie (1973) on the origins of the Ndau people point to Nyakuimba as the founding figure of the Ndau people of Chipinge district. Rennie (1973) opines that Nyakuimba is generally believed to be the founder of the Ndau dynasty. It is believed that during the Rozvi Empire, Nyakuimba was entrusted with the keeping of the sacred rain-making charm (*gona remvura) of* the Rozvi king, Shiriyedenga. Konyana (2016) states that Nyakuimba connived with his sister Chapo to flee with the sacred charm. When Nyakuimba broke away from the Rozvi Empire he took with him his two brothers, Chikanda and Chimoto and a sizeable number of followers and founded the Ndau dynasty. Marashe and Maposa (2010) opine that when Nyakuimba and his followers broke away, they fled into the deep forests of the Gazaland which covers the present-day geographical areas of Chimanimani and Chipinge. It is further argued that with the passage of time Nyakuimba separated from his two brothers as he and his sister settled close to the present-day Mt. Selinda Ngungunyana forest. He conquered the people he found there, and his influence stretched as far as the southern parts of Mozambique. This suggests that the Ndau are not the original inhabitants of the Mt. Selinda Ngungunyana Forest. There were others settled there before them but because of their lengthy presence in the area, they qualify as indigenous people of the area.

After separating from Nyakuimba the brothers led a separate group of the Ndau and settled along the Save River valley. This section of the Ndau people later referred to themselves as the Ndau of the valley (*gowa)*, people of low-lying areas as compared to those who settled in the highlands of Mt. Selinda.

4.4 The term 'Ndau' as identity

Scholars have advanced several theories in a bid to understand how the Ndau came to be known by the term Ndau. Mwandayi (2011) argues that the use of the term *Ndau* to refer to the people of Chipinge district is shrouded in controversy. According to him there is no clear-cut information regarding the term's origin. The Ndau people did not originally refer to themselves as Ndau (Vijfhuizen 1997, Mwandayi 2011), but the word 'Ndau' originated from the way this ethnic Shona sub-group greeted other people (Vijfhuizen 1997, Mwandayi 2011). Upon receiving other people into their homesteads; the Ndau would say to visitors, *'ndauwe'* which signified an invitation of welcome to the homestead.

MacGonagle (2007) concurs when she states that the influence of the Gaza Nguni upon the Ndau was significant in the naming of the people as Ndau. She argues that it is likely that the phrase *Ndau-we, Ndau-we* used by the Ndau speakers in their act of supplication to greet the invading Nguni, led the Nguni to select the term 'Ndau' as a label for their subjects. The phrase *Ndau-we Ndau-we* [We salute you! We salute you!] is used to exclaim deference. What began as a way of showing respect turned into a derogatory sobriquet for the Ndau people. Bulpin (1986) states that the term 'Ndau' was used by the raiding Gaza-Nguni as a derogatory epithet to refer to the people of the frontier who knelt and clapped hands when greeting their superiors. Beach (1990) maintains that this behaviour of kneeling down and clapping hands that earned them the name Ndau was a unique way of showing humility and respect for other people. According to Konyana (2016:49) "the behaviour displayed by the Ndau here was and still remains a unique identity, displaying downright submission and allegiance to their superiors". Even today the Ndau people display a degree of humility and hospitality that are easily noticeable wherever they are. This could have been used as a survival strategy from their Gaza-Nguni adversaries, especially during the Ngungunyana reign. Despite the negativity thereof, the Ndau people proudly trace their origin to the deferential greeting *Ndau-we, Ndau-we.*

On the other hand, Vijfhuizen (1997) is of the view that 'Ndau' means 'place' and because of the aforesaid form of greeting this group became to be labelled Ndau. The Ndau people have generally come to understand Chipinge as their *ndau* [place of origin]. The notion that the name *Ndau* was bestowed upon them by their Nguni invaders has long since been forgotten, as the Ndau take pride

in being the Ndau in their *ndau* [place] of Chipinge. Rennie (1973) concurs that the term 'Ndau' predates colonialism. He argues that the label 'Ndau' came into existence long before the Europeans arrived in Zimbabwe around 1890. They referred to their place, Chipinge as *ndau yedu* [our place]. This eventually culminated in them being referred as the people of *ndau* [place] and what started off as a reference to place, ultimately became a people's identity.

Another theory on the origin of Ndau confines them to the lowveld of the district. Focusing on the Ndau of Mutema irrigation scheme in Manesa village, Vijfhuizen (1997) argues that the Ndau view themselves as people of *gowa,* the dry river valley or lowveld. This includes parts of the Mutema and Musikavanhu chiefdoms. Areas such as Manesa, Mutema near Birchenough Bridge and Musani form the western part of the Mutema chiefdom, whereas villages like Chibuwe, Rimbi, Manzvire form the western part of the Musikavanhu chiefdoms. The eastern parts of these chiefdoms are in the highlands. The assumption made by Vijfhuizen points to the notion that only the Ndau people inhabited the lowveld. This understanding of the Ndau by Vijfhuizen confines the Ndau to the lowveld of Chipinge yet the highlands are equally inhabited by the Ndau people.

Another attempt to trace the origin of the Ndau is one by Elizabeth MacGonagle (2007). She traces the origin of the Ndau people as a group that inhabit both Zimbabwe and Mozambique. MacGonagle (2007:3) maintains that "most of the several million inhabitants living between the Pungwe and Save Rivers, two waterways that originate in Zimbabwe and flow eastward through Mozambique on their way to the Indian Ocean, speak a dialect of the Shona language called Ndau". She maintains that the usage of the words 'Shona' and 'Ndau' were only used much later as the Portuguese who wrote extensively about this region did not refer to either of these terms in their early precolonial vocabularies. The words came into use with the advent of colonialism during the 19th century when the Portuguese took control of Mozambique and the British colonised the southern part of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. Her theory is also confirmed by Taringana and Nyambara (2018:45) who state that "Ndau people are mostly located in the Chipinge and Chimanimani districts, Manicaland province, south-east of Zimbabwe. They are also dominant in the Manica province of Mozambique".

Duri and Gwekwerere (2007) concur that the Ndau did not name themselves '*Ndau*'. They maintain that no name was used to designate a specific Shona-speaking group until the nineteenth

century; the use of specific names such as *'Ndau', 'Zezuru', 'Karanga', 'Manyika'* and *'Korekore'* to differentiate the Shona people became prevalent only after 1900. This differentiation was necessitated by Christian missionaries and colonial administrators who required linguistic differentiation for administrative purposes (Konyana 2016). It can also be argued that having seen the unity and resilient nature of the Shona people the colonial administrators purposefully created loose tribal groupings for easy manipulation and conquest. This theory understands the Ndau as those who live in the eastern region and speak a distinct version of Shona known as Ndau (Konyana 2016), which in 2013 got official language status in the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe (Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act 2013, Sithole 2017).

The origin of a tribe by the name Ndau is also explained in terms of migration and occupation. Having been invaded by the Gaza Nguni people under the leadership of Mzila and thereafter by Ngungunyana, who occupied most of the eastern part of Zimbabwe and the western part of Mozambique (MacGonagle 2008), the indigenes of the invaded land had no option but to identify themselves from the invaders, as the Ndau. This collective identity did not only create a sense of cohesion in times of war but an identity that would set them apart them as a unique group from their rivals. This theory explains that because of the conquest by the Gaza Nguni, the Ndau as a people identified themselves as such to create their identity and assume a sense of Ndauness. This did not only create a rallying point in the face of adversity but created an indelible mark of identity as evident below:

Ngungunyana was a problem . . .

We are called Ngungunyana people, yet we are Ndau.

We were changed into Changana (Shangani)

(Jona Mwaoneni Makuyana) (MacGonagle 2007:29).

On the same note the Ndau were compelled to identify themselves with the Gaza Nguni to survive the tyrannical rule by Ngungunyana who severely punished his opposition. To assure Ngungunyana of their alliance with the Gaza-Nguni, MacGonagle argues that the Ndau males had to pierce their ears as a sign of submission to Ngungunyana and identify themselves as Nguni. The

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piercing of the men's ears symbolized the Gaza Nguni dominance over the Ndau (MacGonagle 2007), and later. came to be a mark of identity for all Ndau males.

The next section is an explanation of the socio-economic, political and religio-cultural milieus of the Ndau people in the three chiefdoms that form part of this study. Chief among the socio-economic, political, religio-cultural lives of the Ndau is health and well-being. Life prolongation and sustenance is the pre-occupation of African people in general and the Ndau in particular. For this reason, the practice of *bota reshupa* as a health asset among the Ndau of the selected chieftaincies was and still is of paramount importance in ensuring good health and well-being

4.5 The Ndau chieftaincy

It is important to discuss Ndau chieftaincy as it is a determinant factor in ensuring the IKS of the local communities. Traditional leaders function as religious leaders in their communities (Marashe 2014). The chiefs, as traditional leaders in Ndau communities, are the custodians of the communities' culture and includes the values, beliefs, practices and norms of a community. Airhihenbuwa and DeWitt (2004) argue that culture is cardinal to the health of the community. Since the study is about *shupa* as an indigenous health asset, its sustenance finds expression on how the traditional leaders uphold their traditional values, beliefs and practices. Excluding this important traditional governance structure may have serious implications on the sustainability of IKS such as *shupa.* A brief survey of Ndau chieftaincy of the research sites is therefore included.

It must be noted from the outset that the reconstruction of the outline of the Ndau chiefs is contentious. Rennie (1973) admits that the evidence for the origins of the Ndau chieftaincies is both direct (written and oral) and inferred (from cultural facts, length of genealogies). This implies that there is no one source that can be entirely depended on in a bid to trace the origins of the Ndau chieftaincies.

Written documents that could be used as sources of the chieftaincies in Ndauland may have been documents compiled by the Portuguese. Unfortunately, as Rennie (1973) argues, the penetration and knowledge of the area between the Buzi and Sabi by the Portuguese appears to be limited until the 1880s. Notwithstanding its limitations, oral tradition complements the paucity of written records on the Ndau chieftaincies.

The Ndau society of the Chipinge district consists of six chieftaincies, namely Mutema, Musikavanhu, Garahwa, Gwenzi, Mapungwana and Mahenye. Each chieftaincy rules over its own territory/country [*nyika*]. Of interest to this study are the Mutema, Musikavanhu and Garahwa chieftaincies. The chieftaincies distinguish themselves from one another by totemic clans [*mutupo;* pl: *mitupo*] (Vijfhuizen 1997). For example, the totem for Mutema people is cattle [*mombe*]and that of the Musikavanhu chieftaincy is the hippopotamus [*Muyambo* or *mvuu*]. This does not mean, however, that everyone in the chieftaincy is a *Muyambo*. In a chieftaincy, there are different clans with different totems, and this enables intermarriages within a chieftaincy, some clans may have totems of a dog [*Sigauke*]*,* termite [*Dhliwayo*] and many others.

 Politically, the Ndau chieftaincy is made up of the highest chief and ruler of the whole chieftaincy. He[29] is known as a paramount chief or *mambo* in the local dialect. He is deputised by other chiefs who may oversee large villages that are made up of village heads (headmen) who report to the chief. In some instances, there are no paramount chiefs who have chiefs under them but have village heads (headmen)[30] as their juniors in the political hierarchy. The headmen [*sadunhu /mutape*] normally share the same totem with the paramount chief [*mambo*] or the other chiefs [*vanamutape*]*.* Rennie (1973) argues that in the Musikavanhu chieftaincy, all headmen are of the royal lineage and where one is not, he is part of a related lineage of the *Dziva* clan. In some instances, a chieftaincy may have two paramount chiefs, one acting as a political figure and the other as the religious figure of the chieftaincy. For example, in the Mutema chieftaincy there was a time when chief Siwonani stood for the government and Mapipana for the ancestors (Rennie 1973). These paramount chiefs had different but complementary roles in the chieftaincy. When people had issues with the government, they approach the chief for government-related matters and the ancestors for spiritual leadership responsible for religious and spiritual activities such as rain-making ceremonies, among others. However, arrangement is slowly losing ground as the chiefs are now politically appointed 'in consultation'[31] with the elders of the chieftaincy. This has

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[29] 'He' for all Ndau chieftaincies is used as they are all politically ruled by a male leader. This is one of the issues that the study discuses later as it considers the gendered nature of *shupa.*

[30] Once again Ndau have headmen not headwomen in their political leadership. Women become prominent figures in the religious sphere where they act as mediums. This demonstrates the patriarchal nature of the Ndau chieftaincy.

[31] These consultations are often accused of being biased and settle on some illegitimate rulers being appointed. The process is alleged to be riddled with corruption as the government officials from the Ministry

resulted in the spiritual aspect of a chieftaincy slowly being eroded. Normally those appointed are 'politically positioned' in that they are ardent supporters of the appointing government. This has caused a number of disputes in a number of chieftaincies.

The Ndau chieftaincy has a concept that is known as *yafa yabara*[32] in the Ndau dialect. One participant stated that the *yafa yabara* model was whereby the eldest son of the deceased chief succeeds his father. This is a late development that came to replace the old establishment where brothers, following seniority would take turns to rule the chieftaincy. When the last brother passed on the eldest son of the departed brother took over the leadership. The cycle was perpetuated but because of the long wait that other would-be leaders had to endure, they circumvented the process by simply replacing the old establishment with the *yafa yabara* concept which excluded most of the hopeful brothers from becoming leaders. This resulted and is still resulting in chieftainship disputes that often culminate in bloodshed. To obviate any resentment and conflict some chiefs appoint the discontented males as headmen in charge of the villages and reporting to the chief. This arrangement appears to have solved the disputes as the headmen now have a certain amount of autonomy in their areas of jurisdiction. This is, perhaps, why most headmen, if not all, in Musikavanhu chieftaincy are of royal lineage. They are all from the *Dziva* totem. This arrangement may have occurred to pacify those who had the right to heirship but because of the *yafa yabara* concept were denied this. Given the contestations that surround the Ndau chieftaincy, it is prudent to briefly assess the origins of the chieftaincies under study in order to discover the role of the chiefs in the community, particularly their role in community health matters.

4.5.1 The Musikavanhu chieftaincy

It is argued that as early as the 17th century the *Dziva* chieftaincies represented by Musikavanhu on the Zimbabwean side and Mafusi and Gogoyo on the Mozambican side were established. The traditions of the Musikavanhu chieftaincy show that it was established by Nyakuimba, the young brother of Chiphaphami and the founder of the Mutema chieftaincy (Rennie 1973). It is historically

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of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, which is the core ministry for chieftaincies, are alleged to be 'bought' by those appointed. Again, this has resulted in protracted conflicts that find their way into the courts for recourse.

[32] When a chief dies, his eldest son takes over the leadership of the chieftaincy. When the heir also dies; his eldest son takes over and so it goes on. This has created several disputes and schisms among several Ndau chieftaincies as this arrangement denies the reigning chief's brothers to lead the chieftaincy.

recorded and orally given that Nyakuimba and his sister Chapo stole the ritual objects for rain from the Rozvi king, Shiriyedenga. These ritual objects include what Konyana (2016) refers to as *gona remvura*. This is a traditional concoction that to this day is believed to enable, the Musikavanhu chieftaincy to make rain. The chieftaincy is, therefore, consulted by neighbouring chieftaincies when drought strikes. The belief is that it is the Musikavanhu who possess the *gona remvura,* hence their *Dziva* [pool] totem and thus the rain-making power is vested in this *Dziva* group.

The *Dziva* chieftaincy of Musikavanhu is said to have its 'Garahwa client' chieftaincy. There is no record of this 'client chieftaincy' and it is said to have been founded with the Musikavanhu chieftaincy in the south of the Chipinge district. Being accountable for rain, the Musikavanhu chieftaincy ensures that Chipinge as a district receives sufficient rains. It carries out all rituals that are meant to invoke the ancestors' favours to bring rain, thus ensuring the communities' sustainable livelihoods. Even the plant kingdom from whence the herbs used for the *shupa* preparation come from, benefits from sufficient rains. This implies that the Musikavanhu chieftaincy holds the key to food security and the necessary health care among the Ndau through their *gona remvura* [rain-making magic].

4.5.2 The Mutema chieftaincy

The chieftaincy has *mwoyo* [the cattle heart] as its totem. It is said to have been founded by Chiphaphami Shiriyedenga, a brother of Nyakuimba of the Musikavanhu chieftaincy. He apparently came from the Mbire empire with several followers who later founded the Musikavanhu, Mapungwana, Gwenzi and Sahodi [Ngorima], Sangweme [Chikukwa] and Mutambara of Chipinge and Chimanimani districts respectively. Chiphaphami founded the capital of the Mutema chieftaincy at Ngaone, which has been the traditional capital since, although other Mutema people occupy the Save River areas of the Manesa, Tanganda and Musani villages. Mutema is said to be a derivation of the Shona *kutema mitemo* [to make laws or to give judicial decisions], a label the Mutema chieftaincy is known by. They have the prowess to deal with disputes of any nature. The chieftaincy is said to have excelled in conflict management and the Mutema chieftaincy ensures that the Ndau live in harmony with one another and with their environment. Being in harmony with their environment ensures that the plant kingdom consistently supplies people with medicinal plants like those that are used to prepare *shupa*.

From the foregoing it is possible that the Ndau chieftaincies had different origins at different times. The historical reconstruction of their origins is contestable at best but what remains clear is that they have remained united by intermarriages, functional interdependence and by the Rozvi identity. Musikvanhu is said to have sent a wife to the Ngorima chieftaincy; Mutema provided the first wife to Mapungwana who also sent a wife to Musikavanhu in return for rain. If, according to history, Chiphaphami Shiriyedenga was indeed a brother of Nyakuimba, then they all share a common identity in the Rozvi empire. Their identification as either *Dziva* or *Mwoyo* could have been necessitated by the need to marry each other to avoid being accused of incest. The Chipinge chieftaincies seem to have originated from the Rozvi Empire and thereafter spread throughout the district. If the chieftaincies are not related by blood, they are by intermarriage. This interrelatedness has resulted in strong bonds being forged among the chieftaincies and thus disputes regarding chieftaincy boundaries, often marked by rivers, mountains, and anthills, are minimized as the chieftaincies have formed a cluster of their own. Therefore, any diffusion during colonialism and its attendant effects of globalisation, into the hinterland of Ndauland remains minimal, as observed by Konyana (2016) who argues that the Ndau people take pride in owning and belonging to a region and to a religion that colonialism and globalisation have failed to extricate from their traditional and cultural practices. The chieftaincies share responsibilities to ensure a healthy Ndauland. The discussion above shows that the Ndau, under different chieftaincies have a worldview that promotes healthy living, using IKS and *shupa* in particular.

4.6 Ndau traditional beliefs and practices

The Ndau people, like any other African community, have a wide range of traditional beliefs and practices which they have practised since time immemorial (Konyana 2016). In this section their beliefs in supernatural beings such as the gods/God whom they call *Mwari,* their ancestors [*vadzimu*]*,* clan spirits, [*mhondoro*]*,* belief in witchcraft, traditional healers and plant kingdom are presented. This helps in appreciating that the Ndau understanding of *shupa* is closely informed by their spiritual understanding of health matters as well as the abundant plant species that their *Mwari* and *Vadzimu* grant them in the form of forests and woodlands. Good health is understood as a sign of the spiritual world's happiness and ill health shows that the spiritual world has been aggrieved. The plant kingdom offers most remedies for the combatting of ill health. Tree bark, leaves and roots play an important role in the primary health care of the Ndau. Apart from the biological

causes of illnesses, the Ndau believe there are spiritual causes which also require spiritual remedies. This creates a symbiotic relationship between the spiritual and the physical worlds, which the Ndau support wholeheartedly.

4.6.1 Belief in a *Mwari*.

Although Mercy Amba Oduyoye is skeptical of the notion that Africans are notoriously religious (Mbiti 1969), she acknowledges that human beings in general are religious by nature. The Ndau are also a religious people as their cosmology is similar to most other African communities. Like all the Shona people, the Ndau believe in a 'higher god' (Bourdillon 1987) the creator who has power over the ancestral spirits and human beings. *Mwari* (High God) is believed to be too remote to be concerned with human beings. He has juniors (other divinities and ancestors) who see to the day-to-day concerns of people. The Shona and the Ndau by extension, believe in a three-tier structure that consists of the spirit world [*vari kumhepo*[33]-literally meaning those in the atmosphere], the land of the living [*nyika*], and the underworld, the land of the departed [*vari pasi*]. The spirit world is occupied by *Mwari* at the apex of the hierarchy together with the ancestral spirits (who had all rituals performed for them). The underworld comprises the dead whose rituals are yet to be performed for them to occupy the spiritual world.

 It is this worldview that renders *Mwari* to be too remote to be concerned even with the spirit elders of a family, but the Shona believe that the more important lion spirits can communicate with him (Sipeyiye 2014). Of immediate concern are those whom they have interacted with, the *vari kumhepo* or ancestors, during their life before death. They believe it is *vari kumhepo* who have a practical experience of the life they had lived. For that reason, the inhabitants of the spirit world are consulted when the need arises. They are believed to 'hear', 'listen', and 'see' what the living go through, desire and ask for. These are the family and clan spirits. They are consulted for matters that include health and food security. The spiritual worldview of the Ndau has a bearing on how *shupa* as a health asset is understood as will be discussed later when the study analyses the *shupa* practice.

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[33] The realm of *vari kumhepo* is divided into two spheres. The first is the sphere of the most 'high god'. The other sphere is for those who died and have their death rituals such as *kurova guva* (meaning beating the grave to bring the spirit of the deceased from the underworld into the spiritual world.

4.6.2 Belief in family spirits (ancestors)

The Shona in general, including the Ndau believe in ancestors. For them death is not an end but a transition from the physical to the spiritual realm. Lan (1985) argues that ancestors are sensory beings who have emotions and desires and can see and hear. He further asserts that ancestors are never frivolous or unkind. The welfare of their descendants is their sole concern. Pfukwa (2001) argues that the belief in ancestors is a core traditional belief of the Ndau people. They believe that their deceased elders still have a say in the lives of the living. For Konyana (2016) the Ndau believe that their ancestors [*vadzimu*] continue to live among them in spirit. It must be noted that not everyone can become an ancestor at death. For one to qualify as an ancestor, one needs to have attained the status of an elder. One must have had a family, lived a model life and leave behind a considerable legacy. If one dies unmarried, he or she is buried with maize husk [*deentengu*] as a 'marriage partner'[34]. This is an acknowledgement on the part of the Ndau that they hold marriage in high esteem. Marriage marks a transition from boyhood or girlhood into adulthood. This adulthood is associated with responsibility and accountability. When one dies unmarried it is difficult for the Ndau to entrust that individual with looking after the living. Hence, he or she does not qualify to be an ancestor.

The Ndau consult the 'living timeless' (Banana 1991) whenever there are social, political, economic, religious and cultural challenges made to their health and well-being. To live in harmony the Ndau people carry out several rituals to honour their departed. They mostly brew millet beer which is then given to the ancestors thanking them for their care of the family and continued favour. For the Ndau good health and wellbeing, good harvests and general happiness in the community are not coincidental. These are signs of happy ancestors. Mbuya Mwaoneni[35] said, "*kana zviro zveitihambira zvakanaka, tine kurya kwakakwana uye pasina kurwara-rwara zvinoronza vadzimu vedu vanodakara.* [If things are alright with us, when we have enough to eat and there is no one sick, then our ancestors are happy with us].

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[34] The belief is that if this is not done the deceased will torment the living asking for a marriage partner. To avoid his or her spirit to come back to trouble the living, they bury him or her with the maize husk as a marriage partner. Once this is done the deceased does not come back to trouble the living.

[35] Interview with Mbuya Mwaoneni, Chikore Mission, 6 June 2017.

Thus, the ancestors reward the living when they (the living) are doing well. However, the ancestors can punish the living when angry. Konyana (2016) states that when Ndau ancestors are unhappy about what the living have done to them, they (the ancestors) cause illnesses and misfortunes among the living (Shoko 2007). These illnesses and misfortunes come in various forms. To this day HIV and AIDS is sometimes explained among the Ndau as a spiritual epidemic that is meant to punish those who have wronged the ancestors. The Ndau do not dispute the medical nature of the epidemic but believe that for one to be infected by the HIV one would have been punished by angry ancestors. The ancestors withdraw their protection and guidance and hence one becomes vulnerable and infected by the virus. Other misfortunes that might befall offenders are barrenness, incessant losses in property and job losses for those in employment. Situated above the ancestors in the Ndau cosmology, are the clan spirits popularly known as lion spirits or *mhondoro*. Since illnesses and misfortunes are understood as punishment from ancestors, remedial action also takes a spiritual form for the Ndau people. Treatment and cure, which are usually derived from herbs have a spiritual dimension as well. This could explain the spiritual dimension which will be dealt with in greater detail in chapter Five. This Ndau worldview is therefore important for the study in that it foregrounds the spiritual aspects of *shupa.*

4.6.3 Belief in Clan spirits (*Mhondoro)*

Gelfand (1962) refers to clan spirits as 'tribal or tutelary' spirits. These are district spirits above family spirits. When there is a problem that affects the whole tribe (often made up of closely related people who share the same totem) the *mhondoros* are consulted. They concern themselves not with individual family problems but with that of the tribe as a whole. They are associated with the concerns of the chiefdom or the community (Bourdillon 1987). Issues addressed by the *mhondoros* include, among others, drought and famine, land demarcation, intra-tribal wars and the general welfare of the community which includes health and well-being. They are the custodians of the tribe and operate at a higher rank than family spirits. There are instances when family issues may be passed on to *vadzimu* who in turn take them straight to *Mwari.* This is to avoid bureaucracy which may delay solutions to imminent problems, as the spirit world is also concerned with the health and wealth of the living.

Shoko (2007), writing on the Karanga people of the Midlands province, states that *vadzimu* are responsible for the health and wealth of the Karanga people. Similarly, the Ndau believe that one does not fall ill without a cause. The cause is not medical but spiritual in most cases. For them the *vadzimu* play a pivotal role in ensuring health and wellbeing. When one falls ill the family is eager to know the type of illness. The Ndau have two typologies of illness: normal and abnormal illness. The respondents stated that the Ndau were not concerned about the ordinary illnesses as they believe these naturally come to an end without any intervention by the spiritual world. Such illnesses include influenza [*kukotsora*] and headaches [*kuzwa musoro*]*,* among others.

However, when such illnesses become protracted and are ongoing within the family, then there is every reason for the Ndau to be concerned. This is no longer an ordinary illness but must be indicative of a serious anomaly that needs redress. Other illnesses and/or sickness that are not taken for granted among the Ndau are mental illness, barrenness, persistent misfortunes befalling the same members of a family and unusual occurrences within their homesteads. The appearance and hooting of owls [*mazizi*] at night, the appearance of ghosts and ominous sounds are signs of a homestead that is unwell in the Ndau cosmology; hence the Ndau belief in the role of traditional healers and traditional medicine.

Mysterious happenings and atypical illnesses are believed to be the work of the ancestors or witchcraft. One becomes ill because an ancestor wills it and wants to express itself to the living or to the one who has been bewitched. These are matters the Ndau take seriously and because the illnesses and mysterious happenings cannot be explained in the physical realm, the Ndau appeal to the spiritual realm by either consulting spirit mediums or traditional healers for redress. It is for this reason that Machinga (2012) submits that in the traditional Shona practices, wellness is derived from a cultural understanding of the role of family, community, and the spiritual world in human welfare. The Ndau believe in the ubiquitous nature of witchcraft and its anti-social nature towards life and sustenance. This belief system of the Ndau resonates with their belief and practice of *shupa.* It is a health asset that has spiritual overtones. It is a practice that connects the physical and spiritual realms of the Ndau. This dimension is explained in detail in the analysis chapters.

4.6.4 The Belief of witchcraft among the Ndau

Arguments abound as to the existence and nature of witchcraft in African societies. Contestations revolve around its motivation, nature and effects. Mawere defines witchcraft as:

> A practice that involves the secretive use of potentially harmful medicines, charms, magic and any other supernatural means or devices to cause some positive effects (such as wealth accumulation, social power) or negative consequences (such as psychological or physical harm, illness, misfortune or death of other people, animals or property" (Mawere 2010:92).

While Mawere views witchcraft from both a positive and negative perspective, the Ndau believe that witchcraft is meant to harm them, thereby threatening the prolongation and sustenance of life. The negative portrayal of witchcraft is confirmed by the Zimbabwe Witchcraft Suppression Act, Chapter 73, which defines witchcraft as the "throwing of bones, the use of charms and other means or devices adopted in the practice of sorcery" (Mawere 2010:92). For the Ndau, witchcraft must be kept at bay at all cost. It is there to disturb a family's harmony, health and well-being. Any death among the Ndau is suspected to be caused by witchcraft. There is no 'natural' death in the Ndau cosmology. One often hears of other communities, especially Christian communities, accepting that one has died because it is God's time [*inguva yaMwari*]. For the Ndau even when someone has aged naturally, he/she does not die because 'it's God's time'. The Ndau consult traditional healers to know who has caused the death. This culminates in the Ndau's belief in the efficacy of the traditional healers to restore health and well-being whenever it is threatened by witchcraft. The belief and practice of *shupa* also takes cognisance of the existence of witchcraft and sorcery. The *shupa* is jealously guarded against those who may be bent on wanting to harm the baby that feeds from the *shupa*. Therefore, *shupa* has taboos that are meant to ensure its safety for its consumers. The respondents indicated that the *shupa'*s lid was prohibited from being opened and closed by anyone other than the child's mother. It cannot be left unguarded for a single night by the baby's mother. These issues have a bearing on how the Ndau understand witchcraft. More details will be provided in Chapters Five and Six.

4.6.5 Ndau perceptions on traditional healers

Since witchcraft is dreaded among the Ndau, concerted efforts are made to eliminate it. Because it is so secretive that the physical realm cannot deal with it, the Ndau appeal to the spiritual world

where most traditional healers [*nyanga* in Ndau dialect] operate. Witchcraft is spiritual and hence must be dealt with spiritually. The *modus operandi* of the traditional healers differs from one traditional healer to another. There are those who are possessed and begin to 'prophesy' or make use of divination to discover the causes of any illness, misfortune or death. Some of the *nyanga* rely entirely on the powers of their spirits, either *mudzimu* or *shavi* spirits, in ritual possession to diagnose the cause of illness and disease. Sekuru Chirimo-Ngorima[36] stated, "*Dzimwe nyanga dzinomukirwa dzobhuya chasakisa urwere*" [Some traditional healers get possessed and diagnose causes of the illness/sickness]. Shoko (2007) asserts that by merely looking at the patient, the possessed healer can diagnose the illness as a manifestation of *ngozi* [avenging spirit], if caused by the avenging spirit. The possession could also be by the healer's *mudzimu*, one's ancestral spirit. It can also be caused by the *shavi* [alien] spirit. This is possession by an 'external' spirit (Shoko 2007). One major distinction Shoko makes between diviners possessed by *mudzimu* and *shavi* spirits is that the one possessed by the *mudzimu* spirit does with little payment whereas the one possessed by the *shavi* spirit charges more than a nominal fee. The reason for this could be that the one possessed by the *mudzimu* spirit does the work as a social obligation, whereas the *shavi*-possessed divination is a profession to earn a living.

On the other hand, respondents stated that there were traditional healers who threw *hakata* [*kuringidza* in Ndau dialect]. The *hakata* is made from bone, wood, seed or glass (Shoko 2007). These may not need to be possessed but may have developed a skill of reading and interpreting *hakata*. The diviner interprets the way the *hakata* falls on the ground. The *hakata 'sees'* reality and this reality is then communicated to the patient and relatives. At times, this may take a circuitous route as the diviner traces the historical background of the patient, his or her deceased relatives, causes of their death to which the relatives must confirm by saying *siyavhuma* [we agree]. This drawn out process is to assure the clients that the diviner is not bogus hence the clients build trust and confidence in the traditional healer.

Apart from using *hakata* some diviners make use of dreams. Mbuya Muvhamba[37] states, "*Dzimweni nyanga dzinoita zvekurotswa. Dzinooneswa muhope zvese zvichada kuitika uye zvikonzero zvakhona*" [Some traditional healers dream of what is to happen or see visions of what

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[36] Interview with Sekuru Chirimo-Ngorima, Muumbe village, 10 May 2017.
[37] Interview with Mbuya Muvhamba, Pfidza Township, 8 June 2018.

shall happen and what causes that]. The diviner, as Shoko (2007) concurs, relies on dreams directed by the spirits. It is argued that diviners of this nature do not immediately attend to a client but should sleep first for them to dream of the causes and remedies of the illness. The cause is conveyed to them in a dream. If medicine is to be administered, the diviner is shown in the dream, the tree roots, leaves and bark to use to cure the illness. Diviners of this nature are highly regarded by the Ndau people. They are not ordinary as they receive instructions and advice from the spiritual world in which the Ndau have much faith in. The opportunity to lie and cheat are minimal. If the illness is of a complex nature and beyond the diviner's powers, the diviner is shown in the dream the healer to whom to refer the client. Diviners, much like medical doctors, refer certain illnesses to certain specialists.

Ndauland is believed to have many traditional healers. The Chipinge district is mostly misconstrued by other Shona-speaking people to be a haven for witches. When one says he/she resides or hails from Chipinge among the *Zezurus* of Mashonaland, *Karangas* of Masvingo and the Ndebele of Matabeleland, one is treated with awe. The respondents stated that in most cases, the Ndau are respected at workplaces, neighbourhoods and in any other social groupings. They are said to have knowledge about witchcraft and traditional medicine even when this is untrue. Taking advantage of this misconception, some Ndau boast to their peers who are not Ndau that they are 'fenced', that is, protected, and no one can harm them. They even leave their property unattended and the property is not stolen.

 The Ndau traditional healers are experts and are well known for dealing with spiritual problems of any nature. This is confirmed by Mapuranga (2010) who states that Chipinge traditional healers are the envy of many. Some unscrupulous traditional healers advertise their divination practices on public notices claiming to originate from Chipinge even when they are not, in order to attract clients. This is because of the trust clients have with Chipinge traditional healers. Anyone who is affected by any misfortune of any kind, be it barrenness, mental illness or chronic illness is referred to Chipinge for assistance.

Traditional healers play a significant role in ensuring the health and well-being of the Ndau people. Konyana (2016) confirms this when he states that the *nyanga* (traditional healer) is the Ndau people's main source of assistance in all matters of social life. Having realised their (traditional

healers) significance in ensuring a healthy nation the Zimbabwe Government recognise their work by allowing them to form a watchdog association, the Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers' Association (ZINATHA) that ensures that all traditional health practitioners register in order to practise. This is meant to curtail the activities of unscrupulous and bogus traditional healers. The Association has offices throughout the ten provinces of Zimbabwe where consultations take place and appropriate assistance is given. They even keep a record of specialists for certain illnesses to refer clients for help. These traditional healers carry out their various healing duties, ranging from healing and prevention, due to the benevolence of the natural environment that provides the healing, curative and preventive medicine. There is a symbiotic relationship between the Ndau and their environment. The Ndau rely on the environment but are fully aware that the same environment needs to be taken good care of. This is further illustrated in Chapters Five and Six. The next section is an illustration of how the Ndau look after their environment, particularly the flora from which they derive their herbs for treating or curing different illnesses.

