THE DEPICTION OF *VHUTHU* AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY IN SELECTED TSHIVENḒA NOVELS

BY

KEDIBONE VIOLET MAFUNE

SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN TSHIVENḒA

IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

(School of Languages and Communication Studies)

AT THE

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR S.J. KUBAYI

CO-SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR R.N. MAḒADZHE

SEPTEMBER 2020

DECLARATION

I, Mafune Kedibone Violet, declare that *The Depiction of African Vhuthu Philosophy in Selected Venḓa Novels* is my own independent work, that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted this work to any university for a degree and that I have acknowledged all the references supportive to my research topic in the bibliography.

……………………………

Mafune KV

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

The Depiction of Vhuthu African Philosophy in Selected Venḓa Novels is a research study specifically dedicated to the following people:

My husband, Mr Itani David Mafune, who did not only encourage me to become educated, but also provided me with an exemplary attitude, care and support.

My children: Itani, Masala, Nduvheni, Makonḓe and Mafune. You are doing exactly what Mom and Papa want in your lives. *Ndi a ni funesa vhana vhanga.*

My late father, Mr Kanakana Robert Malema; my mother, Dzuma Anna Malema, and my late uncle, Mr Khanyakhanya Frederick Raulinga, who encouraged me from the foundational stages of my educational development to pursue education as both spear and shield in my future, *ke le o thlwele batswadi.*

Kha muṱa (family) *wa ha Mafune, nga maanḓa muṱahabvu mazwale*, Vho Musandiwa Joseph *na mazwalekadzi*, Vho Josphinah Makonḓelele Mafune, ndi *vha livhuwesa kha u tendela voḓa* (son) *ḽavho ḽi tshi ntendela u bveledza pfunzo dzanga hu si na tshithithisi.*
Ndi a losha. Aa!

Makhadzi wanga, Vho Georginah Kudzingana, I thank you for uplifting my spirit with wonderful words of wisdom when I was down and dejected. You have consistently given me more than I ever needed. You and I both know that prayer works. May the Lord continue to make you the light of this world.

Mudzimu Ramakole, lwe wo nṋetshedzaho vhutshilo, u konḓelela na ndivho (purpose) so that what You gave me could be used for the development and improvement of others and the communities within which they exist. Lord, I give you all the glory, I worship You my Lord; You are indeed worthy to be praised! Make me your vessel, make me an offering, make me whatever you want me to be. In the crushing and in the pressing, You are making new wine out of me.

ABSTRACT

This research study investigated the *Vhuthu* African philosophy in four selected

Tshivenḓa novels, namely; *A si Ene* (Madima, 1954), *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980),

Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa (Demana, 2015) and *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014) respectively. The *Vhuthu* philosophical principles formed the main part of the literature review in this study, which afforded the researcher the opportunity to read through, gain an understanding and develop a detailed analysis of the concept of *Vhuthu* as depicted in the aforementioned novels. Undergirded by the Afrocentricity Theory, this study foregrounds the depiction of African *Vhuthu* philosophy in the mentioned Tshivenḓa novels. The Afrocentric theoretical perspective centralises the agency of Africans and is geared towards drawing Africans from the margins to the centre in various spheres of society. This study illustrates how Vhuthu, as an essential tenet of African life and philosophy, is embraced by the Vhavenḓa. The study employed the qualitative approach, and used Textual Analysis in the analysis of data obtained from the four selected Tshivenḓa novels. In its investigation of the depiction of *Vhuthu* in the four selected Tshivenḓa novels, this study was framed within four main objectives of the study, namely:

(i) to identify aspects that depict *Vhuthu* from the selected Tshivenḓa novels, (ii) to investigate the benefits of *Vhuthu* from the selected novels, (ii) to investigate the shortcomings of *Vhuthu* from the selected novels and, (iii) to establish the relevance of *Vhuthu* in present-day society. In the analysis of the selected novels, it was found that there were instances where the characters acted in accordance to the *Vhuthu* philosophical principles while in other instances, the characters somewhat contravened the *Vhuthu* philosophy. Overall, the study suggests that the *Vhuthu* philosophy must be included in the school curricula because, as the study argues, most people who act against the philosophy's principles are largely the youth.

Keywords: *Vhuthu* philosophical principles, Afrocentricity, Textual Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 4
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter details the background to the study. The chapter also looks at the research problem, purpose and objectives of the study, the significance of the study, ethical considerations and the layout of the study in relation to the depiction of African *vhuthu* philosophy in selected Tshivenḓa novels. The selected novels are: *A Si Ene* (Madima, 1954), *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980), *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014) and *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015).

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.2.1 The origin of the concept of *ubuntu (vhuthu*)

Tshawane (2009) indicates that African Americans' conceptions of community arose from as early as during the time of Martin Luther King. Thus, in this study, the present researcher concurs that the concept of *vhuthu*ism may indeed be traced from the Afro-American philosophies of the past. This view is in consensus with Tshawane (2009) who maintains that *vhuthu* principles and ideological connotations are not only African-borne but have also gained roots from the Afro-American influence. The *vhuthu* principles were once proclaimed by King when he stated that the world of shared values can reach such a level of cooperation that human beings are liberated from their selfishness and empowered to give themselves to their neighbours (Tshawane, 2009).

The study focuses on the African philosophy of *vhuthu,* otherwise commonly known as *ubuntu* as portrayed in four selected Tshivenḓa novels. The word *vhuthu* is derived from a Nguni word *ubuntu* meaning "the quality of being human" (Mangena, 2016:67). *Vhuthu* manifests itself through various human acts, visible in social, political and economic situations, as well as among the family institution. The concept of *vhuthu* originated during the pre-colonial periods when orality dominated the recording of African histories, cultures, traditions, values and norms (Van den Heuvel, 2006). Metz

(2011) highlights that the development of *vhuthu* as a philosophy dates back to the periods of philosophers such as Augustine who then indicated that an unjust law is no law because it lacks the principles of *ubuntu*. In the 1790s, the German Philosopher, Immanuel Kant, indicated that humans have the capacity to relate to others in a communal way which forms part of the African philosophy of *ubuntu* (Metz, 2011). This indicates that the origins of *vhuthu* could be traced as early as in the 1790s.

Vhuthu was previously used as a form of African Traditional Religion (ATR) which was projected in the form of stories, dances, music and other means of an oratory nature (Ejizu, 2011). Contemporarily, as far as South Africa is concerned, *vhuthu* underlies the development of nation-building, reconciliation and management. It was also used to deal with issues of mistrust, hatred and retaliation among different political parties; freedom fighters and perpetrators as well as the victims of apartheid to enhance the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). That process culminated in the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which aimed at reconciling South Africans (Sapire & Saunders, 2013).

Gade (2012) maintains that the *vhuthu* philosophy is generally held to have stemmed from and is rooted in the African indigenous cultures. Indeed, a number of African nations were identified as subscribing to the adherence of *vhuthu* principles. Such countries include, among others: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola (Gade, 2012). Thus, *vhuthu* is an African philosophy determining the cultural nature in which Africans should interact with each other and live in harmony. The researcher is of the opinion that the *vhuthu* philosophy is practiced more within the Sub-Saharan African continent than elsewhere around the globe. Besides, *Vhuthu* theoretical explanations cover a great deal of both the social and natural sciences. According to Hailey (2008), the *vhuthu* principles can be extended to the need to improve food distribution, musical events and others. In the subsequent sections, this study will argue that the *vhuthu* principles may be directed

towards the elimination of all kinds of criminal activities, mismanagement practices and corruption.

1.2.2 Towards the definition of *vhuthu*

The term *vhuthu* can be interpreted from diverse perspectives. This is well reflected in the contrasting definitions offered by different dictionaries and scholars. Mzamane (2009) contends that the problem with the *vhuthu* philosophy is that no one is able to define it. Its complexity emanates from the fact that most Western philosophers do not view it as a viable social philosophical approach (Tutu, 1999). Nevertheless, Sparks (1990) attempts to clarify its meaning when he suggests that, to understand the full meaning of the word *ubuntu* (*vhuthu*), one must first separate the prefix *ubu-* from the root *-untu*. The prefix *ubu-* may translate into "to be" simply meaning 'to become something else'. It can only make full sense after it has been attached to the root *-untu* which means 'humanness'.

Morphologically, the term *ubuntu* comprises the pre-prefix *u-*, the abstract noun prefix *bu-* and, the noun stem *-ntu*, meaning 'person', which translates as personhood or humanness (Kamwangamalu, 1999). The term *ubuntu* is commonly found in the Nguni languages of Southern Africa, and words with a similar meaning are found throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, *botho* (Sesotho or Setswana), *bumuntu* (kiSukuma and Kihayi in Tanzania), *bomoto* (Bobangi in Congo) and *gimuntu* (Kikongo and giKwese in Angola), *umundu* (Kikuyu in Kenya), *umuntu* (Uganda), *umunthu* (Malawi), *vumuntu* (shiTsonga and shiTswa in Mozambique) (Kamwangamalu, 1999). This demonstrates that *vhuthu* is a concept that prevails in most African cultures. The morphological structure of *vhuthu* in Tshivenḓa is delineated from a proverb *muthu ndi muthu nga vhaṅwe* translated as 'a person is a person through others'. In this case, *vhu-* is the prefix whereas *–thu* is the root. According to the Tshivenḓa customs and traditions, a person cannot live in isolation from others. The African *vhuthu* philosophy was also observed within the Zimbabwean society. In this regard, Hailey (2008) maintains that although *vhuthu* philosophical approach gained a large support from the Nguni languages of Southern Africa, it was also supported by people in countries such

as Tanzania, Congo, Angola and others. Mangena (2016) called it *hunhu.* In the context of this understanding, the concept of *vhuthu* is spread across all Sub-Saharan countries due to the reason that they share similar cultures and traditions.

Sparks (1990) notes that *vhuthu* is an African philosophy that is strongly based on the notion that people are people through other people. Similarly, Biko (2013) mentions that the *vhuthu* philosophy maintains that no-one can exist as a human being in isolation. This view is supported by Van Den Heuvel (2006) who contends that *vhuthu* is a philosophic approach designed to improve relationships among people. What all this means is that *vhuthu* emerges once people start living together peacefully and harmoniously, and as such, it is an important building block of communities and societies. Ideally, *vhuthu* repels individualism as human beings are social beings by nature.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, quoted by Hailey (2008), notes that *vhuthu* is very difficult to render into a Western language other than to say, 'my humanity is caught up […] inextricably bound up in what is yours'. Metz (2011) contends that people are expected to provide each other as well as foreigners with a high level of hospitality. This entails that in order for people to be regarded as practising *vhuthu*, they are expected to invite, provide and treat others with a high level of humanness.

Different approaches to defining *vhuthu* range from the official legalistic approaches as found in government documents to the highly personal. The latter is reflected in Archbishop Tutu's comment, as cited by Hailey (2008), which states that you know when *ubuntu* is there, and it is obvious when it is absent. It has to do with what it means to be truly human, to know that you are bound up with others in the bundle of life. Tutu (in Mbigi, 2006) sees *vhuthu* as the essence of being human, and that it is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. All this suggests that Tutu sees a person with *vhuthu* as someone who is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, and willing to share. Such people are open, affirming and available to others. Mangena (2016) maintains that although an individual's rights are considered, they must be subjected to others as

enshrined by the *vhuthu* principles. An individual cannot be allowed to act on their own in this regard.

A more formal definition is the one adopted in the South African Government's (1996) White Paper on Welfare that identified *vhuthu* as the principle of caring for each other's wellbeing and a spirit of mutual support. Each individual's humanity is ideally expressed through his or her relationship with others and theirs in turn through the recognition of the individual's humanity. *Vhuthu* means that people are people through other people. It also acknowledges both the rights and responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal wellbeing. This more formal meaning still reverberates the same essence that Archbishop Tutu advocates.

Vhuthu principles within the South African context are also contained in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996). Whereas the entire Chapter 2 of the Constitution stipulates the Bill of Rights intended to promote, protect and fulfill the fundamental human rights, two sections are, however, specifically attributed to the principles of *vhuthu*. Firstly, Section 9 states that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. *Vhuthu* principles are aimed at the protection of human rights. Secondly, Section 10 of the Constitution promulgates the concept of human dignity which requires that everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. Respect is one of the most important elements of the *vhuthu* philosophy. According to Metz (2011), *vhuthu* principles aim to promote human rights and human dignity, which he regards as the treatment others in a way that obtains some quality that one shares with all other human beings. Again, Metz (2011) notes that the *vhuthu* philosophy within the South African context is directed towards the fulfillment, protection and promotion of the global fundamental human rights of all people. Indeed, this premise is directed towards the promotion of individual and the social wellbeing of people who are expected to share a community and communal life with each other.

1.2.3 *Vhuthu*: a worldview

Van Niekerk (2013) points out that *vhuthu* becomes an exhaustive theory or a worldview approach aimed at developing a large-scale and modern multicultural society such as South Africa today. The *Vhuthu* philosophy is one of the world-renowned philosophies around the globe. Hailey (2008) supports this statement by articulating the properties required for any philosophy to be regarded as currently recognised as an international concept which is used by different academicians, philosophers, researchers, etc., drawn from schools of thought such as philosophy, biology, management, community development, political science, linguistics, literary criticism, health care studies, engineering, theology and others (Hailey, 2008). In order to add a debate to this view, Ntamushobora (2012) maintains that *ubuntu* is a worldview philosophical approach aimed at the prevention of conflicts and violence and the promotion of reconciliation among people of different tribes, races, religions and social status. When a concept is used over a variety of professional disciplines such as these, it gains a recognition of being classified under a worldview category. *Vhuthu* has gained a large amount of respect globally in that it is no longer viewed as an indigenous philosophy but a worldwide philosophical approach (Hailey, 2008). *Vhuthu* is an African philosophy that is used to address a large amount of social injustices throughout the globe. In light of this view, Hailey (2008) maintains that in South Africa, *ubuntu* is one of those protean terms that has been adopted by a variety of institutions and events in their attempt to capture the spirit of oneness, respect, protection, fulfillment of human rights and so on.

1.2.4 Tshivenḓa culture and the practice of the *vhuthu* philosophy

Vhuthu is strongly embedded within the Tshivenḓa culture, traditions and way of life. Culture and traditions are generally reflected by certain ceremonies where the Vhavenḓa practice and delineate the nature in which *vhuthu* is encouraged among their communities. For expository convenience, the researcher selected at least three prominent cultural activities practiced in Tshivenḓa culture where the *vhuthu* philosophy is evinced, namely; *thevhula*, *davha* and *dzunde.*

Mabogo (1990) states that *thevhula* is a ceremony which is held during a season called *mavhuyahaya*. *Mavhuyahaya* is a season which coincides with winter and is characterised by the ripening and harvesting of all summer crops. *Thevhula* provides people with much eating, drinking, building, school initiations and others (Mabogo, 1990). The researcher is of the understanding that *thevhula* depicts the aspect of *vhuthu*, precisely because it translates into people coming together and enjoying abundant consumption of the spoils obtained from nature.

Davha, on the other hand, is a self-help programme which means working for free and without being coerced into doing so by the authorities (Mamburu, 2004). During *davha*, community members contribute their labour, skills and equipment free of charge to the family/community in need of immediate assistance. *Vhuthu* is depicted through the satisfaction and happiness people obtain from having assisted their neighbours. Other families who are without the necessary resources are provided with shares required to sustain their family households in the process.

Dzunde is defined as a process where subjects of a chief or king are compelled to render services on his/her behalf, and the practice is enforceable in nature (Mamburu, 2004). An important attribute of *vhuthu* is delineated when the chief or king redistributes the harvest to the sectors of communities or kingdom which are without food and other amenities. In this context, all the people are treated as equals and belonging to one and similar social network.

Thus, the aspect of an African way of life is not only embedded within the Tshivenḓa cultural practices, namely; *thevhula*, *davha* and *dzunde*, but also in other African cultures as well (Metz, 2011). Unfortunately, these cultural practices were eroded by the advent of a variety of societal changes, namely; industrialisation, urbanisation, migration, Christianity, Western education and so on. This study argues that the significant erosion of the *vhuthu* philosophy in Tshivenḓa customs and traditions is a threat to the establishment, development and maintenance of *vhuthu* within the Vhavenḓa communities. This is so because community members are no longer

encouraged to conform to the norms, values and standards previously respected by their predecessors.

Vhuthu is noted as the most fundamental and encompassing view of reality shared among people within a common cultural environment (Ntamushobora, 2012). A culture is some form of entity which is mostly shared among African people. In this instance, African people within the Sub-Saharan Africa use culture as a basis for their interconnectedness. Ntamushobora (2012) insists that culture is the main attribute that brings people together to share a common goal of developing the continuity of their livelihoods.

1.2.5 Perspectives on *vhuthu*

It is important to note that there is a body of literature that has a critical perspective on *vhuthu* and its genesis, and which highlights some of the negative consequences of promoting *vhuthuism* and adopting its values. These commentaries on *vhuthu* either see it in terms of a set of common characteristics or behaviours (valuing others, kindness, compassion, etc.) or as representative of a wider value system or paradigm. It is increasingly used as a "catch-all" term used to characterise the norms and values that are inherent in many traditional African societies, and used to illustrate the way individuals in these communities relate to others, and the quality and character of their relationship (Hailey, 2008).

The principle of *vhuthu* is measured according to its presence and absence. Hailey (2008) states that 'you know when *vhuthu* is there and it is also obvious when it is absent.' Similarly, *vhuthu* is observed ultimately when people show humanness towards each other, while, on the other hand, its absence is observed when criminality, pride and prejudice, callousness, non-supporting and others occur. Individuals who practice the high level of *vhuthu* are expected to show elements of welcome, hospitality, warmth, generosity, a willingness to share, openness, affirmation, availability to others and so on (Hailey, 2008).

One increasingly important perspective is that vhuthu represents a wider worldview or belief system rather than just a set of discernible characteristics. Nyathu (2004), for example, has written that *vhuthu*'s importance as a value system is seen in the way that it has "been the backbone of many African societies" and it is "the fountain from which many actions and attitudes flow" (Nyathu, 2004). In that way, it is the basic elements that qualify any person to be human. Murithi (2006) expands this view by referring to *vhuthu* as an African way of viewing the world. It is a worldview that tries to capture the essence of what it means to be human.

Even more determinedly, Hailey (2008) suggests that *vhuthu* is a "cosmology" that defines the "harmonic intelligence" that is an intrinsic part of local cultures in Southern Africa, and is at odds with the Western ideas of communities that appear increasingly geared to individuality and competition. In this regard *vhuthu* can be defined as our humaneness.   An English concept of humanism is translated into other African languages as a philosophy, a worldview and an ethic (Gade, 2012). In the context of this view, humanness entails a process through which people living next to each other create a warm environment which allows them to live harmoniously and peacefully. *Vhuthu* principles promulgate that people should always treat each other with love, care and respect. Gade (2012) is of the opinion that humanness shall have been completely attained once people regard each other as equals.

A persuasive spirit of caring and community, harmony and hospitality, respect and responsiveness that individuals display to one another is part of *vhuthu*. *Vhuthu* is able to promote genuine harmony and continuity throughout the wider human system. People living harmoniously with each other have a capability of continuing to establish a good and healthy neighbourhood with one another (Metz, 2011).