4.6.6. The Ndau belief in the plant kingdom

The plant kingdom can be generally understood as the environment, that is, the landscape which contains plants of all varieties. Traditional societies in Africa value land and what is on it. The Shona people of Zimbabwe believe that the land is their *axis mundi.* It is land upon which they live. It is land that is the abode of their ancestors. It is on land that their medicinal plants grow. In other words, land is central to the people of Zimbabwe and of Africa by extension. When land is taken away from them, Africans in general feel that they have been denied their birthright. This explains why Zimbabweans and other Africans fought protracted liberation struggles that pitted them against the settler regime, land being the major bone of contention. While the land issue took on political and economic overtones, the major issue for the traditional people was the loss of their ancestral land. Land for the Zimbabweans, and the Ndau in particular, has a religio-cultural significance. Land is the abode of the ancestors. Depriving the indigenous people of land is like cutting their umbilical cord that connects them to the source of life. The liberation struggle fought by the Zimbabweans was for the said reasons. The religio-cultural significance of land for the Ndau is evident in their perception of forests, rivers and mountains and the traditional society of the Ndau jealously guard against the devastation of their environment and other natural resources. The main concern for the Ndau is that these natural resources embedded in the environment should

be used for the benefit of human life, but this use must be guided by the need to safeguard the natural resources against extinction and/or pollution.

Ikeke (2013) argues that a key area of the environment is the forest, which consist of trees, shrubs and other plants that are essentially useful for the health and wellbeing of the inhabitants. For the Ndau the forest serves a multiplicity of purposes. Ikeke identifies one such purpose by stating that a landscape without forests greatly harms human health. Forests provide not only oxygen but medicinal plants that the Ndau people use for health purposes. There are other benefits that people derive from forests such as energy in the form of firewood, food from forest fruits and timber for shelter. All these are derived from the forests which in the Ndau and other African cosmologies come from their spiritual world as represented by God, the creator of all life and other divinities below him.

This spiritual understanding of the environment enables the Ndau to regard the natural environment as an indispensable necessity in their lives. To ensure the conservation of the environment, the Ndau have taboos that are meant to conserve the environment. Makaudze (2015) understands taboos as legislation and equates taboos to the Environment Management Agency (EMA), a watchdog for environment conservation in Zimbabwe. Taboos were the EMAs of the pre-colonial era. For Makaudze taboos were and still are the environmental police who maintain order and a peaceful existence amongst people, the flora and the fauna (Makaudze and Shoko 2015). Taboos such as the prohibition among the Ndau that when one finds sour fruits in a forest one must not complain least this offend the ancestors. Once the ancestors are angered one may get lost in the forest until appropriate rituals are carried out. Instances of people who perished because of this are often told. People are also prohibited from cutting green trees. If they want firewood they must go for dry trees. Any violations of such prohibitions will have serious consequences. The reason for crafting taboos for the conservation of the environment is because they value nature and are aware of its benevolence. It is for this reason that Gelfand (1968) argues that African faith is characteristically identified with nature, and it is closely linked to the surrounding environment.

Plants are an important component of the environment and form an integral part of humanity. For the Ndau, the plant kingdom is central and is not restricted to traditional healers but is made accessible to ordinary members of the community. Indigenous knowledge of which plant prevents

and cures which illness or disease is common knowledge for every member of the community, particularly women. It is no surprise that the Chipinge district in Zimbabwe is associated with witchcraft and traditional medicine. There is a misconception that knowledge in traditional medicine is closely linked to witchcraft. This misconception emanates from the notion that almost every Ndau who grew up in the local communities was taught which bark, leaves and roots prevent and cure which illness or disease. This socialisation is confirmed by Semali who states that his parents used to show him which plant cures what illness or wound when passing through a forest on their way to their field (Semali and Kincheloe 1999). Indigenous knowledge regarding plants and their cures is often misconstrued to also include a vast knowledge on which plant may be used to harm other people. Knowledge on toxic plants does not mean knowledge on sorcery and witchcraft. This must be made clear so that the misnomer that traditional healers are witches or wizards is demystified.

Given the efficacy of the plant kingdom, the Ndau have a high regard for nature. Though Taringa (2006)'s argument is that it is the spiritual worldview of the Shona that prevent them from tampering with nature not that they are environmentally friendly. However, the Shona of Zimbabwe in general and the Ndau in particular realise that plants are important in their lives. Their regard for certain plant species stems from their knowledge that the plants provide medicine for the primary health care of their communities. Women know which plant is good for firewood and which one must not be used for firewood. They even know plants that can prevent misfortunes and 'fence'[38] their homesteads from witches. Rural women are firewood collectors. To demonstrate that they value the plant kingdom they only collect dry firewood and do not cut down green trees. All this points to the nurturing nature of women towards the plant kingdom. It is this nurturing nature of women that have seen some plant species such as those used in preparing *shupa* surviving extinction despite the destruction of woodlands and forests by human activities such as clearing lands for farming, cutting trees for building material and burning down forests for the purpose of hunting in some communities.

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[38] There are homesteads in African communities where certain plant species are used to protect the homesteads from witches at night. The plant species are used as an invisible fence that keeps away any evil spirit that may intend to cause harm to the members of the homestead.

The Ndau worldview as provided above is no longer intact after the Ndau's experiences with Christianity and the missionaries of American origin. This section addresses how Ndau IKS in matters of marriages, cultural beliefs and primary health care were impacted on by christianity in order to discover how christianity impacted on some Ndau traditional beliefs and practices. This is important to determine whether the encounter could have been a factor in the inferiorisation of the Ndau traditional beliefs and practices such as *shupa*. This section does not only provide a necessary anchor for the study to investigate whether *shupa* was affected in the christianisation of other Ndau indigenous practices such as marriage, bride wealth and traditional medicine, but it situates the study on *shupa* as efficacious for Ndau survival.

4.7 The advent of christianity in Africa: A brief overview

The history of the Church in Africa has been addressed by many scholars. Chief among these are Elizabeth Isichei (1995), Sundker et al (2000). This study intends to use that information in the exploration of missionary activities in Zimbabwe. Missionary activities in Zimbabwe [the then Rhodesia] is explored in this study for two reasons: firstly, to examine how missionary activities impacted on the traditional ways of knowing of Zimbabweans, particularly the Ndau. Secondly, to ascertain whether this encounter resulted in any positive developments that the Ndau tapped into. Missionary activities in African states 'coincided' with the colonisation of the African nations. Some scholars like Maposa (2013) therefore argue that Christianity worked in favour of the colonisation process of Africa.

4.7.1 The Church in Zimbabwe

The 19th century ushered in the pioneers of missionary enterprise in Matabeleland. These pioneers were missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) who started their first mission station at Inyati in 1859 (Zvobgo 1996) and the second at Hope Fountain in 1870. Bhebe (1979) makes a trajectory survey of the missionary activities in Matabeleland under King Lobengula. He reports that these missionaries did not make much progress as they only managed to convert twelve converts after more than twenty years of missionary work. The head missionary, Prestage, out of frustration at the slow progress, wrote, "Until the Matabeles are put down by brute force …they will never improve" (Zvobgo 1996:1). The slow progress was followed by the advent of colonialism that led to the signing of the Rudd Concession in 1888 that promised to pay Lobengula

one hundred pounds, one thousand rifles and one hundred thousand rounds of ammunition every month in exchange for all the metals and minerals in Lobengula's kingdom (Zvobgo 1996). Though the details of the Rudd concession are beyond the scope of this study, what needs to mentioned is the fact that when the rifles finally arrived as promised, Lobengula refused the consignment under the pretext that he did not fully understand the interpreter during the negotiations.

The missionaries realised that they, on their own, might not succeed in the evangelisation of Matabeleland and hence sought the support of the British South African Company (BSAC.), which had plans to colonise Mashonaland first and Matabeleland later. An alliance was agreed upon on the basis of a community of interests (Zvobgo 1996). The missionaries wanted protection and material support from the BSAC to proselytise without fear of adversaries. The BSAC wanted moral support as well as legitimacy for their political activities; such agreements rendered christianity an appendage of colonialism as argued earlier.

In Mashonaland, the Roman Catholic missionaries were among the first to arrive. A Portuguese Jesuit missionary, Fr. Gonzalo da Silviera is reported to have been the first missionary to have introduced christianity in Mashonaland. His first port of call was the court of the Munhumutapa dynasty. He made many attempts to convert the king and later had some substantial successes in winning converts in the kingdom. Bhila (1977) argues that Fr. Gonzalo da Silviera targeted emperor Munhumutapa Chisamhuru Negomo Mupunzagutu who received the missionary with great hospitality and presents of gold dust, cattle and female slaves. The king and his mother were converted having been impressed by the missionary. Despite this, his missionary activities were not without squabbles. He faced much resistance from the Shona whose indigenous beliefs and practices were a contravention of the christian mission. He was eventually murdered because of court skirmishes in 1561 (Shaw 1996). Narratives of his death are shrouded in controversy which is beyond the purview of this study. The missionary activities that started with the Jesuit missionary did not cease but spread steadily to all parts of the country. Because there were many missionaries representing their mother churches in Europe, there was a need to systematically determine who would occupy which part of Zimbabwe. The need for this culminated in the signing of the Comic Agreement (CoA). Zvobgo (1996) states that the Comic Agreement was signed by several churches in 1934 to finally confirm the geographical areas where christian missionary

societies were allocated to between 1891 and 1923 (Maposa 2013). For instance, the Dutch Reformed Church, now the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, was given permission to operate in the Masvingo province around the Morgenster and Zimuto areas. The British Methodist Church operated in urban areas, particularly in Harare (the then Salisbury) as opposed to the American Methodist Episcopal Church which operated in rural areas between Harare and Mutare (the then Umtali). The Evangelical Lutheran Church occupied the Mberengwa and Gwanda areas of Masvingo and Matabeleland provinces. The Salvation Army was given the Mazowe area and created missions like Howard and Mazowe. The Roman Catholic Church was allowed to operate almost everywhere across the country but not within a fifteen-kilometre radius from a christian mission (Maposa 2013). These missionary denominations were given large tracts of land grants by the British South African Company (BSAC) to start their respective missions. In the Manicaland province, for example, the United Methodist Church was granted 13 000 acres of land to establish the Old Mutare mission (Maposa 2013). Other missionary work was introduced at St. Augustine mission near Penhalonga by the Anglican missionary, Bishop Knight-Bruce in 1891. The United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ) formerly known as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was apportioned to occupy the south-eastern enclave of Chipinge.

Given how the church spread itself across Zimbabwe, the next section explores how the church was established in the research site of Gazaland in order to assess the effects of missionary work on the Ndau IKS such as *shupa* and this assists in ascertaining whether the Ndau attitude towards *shupa* has anything to do with their encounter with christianity. This background is essential as it also informs the postcolonial lenses (one of the theoretical frameworks) through which the study is carried.

4.8 The region of Gazaland

Matikiti (2012) states that Gazaland is a region that refers to the area north and west of the Save River extending to the coast. This area covers the Chimanimani and Chipinge districts of the Manicaland province. This land is often referred to as Ndauland. Matikiti argues that the Gaza state was founded by a Nguni breakaway movement from Zululand between 1821 and 1831. The word 'Gaza' is derived from the Zulu chief Gaza who fled northward during the harsh reign of, the Zulu King Chaka. Having settled in the Chimanimani and Chipinge regions, the whole area

was popularly known as Gazaland and is known as such in modern Zimbabwe. Other people would refer to this region as Ndauland, a region inhabited by the Ndau people. This area covers the site of the research.

4.8.1 The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in the Chipinge District

Geographically, Chipinge is part of the historical Gazaland region in south-eastern Zimbabwe. According to Maposa (2013) the Chipinge district comprises two areas. First is the eastern area known as the *kumatunhu* [highlands] with an altitude ranging from about 914 metres to 2 437 metres (Maposa 2013). Second is the *gowa* (lowlands) with an altitude ranging from 244 metres to 548 metres. It is arid and extremely hot. This lowveld belt culminates in the Save River valley. Moyana (2002) observed that the Save River valley is like a semi-desert area which was sparsely populated in the pre-colonial period due to endemic starvation caused by frequent droughts. It is because of its 'uncultivability' and 'inhabitability' that a white settler, D.M. Stanley described the area as "baboon country" (Moyana 2002) due the dominant presence of baboons that favour this hot region. Having described this region, the next section looks at how missionary work was established among the Ndau of the Chipinge district.

What applied to most regions of Zimbabwe during the establishment of mission stations, applied *mutatis mutandis* to the Chipinge district. Matikiti (2012) argues that the expansion of ABCFM in Zimbabwe must be seen within the context of the christian missionary enterprise in Zimbabwe as a whole. Zvobgo (1996) states that the ABCFM established their mission stations at Mt. Selinda and Chikore in 1893 and 1895 respectively. The establishing of these mission stations was not an easy task. Maposa (2013) further makes an interesting observation that the arrival and establishment of the missionaries and the subsequent land acquisition would have resulted in deep-seated chaos and social alienation to a large extent.

Matikiti (2012) traces the history of the ABCFM beyond Zimbabwe to the outreach of the ABCFM formed in 1810 in the United States of America. It was a voluntary association made up of people who had an interest in foreign missions. The membership had a congregational background. With the passage of time the membership sought independence from the congregational church. This association developed strong links with missionary churches in the then Rhodesia and the

American Board in the United States. The ABCFM sent two groups of missionaries to South Africa. One of the groups had an interest in the north of South Africa. This formed the first attempt in Ndauland. The first missionaries were Rev. G.A. Wilder and Rev. Bates, who persuaded chief Ngungunyana to allow them to make converts in his kingdom. They are reported to have given him some gifts which include among others, a Zulu Bible and a hymn book (Matikiti 2012). The chief is said to have been also presented with Rev. Wilder's sleeping tent. The gifts surprised the chief, but despite these gestures by the missionaries, he was not swayed.

The Pioneer Column of 1890 came as a relief to missionary work in Ndauland. Just like any missionary work elsewhere in Zimbabwe, the American missionaries welcomed the Pioneer Column. The column provided the much-needed political support and was therefore a 'ray of hope' for them. Motivated by this political anchorage, the trio of missionaries, notably, Rev. G.A. Wilder, Rev. T. Bunker and Dr. Rev. W.L. Thompson visited Ndauland. Maposa (2013) states that the visit by the trio marked the second phase when missionaries opened another arduous interface with chief Ngungunyana at his traditional royal court. It is reported that when the trio arrived at chief Ngungunyana's court, he was away in Mozambique, at Biyeni to be specific, where he, together with his much celebrated and decorated army commander, Magigwana, were fighting against Portuguese colonialism. Ngungunyana is said to have met his death there at the hands of the Portuguese. Matikiti (1992) opines that Ngungunyana's capture was a blessing for missionary work in Gazaland and an opportunity for the missionaries to obtain permission from chief Mapungwana and to determine the location of the mission. He had been the stumbling block for missionary work. The American missionaries, therefore, had to court the audience of chief Mapungwana. Their famous conversation with the chief still lingers among the Ndau as it has been passed from generation to generation. Maposa (2013) cites Rev. Simon Mundeta, one of the longest serving ABCFM reverend (later to be known as United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ), who narrated the conversation between the American trio and chief Mapungwana. In the conversation, it was clear that the chief was disinterested in the trio's mission. Having listened with disinterest, chief Mapungwana is said to have called *impis* [soldiers] to drive the missionaries away across the Msirizwi River.

As they were being chased away, chief Mapungwana is reported to have noticed an earlobe- pieced Zulu associate among the missionaries. The piecing of ears, as stated in Chapter Two, was an

identifying mark that was introduced among the Ndau during their (Ndau) encounter with the Gaza-Nguni. The mark had become a Ngungunyana mark that identified the Ndau as people of Ngungunyana. It was a mark of submission to Ngungunyana's reign. When chief Mapungwana noticed this Zulu Zenzo Cele, among the missionaries, he changed his mind and stopped the *impis* from chasing the missionaries from his land. This incident saved what could have been an embarrassment and a possible assault on the missionaries. Hopeful that missionary work in Ndauland would succeed, the missionaries left for Natal in South Africa where they were based before venturing to the north of the Limpopo. Plans were then made to officially head for Ndauland. On 21 June 1893 a group left Natal to occupy chief Mapungwana's land. This group was led by Dr. Rev. W.L. Thompson who founded the Mt. Selinda mission.

Having successfully stationed themselves at Mt. Selinda mission station, the ABCFM founded a second mission station to the west of Mt. Selinda in Chief Musikavanhu's area. The mission station was founded at Chikore in 1895. Maposa (2013) points out that this mission station was the second outreach established by Rev.G.A. Wilder. This follows initial visits by Rev Wilder, who was responsible for organising a sizeable number of missionary corps who penetrated the heartland of Musikavanhu territory. During the exploits in 1892, chief Musikavanhu, Munjakanja by name, is reported, to have shown interest in welcoming missionaries into his chieftaincy. He is believed to have assured the missionaries that they were welcome in his chieftaincy to teach his people.

These missionaries were allocated land by the British South Africa Company. Chikore mission is located on an 18 000-acre tract of land as compensation to the land lost at Mt. Selinda when the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border was defined (Matikiti 1992). It is argued that Cecil Rhodes allocated land to the ABCFM in the south-eastern part of Zimbabwe to act as a buffer zone to protect the British from the Portuguese who were active along the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border, though at that time the political border was not yet defined. The generosity that Rhodes seemed to have offered was for political convenience for the BSAC. Having been allocated the land and having settled in the two mission stations, Mt. Selinda and Chikore missions, the ABCFM, now UCCZ, started their missionary work.

4.8.2. ABCFM Missionary Activities in Chipinge

Having been firmly established, the ABCFM embarked on several activities that are still evident in Chipinge district to date. Some of the activities are mentioned here because they are the precursors to what later happened to the Ndau traditional beliefs and practices.

4.8.2.1 Mission Education

Having realised how language prohibited their progress, the missionaries started training the locals in the work of the mission. They opened schools and hospitals at both Mt. Selinda and Chikore. To this day Mt. Selinda and Chikore missions are well known for having produced Zimbabwean leaders such as the late Zimbabwean Vice President Joseph Msika who studied at Chikore mission. For the missionaries, education in Zimbabwe was a legitimate way to 'civilise' the natives (Matikiti 2012) and was vital for the spreading of the gospel. There was a need for literacy, and this explained why schools were soon opened to train and prepare Africans, the Ndau in particular for the work of God. Effective evangelism was dependent on education of the African. It is for this reason that the ABCFM saw it fit to establish schools. Barely two months lapsed before the pioneering missionaries voted that a day school be established, and local kraals or villages were asked to send their children to school. The first converts sent their children to school and the first formal school was opened by the ABCFM in 1894. Nine boys were enrolled and were taught in Zulu. These schools were Emerald (1902), BeaconHill (1919) and Gwenzi (1919). Others were opened in the lowveld such as Makoho (1917), Chipinge (1917), Zamchiya (1919) and Mutema (1919). Education was made compulsory. Of note here is the curriculum at the schools. It was designed in such a way that it fulfilled the needs of the missionaries and had little to do with the development of the African child. According to Taringana and Nyambara (2018:55) this education "would make the African a useful resource in advancing the objectives of colonial establishment". They further argue that the colonial administration made sure that this education would not make Africans compete with the whites on the labour market.

With people who could read and write, evangelism had a fertile ground for the teaching of the gospel to the inhabitants. Most converts' sons who had been to these mission schools were sent for training in pastoral work and leadership roles of the local churches. Although the training included the training of people for local leadership, Matikiti (2012) opines that the leadership roles

were never extended to the trained African people. He argues that the missionaries generally did not encourage Africans to think for themselves. Any attempt to show an independent mind was taken to be an act of insubordination which was punishable by excommunication from the mission stations.

4.8.2.2 Evangelism

At the heart of missionary work was evangelism. The ploy to introduce education was not a genuine gesture on the part of the missionaries. They were missionaries whose mandate was to spread the gospel and education was a means to an end. Matikiti (2012) state that the missionaries longed for a time when the poor heathen shall learn to know their creator and God and Jesus as their saviour from sin. The blatant assumption missionaries made was that Africans had no religion and the concept of a God was too philosophical for them to comprehend. As such missionaries felt it was incumbent upon them to introduce their God to Africans. For the ABCFM the onus was on Africans to embrace this God, as one of their pioneering Rev. Dr. Thompson is recorded to have said:

> These people of Gazaland are densely ignorant and are all African pagans. They held to the traditions and superstitions handed down to them by their ancestors with that tenacity which is born of religious fervour for the worship of their own ancestors in their religion (Abbott 1981:6).

This is what made missionaries believe that they had a divine mandate to propagate the gospel to Africa. This thinking by Thompson seems to suggest a prejudicial template upon which christianity was inscribed. This scenario defines the antagonistic nature of christianity which finds expression in the thinking of missionaries like Thompson. The establishment of christianity in south-eastern Zimbabwe brought several changes to the lives of the Ndau people. Suffice to say that christianity among the Ndau has been viewed with ambivalence. On the one hand, its imprint is largely negative, on the other hand. it is credited for having brought 'civilisation' and 'development'. The next section is a trajectory survey of the encounter between the ABCFM and the Ndau people.

4.9 The effects of the ABCFM encounter with the Ndau IKS.

It must be noted that the missionaries' arrival in the early 1880s among the Ndau of Chipinge district was not the first arrival by strangers. The Ndau had faced invasions by the Gaza-Nguni and

the Portuguese. The contemporary Ndau may not have witnessed the invasions but from oral tradition they have heard what had transpired. The ABCFM's arrival in Ndauland was not without incident. The arrival was characterised by a number of events that did not only bring a new dispensation but transformed the lives of the Ndau people overnight. Maposa (2013) argues that the villagers were transformed as church tenants overnight. While the study acknowledges the existence of other churches such as the Roman Catholic, among the Ndau people, Ndauland has largely been patronised by the ABCFM. UCCZ is known in Zimbabwe as a church that is dominant among the Ndau and labelled as *chechi yemaNdau* [a church for the Ndau]; it has remained within the confines of the Ndau people over the past century. Though it has church buildings and circuits in non-Ndau territories, its members have largely remained Ndau. Wherever the Ndau people congregate, be it in towns, mines or farms across the country, they identify themselves by establishing UCCZ within their area. It is this close affinity that has named UCCZ a church for the Ndau people. It is under these premises that this part of the study analyses the effects of UCCZ, formerly ABCFM, on the whole spectrum of the Ndau people's lives with the intention to investigate how the Ndau indigenous knowledge systems such as *shupa* were impacted upon.

When the missionaries came to Ndauland, they disapproved of a number of Ndau traditional beliefs and practices, which the study collectively understands as the local people's indigenous knowledge systems. Taringana and Nyambara (2018:56) point out that "Christianity attacked the heart of Ndau life". It prohibited beliefs and practices such as polygamy, bridewealth and African religion "as primitive and pagan" (Taringana and Nyambara 2018:56). The beliefs and practices were said to hinder the Ndau from fully accepting Jesus as their personal saviour. For purposes of clarity some of the beliefs and practices that were vilified by the missionaries are discussed. These include among others, the institution of marriage, particularly its polygamy and bride-price [*roora/lobola* in local Shona and Ndebele languages] and traditional herbal medicine [*mitombo yechivantu*].

4.9.1. The Ndau Marriage Institution

Although the institution of marriage is not directly linked to the focus of this study its inclusion here is meant to demonstrate some of the indigenous knowledge the Ndau uphold as a people. Its inclusion also illustrates how the Ndau ways of knowing were impacted on by christianity and how they coped with the changing circumstances. This serves as the stepping stone to investigate how

IKS such as *shupa* were impacted on by christianisation. The annihilation of polygamous marriages by christianity, as illustrated below, meant that some of the indigenous knowledge that used to sustain the Ndau were lost even though it was useful in ensuring the wholeness of their community life.

For Annin and Adoma (2014:91), marriage is 'an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually intimate and sexual are acknowledged". Meekers (1993) understands the traditional Shona marriage (to which the Ndau are a part) as a contract between two families, rather than a personal arrangement between two individuals. Admittedly, marriage is an essential institution that the Ndau cherish to this day. Reasons for marriage among the Ndau is for procreation and community cohesion. Generations are perpetuated one from the other due to marriage. Without it, one Ndau interviewee said, *madzinza anofa* [clans become extinct]. This explains why the Ndau uphold marriage and its associated aspects of polygamy and bride-price, *roora/lobola.*

4.9.1.1 The belief and practice of polygamy

Muchabaiwa (2017) states that generally people understand polygamy as a simultaneous union of a husband to multiple spouses or a custom of having more than one wife at the same time. Similarly, Gelfand (1973) understands polygamy as a union of a man with two or more wives. For him, polygamy is the way of life for the Shona people. He further suggests that the reason for the Shona to have polygamous marriages as a practice exemplifies the survival imperative that calls for many children and a large family group. For the Shona, there is safety in numbers. The larger the family is in terms of numbers, the safer the family is. This notion found expression during the tribal and inter-tribal wars that used to plague Shona communities in primordial times.

Zvogbo (1996), through his interviews with practitioners of polygamy, states that polygamy played a social role among Shona communities. Polygamy could be because of a custom that requires a man to look after the widow and children of a deceased brother or to beget children in the name of a brother who died without children. This was a societal obligation for the brother to sire children with the deceased's wife. This did not only ensure the welfare of the widow but the clan's continuance through the children sired in the widow's inheritance. Mawere and Mawere (2010) concur when they argue that without children the family's genealogy and identity die off. Hence the need to practice polygamy where the deceased's widow is inherited by the deceased's young

brother. It was practised to ensure co-existence and harmony within communities and between in-laws.

It is also argued that polygamy was practised to solve gender imbalance among communities. The belief was that men were fewer than women. If the notion of one man, one woman was to be practised, then other women would remain unmarried. In African communities, it was an expectation, if not an obligation for one to get married. Anarfi (2006) argues that it was an obligation for all citizens within communities to get married. If one was of age and was not married, one would lose self-respect. In the same vein Mbiti argues thus:

> Marriage is looked upon as a sacred duty which every normal person must perform. Failure to do so means in effect, stopping the flow of life through the individual and hence the diminishing of mankind upon the earth… Therefore, anybody who, under normal condition, refuses to get married is committing a major offence in the eyes of the society and people will be against him. In all African societies, everything possible is done to prepare people for marriage and to make them think in terms of marriage (Mbiti 1975:98).

Similarly, Okyere-Manu (2015) concurs when she argues that because of the societal obligation for everyone to get married, parents negotiate the marriage union of their children particularly the girl child at a young age. She further states that refusing to get married is seen as unnatural. Grown-up girls who are not married are a disgrace to their families and clans. This places pressure on families and girls to enter into marriage. Hence the girls end up in polygamous marriages.

This centrality of marriage in African communities could account for the need to practise polygamy. Since all women aspired to be married and men were few, polygamy was not only a solution to the gender imbalance, but a humane gesture. Therefore, Bishop Hatendi, in an interview with Zvobgo (1996) asserts that a Shona polygamist is a humanist as he comes to the rescue of the widows and orphans left behind by the deceased. The issue of inheritance squabbles is rife these days, where unscrupulous brothers of the deceased marry widows to squander the wealth left by the deceased; this was not as frequent as nowadays. Brothers would marry the widows to provide welfare to the widow and her children. It meant being responsible for the welfare of the deceased' family. Polygamy was therefore a humane gesture from this perspective.

When the missionaries arrived, they attacked IKS in Zimbabwe. Sekuru Gwenzi[39] stated, *Pakauya vayungu dzimwe dzetsika nemagariro edu zvakaramba zveizwi ngezvehuhedheni".* [When missionaries came, some of our cultural practices were denigrated as heathen]. The missionaries based their arguments on the Bible that a man should only have one wife. What applied to other local communities in other parts of Zimbabwe applied *mutatis mutandis* to the Ndau community. The ABCFM missionaries emphasised monogamous marriages. Having seen how supportive the local Ndau people were towards this kind of marriage, the missionaries believed it was one such institution that made them make slow progress in converting the Ndau. They indoctrinated the local Ndau against polygamy [*barika*] to such an extent that eventually the belief and practice became eroded. It was labelled as heathenism and those who converted to Christianity were discouraged. Even today the *barika* form of marriage is not readily acceptable. Muchabaiwa (2017) argues that where it is still in practice it has assumed a new form, as the *small house[40]* phenomenon. This is where a man is in an unknown 'marriage'[41] with a mistress who is kept a secret from the first marriage. Children can be sired in this 'marriage' but again kept a secret from the main family. This can be understood as a form of a protest arrangement against the banishment of the traditional polygamous marriages by the Church.

Most of the trained Ndau UCCZ pastors began to criticise the belief and practice. Mundeta, one of the longest serving reverends of the ABCFM at the Chikore mission, is quoted by Zvobgo as having said that it was impossible to love two wives with one heart (Zvobgo 1996). According to the reverend, chances were high that a man would love one and hate the other wife. Such thinking found its way into the ABCFM constitution. *Ruwadzano[42]* constitution item 4.5 on membership clearly states: **A second wife in marriage cannot be bloused** (UCCZ Constitution 2008)**.** Bloused means that one has become an active member of *Ruwadzano* Council, having met the

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[39] Interview with Sekuru Gwenzi, Muumbe village, 28 April 2017.

[40] This is where a married man has a mistress with whom he has children under a normal family set-up, but this 'other' family remains a secret between the 'wife' and 'husband'. The man in the relationship look after the 'family' as he does the main one. This is polygamy but is kept a secret. This kind of polygamy is rife in Zimbabwe.

[38] Marriage in quotation marks here to indicate that it is not the normal marriage where all procedures are properly done. This marriage could be cohabitation without the payment bride wealth. In fact, the marriage is a secret between the man and woman and no other relatives may know.

[42] *Ruwadzano* is defined by UCCZ constitution as fellowship of women in the UCCZ. This is a women's council

qualifications. These include, among others, a fully paid up membership, that is determined by the National *Ruwadzano* Executive from time to time, having been approved by the local *Ruwadzano* church group and should be older that twenty-two years. Second wives in the church are not taken seriously as they are not only secluded from the main activities of the church but are barred from joining the women's wing of the church (*Ruwadzano* Council). This has become a thorny issue in the Church. As a member of the UCCZ, in 2002 the researcher witnessed a man who had married a second wife when he was already a member of the Church together with the first wife. When the second wife met all other requirements to join the *Ruwadzano* Council such as being an active member through actively participating and tithing in the church, she was not allowed to join the council. When a member has fulfilled all the requirements, she is conferred a member by being bloused [*kupfeka*] the *Ruwadzano* uniform at the council Annual General Meeting (AGM). The second wife was denied this on account that she was a second wife. The resident reverend at the circuit tried to have her join the council, but the move was met with resistance from members of the *Ruwadzano* Council. The reverend was unequivocally reminded of the need to adhere to the statutes of the church's constitution. This cited scenario means that the UCCZ does not condone polygamy that it is unbiblical. This does not only demonstrate the inhuman face of christianity as it entered Africa but rather its confrontational nature meant to uproot African beliefs and practices. The humanistic nature of polygamy was abandoned. It is, therefore, argued that although some Christian churches recognise polygamy as an acceptable form of marriage in traditional communities, most of them still are not able to accept polygamists as full members (Acquah 2011). Concomitant to polygamy is the concept of *roora/lobola* (bride wealth).

4.9.1.2 The practice of bride-price (*roora/lobola)*

In traditional African communities, what mattered most was not the type of marriage one found oneself in but whether one had fulfilled the marriage requirements. Konyana (2016) looks at the status of marriage in Zimbabwe. One of the marriage issues he identified is the unregistered customary marriage. This is a common marriage status in rural Zimbabwe. In order for this marriage to be officially recognised, the payment of a bride-price or pride wealth (*roora/lobola*) should be met. Once the bride wealth is paid by the man, he can stay with the wife. The bride wealth acts as an official marriage requirement which allows men to marry as many wives as they can as long as they can pay *roora* (bride wealth) and take care of the wives. One respondent, sekuru

Chitengwa stated "*Chinozwi kuroora kubvisa pfuma ramunoti roora. Pasina izvozvo apana kuroora kuhura"*. [Marrying is paying bride-price. Without doing that you are co-habiting].

Posset understands *roora/lobola* as:

> a contract that arises from a proposed marriage by which the future husband (or his family on his behalf) delivers or promises to deliver the father (which in all cases includes the guardian) of the future wife, stock or other property, in consideration of which the legal custody of the children born of the marriage is vested in their father (or his family) to the exclusion of any member of the mother's family (Posset 1926:51).

He further emphasises that this is not the purchase price of the woman. In African cosmology, a human being is important and no pricing like that of a commodity may be done. Because one has paid *roora/lobola* one is obliged to protect the woman and ensure her welfare.

Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) understand *roora/lobola* as the payment of bride wealth by the husband or his family to the family of the wife. Bourdillon (1998) confirms that there is some payment made when he argues that traditionally this payment could be in the form of cattle, but now it is paid in cash. Gelfand (1973) adds that the *roora* payment [*pfuma*] in former days amounted to a hoe [*badza*] which was kept as a symbol or proof of marriage. What was of major concern was that a token of appreciation to the in-laws was made. Therefore, anything such as hoes, cattle and in some instances, goats could also be used. The payment was not meant to 'buy' the wife but rather to solidify the relationship between husband and wife as well as the two families whose children are marrying each other. It gave and still gives the woman value. Since the woman is valuable, she cannot get into marriage without *lobola* (Gelfand 1973). In Zimbabwe, where there is no proper currency for transacting, *roora* is demanded in foreign currency.

When the missionaries arrived, they misconstrued this important aspect of marriage to mean 'buying' a wife. They translated *roora* into English and meant bride price or bride wealth. It is because of this translation that missionaries thought that *roora* meant buying a woman and hence one could do anything he wished to the woman. This amounted to abuse hence their criticism of *roora* as the perpetuation of women abuse. This misconception is eschewed by Chireshe and Chireshe (2010) who, in a study of Great Zimbabwe Students' perception on *roora*, determinedly continued to use *roora/lobola* instead of bride wealth or bride-price. Their reason for their

continued use of the word *roora/lobola* is that the translation into bride wealth seems to suggest the purchase of wives. This has resulted in *roora* becoming a hotly contested notion in Zimbabwe. Opinions are divided. Some people equate *roora* with buying a wife. The abuse of women which is rampant in Zimbabwean communities, is equated to the payment of *roora*. Once a man or his family pays *roora* the belief is that the woman has been bought and hence can be treated as property. This erroneous thinking has resulted in many people calling for the abolition of *roora*. Others argue that the abolition of *roora* devalues women. They argue that *roora* payment is not the mere purchase of a wife. It is, *inter alia,* a safeguard for the wife's good treatment by the husband and her family ensures that she is well treated.

To demonstrate that abolishing *roora* is not tenable, Chireshe and Chireshe's 2010 study of Great Zimbabwe students' perception of *roora* found that despite the accusation of *roora* as a perpetuator of women abuse and domestic violence in most Zimbabwean families, the payment of *roora* shows that a husband loves his wife, links families and that the man values his wife. It was generally agreed by Chireshe and Chireshe's respondents that *roora* should remain as it shows a man's acceptance of his wife and total commitment to her. Polygamy and *roora* have withstood the test of time. Missionaries' attempt to tamper with the marriage institution as demonstrated through their vilification of polygamy and *roora* shook these IKS to their very roots. This is the reason why marriage, as an institution in Africa and in Zimbabwe in particular, is treated with ambivalence. Some people no longer value it and decide not to marry while others still attach much importance to it. This ambivalence is due to missionary work in African countries. Another area that the missionaries criticised is the spirituality of the Ndau and their objects of worship.

4.9.1.3 Ndau 'Worship'

Although the Ndau people knew and still know that there is a Supreme Being whom Christians refer to as God, they occasionally refer to this being in their religious realm. Of immediate concern to them is their *vadzimu* (ancestors). Pfukwa (2001) makes this clear when he argues that the core of the Ndau traditional beliefs and cultural practices is their belief in ancestors or guardian spirits. A sense of the Supreme Being whom they call *Marure* (the Omnipotent), *Nyadenga* (the Heavens) and *Musikavanhu* (the Human Creator) is tacit in the minds of the Ndau people (Marashe and Maposa 2010). There is a heated debate as to whether the Shona people of Zimbabwe (of whom

the Ndau are a part) have a concept of a God in their cosmology. However, this debate is beyond the scope of this study. Sekuru Chitengwa[43] maintains that "*Isusu tinonamata Mwari asi tinoenda kwaari kubukidza ngevadzimu vedu*". ([We pray to God but through our ancestors]. What is of significance here as Konyana (2016) also noted, is that an understanding of *Mwari,* as a Shona name denoting God, has a bearing on the understanding of life among the Ndau. While Konyana opines that the Ndau believe that God (*Mwari*) and the ancestors (*vadzimu*) come together and look after the family, the emphasis for the Ndau is on ancestors. The reason being that the Ndau believe in a hierarchical nature of the spiritual world. The Ndau respect hierarchy among themselves where seniority is revered and celebrated. For example, when there is a family issue to be discussed it takes what the Ndau call *murandu* [protocol] where the issue is procedurally dealt with from the junior members of the family until it reaches the most senior member-even if they are all close to each other. Similarly, the Ndau believe the first entry point for the spirit world is through the ancestors. For this reason, the ancestors occupy a very important position as intermediators between the living, the 'living dead' (Mbiti 1969) and even the unborn. The Ndau believe that the living dead continue to guide and protect the dead. This belief is deeply rooted, so much so that the Ndau's life is filled with a litany of rituals meant to please and appease the ancestors. For example, among the Ndau there are rain-petitioning rituals, birth, death, naming and marriage rites. The rituals are events where food and drink are offered to the departed. For the Ndau people, *doro* [beer] and *sadza* (erroneously translated as thick porridge) are given to the departed. The food is given at events such as *kusemendera guwa* [cementing a deceased's grave] (Muyambo and Maposa 2014) and *kudira mudzimu* [appeasing the ancestors] (Konyana 2016).

It is, perhaps, because of this Ndau spirituality that when missionaries came to Gazaland, they accused the Ndau of 'worshipping' ancestors. They were accused of having no sense of a God hence the quest by the missionaries to implement not only a 'civilising' mission but also an evangelising mission. They mistook Ndau honouring of their ancestors as worshipping them. Mbiti vehemently refutes this thinking when he argues that Africans do not worship ancestors but venerate them as an expression of honour. He argues thus:

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[43] Interview with Sekuru Chitengwa, Musani village, 9 May 2017.

Certainly, it cannot be denied that the departed occupy an important place in African religiosity, but it is wrong to interpret traditional religions simply in terms of 'worshipping the ancestors' … the departed, whether parents, brothers, sisters or children, form part of the family, and must therefore be kept in touch with their surviving relatives. Libation and the giving of food to the departed are tokens of fellowship, hospitality and respect, the drink and food so given are symbols of family continuity and contact… (Mbiti 1969:9)

The foregoing is evident that the Africans, the Ndau in particular, are fully aware that they are not worshipping their ancestors. It is therefore blasphemous (Mbiti 1969) to describe these family relationships with their departed ones as worship. Equally blasphemous on the part of missionaries were their criticism of religious artefacts such as the Ndau *dumwa*[44] which was meant to ward off witches and bad omens. These were viewed as works of the devil. The same missionaries had their religious icons such as the rosary as well as the ring worn by nuns in the Roman Catholic church. More telling in Zimbabwe now are the use of wrist bands, towels and anointing oil (kept in bottles) by Pentecostal movements such as Magaya's Prophetic, Healing and Deliverance (PHD) Ministries. They are meant to protect congregants from evil. All this point to the hypocrisy that characterised the missionaries' denigration and demonisation of African beliefs and practices.

4.9.1.4 Traditional medicine and christianity

The African traditional medicine also did not escape the ire of missionaries. Having realised that Africans in general valued their health and wellbeing, the missionaries made an unprecedented attack on traditional medicine in a bid to sway them to western medicine. The intention was that once the Africans patronise western medicine just like they would patronise western education, it would be easy to convert them to christianity. Western education and medicine were presented as more favourable and whoever tested it would abandon African ways of education and health.

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[44] *Dumwa* is a Ndau religious icon made out of cloth. Medicine may be wrapped in that sewn cloth and then wrapped and individual's waist or arm near the shoulder or anywhere where it is covered by clothes. This religious icon is meant to protect the individual from witches or any evil spirit that may attack the individual. It could have been dedicated to the ancestors as a protective icon that wards off anything that might attack the individual.

To clearly understand the interface between christianity and Zimbabwean traditional beliefs and practices such as the practice of traditional medicine, Joshua Nkomo's insightful observation is worth quoting here. He argues thus:

> In their zeal to proselytize the Africans, the missionaries pooh-poohed traditional religion because they believed that the imperative of the Christian mission did not permit peaceful coexistence with a non-Christian culture and social organism (Nkomo 1991:1).

This was meant to inferiorise the African beliefs and practices. Once they have been inferiorised in the face of the superiorised christian beliefs and practices, the African was easy to proselytise.

Matikiti (2012) concurs when he argues that African cultural values and religious beliefs were seen as stumbling blocks to the establishment of christian civilisation. He further asserts that anything African was regarded as pagan and demonic. Christianity was founded on false premises in Gazaland, that the African had nothing to offer. It is against this backdrop, that traditional medicine, (under which *shupa* resorts) among the Ndau and other African people elsewhere, was denigrated as western medicine took centre stage in mission hospitals at Mt. Selinda and Chikore.

The World Health Organisation (WHO 2004) defines traditional medicine as the overall knowledge skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health, as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness. This understanding of traditional medicine by the WHO is useful in the recognition of traditional medicine as essential in maintaining good health and wellbeing which is contrary to the UCCZ missionaries' views when they settled among the Ndau people. Traditional medicine is the sum total of all knowledge and practices, whether explicable or not, used in the diagnosis, prevention, and elimination of physical, mental, or social imbalance and relying exclusively on the practical experience and observation handed down from generation to generation, whether verbally or in writing (Makinde 1988).

Chavunduka (1994) points out that before Zimbabwe became a colony of Britain, traditional healers enjoyed tremendous prestige in their society. They were specialists in their own right and ensured the traditional societies' wellbeing. He further argues that colonial governments and early christian missionaries attempted for many years to discourage the use of African traditional

medicine. They attempted to suppress the traditional medicine system for a number of reasons, chief among them being that colonial government officials and European missionaries did not know that traditional medicines were effective in curing many illness (Chavunduka 1994). For them the traditional healer was a rogue and a deceiver who prevented many patients, who would otherwise be treated effectively with modern western drugs and surgery, from reaching government and mission hospitals (Chavunduka 1994). To make the situation worse the practice of traditional medicine was erroneously linked to the practice of witchcraft, regarded as one of the greatest hindrances in the way of Christian missionary work.

In line with the above, Sekuru Chitengwa[45], one of the study's respondents had this to say:

> *Pakauya vayungu paChirinda neChikore vakashoora tsika nemagariro edu dzakawanda. Mitombo yedu yechiantu yairapa maningi yakazwi ngairashwe ngekuti uhedheni. Izvi zvakaita tikarashikirwe ngezvezhinji kusanganisira shupa kubeni yaidetsera yaamho.* [When missionaries arrived at Mt. Selinda and Chikore missions they despised many traditional beliefs and practices. Traditional medicine which used to be the panacea for many illnesses was rubbished as evil and devilish. This resulted in many traditional medicines losing their efficacy. *Shupa* was not spared in this regard yet it served many purposes as I have alluded to earlier on].

Despite the respondent's Christian background from Chikore mission, he was still nostalgic about traditional medicine's efficacious nature. To him Christianity did not only disenfranchise traditional medicine but the practitioners as well. This demonstrates how bigoted Christianity was towards African value systems, beliefs and practices.

In a bid to ensure that traditional medicine was done away with, the missionaries introduced mission hospitals. Wherever there was a Christian mission station, there was a Christian school and hospital. While Maposa (2013) and Matikiti (2012) largely believe that the UCCZ brought some positives such as development in agricultural activities and education respectively, they seem to downplay the religio-cultural effects of the UCCZ on traditional medicine. The establishment of Mt. Selinda and Chikore mission hospitals was necessitated, first and foremost, not by the need to develop Ndauland/ Gazaland but rather to prevent the Ndau people from patronising traditional

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[45] Interview with Sekuru Chitengwa, Musani village, 9 May 2017.

medicine and the traditional healer. The missionaries thought that as long as the converts were still in contact with the traditional healers, they were likely to consult them whenever they fell ill. To sever that link, missionaries did not only denigrate the traditional healer as a 'rouge' and 'deceiver' (Chavunduka 1994:9) but diverted the converts from their roots by keeping them at the mission stations. This had the net effect of making the traditional healer with his/her medicines irrelevant. His/her place was taken by the mission hospital doctor and his western medicine. Anyone caught either leaving the mission station, having become a convert, for the villages outside the mission was heavily punished. The punishment, according to Maposa (2013), was in the form of eviction from the mission farm, where they had been 'rewarded' by being given *biletha*, known as African Purchase Areas (APAs). Once evicted, the evictees began to live the lives of outlaws in the traditional land of their ancestors (Maposa 2013). This is tantamount to social alienation that shook the social fabric of Ndau society to its foundations.

Medical missions, like Mt. Selinda and Chikore in Gazaland, were purported to be championing and fulfilling the healing mission of Jesus. Additionally, Zvobgo (1996) is of the view that these medical missions were an invaluable evangelistic agency. To emphasise Zvobgo's observation a quote from a Wesleyan medical missionary, Dr. L.G. Parsons suffices. He stated

> Medical missions constituted an excellent object lesson in Christianity. If by skillful treatment a sick native is relieved of pain or cured of his disease, he must wonder why it has been done, and is far more prepared to receive and respond to the Gospel message than if this is presented to him with his pain unrelieved (Zvobgo 1996:106).

This medical missionary, like other medical missionaries in Africa, made serious assumptions that it was only western medicine that could take away an African's pain. Little did he know that Africans had and still have their efficacious traditional medicine which are natural and have no other side effects like we are often made aware of side effects of western medicine. To echo Parsons, Revd H. Oswald Brigg of the Tengwani circuit in Matabeleland is quoted to have said in 1909:

> This work is not only necessary for the sake of those who have no one but the missionary to help them, but it is necessary for this reason also-that until we can change the native's idea of medicine, we can never make him a real Christian. Half his heathenism is summed up in that one word

'medicine'. So every case we cure and every pain stayed without magic, means not only relief to the sufferer, but the most powerful sermon against witchcraft and superstition[46].

The above submission is a clear case of disenfranchisement of the African from his/ her own way of survival. It is a demonstration that medical missions were set up as evangelising agencies. They were set up to counteract the African way of healing. Medical missions were set up to entrap Africans to wantonly abandon their IKS on traditional medicine.

Admittedly, medical missions played a pivotal role in the Ndau people's health and wellbeing. But simply admitting without pointing out that the medical missions were appendages of colonisation and Christianisation of African communities is not only unacceptable but a too simplistic understanding of the dynamics thereof. The medical missions refused to accept traditional medicine. Little did they know that traditional medicine was used because of its proven therapeutic properties (Abbott and Mundeta 1995). For the African, illness has a spiritual aspect that cannot be addressed by western medicine. Having realised this reality, Michael Gelfand (1964), a medical doctor who worked among the Shona in Zimbabwe, took it upon himself to understand his patients for effective healing. He discovered that the Shona believe very strongly in the efficacy of their medical culture, in its wisdom and virtue and in the countless medical secrets which have been handed down from one generation to another through the family *nganga* spirits. In African cosmology illness or ailment has a spiritual cause which must be diagnosed. The traditional healer both diagnosed and administered curative measures for the patient. This is a heritage that medical missions routed as they attempted to make converts sever ties with the tradition and beliefs of their people (Opoku 1978). Contrary to the missionaries' wish to exterminate Ndau IKS as traditional medicine, they remained resilient and useful to the contemporary Ndau. The resilience and tenacity, despite the denial western knowledge, is still sustaining Africans in 21st century Africa.

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[46] Wesleyan Method. Mission. Soc. Arch., Synod minutes, South Africa, 1906-1911, Rhodesia District Synod Minutes, 1910, H. Oswald Brigg, Tengwani Circuit Report, 1909.

4.10 Perceptions on the tenacity of Ndau beliefs and practices

Having noted the annihilation of Ndau beliefs and practices by Christianity, as a handmaiden for colonialism, I had to find out from the respondents the reasons behind the tenacity of their beliefs and practices. Sekuru Gwenzi[47] clearly stated that:

> *Chaita kuti chiantu chedu chidai chiriyo nanyamushi kudari indaa yekuti isusu atina kukambira chiyungu ngesimba. Iya takaashira zvechiyungu asi atina kurashwa zvedu. Toita panodiwa zvechiyungu toita, podiwa zvechiantu toita teihlanganisa kudaro.* [What has made our beliefs and practices resilient and sustain up to today is that the Ndau did not wholesale embraced western culture. We accepted it and applied it where and when necessary, but we clung to our own. We juggled the two cultures].

Sekuru Chitengwa[48] concurs when he congratulated the Ndau people for embracing western culture with caution. He stated that the Ndau people were astute in that they sent their children to mission schools and hospitals but never forgot their culture. He said, "*VaNdau havana kumbosiya tsika dzavo. Vaita zvechiyungu asi vaa vega voita chibarirwe*". [The Ndau people never abandoned their culture. They would practice western culture but when on their own, they continued with their beliefs and practices]. Sekuru Gwenzi further confirmed that the western culture had positives that they selected from such as the ability to read and write, attaining western knowledge on farming as well as getting salaried positions. Maposa (2013) echoes the same sentiments when he argues that the Ndau, especially women, benefitted from western agriculture knowledge.

From the above submissions, it can be argued that the Ndau people had to use their ingenuity to survive the onslaught from Christianity and its other forces. Just like they did during the Gaza-Nguni invasion, they complied but not negating their ways of life. They managed to integrate the two systems for survival. The western and Ndau cultures co-existed and this explains why the Ndau up to the 21st century Zimbabwe are still holding to their culture. Konyana (2016) admits this reality when he argues that the Ndau have remained traditional in the face of adversaries and derive pride in their culturedness. This adaptability and receptiveness have earned the Ndau people an indelible uniqueness that has even included politics. They have remained religio-culturally

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[47] Interview with Sekuru Gwenzi, Muumbe village, 28 April 2017.
[48] Interview with Sekuru Chitengwa, Musani village, 9 May 2017.

united as a people and politically they have always been steadfast on a party they formed with the late Ndabaningi Sithole, Zimbabwe African National Union, Ndonga (ZANU-Ndonga). All these years they have engaged with opposition politics.

4.11 Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter was to explore the encounter between Christianity and African indigenous knowledge, particularly the IKS of the Ndau people of Manicaland. The first section of the chapter traced the history of the Ndau people, their origins, contemporary setting, and their worldview. This was done to understand who the Ndau are before studying their IKS, particularly their *bota reshupa* as a resource. The second section of the chapter also traced the history of Christianity in Zimbabwe from the 1890s when missionaries came to Zimbabwe. Christianity first made inroads into Matabeleland where the first mission stations were established at Inyati and Mpandeni missions. The chapter noted that for a period of twenty years in Matabeleland, the missionaries' efforts were thwarted as they could only have twelve converts. Success was limited due to several factors which include, among others, the local people's tenacity on clinging to their religion.

The chapter also traced the missionaries' work in Mashonaland where a number of missions were established in Harare, Masvingo and Mutare. Different missionaries occupied different regions with the Roman Catholic occupying all regions on one condition that they could settle fifteen kilometres away from another mission by another church. Occupation and establishment of mission stations were necessitated by the BSAC who gave large tracts of land to missionaries to establish missions.

It was also made clear in this chapter that the ABCFM was the church that occupied the research site, that is Chipinge district. The ABCFM established missions at Mt. Selinda and Chikore missions. Notwithstanding the challenges missionaries faced in the district such as resistance from local chiefs, they finally settled at the said missions where they introduced mission schools and medical missions. The chapter argued that the establishment of the mission schools and medical missions enabled evangelism, which was at the heart of missionaries. Having made inroads into the lives of the Ndau people, the missionaries criticised Ndau traditional beliefs and practices such

as polygamy. Polygamy was dismissed as unchristian and hence was evil. The chapter also discussed how *roora/lobola* was questioned. To the missionaries, it implied 'buying' a wife.

In addition to the polygamy and *roora/lobola* as the Ndau's IKS, the chapter examined how the Ndau's spirituality was collectively dismissed as 'ancestor worship'. It was made clear in the chapter that this missionary misconception of the Ndau religiosity in particular and African religiosity in general was not only blasphemous but an illustration that missionaries had no regard of the people they intended to 'civilise'. They treated them as irreligious people and their mission was to teach them about a God they did not know before their coming.

The chapter further provided insight into how traditional medicine was demonised by the introduction of medical missions. Traditional medicine was treated as evil and the traditional healer was preventing the Ndau people from fully embracing the gospel. The Ndau indigenous knowledge on how to deal with illnesses was denigrated as the hospital took the centre stage in all matters of health and wellbeing of the Ndau people.

The chapter also argued that despite the unprecedented attempt to diminish the Ndau IKS, some of their practises stood the test of time. They have been in use from time immemorial to date. Traditional medicine, endured. Theories of negotiation and integration have made Ndau beliefs and practices survive to the present day. The next chapter presents the research findings and the analysis of data.

Chapter Five

Presentation of Research Findings and the Analysis of Data

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the effects of the christianisation of the Ndau people and their Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). Despite the denigration of the Ndau people's beliefs and practices by the ABCFM missionaries, some of the beliefs and practices are still sustaining its people to date. The Ndau cosmology was shaken to its very roots where polygamy, as an example of the Ndau's IKS, was eliminated. The chapter looked at how the ABCFM had a lasting effect on the Ndau people. Ndau beliefs, values, practices and norms were pushed to the periphery as christianity took the centre stage. While this was happening, the Ndau traditional health system was replaced by the introduction of hospitals at Mt. Selinda and Chikore missions. As a result of this, the traditional way of addressing health matters among the Ndau was also relegated to the periphery.

The chapter also illustrated that despite the attempts to biliterate the Ndau belief system, some beliefs and practices remained resilient. This resilience and tenacity are explained by Bhabha's (1994) notion of hybridity as is explained in the sections below. Part of the study's objective is to establish how and why such beliefs such as *shupa* are still being sustained against a background of christianity represented in this study by the ABCFM

The current chapter is on the presentation of research findings and analysis of data. In this chapter the thematic analysis is used to extract themes from the interview data (Ouma 2013). Its primary goal is presenting a combination and analysis of data simultaneously using the theoretical frameworks as discussed in Chapter Three. The juxtaposition of the presentation of data and its analyses is premised on what Marashe (2018) understands as the need to avoid repetition and monotony by reporting on the study findings in one chapter and analysing similar data in another. The chapter addresses the study objectives 1 and 2 which are firstly, to explore the Ndau understanding of *bota reshupa* and secondly, to investigate its efficacy. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is on the demographics of the research respondents. The second section is on the nature of *bota reshupa.* This section is a response to the question: What is

bota reshupa? It is a narrative of the findings from the respondents of the study on the nature of *bota reshupa*. The section explains the *what* questions of *bota reshupa*. This includes the Ndau understanding about *shupa,* its nature, ingredients, preparation, administration and preservation. The third section addresses the *how* and *why* questions with the intention to determine the efficacy of *shupa.*

5.2 Section 1: Demographic information on the respondents

5.2.1 Sample Composition

A total of thirty-four respondents were selected from three chieftaincies of the Chipinge district to facilitate qualitative data collection on the efficacy of *shupa* as a health asset in meeting the primary health care needs for the Ndau. Of the thirty-four ten respondents were professionals who are of Ndau origin but located in different areas of Zimbabwe. The sample population comprised more females than males. This was necessitated by the realisation that Ndau females dominate in matters of primary health care as they prepare, administer and safeguard *shupa.* Males are only mostly the partakers of *shupa.* This gives Ndau females not only the comparative advantage in being more knowledgeable about *shupa* but also as authentic practitioners and holders of IKS in their own rights contrary to the women's inferiorisation in IKS (Mukoni 2015), a theme dealt with later on in the chapter. This rationale explains why the study sample had more females than males as respondents. The inclusion of ten professionals such as university lecturers, a minister of religion, a social worker as well as teachers, was intended to investigate whether their exposure to and personal experiences of the external world of the Ndau community influenced their perceptions and attitude towards *shupa.* Informed by Bhabha's (1994) postcolonial theory of hybridity the inclusion of professionals' views assisted this study in determining the status of IKS (Chapter Six), particularly *bota reshupa,* in the contemporary Zimbabwean society.

Twenty-six individual interviews were conducted targeting practitioners and or partakers of *shupa* in two of the three chieftaincies. These included the ten professionals as stated earlier. One focused group discussion of eight members was conducted in the Garahwa chieftaincy.

5.2.2 Age of the respondents

The respondents were all of Ndau origin. The majority resided within the research sites, save for some of the ten professionals who were not residing within the research sites at the time of the study but were of Ndau origin. All the respondents were adults in their late-40s and above. The majority were in the mid-70s and were ordinary men and women of the communities with no or little formal education except for the ten professionals. Vilakazi's (1999) view that after colonisation, African knowledge remained in the rural areas with ordinary, uncertificated men and women informs this. This is the reason why non-certificated men and women were incorporated as respondents in the data collection. It was also reasonable to have adults in the study because, as Rankoana (2012) argues, the indigenous knowledge systems, beliefs and practices in a community are understood and more valued by adults who are custodians of cultural values.

5.2.3 Respondents' education

Zimbabwe's literacy percentage stands at 97% (ZimStat 2012). The remaining three percent of illiteracy is largely in the rural areas such as Chipinge and other outlying districts. Given the nature of the study focus, which is on *bota reshupa* as a health care asset, the majority of the twenty-four respondents were illiterate to semi-literate[49], save for the literate ten professionals. This is explained by scholars like Vilakazi (1999), Konyana (2016), Okyere-Manu and Konyana (2018), who are of the view that traditional beliefs, cultural practices and values are still upheld and fully practised by ordinary men and women who have either not been to school or have been to school, but their worldview is still largely shaped by their local traditional beliefs and cultural practices. Of the twenty-four respondents in the chieftaincies, five (20.8%) respondents were semi-literate, and the rest were illiterate. The ten professionals were all men. Of the ten, two held PhDs, four held Master's degrees, two were 'A' level graduates and two were 'O' level graduates. Thus, the

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[49] The reference to illiteracy and semi-literacy in the study is not meant to demean IKS but to emphasise that the often-dismissed people as uneducated (illiterate and semi-literate people) possess critical and sustainable knowledge. It is meant to reinforce Vilakazi's (1999) views that for one to do real and meaningful research especially on a people's culture, which encompass IKS, one must look for uncertificated men and women in the rural areas where the people's values, norms and practices still resemble the people's traditions. The point made here is that knowledge remains knowledge regardless of who the producer is. Even those without formal training possess valuable knowledge hence the need to have uncertificated men and women as research participants.

ten professionals constitute the elite class in an ordinary society in Africa. The perceptions on *bota reshupa* held by this group of professionals were used to investigate whether the changing dynamics represented by educated has had an effect on Ndau IKS, particularly on *bota reshupa.*

5.2.4 Respondents' Occupation

Twenty-four respondents were farmers. Three of the sixteen respondents in Mutema and Musikavanhu chieftaincies were female traditional healers who depended on their healing practices for a living. The ten professionals comprised five university lecturers, one minister of religion, one social worker and three teachers. This composition of respondents covers a sizeable number of respondents that were rich sites of information for this study. Their views therefore become essential in establishing the place and status of IKS, particularly *shupa* as believed and practised by the Ndau.

5.2.5 Respondents' marital Status

All the study respondents were either married or widowed. The sample consisted of three widows who were in their late 70s. Most of the respondents were grandmothers and grandfathers except for the ten professionals who were all fathers. Marital statuses and the age of the respondents are helpful in this study in that the respondents have acquired experiential knowledge obtained through trial and error (Khupe 2014). This experience which accumulated over time becomes the people's IKS (Khupe 2014). It is this form of knowledge, such as *shupa,* that the study seeks to investigate to discover its efficacy (or lack thereof) among the Ndau. The sampled respondents' married statuses were therefore relevant to the study. This enabled the data gathered from people who have experienced administering *shupa* to a child and how ailments are dealt with in the family.

To protect the respondents' confidentiality and privacy a coding system was used as illustrated in the table below. Where the respondents' consent to use their names was sought and granted, the real names of the respondents are given. Where anonymity was desired, pseudonyms or coding were used.

Table 1: Case Studies for interviewees

Research site	Code

Mutema	MS 1-8
Musikavanhu	MS 9-16
Garahwa	MS 17-24
Professionals	MS 25-34.

5.3 Section 2: Ndau Perceptions of S*hupa*

This section addresses the question: What is *bota reshupa?* It is a description of the nature of *shupa* as given by the respondents in the three chieftaincies as well as from the professional interviewees. This is done to understand the practice from the respondents' perspectives as informed by the phenomenological approach discussed in Chapter Three. As I gathered this data, I had at the back of my mind the limitations of the human factor in interviews as earlier on alluded.

5.3.1. The Nature of *Bota reshupa*

As explained in Chapter Three, much of the data for this study were collected in *ChiNdau*, the mother tongue of the respondents. The elders communicated in *ChiNdau* in interviews and group discussion carried out in the chieftaincies. The professional respondents had the choice of responding in either *ChiNdau* or English. To avoid misrepresenting the respondents, the data in this section of the chapter is presented in the language used by the respondents (either *ChiNdau* or English). *ChiNdau* quotes are in italics, followed by an English translation of the respondents' words for clarity. Where respondents chose not to be anonymous and treating them as anonymous is not ethically appropriate, because in the context of this study, the respondents are knowledge co-creators (Khupe 2014). Direct quotes are included on the basis of their richness and representativeness of the respondents' views as argued by Messias et al (2008).

What constitutes *bota reshupa,* according to respondents MS 5, MS10, MS23, MS32, MS34 is a porridge that is prepared using a mixture of herbs, rapoko millet and water. The mixture is stored in a calabash. The calabash, according to the respondents, can be made of either clay, *chidhuwa* (clay pot)*,* or *danga* (gourd). The respondents indicated that when the calabash has been prepared and thoroughly cleaned, traditional herbs are cut into small pieces and placed in it. Water and some

millet or maize meal mealie is also added. The mixture is left overnight to brew. When it has fermented the watery mixture is drawn into a pot and put on the fire to prepare the porridge. This porridge is referred to as *bota reshupa*. Muyambo (2015:65) concurs by stating that *shupa* is "porridge prepared using a mixture of traditional herbs soaked in water." One respondent MS4 from Musani village put it thus:

> *Kare shupa yaibarwa ngemutanga. Yapera kunasirwa, yaiiswa mvura popenywa mitombo yakasiyana-siyana yoiswa mushupa muya. Mitombo iya yaisanganiswa nemvura yemushupa pamwe neuswa hwemungoza kana kuti mafunde. Zvaisiiwa kwenguwa yakati kuti zvimboita nguwa yekusangana imwomwo. Kana zvaakuti zhazhirei, paimiminwa mvura iya kubva mudumbu yobikiswa bota. Iri ndiro bota reshupa. Ndizvo zvatakakura teiona anamai edu naanambuya veiita. Taipuwa bota riya torya. Rainaka seraiswa chokera.* [When the calabash from a gourd plant was ready, traditional herbs of different kinds were put in the calabash. Water and millet mealie-meal was added and left to brew for some time, especially overnight. The next morning, the mixture which would have turned a bit sour, was used to prepare porridge. This is what we grew up seeing our mothers and grandmothers doing. They gave us this porridge to eat. It was very sweet as if sugar had been added].

The respondents MS 4, MS8, MS11 and MS 14 agreed that the term *shupa* is derived from a gourd prepared from a *mutanga* plant. The respondents indicated that when the gourd is transformed into a container, the container [*dumbu*] is referred to as *shupa. Shupa* is the container wherein a mixture of water, traditional herbs and *hlama* [boiled watery meal mealie] is kept. Once the soaked herbs in the *shupa* are ready for use the solution can either be used to prepare herbal porridge, which they refer to as *bota reshupa* or can be taken directly as a beverage MS14, MS22, MS28. It was also found that *shupa*, the container, is also known by the term *dende*. One respondent stated that *dende* is synonymous with *shupa*. She stated that *dende* (singular) and *matende* (plural) was made from *mutanga*. She said *dende* was made from *matanga* harvested in the people's fields. To illustrate how the different communities, differ on terminology when referring to the same thing, the different terms used in the different settings for *shupa* are presented in the table below.

Table 2: Other terms for *shupa* as stated by the respondents

Term	Communities studied		
	Mutema	**Musikavanhu**	**Garahwa**
Dumbu	✓	✓	✓
Dende	✓		
Chidhuwa	✓	✓	✓

5.3.2 *Shupa* and its ingredients

The participants in the interviews and the FGD indicated that the most important ingredient of *shupa* was traditional herbs from tree roots, bark and leaves. While the herbs were similar in some communities, they differed in others. Chavunduka (1998) confirms that most traditional herbs are obtained from either tree bark, roots or leaves. Other scholars who hold this view include Shoko (2007), Raphael (2011) and Chinsembu (2015). For these scholars, most indigenous trees in African communities are an agency for primary health care needs for the communities, owing to the vast use of the trees' roots, bark and leaves. Okello, Nyunja, Netondo and Onyango (2010) confirm this when they state that the Sabaots in the Kopsiro division of Mt. Elgon district in Kenya use medicinal plants to treat colds by chewing *Tagetes minuta* plant leaves that belong to the Asteraceae family; malaria is treated by boiling and drinking *Artemisia afra* leaves and ulcers are treated by boiling and drinking the root of *Heteromorpha*.   The participants, especially from the FGD, further illustrated that small grain crops such as millet, rapoko, sorghum as well as maize were also ingredients for *shupa*. The use of small grain crops as well as maize differed from community to community. The variations were due to the climatic region in which the research site fell. For example, in the dry areas, small grain crops such as rapoko, sorghum and millet were mentioned as the mealie meal used in the mixture for *bota reshupa.* These areas include Mutema and the western parts of Musikavanhu. The areas receive very low rainfall and drought resistant small grain crops such as rapoko, sorghum and millet are grown instead of maize. The highland areas of Musikavanhu and parts of Garahwa receive average to above average rainfall. For this

reason, maize is their main crop. Maize meal was often cited as an additive in *bota reshupa.* Table 3 below illustrates the crop used in each research site.

Table 3: Crops used in preparation of *shupa* as stated by the respondents

Crop	Communities studied		
	Mutema	**Musikavanhu**	**Garahwa**
Maize		✓	✓
Rapoko	✓	✓	✓
Sorghum	✓	✓	
Millet	✓	✓	

Similarly, the names of the herbs used in the porridge varied from community to community. The names have been captured as supplied by the respondents as no botanical names were available. The herbs have not been taken to a laboratory to establish their scientific names. For that reason, the names were recorded as stated by the respondents. Table 4 indicates the names of the herbs mixed in the herbal porridge

Table 4: Names of herbs used in the communities as stated by respondents.

Herb	Communities studied		
	Mutema	**Musikavanhu**	**Garahwa**
Mungurahwe		✓	✓
Rupupu		✓	✓
Chidamhuru		✓	✓
Chinyamukaka	✓	✓	✓
Mushanguru		✓	
Munyabota		✓	
Rugwihi			✓
Chithamburu		✓	

The herbs are known by different names but in some cases serve the same purpose. For example, where *mungurahwe* was used to sweeten and flavour the porridge because no sugar was added to the porridge in Manzvire village, Musikavanhu and Garahwa, in Chikore village, *chidamhuru* was used for the same purpose. The two different herbs served the same purpose in different settings. This information does not only show how localised IKS are but also that they are varied (Odora Hoppers 2002).

5.3.3 Preparation of *shupa*

The preparation of *shupa* was almost uniform in all the research sites. Both the interviews and focused group discussion indicated that the procedures of preparing *shupa* were similar with minor variations from one village to another. The variations were largely the names of the herbs used as well as the containers used to store the contents.

The interviews with the elders and the professionals indicated that *shupa* was prepared with care. Once a baby was born, he/ she had to have his/her *shupa* prepared when he/she was due for supplementary feeding, usually after four to six months of breastfeeding. What would happen is that each baby had his/her own *shupa* prepared after birth. It was meant for the baby but could be shared with grown up siblings and even elders in the family like the grandmothers. One elderly woman MS5 stated:

> *Zvaiti kana mwana achinga abarwa zviya, mai vemwana kana kuti mbuya vake, mai vababa (mazvarira), vaigadzira shupa yemwanawo. Vaitora dumbu kana chidhuwa vosuka zvochena kuti mbembee. Vaitora mitombo yakasiyana-siyana semunguruhwe, rupupu, chinharara, murudza neimweniwo yakadaro votemera-temera kuti zvikwane mudumbu kana chidhuwa chine muromo mudoodori. Vaisa mitombo iya vaiisawo mvura ine mwero. Vaizotora zvimungoza kana mafunde vozvikuya paguyo. Vaizotora tsero voti kipi-kipi kupepeta zviuswa zviya. Vadaro vaizotsera zviuswa zviya ngemucheka wejira wakachena. Zviuswa zviya zvaitetepa kwemene. Zvadaro, vaikandira zviuswa zviya mushupa muya mune mitombo yaiswemwo. Zvaivharirwamo kweusiku umwe. Rechimangwani vaitora dumbu riya vochukucha, vomiminira mvura yacho muchikari vobika bota rozopuwa mwana. Kana mitombo iya yapera simba, vairasha vogadzira zvimwe kudakara mwana akure eirya bota reshupa.* [When a baby was born, its mother or grandmother prepared *shupa*. The calabash was cleaned. Various herbs from tree bark, leaves and roots were cut into sizeable portions and put into the container. Water was added. Sieved mealie meal from either millet or rapoko was added to the mixture. This was then left for a night. The next day, the solution was used to prepare porridge which was given to the baby. When the herbs lost their medicinal strength, they were thrown away and another *shupa* was prepared. This continued until the baby stops taking *shupa*[50].