Vhuthu principles played a significant role in the creation of friendly and healthy neighbourhoods among African people (Gade, 2012). For example, during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), before the 1994 South Africa general elections,

different political groups, theoretical approaches and belief systems were amalgamated into one goal, namely; the creation of a peaceful South African society. *Vhuthu* principles were accordingly used as the basis from which society could be formed, developed and moved forward.

Ramose (1999) suggests that "African philosophy has long been established in and through *ubuntu* … there is a family atmosphere, that is, a kind of philosophical affinity and kinship among and between the indigenous people of Africa". He notes that the philosophy is not merely restricted to Bantu speakers but is found throughout Sub-Saharan Africa including West Africa. In Senegal, the concept of "*Teranga*" reflects a similar spirit of collective hospitality and responsibility.

More specifically, Swartz (2006) calls *vhuthu* a "pervasive African philosophy" that has been part of the process of shaping concepts of citizenship and morality in post-apartheid South Africa. Mangena (2016) noted that all forms of oppression envisaged by colonialism, apartheid and so on, are accordingly redressed through the application of *vhuthu* principles in most nations within the Sub-Saharan continent.

Vhuthu is viewed as the fundamental social philosophy in many African countries. However, as Nussbaum (2003) argues, there is a considerable misunderstanding in the West as to the nature of this indigenous African paradigm. Nussbaum suggests that this is partly the product of the oral nature of traditional culture in Africa and the nonexistence of written amplifications on *vhuthu*. However, this may also be exarcerbated by the negative depiction of African society in Western media. Nonetheless, there is an overall agreement among authors on *vhuthu* that it epitomises an alternative voice to the European and American philosophical and theological discourses that dictate so much on African intellectualism.

While *vhuthu* has been seen by some writers as African humanism or a cosmology, for others, it is "resiliently religious" (Prinsloo, 1995), and expresses the "religiosity or

religiousness of the religious other" (Louw, 2001). Mangena (2016) related that the concept of *vhuthu* is closely associated with the African Traditional Religion. Implicit in this view is that Africans have their way of understanding and reacting towards occurrences surrounding them. According to the African Traditional Religion (ATR), Africans are combined together in order to address problems they face in their daily livelihoods.

Ntamushobora (2012) contends that the African Traditional Religion (ATR) is a typical kind of African religion which is purported towards connecting an individual, his/her descendants and his/her family with the ultimate ancestors to gain a source of life. In this regard, ATR purports that Africans must believe in the ancestral spirits as entities which direct their values, norms, standards and actions. It is possible to identify five general areas where *vhuthu* has a practical application. Firstly, *vhuthu* has plays a role in helping African people value themselves through their relationship with a particular community. Secondly, vhuthu has a role in community building. Third, *vhuthu* has a notable ability to encourage collective work and consensus building. Fourth, *vhuthu* has the potential to encourage and aid in conflict mediation and reconciliation, and fifth, *vhuthu* has an impact on organisational effectiveness and productivity (Hailey, 2008). This study seeks to examine how the five aspects are depicted in the selected novels as well as to examine how those aspects relate with the role and effect of *vhuthu* on society.

Ramose (1999) supports the notion that the term "*ubukhosi*" which is commonly used in Zimbabwe also metaphorically mirrors the statement "*umuntungumuntungabantu*" which some translate into: "a person is a person through other persons". Nussbaum (2003) asserts that such connectivity is also portrayed in such indigenous maxims and proverbs as: "your pain is my pain; my wealth is your wealth. Your salvation is my salvation", or the Sotho saying, "it is through others that one attains selfhood", or through the slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all". Nussbaum argues that these sayings metaphorically capture interconnectedness, common humanity, and shared

responsibilities. Mangena (2016) indicates that in the Shona society in Zimbabwe, *vhuthu* is defined by means of blood relationship. This entails that individuals who belong to a family or a clan are subjected to become part of the whole and therefore, are expected to treat others with respect.

Louw (1998) talks about how *vhuthu* reflects elements of "totalitarian communalism" which "frowns upon elevating an individual above the community" and so can be "overwhelming". He alludes to the consequences suffered in communities where tradition is venerated, continuity revered, change feared and difference shunned. Individualism is not tolerated.   In a similar vein, Themba Sono talks about the "constrictive nature" or
"tyrannical custom" of a derailed African culture which "frowns upon one beyond the community" (Louw, 2001). Similarly, the Shona in Zimbabwe are against the concept of individualism in that they promote that individuals belong to communities from which they belong (Mangena, 2016). There is therefore no area in which an individual acting on their own could be supported by either the family or the community.

Interestingly, some of the most powerful critiques of the old order from which *vhuthu* is derived can be found in recent South African literature. For instance, Mphahlele (1959) and Mpe (2001) are representatives of two generations of Black South African writers, and in two of their best-known books, they both highlight the changing nature of indigenous societies in South Africa partly as a consequence of apartheid and partly because of increased urbanisation. According to Van Niekerk (2013), in recent years the attempt to recover African dignity has been connected with the idea of an African renaissance. This renaissance is different from the past dispensation of the 1960s when African countries sought ways to interact with each other in order to address socioeconomic and political issues obtained from oppressive nature of colonialism and apartheid. Van Niekerk (2013) is of the opinion that the African renaissance element should as well address the attribute of urbanisation which is developing within African countries.

Vhuthu principles are likely to be consigned into oblivion, and subsequently obliterated in the African communities, particularly because of the transformation challenges and changes appended to urbanisation and modernisation. This is notable in a multicultural society such as South Africa, where individuals tend to distance themselves from adhering to the mores, values and standards of living which were enshrined by their respective cultural manifestations. Again, Van Niekerk (2013) notes that the traditional norms of a given community could as well be violated once individual members of that community become part of the multicultural community or society. In the present-day context, the extended family is neither consulted nor respected when it comes to matters affecting nuclear family decisions like it used to be the norm in the past. Current South African families are nuclear in nature because they are detached from the extended family which previously provided individuals with love, care, support, child rearing and other social responsibilities. Gade (2012) observes that although nuclear families are existing on their own, away from the extended family, this distance ultimately affects the extended family, the clan and the community at large, respectively. Hence, the *vhuthu* principles denounce the nuclear family type of livelihood.

Finally, some commentators, such as Enslin and Horsthemke (2004), question the uniqueness of *vhuthu*, and its value and efficiency as a practical guide to action and policy. Their study highlights some of the contradictions inherent in *vhuthu* and explores how conflict between the principles and values implicit in *vhuthu*ism can be resolved –if at all. This article is based on the premise that many of the elements of effective communities, namely; democracy, citizenship and civil society, are, in fact, universal. They are not culture-specific and consequently, one must not over-emphasises *vhuthu*'s role in community development or nation-building, and that it has a cultural specificity that limits its wider application. This current situation within the South African context is what Mangena (2016) calls a postmodern to denote that all levels of oppression are addressed and discouraged. African countries within the Sub-Saharan continent are

now using *vhuthu* philosophy in order to rebuild their respective nations which were once oppressed by colonial powers.

The teachings of the *vhuthu* concept as one of the principles necessary for the building of the South African society also require a detailed analysis of texts such as novels. Teachers, students and other consumers of texts simply read books without an understanding (Kovala, 2002). Novels contain a variety of messages that encourage readers to take charge of their own limitations in order to improve themselves. The depiction of the African *vhuthu* philosophy in the four selected novels in this study thus encourages a conscious and understanding reading on the part of readers.

1.2.6 Critical analysis of *vhuthu*

A number of criticisms were leveled against the *vhuthu* philosophy*. Vhuthu* philosophy is generally criticised by scholars and philosophers who are non-African and non-African-American in nature. Most of the criticisms gained in this study are those obtained from academicians, researchers and philosophers from other continents other than the Sub-Saharan Africa. The first criticism leveled against *vhuthu* is that it is an aspect that is generally contained within the Nguni languages within the South African context. Mangena (2016) noted that a language game endorsed with the concept of *ubuntu* could lead to other South African ethnics not supportive towards it because it is not addressed in their linguistic inventory.

Secondly, *vhuthu* principles tend to gain support from the Western philosophical approaches without which it cannot stand. Mangena (2016) is of the opinion that any other philosophical approaches not supported by the Westernised ones, is considered nonexistent, non-ethical and therefore, immature in nature. Van Niekerk (2013) posits that harmony, which is subscribed by *vhuthu* principles, is non-existent within the South African context. South Africans experience a large amount of criminal activities, fraud and corruption and others which vhuthu principles intended to address in the first place.

Thirdly, *vhuthu* principles are grounded within the Westernised customs and traditions. According to Mangena (2016), *vhuthu* lacks a well-defended general principle of adherence to values, norms and standards different from those of a Westernised environment. Other criticisms leveled against *vhuthu* will be identified and covered in the literature review of this study.

1.3   RESEARCH PROBLEM

The principles of *vhuthu* as highlighted above seem to be diminishing in the African family, community and society. It is a great concern for political leaders, traditional leaders, religious leaders, teachers, women groups and other formal and informal consortia within the South African context (Mangena, 2016). Khoza and Adam (2003) argue that a high level of social problems experienced within the African continent are due to moral degeneration, which is an antithesis of *vhuthu*. This condition positions communities and societies under siege in terms of development. The assumption is that corruption, crime, service delivery inadequacies, unemployment, lack of social cohesion emanate from the disintegration of the *vhuthu* philosophy (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). Societal moral degeneration and other social problems that originate from this degeneration are dehumanising in nature. In other words, society looks beautiful on the outside, but ugly on the inside. People tend to speak about *vhuthu* but their lives reflect the contrary (gang violence, rape, selfishness, hatred of the neighbour, etc.).

Since literature is reflective of predominant political and philosophical principles of the time in which it is written, Tshivenḓa literature is also a historical reflection of the evolution of South African culture in general and Tshivenḓa culture in particular. It is thus a portrait of a setting within a given time, in this instance a mirror of the Tshivenḓa culture within the South African context. What used to be deemed *vhuthu* in the past may no longer be necessarily so these days. Therefore, it is important to establish what *vhuthu* in Tshivenḓa culture entails in the current epoch.

1.4   PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine the depiction of *vhuthu* African philosophy in selected Venḓa novels.

1.4.2 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

- To identify aspects that depict *vhuthu* from the selected Tshivenḓa novels.

- To investigate the benefits of *vhuthu* as reflected in the selected novels.

- To investigate the shortcomings of *vhuthu* as encapsulated in the selected novels.

- To establish the relevance of *vhuthu* in present-day society.

1.5   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The depiction of African vhuthu philosophy in selected Venḓa novels is a qualitative research study aimed at providing students, teachers and tertiary level lecturers with effective and relevant methodologies necessary to conduct textual analysis. In this regard, this research study is beneficial to Tshivenḓa first language students and teachers within the high school environment. Furthermore, Tshivenḓa first language students and lecturers, both at colleges and universities, will be beneficiaries of the study. In a nutshell, the depiction of the African *vhuthu* philosophy in the selected four Tshivenḓa novels will benefit all the important role-players mentioned such as students, teachers and lecturers.

Secondly, a literary analsyis of the philosophy of *vhuthu* may also be beneficial to the African communities at large because Africans will be once more reminded to practice their original livelihoods which were eroded by the aspects of urbanisation, modernisation and globalisation. This is so because, according to *vhuthu*, an African person is encouraged to seek assistance from the community they belong to because a community is viewed as a strong basis to complete one's livelihood. Thirdly, an analysis

of the *vhuthu* philosophy might be beneficial to diverse cultural groups and other cultural formations within the South African context. Thus, cultural groups may use *vhuthu* principles when discouraging the scourge of crime and other social ills within the society. This implies that *vhuthu* shows how people should behave in order to be considered as law-abiding citizenries.

Fourthly, the *vhuthu* philosophy is currently used as an effective management tool, deemed essential in improving the relationship between employers and employees as well as addressing a variety of mismanagement elements such as fraud and corruption.

1.6   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues refer to the social science professional guidelines which are in place in order to protect the participants from being physically, psychologically and emotionally abused by the researchers and or research investigations. According to Cohen *et al.* (2000), social scientists generally have a responsibility not only to their profession in its search for knowledge and quest for truth, but also for the subject they depend on for their work. Babbie (2004) highlights that social science researchers have their ethical obligation towards their research subjects and scientific community. Thus, ethical considerations are guidelines aimed at protecting research participants from harm during the interview sessions, for instance. The researcher identified a number of ethical considerations which should be addressed in this study as risk, harm, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality.

Risks are the unintended outcomes the research participants are likely to encounter after participating in research which could include embarrassment, exclusion and punishment by others. According to Whitley (2002), researchers are obligated to monitor participants during a study for signs of unanticipated negative effects, called the risks in this context. Similarly, Babbie (2008) indicates that risks are in the form of the physical harm, psychological and emotional distress. Researchers are therefore required to avoid any distress and discomfort that might occur during the research projects with the participants.

Harm to subjects means the discomfort condition of the participants which is evoked during the research, such as during interviews, for example. Social research should never injure the people studied, regardless of whether they volunteered for the study (Babbie, 2008). Harm to subjects comes in different ways, the most common ones being; interviewing participants in rooms which are extremely hot or cold, for example. The revelation of information that would embarrass the subjects or endanger their home life, friendships, jobs and so forth is harm to the participants (Babbie, 2008).

Privacy is an ethical consideration which is synonymous with confidentiality. Simply put, privacy entails the manner in which information shared by the participants in the research is kept by the researchers and not made available to other individuals and or institutions (Babbie, 2008). Privacy is not relevant to this study.

Anonymity means that no person, not even the researcher, is allowed to identify the research participant as they are only identified by codes and pseudonyms. A research project guarantees anonymity when the researcher, not just the people who read about the research, cannot identify a given response with a given participant (Babbie, 2008). In this study, anonymity is a promise that even the researcher will not be able to tell which responses came from which participant (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006).

Confidentiality can be defined as a means through which information gathered from the participant is treated with secrecy. Confidentiality extends to all information relating to a person's physical and mental condition, personal circumstances and social relationships which is not already in the public domain (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Individuals may risk losing their jobs, having family difficulties, or being ostracised by peers if certain facets of their private lives are revealed (Babbie, 2008).

1.7   CONCLUSION

This first chapter of the study was aimed at established a foundational and conceptual premise upon which the examination of the depiction of African *vhuthu* philosophy in the

selected four Tshivenḓa novels, namely; *A si Ene* (Madima, 1954), *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* by (Magau,1980), *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014) and *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015). The chapter also provided the background of the study, research problem, purpose and objectives of the study, the significance of the study and ethical considerations of the study. The following chapter presents the literature review.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the issue of *vhuthu*. *Vhuthu* is classified as an African philosophy that is strongly based on the notion that people are people through other people. According to the African tradition, culture and belief, a person cannot live in isolation from others. He/she needs the assistance of others with whom he/she is interconnected. It is better for academics, scholars and researchers to divide *vhuthu* into a number of elements which are then individually described. The most important attributes related to the philosophy of *vhuthu* are that it is an identity maker; it is today used as glue that combines different African states under the umbrella of African renaissance. V*huthu* is currently used as a managerial tool; it is a nation-building concept in that it promotes a high level of unity among people. The main topics covered in this chapter include: the origins of the *vhuthu* philosophy, the explications of the *vhuthu* philosophy, elements of the *vhuthu* philosophy, critical analysis towards the *vhuthu* philosophical approach and the conclusion. However, prior to the discussion on these topics, it is imperative that a summary of each selected novel be provided.

2.2   SUMMARIES OF EACH NOVEL'S STORY

In this section, the summaries of the selected four Tshivenḓa novels analysed in this study are provided.

2.2.1 *A si Ene* (Madima, 1954)

From the start, Adziambei is described as a Muvenda maiden who lacks the Vhavenḓa's culture and traditions. She was earmarked for marriage as Masuwa's wife. Masuwa sent her family presents, which she refused to accept, thus destroying a relationship between her and her father. In a nutshell, both Adziambei's parents were troubled by her character. Maluṱa regarded Adziambei as an attractive woman who knew how to

improve her beauty. Adziambei 'stole' Muhanelwa's suitor, Maluṱa, eloped with him, where they both moved to Hamanskraal, a township situated in the Pretoria city. Muhanelwa is described as a well-behaving Muvenḓa maiden, well-versed in the Tshivenḓa's culture and traditions. She was also literate. Maluṱa was no longer interested in completing his marriage to Muhanelwa. His mother continued to contact Muhanelwa's maiden family in his absence. She paid all the dues and fines demanded by Muhanelwa's people. Fanyana is Maluta's friend who planned the abduction of Adziambei to make her his own wife. Adziambei hired Matshaya to kill Fanyana so that she could be free and return to Hamanskraal. She gave him money and Fanyana's pistol for the execution of the assassination. Muhanelwa was later forced by her in-laws (Maluṱa's mother) to follow him in Pretoria. Unfortunately, this did not go well because Maluṱa organised gangsters to kill her. Muhanelwa was saved by her prayers and thus survived Maluṱa's conspiracy to kill her. Adziambei eventually ended up in Lesotho. Maluṱa became seriously ill and was sent back to Venḓa where he eventually died.

2.2.2 *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980)

This story occurs in the Mphagane area, which is ruled by chief Mphagane. It is here that it was found that prominent local chiefs, namely; Mandiwana, Mukhetho and a local, Reverend Mamidze, under Mphaga happen to hate a local chief responsible for the Tshiozwi community, Lugisani. This hatred actually resurfaced in a traditional council meeting where Lugisani was found to be acting truthfully to avert harsh sentences levelled towards a majority of people alleged to have disrespected the throneship. The conspiracy levelled towards Lugisani was that he was to be redeployed to an area which his enemies felt was totally underdeveloped as compared to others, the Dovhoni community. Lugisani was an outstanding community development practitioner who had improved service delivery at the Dovhoni community over a short space in time. This achievement disturbed his enemies, the trio who were identified above. In the second plot, Mandiwana, Mukhetho and a local Reverend Mamidze tried to pin Lugisani with an allegation of attempting to overthrow Nyamalwela. The Reverend wrote a letter as if it was written by Lugisani maintaining that the chieftainship should be given to him, thereby implying that Nyamalwela should be deposed. The trio also spread rumours

around the community indicating that Lugisani was claiming to be above all other people. The people and chief Mphaga became furious and a demand was issued that Lugisani must be expelled from Mphaga's land with immediate effect. Tshammbenga and Nndanduleni were attention seekers who, under the influence of alcohol, threw rocks at Lugisani's house and mistakenly killed his daughter, Mukandangalwo. It was after the incarceration of Tshammbenga and Nndanduleni that the real perpetrators behind a letter which was rumoured as written by Lugisani, were revealed. Tshammbenga revealed that he was instructed by Reverend Mamidze to type and sign the letter as if its author was Lugisani. Mandiwana, Mukhetho and Reverend Mamidze were arrested for the conspiracy whereas Lugisani was promoted from the position of *mukoma* (petty headman) to that of *vhamusanda* (headman). This novel is called *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* because it shows the myriad ways in which a person may be killed. Thus, taking someone's life is not only evinced by literally spilling such a person's blood, but also through strategies such as character assassination and other means that ultimately result in the misfortunes of another person.