5.3.4 Administration of *Shupa*

The administration of *shupa* also varied from one village to the next or from one family to another. The administration of *shupa* depended on who was given the herbal porridge. For example, the respondents stated that if the porridge was given to the baby its mother or paternal grandmother would administer it. If the porridge was ready for consumption, it was dished out not in a metal plate, but wooden plates [*ndiro yemuti*] are used when serving the porridge. In some cases, *mukwe*

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[50] Interview with an elderly woman in Musani village of Mutema chieftaincy on 25 April 2017, interviewed by Tenson Muyambo.

[a gourd that is cut in half] is used. The utensils used are traditional ones as one respondent MS9 clearly pointed out that:

> *Bota reshupa rinoburirwa mumukwe kwete mundiro yesimbi. Mukwe idanga rinochekwa nepakati ronasirwa kuita sendiro. Zvinokona kuita mukwe wedanga kana ndiro yemuti yokutsetsa. Izvi ndizvo zvinoitwa pachiNdau chedu.* [The porridge is served in a gourd, not in a metal plate. The gourd is cut into halves and is prepared to serve as a plate. It is also possible to have a wooden plate. This is what is done in Ndau tradition].

The traditional utensils are repositories of tradition. In a study by Khupe (2014) traditional artefacts such as mats, wooden platters as well as traditional drums are used as symbols of the strong relationship between the people and their culture. Similarly, Muyambo and Maposa (2014) argue that the use of modern metal cups in fetching water from the wells is prohibited. Instead, gourds which are artefacts of tradition are used for that purpose. Using metal cups, according to Muyambo and Maposa's (2014), resulted in the drying up of wells.

In another interview, the herbal porridge can be given to elders. One male interviewee MS06 narrated how adults could have the porridge before it is administered to the baby, who is the owner of the *shupa.* Generally, as respondents indicated, *shupa* is prepared for babies but adults can also feed on the herbal medicine. When a man arrives home from tedious work in the field, he can be given *shupa* in the form of a thin, watery porridge or in the form of *mahewu* [malt drink]. The way it is administered as narrated by the respondents is such that it does not only quench the man's thirst and energizes him but solidifies the social bond between the family members who would have prepared the watery porridge, the baby (who is the owner) and the man in this case. The porridge has a social role in bringing together people.

As to who administered the porridge, most of the respondents were unanimous in identifying senior women and grandmothers as the 'managers' of the porridge. One respondent MS19 was categorically clear when she stated thus:

> *Anamazvarira ndivo vaipaka vazukuru bota iri. Pamweni vaiti kufa akurotwi veitikhombedza mitombo yavaitsa. Vaizondituma kuti enda wootsa mutombo uya uise mubota remwana.* [Our

mothers-in-law fed their grandchildren. At times they trained us on what herbs to use. They would then send us to collect the herbs on our own for the porridge].

Mazvarira [mother-in-law] in this instance is an elderly woman who, in most cases, would have reached menopause, and would feed the baby. (This is dealt with in the taboos and prohibitions section in this chapter). The statement, *"Pamweni vaiti kufa akurotwi veitikhombedza mitombo yavaitsa"* [Sometimes the elders said death has no time and showed us some of the herbs] confirms that the accusations levelled against traditional practitioners that they were/are secretive (Emeagwali 2016) about their medicine/herbs were/are false. In the above submissions, the willingness of the *vanamazvarira* [mothers-in-law] to apprenticeship their daughters-in-law on primary health care matters shows the contrary. The daughters-in-law were/are taught the type of tree bark which could heal different ailments. This bequeathing of such important information has sustained IKS on traditional medicine that was/is passed on orally from one generation to another, to the present day.

Women in general were/are the custodians of the porridge. Though men could also partake of the porridge, no men were/are responsible for its administration. Just as in the distribution of food in homes is a monopoly of mothers (though fathers can also do so in the changing times), so is the administration of the herbal porridge (*bota reshupa)*. One male respondent MS06 said:

> *Kunyazwi bota reshupa tinoriziya isu vaisa uye takarirya atingariziyi kudarika madzimai. Zvavaronza mai avo tinoti ndizvo ngekuti nyaya dzebota iri ngedzavo. Atingavapindi kuziya pamusoro pazvo* [Even though we men know the herbal porridge and ate it, we cannot know about it more than women do. What that woman has said is the truth because these are areas of their specialisation. We cannot claim to know more than them on the herbal porridge].

The reasons given by respondents why women administer the herbal porridge ranged from religio-cultural to social. Unlike the perception that there is the marginalisation of women in IKS (Warren and McKiernan 1995) in Ndau culture, women are not stereotyped as inferior, as often found in other cultures (Mapuranga 2010). From observations, women in Ndau culture have some space, especially when it concerns the Ndau primary health care needs and in matters to do with Ndau religiosity. Ndau women play significant roles in the traditional milieu. They are the ones who prepare beer for traditional ceremonies. Most of them are traditional healers and herbalists and hence they preside over most of the socio-religious ceremonies of the Ndau people. Since women

in Africa generally are the ones who are responsible for the welfare of children (perhaps because they spent most of their time nursing babies), they know medicinal herbs that cater for the babies' primary health care needs. This perhaps explains why women are predominant in the administration of *bota reshupa* among the Ndau. However, using cultural hermeneutics as an analytical lens, women in this regard are custodians of culture while men are the owners of culture. Owners have more power than custodians as discoursed later. The next section addresses the second objective of the study: to investigate the efficacy of *bota reshupa* among the Ndau people.

5.4 Section 3: The Ndau views on *shupa*

This part of the study establishes how *shupa* is a resource among the Ndau. The section discusses the Ndau people's perceptions on the efficacy of *shupa* evident in the recorded interviews.

5. 4.1 Ndau perceptions of *shupa* as medicinal IKS

This section is a report on the functions of *shupa* among the Ndau as gathered from the key respondents of the study. The respondents' views demonstrated that *bota reshupa* was central in the lives of the Ndau. The respondents in both the interviews and the FGD were unanimous that *shupa* ensured children's health. Their views were summed up by one FGD respondent MS18 who stated, *"Shupa inoita kuti vana vakure vakagwinya."* [Herbal porridge ensures that children grow up healthy]. *Kugwinya* [being healthy] in this instance referred to the child's ability to resist attacks from diseases and infections. One grows up not easily susceptible to illnesses. Scholars such as Chavunduka (1994, 1998), Shoko (2007) and Chinsembu (2015) affirm this when they state that traditional medicine administered through tree bark, roots and leaves enhances people's immunity. The respondents identified various common children's diseases that they said were treatable and or preventable using the leaf, bark and root mix of *shupa*.

Most diseases identified by the respondents included *mhezi* [measles], *chipembwe* [whooping cough], *manyoka* [diarrhoea], *mhetamakumbo* [polio] and *chipande* [excessive dehydration]. The herbs, tree bark, roots and leaves used to prevent the diseases are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Names of herbs and the diseases they prevent or cure

Name of herb and part of tree used	Research Sites			Function(s)
	Mutema	**Musikavanhu**	**Garahwa**	
Mungurahwe (tree root)	✓	✓	✓	Sweetens the porridge and gives it a good flavour/taste
Rupupu (leaves)	✓		✓	Treats *chipande/ chipembwe*
Chidamhuru (leaves)	✓	✓	✓	Treats stomachache, measles and prevents polio and diphtheria
Chinharara (roots and leaves)	✓	✓	✓	Treats diarrhoea, measles and prevents polio
Mubhamubhamu			✓	Treats measles and prevents whooping cough
Murubva		✓		Treats whooping cough (*chipembwe)*
Munyadumba		✓	✓	Treats *Phuwa* (falling sickness)
Muvhusakunzi	✓		✓	Prevents backache/ *chipande/*polio
Murovan'ombe	✓	✓		Treats whooping cough, measles and prevents polio and diphtheria

From the data gathered it is evident that each community had its own kinds of herbs to treat and or prevent different ailments as indicated in the table above. The use of *chidamhuru* and *chinharara* were common in the three research sites but prevented or cured different ailments. Chinsembu (2015) concurs that when he studied the local communities in Namibia, he discovered that what a particular herb cured in one community could differ in another community. Even the name of the herb in one locality may be different in the other. What emerged from the respondents is that while the different herbs were identified by different names, they all had either a healing or preventive effect on the ailments that afflict the people. According to the respondents, *shupa* had both preventive and healing benefits.

5.4.1.1 The preventive nature of *shupa*

While some respondents stated that this herbal porridge cured diseases, others said the porridge was a preventive measure against most diseases that affect infants. One respondent MS01 said, *"Iri ibota rinoita kuti nthenda dzikazobata vana havanyanyi kuzoshatirwa maningi. Zvinodziirira kubva kunthenda zhinji"* [This herbal porridge prevents children from disease attacks. Once attacked, the children may not suffer too much]. To support this an interviewee, a Minister of Religion MS30 made it clear that *shupa* assisted in making them grow up healthy. He maintained that:

> We grew up very healthy and without falling ill easily. One could only cough for a day and the next day one was fine without any medication taken. We owed this to *shupa* that ensured we were well immunised. Our immune system could resist any kind of infection. The various herbs mixed in *shupa* accounted for this disease resilient nature of the Ndau people.

Although the herbs have not been 'scientifically'[51] proven to be the panacea for a number of ailments, the respondents were convinced about their efficacy. It was argued by most respondents that *shupa* boosts the immune system of the people who ate or drank it. This resonates with the findings of Mushishi (2010) on the Budya people of Zimbabwe, where *mono* [a traditional herb]

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[51] The word 'scientifically' is placed in quotation marks because there are inconclusive arguments that ethnomedicine is a *pseudo*-science from a western perspective but for the locals their medicine is equally scientific in its own right.

mixed with the fragments of a snake tail tip was used to protect children from evil forces such as witchcraft or alien spirits. The herbal medicine is also used "to boost the immune systems of children against diseases which are either natural or caused by evil spirits" (Mushishi 2010:165).

The FGD respondents also emphasised the preventive nature of the herbal porridge. In the FGD it was made clear that apart from preventing children from common infant diseases, the porridge kept even the elderly healthy. One member of the FGD indicated that they partook of the porridge to prevent diseases like malaria. The respondent stated that she rarely visited the clinics because she obtained various medicines from the porridge that kept her healthy despite her advanced age. She said, "*Andingorwari-rwari ngekuti ndinorya bota reshupa"* [I am not easily taken ill because I eat this herbal porridge]. From what the respondents were saying it is arguable that the porridge is a health safety valve that provides a cocoon for the people to resist opportunistic infections. If the porridge offers this immunity it is therefore a resource that can be utilised to curtail the devastating epidemics that affect people's immunity systems like the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Chinsembu (2015) concurs that most Namibian plant species have chemical compounds that boost the immune systems of people. His studies have shown that HIV and AIDS related conditions are treatable using traditional herbs.

Another interesting dimension of *shupa* related to the above insights that respondents confirmed was its prolongation of life expectancy. A 92-year man MS5 in Muumbe village of Musikavanhu chieftaincy said:

> *Ini pano ndakarya bota reshupa. Unoona mungoza uyu uri mumunda, ndiwo waibikisa bota retakarya. Ndakura uye ndararama ini. Imwimwi amugumi pazera rangu rino. Kurarama kwakadai uye kusarwara-rwara kwangu ndiyo mitombo yatairya yaiya mubotamwo. Mitombo iyi yaisuka nthenda zhinji zvekuti takakura tiri zvimajaha zvakati njii kugwinya. Kukotsora kwaiya kushomanane uye atisairwara-rwaranje* [I fed on *shupa* and it could be the secret behind my strength and long life. Look at that millet in the field. It was used to prepare *shupa.* You will not reach our age. This long life and strength are because of what I ate in *shupa*- different kinds of herbs. The herbs prevented us from many ailments. Cases of whooping cough were few and we grew up as strong boys].

This 92-year-old man looked like he was in his early 60s and he was able to walk without the help of a walking stick. He attributed his good health and strength to all the different kinds of herbs that

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he consumed in the *shupa* mixture. Albayrak and Gunes (2010) agree when they submit that traditional foods are healthy. What the old man said was that his longevity could be attributed to his dietary habits. He consumed traditional foods that included ingredients of *shupa.* The demand for traditional food is on the increase in Zimbabwe. Most food outlets in the cities sell traditional foods, including at events such as graduations, official commissioning of various infrastructures by heads of governments as well as weddings. Most genetically modified foods are shunned in favour of traditional foods. The increased demand for traditional food is a result of the beneficial effects traditional food has on health. They are good for people's health especially the elderly who are less active. *Shupa*, being a traditional herbal mixture, was believed to be a health asset that ensured not only good health but also longevity (confirmed by MS9, MS11.MS22, MS30), as it was not only preventive in nature, but also was a cure for several ailments.

5.4.1.2 The Healing value of *Shupa*

The herbal porridge was also said to provide healing for several ailments. The respondents indicated that most of the diseases that affect children include *chipande and chipembwe* (whooping cough *and manyoka* (diarrhoea). According to the respondents both in the interviews and the FGD, these diseases can prove fatal if not attended to timeously. Marashe and Maposa (2010) define *chipande* [the fontanelle] which affects the centre of the child's head and sometimes the upper part of the mouth as being the development of an opening on top of the child's head (*panduvhuma*). The opening widens gradually, and the child becomes ill. A female respondent MS7 stated that this is the most dangerous part of the child's skull. It becomes very soft such that *nduvhuma yemwana inotamba-tamba* (child's *nduvhuma* moves up and down). The child always cries, refuses to feed and at times *unokotsora* (has a dry cough). If the situation persists the *chipande* can collapse and the child may eventually die. When asked what caused this type of infant diseases most respondents in both the interviews and the FGD were not clear about its causes. What they were sure of were the symptoms, as one respondent stated that: "*Apana unonasa kuziya kuti chinokonzerwa ngei asi kuti chabata mwana unochema-chema, unokotsora-kotsora, unoramba kuamwa, nduvhuma yake inotamba-tamba uye unoperezeka muiiri*" [No one really knows its causes but when affected by it the child always cries, coughs a dry cough, refuses to feed, *ndivhuma* moves up and down and loses weight within a short space of time].

Once these symptoms are detected in the child, the child is quickly taken to its grandmother or a traditional healer who then administers *shupa* as a medicine to heal the child. If *shupa* is ready at the homestead, the mother is urged to constantly and consistently administer the *shupa* to the child.

To further illustrate this another respondent Mbuya Mashoko[52], aged 76, from the Musani village, explained how a weakling child survived by the administration of *shupa.* She narrated the story thus:

> *Kamwana kamainini angu kakabarwa kakaita inga tsanga yemene kutetepa. Vanhu vaiti kanofa ngekuti akasainingirika ngekuondoroka. Hino mbuya edu akati kachikari kebota reshupa rineri kasabva pachoto. Kamwana kaya kairamba keipakwa bota iri. Taiti tikati gare- gare, okapaka gare gare, okapaka. Takazoona mumazuwa nemwedzi yakati kuti kamwana kaya kotanga kuita mwiri. Zvakaitika ndeiona ngemadziso angu ano. Takazoona kati gwindiri kotogwinya kamwana kaya. Hino mukakaona mazuwa ano kaamai akuru ane muiri wakati gwindiri. Ungachaziya ere kuti ndiko kamwana kakasiya padoodori kurashwa* [My aunt gave birth to a sickly baby. The baby looked like a water reed, very thin and pale. My grandmother ensured that she always fed her using *shupa* with all kinds of herbs in it. Within a few months, the baby gained weight and changed. Now she is a huge woman who is very strong. One wonders whether she is that baby who was nearly left to die].

It is evident from the above and confirmed by the respondents that this type of disease, *chipande*, is one of the most dangerous diseases that account for the high infant mortality rate in Zimbabwe. The respondents agreed that the disease's remedy lies with traditional medicine administered through *shupa*. If the child is mistakenly[53] taken to the clinic or hospital, chances are very high that the child will die. This confirms what scholars like Chavunduka (1994,1998), Ntuli (2002), Shoko (2007, 2016) and Chinsembu (2015) maintain that modern science is not the panacea for all

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[52] Interview with Mbuya Mashoko, Musani village, 9 May 2017.
[53] This word is used to show that according to the participants *chipande* remedy is not with modern health facilities but lies with the indigenous knowledge systems of the people and the people use the concept of 'asset-based approach' instead of 'needs-based' approach. The people use what is there to solve problems rather than relying on an external hand to provide what is not there. For more see Gunderson and Cochrane 2012, *Religion and the health of the public: Shifting the paradigm.* While visiting the hospital when one is sick is believed to the correct action, for *chipande* it is a mistake according to the participants (MS4, MS7, MS10, MS22)

challenges, especially on matters of health and wellbeing. Ethnoscience like *shupa* is efficacious in primary health care needs of people.

Yet another disease that afflict most children is *chipembwe* (whooping cough). The disease was identified by respondents as also potentially fatal. This is a disease where an infant persistently coughs, and the coughs become prolonged. *Mwana anokotsora kwenguwa yakareba* (the infant has a prolonged cough). If this is not attended to expediently, the child develops complications such as pneumonia. These complications may result in the child's death. The respondents made it clear that once symptoms of *chipembwe* are indicated remedial action must be taken immediately. The *shupa* mixture is administered and, in most cases, if the disease has no other causative factors [*zvapindire muurwere*] the child usually recovers. Probed on what *vapindire muurwere* meant, a spiritual dimension to disease was explained. One respondent in the FGD MS19 said:

> *Kupindira muurwere ndinoronza kuti kana paita chipembwe pane vane utsinye vanobva vaisa zvavo pamusoropo. Kana zvadai mwana waane chipembwe chinenge chaane zvaiswa pamusoro. Achisisiri chipembwe chega asi kuti patoa nemweya waisawawopo.* [When the *chipembwe* disease is not easily treatable then the belief is that the child has been bewitched by jealous people].

This spiritual dimension to disease or illness finds confirmation in the writings of scholars such as Shoko (2007), Machinga (2012) and Marashe (2018). For these scholars a person does not simply fall ill. They refer to the cause-effect dimension to illness. For Shoko (2007, 2016) and Machinga (2012) one may fall ill because one's ancestors are angry. They may feel abandoned and neglected such that they will cause an illness in order to bring their anger to the attention of the transgressor (Agorsah 2010). When traditional diviners and seers are consulted for the illness, they identify the ancestors' complaints and once the complaints are addressed the ill person recovers. According to Mligo (2013) these diviners and seers are the laboratory technicians who diagnose the suffering and its source. Marashe's (2018) study on HIV and AIDS among the Shona people of Chiping district found that the belief that people become infected by HIV due to angry ancestors was rife. He found that it was angry ancestors who 'encourage' an individual to have sexual intercourse with an infected person. Similarly, as indicated by the respondent MS19 illness can be caused through witchcraft. Bourdillon (1987), an anthropologist, maintains that witchcraft is practically universal among the Shona people of Zimbabwe. Chavunduka (2001), a sociologist and traditional practitioner of traditional medicine, understands witchcraft as the use of charms and magic to cause

illness or misfortune. Similarly, Shoko (2016) argues that witchcraft ranks high as a cause of illness and disease among the Karanga people of Zimbabwe. According to Sibanda (2018) witchcraft is real and exists contrary to western views that it is non-existent and irrational. This means that the belief about witchcraft is pervasive among the Shona, which includes the Ndau. Witches can cast an evil spell on an individual and this may result in an illness. It also emerged that when a normal illness[54] affects an individual, witches may bewitch the ill person and what seemed as 'normal illness' persists. The witches take advantage of the 'normal illness' to inflict pain on the ill person or even cause his/her death. This is what the respondent MS19, inferred by *kupindira muurwere.*

Manyoka (dysentery) was cited as another troublesome disease that was equally fatal. This leads to mild or severe stomach cramps and severe diarrhoea with mucus or blood in the stools and results in dehydration. One respondent stated that *munhu anohudha zvekuti anosara acheneruka kumeso neganda rake* [One passes watery stools that he/she becomes pale and dehydrated]. In infants this may result in the child vomiting as well. From the explanation it seemed this was cholera, but the respondents were insistent that this was not cholera. For breastfeeding infants, they called it *chinyamukaka* where the infants vomit as well as passing watery and yellowish stools. Another term the respondents used for this was *kuchaya*. One female participant said that once an infant suffers from this, she prepares *shupa* and administers it to the child. The child recovers in no time. *Ndinokurungira mwana ena uwowo bota iri unobva aita zviri nani muchinguwana kana pasina zveuroyi. Manyoka anobva amira* [I prepare the porridge and give it to the child. Diarrhoea stops, and the child recuperate if not bewitched].

Apart from understanding illnesses and diseases from the biological prism, the Ndau understand illnesses and diseases from a spiritual spectrum (Chavunduka 2001, Machinga 2012, Shoko 2016). The spiritual spectrum seems to override the biological explanations of illness and disease. Writing from a Yoruba perspective in Nigeria, Akintunde (2006) argues that illness among the Yoruba is understood in three ways. Firstly, it is natural or physical, such as a cough, pain and diarrhoea. Secondly, it is supernatural, or spiritual, including attacks by witches and wizards. Thirdly, it is mystical. This final category is attributed to spirits, divinities, or ancestors for punishment of

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[54] A normal illness is an illness that needs attention. One gets a mild headache, cough and stomach ache that can eventually disappear after a short time. For more see Shoko (2007) *Karanga Indigenous Religion in Zimbabwe*. See also Chavunduka (1994, 1998,2001).

offences against them. This three-tiered worldview cuts across most African communities. Infection for Africans can either be biological or spiritual, hence the need to patronise the three-tiered health system for holistic health care and healing. From a postcolonial perspective the spiritual dimension (which was dismissed at colonisation emphasising the biological dimension to illness) adds value to an African worldview of understanding illness.

However, the three-tiered approach to illnesses and diseases could be the reason why most communities in Zimbabwe still experience high infant mortality rates. Instead of rushing the ill person to the nearest clinic or hospital, valuable time is spent looking for spiritual explanations for these illnesses and diseases. When the ill infant finally gets to the clinic or hospital it would be too late and the infant dies. This is not intended to underrate and dismiss the spiritual aspect to illness and diseases but patronising both the biological as well as the spiritual could be the model for a healthy populace. Both systems of health delivery need to integrate and complement each other. This understanding is slowly crippling modern health delivery facilities. For example, the Mbuya Dorcas Memorial Hospital in Harare, a Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA) related medical centre, has medical as well as spiritual wings. Patients patronise both wings. This is where the patient needs to be exorcised of evil spirits first before taking medication for an illness. This model is couched from the Shona's understanding of the biological-spiritual dimensions to illnesses and diseases. *Shupa.* therefore, was understood by the respondents as an agency for good health. It was a health asset that is understood from the Gunderson and Cochrane (2012) perspective. This is a perspective where Gunderson and Cochrane (2012) understand religion, which in this case includes IKS, as an asset and not a liability to health. In other words, Gunderson and Cochrane (2012) argue that people must use what they have, that is, what Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) call Asset Community Based Development (ACBD) which places emphasis on the utilisation of assets already available for sustainable livelihoods. IKS, particularly *shupa, is* what the Ndau have for their primary health care needs. *Shupa* becomes a health asset that ameliorate the health conditions of the Ndau. The findings recorded above are illustrative of the efficacy of *shupa* as a health asset that ensures the health and well-being of the Ndau as a community. It prevents and heals ailments. Although these claims could be viewed as anecdotal, phenomenology teaches us to always believe in the believers themselves. Even though medical

tests have not been done on the herbal porridge, respondents' views cannot be totally ignored for they have been using this knowledge for generations after generations.

5.4.2 The respondents' views on the ritualised nature of *shupa*

According to Mligo (2013), rituals are symbolic actions. Shorter (2001:61) conceptualises ritual as symbol-in-action, with or without accompanying verbal symbols. These symbolic actions are important in dramatising lived reality. Ritual action reinforces belief and provides participants with a sense of control on how they relate to each other (Agorsah 2010). In the same vein Kangwa (2017) understands rituals through the rites of passage where life is characterised by transitions from one social group or situation to another. The transitions are not simply events but moments of supplication and *shupa*, as stated by respondents, served that purpose.

It also became evident during fieldwork that *shupa* served as a ritualised practice which introduced the child to the world of the departed. One female respondent MS15 made it clear by saying:

> *Kare waiti wava nemwana wako wainasira shupa yako. Yaindoshandiswa kusuma mwana uya kuvadzimu. Yaidirwa shupa iyoyo pamwe nedoro zvonzi, 'Shupa iyo kukuziisai kuti mumuzi uno mwaane mwana. Imwimwi mbuya Charwa (*name of the deceased elder of the family) *chiizisaiwo vamweni ndimwi munovaziya vasharuka venyu. Heyo shupa yenyu iyo (achirashira shoma pashi). Yasara yaizopuwa masungukati omwa kana kurya* [In the past when one had given birth *shupa* was used to notify the ancestors of the new arrival in the family. The herbal porridge was given to the departed by pouring some onto the ground. What remained was eaten/ drunk by senior women after the ritual].

This was followed by a celebration, having been assured that the baby was safe from evil spirits or attacks from diseases. Beer punctuated the celebratory atmosphere. The ancestors were informed through *shupa* that the family had a baby and the baby was ready to be accepted as a member of the living by the 'living dead' (Mbiti, 1969) or the 'living timeless' (Banana 1991). This implies that apart from being a medicine, *shupa* was used to introduce the new baby into the world of the departed and the living. The respondents made it clear that the baby needed protection from evil spirits as well as having good health to grow. This can be guaranteed and granted when the baby has been presented (*kusuma)* to the ancestors through *shupa.* The child is believed to be, therefore, physically and spiritually protected when the ancestors are officially informed of the

arrival of the new individual in the family, as confirmed by Mushishi (2010). It is this ritualised nature of *shupa* that explains why each child had his/her own *shupa*. No one child may use another's *shupa* in the ritual of *kusuma*. Each child had to have his/her own *shupa* prepared for him/her. The respondents emphasised this aspect during the interviews and FGD.

To further demonstrate that *shupa* was a ritualised rite of passage intricately linked to the Ndau religio-cultural milieu, one female respondent MS19 in the FGD narrated what she experienced when *shupa* was not administered to her child due to Christian beliefs, which eschews ritual ceremonies (Bogopa 2010). She narrated thus:

> *Mwana abarwa waipuwa zita rasekuru kana rambuya zvichienderana nekuti murumbwana ere kana musikana. Zita iri raiva revakafa kare. Inini pano ndakabereka mwana akapuwa zita rasekuru vake. Mwana uyu haana kupuwa bota reshupa ngekuti takanga toenda kuchechi. Mwana wakakura asina kumera mazino. Taidhana pakawandiwa kuti mwana orumba asi asina mazino. Taona zvanyanya takazohamba kuti tizwe kuti chiinyi. Takaronzerwa kuti sekuru vane zita raiva nemwana vaida shupa yavo. Mwamuna wangu wakambozviramba asi mwana haana kumera mazino. Paakazobvuma mwamuna, takaita shupa iya pamwe nedoro tikadira. Kwakapera mazuwa maiiri mwana ndokumera mazino mairi.* [When a baby is born, he/she is given his grandfather's or her grandmother's name. I had a baby who was given his grandfather's name but was not fed on *shupa* because we were going to church then. The baby grew up without developing teeth. It was too embarrassing to see the boy running but toothless. When we consulted traditional healers, we were told the grandfather wanted his *shupa*. We prepared it together with traditional beer. The *shupa* and brewed beer were then 'given' to the ancestor. Within two days the boys developed teeth].

The narrative pointed out two important issues. Firstly, the child was a disgrace in the society as he had no teeth. The mother had to endure the embarrassment that went with the child's toothless status. The belief was that since the child had not partaken of *shupa,* he could not attain the next stage of his growth (growing teeth) because a requisite rite of passage involving the administration of *reshupa* had not been done. It was not until the rite of passage was done that the child grew teeth and related to his peers at that stage. The excitement that the mother experienced when she discovered that he had grown teeth was testimony that the family had made amends with the wronged ancestor. This example serves to demonstrate that *shupa* was also a rite of passage for Ndau children that served as a ritual.

Secondly, the narrative is an illustration of the religio-cultural significance of *shupa*. The idea that it had to be presented to the ancestors is testimony that the ancestor was not informed that there was a baby named after him in the family, a stage that is essential in the socio-cultural milieu of the Ndau. The ancestor who was not informed had to punish the offenders (the child's parents) by preventing the child from growing teeth.

Concomitant to the above belief is a study by Bogopa (2010) among the Xhosa of South Africa where he found that any failure to bear children (infertility) could be as a result of failing to carry out *ukuthombisa* (a ritual ceremony for girls). Mulenga-Kaunda and Kaunda (2016) support this view using the *Infunkutu-* Bemba sexual dance as women's sexual agency.

5.4.3 Interviewees' perceptions on *shupa* as their identity

It must be stated from the outset that discourses on identity are inundated by contestations. Maposa (2011) confirms this when he admits that there are contesting western and culturalist perspectives in discourses concerning identity issues. He further argues that the concept of identity is complex and presupposes that every ethno-linguistic group is unique. This uniqueness entails that every culture has a way of looking at things in the world. The Ndau, being a unique ethno-linguistic group, have their own way of expressing their identity as a people. It is therefore argued that the expression of identity is heavily embedded in Ndau culture and *shupa* is one such way of identity expression.

The Ndau are known for their acute sense of beauty and distinct identity. MacGonagle (2007) argues that the Ndau express their sense of beauty and identity through clothing, jewellery (beads, bracelets of copper), *pika* [tattoo-like marks] and *nyora* [scarification], hairstyles, houses, granaries and pots. Just like *pika* (tattoos) marked on either the cheeks, forehead or stomach, *shupa* is a symbol of identity. This became evident among the FGD participants who indicated that *shupa* is a practice that is not known in other tribes save the Ndau of the Chipinge and Chimanimani districts in Zimbabwe. One male FGD participant MS 22 stated thus:

> *Akuna kumweni kwaungazwa zveshupa muZimbabwe kusiya kwedu isu maNdau eChipinge neChimanimani. Ukazwa muntu unoronza zveshupa ibva waziya kuti muNdau. Iyi itsika yedu isusu maNdau. Auioni kune amweni marudzi.* [There is nowhere where you can get information about *shupa* in Zimbabwe besides among the Ndau people of Chipinge and Chimanimani districts. When

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you get someone with knowledge on *shupa,* know that the person is Ndau. This is our unique tradition not to be found among other tribes].

To confirm this, Maposa (2011) identifies the Shangani circumcision (*hoko*-in Shangani) rite of passage as part of the Shangani traditional practices whose ethos is embedded in the Shangani socio-religious prism. *Hoko* is the Shangani identity and every male member must be circumcised to be fully Shangani. Equally, *shupa,* for the Ndau, identifies them as a distinctively ethno-linguistic group as stated by the above participant.

To support the notion that the Ndau use their traditions, particularly their IKS, much like the Shangani, as the source of identity that distinguishes them from other tribes, MacGonagle (2007) and Vijfhuizen (1998) explore ear piecing among the Ndau not only as a rite of passage for young men before they go to South Africa for employment, but as a distinguishing feature that identifies the ethno-linguistic group or chiefdom people belong to.

Culturally speaking *shupa* denotes a people whose cultural embeddedness remained intact in the face of adversaries. One respondent MS08 clearly stated that *shupa* was a source of Ndau identity and that its practice in the 21st century is a clear demonstration that the practice has withstood the test of time. In confirmation one of the professional interviewees MS29 stated:

> To illustrate that the Ndau people are uniquely different from other tribes, their practice of *shupa* does not only identify them as Ndau but as a people who value their socio-cultural beliefs and practices. *Shupa* remains the source of their well-being and because it identifies with them, the practice, despite challenges posed by globalisation and technology, is likely to be in practice for generations to come. It is an indelible mark of their identity.

Arguing for the need to have cultural practices such as *shupa* included in indigenous education and curricula in East Africa, Semali and Stambach (1997) agree that for an inclusive and democratic curriculum that acknowledges the African heritage of individuals, experiences and identities, cultural practices such as the one presented in this thesis must find their way into modern schooling. For Africans not to lose their identity, which distinguishes them from other people of the world, their tradition which finds expression in IKS must be part of the curriculum in schools. It is therefore argued that *shupa* is not only an asset for health among the Ndau but also an identity practice. Because it is an identity practice, its resilience and tenacity abound.

5.4.4 Participants' views on the beauty in *shupa*

It was also evident, through the respondents, that *shupa* was a form of self-expression for Ndau women. They derived pride not only in preparing *shupa* for their children but also for their in-laws. One elderly woman MS19 stated thus:

> *Kana wagadzira shupa yako wopa sezara namazvarira iri mudumbu kana chidhuwa zvakanasa kuiswa magadagada unozwa kuita mukadzi wemene. Izvi zvaidadisa maningi. Waivapa vabva kuita basa vakagara pamumvuri, vomwa shupa yemuzukuru vachidakara.* [After preparing *shupa,* you could give it to your father-in-law as well as the mother-in-law. One could give them the *shupa* in a well-decorated calabash or well-designed small clay pot. One would feel proud to be a real daughter-in-law].

It is this sense of pride that makes the researcher question scholars who argue that women in general have no meaningful part to play in IKS (World Bank, 2003, 2006, Kanjere, Thaba and Teffo 2011). The above example shows a woman whose self-esteem is enhanced in providing *shupa* to her in-laws.

Apart from acting as a health asset in addressing primary health care needs for people, *shupa* provided Ndau women with dignity, integrity and self-esteem. Mulenga-Kaunda and Kaunda (2016) concur when they argue that traditional beliefs and practices like the Zambian *Infunkutu* are agencies for women's self-expression. *Infunkutu,* which is an indigenous sensual dance for Bemba women in Zambia, is not only an agency for Bemba women's sexuality but functions as a self-expression. The women do not only express their sexuality as an end in itself but as a means to dignity, integrity and a sense of belonging. *Infunkutu* is a ritualised dance illustrating that women, too, can, should and must enjoy sexual activities, contrary to the widely-held view by women themselves that they are not permitted by society to express their sexual feelings or even to enjoy their sexuality in many contexts (Baumeister and Twenge 2002). Just like *Infunkutu, shupa* was stated as the Ndau women's agency for self-expression through the well-decorated *shupa* container. The pride with which the female respondents refer to a well decorated *shupa* container, *chidhuwa* shows that Ndau women regard *shupa* as an agency for their self-expression, dignity and assertiveness. Khupe (2014) points out the same idea about Zulu women who express the same virtues through traditional red mats, wooden platters and clay pots that are expertly decorated. For Khupe (2014) these artefacts suggest an intimate relationship between the

practitioners and their culture to which the artefacts are a symbol. Similarly, the *shupa* container is an artefact that symbolises not only the Ndau women's self-expression but their dignity and assertiveness as well. It expresses their full humanity (Ruether 1983).

To argue that women, particularly Ndau women in this study, are marginalised in IKS discourses is not only a generalised view but comes from a foreign culture (Makaudze 2014). The phenomenological approach, which emphasises the 'sole right of the believer' shapes this study. It encourages one to derive it from the rural women themselves as they live and experience it. The generalised scholarship that women are marginalised in IKS discourse tends to omit that the African concept of *ubuntu, batho* in Setswana ensures that Africans earn respect by giving it first and thus gain empowerment by empowering others (Dube 2006).

One important issue that recurred in the interviews was the issue of dignity and self-expression that Ndau beliefs and practices have for the practitioners. *Shupa* was presented not as an end in itself but as a belief and practice that Ndau women take pride in. To begin with was the *shupa* container itself. Where a *chidhuwa* (a clay pot) was used in place of a *dumbu* (calabash), the clay pot was thoroughly cleaned and beautifully decorated. It was polished using a substance called *mukura*- a brownish substance that made the clay pot shiny and smooth. One respondent MS11 stated:

> *Zvidhuwa zvaishandiswa pashupa apa zvaidadisa mani. Zvaizorwa mukura kana kurukirwa usanga muhuro mwazvo umu. Zvaibva zvati chechetere. Waiona amweni madzimai echiyemura kunaka kwazvo. Madzimai akagadzira zvidhuwa izvi aizwa kudada nekunaka uku.* [Clay pots that were used as *shupa* were nicely decorated to the envy of everyone. They were admired and women who prepared them got the pride associated with *shupa*].

The *shupa* belief and practice is an expression of Ndau artistic prowess. Art is an expression of the self. The way the *shupa* container was designed was a clear testimony that the Ndau, especially women, were accomplished artists. Their sense of beauty surpassed earlier claims by foreigners to Africa that Africans in general were not artistic (Bewaji 2003). Using postcolonial lenses, the designs on the container illustrated the sophistication of the Ndau culture. It is with the same artistry and acute sense of aesthetics that the Rozvi people built the magnificent Great Zimbabwe Monuments. Although the Rozvi's building of the Great Zimbabwe Monuments has been denied

them (Beach 1994), Mapara (2009) declares that the monuments are a world heritage that illustrates the architectural prowess of the Shona/Rozvi people who built the monuments. This is no mean achievement for the Shona. Using the same architectural prowess, the Ndau mould *zvidhuwa* as *shupa* containers with a skill that demonstrates their innate sense of beauty.

One respondent MS23 expressed the pride women had in *shupa* as an expression of their artistic nature. She stated:

> *Kana shupa yako yakanasirwa ngemukura uye usanga muhuro mechidhuwa unozwa kuti une shupa inodadisa. Unozwa vantu vechiti iii tinasirirewo shupa yakadai. Pamwe unozwa vantu veiti nhingi uya ishasha pakunasira zvidhuwa zveshupa. Izvi zvinopa manyawi. Zvaidadisa kuti kunakidza kuona izvi zvichiitika.* [When *shupa* is well decorated with beads around its neck one feels a sense of pride. People ask you to prepare them such *shupa*. This brings a sense of pride and one feels happy].

The decorations on the *shupa* containers are expressions of the Ndau culture and its beauty. Bewaji (2003) points out that such decorations are simply the beautification of the self and in this regard the belief and practice itself decorate the Ndau culture and inculcates a deep sense of belonging.

5.4.5 The role of men and women in the administration of s*hupa*

The question that addressed the gendered nature of *shupa* was: Who prepares and administers *shupa*? All the respondents were unanimous in that it was the senior mothers or the grandmothers who had greater experience and knowledge in *shupa* as a health asset among the Ndau. Writing from a Zambian cultural perspective, Siwila (2015) argues that motherhood is a celebrated and revered status or position in a woman's life. Contrary to western thinking that African women are inferior (Schollmeier 2003), they actually occupy a very important position in the continuum of human life. One male respondent MS02 admitted that Ndau women were primary health care givers. He stated:

> *Masungukati ndiwo ari pamberi kuona kuti tagara zvakanaka pautano hwedu. Shupa iyi ndakairya maningi. Takatokura ndiyo. Yaigadzirwa ndimbuya angu, mai ababa. Umu ndimo mumutambo wemadzimai, isusu vaisa kwedu kwaiya kurya asi madzimai ndiwo aitoziya kuti mumbuti uyu ngewe chakati, uyuwo ngewe chakati*. [Senior women or grandmothers are the ones in charge of our good health. I ate *shupa* all my childhood. It made me grow up well. It used to be prepared by my

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grandmother, my father's mother. *Shupa* was solely prepared by women. Men were partakers only, with little knowledge of the tree barks, leaves and roots that prevent or cure different ailments].

Admittedly, the preparation and administration of *shupa* was purely a woman's responsibility. In the western worldview, anything associated with women is deemed inferior (Makaudze and Shoko 2015). This worldview is the opposite of the African worldview where women are given full status.

The idea that *shupa* is administered by senior mothers and grandmothers only was quite evident from the respondents. Mapuranga (2010) affirms this when she argues that women, senior mothers and grandmothers are the primary health care givers. In the first place, they are the ones who 'create' life by giving birth. After birth, they ensure that the life they have ushered into the world is not only prolonged but sustained. Swai (2010) further argues that women occupy a special place in the improvement and promotion of health care services, mainly because they participate in and manage many health care activities that affect the health of their families. This simply means the mother is a health care worker not by formal training but by experience in dealing with health care matters that affect her family. This explains why *shupa,* as a health care asset, is a preserve of Ndau women. One male interviewee MS01 in Muumbe village of the Musikavanhu chieftaincy had this to say:

> *Masungukati ndiwo aigadzira shupa. Yanga isikashandwi ngevaisa. Sungukati mudzimai wakura waane vazakazi uye waguma kubara ngedzimweni nguwa. Aya ndianambuya vemizi vaya vane ruziwo maningi maererano neshupa yatinobhuya ndiyo pano*. (Senior mothers or grandmothers prepared *shupa*. [This was not done by men. Elderly women are those who are aged and could have reached menopause and may have daughters-in-law. These are senior women who have greater experience and knowledge in *shup*a which we are discussing here].

It became clear that the idea that *shupa* was not prepared by men has nothing to do with gender dynamics as understood from a western perspective, but that women possess the expertise needed in primary health care needs of the communities. That men are not experts in *shupa* is not that *shupa* is inferior but that it is a delicacy where Ndau women as care givers have perfected the art of preparing *shupa* beyond the male's comprehension. On enquiring why, the senior mothers and grandmothers were actively participating in preparing *shupa*, the respondents confirmed the Senegalese proverb: 'The things that grandmothers can see while sitting on the ground, young people cannot see even if they climb to the top of a tree'. This emphasises the significant point

made earlier, that the elderly women have "considerable knowledge and experience related to all aspects of maternal and child development, and that they have a strong commitment to promoting the well-being of children and their families" (World Bank, 2006:2).

 Being a health asset, *shupa* should not be understood from a western perspective, as this perspective on femininity trivialises all that women do (Makaudze 2014). It refers to being submissive and dependent. In this study femininity has no place in African epistemologies such as health. Since women are more likely "to nurture the needs of the family, they tend to be primary practitioners of indigenous knowledge" (World Bank, 2003:2). Health issues are human life issues. Placing such issues as *shupa* in the hands of women means that for the Ndau, women are community leaders in matters of health just as men are community leaders in matters of politics. This then justifies the social reality of women in the context of IKS and health. If culturally insensitive and irrelevant methodologies are used the cited example may be understood and interpreted differently.

Research has also revealed that most local traditional healers are women (World Bank, 2003). This is no mean job for women. One female respondent clearly pointed out that the mere fact that *shupa* was predominantly a woman's prerogative indicated that women hold power of immense proportion among the Ndau. She further made it clear that the man, as the women's counterpart, had accepted this reality. Ndau women, therefore, work closely with men. Ndau women's experiences in preparing and administering s*hupa* indicated that they "are knowledge managers in health matters" (World Bank, 2006:3).

In a study by Fernandez (1994) women are said to have more knowledge of livestock management practices than men. Those who are advocating that women are marginalised in discourses of IKS are either being informed by Eurocentric opinions or have not done enough research in terms of the women's experiences in IKS. The current study, as confirmed by both men and women, found that Ndau women possessed considerable knowledge in the primary health care needs of the Ndau. The women did not only know the bark, leaves and roots that make the *shupa* mixture but were the makers and producers of the mixture itself. Evidently Ndau women were knowledge producers.

While researchers use foreign analytical tools to analyse phenomena in different socio-cultural milieus, the respondents of this study were not concerned about gender implications of *shupa*.

There was no struggle to control the belief in and practice of *shupa*. Male respondents always admitted that *shupa* was and still is the preserve of Ndau women. In chief Garahwa's chieftaincy, one male respondent MS15 had this to say:

> *Madzimai inyanzvi pashupa apa. Apana muisa anozvikona izvi, ndezveanamai. Anamai ndivo vanonyanyobatika ngeutano hwedu isusu antu. Chero kuchiyungu anamukoti azhinji madzimai* [Women are experts in this. No man can do this. Women are our health care givers. Even in modern clinics and hospitals, most nurses are women. Issues to do with our health are the preserve of the women].

The notion that women are at the forefront of this significant health asset of *shupa* for the Ndau implied that women are responsible for the health and well-being of their communities. Not much research has been done on IKS with women as the main participants. Kanjere, Thaba and Teffo (2011:246) believe that women, especially rural women, "are negatively affected by prejudices because most men in such areas claim to be the staunch custodians of culture". This is a Euro-centric stance that is imposed upon the culture from which studies are carried on. Most researchers fail to study phenomena from a phenomenological approach. They approach African phenomena with foreign research tools that are not only skewed but 'are culturally insensitive and culturally irrelevant" (Levers, 2006:87). Heferran (2008:1) argues "that although rural women are often presented as silent, absent and under-appreciated, they probably represent the world's most powerful untapped natural resource, and they are more than ever before a key to world stability and understanding". Being owners of homes (Kangwa 2017), women are often leading in their households, but this is generally misunderstood or misrepresented as marginalisation and exclusion. As evident in the current study, Ndau women, particularly the senior mothers and grandmothers, commanded respect as primary health care givers.

The above submissions and observations are a testimony that women in Africa, and in Zimbabwe in particular, are not stereotyped. Makaudze (2014), using the postcolonial perspective, believes that, unlike western women who nurse irreconcilable grudges against their male counterparts, African women are not enemies of African men. They are co-workers in human life. Their roles range from the socio-cultural, religious as well as economic spheres of human life. Though, politically, most African women in patriarchal societies, do not wield much power, socio-culturally women are the custodians of their people's values, norms, practices and beliefs. Interviewee MS30

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stated that Ndau women were pivotal in the administration of *shupa* because of their religio-cultural roles in rituals. For Mapuranga (2010), Ndau women officiate in important religious ceremonies. She argues that the fight against HIV and AIDS cannot be won if women are not empowered. This demonstrates the indispensability of women in general and Ndau women in particular.

Amadiume (1987) depicts African women as 'female husbands.' For Amadiume, gender is fluid. This resonates with the Ndau conception of gender. The issue of gender is not as dichotomous as it is in the west. In the African contexts, males are not purely seen as such in some cases and so are females. This understanding of gender negates the binary view of humanity (of being male or female) it is normally associated with. Among the Shona of Zimbabwe, it is possible to refer to one's mother's brother (uncle) as mother (*mai*) without any confusion at all. It may be argued therefore that for the Ndau people, being female or male are mere identities that do not have serious divisions as that of the west. Although beliefs and practices are shared by both sexes/ genders, some of the male respondents were comfortable to accept, without any reservations, that Ndau women had more expertise than men in the preparation and administration of *shupa*. This is what Chitando (2007) refers to as mature masculinity that provides space for women to demonstrate their potential.

To further illustrate that gender among the African people is fluid, Amadiume (1987 further asserts that women play significant roles in rituals. For her, the concept of a goddess reigns supreme. Religiously, African people revere women who are possessed as they embody the Supreme Being. The mere fact that even the spiritual realm recognises women by possessing them means that women are respected from beyond the physical world. Women are significant religious practitioners. One interviewee MS28 admitted that women were the religious functionaries of the Ndau. He stated that it was the Ndau women who brewed the beer to honour departed family members. He furthermore stated that *muzi mukadzi* [a home is a home because of a woman]. Mapuranga (2010) confirms this when she argues that women are the mainstay of the family. Hence, while gender is perceived as strictly being male and female with definite roles assigned to each, with women assigned roles that are trivialised, for the Ndau, women play significant roles when it comes to the preparation and administration of *shupa.* For the Ndau, gender is not viewed in terms of how important being male or female is. Each gender is significant, and it has its areas

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of expertise. Women are experts in primary health care in Ndau communities. The respondents were adamant that gender roles are assigned according to areas of expertise. As alluded in Chapter Three, a female rainmaker Chapo was not only revered by all and sundry but ensured that the Ndau had enough rains for food security. One interviewee MS34 stated that gender in Africa, and in Zimbabwe in particular, is not intended to stereotype anyone. According to her, the stereotyping of women is a foreign import. Amadiume (1987) agrees when she points an accusing finger at colonialism, accompanied by Christianity, as the corruptions responsible for the erosion of the woman's power in Africa. The participation of women in the belief and practice of *shupa* illustrated that Ndau women were valued in Ndau communities. Unlike previous writers who portrayed the low status of women in IKS, the case of *shupa* indeed venerated Ndau women.

Swai (2010), whose publication, *Beyond Women's Empowerment in Africa: Exploring dislocation and Agency,* is not only about women's knowledge systems as contained in the stories of ordinary women in Africa, but also about knowledge systems that have sustained the continent for many years, despite being sidestepped and undermined by colonial and postcolonial projects. Swai's writing illustrates that the stories by women show how women give meaning to who they are and what is expected of them in modern society (Swai 2010). It is therefore argued that leaving women in IKS discourse is not only unfortunate but denies women their full humanity and, in the end, "diminishes us all" (Ruether (1983: 20).

5.4.6 Taboos (*zviera*) associated with *shupa*

Naidu and Naila (2013) conceptualise taboos as prohibitions or restrictions imposed on certain actions or words by social custom. The respondents stated that the success of *shupa* depended on the strict observance of two elementary prohibitions. These were the opening and closing of the *shupa* by someone other than the mother of the owner of the *shupa* (*mai vemunikazi weshupa*) as well as having sexual intercourse with another woman in the hut/room where the *shupa* was kept. These two taboos were the most dreaded among the Ndau. Mbuya Chipikiri, of Manzvire village, stated that practising *shupa* in this era was risky. According to her *vantu vemazuwa ano avangaingwarire mithetho iyi* [people nowadays can't keep the taboos]. The taboos are discussed below.

5.4.6.1 Opening and closing the *shupa*

Given the centrality of primary health care practices among the Ndau, *bota reshupa* as a medicinal porridge has always been held in high esteem. The porridge was/is jealously guarded against mischief by unscrupulous members of society. One respondent MS04 from the Musani village of Mutema chieftaincy candidly responded as follows:

> *Bota iri rine mithetho yaro inofanirwa kuteedzwa. Rinofanira kugara mumhatso mamai vemwana weshupa kana kuti mbuya vemwana.* [This herbal porridge has prohibitions and taboos which should be observed. It is kept in the child's mother's house/room or the child's grandmother's].

This is meant to safeguard the mixture from being despoiled. This calls for a strict code of conduct whereby the respondents stated that the porridge could be harmful if not properly handled. If, for example, a woman who is not the child's mother, secretly opens and closes the *shupa*, especially after having been intimate with her husband, the child may be affected. The child develops a cough (*gotsorwa*) which may be serious to the point of bleeding, leading to the child's death. It is for this reason that *shupa* is tightly monitored. Such prohibitions are confirmed by Marashe and Maposa (2010) when they discuss taboos surrounding the Ndau uses of salt [*munyu*]. They argue that salt is an asset as a food beverage but can be equally dangerous in a family set-up, especially in polygynous marriages. Due to competition and jealousy, co-wives can use salt to destroy each other. If one wife's salt closed in *dumbu*, just like *shupa*, is secretly opened and closed by another wife, that salt becomes dangerous to health. If used, it leads to *kuhaza* (bleeding) and may kill the affected.

A respondent MS09 stated that *shupa* is so delicate that the child's mother cannot sleep away from where it is stored. If the mother is going on a journey where she will spend a night away from home, she carries with her the child's *shupa*, lest it may be opened and closed during her absence. If she leaves it behind, she makes sure she returns the same day. She would rather leave it with the child's paternal grandmother, than with co-wives in a polygynous marriage.

The respondents stated that if *shupa* has been 'profaned'[55] or rather, its prohibitions violated, corrective measures can be made. However, this must be discovered timeously. Once it happens that the child's *shupa* has been profaned, one female participant MS22 in an FGD explained:

> *Kana yaduhumurwa shupa yemwana kunoendiwa kunyanga yoronzerwa kuti shupa yemwana yashaishwa. Nyanga iya inorasha mitombo iri mushupamwo yogeza shupa iya yoisa imweni kusanganisira neyekurapa mwana wakotsodzwa uyu.* [When the child's *shupa* is intentionally or accidentally opened, a traditional healer's assistance is sought. The traditional healer is told of the profaning of *shupa*. He/ she empties the *shupa* and thoroughly cleans it. He/she adds medicine in it including the one to heal the child].

Another FGD participant MS19 narrated an incident where her child's *shupa* was profaned. Upon discovery the grandmother of the child took the mother to a bush and asked her to dig up a tree's root. A piece of the root was taken, boiled and the medicine given to the child. The root was taken back to the bush and re-joined to the root from which it was severed. The mother was instructed to water it until it re-joined. This took several weeks and when it re-joined the child was healed as well.

5.4.6.2 Having sexual intercourse in a hut/room where *shupa* is stored

Another factor that was mentioned by the respondents was that *shupa* could risk people's lives where sexual licentiousness was rife. In most polygynous marriages each wife has her own hut or room where the husband can have sexual intercourse with her. The respondents stated that should a co-wife, for any reason, say jealousy, have sexual intimacy in another wife's hut where the *shupa* is kept, the *shupa* is no longer safe for use for the child as it has been defiled. If not disclosed, the use of that *shupa* will endanger the life of the child who is fed on the *shupa*. The child would also blood-stained coughs (*kukotsora*) which may result in the child's death if not attended to on time. One elderly male respondent, Sekuru Chitengwa of Musani village, stated that *shupa* called for a great deal of sexual self-control. He stated that with modern women, *shupa* was no longer easy to practice. He complained about the sexual licentiousness that was rife in the community, where

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[55] The use of this word is premised on the fact that *shupa* on its own is sacred. When its sacredness is tampered with, either by being opened and closed by anyone other than the child's mother or paternal grandmother or when a co-wife becomes intimate with the husband in the child's mother's room where it is stored, it is profaned or violated.

people no longer had respect for other men's wives and *vice versa*. For him this was one factor that had led to the demise of *shupa* in some communities. He said "*Neshupa mazuwa ano antu angapera kufa*". This confirms that *shupa* is a practice that calls for much self-control on the part of the practitioners.

On why co-wives would either open and close the *shupa* and have sexual intercourse in a co-wife's hut/room, the respondents provided varying reasons. Sekuru Chitengwa[56] stated that one reason could be due to jealousy, as jealousy is a vice that is prevalent in polygynous marriages. He stated:

> You see, one wife may not have a boy child in the family and feels very jealous that her co-wife has one. She may want to spoil the boy's *shupa* so that the boy dies, and they are the same-having no boy children. She then clandestinely opens and closes the *shupa*.

This was confirmed by Mbuya Garahwa in the FGD when she stated that *"godo rekuti umweni mukadzi wabarirei mukomana ini ndisina zvinoita kuti ashaishe shupa yemwanawo* [The jealousy on a co-wife who gave birth to a boy child could lead to the boy's *shupa* being spoiled]. She further stated that the male child strengthens a woman's stay at her in-laws. She does not only gain respect but also motherhood status in the family. "*Kuti mukadzi aite chiremera pamusha pake unofanira kubara mwana mukomana*".

This reason points to the importance that Africans attach to the male child. Failure to produce one renders a woman less important in a polygynous marriage, hence the jealousy. In a Ugandan study, Beyeza-Kashesya, Neema, Ekstrom, Kaharuza, Mirembe and Kulane (2010) found that the male child is more valued than the girl child. Beyeza-Kashesya et al cite one of the study's respondents who states:

> Men would always want to produce a boy first. …men usually think of their blood. For example, when a man leaves a boy, then he is sure of continuity of his blood since he leaves an heir behind (Beyeza-Kashesya et al 2010:74)

Beyeza-Kashesya et al. further argue that African men aspire getting as many boys as are possible even if it means getting them from different women. It is not therefore only a misfortune for a woman to give birth to girls only, but a calamity that is met with scorn in an African community.

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[56] Interview with Sekuru Chitengwa, Musani village, 09 May 2017.

No woman would therefore be happy in a polygynous marriage to have girls only when others have boys. This societal burden weighs so heavy on the woman that given an opportunity she may engage in activities meant to harm or kill her co-wife's boy children for them to be equal.

Another reason cited by the respondents for besmirching *shupa* was that people may do it unwittingly. Mbuya Chipikiri[57] stated that *shupa* could be opened and closed by other children not realising the risks thereof. It is for that reason that she said, "*Mazuwa ano ungachaita shupa ikasakuwadza antu nekuangarara kweana emazuwa ano*" [It is not possible to have *shupa* these days. People may get hurt given how mischievous children are nowadays]. *Shupa* is thus believed to be an IKS that must be safely kept out of the reach of children.

5.4.7 Masculinit(y)ies associated with *shupa*

Viewed through the feminist cultural hermeneutic lens, it is noted that *shupa* carries masculine undertones that are both life-affirming and life-denying. The respondents' views alluded to the close association of *shupa* and masculine behaviour.

5.4.7.1 Manhood enhancer

Within the Ndau culture, *shupa* is linked to human sexuality and reproduction. Just like Marashe and Maposa's (2010) findings on salt among the Ndau, *shupa* is associated with Ndau manhood. Writing on the issue of salt, Marashe and Maposa state that salt was used as *vhuka-vhuka* [aphrodisiac] where it is used to boost and sustain an erection, *varembedzeka musana* (which means the husband has lost sexual desire and can no longer sustain an erection). The respondents explained that the belief is that *shupa* strengthens one's back (*mushana*) and keeps the male's sexual libido high. Once *mushana* is strengthened, one becomes sexually strong and does not 'retire' sexually. Sekuru Chitengwa stated that the different herbs in *shupa* have various functions and enhancing one's manhood was one of them. He said:

> We grew up knowing that *shupa,* apart from preventing one from contracting illnesses, was meant to enhance one's virility as a man. One could see an old man marrying a young girl. To enhance his virility, the old man had to continuously and consistently take *shupa* to remain sexually strong to satisfy his young wife.

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[57] Interview with Mbuya Chipikiri, Manzvire village, 12 May 2017.

Arguing from the same perspective, Muyambo (2015) observes that *shupa* contained herbs that are said to enhance a male's virility. Although the respondents could not explain why polygamous marriages[58], which according to Konyana (2016. Muchabaiwa 2017) have taken a paradigm shift, were prevalent in the study areas, it would not be speculative to argue that disproportionate polygamous marriages, where an old man of eighty could still marry a young wife in her twenties, were sustained by *shupa* that ensured that the old man remained sexually active to satisfy all his wives in the polygamous marriage.

On whether the sexual virility element of *shupa,* in the context of different pandemics in Zimbabwe such as HIV and AIDS, was a safe space for both men and women, the respondents were in unison and argued that being sexually strong did not mean men could be promiscuous. They insisted that every man was supposed to be faithful to the wives he had, and the wives should do the same. This resonates with Klinken's (2011) views on male headship where he argues that African men head their families. The headship role calls for responsibility and accountability for one's actions. For Chitando (2007) this realisation that men cannot, should not and must not use their virility for promiscuous behaviour, especially in the context of HIV and AIDS, is mature masculinity.

Although the elders could remain faithful to each other, the same scenario could not be said for young men. Young men and boys in a study by Barber and Ricardo (2005) and Muyambo (2015), boasted that they were sexually strong, hence they deserved to be adventurous. This creates, as Barber and Richardo (2005) argue, the 'macho image' where the boys feel that it is their prerogative to prove their manhood by experimenting with girls. While it is argued that *shupa* was understood to be an enhancer of male virility, what needs to be remembered is that showing off in terms of one's sexual prowess is problematic in the context of pandemics such as HIV and AIDS. Uchendu (2008) points out that in the Zulu society, which is a microcosm of African societies, penetrative sexual encounters of any kind before marriage were viewed as non- masculine acts. For him it was inappropriate behaviour to prove one's masculinity through sexual conquest. As a

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[58] Men now unofficially have wives outside of the matrimonial home. A man has one known wife but may have another one or two with whom he may have children but remain a secret to the main family. This is a new form of polygamy that most African men engage in. See Elias Konyana. 2016. "When culture and the law meet: an ethical analysis of the interplay between the domestic violence act and the traditional beliefs and cultural practices of the Ndau people in Zimbabwe" Unpublished PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu Natal, 100.

result, the Zulu society does not condone a boy or man who deflowers a girl, which is regarded as a punishable offence.

The above submission points to the fact that although *shupa* could be used as an enhancer of men's virility, it does not mean that Ndau men and boys can abuse it for selfish ends. Uchendu's argument confirms the fact that showing off one's sexual prowess was not condoned in African societies. If *shupa* could enhance a man's virility for sexual gratification for him and his spouse(s), then there was nothing wrong with the herbal porridge. In fact, the use of *shupa* in marital relationships meant that the man sexually satisfied his wife/ wives, hence chances of cheating were minimised. This creates a safety net in the context of pandemics such as HIV and AIDS. *Shupa,* in this regard, served as, according to Barker and Richardo (2005), "a form of positive social control". Once the man, whose virility would have been enhanced by *shupa*, is able to sexually satisfy his spouse(s), the spouse(s) would not cheat as is often the case in polygynous marriages. *Shupa* would have prevented a potentially explosive scenario where the man would have failed to sexually gratify his spouse(s). The spouse(s) would have become involved in extra-marital relations in search of sexual gratification. However, this issue has serious consequences which fall outside of the parameters of this study.

5.4.7.2 *Shupa* as 'central locking': a promiscuity check?

Cases of infidelity and cheating among married couples characterise African marriages (Dewah and Mutula 2014). Due to this, Dewah and Mutula submit that a number of indigenous intervention methods have to be employed to curtail infidelity and immorality. According to these scholars *runyoka* in Zimbabwe is one such indigenous intervention strategy. They define *runyoka* as an indigenous way of 'fencing' or 'locking' a spouse, usually wives, to prevent them from committing adultery. The 'fenced' or 'locked' spouse is not made aware of this strategy. The 'fencing' is done using herbs, charms and any other magic. When an unsuspecting man sleeps with the 'fenced' woman, the two remained 'locked' and cannot separate until the woman's husband 'unlocks' them after having met his demands.

Similarly, *shupa,* according to the respondents, was said to be closely associated with 'central locking' just like *runyoka.* In the FGD, this issue surfaced but since the group was made up of both men and women, the respondents were evasive. One female respondent MS20 refuted the concept

of *kuhaza* in *shupa*. She admitted that there are unscrupulous members in society who may turn a well-intentioned practice like *shupa* to suit their selfish ends. She insisted, however, that *shupa* was not meant to hurt anyone, yet people abused it for their selfish ends. It appeared that *kuhaza* was an issue with the *shupa* practice. This prompted a follow-up with interviewed respondents, especially the males. These respondents stated that when a man (who had had *shupa*) is cheated on by his spouse by having an extra-marital affair, this became evident when the husband became intimate with his spouse. Unlike *runyoka,* where the man is joined to the woman, in *shupa* the husband profusely bleeds immediately after intimacy. This bleeding through the mouth and nose or coughing up a blood- stained cough substance is known in the local language as *kuhaza.* Among the professional interviewees, a university lecturer, confirmed that the *kuhaza* concept exists in the *bota reshupa* practice. The respondent admitted that when a man who was fed on *shupa* during his childhood becomes intimate with his wife who had cheated/ was cheating on him, the husband coughs up a blood- stained substance (*kukotsodzwa*). This confirmed my family member's experiences as outlined in Chapter One. The respondent went further and confirmed that if the husband was not timeously attended to by traditional healers, he could die. The respondent, however, stated that the matter can be addressed if discovered on time, but the husband becomes *denhe* [husk] to use his own words. The husband becomes sexually and physically weak. Muyambo's (2015:68) study confirms this dimension of *shupa* by stating that "Once a man has bled, elders among the Ndau believe that he does not fully recover. He becomes what they call *denhe*, a husk and hence he becomes sexually weak. The man loses his sexual vitality". Another interviewee confirmed that *kuhaza* is whereby a husband bleeds after having had sexual intercourse with a spouse who had been adulterous. For him men who had not had *shupa* in their youth do not bleed when their spouses cheat on them. It only happens to those husbands who had had *shupa.* Once the husband bleeds, family members know the wife or one of the wives, if in a polygynous marriage, have cheated.

Unlike in *runyoka* where the cheating couple suffer the consequences of their infidelity by remaining joined to each other for all to see, in *shupa* the innocent husband suffers. Although, according to Muyambo (2015) the cheating wife receives a fair share of the humiliation, scorn and divorce in some instances, it is the innocent husband who is affected and infected and can die if not attended to on time. The respondents clearly stated that in most of the cases the cheating wife

would not be aware that her husband had had *shupa* and therefore she is unwittingly 'locked' to engage in extra-marital affairs.

Using cultural hermeneutics as an analytical tool, especially the postcolonial African feminist perspective, the practice of *shupa*, despite its efficacy, has elements that put people's lives at risk. The above-mentioned risk demonstrates that IKS should not be uncritically embraced. There is a need to interrogate IKS in order to make them agencies rather than risks to life. This view resonates with cultural hermeneutics theorists like Kanyoro (2002), Mapuranga (2010) and Siwila (2011, 2012) to mention a few. For these scholars, culture, to which IKS are a component, must be analysed to make it safe for all humanity. Apart from endangering the lives of women, as most scholars (Mapuranga 2010, Siwila 2012) argue, the above *shupa* taboo poses a risk to everyone in the community. If the container is opened, the baby is affected, through the *kuhaza* concept, men are at risk and women suffer the consequences of having cheated by being dehumanised. The questions that remained unanswered are: Why would a wife not bleed when the husband cheats? Could this be the power of belief? What if the husband bleeds of other causes not the wife's infidelity? These critical questions point to the need to scrutinise IKS and reconfigure them for life-affirmation.

5.4.8 Respondents' perceptions on *shupa* as Intellectual Property

A contentious issue that emerged during the fieldwork is the issue of indigenous knowledge systems and their protection. Having seen how hesitant some of the respondents were in disclosing information on *shupa*, a need arose to understand this hesitancy. Thus, this part of the thesis addresses the subtheme of IKS and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The intention here is not to delve into debates about IPR *per se* but to provide an analysis of this subtheme.

5.4.8.1 Intellectual property

While a universally accepted definition of IPR may prove difficult, Grenier (1998) understands IPR as mechanisms to protect individual and industrial inventions. Mshana (2002) views ownership rights over intellectual property as IPR. He identifies three types of property, namely, movable property (e.g. cars, wristwatches), immovable property (houses, land) and intellectual property, which refers to the creations of the human intellect (Mshana 2002). This property is the preoccupation of the following section.

For the purpose of this discussion, IPR are understood as rights that information holders have in either disseminating the information or withholding it. This includes individual and community rights to benefit from knowledge that finds itself with other organisations who may sell it for financial gain. Experience has taught most local communities in Africa that their knowledge, especially relating to medicinal plants, is stolen by pharmaceutical organisations who 'improve' and patent them into modern drugs. These pharmaceutical companies sell the medicine without remunerating the originators of the plant knowledge. This scenario creates suspicion and mistrust between IKS researchers and IKS holders. During a symposium on devil's claw, the former president of Namibia, Sam Nujoma cited a situation in Chinsembu (2015) where big pharmaceutical companies had patented the formulae of the devil's claw, making it unavailable to the natural owners of the resource.

To ascertain this suspicion and mistrust, one elderly woman respondent MS11 initially refused to share information despite having made prior arrangements with her. After assuring her that the research was for academic purposes only, she then cooperated. During the interview, she was asked why she was hesitant to share information on *shupa.* She stated:

> *Iiii taremba kubirwa ruziyo rwedu ngevantu vatisingaziyi. Vanouya tovaudza tozoona votengesa mitombo yedu kumathaundiyo. Isusu apana chandinoona. Saka atichanyanyi kusununguka kupa zvatinoziya mukupona kwedu* [Aaah we are tired of people we do not know who 'steal' our knowledge. They come to us and we give them the knowledge about the plants. Surprising we find our medicine in the streets for sale. We, ourselves, we don't get anything. As a result, we are no longer free to give our knowledge to anyone].

The foregoing indicates the highly emotive nature of the IPR. There is suspicion and lack of trust between indigenous knowledge holders and IKS researchers. The reason for this is that indigenous knowledge holders receive no remuneration when their knowledge is taken and sold without their consent. Mashelkar (2002:191) concurs that "the issue of access to and use of indigenous knowledge linked to traditional knowledge is becoming highly emotive, not least because of the huge implications of the economics of such traditional knowledge". The knowledge originators, who are the farmers in the rural communities are forgotten. Once their knowledge is patented, the indigenous knowledge holders cannot claim ownership of their knowledge. The patenting organisations claim ownership as the originators of that knowledge. What this means is that the

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knowledge is 'stolen' and huge sums of money are made with none being channelled to the local communities from whence the knowledge was stolen. This scenario has resulted in many companies being taken to court over biopiracy. However, not many local communities have the courage or the resources to take this route. In the end their knowledge is stolen without not only compensation, but also without due recognition.