2.2.3 *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014)

The story line in *Ḽi a kovhela* commences with an argument between Segere Muremi and a woman he recently eloped with from Madombidzha (Sophy) who prohibits him from giving Khuthadzo pocket money when he goes to school. Khuthadzo is an orphan; his mother, Margareth, died earlier on. Sophy insists that every money available in the household must instead be given to her son, Maluṱa, a boy she brought along when she eloped with Segere. Sophy is jealous of any form of academic development exhibited by Khuthadzo. She shows this by hiding his schoolbooks when he is supposed to leave for school. When returning from school, Khuthadzo overhears Sophy and a friend, Khuṱhe, gossiping about him and how the latter advises Sophy to treat him differently. The women concealed their plans by greeting the young boy as if they were loving parents. Segere comes home and relaxes himself by reading a daily tabloid and in the process, he overhears that an argument had erupted between Sophy and his son, Khuthadzo.

Segere became furious and advised Sophy that she should not mistreat the boy as he could be her helper in the future.

Sophy's disappointment for being rebuked by her husband led her friend, Khuṱhe, to taking her to consult a medicine man at Ngweṋani-ya-ha-Mapholi were both sought *gaputshete* (love potion) intended to suppress Segere's masculine power. At this juncture, both friends met with Khuthadzo and his aunt (Vele) and avoided exchanging greetings with them. Segere finally consumed the medicine prepared by Malapule, that is, the *gaputshete*. Sophy was fearful that either Khuthadzo or Vele would report to Segere that she had been seen at Malapule's place. She acted very ill and requested Segere to take her to Malapule who was already requested by Khuṱhe to describe Vele as a witch responsible for Sophy's illness. After learning that his sister and her children were behind his downfall, Segere decided not to see them any longer at his household.

Sophy went to Ṱahulela High School to collect Khuthadzo's report. She discovered that the lad had excellently performed in his studies and that the teachers' remarks were concentrated solely on praises and well-wishing. She became so angry that she tore the report into pieces and threw it into the dustbin. Sophy also learnt that her son, Maluṱa, was performing badly at school and that he was abusing alcohol and other types of illicit drugs and starting to chase girls around. She ventilated her anger on Segere by calling him names. Khuthadzo visited his family at Matanda where he enjoyed watching a soccer game. He was engaged in a fist fight with Mishikashika who provoked him and that led to his arrest. Sophy took the opportunity of threatening Segere that Khuthadzo was as dangerous to other people's safety and security, including himself as the father. But Khuthadzo was released from police custody without a charge the following morning.

Sophy made Khuthadzo's life utterly difficult so that his academic performance dropped as well. Sophy and Khuṱhe consulted Malapule from whom they brought along poisoned apples and bananas for him to eat. Khuthadzo did not eat the fruit, instead he fed it to the goats. Khuthadzo passed his Grade 12 and could not succeed to enroll for tertiary education because Sophy would not consent to Segere giving him the money to fund in

his studies him. Bulannga, Khuthadzo's friend, helped him find a job at Treasure Hunt Drillers. Khuthadzo bought a car for himself. Dzudzanyani was captured discouraging Segere for failing to finance his son's education in an effort to please Sophy. On arrival at home, Segere became a different man who also pushed Sophy during their argument. As usual, Sophy sought advice from her friend, Khuṱhe, who insisted that she consults Malapule for help, the kind of help similar to the one where she used poison to kill her late husband, Khanḓela. After Segere had eaten the poison, he became seriously ill. Segere was taken to both Makhado and Siloam hospitals, where it was confirmed he was poisoned. He took all his bank cards from Sophy before he was discharged. Segere made peace with his sister, and ate the food only prepared by Rovhona's mother, that is, Khuthadzo's wife.

Sophy returned to her maiden home where she stayed with her spoiled son, Maluṱa. The son had impregnated a number of girls, neither of whom he married. After problems with Segere, Sophy became a spinster once again. She fell in love with yet another man,
Muzhombeni Muphalali Nembulu (with nickname Ḓilogo) from Dzwerani. Ḓilogo was then married to Heṱisani Xibobo from Bungeni area. On the day Sophy followed Ḓ ilogo to his workplace in order to collect his monthly earnings, she was approached by Heṱisani who beat her and took all the money she collected from Ḓ ilogo. Heṱisani was so angry that she moved to a farm area called Makavhishi where she once worked as a labourer a long time ago. Segere was free then and as a result, he moved to Sophy's maiden family without shame. Segere found an employment opportunity for Maluṱa to work at an abattoir. Maluṱa was both a drunkard and delinquent whose character led to the development of a conflictual relationship between himself and Segere, where at some stage, he wanted to force Segere to legally marry his mother, Sophy. Life at Sophy's maiden home was marred by a high level of poverty, she was infected with HIV/AIDS and her body structure succumbed to the illness. Sophy and her son, Maluṱa, were later discovered lingering around Makhado streets by Segere, Khuthadzo and Lufuno
(Khuthadzo's wife).

2.2.4 *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015)

Indeed, the walking stick of your own sculpt is worth more than that which you pick on the way. The novel is about Magelegele, a family man who used to stay with his wife, Laedzani and their son, Thambatshira, in Venḓa. He was employed at a manufacturing company called Krost in the cities. There he worked with his childhood friend, Masikhwa. At Krost, Magelegele happened to befriend a widowed woman called Grace who was once married to Makgato. Their love increased to such an extent that Magelegele moved to her homestead and cohabited with her. Magelegele was no longer interested in the livelihoods of those he left back home, namely; his wife and their son. Makhadzi (sister to

Magelegele) rescued the neglected Laedzani and her son from hunger and other ailments associated with poverty. At this stage, Thambatshira found assistance for his schooling from a concerned teacher called Khamusi. Magelegele's continued care and financial support to Grace's household influenced her to resign from her own employment to become a housewife. Grace's children obtained the fullest financial support from Magelegele, thus enabling them to buy expensive clothing and were admitted to hostel schools which were highly expensive during that period. Thambatshira's teacher, Khamusi, encouraged him to visit his own father in the urban areas, his aim being to allow the boy to actually observe how his father would treat him once he had joined them. Magelegele disowned his own son and instead introduced him to his newly found family as his nephew. Grace and her children loved Thambatshira. Thambatshira learnt a good lesson, that is, his father neglected him and replaced him by Grace's children whom he took to town where he bought them expensive clothing whereas he was not considered at all. Kgopelo, Grace's son felt pity for Thambatshira and gave him his used jacket, to which Magelegele became outrageous. Upon retirement, Krost Company honoured

Magelegele with a wristwatch with his names engraved on it. Life turned sour at Grace's household because now and then Magelegele was either verbally harassed or requested to leave the place. Grace had no other option available to her but to suggest that Magelegele must return to his former family in Venḓa. A day arrived when

Magelegele's luggage, containing obsolete items, was packed and he was taken to a train station where

Grace and her daughter, Funeka purchased him a single ticket to return to Venḓa. At this point, Thambatshira had become a professional teacher, well-assisted by his wife where both built a large modern house which was roofed with corrugated iron indicating that poverty had evaporated from their household. Upon finding a location in which his son lived, he gathered that he was not welcomed at all. Magelegele ended up staying with his cousin, Nyadzanga, in her shack dwelling not far away from where Thambatshira and his family lived. It was Thivhonali, Thambatshira's wife who significantly approached Laedzani and Thambatshira and encouraged them to forgive Magelegele and take him home. Magelegele was finally allowed to become part of the family household. It was heartfelt by his welcoming family when he suddenly became ill and rushed to a nearby hospital where he died.

2.3 DEFINITIONS OF A NOVEL, AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF CHARACTERS AND THE TYPES OF CONFLICT IN THE STUDY

This section of the chapter defines the novel as a fiction created by authors to delineate their respective characters as well as how the characters experience several conflicts in their livelihood. This section is divided into three sub-headings, namely; the novel, characters in the novels and the types of conflict contained in the selected four Tshivenḓa novels which were analysed in relation to their depiction of *vhuthu*.

2.3.1 The novel

A novel is a book which is fictious in nature, that is, the storylines reported, and the people mentioned in novels are untrue and unreal. Weiland (2020) is of the opinion that there is a unique area of discourse called 'fictional' included in novels which equips readers with a large amount of near-to life incidents in order to create their understanding of how best to address socio-economic circumstances they experience in their daily living. Novels present stories from an author's imagination, usually with an emphasis on character development that might be realistic or not (Kotatko, 2017). The

characters mentioned in novels are creations of the writers. Writers use these characters to make their stories believable or plausible. Routman (2005) is of the view that, literally the word 'novel' comes from the term 'novella' which is an Italian word, meaning 'newly'. Novels are writings which are unique and usually developed differently in the historic space in time. Moreover, Kotatko (2017) defines a novel as one of the prose forms with a structure that explains and comprehends the real-world situations in people's lives. Novels in particular contain a complexity of different elements, discussion, structure discourse, art signification, beauty, socio-cultural aspects, social values, philosophical principles, religious belief systems, and so on. A novel is therefore a story presented in the form of prose. Prose is viewed as a lengthened paragraph which could be translated into a novel once it becomes maximised to allow certain properties to be presented in a more complex manner. All the selected texts analysed in this study qualify to be classified as novels.

2.3.2. Characters in the novels

Characters are fictious individuals mentioned in novels and are the creative subjects who provide the readership with an interest into continuing to enjoy the storylines. Kotatko (2017) contends that the basic question providing a proper framework for composing a novel is concentrated within what readers have to do in order to allow the text of narrative fiction to fulfill its literary functions. This main question is related to how the characters in novels are viewed by their respective readership. In a nutshell, characters are classified as the people, animals, robots, etc., who take part in the action of the story. Similarly, Weiland (2020) maintains that characters are individuals contained in novels whom we are provided with their respective biographical information such as, their names, whether they are married, divorced and widowed, their educational qualifications and so on. This debate leads to a requirement of the classification of characters mentioned in novels. The characters are either major or minor in this regard. Carroll (2012) maintains that characters who are classified as minor play less significant parts in novels. These individuals are mentioned once, twice and or are occasionally involved with others in novels. A minor character plays only a small role and contribution to the development and configuration of the story (Weiland, 2020). On

the other hand, major characters are individuals who play the most important roles in the storylines exposed in novels. A major character is a person or thing that has a big role in the development and configuration of the story (Weiland, 2020), that is, all the elements belonging to the story including the theme, the plot, the atmosphere and others are focused on describing the major character(s) in novels.

2.3.3. Conflicts developing from the novels

An analysis of the selected four Tshivenḓa novels revealed quite a number of conflicts which drew the researcher's attention in this study. Conflict develops in situations where two or more opposing parts start to compete over scarce resources. Carroll (2012) states that conflict is defined as the struggle between opposing forces in the story. On the other hand, Kotatko (2017) contends that a conflict is basically a struggle between two opposing forces each trying to amass resources at the expense of the other. The researcher classified conflict into two main classes, namely; the internal and the external conflicts.

2.3.3.1. Internal conflicts

Internal conflicts usually develop when individuals blame themselves for the mistakes, they have made which often lead to negative consequences. Carroll (2012) states that internal conflict is that which exists inside the character as they struggle with morality, fate, desire, belief and the mistakes they have made in their lives. This form of conflict is central to the character, or characters and must be resolved by them alone. In this regard, every character depicted in a novel tends to suffer from the weight of internal conflict that eventually lands them into blaming themselves rather than others.

2.3.3.2 External conflicts

External conflicts develop once individuals are exposed to a series of competitions which are above their control. External conflict deals with the problems of the world that are above the character's own creation. Carroll (2012) explicates that external conflict occurs when the story's characters struggle against the world's woes. In this context, external conflict manifests itself as man versus man, man versus nature, man versus

society and man versus fate. In a man versus man elevation, the person is troubled by those people they significantly interact with. External conflict also includes an interaction between a person and their significant communities and or society. In this regard, Kotakko (2017) contends that a man versus society is a conflict that places a character against the cultural manifestations, rules of laws and ideas, rules and regulations and others which form part of the expectations from society (Routman, 2005). External conflicts develop in situations where individual characters are found to be questioning their fundamental rights and freedoms concerning how they are treated by others. In summary, conflicts in novels include the following:

    (a) a character struggling against nature;
    (b) a struggle between two or more characters;
    (c) a struggle between the main character and some aspect of society;
    (d) a struggle of opposing forces within one character.

Types of conflict do not occur in a vacuum. There has to be characters to reflect one or some other types of conflict. There are two main types of characters in a novel, that is, a protagonist and an antagonist. A protagonist is the main character in a story and is central to the development of the events. The main character (or protagonist) is not only at the centre of action, but also the chief object of the novel or any other piece of creative literature such as a short story or a play.

In contrast to the protagonist, the antagonist encapsulates the force with which the protagonist is in conflict. In this regard, the antagonist would be another internal force within the protagonist, e.g. self-doubt or another character in the novel. Thus, the antagonist is the character or force against which the protagonist struggles. All this means that an antagonist may be another character, a culture and its laws or traditions, natural elements that oppose what the protagonist stands for. Both these types of characters are significant in a novel as conflict revolves around them.

2.2 THE ORIGINS OF THE *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHY

The origins of *vhuthu* are traced back to the pre-colonial periods where orality dominated the recording of African histories, cultures, traditions, values, norms and others. It is used today in the modern management operations of large corporations, institutions and organisations. In this section, the researcher identifies and discusses the origins of the *vhuthu* philosophy.

2.2.1 The historical origin of the *vhuthu* philosophy

The origins of the African philosophy of *vhuthu* are traced long before whites set foot on the African soil. Van den Heuvel (2006) notes that the origins of *vhuthu* take us back to rural village life in pre-colonial Africa. *Vhuthu* was originally illustrated in songs and stories as well as embodied in traditional customs and institutions within an African society (Shuttle, 2009). This shows that the philosophy was developed orally because Africans could not read and write in the pre-colonial era but could count in numbers.

The second phase of the historical development of *vhuthu* dates back to the colonial period when Whites first entered Africa. Very little was recorded about *vhuthu* then. The colonial era is a period where Africans were overpowered and controlled by White people. In the context of South Africa, *vhuthu* originated before the year 1652 when Whites set foot in the then Cape of Storms. According to Sparks (1990), the spirit of *vhuthu* caught the attention of explorers, missionaries and others during the colonisation of Africa. Thus, the *vhuthu* philosophy underwent a series of oppressive milestones since its conception in the early 1600s to date (Mzamane, 2009).

The third historical development of *vhuthu* was captured during the decolonisation of Africa. This is a period in which all African states demanded their emancipation from Western powers. Mzamane (2009) mentions that the philosophy of *vhuthu* survived and is stronger than ever before. This was a period which was defined by a high level of segregation and apartheid. The National Party played a significant role in the suppression and distortion of this important African philosophy but failed to totally

eradicate it in the writings and cultures of South Africans. According to Sparks (1990), *vhuthu* is one of the African cultural practices in the Sub-Saharan Africa which continued to exist and is now becoming a central part of African renaissance. *Vhuthu* is an African philosophy that has been suppressed by the former colonialist governments, and apartheid in particular. It is today one of the most recognised African philosophies in the African continent. *Vhuthu* served South Africans with different resolutions during the apartheid era and in the transmission and transformation period. This was identified by Mzamane (2009) who stated that *vhuthu* in the past was a philosophy that underpinned the liberation struggle and that today, *vhuthu* is becoming the foundation for the new South Africa.

South Africans used *vhuthu* philosophical ideologies in order to gain control of their motherland. *Vhuthu* was neither recognised nor supported by an apartheid government in the past. This was a time of desperation during which man was reduced to bestiality and the spirit of *vhuthu* disappeared from the land (Sparks, 1990). The *vhuthu* philosophical approach to nation-building had been alive for many decades before colonisation, thus no political regime could suppress its existence because it kept on emerging when oppressors thought it would no longer survive. Etieyibo (2014) is of the opinion that the apartheid system sparked the need for South Africans to find a common view which underlines brotherhood among humans (men and woman) with common aims and interests. On the other hand, Biko (2013) maintains that before 1994 and perhaps even earlier in the South African historic developmental transformational mainstream, *vhuthu* was challenged by the adoption of capitalistic lifestyle among Africans. Hence, the researcher argues that *vhuthu* has gone through several oppressive practices such as, colonisation, segregation, discrimination, stigmatisation, deprivation, to name but a few, which Africans experienced in the past. Be that as it may, one concurs with Van den Heuvel (2006), who states that even today, *vhuthu* as a term derived from the Nguni language group in Southern Africa, still expresses a strong sense of community, collective morality and unconditional solidarity in the postcolonial context. Hence, South Africans are still enjoying the effectiveness of *vhuthu* in solving their societal, economical and political problems. Furthermore, the philosophy of *vhuthu*

still carries the most important value stipulated by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of

1996). The Constitution observed the importance of people's equality before the law. Van den Heuvel (2006) remarks that *vhuthu* played a significant role during the reconstruction and development of the South African society. This philosophical approach shared the most important aspects considered during the transition and transformation of the South African society in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The South African society faced several challenges immediately after it gained its independence under Black rule. The society needed a strong reconstruction and development programme in order to suppress the mistrust, hatred and a feeling of retaliation among different political parties.

One of the most important achievements in the democratic South Africa was the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Its aim was to reconcile South Africans. Sapire and Saunders (2013) maintain that the Freedom Park Trust not only derived its mandate from the TRC but followed its lead in adopting the notion of *vhuthu* as the foundation for an integrated nationalism. It is obvious that *vhuthu* played a significant role in bringing about longstanding peace within the South African society. Another aspect related to reconciliation is that of reconstruction of the self. Reconstruction of the self is a concept which purports that an individual reached a state where he or she is able to see (view) the world in a positive manner, that is, they want to contribute to the process of making things work for themselves and the group at large (Van Niekerk & Hay, 2009). In such a context, i.e., the TRC, both the perpetrators and victims put the past aside and sought to find ways of improving and developing the communities in which they lived.

2.2.2 Historical evolvement of the concept *vhuthu*

The philosophy of *vhuthu* is expressed by certain specific and important words. According to Mzamane (2009), *vhuthu* is expressed through the notion of 'I am because you are.' This expression entails the importance of interconnectedness among

individuals within a community. A person sees himself/herself through the eyes of others. The following note summarises it all: *Umuntu mguntu ngabantu* which simply translates into "I am because you are, you are because we are" (Khoza & Adam, 2005). Stated differently, this expression simply holds that a person is a human being because they are existing among others. Mbigi (2006:42) continues to state that *vhuthu* means "I am because we are", I can only be a person through others, meaning a community within which we all live. Africans do not respect individuality. As mentioned already, an African person arguably attains complete personhood when they interact with the rest within a community, thus implying that a community is a social unit without which people cannot live a successful life.

Nussbaum (2009:101) asserts that the West-African philosopher, Leon Senghor, simplified the descriptions of the *vhuthu* philosophy through the statement: "I feel the other, I dance the other and therefore I am". This philosopher suggests that *vhuthu* is like getting in another person's being and feeling what they feel. In psychological terms, this is called empathy, that is, to feel the needs of others and address them as your own. A person can easily assist others when they feel for them. *Vhuthu* is about feeling for each other because my neighbour's sorrow is my sorrow, his joy is also my joy (Bhengu, 1996). Bhengu's remark carries an empathetic connotation because it shows that people with *vhuthu* have regards of others' livelihood.

Buntu Mfenyana, a Johannesburg sociolinguist, said that to understand the full meaning of the word *vhuthu* (*ubuntu*), one must first separate the prefix *ubu-* from the root *-untu* (Sparks, 1990). Non-African scholars may find it difficult to understand this explanation. The prefix *ubu-* may translate into "to be" simply meaning to becoming anything else. It can only make sense after it is attached to the root *-untu* which means 'humanness'.