Although the respondents did not know IPR by that name, it was clear that they knew that their ownership of property, their intellectual property rights were not being honoured. One interviewee MS09 stated that she was once called to a traditional healers' workshop in Bulawayo (a city in Zimbabwe) where traditional healers were asked to share their various knowledges and experiences on healing and curing different types of diseases. She narrated that it was their knowledge that the workshop organisers 'stole' and were making drugs in clinics using the knowledge from traditional healers. It was for this reason that she became suspicious about people who came to her purporting to be carrying out research on IKS, particularly IKS on traditional medicine. Emeagwali (2016:164) concurs with this suspicion, when she argues that "African Traditional Medicine (ATM) practitioners must refuse to divulge the secrets and intricate dimensions of their practice sought, and undoubtedly deserve protection of their intellectual property rights".

Mshana (2002) admittedly argues that biopiracy is double theft. Firstly, biopiracy steals creativity and innovation. Secondly, patents on stolen IKS rob owners of economic options on everyday survival. The respondents argued that because of biopiracy experiences, they have learnt to be very conservative when it comes to sharing IKS, particularly those on health matters. They were no longer at liberty to share any IKS information with people they did not know. This led to the discussion of the sub-theme of IPR, IKS apprenticeship. This sub-theme is discussed in the next section.

5.4.8.2 *Shupa* Apprenticeship

IKS holders have often been accused of being "secretive about their indigenous knowledge especially on medicinal plants" (Emeagwali 2016:164). She argues that the field of African Traditional Medicine (ATM) is filled with secrecy. She states that the practitioners are reluctant to divulge fully the secrets of their trade. By apprenticeship it is inferred that any knowledge holder

such as a traditional healer 'trains'[59] a close confidante, who can be either a son, daughter, cousin, niece or grandchild, to put that IKS into practice. The apprentice goes through several sessions where he/she is taught how to collect, prepare and administer certain herbs to cure certain diseases.

This theme emerged from the fieldwork where IKS holders proved that their knowledge was safe in the face of adversary such as globalisation and technology. During the literature review it emerged that IKS were fast losing their grip because their holders were dying out, hence the need to document and database them (Agrawal 2002). The respondents were clear that they teach their young ones so that when they die, they would have bequeathed the knowledge to would-be IKS holders. One respondent MS07 was interviewed in the presence of her daughter who demonstrated that she too had knowledge about *shupa*. Where the mother was a bit forgetful, the daughter would remind her and at times she explained how *shupa* worked. Asked from whom the daughter had learnt about *shupa,* she indicated that she had been 'trained' by her mother, learning from experience.

> *Ini ndakazvifunda kubva kuna mai ivo vakazvifunda kubva kuna mai vavowo. Vaindituma kundotsvaka mitombo iyi vondidzidzisa kuti bota iri rinobikwa sei. Isiya nausiye.* [I learnt this from my mother and she also learnt it from her mother. She used to send me to collect the medicine from the forest and she would then teach me how to prepare *shupa.* It is passed on from generation to generation].

Semali concurs with this when he states that he learnt certain IKS from his mother and father. He is quoted at length here:

> I recall vividly the many days I accompanied my mother and father to go to work in the maize (corn) fields. I listened to them telling stories about their youth and about their challenges in life. My mother never passed the opportunity to alert me about the different plants which were treatments for snake-bites, spider bites, and many other remedies for headache, stomach-ache, and so on. My father often warned me to remember not to cut certain trees or shrubs for feeding the

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[59] The training here is not done in a four-cornered room but is where the knowledge holder makes the apprentice learn by seeing the knowledge holder doing or where the knowledge holder takes the apprentice to where the herbs, if it is about traditional medicine, are. He/she explains how they herbs are collected, prepared and administered to clients. At times the knowledge holder asks the apprentice to go and collect, prepare and administer the medicine. The trainee learns by observing and doing. This is the training referred to in this study as IKS and Apprenticeship.

animals. He would explain how poisonous and deadly such grass would be to our livestock. All this information was learned effortlessly and stored in my memory as a way of survival in a wild and cruel terrain (Semali and Kincheloe 1999:9).

The above quotation is a clear testimony that although IKS are not written down, the knowledge holders pass their knowledge on to the next generation. This has kept IKS sustained among many local communities. This is how IKS are preserved and protected for future generations. However, it must be stated that relying only on memory may not be the best way of preserving and protecting IKS. Agrawal (2002) suggests creating databases for IKS as a way of preserving them rather than depending on memory. But again, documentation for the creation of those databases has its own challenges in that the printed word has no equal impact with the spoken word. In other words, during translation much is lost in the process. The conservation of IKS by isolation, documentation and storage in international, regional and national archives, which is the conservation of IKS *ex-situ* (Brokensha, Warren and Werner 1980)*,* is problematic as well. If western science has been condemned of being non-responsive to local demands and being divorced from people's lives, then centralised storage and management of IKS make IKS equally divorced from people's lives. One must be mindful of Agrawal's (1995b) argument that IKS exist in a local context, anchored to a particular social group in a particular setting at a particular time. This then gives credence to oral transmission of IKS as the respondents of this study have illustrated. This has been the way IKS have been preserved, protected, promoted and conserved for generations. This is the way of IKS and apprenticeship.

5.5 *Shupa's* prevalence among the Ndau communities

On the prevalence of *shupa* among the Ndau communities, it emerged that the practice was still prevalent in some communities but almost extinct in others although members still had fresh memories of the practice. In communities where the practice had ceased to exist, the respondents were nostalgic about the practice. One elderly woman MS05 stated:

> *Mukoma iwe, shupa yaibaashanda zvayo. Kushanda kwemene. Kwanga kusina zvekuti vana vanokura vasina kukwanga zvotoona mazuwa ano. Hino hai, dai ndicho chiyungu chenyu ichi* [(My brother, *shupa* was helpful. It helped us a lot. There were no children who would grow unhealthy like we witness nowadays. Perhaps it is now because of your modern life styles].

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The respondent's sadness and discontent at the disappearance of the once cherished practice was evident in her statement, *"Dai chicho chiyungu chenyu ichi"* [Perhaps it is now because of your modern life style]. This means that she blamed modernity and its attendant vices as the major cause(s) for the extinction of *shupa* in her area.

To emphasise how modernity destroyed practices such as *shupa,* another respondent complained how the hospital had usurped traditional medicine (as earlier on stated in Chapter Three of this study). She narrated:

> *Vana venyu hamuchadi kuti tivape zvaitiponesa nekuti maakuvaendesa kukhiriniki. Kungoti musoro bandei mworumba kukhiriniki. Zvino shupa yacho tichaipa anaani? Kwaakutofa kwayo.* [You no longer want us to administer traditional medicine to your children. When they fall sick, you take them to the clinic. So, we have no one to administer *shupa* to. It is now becoming extinct].

One professional interviewee, MS31, stated that some of the reasons why the *shupa* practice was no longer popular in some communities was due to its prohibitions and taboos. For the interviewee the prohibitions and taboos are such that one must be very cautious in dealing with *shupa.* Because of the *laissez-faire* approach to life by 'modern' families, administering *shupa* may be disastrous. The respondent regretted the lack of morality among people and the level of competition that has resulted in jealousy. *Shupa* may be used to eliminate each other.

After being asked whether she was at liberty to administer *shupa* to her grandchildren, an elderly woman, Mbuya Chipikiri[60] responded by saying:

> *Iii, kudai ndoofira hangu mujere? Ndinovapa mai vacho vokorera kuibata zvakanaka yokuwadza mwana. Totozvirekerawo hedu. Asi mapiritsi enyu achamupedza.* [What if I end up in jail? I may give it to the mother and she mishandles it and hurts the child. We are abandoning the practice altogether. But, surely, your pills will finish you all].

 Her voice was the voice of disapproval of modern medicine. She, however, had no option but to abandon the practice of *shupa* for fear of being accused of harming her grandchildren, but she still retained her faith in the efficacy of *shupa* in primary health care matters.

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[60] Interview with Mbuya Chipikiri, Manzvire village, 12 May 2017.

Another reason cited by respondents for the non-existence of *shupa* had to do with environmental degradation. Due to climate change, most of the trees that would provide the leaves, bark and roots for *bota reshupa* are no longer accessible as they have become extinct. Where they used to be found, there are now dry valleys due to climatic changes. People walk long distances to find the trees. This has had a negative impact on the practice of *shupa*. The *Gowa Valley,* as indicated in Chapter Three has been adversely affected and this is where most respondents regretted the scarcity of the tree bark, leaves and roots that are used as the herbs in the preparation *of shupa*. People have therefore given up on the practice.

However, responses from other communities indicated that it was not a total disaster. For these respondents, *shupa* was still in practice and has withstood the test of time. When appointments were made with some of the interviewees, they prepared *shupa* in advance on the day of the interviews. In some instances, the researcher was shown the herbs and the plants from which the leaves are taken for *shupa* preparation. This was evident enough that *shupa* was and is still prevalent among some of the Ndau communities.

One elderly woman, MS12, was even prepared to take the researcher to the river where she wanted to reveal the plants. She said "*kana mweida kuona imweni mitombo yacho itorimwo mubani umo*" [If you want to see the plants, they are there in the river]. To support that *shupa* was and is still prevalent, one interviewee, MS7, from Musani village stated that she prepared the herbal porridge even for Christians. She admitted that Christians visited her during the night. The Christians bring their children to have the porridge to prevent them from being attacked by *chinyamukaka* (a local word for a very dangerous ailment that attacks babies). One respondent stated that *chinyamukaka* is an ailment where a breastfeeding child vomits a milk-like substance and is usually accompanied by coughing. The ailment was said to be equally dangerous to infants. Interviewee MS7 went on to state that after being assisted the Christians begged the elderly woman not to reveal their visits to their fellow church members. They wanted to keep it as a secret as they could be excommunicated from the church if their consultation with traditional healers became known to the church leaders. She went on to add that what was ironic, was that these very same church leaders also consulting her with their children at night. This syncretic behaviour of being Christians during the day and traditionalists after hours was also emphasised by Okeke, Ibenwa and Okeke (2017). African Christians patronise both religions when it suits them. Hlatshwayo (2017:219)

sums it up by stating "They act as Christians by day and adherents of African traditional religion by night".

What also confirmed that *shupa* was prevalent was that, when searching for people who had knowledge of the herbal porridge, people were quick to direct me to certain members of the communities. That was an indication that the belief and practice was indeed very much in practice. For example, in the Musani village, when the local headmaster was asked whether he knew practitioners of *shupa,* he was able to identify an elderly woman who even showed the researcher the porridge. The same occurred in Chikore, in Pfidza village. A local school teacher and a church deacon identified two women who showed the researcher the plants they had collected for preparing *shupa.* The respondent MS 15, had this to say:

> *Ndati kumwanasikana wangu nyamashi enda undotsvaka mitombo ndoda kurya bota reshupa. Andiryi rine tsvigiri inini. Takakura teirya iri ndosaka mwaguma tooda kutorinasira* [I said to my girl child today go and collect the herbs for the porridge. I don't eat porridge with sugar. We grew up eating this porridge, that's why you saw us ready to prepare it].

The above submissions indicate that *shupa,* as a belief and practice, still abounds and sustains the Ndau. The practice may have undergone some changes as indicated earlier in the study, but it has not become extinct. It has withstood the test of time.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the third objective of the study: investigating the efficacy of the *bota reshupa* practice among the Ndau people. The chapter demonstrated that *shupa* is an indigenous asset to the Ndau. It represents their primary health asset, their rite of passage, their practice of identity, their expression of beauty as well as their practice of female agency. This chapter illustrated that although the practice, through its feature of *kuhaza*, poses a life-threatening IKS*,* it acts as a deterrent to would-be violaters of its taboos and prohibitions. The element of *kuhaza* to *shupa* acts as a socializing agent where women are discouraged from cheating on their husbands lest they hurt their husbands and risk being humiliated and divorced in the process. It is not a 'snare' for would-be adulterous wives but discourages infidelity in the African worldview.

The chapter also dealt with the issue of indigenous knowledge and IPR as well as IKS apprenticeship. Indigenous knowledge holders need to be respected, including their right to

ownership of knowledge. IPR protects the patenting of their knowledge. To ensure that the knowledge they have is not lost when the elders die, the knowledge holders, as illustrated in this chapter, engage in informal apprenticeship. The confidential sharing of knowledge was found prevalent among the elderly, where they had either 'trained' their daughters/sons, or the confidantes have learnt through observation followed by trial and error up to the point where the 'trainees' become experts.

Having demonstrated the efficacy of *shupa* among the Ndau people of the Manicaland province in Zimbabwe, Chapter Six focuses on the future of *shupa* in modern 21st century Zimbabwe and discusses the prospects and challenges of *shupa.*

Chapter Six

Ndau Perceptions on the Challenges and Opportunities of *Shupa*

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Five provided an in-depth discussion on the themes that emerged from the study. *Shupa* as a health resource among the Ndau was discussed at length. It also discoursed on how *shupa* as an identity practice, sets the Ndau apart as a unique ethno-linguistically group and how it is a practice for self-expression. The chapter also includes a discussion on how *shupa* empowers Ndau women, a discussion that demonstrated that even though women are the custodians of culture men are the owners of that culture.

Chapter Six focuses on the Ndau perceptions of the status of IKS, particularly *shupa* in the context of a myriad of challenges that local communities face in upholding their IKS. This chapter addresses the third objective of the study which is: To examine the status of *shupa* in 21st century Zimbabwe. It does this by exploring the challenges and prospects of *shupa* with the intention to determine its future status. The chapter addresses the question: What is the future of *shupa* as an IKS in Zimbabwe? The question arose after realising that while IKS discourses abound in world foras, very little seems to be taking place regarding the preservation, promotion, protection and documentation (Hlatshwayo 2017, Mapara 2017) of practices and knowledges such as *shupa* in Zimbabwe; and whether this scenario could spell disaster for IKS in Zimbabwe. The chapter proceeds by discussing challenges that local communities like the Ndau community face in practicing their IKS. The chapter poses questions such as, now that colonisation is long gone, why it is that IKS, *shupa* in particular, are still facing challenges? What threatens *shupa* as an IKS for the Ndau? What prospects are there that *shupa* will continue to withstand the test of time? The chapter identifies and examines some of the main contemporary challenges facing IKS in general and *shupa* in particular and assesses the existing and potential opportunities that affirms its credibility as a community-based knowledge capable of continuing to endure the test of time and serve its community and humanity in an increasingly globalising world.

6.2 Challenges faced by IKS in general

Despite the steadily increasing space and place by IKS in the African political, cultural and academic contexts, there remains a host of external and inherent challenges and barriers to deal with before IKS are fully embraced as independent and/or contemporary sources of knowledge and mainstreamed as consummate agents of innovations and natural resource management (Osman 2018). Although colonialism, as one of the external forces that shook IKS to their foundation is said to have long departed, it still continues to cast a shadow on the postcolonial era.

The challenges that threaten IKS in general are divided into three categories: firstly, the impact of colonialism which is still evident in Africa; secondly the impediments associated with IKS as a source of knowledge; and thirdly, the passive response of most African universities and research institutions as research hubs in Africa. Anwar Osman's lecture on *Indigenous knowledge in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities* is an insightful, informative and helpful lecture for this chapter. Before discussing the challenges that threaten *shupa* and its potential opportunities for the Ndau and Zimbabweans by extension, it is essential to have a broad overview of the challenges and opportunities of IKS. This overview provides the following:

- a broad understanding of the challenges and opportunities of IKS before particularising on *shupa.*
- Enables a comparative approach
- Situates the challenges and opportunities of *shupa* into context by tracing the emerging trends.

6.2.1 Colonial impact: A general overview

With the advent of colonialism in Africa, there emerged many transformations ranging from the political to the social, economic and religio-cultural. African politics were never the same under the colonial period. The role of the chiefs, as political luminaries of African communities were usurped by the colonial powers. The social system of communities was disenfranchised and the local communities' economic situation that entirely depended on agriculture, was adversely affected by the introduction of cash economies. Religio-culturally, Africans were alienated from their beliefs and practice systems as they were forced to embrace the colonial way of life. Mawere

(2012) avers that the encounter between indigenous knowledge systems and colonialism brought many changes to Africa's traditional villages. For example, in Zimbabwe the whites from Britain allegedly stole valued resources such as land, ivory and minerals, among others (Moyana and Sibanda 1984). Mawere (2012) further argues that black Africans were taught to despise their own culture and to believe that western knowledge systems were the only systems which offered the right to the universal construction of knowledge. This negatively impacted on African norms, beliefs, practices and values. The African epistemologies and ontologies were inferiorised thus making Africans culturally impoverished. This created a western epistemological hegemony that annihilated other alternative ways of knowing.

Once the Africans were emasculated, it was easy for the colonisers to dominate and control. Progler (1999) concurs by stating that the policies that ensured complete domination and control resulted in the absolute submission of the communities and stigmatisation of their knowledge systems; consequently, many communities were trapped in the design of perpetuating their own subjugation. This subjugation was necessitated through western education, Christianisation and the degeneration of relatively self-sufficient economies into dependent consumers (Eyong 2007).

This domination did not end with most African countries gaining their independence. It continued to prosper during the post-colonial (neo-colonial) articulations in the economic and political domains (Progler 1999). The current systems of production and dissemination of academic knowledge in Africa reflects the western hegemony (Zeleza 2006). This resulted in what Zeleza (2006) calls the provisions of intellectual exchange which is distinctly unequal: where African Studies including IKS in Europe, constitute a marginal part of the academy while the European epistemology remains central in African Studies. This scenario has resulted in scholars (Odora Hoppers, 2001, Kaya 2014, Dei 2014) advocating for a review of curricula in Africa's institutions of learning where IKS must be mainstreamed to make education in Africa relevant.

Osman (2018) who, in his inaugural lecture, correctly argues that the continued western domination of knowledge and marginalisation of African systems of knowledge continue to be an academic challenge that calls for a comprehensive evaluation, rigorous planning and watchful implementation of policies that ensure the recognition and provisions of space for the local in the

existing political, economic, cultural, and pedagogical domains. Until this is implemented IKS in Africa will continue to be marginalised as the 'other' knowledge in world knowledge discourse.

6.2.2 Challenges faced by IKS as a source of knowledge

Besides being negatively impacted upon by colonialism, IKS in Africa continue to face challenges as sources of knowledge. The challenges include alleged ethnicisation, epistemological, conceptual and methodological issues and the challenges associated with their restoration and protection.

6.2.2.1 Alleged Ethnicisation

It is argued that IKS are place-specific because of their local nature (Dei, Hall and Rosenberg 2000). Because IKS are a localised knowledge base, they (IKS) are often associated with limited significance. They are perceived as only useful to the local community that practise them. This is what Osman (2018) refers to as alleged ethnicisation. He calls it 'alleged' because this is far from being accurate. Arguing against limiting IKS significance to a locality, Emeagwali and Dei (2014) posit that such knowledge has not remained static, neither has it been confined to the shores of the African continent. They further argue that like all other knowledge systems, such knowledges have diffused and interacted with other ways of knowing from other communities. What these scholars are saying is that many indigenous communities share knowledge systems in common with each other. Indigenous knowledge cannot be dismissed as mere local's phenomena. Such knowledge "extends across cultures, histories, and geographical spaces, as well as across time" (Dei, Hall and Rosenberg 2000:4). Mubangizi and Kaya summarise this, stating:

> …we reject the view that African indigenous ways of knowing and knowledge production lack universal usage because of their localised and community-based nature. This is a simplistic view of the nature of knowledge production and its uses, because all knowledge systems are initially created and utilised locally-but with potential to be used globally (Mubangizi and Kaya 2015:131).

To support the view that IKS are not only useful within the confines of the community in which they are used, Osman (2018) states that IKS, though place-specific, are useful as inter-intra communities conflict resolution mechanisms. Ademowo and Nuhu (2017) concur when they state that IKS are useful in community conflict resolution and management in Africa. The conflict can be between members or families of the same community (inter-conflict) or between community A

and community B (intra-conflict). Once IKS can resolve a community to community conflict then the issue of ethnicisation is no longer tenable. This, therefore, means that confining IKS to ethnic groups is a serious challenge that does not only trivialise IKS but denies IKS the ability to potentially solve world challenges.

6.2.2.2 Epistemological, conceptual and methodological issues

IKS in Africa face some serious epistemological, conceptual and methodological challenges. IKS are often misunderstood and as a result there are also challenges of how to conceptualise them as well as what methods are to be used in studying a people's IKS. The shadow of colonialism in Africa cannot be easily wished away. This has resulted in what Museka (2012) calls 'the colonial jinx' whereby the conceptualization and study of IKS have remained Eurocentric.

The major challenge being faced by IKS is that they are not understood as another alternative knowledge *per se.* This is evident in the terminology used to refer to IKS, especially by those bent on devaluing and marginalizing IKS. Horsthemke (2004) is one such scholar who dismisses IKS as a knowledge that involves incomplete or at least a questionable understanding or conception of knowledge. For others IKS is 'irrational' and 'superstition' hence are unable to constitute valid bodies of knowledge for the advancement of science since their mode of thinking is spontaneous and not systematic; their fact and reasonableness are related to local conditions and culture; and their classifications highlight ontological and biological differences between thought systems (Nel 2008). This colonial thinking has rendered the common-sense ideas of IKS (Dei, Hall and Rosenberg 2000) not being taken seriously. Lack of seriousness in how countries mainstream IKS has denied these countries to benefit from the agency and efficacy of IKS.

Another challenge clouding the study of IKS in Africa has to do with methodological issues. The field methods currently employed by researchers into IKS are predominantly that of western methodology. Yet IKS, by their nature, are diverse, comprising their socio-economic and spiritual dimensions. IKS use methods of discovery (trial and error). Their mode of transmission is oral and collective (Emeagwali 2003), thus, it could be exigent to use them concurrently with the standard scientific methodologies; added to that the IK diachronic experimentation procedure can pose logistic inconvenience (Osman 2018). Using western methodologies in researching IKS poses challenges that result in distortions and misconceptions. This leaves IKS undervalued and

marginalised. There is need to use methodologies that ensure respect for IKS and its practising people.

6.2.2.3 Challenges in the restoration and protection of IKS

A daunting challenge faced by IKS is the IKS restoration and protection endeavour. The major issue here is how IKS can be restored and where IKS should be stored and in what form IKS can be stored and restored. The colonial impact on IKS has been considerable, so much so that IKS have come to be regarded as 'folk knowledge' (Briggs 2005). This resulted in the inferiorisation and marginalisation of IKS. Given the renewed interest in IKS by decision-makers, environmentalists, ethicists and educationists (Muyambo 2016), IKS have attracted much attention of late. IKS agency and efficacy have proved beyond any doubt that they (IKS) are development-oriented (Mafongoya and Ajayi 2017). However, since IKS have been pushed to the periphery and in some cases have been abandoned and forgotten, the challenge is then on how to restore this knowledge. Indigenous resources which IKS can draw on to be restored and stored have not been spared the colonial onslaught. Artefacts, for example, that were used to store IKS in have also been long forgotten. This has left IKS, despite their agency and efficacy, difficult to restore and store.

Another related challenge is the protection of IKS. Protection from globalisation and internet violations have far- reaching effects in dispossessing the local communities of their knowledge systems (Osman 2018). Homogenisation of communities under the auspices of globalisation has serious challenges. Communities are likely to abandon their useful IKS in a bid to move with others in a globalised world. It is a truism that communities do not move at the same pace due to different circumstances. In a bid to be part of the globalisation process some communities abandon certain forms of their IKS. Globalisation, therefore, forces communities to homogenise, thereby violating the situatedness of IKS. This violates the privacy of IKS as place-specific ways of knowing. However, Muyambo's (2017:181) findings on *humwe* (work party) demonstrates that IKS have remained "resilient and buoyant" in the context of globalisation.

Furthermore, the issue of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is problematic in IKS discourses. It is argued that rights accrue to those who produce IKS and not those who own IKS (Mshana 2002, Osman 2018). IPR are characteristically individualistic and hence are not applicable to the collective and communal ownership of knowledge among indigenous communities (Hlatshwayo

2017). In most cases IKS become patented thereby depriving the knowledge holders of the benefits that are accruable to them. IKS piracy is a serious issue in IKS discourses. Mapara (2017:12) warns that "unless IKS are researched into and documented they (IKS) are under the potential threat of being stolen".

6.2.3 The role of African universities and research institutions

Zeleza (2006:196) argues that "since colonialism set foot in Africa and to the present day, all systems of knowledge production, dissemination and consumption reflect robust Western hegemony". For Zeleza the dominance of the Western hegemony even in post-colonial Africa is still being felt. The colonial impact has not diminished. He states that "it is everywhere…, dominating the disciplinary discourses and departments, paradigms and publications, academic politics and practices" (Zeleza 2006:197).

Osman (2018) is surprised by the proliferation of African universities and research institutions whose mentality is dominated by the same Western hegemony. The areas of focus (curricula) in the universities is dominated by Western hegemony where universities in Africa, though located in Africa, teach and do research in Africa but not much of what they teach, and research reflect the African context (Osman 2018). Odora Hoppers (2001) insightfully calls upon institutions of higher learning to rise to the challenge presented by knowledge production, accreditation, legitimation and dissemination. She argues that these institutions, being institutions of society with the daunting task of imparting necessary credentials to millions of students, must be accountable. This accountability comes in the form of concisely and consciously designing curricula that best suit the consumers of that curricula (Dei 2014). What universities choose to include, exclude or denigrate can make all the difference as to the cognitive and operational capacities of the products of this industry in a post training period (Odora Hoppers 2001).

Research has shown that there has been the 'Othering' of IKS (Odora Hoppers 2001) to the extent that communities that are the producers of IKS are viewed as objects and not subjects of research in institutions of higher learning. Communities, as IKS holders, need to feel needed by the formal education system (Mubangizi and Kaya 2015) by allowing them to participate in the instruction of their people. Arguing on the need for local communities to participate in developmental projects, Muyambo's (2018) case study of Environmental Management Agency (EMA) in Zimbabwe

demonstrates that people's indigenous knowledge is helpful in the success of developmental projects. There is need to use community-based knowledge for community development (Sithole 2014).

Efforts to include IKS in curricula have been negligible in African institutions of learning and research centres. In a South African context, it is North-West university that has taken IKS seriously (Kaya 2013, Mubangizi and Kaya 2015). Currently the University of KwaZulu- Natal has also mainstreamed IKS (Mubangazi and Kaya 2015).

In the Zimbabwean context IKS have not been taken seriously (Mapara 2016, Hlatshwayo 2017). There is a lax approach to the study of IKS (Mapara 2017) with no clear-cut policies in place to mainstream IKS as discussed in Chapter Three of this study. A possible reason for this could be because of the colonial influence whereby IKS, despite their agency and efficacy, have been understood in colonial terms as pseudo-knowledge, that lack scientific validation. This poses a serious challenge in that as IKS holders and custodians, the elderly, pass on a great deal of vital knowledge is equally lost. The truism of this can be summarized by quoting an old anonymous African proverb: *When an elder dies, a whole library burns down.*

Despite the daunting challenges stated above, there are some optimistic voices still audible. For Mapara (2017) all is not lost. For Masondo (2011) writing on African Traditional Religion, to which IKS are a component, the need to record knowledge of the elders who are dying off becomes imperative. With serious research witnessed in the last decade or so, the future for mainstreaming IKS is bright. Institutions of higher education and research centres have finally accepted IKS as knowledge *per se.* In addition to this the United Nations has taken decisive steps in ensuring that indigenous people and their indigenous knowledge systems are formally recognised. Policy documents on IKS have been and are being formulated. These include the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which affirms, among other rights, that indigenous people are equal to all other people. It recognises the right of all people to be different, to consider themselves as different and to be respected as such and affirming also that all people contribute to the diversity and richness of civilisations and cultures, which constitute the common heritage of humankind (UN 2007). The documents do not only endorse the rebirth of the previously suppressed indigenous people but also protect their intellectual rights (Osman 2018). As a way

forward, all centres of research and education institutions must realise that it is time for them to include IKS in whatever they do. Universities in Africa, as centres of knowledge production, must be transformed into African universities. Only when this happens will IKS be formally acknowledged and embraced within the institutions and gradually incorporated and contextualised within their research strategies and teaching activities (Osman 2018).

6.3 Respondents' perceptions on the challenges and prospects of *shupa*

The impact of colonialism and Christianity on Ndau beliefs, values, norms and practices, as discussed in Chapter Three did not spare Ndau *shupa.* Although the Ndau, as gathered from the respondents, uphold and regard *shupa* as their resource for their existential well-being, the practice has undergone some changes dictated to by the changing times. The changes are because of the challenges that are posed by modernity, changes in climatic conditions and the serious challenge posed by the demise of the elderly who are the repository for IKS, to mention a few. The following section is on the respondents' perceptions of the challenges and prospects of *shupa* in 21ˢᵗ century Zimbabwe.

6.3.1 The erosion of IKS by modernity

The conceptualisation of modernity, especially by rural people, varies. For some, modernity is synonymous with westernisation, Christianity, colonial education, colonisation and globalisation. This conceptualisation is not far from the truth in the sense that all the concepts are foreign imports to Africans. Most of the research respondents understood the concepts as one and the same thing. This came out clearly during the discussion on the future of *shupa* as a Ndau IKS. For the purpose of this study modernity is equally understood as the beliefs, values, norms and practices that are not of an African origin. However, because of constant contact and interaction in the globalising world these norms, beliefs and practices have also been embraced by the Africans. Whether this is voluntary or involuntary is debatable. These values, practices and norms include, but are not limited to colonial education (*fundo yevayungu* in local Ndau language), Christianity (*chiKristu*) and western health care facilities (*zvibhedhlera*). When questioned on the challenges that face *shupa,* the respondents were quick to identify the above as the major ones.

One respondent MS08 stated that *shupa* is under the threat of modernity. She stated that most children are born in towns where their parents work. They occasionally visited the rural areas and one could no longer administer *shupa to* them. The respondent said:

> *Mwanangu, tsika nemagariro echiNdau opera ndendaa yekuti vana vazhinji vobarirwa muchiyungu kumathaundiyo. Hino kuti vanavo vangazobatidza ngetsika dzedu iii apachina. Unozwa voti izvo ngezvekumachonjonjo kubhuya kuti avachazvidi.* [My son, our Ndau culture is diminishing because most children who are supposed to be future custodians of the culture are born in towns. They grow up there and occasionally visit rural areas. They have no close ties with their roots and have lost touch with our culture. They refer to their rural homes as *kumachonyonyo*[61] meaning they dislike the rural areas].

This perception resonates with Lucifer Mandengu in Charles Mungoshi's (1975) novel *Waiting for the Rain.* Mungoshi narrates of a young man who has been to a mission school and has received western education. During one vacation he visits the rural areas where his parents and relatives are. Because of what he has internalised at the mission school, he cannot relate meaningfully to his family. He is always alone in his hut, regretting having been born in the Manyene rural area of Zimbabwe. In a soliloquy he laments:

> I am Lucifer Mandengu. I was born here against my will. I should have been born elsewhere of other parents…. It was a biological and geographical error that I was born here…. Home is where you come back to die having lived your life elsewhere…. (Mungoshi 1975:162).

The above quote is included to substantiate the respondents' claim that children who are born in towns and are educated there have no close ties with the rural inhabitants. Although Lucifer was not born in the town, he loathes the rural areas such that he contemplates leaving for ever. To him home is where one only finds 'termite-eaten huts' with no worthwhile activity to occupy oneself with. Echoing the same sentiments Hlatshwayo (2017) discourses on family dislocation where there are rural-urban migrants searching for employment and education. For her this has created a

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[61] The term is a modern one coined by urbanites referring to rural areas which they accuse of lacking efficient transport, communication facilities, decent accommodation and education. There are no electricity and Internet facilities. Overall life there is 'dull,' to quote them.

gulf between the urbanites and the rural people such that traditional transmission of IKS from the older generation to the younger is no longer possible. She further bemoans the loss of interest by the younger generation towards the indigenous ways of life. In the Lucifer narrative cited above, relations between Lucifer, the Oldman and his brother Garabha, the drummer are not optimal. Greiner (1998) equally regrets this lack of understanding between the young and old as it denies the elders the chance to transfer their knowledge to the younger generation. This eventually leads to the diminishing of our culture, "*Ndiko kufa kwechiantu chedu",* as one respondent stated. Mafongoya, Jiri, Mubaya and Mafongoya (2017) admit that the dominant acceptance of the English language at the expense of local languages as forms of instruction has led the erosion of IKS. The scholars argue that formal education has contributed to the erosion of IKS. Schools remove children, who are the future leaders, from the family and community setting. The children are presented with external values that clash with or undermine traditional teachings. This results in the loss of IKS which eventually reduces the social capital of the younger generations. A respondent MS09 lamented the lack of respect by the younger generation, not to the elders but even to their traditions and culture. This respondent noted that traditional medicine was not accepted by the youth and they did not, therefore, have respect for the environment which supports the plant species. It was indicated that even forests that were said to be sacred were profaned by the youth who would do the unexpected and prohibited sexual acts in the forests. Once the forests were profaned the clan spirits (*mhondoro*) became angry. Their anger would be meted against humanity by destroying the forests, either by heavy rains or excessive droughts and mysterious veldt fires. Thus, special plant species become extinct in the end.

On a similar note, Nürnberger (2012) calls modernity the root of all the problems and challenges facing IKS. He argues that modernity, because of its glaring successes from antiquity, has become irresistible to people of traditional cultures. As people embrace modernity, they abandon their tradition in which their IKS are enshrined. *Shupa* risks being abandoned as the youth, who are supposed to be learning how to protect, promote and preserve IKS, have developed condescending attitudes towards IKS. Muzondi (2014:80) amplifies this when she argues that the "emergent modern youth culture denigrates Ndau folklore, traditional dances, games and diets". Just like the respondents, Muzondi's (2014) elderly research participants expressed concern that the rest of the

young population, who in truth represent the future of the Ndau spiritual belief systems, expressed little interest in IKS. Nürnberger sums it up as follows:

> Modernity has been able to overwhelm other cultures because it 'delivers the goods'. Being the dominant culture, it exerts considerable pressures to conform. Science disparages superstition, technology tolerates no inefficiency, commerce lures people into an acquisitive mentality, and the consumer culture elevates utility and pleasure to ultimate values. As a result, there is a steady and rickety, but relentless drift from traditionalism to modernity (Nürnberger 2012:4).

This drift is detrimental to the survival of IKS and *shupa*. Without proper planning this traditionalism upon which IKS thrive is on the verge of extinction.

The FGD at chief Garahwa's homestead made it clear that modernity had eroded their religio-cultural lifestyles. The FGD decried the violations of local taboos to do with the protection of their IKS. Chief Garahwa[62] complained that modernity had even supplanted the chiefs' role in their areas under their jurisdiction. He gave an example of a local beer (*doro remakoto*) intended to be used when requesting the ancestors to bring rain. Every household in the chieftaincy was obliged to brew this beer during October of every year. The FGD clearly stated that members of the new faith, Christianity, refused to comply and when the chief used his authority, they reported him to the police that they were being forced to brew beer. The chief ended up being reprimanded by the police, citing a law that expressed the freedom of religion (*religio licita*) of any one's choice. This made *doro remakoto* difficult to practice in a community besieged by Christians. This is conflicting belief systems with consequences that are dire for IKS.

Equally affected by this modernity is the practice of *shupa*. The FGD lamented that modernity had relegated the practice to the periphery. During a visit to the chief's homestead, young mothers were asked if they knew anything about *shupa* as during the selection of participants. Many of them professed ignorance of the herbal porridge. The older women had to be interviewed after realising that the young mothers did not possess the necessary information. This illustrated that firstly, *shupa* was no longer practised in the area. Secondly, that the elders had given up teaching

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[62] Interview with FGD, chief Garahwa homestead, 8 May 2017.

the practice to young mothers. One participant MS22 in the FGD stated that the young mothers were no longer interested in what they termed 'things of the past'. She said:

Madzimai emazuwa ano havachina shungu nekungwarira tsika nemagariro edu isu vechiNdau. Kuti uvafundise unozwa voti ngezvekare mazuwa ano kwaane nezvimwe. Ini ndakadzidziswa tsika nemagariro pamuzi pano ndimazvarira vangu. Hino vazakazi vazvino avachadi vopedza nguwa zhinji vari kuchirungu [Today's women have no interest in our culture. They refuse to be tutored on the Ndau traditional beliefs and practices. They accuse the beliefs and practices as backward. I was taught this family's beliefs and practice by mother-in-law. These daughters-in law no longer desire this and spend most of their time in towns with their husbands].

As a result, the young women did not want to give their children the porridge and relied on modern formulas of porridge which the elders dismissed as devoid of the nourishment and medicinal properties that their *shupa* had. The fact that the young mothers had no interest in the local herbal porridge meant that the practice was under serious survival threats. With the passage of time, when all the elders who are its custodians and holders die, the practice would have no practitioners and that would be its end. The rate at which Africans are losing their traditional beliefs, norms and values recalls Okonkwo's cardinal question in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart.* Okonkwo, the protagonist in the novel asks, "Where are the young suckers that will grow when the old banana tree dies?" (Achebe 1996:46). Although literally, Okonkwo is complaining about the lack of promising boys who would become men and take his place when he dies, metaphorically, Okonkwo is lamenting the loss of African values in African communities. All this is caused by modernity whose effect on local knowledge is summed up by an old Kenyan woman thus:

What could you learn from me, an old woman like me with no education? I cannot speak English…What do I know except to hold my hoe?... I am sure you have not come all this way to learn about that (Wane 2000:54).

The tone of resignation evident in the old woman's voice illustrates her disappointment. This is a tone that indicates the old woman's feelings regarding her knowledge which has been relegated to the periphery. She, therefore, is reluctant to talk to people who have acquired formal education.

This spells disaster for indigenous knowledge whose holders, like the old woman, feel insignificant and insecure in contributing indigenous knowledge to world knowledge.

Similarly, a study of Kenyan traditional rites like circumcision and child naming by Wane (2000) indicated that the rites had been discontinued and wherever they were practised they no longer carried the same ethos that they carried before modernity. For him, the rites had lost their significance. The same can be said of *shupa*. Despite its enduring nature its future remains bleak in the face of modernity. Whether this indicates total extinction remains to be seen. The custodians of this practice have been cowed to such an extent that Mbuya Chipikiri[63] had this to say:

> *Mithetho yeshupa avachaikoni asikana adoko aya. Ndototya kuvapa ngekuti vangatozokuwadza vana vokorera kutreedzera zvinodiwa zvakhona. Vaa veChiyungu anamai akhona hino iii totozvirekera.* [Taboos associated with *shupa* cannot be observed by this new generation of mothers. I am now afraid to administer the porridge for it may hurt the children when the mothers violate the taboos. They now belong to the modern generation. It is 'better' we leave it].

Her fears were confirmed by respondents in Musani village who were skeptical about their daughter-in-laws' attitude to traditional practices such as *shupa*. One stated that:

> *Vazakazi vemu ava veChiyungu kuvati zvedu zvechiantu vanoti tingi kuramba. Mwana akazwa mundani chinyoka chake cheiruma-ruma uti kunamai ake zvimutombo izvi mukurungirei zvibota unozwa voti ndoenda naye kukhiriniki. Kunyange chiri chipande chinoda marapire edu echiantu vanoenda nacho kukhiriniki. Taremba totozvisiyawo zvakadaro asi munopera kufa ngechiyungu chenyucho* [These modern daughter-in laws refuse to practice traditional beliefs and practices. When a child has stomach pains, they take the child to the clinic even with illnesses that must be traditionally addressed like fontanelle. We, the elders are tired, and we leave it to them. But you will all perish with your modernity].

The behaviour by the daughter- in-laws is understandable. In a study by Hlatshwayo (2017) findings on the perceptions of pregnancy and childbirths beliefs and practices by young mothers indicated that the young mothers preferred having pregnancies and childbirths monitored by the

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[63] Interview with Mbuya Chipikiri, Manzvire village, 12 May 2017.

medical professionals at hospitals and clinics rather by than their mother-in- laws. They complained of rituals that they are subjected to, such as *masuwo.* This shows that traditional lifestyles are diminishing. Greiner (1998) notes that the younger generation, like the daughter-in laws, are no longer interested in traditional knowledge and it is increasingly becoming difficult for elders to convey that knowledge to the younger generation. Greiner argues that modernisation has led to the acquisition of modern lifestyles leading to the erosion of traditional knowledges.

6.3.2 Climate change (*Maemere entharaunda*)

Globally, Africa is one of the most affected continents by climate change. According to Christian (2014) the reason is because of its low adaptive capacity. Climate change discourses pervade the United Nations summits, conferences and symposiums. It has become a highly topical issue because it threatens human existence. Given its devasting effects on the environment, climate change has not spared the practice of people's beliefs, values, customs and norms in Africa. Christian (2014) succinctly summarises the effects of climate change below:

> With the indiscriminate melting of the glaciers, the devastating and chronic deluge in several countries, the rise in sea level, the gradual annihilation of some plants and animal species and the evidence of extreme weather conditions around the globe, the reality of climate change has become undisputable (2014:1).

For Christian (2014) climate change is the significant increase in the earth's temperature over a long period of time. This temperature increase affects biodiversity, which also affects the plant species upon which *shupa* thrives.

When asked about the status of *shupa* in the research sites, one female respondent MS08 clearly stated that the tree roots, leaves and bark were no longer accessible. She complained about the drastic changes in rain patterns which have resulted in the trees drying up. She said:

> *Mitombo yekuisa mushupa yonesa kuona. Anditi unoona nyika yaagwenga kudai. Makomo eshe ambova makwasha hino mati ruru kutama mimbiti kudaro. Rangova dutu rega-rega mugowa muno mvura aichanayi.* (It is now difficult to get herbs for *shupa.* [The country side is now a valley. The

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mountains no longer have trees. There used to be forests in those mountains. The area is now windy and there are no rains].

Mbuya Mufunda[64] concurred by stating that *mutanga* from which *dumbu reshupa* is made was no longer available. She stated that *mvura yekunaya yaashoma muno mwaMutema* [we receive very little rainfall here in Mutema]. For that reason, *mutanga,* which requires average to above average rainfall to germinate and mature into *dumbu,* cannot grow in the dry lands of the Mutema chieftaincy. For that reason, practitioners of *shupa* have turned to other containers for *shupa.* For instance, one respondent showed a metal container for *shupa* and in another instance a Delta Beverage container popularly referred to as *scud* (because it looks like a scud missile) were used as alternative containers. When asked for the reason for such modifications and their implications, the respondents stated that the traditional *dumbu* was no longer available due to erratic rainfall patterns. The reason why the *dumbu* container was no longer in use was because of the scarcity of the *mutanga* plant. The improvisation where the metal containers and the *scud* were used demonstrates the ingenuity of the local people. It also demonstrates their adaptability to the changing times contrary to colonial thinking, that traditional people are conservative and refuse to change. But it can be argued that the improvisations point to the unfortunate reality that things are changing and have impacts on the practice of IKS.

Due to erratic rainfall patterns people had to walk long distances to obtain the tree roots, leaves and bark necessary for the herbal porridge. This has not only made *shupa* difficult to practise but has made the training of apprentices (as mentioned in Chapter Five) almost an impossibility. Sending apprentices to fetch the medicines had become a challenge. The respondents indicated that the plants that were useful in the herbal porridge preparation could be found across the Mozambican border with Zimbabwe. Apart from the long distance, the political situation in Mozambique, where incidents of sporadic fighting between the Mozambican soldiers and opposition fighters are rife, is volatile.

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[64] Interview with Mbuya Mufunda, Musani village, 9 May 2017.

To illustrate the effects of climate change, Boko, Niang, Vogel, Githeko and Medany state that the impact:

> …range from decreases from grain yields, changes in runoff and water availability in the Mediterranean and southern countries of Africa, to increased stresses resulting from increased droughts and floods, and significant plant and animal species extinctions and associated livelihoods impacts (Boko et al 2007:433)

Furthermore, climate change impacts on the socio-economic lifestyles of people. This includes plant and animal life. It has also impacted on the traditional religious practices of the African people. Christian (2014:1) points out that "anything that affects nature affects religion, and anything that distorts the natural course of events, affects the traditional religious practices of the Africans". He further argues that since rain patterns are no longer predictable because of changes brought about by climate change, the traditional religious practices such as rainmaking ceremonies, rituals and other agriculture-related rituals are no longer being practised. This has either resulted in the rituals being discontinued or practised at a lower rate. Shifts in seasons due to climate change has also resulted in shifts in seasonal ritual ceremonies. This affects the timing of the rituals as some ritual are period- specific. If they are meant for September, they should be done in September. To emphasise this Christian (2014) argues that climate change has a serious impact on how festivals and ceremonies are performed in communities. Festivals associated with ecological cycles are the most affected in that if planting rituals, for example, are supposed to be done in October and because of changes in weather patterns, they are delayed to December, the quality of the plants is adversely affected. Because the rituals are not done when due, the religious life of the community is disturbed. In many cases the rituals would never be performed at all. Under these circumstances it becomes difficult to believe that these religious festivals and ceremonies have not been affected in one way or the other.

To show the desperate the situation, the researcher was reminded of the fruits that they grew up eating in some of the areas mentioned by the respondents. Some plant species have gone into

extinction. Mbuya Mabhuya[65] lamented the lack of nutritious fruit that used to be plentiful in Manzvire village. She stated:

> *Mukoma iwewe, maongororo, nthengeni, matokorotsviyo neinthani muchero yawakakura weirya anditi akuchina. Vana vako ava avaiziye michero yandinoronza iyi. Akuna. Anditi matuntu awo aamapuwe ega ega amuchina michero yaidai kuwanda muchiri zvikomana. Hino unoti mitombo yeshupa ndiyo ingasara. Anditi kana woda mungurahwe wotoenda Mozambique kootsvaka iyoyo.* [The fruits you grew up eating are now extinct. Your children will never know that there were such fruits, yet they used to be plenty. How then can herbs for *shupa* be spared? Nowadays people have to travel to Mozambique for herbs like *mungurahwe*].

In the FGD[66] similar observations were expressed. The FGD stated that it was difficult to find most of the tree species they once could. For the group the scarcity was due to the extinction of the special tree species. The extinction was either because people wantonly cut down the tree species without replacing them or it was due to lack of respect for sacred places where these tree species used to grow. The sacred places had been cleared to build homes or turned into land for farming. Mbuya Simango[67] in the FGD stated:

> *Apa peshe apa pamunoona paiya nemumbiti yataishandisa mubota iri asi iye zvino apachina. Porimwa mimbuti yeshe yakapishwa. Imweni yakaoma yega uye kutemwa kuita huni ngevantu. Taakuenda kure kundotsvaka mitombo yekuisa mubota iri. Mudamhuru amuchina muno zvekuti kwaakutopera kwebota iri.* [We used to have the special tree species all over here. But now as you can see there is nothing now. The trees were cleared people clear land for farming. In some instances, the trees dry on their own while others were cut for firewood. We now travel long distances to find the tree species. Some like *mudamhuru* are no longer available. Preparation of the porridge is slowly diminishing].

The above views indicate that although the respondents may not know that climatic changes are responsible for this, they were aware that things were not good. Their environment was under siege and life was threatened. Mother Nature could no longer provide as it used to do.

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[65] Interview with Mbuya Mabhuya, Manzvire village, 12 May 2017.
[66] Interview with FGD, chief Garahwa homestead, 8 May 2017.
[67] FGD interview, chief Garahwa homestead, 8 May 2017.

Figure 3 below summaries how climate change has affected all facets of humankind. The impact may be direct or indirect, as illustrated below.
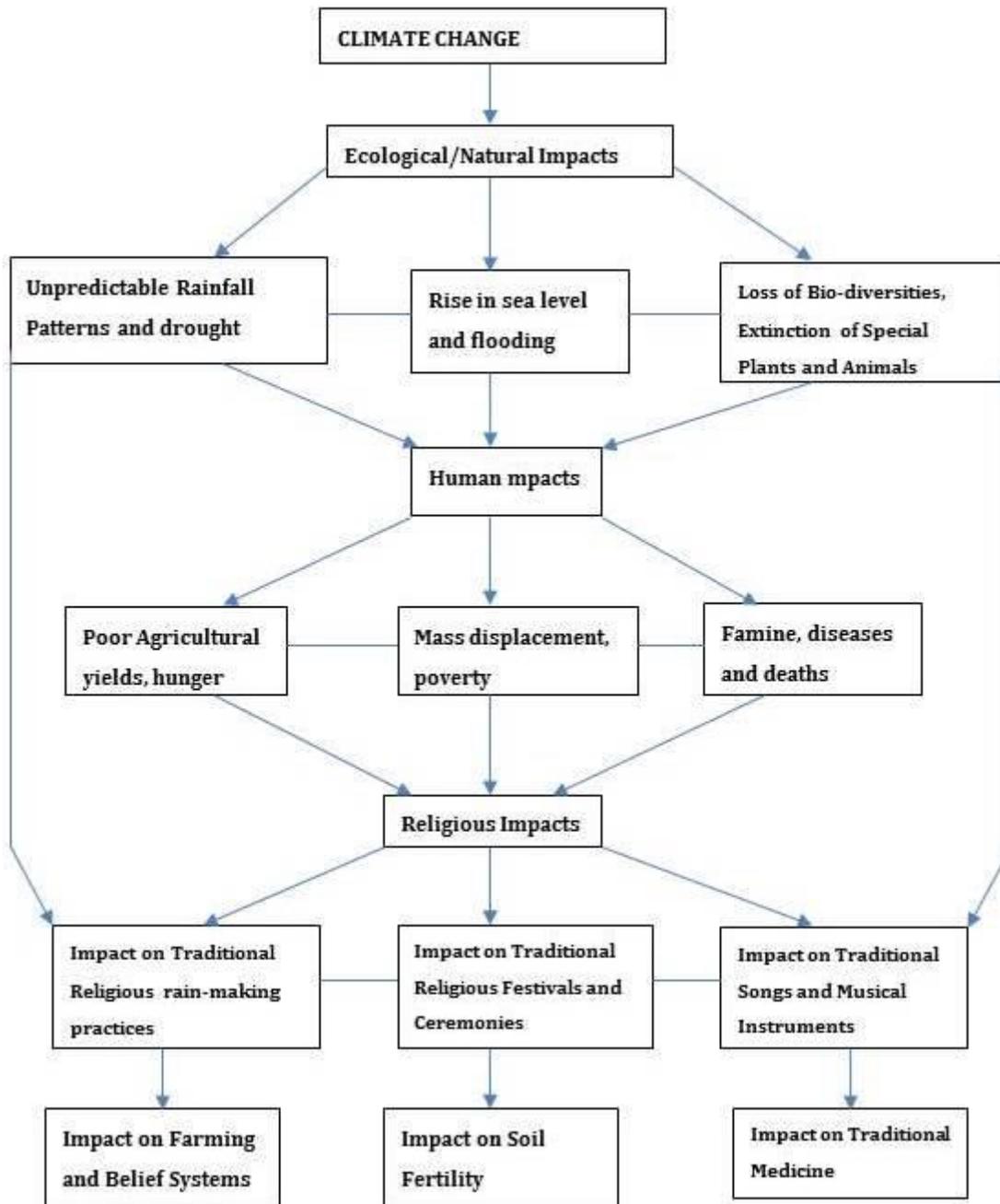
Figure 3: Illustrating the direct and indirect impact of climate change on African Traditional Religious practices: Adapted from Christian, N.G., The impact of climate change on African traditional religious practices. *Journal of Earth Science and Climate Change*. Vol.5, No.7, 1-5.

The above figure illustrates that climate change has had adverse effects on the ecosystems as well on the human species. It affects the socio-political, religio-cultural as well as the economic spheres

of human life. Women, as indicated by the respondents, appeared to be the first to notice that environmental degradation affected their well-being and that of their children and husbands. Early writings disclose that women commonly take much of the responsibility of the well-being of their children and other members of their families and communities (Griggs 1981). As such they are often the first to be aware of the environmental damage as biodiversity resources become scarce and incapable of sustaining families' health and well-being (Ouma 2013). This explains why most female respondents were particular about the environmental changes that affected their biodiversity resources.

6.3.3 Population explosion

One other factor that has placed a strain on plant species in the Chipinge district is the increase in the population occupying a given area. There are many factors that are responsible for this population increase in the study areas. A few of the respondents' contributions concerning the impact of this increase on the practice of *shupa* as a resource for the Ndau are discussed.

Firstly, the study areas share a border with Mozambique. There are also the Ndau in Mozambique (MacGonagle 2007, Mawere 2010, Konyana 2016, Taringana and Nyambara 2018). The Ndau in Zimbabwe and the Ndau in Mozambique have close ties and frequent each other's homesteads if the need arises. During the liberation struggle in the then Rhodesia most Ndau from the Chipinge and Chimanimani districts found it easy to cross the border and found refuge in neighbouring Mozambique. They were not only hosted but were given land to establish their own homes as the war in Zimbabwe raged on. Upon attaining independence, they returned to Zimbabwe, having resided in Mozambique for decades. In some instances, some members maintained their homes there and established other homes in independent Zimbabwe. These families have homes in both countries, an arrangement that exists to the present day.

When the Mozambican political crisis ensued around 1992, the Mozambican Ndau crossed into Zimbabwe as, in the eyes of the Zimbabwean political leadership, 'refugees' but again found refuge among their fellow Zimbabwean Ndau. Chieftaincies that frequently witness this are Musikavanhu, Garahwa, Mapungwana and Gwenzi which share their borders with Mozambique.

For example, there is a Zimbabwean Gwenzi area as well as the Mozambican Gwenzi area, both sharing the same name. These close affinities have been in place from time immemorial. This affects the practice of *shupa*, because when the Mozambican Ndau arrived (this is still happening as the political crisis in Mozambique has not been resolved completely), they were given land to stay on Zimbabwean soil. Mbuya Makhaza[68] made this clear when she stated:

> *Tine hama dzedu dziri Mozambique. Kwashata zviya vanouya uno vogara tovapa pekurima kuti vaone kuhwara hondo iri kwavoyo. Isusu nguwa yehondo yemabhunu takaendeyo tikandogara tikapiwa minda. Hatina kugara mukipi isusu.* [We have relatives in Mozambique. When there is a political crisis, they come here, and we give them where to stay and farm as they take refuge from warring parties in their country. During our liberation struggle against the Smith regime we also took refuge in Mozambique. We were given pieces of land to farm. We did not stay in protected villages created by Smith].

Echoing the same sentiments, Sekuru Chirimo[69]admitted that some parts of Muumbe village, being a few kilometres from Mozambique, were occupied by their relatives who came from Mozambique. He stated that even their grazing land had been turned into homesteads by these relatives. Large pieces of land with some of the tree species were cleared to create space for their Mozambican relatives. He said, "*Apa peshe paiya pamadhleyo ezvifuyo zvedu asi pazara mizi. Mimbiti yaingepo yakabviswa yeshe.* [All this space used to be our grazing land for our animals. But look there are homes all over. Trees were cleared here].

Even the Zimbabwean chiefs and headmen could not deny them as they were close allies. Chief Garahwa[70] agreed that he could not deny his relatives from Mozambique to stay as there were very close ties with his fellow chief from the Mozambican side. He said he did not have enough space in his chieftaincy but on humanitarian grounds he was obliged to assist in the same way the Mozambicans assisted Zimbabweans during the liberation struggle for Zimbabwean independence.

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[68] Interview with Mbuya Makhaza, Chikore Mission, 8 June 2017.
[69] Interview with Sekuru Chirimo-Ngorima, Muumbe village, 28 April 2017.
[70] Interview with FGD, Chief Garahwa homestead, 8 May 2017.

When the Mozambicans were given to build homesteads and to farm on, it placed a strain on the finite resource, land, which does not increase in size. Vast tracts of land were cleared. The clearing did not spare the valuable trees and plants that provided roots, leaves and bark for the preparation of *shupa.* These trees were cut down, purposely or otherwise, by the new inhabitants. The trees then became a scarce resource in some of the research sites owing to the influx of people from neighbouring Mozambique. This posed a serious challenge to the practice of *shupa* among the Ndau.

Yet another factor that impacted on the availability of medicinal plant species in the areas of study was an operation codenamed 'Operation *Murambatsvina*/Restore Order' carried out in Zimbabwean cities and towns in 2005. Literature abounds on this operation that affected the Zimbabwean populace on both a socio-economic and political level (Madebwe et al 2005, Action Aid International and Harare Residents Association 2005). When the people were removed from the cities and towns, they flocked to the rural areas. One respondent observed:

> *Vantu vagara apa veshe ngevaya vekubva kumathaundi mazuwa emurambatsvina aya. Paiya neshango peshe apa asi pagarwa. Pakatemwa mimbuti yeshe yaiya apa kusanganisira nemimwe yataishandisa semitombo yekurapa vana. Zvinezvi apachina.* [These people settled here came from towns after *Operation Restore Order (Murambatsvina).* It is used to be a forest but now cleared for settlement. The medicinal plants we used to treat different ailments were not spared during the clearing].

The period referred to above was characterised by buses endlessly ferrying people to the rural areas. The local headmen and chiefs struggled to accommodate these people who had been ousted from towns and cities for political expediency. Once again, the finite resource, land, was put under strenuous strain. Headmen and chiefs had no option but to turn to their kin and kith from the towns and cities. Again, land was divided amongst them and again land was cleared to establish shelter and fields for agriculture purposes; the medicinal plant species were not spared in the clearing process. One respondent MS11 stated that they used to have forests, but they had been cleared to accommodate victims of *Murambatsvina* as well as new families that were being set up after the local youth married and started their own families. The forests that used to exist were no longer

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there as these had been cleared away to make place for human habitation as well as for agricultural purposes.

6.3.4 Orality

There have been contestations as to what is to be deemed authentic regarding written IKS and memorised IKS. Ganyi (2014) argues that rationalism and intellectualism have been erroneously believed to mean what was written to the exclusion of what was spoken or verbalised. From this, logic detects "that African cultures, therefore, which are predominantly oral, are dubbed primitive, backward and incapable of cognitive experience" (Ganyi 2014:61). This understanding inferiorised orality and superiorised literacy. This was a western ploy to undermine African cultures and traditions, unfortunately, the lies that were peddled were accepted as the truth. Ntuli (2002:54) regrets this when he argues that "Africans accepted the lies that they had no history, no knowledge systems, that their knowledge systems were nothing but a set of superstitions". The lies were perpetuated until such a time that Africans accepted that IKS lacked sophistication and were hence mere pseudo-knowledges.

Despite the attempts made at reviving IKS through programmes such as African Renaissance Studies, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to mention a few, the inferiorisation of IKS has continued unabated. The lukewarm approach Mapara (2016) talks of concerning IKS and the lack of robust inclusion of IKS in the curricula in institutions of learning in Africa (Dei, 2000, 2014, Odora Hoppers 2001, Emeagwali 2016) evidently point to the fact that IKS are still devalued due to their oral nature. Surprisingly, despite the decolonisation projects (Ngugi 1998) Africans, who should pioneer the upliftment of IKS discourses, have a colonial hangover. This scenario, arguably, is not healthy for mainstreaming IKS discourses in Africa. One of the interviewees, Mbuya Makhaza[71], enquired after the reason for gathering this indigenous information since "*mwaavechiyungu*" [since you are now modernized]. Her question inferred that her indigenous knowledge had no place in the world of the educated. This thinking shows how inferiorised indigenous knowledge has been, such that its holders, the elderly, are no longer at liberty to share it. This creates secrecy and suspicion amongst the indigenous knowledge

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[71] Interview with Mbuya Makhaza, Chikore Mission, 8 June 2017.

researchers and indigenous knowledge holders. She had to be convinced that her knowledge was important and that there was a need to have the indigenous knowledge documented and preserved for future generations.

The oral nature of IKS, passed from one generation to the other by word of mouth, poses serious challenges to how IKS are perceived. The mere fact that *shupa* is passed from generation to generation has resulted in even the researchers disdaining it. The mere fact that there is no written record on Ndau *shupa* is a matter of concern. This serves as evidence that the oral transmission of knowledge is not taken seriously. This puts valuable IKS like *shupa* at risk of being ignored and its efficacy is therefore not tapped into.

Debates of orality and literacy abound. However, the emerging trend is that debating on the 'great divide' between orality and literacy is meant to dismiss orality. Oral literature has proven to be an effective way of knowledge transmission. Ganyi (2014) explains this by using the Bakor experience from Nigeria, where storytelling is extensively and intensively used for entertainment as well as being a form of instruction for the youth. The examples offered have proven that, "indeed, the word in oral discourse is the most succinct way of authenticating experience and educating young generations on African indigenous knowledge systems" (Ganyi 2014:79). To support this, Emeagwali and Dei (2014) admit that local, indigenous knowledge resides in cultural memories. Muyambo (2016) further confirms this by arguing that *ngano* (storytelling) as part of orality can be useful in the 21st century mitigation strategies against HIV and AIDS.

Though the oral nature of IKS, particularly *shupa*, is a challenge for its protection, promotion and preservation, respondents were insistent that the passing of this knowledge system from generation to generation has been ongoing from time immemorial. It is only in western epistemologies and ontologies that orality is viewed negatively. In fact, according to Ganyi (2014) the West purported to know Africans and their ways of knowing but they did so with arrogance and utter disregard and disrespect for Africans and their ways of knowing and methods of disseminating their knowledge. It is only the Africans themselves who can make meaning and sense out of what they are doing. A Bakor proverb states that 'it is the attendants of a sick person who know the name of the ailment or disease the sick man suffers from'. This implies that it is the users of orality who understand its efficacy and the mere fact that IKS in Africa are transmitted orally does not mean

that IKS must not be taken seriously. One of the respondents stated that they had been disseminating their indigenous knowledge by word of mouth from time immemorial. He said, "*Masungukati aya ndiyo anodzidzisa vazakazi tsika nemagariro edu. Zvino vamweni avakoni kunyatsobatisisa zvavanodzidziswa asi izvo ndizvo tagara teita kubva kare nakare* [The elderly women teach their daughters-in law our culture. It is up to them (daughters-in law) to take the advice. This is how we have been doing from time immemorial]. One can, therefore, agree with Ganyi (2014) that it is the oral nature of IKS that makes them not only alive, efficacious and efficient, but also performable art.

6.3.5 Perceptions on *Shupa* Continuities and discontinuities

Despite myriads of challenges that face IKS in general, the future for IKS in Africa is encouraging and promising. In a study by Mmola (2010) on students' and lecturers' perceptions towards the IKS programme at the North-West University in South Africa, more than 80% of the respondent students were of the opinion that lecturers who incorporated IKS into their teaching practices were highly appreciated by students. The use of local language, the incorporation of local community practices into lessons, and the utilisation of culturally relevant material were much appreciated by the students. The acceptance of such a curriculum by university students points to a bright future for African IKS. All along scholars called for the inclusion of IKS pedagogy into institutions of higher learning (Odora Hoppers 2001, Dei 2000, 2014, Kaya and Seleti 2013, Kaya 2016). That its consumers, the students, as indicated by Mmola (2010) have accepted the teaching and learning of IKS speak volumes for the bright future of IKS that lies ahead. It is quite commendable that students, who are the future academics and policy makers, embrace the teaching and learning of IKS. This is an assurance that IKS, indeed, are a resource that must be tapped into for Africa's development.

One respondent MS05 indicated her willingness to teach the youth the traditional practices such as the practice of *shupa* in schools. She said:

> *Muzvikora umu amuna zvekudzidzisa tsika nemagariro edu zvakakwana. Kana zvirimo zvinodzidzisa ngematicha avo vasinawo ruziyo rwakakwana. Vamwe vevadzidzisi ava havasi vaNdau saka vangafundisa zvebota reshupa vanozviziira kuri? Zvinoda varidzi vazvo kuti vadzidzise* [There are no sessions in schools where our values and practices are taught. If there, the

teachers do not have adequate information on our values and practices. Some of the teachers are not Ndau and how can they teach our children practices like *shupa?* This requires the practitioners of those practices to effectively teach the students].

The respondent complained, in the presence of a local headmaster the lack of cooperation between Zimbabwean schools and the local communities in ensuring that the cultural practices and values are merged into the teaching and learning of IKS. Her willingness indicated the following: firstly, that the IKS holders are not secretive about their practices as is widely believed. Secondly, that attempts to be inclusive in the teaching and learning processes of the African youth are still few and far between. If there is the willingness to bequeath indigenous knowledge, then the onus rests on those who design curricula in African institutions of learning to include IKS in the curricula. The Zimbabwean primary and secondary education curricula from 2015 −2022 are an attempt to address the long exclusion of IKS from the curricula. While this is a welcome development, the implementers, the teachers and lecturers alike, are unfortunately products of western-oriented curricula. There is a concerted resistance to embrace the curricula on flimsy grounds like the curricula is too demanding, it is under-resourced and, in some instances, fear of the unknown. In terms of literature, this is where this study becomes helpful in addressing the lack of reading material on IKS. The Zimbabwean government's stance is a positive step towards the protection, promotion and preservation of IKS. Lacking here is the political will to have this materialise.

Another indicator that points to IKS's continued existence in African communities is that IKS holders are 'training' apprentices to take over and disseminate the knowledge to future generations. IKS are a generational heritage (*usiye nausiye*) as one respondent MS09 observed. This respondent stated that her daughter who, at the time of the fieldwork, was about eleven years and in Grade 5, already knew how to collect the tree roots, leaves and bark and how to prepare the medicinal porridge for her siblings. It was also noted during the field work that mothers-in-law taught their daughters-in-law how *shupa* was prepared. Even though some mothers-in-law complained about the lack of interest from their daughters-in-law, there were others who had mastered the skill and expertise in the preparation of *shupa* and its administration. One daughter-in-law who was in the company of respondent MS12 admitted having learnt the procedures of *shupa* preparation and administration from her mother-in-law. She said:

Zveshe zvandinoziya pamusoro pashupa ndakafundiswa ndimazvarira angu. Vaindituma kundotsa mitombo yacho vondifundisa manasirirwe acho kusvikira ndookona. Mwana wangu wechipiri nezveshe vakazoteera ndainge ndonasira shupa ndega. Chero mwana wangu musikana mukuru waakutokona uye midzi yacho oiziyawo. [All I know about *shupa* came from my mother-in-law. She taught me how to collect the herbs and prepare them for *shupa.* When I gave birth to my second born child, I had already mastered the art. Even my first-born girl child can now prepare *shupa*].

What this meant for the study was that the daughter-in-law would also do the same to her own daughters and daughters-in-law. This would ensure that the practice would be passed on from one generation to another.

Despite climate change and its devastating effects on plant species as discussed earlier on, one respondent MS14 observed that the upper part of Musikavanhu chieftaincy- the Chikore area still had the trees and plants in abundance. She pointed to the nearby forest at her homestead where the trees were plenty. In terms of the depletion of medicinal plants, the respondent was positive that it would take years for the forest to vanish. In any case, there were measures in place by the local leadership to ensure that the forest was safe from deforestation. Anyone caught cutting trees in the forest would be severely punished. Those who needed firewood were permitted to collect only dry and fallen firewood. These measures have been protecting the forest for decades. The measures meant that the sought-after medicinal plants were under the protection of the local leadership. As long as the tree species, from which the herbal roots, leaves and bark are extracted, are protected in this way, *shupa* will continue to be sustained among the Ndau.

To ensure that some of the tree species such as *mungurahwe* do not become extinct due to myriad challenges, a cultural Ndau grouping, the Ndau Festival of the Arts (NdaFA) has taken serious measures to protect the tree species that are threatened by extinction. The cultural board is looking after a forest in the Chikore area, in Bangira community. The board is looking after the indigenous trees in the forest as well as planting those that are under the threat of extinction because of their medicinal value like *mungurahwe.* The cultural board has gone further to educate the local community in the need to protect medicinal plant species. The education programmes have been made an annual event where during September of every year since 2013, a festival is held in the forest where all stakeholders, government, non-governmental organisations, academics, culturalists and environmentalists come together and celebrate the vitality and exuberance of the

Ndau culture as depicted in its IKS. Various artefacts and tree species are on display. This annual event has demonstrated the willingness of the Ndau to preserve and showcase their vibrant culture, as well as being a celebration of the need to preserve nature for human sustenance. It is argued that if bodies like the NdaFA are promoted and supported, medicinal plants will be protected from threats posed by climate change (Mafongoya and Ajayi 2017) through the interventions by such bodies.

6.4 Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to explore the challenges and prospects of IKS in general and *shupa* in particular. A detailed analysis of the challenges that threaten *shupa* which include but not limited to modernity (in its various forms), climate change and population explosion was provided. These challenges have changed the Ndau religio-cultural landscape such that *shupa* is under serious threat of becoming extinct. The special roots, leaves and bark are the ingredients of *bota reshupa* commonly shortened as *shupa*, are no longer accessible in most of the research sites. This has forced *shupa* practitioners to travel long distances in search of the tree roots, leaves and bark. This scarcity has made some people abandon the practice even though they acknowledged during the interviews that *shupa* addressed their primary health care needs and also functions as a mark of identity, to mention a few.

The chapter also argued that despite the challenges that threaten *shupa,* the practice has remained resilient and continues to be practised in some Ndau communities. Odora Hoppers (2001:79) avers that history has shown that IKS are resilient and time has come for Africans, particularly, to realise that science as a promoter of modernity, is "…the story of all animals, and not just the lion…". For Emeagwali and Shizha (2016) indigenous sciences, to which *shupa* can be equated to, have always existed in African societies. Building on such insights and the resilient voices from the research respondents, *shupa* still endures and is likely to continue enduring against the challenges. This is because of how people learn and transmit it. Its transmission is culturally specific.