2.2.3 Management operations

Directors of big corporations realised the effectiveness of the philosophy of *vhuthu* in fostering harmony among different and rival groups. They then applied it into

management in order to increase production, improve the employer-employee relationship, to curb corruption and so on. One of the important exponents of the *vhuthu* philosophy is Mbingi who states that the African philosophy of *vhuthu* is a basis of effective human resources (Mbigi, 2006). By this Mbigi means, Africans have something to share and embrace as their cornerstone to address all their social problems, including managerial problems. Khoza and Adam (2005) regard the concept of *vhuthu* or African humanism as the foundation of sound human relations in African societies. Human relations are an important sector within the human resources of corporations, institutions and entities. Human relations are a guiding principle of good governance, quality service delivery and the treatment of clients with a special consideration in respecting their fundamental human rights and dignity. Improved management operations are closely associated with the concepts of openness and accountability.

Openness is a democratic aspect that calls for free and open discussion and dialogue among members of the community without the fear of reprisal, intimidation, discrimination and stigmatisation. Openness addresses the concept of criticism as part of the free flow of ideas that allows individuals an opportunity to air their differences and choices without fear (Steyn, de Klerk & du Plessis, 2011). Openness is closely associated with the concept of 'freedom of speech' which purports that individuals should express their critical thinking as an important aspect of development on their part. Openness addresses the following freedoms which were foregrounded by Joubert and Prinsloo (2011): freedom of the press and other media, freedom to receive or impart information or ideas, freedom of artistic creativity, and academic freedom and freedom of scientific research.

On the other hand, accountability is invested in the accounting authority which is the manager of the company. This is so because Khoza and Adam (2005) are of the opinion that a greater duty of accountability and transparency is a factor that plays an important role in the operation of business and other organisations. Effective accountability tends to impress the customers that their investment in the business is associated with limited risks (Khoza & Adam, 2005). Accountability is necessary for the successful operation of

the business (de Clercq, 2008). It is closely related to the concept of responsibility which Joubert and Prinsloo (2011) insist that it means to accept the responsibility to fulfill a delegated or assigned task or duty.

Vhuthu is underpinned by a set of traditional African values which are strongly based on inclusivity, humanity, respect, responsibility and concern for others, generational responsibilities and a spirit for participation (Khoza & Adam, 2005). The aspect of generational responsibilities indicates that *vhuthu* has been practiced by many generations before and shall continue to be practiced by future generations within the South African society.

2.2.4 *Vhuthu* as reflected in Tshivenḓa culture

Vhuthu is strongly embedded within the Tshivenḓa culture and way of life. The most important aspects of culture and traditions reflected in *vhuthu* were identified and selected for this study as chieftainship, language, *dzunde*, *davha* and *thevhula*. First, chieftainship and language form part of the nature in which the Vhavenḓa live on a daily basis.

Secondly, *vhuthu* is reflected through the culture and traditions of Vhavenḓa as they conduct certain ceremonies. These ceremonies were identified as *dzunde*, *davha* and *thevhula*. Tshikhuḓo (2005) supports the notion that the cultural factors that tend to impact on decision-making and socio-economic development of a community must be considered when researchers address aspects of the culture and traditions of people.

2.2.4.1 Chieftainship

The aspect of chieftainship is included to delineate a relationship between the Vhavenḓa's political life and the chief's redistribution of resources to his subjects (commoners). The Vhavenḓa people are a segment of the South African population which strongly relies on the traditional leadership of *vhuhosi* (chieftainship). *Vhuhosi* is a form of political leadership concentrated within the *khosi*, *thovhele* or *vhamusanda* (chief or king). In this regard, the chief is called *khosi* (or king) in Tshivenḓa and he is regarded as representing the ancestors (Khorommbi, 1996). Subjects to the *khosi* regard him as the living person who is next to the forefathers and ancestors. The chief is

situated in a household called *musanda* and this is an area where all the communal socio-economic and political decision-making take place (Matshidze, 2013). *Musanda* is a place where all the chief's headmen converge for reporting the most important issues challenging their subjects. It is at this place where the chief takes final decisions on how to improve the socioeconomic, religious and political conditions experienced by communities in general.

The royal position of chief is that of a king *(thovhele)* which according to Khorommbi (1996) was taken away by Whites. Somewhere in the past, White settlers defeated the Vhavenḓa tribe and managed to depose their king and reduced him to a mere person or subject instead of his former principal position. Matshidze (2013) clarifies that a *thovhele* (king) ruled over the largest area and had a number of *mahosi* (senior chiefs) paying tribute to him before he was referred to only as a chief. This is why most kings within the Vhavenḓa communities are referred to as chiefs. NB: In this case Matshidze cited Khorommbi (1996: page) The chief is recognised by the Vhavenḓa people as the leader (Khorommbi, 1996). Indeed, the chief occupies the highest political position among their subjects and is therefore regarded as the king.

The chief (*thovhele*) is represented by a number of leaders he nominated in various areas under his jurisdiction. Huffman and Hanish (1986) mention that a chief is represented by *vhakoma* or *vhaḓinda*, that is to say, headmen who perform all the socio-economic and political duties on his behalf. Areas occupied by headmen are similar in size and usually carry almost the number of communities decided by the chief upon his delegation process (Huffman & Hanish, 1986). This means that the chief is responsible for making certain that his sub-districts are ruled by qualified headmen. The chieftainship is conducted in a manner that all subjects across his kingdom are treated on an equal basis. Khorommbi (1996) is of the view that the Vhavenḓa people look at their personal value as an integrated part of the whole. The *vhuthu* philosophy plays an important role in making certain that everyone is treated equally before the chief. Also, according to the Vhavenḓa culture, *vhuthu* demands that even the *khosi* must respect his subjects. This notion is even implicit in the Tshivenḓa proverb which states that,

"*Khosi ndi khosi nga vhathu*" meaning that 'a chief becomes chief because of the people he rules over' (Matshidze, 2013). Hence, the Vhavenḓa chiefs respect the people they rule over without regard of their socio-economic and religious status.

The Vhavenḓa chieftainship is, by culture and tradition, required to help family households and people under socio-economic duress. It must be mentioned that although the chieftainship is royal in nature, it takes the responsibility of assisting commoners' households and others in dire need. Matshidze (2013) confirms that the chief's wives raised commoners' children the way they perceived the world required them. No-one goes hungry or without amenities as long as they belong to the Venḓa chieftainship. In this arrangement, *vhuthu* is regarded as a systematic relationship between political power and the redistribution of resources to the needy communities and family households (Huffman & Hanish, 1986). The aspects of power balance and redistribution of resources are detailed in the discussion on *dzunde* later in this chapter.

2.2.4.2 Tshivenḓa Language

The culture and traditions of a nation are usually expressed through that nation's language(s). Thus unsurprisingly, the expressions of *vhuthu* are highlighted in a series of Tshivenḓa proverbs which reinforce a communal sense among the Vhavenḓa, such as: *muthu ndi muthu nga muṅwe* (a person is a person through another person) (Khorommbi, 1996), or *mulenzhe muthihi a u tshini tshikona* and *munwe muthihi a u ṱusi mathuthu* which mean: 'One leg does not dance to *tshikona*' (Tshivenḓa traditional (reed) dance) and 'One finger cannot pick samp grains', respectively. *Vhuthu* is thus accordingly expressed in Tshivenḓa culture through proverbs and other related sayings, to highlight the notion that people are people because of others. Khorommbi (1996) argues that individual persons are according to the *vhuthu* philosophy required to put aside their personal values in order to integrate them (values) into the value systems of the whole (community). Khorommbi (1996) further argues that *Muthu u bebelwa muṅwe* (a person is born for another). Implicit in this Tshivenḓa proverb is the idea that all persons have a responsibility to assist others in need. Mamburu (2004) maintains that community members are, according to the *vhuthu* philosophy of *harambee*, expected to

help each other. There is therefore no need for a family household or a visitor to experience the socio-economic stress when there are other people around them. Khorommbi (1996) adds yet another proverb to indicate how the vhuthu philosophy is prevalent in the Vhavenḓa's life and worldview: *A u tswukisi nḓila u woṱhe* (You do not tread open the footpath on your own). In a nutshell, this Tshivenḓa proverb explicates that one should never feel alone because there are always others willing to assist them in their darkest hours of need. Huffman and Hanish (1986) indicate that, according to the Tshivenḓa culture and traditions, no-one is supposed to suffer without receiving assistance from others. Mamburu (2004) insists that communities have an important and yet unutilised resource called *davha/harambee* which they can use in order to address their low socio-economic status. The *davha/harambee* is a resource needed for the purpose of seeking help from others existing within a community who are capable of providing them with the necessary resources aimed at alleviating their poverty status.

According to Khorommbi (1996), *Maṱanzu maswa* a *tikwa nga malala* is a Tshivenḓa proverb which simply means that new branches are held intact by the old ones. *Vhuthu* principles are contained within this Tshivenḓa proverb in that it holds that young people should obtain wisdom from the senior citizenry living within their communities. This aspect of *vhuthu* is accompanied by the requirement to respect seniors. To this effect, Khorommbi (1996) concedes that the wisdom, protection and respect and safety of elderly persons are part and parcel of the *vhuthu* philosophy among the Vhavenḓa people. In a nutshell, the *vhuthu* philosophical approach is closely associated with words such as friendliness, compliance, adaptability, pliability, willingness to compromise, modesty, respect for seniors, openhandedness, the willingness to share what one has with others, avoidance of friction between persons, etc. (Khorommbi, 1996). The Tshivenḓa language, in most of its linguistic presentations, indeed delineates the tenets of the *vhuthu* philosophy in general. Ceremonies (*dzunde*, *davha* and *thevhula*), chieftainship and language are thus aspects of the Tshivenḓa culture and traditions that not only depict, but also endorse the practice of *vhuthu*.

2.3 EXPLICATION OF THE *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHY

Vhuthu is a concept that may be difficult for non-African people and other European philosophers to understand. One reason why this concept may be difficult for the aforementioned people to understand is that the concept was established and developed by Africans for their own purpose rather than as a product meant for other and foreign consumption. It is for this reason that important attributes of the philosophy are highlighted and described in this section, namely; *vhuthu* as an identity maker, *vhuthu* as a propellant of African renaissance, *vhuthu* as a management tool, *vhuthu* as a reinforcement of unity among people, *vhuthu* as a lynchpin of nation-building, *vhuthu* as an index into how to treat strangers and *vhuthu* as a mixed approach.

2.3.1 *Vhuthu* as an identity maker

Vhuthu can be regarded as an identity maker, particularly when *vhuthu* is used when a person views himself or herself as an African. Arguably, it is this marker that distinguishes such a person from other people of foreign (Western/European) origin and culture. Van den Heuvel (2006) insists that *vhuthu* becomes an ideological tool and is instrumental as an identity-maker. *Vhuthu* is a concept used by most Africans when they practice their Africanism, that is, an African way of life. As an identity-maker, *vhuthu* insists that Africans must behave in a similar manner towards each other and the neighbouring communities. A person who lacks *vhuthu* essentially lacks empathy for others. At their core, the *vhuthu* principles denounce individuality, that is, a sense of belief that one does not need others in life and living a belief that one does not belong to others (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). A non-person can be any person who does not have any contributions towards the livelihoods of others. Mzamane (2009) posits that, by embracing the *vhuthu* philosophy, one automatically acknowledges that to contravene the *vhuthu* principles ultimately leads to the destruction of oneself in the process. To this end, an African identity entails that causing others harm, inadvertently ends with the destruction of self.

According to the *vhuthu* philosophy, individualism and self-centeredness acts are viewed as failures which in turn bring about harm, injury and pain to others (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). It is therefore unAfrican to inflict pain on others. *Vhuthu* also propagates care for the most vulnerable in society. In this regard, Mzamane (2009) highlights that a nation is as strong as the weakest of its people. The principles of *vhuthu* encourage the care and support of those in need because care for and support of others culminate in complete personhood.

2.3.2 *Vhuthu* and the African renaissance

Vhuthu can be explicated as an appendage of the approach known as an African renaissance. African renaissance is an African developed concept that seeks to bring together all Africans, especially those within the Sub-Saharan Africa. These countries are encouraged to assist one another as well as to develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the other's operations in terms of how it treats its citizens. Van den Heuvel (2006) argues that *vhuthu* is analogous to the rhetoric around African renaissance, which is basically a call for all African States to form an institution of oneness in order to avert all the oppressive circumstances established by the colonial regimes such as poverty, unemployment, wars and so on.

Ramose (1999) sees *vhuthu* as a decisive shift by Africa towards economic growth, stability and democracy. *Vhuthu* in this view, is a tool applied for the improvement of national democracies and their respective stabilisation and maintenance. The *vhuthu* philosophy is about unity development and maintenance because its application is interested in bringing all Africans together (Van den Heuvel, 2006). The former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, is an active proponent behind the establishment, development and maintenance of the African renaissance which is inspired, guided and supported by the spirit of *vhuthu*.

2.3.3 *Vhuthu* as a management tool

Vhuthu is today regarded as an effective management tool because it sheds light on various methodologies, approaches and interventions needed for the improvement of management operations within corporations, institutions, organisations and entities. Van den Heuvel (2006) contends that, as a tool for management and social relationships among people, *vhuthu* is based within the Afrocentric management discourse which is mostly featured by a cultural purity and authenticity. Successful business in this arrangement is attainable through the eradication of all mismanagement practices which are, so to speak, un-*vhuthu* in nature. An important conception of the *vhuthu* philosophy is that it is currently utilised for the purpose of the development of leadership within the African States. Khoza and Adam (2005) contend that *vhuthu* provides leaders with the ability to be both leaders and followers, tolerant and critical. The development of good leadership is one of the mostly needed aspects within the management scenario in the African continent.

Vhuthu is also identified as effective in guiding managers of business during their conflict management processes. Thus, the *Vhuthu* philosophy can be effectively applied in conflict management situations where managers and operators seek a solution towards their service delivery situational area. According to Khoza and Adam (2005), the values underpinned by the *vhuthu* principle assist managers towards achieving a win/win result. A win/win conflict management approach is that which is required in all management operations, and *vhuthu* can best undergird this approach. This type of conflict management reduces the possibility of staff retention, industrial strikes, and so on. Mzamane (2009) writes that *vhuthu* is viewed as the essence of personhood in South Africa. By this, the author suggests that *vhuthu* is aimed at the establishment, development and maintenance of a new workforce with a mission to develop and improve communities and the society in general without regard of their diverse racial, sexual, social, economic, political, and other extraneous variables. Thus, effective management tools are those which are guided by principles of the international standards which are also contained within the *vhuthu* philosophical approaches. The concept of *vhuthu* is closely associated with giving meaning to and articulating the

demands from the prospective governmental institutions and agencies (Ramose, 1999). This aspect entails that public as well as private institutions and organisations continue to seek effective management interventions and operations for the improvement of their businesses.

2.3.4 *Vhuthu* as a philosophy that fosters unity among people

Vhuthu is an effective African philosophical approach which encourages unity among the African people. Shuttle (2009) contends that *vhuthu* philosophical principles take the form of integrity, solidarity or wholeness of characters and spirit that is present in one's judgment, one's decision and one's feelings. In this regard, community members have a role to play in order to affirm the possibility of oneness against antagonism. It is unity that brings Africans together and make them feel stronger than ever. Martin Luther King, an African-American activist, once said that a philosophic principle related to *vhuthu* in the
American society is equated with power obtained from unity among people. In Nussbaum (2009), King stated that it is power that comes from the affirmation of Afro-American people that people are first of all connected, that as individuals they are but unique incarnations of a spiritual force that unites them. Thus, connectedness and unity are important concepts which the *vhuthu* principle is sets out to promote.

2.3.5 *Vhuthu* as a nation-building exercise

Vhuthu is a philosophical approach utilised by many politicians, academics and business managers during the problem-solving process and as such, it must be regarded as a nation-building tool. In nation-building, *vhuthu* is used for the purpose of dealing with problems that are not necessarily social in nature as it was envisaged during its conception. Van der Heuvel (2006) states that *vhuthu* amounts to a remote reconstruction and development of nation-building, reconciliation and development. As indicated above, *vhuthu* is used most specifically for solving all types of problems including social, economic as well as political within a particular society. For Van der

Heuvel (2006), *vhuthu* has become completely attached to its original web of social relations because it is correctly applied to solve social, economic and political problems today. Biko (2013) believes that South Africans have contributed yet another effective strategic approach of dealing with socio-economic and political challenges which other African societies could benchmark, and that strategic approach is *vhuthu*. The *vhuthu* philosophy could therefore be utilised in any other African nation needing to change its respective transitional and transformational position.

2.3.6 The treatment of strangers

The explication of *vhuthu* is accordingly related to the treatment of strangers or people belonging to other communities. Implicit in this is that the *vhuthu* principles do not only provide individuals with a spirit of caring for and supporting those of their kinship, but also others from diverse cultural origins. A stranger is generally someone who is viewed as unknown to a certain group of people, and yet interacts with the very people. Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) maintain that, according to the requirement of the *vhuthu* philosophical approach, people are not expected to ill-treat or close a door to a stranger. African people show hospitality to everyone, including those they do not know, namely; strangers. "Come, visitor, so that we can feast through you" is the connotation shared by these authors which reflects that Africans enjoy a visit by strangers to their homesteads. Simply analysed, this means that African families have much to offer to strangers and that it is during a visit by strangers that they will be able to feast on something that is unusual to them on a daily basis. Thus, the presence of strangers makes it not only possible, but also easier for the hosts to welcome them because their presence is often short (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009).

The *vhuthu* principles encourage people to forgive and treat everyone with dignity, incuding the perpetrators of criminal activities. Khoza and Adam (2005) maintain that *vhuthu* is opposed to a selfish, power-hungry style of leadership that is associated with non-sharing behavioural patterns. Most African political leaders are found to be powerhungry and as such, they tend to manipulate their national constitutions in order to prolong their ruling periods. This is against the *vhuthu* principles. Biko (2013) notes that

the *vhuthu* philosophy was not adequately applied within the African context. The author maintains that the centric ideology practiced by many African political leaders clashed badly with the traditional African values of *vhuthu*. Biko is principally correct because these African political leaders practised foreign philosophic practices which are capitalistic in nature. It is also correct to note that capitalism is an antagonist system to the *vhuthu* system. *Vhuthu* is against any form of acquiring and accumulation of wealth and resources when others do not have anything related to the service of the community at large.

Although the *Vhuthu* philosophical approach was used during the Africans' struggles, it did not however, endorse killings, maiming and other sufferings imposed upon the people within different communities. This aspect was captured by Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) who mention that *vhuthu* is averse to anything that is harmful to a human being. African people, including the South Africans, still believe that there are still people living among them who inflict pain and suffering on them through witchcraft. Sparks (1990) states that witchcraft is the obverse of the collectivist life. According to this author, the *vhuthu* support system is against witchcraft in the African communities. Individuals should not be subjected to burning, killings and other forms of intimidation because they are suspected to be witches.

Finally, the principles of *vhuthu* suggest that people should treat each other with respect and in the process, should gain a sustainable livelihood corporately. *Vhuthu* is a reciprocal entity in that, once one fails to treat the other person with respect; he/she ultimately incurs negative circumstances. Mbigi (2006:45) quotes Archbishop Tutu as saying: "When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself." This therefore means that Africans are compelled to treat each other with respect in order to obtain the benefits of their behavioural patterns in return. Thus, the *vhuthu* principle teaches that people who treat others with respect will in turn be treated with respect.