Regarding what the future holds for the *shupa* practice, the chapter has pointed out that *shupa* is still in practice and evidence shows that it will continue to be practised into the future. The concept of the knowledge holders disseminating the knowledge from one generation to the next indicates that *shupa* is a generational heritage (*siya nausiye*). Programmes embarked by bodies such as

NdaFA are positive indicators including calls for IKS to be included into Zimbabwean schools. Once these are robustly promoted and implemented IKS such as *shupa* will withstand the challenges of modernity, globalisation and climate change. Backyard gardens for the special plant species were also witnessed at the NdaFA festivals and this ensures that the trees will never become extinct. Using the postcolonial lens, the Ndau in particular are holding tenaciously onto their IKS. There is hope that, just like African Traditional Religion in South Africa (Masondo 2011), *shupa* in Zimbabwe, equally has a bright future. It would be unfortunate to ignore this resource for the African people in general and the Ndau. The next chapter presents the summary and conclusions of the study.

Chapter Seven

Summary of Research findings and Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter Six the challenges that threaten IKS and *shupa* were broadly discussed. The findings from the chapter revealed that modernity, climate change and the population explosion were the major threats to *shupa* in the Chipinge district of Zimbabwe. The chapter detailed how modernity, climate change and the population explosion together with other related factors threatened the practice of *shupa* among the Ndau. However, the chapter also argued that despite the challenges that bedeviled the practice of *shupa,* there were opportunities of the practice being sustainable through generations to come. The opportunities included the oral transmission of the practice and the informal apprenticeship that the elderly was conducting with junior members of the community. Bodies such as the NdaFA were also found to be instrumental in ensuring that the Ndau IKS which included the Ndau language were promoted and preserved for future generations. This chapter brings together the themes, insights and concepts from the previous chapters with the intention to answer the research question: *How efficacious is bota reshupa among the Ndau of the Manicaland province in Zimbabwe?* As the concluding chapter, this chapter provides a summary of each of the chapters covered below.

7.2 Chapter Summary

The study consists of seven chapters which all focus on the research question of the study. The study question is: *How efficacious is bota reshupa among the Ndau people of the Manicaland province in Zimbabwe?* Chapter One is the general introduction to the study. The chapter commenced by way of an introduction that set out the importance of IKS. The dearth of literature and research on the Ndau *shupa* was illustrated vide a scenario that did not only prompted the need for this study but a scenario that also questioned the dearth of IKS research in Zimbabwe. This was followed by stating the background of the study where the personal and academic motivation for the study were provided. In this chapter the problem statement was given as well as the research questions of the study. The study's purpose and significance were also outlined. This was followed by the research key question and the sub-questions that the study sought to answer. The study

objectives of the study were also provided. The closing sections of the chapter discussed the delimitations, limitations and definitions of the key terms of the study as well as providing the chapter outline.

Chapter Two focused on the literature review pertaining to IKS. It was a trajectory survey of IKS in general with the intention to demonstrate that IKS are a resource for sustainable development. The chapter discussed literature on IKS and agriculture, IKS and climate change, IKS and traditional medicine, and IKS and sustainable development. The chapter also traced the global status of IKS. This was done to discover whether nations were on the same footing in terms of the urge to protect, promote and preserve IKS.

Chapter Three discoursed on the research methodology and theoretical frameworks used in this study. The phenomenological approach was adopted for this study. This was premised on the understanding that to fully understand *shupa,* the views, perceptions and opinions of the Ndau people were sought. The methodology was juxtaposed with the historical and sociological methodologies. This triangulation of methodologies was necessary to ensure that justice to a study that is historical, sociological and phenomenological by nature, is done. The chapter further explored the postcolonial theory as the lens through which the study was undertaken. The theory presupposed that African values, ideas, beliefs and practices had been distorted by the colonialists. The theory suggested the correcting of such misinformation and untruths by writing back that IKS were not superstition but a resource for survival. Since the study did not romanticise IKS, cultural hermeneutics was also used in conjunction with postcolonial theory. This was done from the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) perspective to deconstruct those elements in *bota reshupa* that may impinge on people's rights as well as reconstructing the practice itself for the 21st century practitioners. Both the methodology and theoretical frameworks provided insights into how data was gathered and analysed.

Chapter Four situated the study on the Ndau people of Chipinge. This was essential in that the chapter was an attempt at understanding who the Ndau people were. This included an understanding of their culture, traditions and customs which collectively form the Ndau IKS. The chapter traced the historical background of the Ndau prior to colonisation and Christianisation. It further analysed the impact of colonisation and Christianisation on Ndau beliefs, ideas, values,

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customs and traditions. This was done to ascertain whether the colonisation and Christianisation of the Ndau communities had, in fact, an impact on the Ndau indigenous ways of knowing. The chapter concluded that despite the western onslaught on the Ndau indigenous ways of knowing, Ndau IKS managed to survive alongside western culture as represented by Christianity and colonialism. The Ndau resourcefully made use of the two cultures to their advantage. Taringana and Nyambara (2018:58) confirm this when they argue that the convergence of Ndau traditional lifestyle and christianisation "resulted in a negotiated culture and a sense of being". It was because of the Ndau's steadfast loyalty to their ways of knowing that the Ndau IKS are still sustaining in this 21st century.

The research findings of the respondents and the analysis were presented in both Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Five provided a detailed account of the Ndau perceptions on *shupa*. The chapter focused on objectives 1 and 2 of the study. The emerging themes and patterns from the respondents' views on *bota reshupa* were discussed as data was being presented in order to avoid repetition. The chapter illustrated that *bota reshupa* was a resource for the Ndau people's survival. The findings from this chapter were: *bota reshupa* was a primary health care asset for the Ndau people, where illnesses such as *chipande* (fontanelle) are prevented and treated, an identity asset, a rite of passage as well as being an expression of the Ndau sense of aesthetics through the artistic preparation of the *shupa,* the container known as *zvidhuwa* or *matumbu* in Ndau language. Senior women and grandmothers were given as the custodians of *shupa* thereby emphasising the significance of women as agency in the Ndau lifestyle even though Ndau males remained owners of Ndau culture as explained in chapter Five.

It was also prudent to discover the prospects and challenges of *bota reshupa* in 21st century Zimbabwe. This was addressed in Chapter Six of the study. The objective of this chapter was   to examine the status of the practice in the 21st century. In this chapter, the prospects and challenges of the practice, as provided by the research respondents, were discussed. The chapter answered the question: What is the future of IKS in Zimbabwe?

One of the major findings of the study was that *bota reshupa* is a health asset for the Ndau whose efficacy could not be overemphasised. It was because of its efficacy that the Ndau people held onto the practice tenaciously. It was their survival mechanism, hence the need to not only

document the practice but also to ensure that it is protected, promoted and preserved for subsequent generations.

7.3 Summary Conclusions

7.3.1 Objectives of the study

The study focused on three objectives as outlined in Chapter One of the study. These were:

- To explore the Ndau people's understanding of *bota reshupa.*
- To assess the efficacy of *bota reshupa* for the Ndau people.
- To examine the status of the practice in the 21st century.

7.3.1.1 Research objective 1

On the question of the Ndau's understanding of *bota reshupa*, it emerged that the Ndau understood *bota reshupa* from two related perspectives. Firstly, they understood it as a herbal porridge that is prepared from a mixture of herbs, millet meal and water. For them this porridge served several purposes that include boosting the immune system and preventing several ailments.

Secondly, the Ndau understood *bota reshupa* as *shupa.* The understanding here is that since the mixture is kept in a calabash/ gourd (*dumbu*) prepared from *mutanga* [a creeper that produces gourds] the *dumbu* has become known as *shupa. Shupa* from this perspective referred to the container of the herbal mixture. This has resulted in the Ndau using the word *shupa* interchangeably. In one instance it is a shortened version of *bota reshupa* and in another instance it referred to the herbal container whose contents were then used to prepare the herbal porridge. However, it must be noted that such interchangeable use of *shupa* is not a sign of confusion on the part of the Ndau. They were very clear of what they meant in the instances cited above. They made no mistake of *shupa*, the container and *shupa*, the herbal porridge. They holistically understand the whole belief and practice as *shupa.*

The Ndau also understood *shupa* as the woman's prerogative, as women are viewed as the possessors of *shupa.* Women dominate in the preparation, storing and the administration of the herbal porridge. For that reason, they have more knowledge about the practice than their male counterparts. It is therefore also referred to as the women' s practice. Again, this does not

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inferiorise the practice by associating it with women (as is the case in other communities). For the Ndau, women have more expertise in the practice than men. The Ndau understood this very clearly as indicated by their responses during the fieldwork. However, through the cultural hermeneutics lenses one noted that Ndau women were custodians of culture, *shupa* in this case but Ndau men were the owners of that culture. This was the reason why men seemed not to worry too much about women agency in *shupa.* Real power remained in the Ndau culture in which men were the owners of that culture. The objective was achieved as the Ndau have a clear perception of their practice of *shupa.*

7.3.1.2 Research objective 2

The question under this objective sought to establish the efficacy of *bota reshupa* among the Ndau. Findings were that it was a health asset that catered for the primary health care needs of the Ndau. It ensured the Ndau's health by providing immunity against a number of diseases, especially those that affected children such as whooping cough, measles, diphtheria, polio and *chipande* (fontanelle), amongst others. It was noted that because of its association with health and wellness, most respondents were convinced that their health and longevity were because of the consumption of *shupa.* A respondent born in 1922 was still vivacious and working in his millet field when interviewed. He attributed his good health and longevity to having *shupa* as part of his diet. This worldview is influenced by the power of belief. Closely related to its medicinal properties, *shupa* was scrutinized through the cultural hermeneutics' lens. It was found that its *kuhaza* element (though not prevalent) risked Ndau men's lives as discussed in Chapter Five. Although it acted as social control the *kuhaza* element as well as other *shupa* prohibitions have caused some communities to abandon the practice. Its social control impetus implies that issues of promiscuity in African communities, the Ndau in particular, were serious matters. Cheating was and is never condoned. However, the fact that it was women who were guarded against cheating where a cheating man's spouse did not bleed implied that the practice was and still is gendered. Why would women whose husbands cheat do not bleed as was the case with men? This illustrates the gendered nature of the *kuhaza* whose focus seemed to be on women only.

Shupa is also an identification practice where most of the respondents believed that *shupa* was purely a Ndau practice among the Ndau of both Chipinge and Chimanimani districts. In one

incident one respondent boasted that he ate *shupa* and therefore he was a true Ndau born and bred, according to the beliefs, values and practices of the Ndau. He called himself an authentic Ndau male whose identity could not be questioned. It was noted that Zimbabwe being made up of several tribes, tribes distinguished themselves from each other through certain beliefs, practices and values. For example, as discussed in Chapter Three, ear-piercing was a distinctive mark of identity for Ndau men (MacGonagle 2007). For the Ndau ethno-linguistically group, *shupa* was one of the distinguishing features of the Ndau which separated them from other Zimbabwean tribes. The study also found that *shupa* was deemed a rite of passage as well as an expression of Ndau aesthetics. The second objective was also achieved as the study demonstrated the efficacy of the *bota reshupa* practice.

7.3.1.3 Research objective 3

The third objective of the study was to examine the status of *shupa* in 21st century Zimbabwe. This status was premised on the general status of IKS in most African countries. The colonial perception of IKS as superstition (Ntuli 2002) was still prevalent in the way IKS discourses were perceived in most countries. It was perceived as not scientific enough to meaningfully contribute to the production of world acclaimed knowledge. Despite the efforts by many scholars (Odora Hoppers 2001, 2002, Dei 2014, Emeagwali 2016) to provide IKS with a noteworthy position along the continuum of knowledge discourses, the marginalisation of IKS continues. This has not only threatened the IKS but has brought with it many challenges faced by *shupa*, including the effects of modernism, climate change, population explosion. (as discussed in Chapter Six).

However, despite the challenges faced and still faced by *shupa* there are opportunities for the practice. The study established that the Ndau were tenaciously clinging to the practice. They ensured that the knowledge about the practice was passed from one generation to the next. Mechanisms such as informal apprenticeships were in practice and the respondents were insistent that the practice would not become extinct. The apprentices themselves confirmed taking it from their elders. The documentation that most IKS are going through (Agrawal 1995b) is a testimony that IKS, particularly *shupa* in this case, will not be lost. The study argues that serious work on IKS has begun and this is a positive sign that practices such as *shupa* will not become extinct. The thesis takes note of the negative aspects of *shupa,* but it has more merits than demerits. Being a

social construct *shupa* can be reconstructed to benefit humanity. The third objective of the study was achieved as it was found that IKS discourses are on the resurgence and practices like *shupa* among the Ndau are still in practice. Prospects are that it will continue to be practised from generation to generation orally as well as through documentation as has been the case in this thesis.

7.3.2 Summary of the findings of the study

7.3.2.1 *Shupa* as a Ndau resource

This exploratory study aimed at understanding *shupa* as a resource for the Ndau communities of Chipinge. More significantly, the study extensively described *shupa* in terms of its purpose, how it was prepared and administered, who prepared and administered it, what were some of its sanctions and how it contributed to the general welfare of the Ndau. Notably, the study established that *shupa* was a health asset that addresses the primary health care needs of the Ndau communities. The study established that *shupa* can be described in five related ways. The first one is that *shupa* was a health asset that provided primary health care needs for the Ndau. Secondly, *shupa* was an expression of the Ndau identity. Thirdly, it was a rite of passage that ensured one's transition from one stage to another. Fourthly, it was an expression of how artistic Ndau women were when they designed and decorated the *shupa* the container. It was a social insurance for the Ndau as it was not only a survival resource but also a source of their identity as well as a source of their pride as a people. Fifthly, *shupa* demonstrated that women play a significant role in the call to "re-cover, re-awaken, and re-claim African indigenous knowledge systems" (Hlatshwayo 2017:241). In this thesis, the women were custodians of the Ndau traditional beliefs and practice even though men are the owners of such beliefs and practices.

7.3.2.1.1 *Shupa* as an agency for prevention and healing

It was agreed in all the three chieftaincies of Mutema, Musikavanhu and Garahwa, that *shupa* was a health asset that catered for the primary health care needs of the Ndau. All the interviewees, including the ten professionals, indicated that *shupa* was primarily a herbal porridge that was prepared to prevent ailments, especially in children. The ailments identified were measles, *chipande* and *chinyamukaka* among others. In modern times these diseases are among the five killer diseases for children in Africa. If *shupa* could prevent diseases as indicated by the respondents, it meant that *shupa* was indeed a health asset that provided for the primary health

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care needs of the Ndau in precolonial times before biomedicine and continues to do so in the postcolonial era as an alternative health delivery system to biomedicine, which is beyond the reach of many in Africa.

Closely related to the above, the study also found that *shupa* was an immune booster. Most respondents stated that the children who ate the herbal porridge developed a very strong immunity system against most ailments. The children grew up healthy and could resist attacks from epidemics such as measles, the notorious *chipande* and others. The use of herbs that prevent diseases of this nature is well documented. Chinsembu (2015) talks of medicinal plants that he calls 'green diamonds' that are used in the management of HIV related conditions. In the same vein there are medicinal plants that are said to treat malaria, cancer and those used as ethnoveterinary medicine. Arguing from a Karanga religious perspective Shoko (2007) accepts the efficacy of traditional medicine in curing many ailments. These submissions confirm what the respondents stated about *shupa*. The study therefore argues that *shupa* is indeed an indigenous knowledge resource that ensured the health of the Ndau during the precolonial, colonial and even in this postcolonial era. It was a herbal medicine which had been subjected to trial and error until it became the Ndau's health asset.

7.3.2.1.2 Ndau Identity and artistic expression in *shupa*

The study also established that the Ndau valued their identity. Their identity could be through a number of practices such as the ear-piecing during Ngungunyana's reign as indicated in Chapter Three. It was also found it was through *shupa*, besides being a health asset, that the Ndau distinguished themselves from other Shona-speaking people of Zimbabwe. The respondents made it clear that *shupa* was a belief and practice that was predominantly Ndau. It was said not to be found among other people save for the Ndau people of both Chimanimani and Chipinge districts. For this reason, remarks such as: *Ini ndiri muNdau wemene ndakarya shupa* (I am a true Ndau. I ate *shupa*) were gathered. By implication, this meant that anyone who did not eat *shupa* was not, according this remark, a true Ndau. The pride that was facially expressed by some of the respondents, especially the professional interviewees, indicated that indeed the Ndau were an ethno-linguistically group that cherished and derived their identity and sense of belonging through their beliefs and practices. MacGonagle (2007:70) argues that the Ndau proclaimed "their identity

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with cultural materials that were important to them and visible to others". *Shupa* forms part of the cultural materials.

Related to Ndau identity in the practice of *shupa* is the concept of aesthetics. MacGonagle (2007) refers to the Ndau sense of beauty as adornment. The study found that the Ndau expressed their sense of aesthetics through *shupa*, the container. The *shupa* calabash (*dumbu*) or *chidhuwa* that was used for *shupa* was distinctively decorated such that it clearly marked itself from other calabashes for other uses. The *shupa* was polished using *mukura* [a shiny brown substance that left the *shupa* shiny]. In addition to *mukura* were marks that were expertly put on the calabash or *chidhuwa* to beautify it. The respondents stated that during traditional beer parties the calabashes could be presented together with the beer to the ancestors, as outlined in Chapter Five. They were compared, and it created competition among the designers. Owners of these ornate calabashes felt a deep sense of pride as expressed by one respondent who stated that she could feel proud to present a well decorated calabash to either her -in-laws or to the elderly women of the communities at festivals. The fact that the Ndau have a high sense of beauty (aesthetics) is equally demonstrated by MacGonagle (2007) whose research evinces that the Ndau expressed their sense of beauty through what she calls *pika*-tattoos and scarifications (*nyora*). These tattoos and scarifications were observable expressions of female beauty and attractiveness.

7.3.2.1.3 *Shupa* as a rite of passage

The religio-cultural aspect of *shupa* was in its nature as a rite of passage. It was found in the study that *shupa* was not only a health asset, expression of Ndau beauty and identity, but that it was also a rite of passage. It was used to inform the ancestors, as discussed in Chapter Five, that a baby was born, was growing up and was passing from one stage of human development to another. One of the study's findings was that failure to inform the ancestors through the presentation of *shupa* or failing to administer it to children resulted in those children failing to attain the next stage of their development. The example of a child who could not have teeth because *shupa* was not administered to the child because the parents were Christians, illustrated that apart from its religio-cultural function of informing the ancestors, *shupa* also y enabled children to move from one stage of their development to another. Ndau male respondents categorically stated that *shupa* was a rite

of passage as it marked the passage of young men into adulthood. One could be a true Ndau man having had *shupa* in one's life time.

7.3.2.1.4 Gendering *shupa*

The research findings also showed the important role assumed by senior women and grandmothers. The preparation, administration and the keeping of *shupa* were the preserve of the senior women and grandmothers. This means that the women were regarded as the custodians of the Ndau indigenous culture. *Shupa* gave Ndau women the status of being indigenous knowledge producers and holders. This finding flew in the face of critics like Fernandez (1994) who argue that women are generally stereotyped in IKS discourses. The senior women and grandmothers inculcated in the young women the dictates of the *shupa* practice. It is through them (the senior women and grandmothers) that *shupa* was passed from generation to generation and this has ensured its survival to the present day. Though Ndau men remain owners of culture, the women, through *shupa,* are the custodians of culture. Although *shupa* has undergone some modifications such as the use of metal containers for the mixture, the religio-cultural and medical aspects of it have remained the same.

Notwithstanding women's prominence in *shupa*, men's lives were at risk. One of the findings was that as a 'central locking' charm, *shupa* risked men's lives. If a man's wife cheats on him, the man suffered. He bled (*kuhaza*) and this could be fatal. Paradoxically the same does not happen to a spouse when the husband cheats on her. This, coupled with some taboos therein, has seen some senior women and grandmothers abandoning the practice, fearing to harm people. Be that as it may incidences of *kuhaza* cited were few. Like any other practice, *shupa* may have undesirable elements but the Ndau knew and still know how to navigate the undesirable.

7.4 Thesis contribution

The main objective of the study was to make a significant contribution to the emerging scholarly bodies of knowledge on the efficacy of IKS for sustainable development.

7.4.1 Methodological contribution

The study made use of interactive qualitative research methods, that is, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. These research methods enabled Ndau indigenous knowledge producers

and holders (both women and men) to position themselves as the subjects and not objects of research (Vilakazi 1999, Hlatshwayo 2017). This research with and for the Ndau, meaning the research, apart from being an academic requirement, it was also for the people of Chipinge in Zimbabwe. In other words, the methods employed in this study enabled knowledge production for both academia as well as the communities that produce the knowledge. The study therefore promoted the treatment of respondents as subjects of the research whose contribution to knowledge production was vital. The study combined indigenous and other theories in the process of knowledge production (Chilisa 2012). The postcolonial theory provided prominence to the voice of the respondents thereby centering indigenous knowledge that was previously marginalised.

7.4.2 Contribution to Theory

By way of promoting African scholarship and minimising western epistemologies that emphasise universal knowledge, the study used postcolonial theory as a decolonising theoretical framework. The theory placed African ways of knowing at the centre of every analysis. It was evident in the study that postcolonial theory was the correct lens through which the study was taken. The idea that most of the respondents bemoaned that colonialism, together with Christianity, (as discussed in Chapters Three and Six) belittled their practices and denigrated them to the periphery was quite evident. The need to centre studies on IKS is couched from a postcolonial perspective. Mapara (2009) clearly demonstrates that the postcolonial theory is the right theory that corrects the misinformation, untruths, half-truths and distortions that colonialism wrought in most African communities, like the Ndau community of Chipinge district. Using the theory this study argues that IKS, particularly *shupa* is a survival resource that caters not only for the Ndau people's primary health care needs but also as an identity asset that must not only documented but protected from myriads of challenges as discussed in Chapter Six.

In order to avoid the excesses of the postcolonial theory where in a bid to centre IKS studies the tendency (by most scholars) is to romanticise IKS, cultural hermeneutics was used as founded by Kanyoro (2002) to interrogate *shupa* with the intention to unearth the inherent injustices that may be present in the practice itself. Using the SWOT analytical tool, it was discovered that closely associated to *shupa* is the element of *kuhaza* which risks both men and women's lives. The ordeal that the suspected wife goes through under the *kuhaza* concept dehumanizes the wife/wives and

the element itself puts the life of the husband at risk. Though corrective measures are taken to ensure the affected husband recovers, if not detected on time it may result in loss of life. Using the SWOT analytical tool, it was discovered that the *kuhaza* aspect of *shupa* needed redefining and reconfiguring. The *kuhaza* element of *shupa* acted as a social control mechanism among the Ndau as it ensured women would not cheat though men were treated with impunity. The respondents were clear on this when they stated that cases of infidelity among married women of Ndau community are fewer as compared to other tribes. They cite elements such as *kuhaza* as some of the reasons for the high morality levels of the Ndau women. This sense of fidelity has sustained polygamous marriages among the Ndau. The Ndau see no evil in them even in the context of HIV and AIDS owing to the *kuhaza* socialisation. Although the *kuhaza* aspect is gendered where men seem to enjoy unbridled privileges, it is a source of fidelity that most African cultures uphold. Therefore, a combined application of both theoretical frameworks, the postcolonial and cultural hermeneutics resulted in an objective study of *shupa* as Ndau IKS, where its efficacy is maintained and its life denying nature is reconfigured. If theories complement each other as was the case in this thesis, adequate lenses are provided for scrutinizing IKS.

7.4.3 Contextual contribution

The current study offered a contextual contribution to the global knowledge by focusing on a Ndau community. The Ndau community acts as a microcosm of the macrocosm. In other words, the study used the Ndau case, being a minority group, to reflect the efficacy and agency of IKS through paying particular attention to *bota reshupa* as an indigenous knowledge.

7.4.4 Contribution to existing literature

While there is limited literature on Ndau IKS, *bota reshupa* demonstrated that indigenous knowledge is community-based and culture-specific. The study found out that Ndau use the practice of *shupa* as a distinct belief and practice that sets the Ndau as religio-culturally apart from other Shona-speaking people of Zimbabwe. The study has added a new dimension to Ndau IKS from those discussed by Mapuranga (2010), Matikiti (2012), Maposa (2013), Konyana (2016) and recently by Hlatshwayo (2017). While this study focused on *shupa* and its efficacy, it complemented literature on Ndau IKS and other IKS from the global perspective.

7.5 Areas for further research

Given the efficacy of *shupa,* there is need for additional research on the specific compounds of the herbs that are used in *shupa.* This means laboratory research that are meant to determine the components of *shupa.* The researches could yield results that studies of a similar nature produced in Namibia when plants such as the Hoodia plant were tested in a laboratory. It was discovered that the plant has compounds that treat HIV and AIDS- related conditions (Chinsembu 2015). Taking *shupa* to a science laboratory can yield valuable pharmaceutical medicine.

Furthermore, while this study focused on the perceptions of adults on the efficacy of *shupa,* it did not consider the perceptions of the young people. It can be worth noting how the young, as future indigenous knowledge producers and holders, perceive the belief and practice of *shupa*. More research on the gendered nature of *shupa* is suggested for this was not exhaustively done in this thesis because of the thesis' focus, time and space limitations. Yet another area for further research can be in the spirituality and power of beliefs in IKS.

The thesis also makes the following suggestions for these stakeholders to consider: communities and their traditional leaders, government of Zimbabwe, policy-makers and implementors in IKS, IKS researchers, academics and curriculum designers/developers.

7.6 Funded and robust IKS Research

As observed by Mapara (2017) the Zimbabwe government must invest in IKS research by funding research on IKS in universities and research institutions like Research Council of Zimbabwe (RCZ). The government must have statutory instruments that make it legally binding for institutions and individuals to make patented IKS researches. While the zeal to do IKS research is there, no funds are budgeted for that. For example, this study had no funding. This explains why very little is being done in IKS research in Zimbabwe.

7.7 Promotion, protection and preservation of IKS

Hlatshwayo (2017:236) notes, "Whilst other countries in sub-Saharan Africa have established IKS policy frameworks and have procedures in place for the production, management and preservation of IKS, Zimbabwe is still lagging behind". Given the efficacy of IKS as demonstrated by this thesis, leaving the *status quo* like that stifles sustainable development. Due to a number of factors

militating against IKS, such as dying of the elders, globalisation and modernisation, documentation of IKS has become a necessity. Ngulube et al. (2011) call for the immediate documentation of IKS for the future generation. The documentation can be complemented by archiving of IKS. These would ensure promotion, protection and preservation of IKS. If there was any time for government to take the promotion, protection and preservation of IKS seriously, it is now.

7.8 IKS and the curriculum

The need to 'Africanise' education has been the aim of many scholars (Odora Hoppers 2001, 2002, Dei 2000, Khupe 2014). This is needed to contextualise education in Africa. Another way to preserve IKS from being diminished is through inclusion into the education system. This will ensure its sustainability through future generations. Zimbabwean educational institutions should embrace more what South Africa is doing by including IKS into its education system. IKS have been mainstreamed at South African universities such as the University of Venda (UV) and the University of KwaZulu - Natal (UKZN). This thesis calls upon the Zimbabwean government to do more in the teaching and learning of IKS in the curricula. GZU's prioritisation of culture, heritage and the arts is a step in the right direction but she needs government support to realise its vision.

7.9 Conclusions

This study intended to answer the question: *How efficacious is bota reshupa among the Ndau people of the Manicaland province of Zimbabwe?* Throughout the study efforts were made to ensure that the chapters demonstrated the efficacy of *bota reshupa* as Ndau IKS. Embracing the postcolonial and cultural hermeneutics theories, the study argues that apart from being a health asset, *bota reshupa* is a socio -cultural agency in which Ndau identity, aesthetics, *rite de passage*, as well as self-pride are embedded.

The chapter has provided a summary of the major findings of the study, revisiting the objectives of the study, methodology and theoretical frameworks, and analysed these to ascertain whether they had been achieved. The contributions of the study to existing literature, methodology, theoretical frameworks and context were also provided. The chapter concluded by suggesting several areas for further research in order to inform policy in Zimbabwe, as well as suggesting what should be done to ensure that indigenous ways of knowing such as *shupa* are preserved for continued use in the future. The lack of response in IKS research in Zimbabwe, particularly in

ethno-linguistically marginalised communities like the Ndau, defies logic, yet as demonstrated in this thesis. these communities produce and hold valuable knowledge that is sustainable for human existence.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethics Clearance from the university

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL

INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

3 November 2017

Mr Tenson Muyambo 214580860
School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Muyambo

Protocol reference number: HSS/0167/017D
Project title: Indigenous Knowledge Systems of the Ndau people of Manicaland province, Zimbabwe: A case study of bota reshupa

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 16 February 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and **FULL APPROVAL** for the protocol has been granted.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

....
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Siwila C Lilian & Dr Masondo Sibusiso
cc. Academic Leader Research: Professor P Denis
cc. School Administrator: Ms Catherine Murugan

Appendix 2: Consent form

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……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Researcher: Tenson Muyambo

Institution: University of KwaZulu Natal

Telephone Number: +263 773 543 029

Email address: tmabhuyamuyambo@gmail.com

Supervisor: Prof. Lilian C. Siwila

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Co-supervisor: Dr. Sibusiso Masondo

Institution: University of KwaZulu Natal

Telephone number +270312607290

Email. Masondosi@ukzn.ac.za

I, Tenson Muyambo, of the University of KwaZulu Natal University, kindly invite you to participate in the research project title: **Indigenous knowledge systems of the Ndau people of Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. A case study of *bota reshupa.***

This research project is done as part of requirements of the PhD undertaken under the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics of the University of KwaZulu Natal. The aim of the study is to investigate the resourcefulness of *bota reshupa* as Ndau IKS.

Participation in this research project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the research project at any stage and for any reason without any form of disadvantage. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records identifying you as a participant will be maintained by the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in this study, please feel free to contact myself or my supervisor at the numbers indicated above.

It should take you between one (1) and two (hours) to participate in the focus group interview and about one (1) hour to participate in the individual interviews. By signing this form, you are agreeing to have your interview recorded.

Thank you for participating in this research project.

Yours Sincerely

………………………………… …………………………………

Signature Date

I ……………………………………………………………. hereby consent to participate in the above study.

Name………………………………………………… Date………………………

Signature…………………………………………………...

Appendix 3: Interviews: In-depth personal schedule of questions

1. What do you understand about *bota reshupa*? Give as many information as possible.
2. What are your experiences of *bota reshupa*?
3. How is *bota reshupa* prepared?
4. Who prepares it and why?
5. How is the herbal porridge secured and preserved?
6. How is it administered and to who?
7. What are the functions of *bota reshupa*? Why does your family or community practice it?
8. How prevalent is the practice in your family or community?
9. What are the challenges that face *bota reshupa* as Ndau IKS? Give as much detail as you can.
10. In your view, what is the future of *bota reshupa*? Explain fully your views.

Appendix 4: Interviews: In-depth personal schedule of questions (In Ndau)

1. Chiinyi chaunozwisisa pabota reshupa*?* Ipa zvizhinji zvaunoziya.

2. Zviinyi zvaunokarakadza pandaa yebota reshupa?

3. Rinonasirwa sei bota reshupa?

4. Ndiani anonasira *bota* iri uye ngei?

5. Rinongwarira sei bota iri?

6. Rinopuwa sei uye Rinopuwa kunaani?

7. Rinoshanda mushando wei bota iri? Ngei pamuzi pako kana mumuganga mwako tsika iyi ichiitwa?

8. Tsika iyi ichakatekeshera zvakadini mumuzi mako kana mumuganga mako?

9. Ngezviri zvibingamupinyi zvakaningirana netsika yebota iri? Ipa zveshe zvaunokona kupa apa.

10. Mukupona kwako tsika iri ine ramangwani rakadini? Ipa zvizhinji.

Appendix 5: Interviews: Focus group schedule of questions

1. What do you understand about *bota reshupa*? Give as many information as possible.
2. What are your experiences of *bota reshupa*?
3. How is *bota reshupa* prepared?
4. Who prepares it and why?
5. How is the herbal porridge secured and preserved?
6. How is it administered and to who?
7. What are the functions of *bota reshupa*? Why does your family or community practice it?
8. How prevalent is the practice in your family or community?
9. What are the challenges that face *bota reshupa* as Ndau IKS? Give as much detail as you can.
10. In your view, what is the future of *bota reshupa*? Explain fully your views.

Appendix 6: Interviews: Focus group schedule of questions (In Ndau)

1. Chiinyi chaunozwisisa pabota reshupa*?* Ipa zvizhinji zvaunoziya.

2. Zviinyi zvaunokarakadza pandaa yebota reshupa?

3. Rinonasirwa sei bota reshupa?

4. Ndiani anonasira *bota* iri uye ngei?

5. Rinongwarira sei bota iri?

6. Rinopuwa sei uye Rinopuwa kunaani?

7. Rinoshanda mushando wei bota iri? Ngei pamuzi pako kana mumuganga mwako tsika iyi ichiitwa?

8. Tsika iyi ichakatekeshera zvakadini mumuzi mako kana mumuganga mako?

9. Ngezviri zvibingamupinyi zvakaningirana netsika yebota iri? Ipa zveshe zvaunokona kupa apa.

10. Mukupona kwako tsika iri ine ramangwani rakadini? Ipa zvizhinji.

Appendix 7: Permission Letter from the Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage

ZIMBABWE

Ministry of Rural Development, Promotion a
Preservation of National Culture and Heritage
Cnr S. Muzenda and Livingstone Avenue
15th Floor Mukwati Building
P. O. Box HR480
Harare

Ref: RDM/23/8

19 April 2017

Mr. Muyambo Tenson
Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University
P.O Box 350
Bindura

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN CHIPINGE DISTRICT: MANICALAND PROVINCE: MR. TENSON MUYAMBO: DOCTORAL STUDENT: UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL: SOUTH AFRICA

The above stated matter refers.

This letter serves as an authority to grant you permission to undertake your research on the "**Indigenous Knowledge Systems of the Ndau people of Manicaland Province, Chipinge District, Zimbabwe: A case of Bota Reshupa**".

By copy of this letter the Provincial Administrator of the above named province is being authorised to facilitate the research programme.
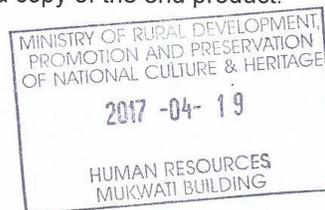
The Ministry would be grateful to receive a copy of the end product.

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
PROMOTION AND PRESERVATION
OF NATIONAL CULTURE & HERITAGE
2017 -04- 19
HUMAN RESOURCES
MUKWATI BUILDING

M. Dube
Director Human Resources
For: Secretary for Rural Development, Promotion and Preservation of National Culture and Heritage

cc: Provincial Administrator-Manicaland
          District Administrator

Appendix 8: Sample of a thump-stamped consent form

Vadzidzisi vangu ndi Dr. L. Siwila *vanogara* Pietermaritzburg *na* Dr. S. Masondo vanogara Durban, Howard College of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics
Contact details: emails: siwila@ukzn.ac.za
masondosi@ukzn.ac.za

Munogona kuwana ve Research Office *pana*:
P. Mohun
HSSREC Research Office,
Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

Mwashuma kuita basa patsvagurudzo ino.

DECLARATION

I……………………………………………………………………… (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.