2.3.7 *Vhuthu* as a mixed approach

Vhuthu may also be viewed as a mixed approach required in order to address different problematic social challenges. It is in view of this that this section considers *vhuthu* as a mixed methodological approach, situating in the treatment of people of colour. Khoza and Adam (2005) say that the *vhuthu* philosophy is now mixed with the traditional Western individualism. Whereas *vhuthu* is tacitly against individualism, capitalistic States in many African countries maintain that they belong to one global village, hence the concept of globalisation. The concept of globalisation intends to treat all individuals drawn from diverse cultures and nationhood as one and equal.

A proper explication of the absence or presence of *vhuthu* in a community is notable in how (native) people treat those who come into contact with them from different nations and countries. In such an instance, the actualisation of the *Vhuthu* philosophy will be noted when all people, irrespective of whether Black, White or Indian, are treated with equal dignity and respect. It is for this reason that Mzamane (2009) believes that *vhuthu* is colour blind; it reaches out more to those of other colours who may feel like outsiders. *Vhuthu* is a philosophy for all Africans and as such, it does not discriminate against anyone because of their racial backgrounds. Most White South Africans felt that *vhuthu* exclusively belongs to Blacks, and therefore has no room for them (Whites). However, this is untrue because *vhuthu* aims to cater for all South Africans. In order to support this, Mzamane (2009 mentions that *vhuthu* provides strategies for dealing with the social divide by insisting on learning from each other. The *vhuthu* philosophy is not only meant for the improvement of the livelihoods of the previously disenfranchised groups in South African society but for Whites as well. Just because the philosophy is identified in African languages, and not European languages, does not mean it is racist or that it seeks to exclude other races. While the attributes described above are used for explicating the African philosophy of *vhuthu*, they are not, however, determinants of the presence and or the absence of *vhuthu* in the behavioural patterns of people. The elements of *vhuthu* are effective measurements utilised for assessing the presence and absence of *vhuthu* in people.

2.4   ELEMENTS OF THE *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHY

In this section, the most important elements of the *vhuthu* philosophy are identified and discussed. Mzamane (2009) notes a few aspects of *vhuthu*, namely: generosity, solidarity, mutual regard, compassion, concern, care, mercy, pity, peace, love, redemption, healing, cleansing, purging, restoration, justice, and service. Mbigi (2006) and Mzamane (2009) suggest that there are ways through which the presence and absence of *vhuthu* can be determined. Mbigi (2006) maintains that *vhuthu* is invariably involved as a barometer for measuring good from bad. In view of this, the following elements are discussed in this section: individualism and solidarity, humanism, community, spirituality, morality and culture, forgiveness and management.

2.4.1 Individualism and solidarity

The *Vhuthu* philosophical approach addresses both the concepts of individualism and solidarity in society. It is only when individual community members have attained their togetherness that they are solidified. But solidarity cannot take place unless the state of individualism is accordingly addressed. The concept of *vhuthu* purports that an individual will always get what his or her respective group has, irrespective of his or her circumstances. Mbingi (2006) says *vhuthu* recognises the importance of an individual and the needs of the group. An individual person cannot live completely without reliance on others, that is, a community structure. Ramose (1999) maintains that *vhuthu* is able to provide a sound basis for constructive conversations about the common interests of all people living within a particular community or society. These interests are naturally individualistic in nature but ultimately become collective in that they affect everyone within the community in which individuals exist. *Vhuthu* encourages people to be interdependent. Thus, in addressing the concept of interconnectedness, *vhuthu* maintains that our humanity requires us to become responsible citizens, and from there, connection begins (Nussbaum, 2009). *Vhuthu* and a person seeking to live in isolation from others cannot cohabit. This is due to the fact that although the *vhuthu* principle starts with the person, it does not, however, encourage that a person lives as if he or

she is alone in communal space. Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) contend that one cannot be a human being alone. This statement suggests that all individual persons can become persons once they interact with others within families, *makgotla*, communities and a society. Individuality is a form within the capitalistic state that is totally discouraged within the African philosophical practice of *vhuthu*.

An aspect of interconnectedness between an individual and the rest of his/her community was highlighted by Biko (2013) who said that the *vhuthu* philosophy entails a need for individuals to become, belong and become subjects of their respective formations such as families, communities and other active contending social protesting campaigns. Similarly, Sparks (1990) acknowledges that *vhuthu* has the elements of grassroots democracy, the balance between community, family and individual rights, and the pervasive spirit of mutual obligation and respect. In this instance, everyone belongs and there is no one who does not belong. Sparks maintains that the *vhuthu* philosophic interpretations send a strong message to Africans about the need to belong to formations intended to improve their own livelihoods and those of others around them.

Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) appreciate an individual person who, although living alone, still engages with others within a community situation. They maintain that a person is regarded as the centre from which every socio-economic, political, religious and other process emanate. Individual persons are expected to join others within the group formations and communities in order to lead successful lives. In support of this mindset, Mamburu (2004) states that the society properly founded on natural passion and religion will override self-centred individualism, making it possible for individuals to form a new, collectivised social structure. Indeed, according to the *vhuthu* principles, individualised persons are required to join others within group formations, organisations, communities and others in order to sustain solidarity with them. The concept of solidarity is highly recognised within the explications of an African philosophic approach of *vhuthu*.

Once a people joins and shares a common understanding, interest(s) and the like, such a people is able to establish and develop solidarity. Solidarity entails oneness and togetherness. Sparks (1990) contends that *vhuthu* advances the rhetoric of African humanism and peculiarity by favouring solidarity instead of solitary intervention. This means that solidarity is a subject that is directed towards the involvement of all people living together in their attempt to solve a common issue challenging their respective livelihoods. Hence, Mbigi (2006) asserts that the philosophical approaches of *vhuthu* are necessarily concentrated within the requirement of solidarity. In this context, solidarity is also expressed in a statement such as: "an injury to one is an injury to all". This means that my neighbour's suffrage is my suffrage.

2.4.2 Humanism

A direct and correct translation of *vhuthu* is humanism or humanness. *Ubuntu* captures the essence of this particular kind of participatory humanism (Sparks, 1990). Participatory humanism means the type of group formation in which members actively participate in the process of helping one another. *Vhuthu* places a high value on human worth and finds expression in a communal context. Mbigi (2006) adds that an important contribution of *vhuthu* to an African society is the value it puts on life and human dignity. The concept of human dignity holds that people should not be subjected to unwanted pain and suffering; they should receive the services that are important to them, and as such, people should not be subjected to discrimination, stigmatisation, exclusion and deprivation.

2.4.3 Community

Since time immemorial, Africans people lived side-by-side. They belonged to homesteads which developed into villages and ultimately became communities. Every African belongs to a community. This evinces that a community is an important aspect in the livelihood of an African person and his or her family. Khoza and Adam (2005) note that the essence of *vhuthu* reflects the principles of interdependence, communality of purpose and mutual respect. African people live a communal life and as such, they cannot live in isolation from others, but must, as a matter of necessity, belong to the communities. Ramose (1999) maintains that interconnectedness refers to a state where

members of a community become interdependent ever much so that they become affected by each others' actions.

The concept of community is pertinant to the Ubuntu philosophy. Khoza and Adam (2005) highlight that *vhuthu* seeks to establish a community through individuals with a sense of common thought and purpose. Implicit in this is that, Africans must strive for the attainment of this typical community because it is an entity that makes them one. Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) mention that *vhuthu* is supported and made concrete by certain components such as respect for persons and the importance of community. The concreteness of *vhuthu* in this regard is that a community is a foundation from which all the social interfaces commence. The *Vhuthu* philosophic approach is embedded within the principles of the development of social interactions among people living within a particular community. According to Sparks (1990), *vhuthu* is determined by the primacy given to the establishment and reinforcement of social relations among people, including those who are neighbours. This, on its own, establishes a social unit called a community.

2.4.4 Spirituality

African people are spiritual in nature, that is, Africans cannot develop anything, be it an artifact, a solution to a communal or natural problem, etc., without maintaining that it is God-given. *Vhuthu* is one of the African inventions which is regarded as spiritual in nature. Mbigi (2006) indicates that spirituality was not added to the *vhuthu* principles, on the contrary, it is the fulcrum of the philosophy developed by people living together in unity and solidarity. Generally speaking, on the aspect of spirituality, it bears emphasis that an African person cannot live a full life without axiomating such a life spirituality. African life is pervasively and deeply rooted in their spirituality. Africans generally believe it is their spirituality that enabled them achieve what they have today, including the *vhuthu* philosophy. The *vhuthu* philosophy is considered a pivotal tool that aided Africans to emancipate themselves from colonisation. This is supported by Shuttle (2009) who says the *vhuthu* principles have outwardly emancipated the African

communities, especially South Africans from all forms of oppression, deprivation, discrimination, segregation, just to name but a few.

2.4.5 Morality and culture

The aspect of morality is closely associated with that of culture. In other words, people are bound together as a community when they share similar morals, value systems, and standards which ultimately manifest as such a people's culture. Since morality and culture are two mainframes which share similar attributes, they are discussed together in this section. Firstly, morality necessitates that where people live together as a community, those in power should adhere to the values and standards expected by those who are at the grassroot level, for instance. Hicks (2004) alludes to an aspect which may be deemed untoward when viewed against the tenets of *vhuthu*, that is, corruption. According to Hicks, once corruption is totally swept away, the project of building a moral society can commence. Morality refers to values and beliefs about what is right and wrong, good or bad (Mbigi, 2006). Morality is therefore a measuring yardstick which can distinguish a behavioural pattern either from being right or wrong. Social scientists can precisely tell whether a practice is *vhuthu* related or not based on certain attributes that are connected to a person behaviour. Mbigi (2006) opines that the concept of morality is against self-interests because moral behaviour excludes selfishness and self-interest. In this context, once a person becomes selfish, he or she is no longer regarded as upright. Among other illicit behaviours, immoral persons often amass power and economic resources at the expense of others, especially the voiceless.

Mbigi (2006) highlights that morality requires that people behave in a manner that distinguishes them from animals. An African person who lacks principles articulated by the *vhuthu* philosophy is unable to demonstrate morality in his or her basic mannerisms and behaviour. Morality, according to Sparks (1990), constitutes vital qualities that are exhibited in one's interactions with others. These interactions are characterised by, among other features, respect for the dignity of others, group solidarity, teamwork, service to others, harmony and interdependence. Morality also extends to how African

nations interact with each other. Mbigi (2006) alludes to this when in stating that morality is notable when communities, nations and countries speak about the possibility of world community, that is, a globalised community in which they all become one and share significant and common socio-economic, and political problems.

Secondly, the concept of morality paves the way for the expected cultural practice to take charge. A culture is an entity composed of different communities who often share common values, norms and standardised behavioural patterns. Culture encapsulates the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organisation of a particular country or groups (Larsson & Olsson, 2008). Culture is an aspect that determines how people dress, eat, talk and relate in view socially standardised mannerisms. Goddard *et al.* (1999) argue that culture is mostly expressed through language because both culture and language are inseparable.

The ideas that surround the concept of *vhuthu* are central to every African culture (Shuttle, 2009). Shuttle recognises that culture is a generic term which indirectly describes the concept of *vhuthu*. Ramose (1999) sees *vhuthu* as a component of culture which can, at times, evoke people's existential feelings. Culture is embedded within the people's reaction towards all social problems and the manner in which they react; culture thus dictates the manner in which people must behave under any given circumstances.

According to the *vhuthu* principles, people living together must enjoy their oneness because they are mutually fulfilled when they stand by each other in moments of need (Bhengu, 1996). *Vhuthu* subscribes to the importance of culture, which is a sum total of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, and attitudes and meaning of objects. Thus, culture is an important attribute of the *vhuthu* philosophy. Mbigi (2006) maintains that culture entails the interdependency and consensus which people enjoy by living side-by#side. Therefore, culture encourages harmony among people, which is accompanied by an independence of thought, and where people do not fight over their differences and

diversity (Khoza & Adam, 2005). At the core of interdependence is the notion that one cannot live without the assistance of others.

Young Africans, especially South Africans should be socialised into embracing and practicing the tenets of *vhuthu* (Mbigi, 2006). This therefore means that *vhuthu* must be viewed as an essential frame of reference for understanding African culture and living up to its expectations. Another obligation of *vhuthu*, according to Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009), is a set of institutionalised ideas which guide and direct the patterns of the life of Africans. In terms of this definition, *vhuthu* becomes a helpful tool which African people should use in order to behave in an expected manner in order to exhibit Africanness. *Vhuthu* affirms a sense of belonging in a given community. Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) posit that a sense of belonging is necessary, important and central in the appropriation of the *vhuthu* philosophical thought. Mbigi (2006) thinks *vhuthu* is closely related to the idea of community-building. Thus, *vhuthu* is based strongly on collectiveness (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). By collectiveness, it is meant that individuals should live harmoniously with their families, communities and ultimately with neighbouring nations.

Culture is inclusive in nature. It means that every member of a particular community must enjoy the cultural benefits enjoyed by everybody else in that community. Inclusivity entails the acceptance and valuation of everyone irrespective of their extraneous variables such as sex, socio-economic status, political affiliation, religious background, etc. Mzamane (2009) summarises this by insisting that, *vhuthu* is inclusive, accommodating and lifegiving. Inclusivity means that *vhuthu* does not leave anyone outside in all the societal development, practices and opportunities. Inclusivity is a process through which people from various sectors of a community are accepted and encouraged to live and interact harmoniously with each other. Gunter, Estes and Mintz (2007) contend that inclusivity means everyone is treated equally without regard of their socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and political backgrounds. In this way, inclusivity addresses the question of equality. Kostoulas (2011) maintains that the concept of equality within the South African context is meant to increase access to high quality

services, developmental opportunities and other socio-economic opportunities by all South Africans. Equality therefore calls for all role-players within the communities and a society to participate in the development of their communities without being marginalised, deprived and excluded in the process. Today, South Africa has developed into a society that constitutes numerous people from diverse cultural backgrounds. This is called multiculturalism. Kostoulas (2011) says that the development of multicultural awareness within the South African communities improves relationship between the host communities and foreigners. Multiculturalism is viewed as a political and social system which accepts, respects and celebrates the cultural diversity within the population and enables equal opportunities for all and enables them to play a full part in the development of the society as a whole (O'Connor *et al.*, 2014). Multiculturalism also refers to a pattern of different cultures interacting within a single society or community (Larsson & Olsson, 2008). These different cultures must be given a platform in order to realise their needs and expectations without being hindered, stigmatised or deprived of the opportunities to do so. The v*huthu* philosophical approach emphasises mutual understanding, respecting differences and demonstrating tolerance in a multicultural environment such as South Africa (Mzamane 2009).

Multiculturalism is also closely associated with the concept of tolerance. According to Tranter and Percival (2006), tolerance emanates from diversity which purports to explain that since the South African society has become complex in nature, people from different countries and cultures should be treated with respect without regard of their socioeconomic, political, religious and cultural backgrounds. In this way, individuals must learn to treat foreigners with respect, trust and understanding. The concept of tolerance is contained within the understanding that different cultural groupings within the South African context must learn to accept their differences and be able to live together in a healthy and harmonious nature.

2.4.6 Forgiveness

Vhuthu was successfully used for the purpose of making peace among perpetrators and victims. This means that it is an effective tool in providing people with forgiveness. Thus, to have *vhuthu* somewhat enables one to forgive because these two aspects are inextricably connected (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). Africans are expected to forgive one another because failure to forgive often leads to internecine, tribal and even intercontinental wars, and thus hinder people from enjoying peaceful lives. Mzamane (2009) concurs that the *vhuthu* values must promote reconciliation, reconstruction and development. Hence, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) in South Africa was designed in view of the *vhuthu* philosophic approach. Among other objectives, the RDP set out to address the injustices of the past which were established by the apartheid regime. According to Mbigi (2006), people practicing the *vhuthu* principles should not only regard the present as important but also regard the past experiences as necessary in the process of healing from the wounds of the past and reflection. In this way, the oppressive treatment they suffered under the apartheid government may be be viewed in retrospect as an essential point of reference in nation-building discourses and prospects.

2.4.7 Management

It has been reiterated throughout this chapter that the *vhuthu* philosophical approach is recently applied for the improvement of management within large business corporations, government institutions and other organisations within the African continent, more so in South Africa. *Vhuthu* has therefore become a cornerstone for management operations, service delivery, developmental programmes and projects. Khoza and Adam (2005) note that the philosophical approaches of *vhuthu* are also involved in the strategic applications of decision-making mechanisms. Thus, *vhuthu* has become a philosophical tool applied, particularly in dealing with management challenges. Most managers in organisations are now applying the principles of *vhuthu* for the purpose of making proper and effective decisions required to improve, develop and maintain their business enterprises. In view of the necessity of *vhuthu* in management systems, Khoza and

Adam (2005) foregrounded the habits related to value system necessary to improve all levels of management and operations within organisations, namely; (i) mutual respect/benefit, which should be attained through a win/win negotiation type of conflicts management, (ii) mutual understanding, which purports that individuals must first seek to understand themselves before they attempt to understand the other, and (iii) a creative co-operation which highlights that people should become independent so that they are able to resolve conflicts in a neutral and mutual nature.

In this section, the elements of the African philosophical approach of *vhuthu* were identified and described. The aspects that were focused on include: individualism and solidarity, humanism, community, spirituality, morality and culture, forgiveness and management. It was revealed in the discussion that Africans have established and developed an important philosophical approach which is effective in addressing problems as well as encouraging peace and harmony among them and strangers. However, like any ideological or theoretical framework, *vhuthu* is not free from criticism by other writers and philosophers. In the following section, different critical criticisms levelled against *vhuthu* are discussed.

2.5   CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The above exposition treated the *vhuthu* philosophy as an African product which all Africans, especially South Africans are proud of. Indeed, *vhuthu* is gaining a large support and momentum on a daily basis because numerous young scholars, academics and researchers are currently concentrating their studies around its conception, development and maintenance. However, be that as it may, the *vhuthu* philosophy is met with a variety of critical thoughts, most of which emanate from the Western (ised) philosophers. A few of such critical thoughts are identified and described in this section. These include notions that *vhuthu* has failed its historic mission, that, it is difficult to define, that the *vhuthu* philosophical thoughts could lead to conflicts, that *vhuthu* is facing opposition from Western philosophies; and that the questions of equality, individuality, reconciliation, capitalism and management improvement are clearly addressed by the philosophy.

Some critics argue that *vhuthu* has failed its historic mission. Van den Heuvel (2006), for example, contends that the concept of *vhuthu* does not account for its conception period, which means that, in its current Afrocentric discourse, *vhuthu* is merely revitalised and reinvented. Against this view, the present researcher argues that *vhuthu* s neither revitalised nor re-invented. On the contrary, *vhuthu* has existed in African communities, life and worldview since time immemorial. Also exacerbating the criticism of *vhuthu*'s period of conception is that numerous scholars and academics find it difficult to define the concept of *vhuthu*. Mbigi (2006), however, avers that *vhuthu* is a concept that not only involves social interactions between people; it also recognises their mannerisms, relations, the products they make, the exchanges and so on. For Van den Heuvel (2006), the Afrocentric cognitive framework and key concepts contained within the *vhuthu* philosophy remain vague because they do not necessarily relate to what the modern management contexts purport.

There is also a debate that *vhuthu* promotes conflicts between South African races in that it tends to make Whites feel less African. Van den Heuvel (2006) argues that the discursive use of *vhuthu* in a post-apartheid organisational context could lead to the covering-up of conflicts. Sparks (1990) disagrees that vhuthu propels racial conflicts and states instead that, *vhuthu* is a mouthpiece for people who were oppressed during the apartheid regime. Moreover, Western philosophers find it difficult to adapt their analyses and interpretations to an understanding of the *vhuthu* philosophy. The *ubuntu* philosophy is unique and actually different from other philosophies because it was initially not developed for academic purposes, which is why some Europeans regard it is a nonphilosophical (Munyaka and Motlhabi, 2009). Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) argue that *vhuthu* is not different from other philosophies of the world, though it might be articulated and actualised differently. Thus, the vhuthu philosophy should not be viewed or understood within the framework of Eurocentricity. Sparks (2006) notes that the *vhuthu* way of thought differs greatly from what a Western philosopher may be accustomed to in terms of philosophical construction and articulation. Shuttle (2009) adds that there is still work to be done for the spirit of *vhuthu* to be recognised in some

permanent and all pervasive way in the contemporary context. *Vhuthu* is essentially a specific approach to African philosophy in its different disciplines (Munyaka & Motlhabi, 2009). The uniqueness of *vhuthu* from other worldwide philosophies is that it does not only revolve around what people do and how people behave, but also guides how people should behave in their day-to-day living. This is probably why people who are unfamiliar with the life and worldview of Africans struggle to understand the concept and spirit of *vhuthu.*

There are also some scholars, academics and researchers who find it difficult to understand how the *vhuthu* philosophy specifically addresses the question of equality among individuals, communities and nationals. It is for this reason that Khoza and Adam (2005) argue that corruption in Africa is a norm, to the effect that things are usually not done the right way, people cut corners to achieve their aims, and so on. Equality cannot be attained if people, especially those in high positions are corrupt. Against this backdrop, Munyaka and Motlhabi (2009) think that the value system prescribed by the *vhuthu* philosophy is anchored by equality. This means that everyone living in an African society must enjoy the value of being recognised and treated as an equal and with respect. Also, the concept of individualism was mentioned time and again in an effort to highlight some of the principal tenets of the *vhuthu* philosophy. On this aspect, other sociological contenders feel that individualism is not adequately addressed in the philosophy. According to the *vhuthu* principles and the Afrocentric theoretical approaches on personhood, a person cannot be described solely in terms of his or her physical or psychological properties (Nussbaum, 2009). Individualism is an aspect that is not only cherished, but is advocated in the European context (Mbigi, 2006). Mbigi (ibid) insists that whereas Western management thought is said to advocate Eurocentrism, individualism and modernity, African management thought is said to emphasise traditionalism, communalism, co-operative teamwork and mythology. *Vhuthu* is criticised for its regard of communality as against the promotion of individuality and selfishness. Shuttle (2009) thinks *vhuthu* is not easily actualised because to appropriately extrapolate the idea of *vhuthu*, one must understand the *vhuthu* worldview in its entirety.

Although *vhuthu* is reconciliatory in nature, for other social scientists and sociologists, it could still exacerbate conflicts among people rather than reconcile them. Nussbaum (2009) appears to validate this notion when stating that, *vhuthu* has up to today darkened the spirit of modern-day Africa because most African politicians view their oppositions as individuals that need to be eliminated rather than to be treated amicably, thus encouraging peace and truce negotiations. *Vhuthu* serves as the mouthpiece of all African nations within the Sub-Saharan African region propagating improvement, development, reconciliation and maintenance. Shuttle (2009) thinks that the *vhuthu* principles fail where certain individuals, i.e., political rivals, rebels and others use its discourse to destabilise nationhood. The concept of *vhuthu* is also totally against the prevalence of capitalism in African States (Sparks, 1990). It is partly because of its oppositional stance against capitalism that *vhuthu* is dismissed is irrelevant in the postcolonial context. This means that the concept of *vhuthu* is antithetical to the capitalist system. Other social and economic contenders within the capitalistic arena argue that the philosophical approach of *vhuthu* is inadequately related to the improvement of management operations. Mbigi (2006) concurs that distinct organisational practices and variations between African and Western management systems also contribute to the disharmony between the two systems. Van den Heuvel (2006) thinks that *vhuthu* is can improve people's quality of life and improve business management systems.

While most African philosophers and writers are proud to have their own African philosophy, i.e., *vhuthu*, Western philosophers, on the other hand, dismiss *vhuthu* as nonphilosophical. The following critical areas were highlighted and discussed in this section: *vhuthu* has failed its historic mission, it is difficult to define, the *vhuthu* philosophical thoughts could lead to conflicts, the *vhuthu* philosophy faces opposition from Western philosophers; and the *vhuthu* philosophy ably addresses the questions of equality, individuality, reconciliation, capitalism and the improvement of management.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, *vhuthu* was defined as an African philosophy that is strongly based on the notion that people are people through other people. The researcher identified a series of important attributes related to the philosophy of *vhuthu*. These attributes highlight that *vhuthu* is an identity maker; it is used as a glue that combines different African States under the umbrella of African renaissance; it is currently used as a managerial tool; and that it is a nation-building concept in that it promotes a level of unity among people. The following chapter presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 looked at literature review and the theory of the study. This chapter looks at the research methodology. Section 3.2 presents the research paradigms, namely; interpretivism, positivism and social construction. Section 3.3 looks at the research approach. The study is underpinned by the qualitative approach. Section 3.4 examines the research design. The descriptive research design has been chosen. Section 3.5 discusses population and sampling. Section 3.6 focuses on data collection and analysis. Data were collected from four Tshivenḓa novels. Section 3.7 elucidates the quality criteria, which is explicated through the attributes such as credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability. Section 3.8 focuses on the significance of the study. Section 3.9 looks at the ethical considerations. Section 3.10 concludes the chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Ndubuisi (2013) avers that the essence of a philosophical paradigm on African identity and development is to highlight the way people think with the aim to rediscover and situate them on the right track. Such philosophical paradigm is indeed premises intended to describe people's social issues and their experiences. Paradigm refers to the approaches which emphasise the meaningful nature of people's character and participation in both social and cultural life. Paradigms entail different research methods that are accordingly applied for the purpose of gaining insight into the nature of people's knowledge of reality, including both the social as well as natural science methodologies (Chowdhury, 2014). Paradigms are divided between the social science research which is concentrated within the qualitative approaches and the natural science research which applies the quantitative approaches. With regards to a study such as this one, Chowdhury (2014) asserts that paradigms have their roots in the philosophical traditions of hermeneutics and phenomenology. This view is cherished in this study because the study was basically concentrated on the need to both investigate and understand written materials such as novels in an effort to locate their manifestations of the *vhuthu*

ideological outlook. On the other hand, the second aspect of phenomenology entails the manner in which social science researchers attempt to obtain the culture and traditions of people under investigation. Elliot and Timulak (2005) state that paradigms include different research methods that are qualitative and quantitative in nature. Research studies which combine both the qualitative and quantitative approaches are representative of their most concepts, namely; positivism, interpretivism and social constructivism. Hence, positivism, interpretivism and social constructivism are regarded as requiring attention and inclusion within this study.

3.2.1 Interpretivism

Interpretivist paradigm is classified within the qualitative research because it is basically aimed at obtaining a large amount of information in the form of statements, beliefs and opinions shared by the research participants with researchers during the data collection process. Chowdhury (2014) contends that the interpretivist paradigm is mainly aimed towards the appropriation of the concept *verstehen* which explains how researchers' understanding of the social world phenomena could enable researcher to improve the phenomena. Interpretivism is the first step in the analysis of written materials such as novels because without understanding the contents, researchers are unable to conduct their respective analytical processes. The use of qualitative case studies as a research method is motivated by the interpretivist research paradigm (Ponelis, 2015:1). The interpretivist research paradigm provides the research participants an opportunity to explain the nature of the phenomena under research investigation in their own words and linguistic style. Thus, the interpretivist paradigm is applied in both the data collection and analytical processes. Qualitative research is often associated with the interpretivism paradigm which is closely associated with action, intervention and constructive knowledge obtained from the research investigations (Goldkuhl, 2012). Interpretivism is not synonymous with qualitative research, instead it is the lens which frequently influences the choice of qualitative methods. This paradigm competes with what is often referred to as positivism, which is quantitative in nature.

3.2.2 Positivism

Positivism means the accurate measurement of social reality with the use of numeric representations. According to Thanh and Thanh (2015), positivists often accept only one correct answer. This accuracy element of the positivist paradigm affords quantitative researchers the latitude to measure real life with precision. The positivist paradigm is not addressed in this study and as such it would not enjoy a detailed exposition.

3.2.3 Social constructivism

The Constructivist paradigm is also referred to as the social construction of reality. The aim of this model of sociology is the reconstruction of the common view of research participants (Schettler, 2002). Social constructivism is obtained from the sociological perspectives. Andrews (2012) contends that Social Constructionism has been instrumental in remodeling Grounded Theory by way of attempting to make sense of the social world. Social Constructionism holds the view that the world can only be known in relation to people's experience of it and not independently of that experience (Andrews, 2012). Thus, Social Constructionism originated as an attempt to come to terms with the nature of reality.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study used the qualitative research approach. This approach allowed the researcher to analyse and interpret the selected texts using her own words. The qualitative approach is defined as the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Babbie, 2008). Gray (2004) argues that qualitative research is highly contextual and as such, it could adequately fit in the analysis of written texts. Qualitative research provides researchers with a detailed description of events, it shows how and why things happen and also incorporates people's own motivation, emotions, prejudices and incidents of cooperation and conflict in their relationship with each other. Marshall and Rossman (1999) add that qualitative research identifies and describes the

complexity of social problems such as those included in the four selected Tshivenḓa novels related to the depiction of the presence or absence of African *vhuthu*.

Qualitative research adopts an interpretive approach to data, studies issues within their context and considers the subjective meanings that people bring to their situations (De Vaus, 2001). An interpretive research uses statements, beliefs, opinions and other detailed descriptions in order to measure the social parameters which the researchers are researching about, for example, the depiction of the African *vhuthu* philosophy in novels.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design can be viewed simply as a plan of action which social science research applies in order to answer research questions in their respective research studies. De Vaus (2001) highlights that the function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables social science researchers to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible. The study adopted the descriptive design because it would help the researcher to answer questions such as what *vhuthu* is all about (Hedrick, Bickman & Rog, 1993) in the selected Tshivenḓa novels, for example. This is in agreement with Neuman's (2000) argument that the descriptive design assists in painting the correct picture about the texts being analysed. It is primarily used to elaborate on the understanding of a phenomenon under research. Thus, the purpose of a descriptive study is to provide a picture of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs, such as the depiction of *vhuthu* in the four selected Tshivenḓa novels (Gray, 2004).

3.4   POPULATION AND SAMPLING
This section discusses the population and sampling of the study.

3.4.1 Population
The four Tshivenḓa novels were selected from a variety of many other novels which are in circulation in South Africa. A population in the social science research is defined as all the units of analysis that are of interest to the study (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). The

concept of population entails all things such as novels which researchers are interested in studying (Kumar, 2011). In this this study, population means all the Tshivenḓa novels which are available for consumption by the readership.

3.4.2 Sampling

This sub-section identifies and discusses the sample and sampling of the study. Sirkin (1999) asserts that from the population, a smaller group is selected to be studied, i.e., the sample. Research projects are only conducted on samples rather than on the populations because samples are a representation of the population from which they were selected. A sample secures efficiency in research by providing a rationale for studying only parts of a population without losing information about that population, be it objects, animals, human individuals, events, actions, situations, groups or organisations (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). It is impossible for researchers to involve all the units of the population because that would be costly and time consuming. Researchers usually make use of a sampling procedure called the purposive sampling which is also termed a judgmental sampling (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). According to Berg (1998), when developing a purposive sampling, researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent the population.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling occurs when elements in the population do not have an equal and known chance of possible inclusion in the sample (Neuman, 2000). It refers to any procedure in which elements have unequal chances of being included in the sample (Dane, 1990). For Babbie (2004), any technique in which samples are selected in some way not suggested by probability theory is termed non-probability sampling. Singleton, Strait and Strait (1993) argue that non-probability sampling is less experimental in nature because it does not apply randomness when units of analysis are selected for inclusion in the samples. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) conclude that a form of non-probability sampling called purposive sampling is characterised by the use of judgment and a deliberate effort to obtain representative samples by including presumably typical areas or groups in the sample.

The samples of this study are four Tshivenḓa novels, namely; *A si ene* (Madima, 1954), *Bulayo Ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980), *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014) and *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015). The four novels were purposively selected because Magau and

Demana's novels were published prior to the democratic dispensation of 1994 in South Africa whereas the other two are recent publications. Analysing the novels that were published in different epochs may be helpful and insightful in tracing the shifting ideologies, if any, related to the understanding and appropriation of the *vhuthu* philosophical outlook.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

3.4.1 Data collection

Data were collected from the four selected Tshivenḓa novels identified above. The researcher critically read through the texts with a view of identifying issues related to the depiction of African *vhuthu* in the mentioned novels. Textual Analysis was employed in the analysis of the data. Textual Analysis is a type of data collection method concerned in gathering important aspects of the research which are contained in written materials such as novels, for example (Kumar, 2011). The aim of Textual Analysis is to decode texts such as novels (Frey, Botan & Kreps, 1999). Textual Analysis could be used as a way of observing and discovering the attitudes, behaviours, concerns, motivations and culture of the text producer by the researchers. This definition indicates that whilst the researcher is busy reading through the texts such as novels, he or she is concurrently gathering and analysing information. Frey *et al.* (1999) are of the view that the important considerations in Textual Analysis include selecting the types of contexts to be studied (data collection), acquiring appropriate contexts relevant to the theoretical perspectives or philosophical principles (analysis) and determining which particular approach to employ in analysing them (interpretation).

Bainbridge (2011) contends that Textual Analysis is a way for researchers to gather information about how other human beings make sense of the world. Frey *et al.* (1999) indicate that Textual Analysis is the method of describing and interpreting the

characteristics of messages contained in novels. Textual Analysis is thus classified as some form of data collection called an unobtrusive methodology in that it collects data from secondary sources without changing their physical, psychological and emotional states as they had already been written and made available for analysis.

Textual Analysis is an unobtrusive measure. In an unobtrusive data collection method, the researcher is always far away and is mostly unknown to the source (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005). Unobtrusive measures are relevant in gathering information from non-living things such as novels, books and others which cannot change their characteristic features due to the reason that they are being observed or studied. Frey *et al.* (1999) aver that Textual Analysis closely examines the content of the texts, meaning of the texts, and the structure of the texts and the discourse of the texts. These are the four main attributes of Textual Analysis which the researcher considered when gathering data from the four selected Tshivenḓa novels. The researcher designed a textual analytic instrument as a tool to assist her in a step-by-step analysis of each of the four selected novels. This was in line with Frey *et al*. (1999)'s opinion that, a guideline is required to answer questions such what Textual Analysis is, how it works, why it is done, what kinds of knowledge it produces and how one might proceed in the Textual analysis of a novel, for example. Frey *et al.* (1999) further highlight that Textual Analysis is research methodology which addresses both the data collection and analytical processes. Overall, Textual Analysis may be viewed as a process of examining and interpreting data in order to extract meaning, gain understanding and developing empirical knowledge from data (Andrus, 2012).

3.4.2 Data analysis

According to Tesch (1990), textual data analysis process is conducted through a series of steps (which were highlighted in the first chapter), namely:

- Reading through all the selected texts carefully and simultaneously making notes on things that could be considered to be part of *vhuthu* or its opposites.

- Listing all the relevant topics on *vhuthu* and classifying them into major and unique topics.

- Assigning to each topic an abbreviated and identifiable code and writing the codes next to the data segments that correspond with the code.

- Writing the most descriptive wording for the topics and turning them into themes or categories.

- Making a final decision on the abbreviation for each theme or category and alphabetising codes.

- Assembling the data material belonging to each theme or category in one place and doing a preliminary analysis.

- Interpreting and reporting the research findings.

3.5. QUALITY CRITERIA

Quality criteria were explicated through the inclusion of its most important attributes in this study. The attributes focused on were: credibility, dependability, transferability and conformability.

3.5.1 Credibility

Claasen, Van der Hoeven and Covic (2016) regard credibility as a research concept that intends to address the methodological limitations which some of the research studies might have acknowledged. In a nutshell, credibility validates that a study was conducted in a proper and professional manner (Mukhari, 2016). Credibility affirms that the subject has been accurately identified and described, and that the research was conducted in a publicly accessible manner. With regards to this research study, the researcher ensured credibility by means of making certain that the study accordingly identified and described the aspects of *vhuthu* in the four selected Tshivenḓa novels. Dussap and Merry (2000) say credibility means the importance of information obtained from a source that is believed to be original and a true reflection of what the someone has reported in the past is treated as trustworthy.

3.5.2 Dependability

Dependability is an aspect of the social science which requires that the research instruments which were used in the first place would be able to obtain similar results if they were again used in future research projects. Claasen *et al.* (2016) view dependability as a requirement which is placed upon all research studies to supply consumers with adequate and precise results. For Kumar (2011), dependability is concerned with whether researchers would be able to obtain the same results if they observed the same thing twice. Dependability entails the source of written work being dependable according to standards by other scholarly people (Dussap & Merry, 2000). Dependability was maintained by means of utilising the textual analytical instrument which would obtain similar results if used to gather the same *vhuthu* aspects from the four selected Tshivenḓa novels.

3.5.3 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalised to other contexts or settings (Kumar, 2011). In this case, quality would be maintained through making certain that data for the research could as well be generalised to other research studies. Claasen *et al.* (2016) add that transferability means that current researchers may obtain research approaches and methodologies utilised by the previous researchers during the attempts of research projects. Transferability may also mean a sharing of ideas and the replication of studies which were conducted in the past.

Transferability is the project's approach which is applicable to similar contexts in other countries (Dussap & Merry, 2000). Indeed, the future researchers could adequately replicate the current study if they conduct a step-by-step process of Textual Analysis research contained in the analytic instrument mentioned in section 3.1 above.

3.5.4 Conformability

Conformability means that the research results arrived at by the researcher could, in the future, be confirmed or corroborated by others (Kumar, 2011). On the other hand,

Claasen *et al.* (2016) view conformability as some form of research findings which were arrived at by various researchers over time. In this study, conformability was ensured by way of providing future researchers with an instrument necessary to obtain similar results from the four selected Tshivenḓa novels, namely; the textual analytic instrument. This instrument will ensure that the findings arrived at by various researchers utilising it over time will indeed achieve same findings in future.

3.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study looks at the *vhuthu* philosophy from an Afrocentric perspective. The study will be of interest to scholars in anthropology, cultural studies, sociology, political science and other related fields with interest in *vhuthu* and other related philosophies. The study will also be beneficial to both students and researchers interested in Tshivenḓa literature in particular and African literature in general. Teachers will also benefit in terms of the textual analysis of data employed in the analysis of the selected texts. Students and learners will also derive benefits in terms of the unpacking of the selected novels as they grapple with similar texts.

3.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) argue that researchers cannot be regarded as having conducted their studies appropriately if they do not adhere to ethical considerations. Black (2002) submits that the aim of ethical considerations is to protect all research subjects concerned with or involved in a piece of research from being physically, socially, economically, psychologically and emotionally harmed by the research practice. The most important ethical considerations involved in this study included risk, harm, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality.

3.7.1 Risk
Whitley (2002) opines that one of the researcher's obligations is to monitor participants during a study for signs of unanticipated negative effects (called the risks in this regard). Risks are the unintended outcomes the research participants get after participating in research, which could include embarrassment, exclusion and punishment by others. Babbie (2008) concurs that such risks are in the form of the physical harm,

psychological and emotional distress. Researchers are therefore required to avoid any distress and discomfort that might occur during the research projects with the participants. This study does involve the collection of data from participants, therefore, the issue of risk does not arise.

3.7.2 Harm

Harm to subjects has to do with the discomfort experienced by participants during the research process. Warren and Karner (2009) maintain that federal guidelines seek to protect human subjects from the possibility of distress, being asked questions that provoke emotional reactions such as shame, guilt or sorrow during the research data collection process. Research subjects are in fact people involved in the interviews who bring along several attitudes which researchers are not to provoke to maintain their respective socio-economic, cultural, religious and political standards. Research should never injure the people studied, regardless of whether they volunteered for the study (Babbie, 2008). This study did not resort to character assassination or any form of unethical criticism where the authors did not validate the *vhuthu* principles in their respective novels.

3.7.3 Privacy

Privacy is an ethical consideration which is synonymous with confidentiality. Simply put, privacy entails the manner in which information shared by the participants with the researcher is kept confidential by the researchers and is not made available to other individuals and or institutions (Babbie, 2008). This aspect is not applicable to this study.

3.7.4 Anonymity

Anonymity is obtained by means of identifying research participants by their pseudonyms and or codes (Kumar, 2011). A research project guarantees anonymity when the researcher, not just the people who read the research, cannot identify a given response with a given participant (Babbie, 2008). Anonymity is an important ethical consideration in that it protects the research participants from being harmed, especially when they share information that is sensitive. Anonymity does not apply in this study.

3.7.5 Confidentiality

Kumar (2011) asserts that confidentiality entails avoiding sharing information about the participants with others for purposes other than research. Researchers need to ensure that the information provided by the participants is kept anonymous and that the names and the biographical information of the participants remains unknown by others. In short, confidentiality means that the information obtained during the research process must not be shared with unauthorised individuals and institutions. Confidentiality is not applicable to this study.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the most important research concepts of research methodology and design. The chapter also outlined the research approach employed in the study, that is, the qualitative approach. The population and sampling procedure represented by purposive sampling, Textual Analysis formed part of both data collection and analysis processes. Quality criteria as ensured in the study were discussed in view of four important elements. Lastly, ethical considerations were discussed, particularly in light of risk, harm, privacy anonymity and confidentiality. The following chapter presents the interpretations and analysis of the study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 focused on the research methodology. This chapter focuses on data presentation and analysis. It discusses *vhuthu* in the four selected Tshivenḓa novels, which are: *A si Ene* (Madima, 1954), *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980), *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014) and *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015). Firstly, the analysis of the selected novels is premised on the following *vhuthu* philosophical principles: humanism, identity and individualisation, solidarity, unity and nation-building, culture and morality, treatment of strangers, forgiveness, spirituality, and management ethos. Secondly, the analysis of the aforementioned novels utilises Afrocentricity as a theoretical perspective (Asante, 1987).

Afrocentricity is divided into a number of aspects such as the 'I' and an African identity, community and accommodation and anti radicalism.

4.2 DATA INTERPRETATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Since this research is based on the analysis of creative texts in the form of novels, it is appropriate to employ the Textual Analysis approach. Textual Analysis is a type of data collection method concerned with gathering important aspects of the research which are contained in written materials such as novels (Kumar, 2011). In addition, Bainbridge (2011) indicates that Textual Analysis is a way for researchers to gather information about how human beings make sense of the world. In other words, Textual Analysis is viewed as a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge from them. In this chapter, data from the four selected Tshivenḓa texts are analysed in light of both the *vhuthu* and Afrocentric theoretical perspectives.

4.2.1 The *Vhuthu* philosophical principles

The selected texts are discussed in terms of *vhuthu* philosophical principles, which can be categorised into humanism, identity and individualisation, solidarity, unity and nation building, culture and morality, treatment of strangers and forgiveness, spirituality, African renaissance and management ethos in this study.

4.2.1.1 Humanism

Humanism means humanness and the active participation in improving the livelihood of others (Sparks, 1990). According to Copson (2015), any action and utterance included in the novels which is humanistic in nature contains some elements of *vhuthu*. Lamont (1997) maintains that humanism is the well-being of all humankind, with reliance on the democracy and love. Humanism is practiced by individuals who show a high degree of respect, care and support towards others. The researcher collected the following attributes that depict humanism in the actions, behaviour and utterance of the characters in *A si Ene*.

In *A si Ene*, one comes across the statement: "*Vha miṱa mivhili vho dovha vha kuvhangana vha lugisa zwipfumelo, nngu na mbudzi*", ([Maluṱa and Muhanelwa's] families once more came together in order to forgive each other. Maluta's family bought a sheep and a goat as fine for transgression) (Madima, 1954:74). Asking for forgiveness between the two conflicting families is an important gesture of humanism usually required by the Vhavenḓa people. This is an acknowledgement of the fact that people are not perfect and will sometimes wrong each other. For people to lead exemplary lives, they basically do not have an option but to forgive each other.

Respect is another key feature of humanism that is depicted in *A si Ene*. This is notable in a statement such as, "*Muhanelwa a bva a gwadama, a losha*" (Muhanelwa came out, knelt and greeted) (Madima, 1954:4). *U losha* (to greet) is not only a form of address, but also a sign of humility and respect, which in Tshivenḓa culture is often demonstrated by clasping hands together, accompanied by interjectives such as '*Ndaa!*' (for males)

and '*Aa!*' (for females). Muhanelwa's greeting is indicative of her being a kind, young woman who is full of respect and loathes conflicts. She was traditionally married to Maluṱa, the man who eloped with Adziambei, as stated in Chapter 2 in this study.

In *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho*, humanism is evinced in the statement, "*U-ḽa mukoma Vho Ledzebe ngauri na ene o dzhena khathihi na vhahwelelwa o vha o no wa vhudzuloni hawe a tshi khou tendelela nga uri 'Muṱavhatsindi´* " (*Mukoma* (petty headman) forgot his position and instead knelt before the chief as the court respondents did saying long-live the king) (Magau, 1980:19). Vhavenḓa are expected to show respect towards their elders as well as their traditional leaders. This is what Ledzebe did. Matshidze (2013) maintains that *u kumela* (to praise) entails the praises reserved for the chief when he is in public places or when he talks. It is only men who are required to praise the chiefs by uttering referential praises such as, '*Tshidada-muhali!' (Great Monster)*, '*Mbilalume!' (The Male Rabbit)*, '*Khakhamela!' (You who appears unexpectedly)*, '*Mboloma!'* (The Great Droner) and so on. Moreover, Tumbala acted and behaved according to the *vhuthu* philosophical principle of humanism when he said: *"Hai muhali, ṋemashango vhone sa muhulwane vha so ngo shulula malofha, kha tou rwiwa nga ṱhamu khulwane zwawe nandi*". (No, his majesty and my lordship, you as the chief must not be involved in killing your subjects, rather place a heavy fine upon this person) (Magau, 1980:81). Humanism is about protecting other people's lives as well as enhancing their livelihood, including care, support and acceptance. An individual is not allowed to publicly discourage a traditional leader's judgment, although they could indirectly do so by asking the leader for a lesser punishment as indicated in this passage. *U shulula malofha* (to spill blood) is one of the Tshivenḓa idioms, which denotes causing (unnecessary) harm even death to harmless individuals usually by those in power such as chiefs (Milubi, 2004).

In *Ḽi a Kovhela* (Mugwena, 2014), humanism when Khuthadzo as "*…muthu o ḓalaho ṱhonifho khathihi na u tevhedza milayo ya vhahulwane*" (Khuthadzo was a young boy who showed respect towards the elderly people). He is depicted throughout the novel as

respectful to elders, including Sophy who hated him. Humanism is also notable when Sophy is described thus, *"Vho Sophy vho tokomelwa vha lavhelesa fhasi sa mufumakadzi wa Muvenḓa o ḓalaho milayo* (Sophy being quiet, looked down like a respectful Muvenḓa woman) (Mugwena, 2014:43). Sophy does this out of respect for the traditional healer that she and Segere had consulted. On any other day and at any other place, Sophy is disrespectful, thus *vhuthu* principles can be faked for selfish purposes. Apart from her pretense, it is possible that Sophy is a victim of the patriarchal ideology, which scorns wives who are disrespectful to their husbands and members of the extended family (Matshidze, 2013).

In *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015) Muofhe, who is described as ugly, short and has a stature of a man, is however, an embodiment of humanism. This is evident in how she is described: "*Ho ḓi nga na mbilu ya hone yo vha i tshi dzula yo sokou tshenela muṅwe na muṅwe. I ngoho muthu iṱali a sa naki hu tshi naka mbilu"* (Muofhe's heart was happy towards everybody. Indeed, the beauty of a person is in their heart) (Demana, 2015:3). The connotative meaning of the words, "…*mbilu ya hone yo vha i tshi dzula yo sokou tshenela muṅwe na muṅwe*" that Muofhe was hospitable, humble and polite towards everybody. Muofhe's demeanour is linked with the concept of humanism because humanism entails being happy towards everyone shemeets.

The four novels are essential indices to the Vhavenḓa's demonstration of humanism, which in the novels, is evinced by aspects such as forgiveness, greeting, respect for traditional leadership, politeness and humility. To this end, the researcher concludes that all the four selected novelists allude to the aspect of humanism, albeit in varied ways in their novels.

4.2.1.2. Identity and Individualism
Among other aspects, identity entails people's adherence to their cultural and societal expectations. In the context of this study, Madima (1954) highlighted areas in which his characters identified with the Tshivenḓa norms, values and standards such as *u tshina*

thondo (initiation for girls). Individualism means that a people (or a person) lives apart from the communities in which they belong (Realo, Koido, Ceulemans & Allik, 2002). In such a context, individuals are not interested in communal interdependence and so, everyone is expected to look out only for themselves and immediate family (Realo *et al.*, 2002). In *A si Ene* (Madima, 1954), when Fanyana felt attracted to his friend's wife, Adziambei, he 'stole' her, an act which is against the *vhuthu* philosophical principles. Madima implicitly confronts immoral and inhuman acts, mainly premised on selfishness, such as when Adziambei stole an amount of £200 in order to hire Matshaya to murder Fanyana.

In *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980:105), identity is indicated in a passage which reads: "*Na ngoho vha tsa kha khuluṋoni vhoṱhe zwifhaṱuwo zwo lavhelesa fhasi*" *(*Indeed, they descended the throne with their faces downcast). The Vhavenḓa who act and behave against the expected *vhuthu* principles are often shamed for their illicit behaviour. In Tshivenḓa culture, when one has wronged the traditional leader, they are regarded as having wronged the entire community. Mamidze, Langanani and Khangale were not aware that they were going to be arrested for conspiracy on the day when there was an official celebration at the King's kraal. They sat on their usual seats, next to Chief Mphaga when the tribal police instructed them to descend and sit on the wooden benches meant for commoners, a shameful scene indeed.

In Tshivenḓa culture and *vhuthu* in general, when a man marries a woman who already has children, the children become his. *Ḽi a Kovhela (*Mugwena, 2014*)* portrays the Vhavenḓa's belief that '*Wa kokodza luranga, mafhuri a a tevhela*' which essentially means men who marry women with children from a previous relationship are, as a cultural norm, expected to treat these children as their own (Mugwena, 2014:18). In Mugwena's novel, individualism, which is closely associated with selfishness, is captured in the statement, "*Bulannga a tshi amba uri u ṱoḓa tshelede i vhonalaho uri a ḽe dzawe mutsinda a ṱovhowe. A ḽe dzawe mutsinda a ṱovhowe*" (Bulannga demanded a large amount of money so that he could enjoy it without a limit) (Mugwena, 2014:42).

Here, Bulannga intends to enjoy his hard-earned income alone; he does not want to share with others. The vhuthu philosophy does not endorse greed and selfishness. In Mugwena's (2014) novel, one notes that individuals who are selfish ultimately end up being incapable of managing their money and fail to care and support their families.

In Demana (2015:12), identity and individualism are notable when Laedzani says: "*Kha vha ri litshe ri fele henefha muḓini ngauri na riṋe ro u pfhela hoyu muḓi*" (Let us starve in this household because we as well worked hard in order to sustain it). Laedzani is angry after gathering news that her husband has another wife and that, he wants her and her son to leave the house. This woman feels she belongs to the matrimonial household and therefore she cannot allow herself to be returned to her maiden family. *Vhuthu* does not mean that one should not stand for one's rights. In this case, Laedzani displays vhuthu because she resists intimidation, exclusion and eviction.

Individualism, which is not encouraged in Tshivenḓa culture, entails that Africans could be reduced to mere subjects once they replace their identity with that of Europeans. In this regard Demana (2015) suggests that African individuals tend to forget their identity once they are exposed to the European way of life. For example, Grace puts a fork and a knife before Frans, which makes him believe she is far better than other African women.

Demana (2015:16) warns that Grace's treatment of men with care, love and attention may be interpreted as respect, while it is not.

The four selected Tshivenḓa novels display *vhuthu* philosophical aspects of identity and individualism. The research shows that *vhuthu* philosophy can only be realised once individuals maintain their identity and refrain from distancing themselves from their community members. Communalism and individualism are antonyms because the former indicates the need for individuals to become part of the community whereas the latter indicates individuals' quest for living and developing themselves without others. Individualism is thus antitheses of togetherness as it encourage actions and behaviours

that often make the person evaluate his or her own physical needs above the teachings of national consciousness (Asante, 2007). Individualism is a practice which is totally denounced by the *vhuthu* philosophical principles for it dissuades people from adhering to societal expectations (Fearon, 1999).

4.2.1.3 Solidarity, Unity and Nation-Building

A close analysis of *A si Ene* can show that the concepts of solidarity, unity and nation building are closely related or synonymous in nature. Firstly, Madima (1954) denounces Adziambei's elopement with Muhanelwa' suitor. A woman 'stealing' another woman's husband, for instance, is Madima's way of showing the absence of solidarity among some of his characters. In essence, such an act reflects cruelty and selfishness – antitheses of the *vhuthu* philosophy.

Still on the aspect solidarity, *dzunde* and *davha* are representative of the vhuthu tenet of solidarity. *Dzunde* and *davha* are the Vhavenḓa's communal activities where people corporately work for the chief for free and help other households during the time of planting and harvesting, respectively. The labourers are only provided with food and drinks. In *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho*, although the Vhavenḓa where living the rulership of a king, *dzunde* and *davha* are not encapsulated in the novel; people's sense of solidarity is only evidenced by attending the *khoro* (local court) in large numbers. It is reported in the novel that the Mphagane community met every Saturday to discuss community matters and or address disputes among community members at the chief's kraal (Magau, 1980). It is in this instance where one notes efforts geared towards inculcating a sense of togetherness in a community.

Magau also foregrounds the aspect of reconciliation in his novel. This is evident when the magistrate in the local office reconciled Thovhele Mphaga and Lugisani by proving that Lugisani was not the author of the letter which implicated him in treason. Instead of seeking revenge against their enemies, both Thovhele and Lugisani preferred peace and harmony, although justice was served to the perpetrators of the false allegations levelled against Lugisani. Lopes and Mapker (2016) reveal that a magistrate even

issues judgment as well as letters to protect those individuals who live under siege of threats by powerful offices such as *musanda* (chief's headquarters). In this case, the magistrate proved to be an experienced person who could identify the cause of conflict between Chief Mphaga and Lugisani, and corrected acts of injustice and inhumanness.

Lugisani, the protagonist in *Bulayo Ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980) is portrayed encouraging people to work together and live in peace and harmony by playing the 'deu' game. In this way, people can conquer all challenges. Lugisani further says: "*Kha ri farisane, ri kokodzane na u sukumedzana nga pfano sa vhatambi vha deu ya domba, ndi hone hu tshi ḓo vha na lwendo*" (Let us help one another, pull one another and push one another in harmony like the dancers of *deu* in *domba*, that is when there would be progress) (Magau, 1980)*. Deu* in the initiation of *domba* encourages initiates to work together, believing that people become stronger when they are united. In the *domba* dance, the maidens hold each other's arms and form a python-like movement as they continue to sing and dance. *Deu* is performed by Vhavenḓa maidens whilst bare-breasted, their hands joined and their attires matching as they move together like a snake-like. *Deu* is thus one way through which the Tshivenḓa exhibits and reinforces the notion of working togetherness. Although Madiba (1994) views *deu* as only a rope (thambo), it bears emphasis that, at a connotative level, *deu* is intended to prove the idea that one needs to join hands with others in order to prosper in life. In Magau's novel, Lugisani informs the *khoro* (local gathering) that he requested donations from *magaraba* (migratory workers) to donate money toward the construction of a school and clinic, and this he does in an effort to convince the community headed by Nyamalwela, locals, *magaraba* and others. Lugisani succeeds in this endeavour so much so that those who doubted his project were left tongue-tied when they saw the financial records in which the donations were captured. Through Lugisani, Magau intends to inculcate a sense of communalism and interdependence among the Vhavenḓa people, highlighting that people can overcome all forms of challenges when they work together.

The aspect of nation-building is evidenced in *Ḽi a Kovhela* through sayings such as,

"*Vhathu ndi ṋanga dza kholomo dzi a kuḓana zwine zwi si vhe u fhela ha vhushaka*" (Conflicts are imminent in our societal living, but that does not mean we are no longer in relationship) (Mugwena, 2014:63). These words were uttered by a young man in the novel, Nkhane. Nkhane is Vele's son who calls Segere 'malume' (uncle) as he is his mother's brother. By saying, "*Vhathu ndi ṋanga dza kholomo dzi a kuḓana zwine zwi si vhe u fhela ha vhushaka*", the lad is trying to convince his uncle that whatever differences he has with his mother, Vele, they could sit down and resolve them. Nkhane knows that there is a problematic issue between his mother and his uncle and he tries to plead with his uncle to find solace in order to try to resolve the conflict. "*Vhathu ndi nanga dza kholomo dzi a kuḓana zwine zwi si vhe u fhela ha vhushaka*" also means that as people interact with each other, conflicts are inevitable. Milubi (2004) says this proverb shows that the Vhavenḓa people always find a way to discuss their issues in order to come up with amicable solutions to their problems with one another.

In the novel, *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* (Demana, 2015) cautions African people against undermining themselves. This is evident in Magegele's speech when he says: "*Vhana havha ndi funa vha tshi funda u swika vha tshi tou kundwa nga vhone vhane*" (I want these children to be educated to the highest level) (Demana, 2015:36). Like many mentally colonised people, Magelegele thinks talking in other people's dialects is a proper thing to do. Hence, the Afrocentric theoretical perspective frowns at individuals who undermine their mother tongues and express themselves through languages of others
(Kabeer, 1999). Nation-building can be achieved by believing in one's abilities and native language(s). The emphasis is that nation-building could also be attained when individuals have obtained decent education, relevant skills and careers.

4.2.1.4 Treatment of strangers and forgiveness

A stranger is anybody who may be deemed foreign to a particular people. In Madima's (1954) novel, the *vhuthu* philosophical principle on how to treat strangers (in marriage

negotiations) is notable in words such as: "*Mufaro wo fhelaho u tshi bva ha Vho Ṋematswiriri*" (the full gift basket to be consumed and finished came from the

Ṋematswiriri). The gift basket referred to as *mufaro* is a common way of showing respect and acceptance by people who are about to exchange children in a marriage process in Tshivenḓa culture and tradition (Matshidze, 2013). An exchange of gifts is one way of demonstrating peace and harmony among the Vhavenḓa clans.

Treating strangers and visitors well is also evidenced in *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* when the "*Ḽipholisa ḽihulu ḽa musanda, Vho Dilika na mukoma wa musanda Vho Ḽidzebe vho ri u vhona uho vhueni vhu tshi swika vha mbo ḓi vhu ṱanganedza nga u ṱavhanya* (When both the senior police of the chieftaincy, *Dilika*, and the chief's headman, *Lidzebe*, noted the arrival of visitors, they immediately welcomed them) (Magau, 1980). The Vhavenḓa people show respect, and hospitality towards strangers and visitors. Khorommbi (1996) indicates that the Vhavenḓa have their own way of welcoming visitors. They demonstrate hospitable acts such as collecting the visitors' luggage at the entrance of their gates, sitting with them and after greetings, show them the place to rest. This is done so that the visitors may feel totally welcome regardless of the reasons of their visit. According to Matshidze (2013), visitors are usually not required to mention why they visited. It is only at dawn or in the morning that they are required to explain the purpose of their visit. It is therefore not surprising to observe the good treatment accorded the visitors at the chief's kraal in Magau's novel. The way strangers should be treated has also received considerable attention in Demana's novel. For instance, one reads: "*U swika hafha muḓini, vha mbo ḓi thoma u londota avha vhana vha fhano muḓini, vhuṋa havho*" (On arrival, he [Magelegele] started providing for the four children in the family) (Demana,

2015:23). Magelegele is not wrong in looking after Grace's children because the minute he decided to stay with them, it suggested that he was prepared to take the responsibility of fatherhood even if the children were not his. Tshivenḓa supports this type of behaviour as evidenced in the proverbs such as: "*Ṅwana wa muṅwe ndi ṅwana*

wau" (Somebody's child is also your child) and "Munna u bebela muṅwe", "People should advise each other, irrespective of whether they know each other or not). It is thus not surprising that Khamusi acted as a father figure to Thambatshira when he provided everything for the family, including food. Furthermore, this trait is highlighted in the words: *"Vhone vho vha vha tshi vho tou nga khotsi khae ngauri na zwiḽiwa zwa afha muḓini ndi musi zwi tshi vho vhonwa nga vhone"* (He was like a father to him because even food in this household was bought by him). The point worth emphasising is that the *vhuthu* philosophical principles will only be achieved when people who are not related treat one another in a humane manner. It is also noteworthy that Khamusi is a concerned member of the community who after observing that there is a need at Magelegele's family took an active action to care and support it. Lamont (1997) is of the opinion that good citizenry is shown by people who care for others who are in need.

Another critical aspect of *vhuthu* that requires attention in this study is forgiveness. Practising forgiveness is part of Tshivenḓa culture as the adage confirms: *"Ṅwana a khakha ha vhulahwi"* (Do not kill the child when he/she commits a mistake). The child could be any person. Magau (1980) depicts this aspect of *vhuthu* in his novel when he narrates that Mamidze, Mukhotho and Mandiwana (characters in the novel) felt honoured when they were instructed to pay fines for their wrongful deeds instead of being arrested.

Asking for forgiveness is an African way of saying that, 'I will not repeat my mistake', which in Tshivenḓa culture is often put thus: "*Zwanḓa mafhini, ndi humbela u farelwa lufhanga; a thi nga dovhi*" which means "Hands in the milk, hold knife for me; I will never repeat the same mistake". Both the literal and figurative meanings merely emphasise the magnitude of the mistake and the person's remorse.

Forgiveness is often accompanied by the tolerance of other people's behaviour. This is revealed in one of the scenes in *Ḽi a Kovhela*, where one reads: "*Nyeletshedzo ine nda nga ni ṋea yone ndi ya uri ni vha vhudzise mutakalo misi yoṱhe, naho vha sa ni fhindula ni songo vha na ndavha*" (My advice to you is that you always greet her, and even

though she does not respond to you, do not mind her) (Mugwena, 2014:27). In this instance, Pfariso advises Khuthadzo to keep exhibiting the attitude of humanness and politeness irrespective of how people react to him. This is in keeping with Tshivenḓa culture that young individuals must be well-mannered and should be kind to others (*Resource Booklet*, 2007). Pfariso, who is Khuthadzo's friend, depicts *vhuthu* in that he does not encourage revenge against those who wronged him and his friend.

Another significant aspect of *vhuthu* is a genuine interest in how relatives and friends are doing in life. Mugwena (2014) exhibits this trait as common among Vhavenḓa *vhuthu* when his characters visit others and are prepared to assist them when there is a need to do so. Makhadzi (Segere's older sister) shows *vhuthu* by practising an element of African identity in this study. Makhadzi (an aunt) is regarded as a principal individual within the Vhavenḓa family and is responsible for bringing family members together (Matshidze, 2013). Makhadzi also plays a significant role in deciding for either boys or girls who they should marry and how the family should be composed (Matshidze, 2013). In Mugwena's (2014) novel, Vele visits family members former neighbours in order to connect them together. All in all, the characters in the four selected Tshivenḓa novels exhibit some of the essential tenets of vhuthu, namely; hospitality, forgiveness and compassion.

4.2.1.5 Spirituality

Spirituality is a complex topic as it means different things to different people. On the one hand, it is about people's participation in organised religion. On the other hand, it refers to non-religious experience that encompasses "getting in touch with their spiritual selves through private prayer, yoga, meditation, quiet reflection, or time in nature" (Ejizu, 2011). For this study, the researcher concentrated on the former definition. Moreoover, religion is divided into two categories in the selected Tshivenḓa novels, namely: Christianity and African Traditional Religion (ATR). Christianity is depicted in the following statement in *A si Ene* through statements such as: "*Muhanelwa a ri litshani ndi thome u rabela. Arali na pfha ndi tshi ri, Amen, ni mbulahe zwaṋu* (Muhanelwa said, let me first pray. If you hear

me say, Amen, you may then kill me) (Madima, 1954:90). This passage signifies a strong belief in Christianity. Secondly, the data obtained from the novels indicate that some characters believe in African Traditional Religion (ATR). This is revealed in *A si Ene* where it is said: *"Fhedzi, vhaṅwe vhana Ṅwali o vha sika a tshi zwi funa"* (However, some children were created by *Ṅwali* (God) out of love) (Madima, 1954:20). Khorommbi (1996) says *Ṅwali* is regarded as an ancestor, a god-like spiritual entity.

Magau (1980) also alludes to spirituality when he mentions a young Christian man from Tshiozwi who was training to become a pastor in the Lutheran Church somewhere in Natal. This shows that the Christian belief system is influential among the Vhavenḓa. Hence, Magau (1980) mentions even the reading of the Bible at a procession at the burial ceremony by the priest r in the Evangel of John which was also accompanied by some songs from a hymn book. The Christian belief system is depicted as pervasive in Tshivenḓa culture and in the hearts of many people in Magau's novel, especially those who experience distress due to death, illness and other related problems.

Where it concerns ATR, Magau remarks: "*Iwe vha ha Bidzha, a si khwine ni tshi vhidza ṅanga uyo muthu a wana dziphamba na tsemo a aravhela khamusi a nga nwa a ṱanza a konou amba. Hezwi zwi tou nga ndi thuri dzo mu dzhenaho*" (You, Bidzha people, it is better to call a traditional healer who can provide this person with medicine and herbs, maybe he will vomit after drinking them and be able to speak again. These seem to be spirits which possessed him) (Magau, 1980:37). This text shows that there are community members who believed in the ATR where herbs, ancenstral spirits and others could be utilised as interventions to help ill individuals. According to ATR, ancestors (*vhadzimu*) are representatives of people who died some centuries or decades ago who currently continue to control human lives. *Vhadzimu* (gods) are believed to be connected to the living individuals through the religious rituals called *malombo* and *mbila* for Vhavenḓa and Vhalemba, respectively (Khorommbi, 1996).

In *Ḽi a Kovhela*, the author reveals that there are some people who do not believe in ATR. For instance, Khuthadzo told his father that he does not believe in African Traditional Religion because he is the son of the only Almighty God. Khuthadzo had already been introduced to the belief system of Christianity and as such, he found it difficult to obey his father's instruction to switch over to another religion, namely, the African Traditional Religion. In Mugwena (2014), one notes that staunch Christians are difficult to transform into embracing other religions. Notwithstanding, there are still characters such as, Sophy, Khuṱhe, Vele and Segere who have a strong belief iḽ African Traditional Religion. Therefore, some characters still consulted the traditional healer, Malapule, to seek spiritual assistance.

Spirituality entails a provision of guiding principles to which people are encouraged to subscribe to for their wellbeing. The contravention or disregard for such principles is often believed to yield misinfortune. This appears to be the case in *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa* where one notes utterances such as, "*Tshilamba-u-vhudzwa ndi tshilila u vhona*" (A person who rejects predisposes him/herself to the (negative) consequences) (Demana, 2015:21). With this statement, Laedzani warns her son, Thambatshira, that if he does not listen, he may experience some negative consequences. The guiding principles of Christianity are written in the Holy Bible where transgressors are also forewarned of the consequences of sin. Generally, in Tshivenḓa culture, people are encouraged to heed good counsel.

Spirituality is evinced in the selected novels as embraced by young people who believe in Christianity. Therefore, Thambatshira tells his mother that he would rather buy her the Holy Bible. Belief in Christianity is projected as a protective shield against calamities that may befall those who do not believe. All this shows that Christianity is a religious belief system mainly followed by modernised individuals (Heathwood, 2012). Christianity is a spiritual belief system most favoured by the postmodernistic theoretical perspective which views the ATR as diabolic, barbaric and irrational in nature (Hutchens and Suggs, 1997). Jackson (2015) contends that the Vhavenḓa individuals who live in extended

family units in which senior elders are alive have a high probability of being influenced to respect the rituals performed by the traditional healers, enhance their strong belief system in ATR and may be reluctant to embrace Christian values. The ATR is a spiritual belief system embedded within an African life and identity which cannot be easily and possibly removed (Sanni, 2016). Overall, when the spirituality aspect of the *vhuthu* philosophical principles is disregarded, disharmony in society is inevitable.

4.2.1.6 African renaissance

African renaissance is an element within the *vhuthu* philosophical principle which was proposed by the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki. According to the African Renaissance approach, all African people must treat each other like brothers and sisters. People must make it a point that they live side-by-side in harmony and also move towards the eradication of physical boundaries that divide their countries and nationals. In the context of African renaissance, people must regard one onather as belonging to a circular interface. In Madima, the aspect of African renaissance is hinted at when one reads words such as, "*A si ene, hu pfhi o no vha Ḽisuthu. Ndi ngafhi henefho?*" ([Adziambei] is a bad girl, it is said that she is now living in Lesotho. Where is that?) (Madima, 1954). In the novel, Madima shows that in Tshivenḓa culture, if a Muvenḓa young woman moves from one community to the other, including neighbouring countries, precisely because of sexual relationships, she is regarded *A si ene* (a prostitute).

Khorommbi (1996) maintains that prostitution among Vhavenḓa is regarded as a taboo. In *Ḽi a Kovhela, Bulayo Ḽo Ṱalifhaho and Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa*, African renaissance is absent. African renaissance encourages the African nations to live as one, where people can even move freely from one country to the next. African renaissance seeks to unite Africans against the exploitation perpetuated bycolonialism and selfish politics, ethnic cleansings in the name of cultural identity, racism, xenophobia, sexism and destruction of the ecosystems in the name of progress and civilisation (Vorster, 2009). Fearon (1999) maintains that African renaissance is a process of African people becoming one in their quest of opposing Westernisation.

4.2.1.7   Management tool

Vhuthu is also a management tool that can provide leaders with proper and good management knowledge, skills and attitudes to run organisations (Khoza & Adam, 2005).   This aspect is important in the study because the four selected Tshivenḓa novels also deal with relationships between employers and employees. The study sought to determine whether the said relationships are premised on *vhuthu* principles or not. Currently, an employee-employer relationship within the South African context is controlled by the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997 (Act 75 of 1997).

In his novel, Madima (1954) deals with the topic of the relationship between employees and employers. For instance, a character called Maluṱa shows his concern for the respect of the employer-employee relationship when he tells Muhanelwa's relatives that his leave from the workplace is over and that he should return to work without delay. Maluṱa shows that he is indeed a responsible worker who respects the conditions of his employment. This shows that Maluṱa had a good working relationship with his boss because ever since he started working with him, the two never experienced conflicts and continued working together harmoniously. This is what *vhuthu* encourages: peace among people. However,

"Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts; differences will always be there. Peace means solving these differences through peaceful means; through dialogue, education, knowledge; and through humane ways" (Dalai Lama XIV, nd). However, Adziambei is able to resist pressure from her employers to return to work, as noted in the statement: "*Makhuwa vha mu fhembeledza a si tende, vha vhuya vha tenda vha tshi pfa a tshi ri u do vhuya ṅwedzi u tshi Fhela*" (The employers begged her to return to work earlier, she refused and told them that she would return at the end of the month. They succumbed to this request and agreed with her) (Madima, 1954). The employer-employee relationship is improved when the terms of employment are negotiated and an agreement is reached between the two.

Magau (1980) reveals a number of incidents where the *vhuthu* philosophical principle of management was elicited in his novel, among them being: "*Musi vho no fhedza u lugisa madzulo, vha dzudzanya vhathetshelesi vhoṱhe nga ndiḽa ine vha ḓivha, vha kaidza vhathu vho halifha uri vha dzike*" (After preparing the seating area for the attendees in a manner appropriate, and harshly demanded that they be orderly and listen attentively) (Magau, 1980). Dilika shows the manner in which large official gathering which include communities and government officials should be effectively administered. Vhuthu philosophical principles shall be said to have been addressed when people participate in meetings in a mature and respectful manner. When there are ceremonies at the chief's kraal, the seating arrangement should be prepared in a manner that shows respect to *vhamusanda* (*thovhele*, king), his/her *vhakoma* (petty headman), distinguished guests and all other people. Naturally, the chief's seat is covered with skins of predatory animals such as lions, tigers and leopards. Ordinary people may be seated on wooden benches whereas the *Tshikona* dancers sit on the floor.

The magistrate sentenced both Tshammbengwa and Mandiwana to six and four years of imprisonment, respectively. The criminal case, conducted and finalised, forms part of the postmodernist theoretical perspective which encourages that African philosophies, including *Vhuthu* philosophical principles, must adhere to the requirement of enlightment. In the context of this requirement, people should be regarded as criminals once they are sentenced by the authorised, recognised and official courts of law. The Vhavenḓa do not believe in prison sentences as they do not have the necessary custody and resources needed to keep those imprisoned (Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act of 2011). The harshest penalty meted out to those found guilty is by their removal from the community i.e. *u shakuliswa.* In the context of this type of sentencing, Magau (1980) maintains that individuals are accordingly exempted from the land and required to seek a place to stay somewhere far away.

Thovhela Mphaga confirmed as regard to challenges involving a school and a clinic within the Dovhoni area that he would cordially support the programmes. *Vhuthu* philosophical principles are embedded in individuals acting as traditional leaders who are actively available for the development of communities and societies within which

they exist. The National Health Promotion Policy and Strategy (2015) indicates that the concept of community development means the design, strategic planning, implementations and monitoring and evaluation of any effort to provide communities with needs, requirements and service delivery. These could include the provision of communities with infrastructure, education, health, safety and security and so on.

Magau (1980) writes that, "*Ayo maṅwalo o no fhela u ṅwalwa vhamusanda Vho Nyamalwela vha a themendela na u saina*" (After the letters were written, Chief Nyamalwela recommended and signed them). Magau (1980) was able to make a connection between the vhuthu philosophical principles of management tool with the manner in which community traditional office administration should be carried out. Mugwena (2014) shows the portrayal of *vhuthu* as a management tool. For instance, one of the characters, Khuthadzo, is projected as an individual respectful of his workplace policies in that he would not consume alcohol whilst at work, and or not attempt to go out in the drinking spree which would leave him unable to report for work the following day. Usually, individuals who abuse substances, including alcohol, have problems with their employers (Labour Relations Act, 1995 (Act 56 of 1995). Burton (2010) indicates alcohol consumption increases the likelihood of occupational injuries, health risk, non-compliance to rules and regulations, absenteeism and so on. Mugwena (2014) reveals that Segere is an honest employee at his workplace. This is supported by his utterance that he does not want to waste his company time talking over the telephone. Mugwena (2014) also portrays Segere's exemplary behaviour when Segere complains to his nephew that he does not want to spend time conducting personal issues that are not related to his employment. Segere says: "*Ni i litshe u ṱoḓa u dzula ni tshi ita uri ndi ḽe mbilu ndi sa ḓo vhuya nda nga ndi sa thathwa na mushumoni ndi ri tsha ita zwone ndi tshi humbula nga ha zwiṱori zwa vhoiwe na mme a vhoiwe thiri!*" (Stop troubling me because it might lead to my dismissal when I no longer deliver as expected thinking about silly stories of yourselves and your mother, not so!) (Mugwena, 2014:66). Segere places his employment above family issues. Segere respects his job and does not want to be placed in a situation where he could be dismissed.

Demana (2015:81) hints at an incident of exploitation in the workplace, which is an anthithesis to *vhuthu*, when "Ḓuvha ḽe vha bva ngaḽo phensheni vho ḓo fhiwa watshi yavhuḓi ya masheleni, nahone yo ganḓiwaho dzina ḽavho nga murahu (Upon his retirement, [Magelegele] was provided with a wrist watch, which had his name engraved at the back to show that this special gift belonged to him). In the current era, cash and decent pension would have been preferable to a watch. Or alternatively, there could be different gifts such as preparing pensioners to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to develop themselves after they have retired from active employment. All in all, a variety of aspects related to *vhuthu* as a management tool were treated uniquely by each of the four selected Vhavenḓa novelists. This section highlights that *vhuthu* as a management tool cannot be adequately realised without the establishment, development and maintenance of a healthy employer-employee relationship.

4.2.2 The Afrocentric Theoretical Perspective

Afrocentrism is defined as a paradigm shift from the European-constructed to the African constructed products. Jackson (2015) states that Afrocentricity is simply a paradigm shift that attempts to erect Africa as the centre of the universe. In other words, people should look at things from an African perspective rather than always looking for affirmation from other perspectives such as European or Asian. Undoubtedly, Afrocentricity is apt in this study because it is a "frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person" (Asante, 1987:171). In the same vein, Madupe (2003:70) avers that Afrocentricity puts emphasis on African people's relevance in the world. This can be accomplished if African cultures are understood from an African viewpoint, not Western as it is currently the norm. Hence, in this study, Afrocentricity has been utilised because the study attempts to comprehend *vhuthu* from an African standpoint in general and Tshivenḓa in particular. The selected texts are discussed in terms of the Afrocentricity theory, which is divided into a number of aspects including the 'I' and an African identity, community and society, morality, spirituality, liberalisation, and resistance and accommodation.

4.2.2.1 The 'I' and an African identity

The concept of the 'I' is primarily discouraged within the *vhuthu* philosophical approach due to the reason that it is individualistic and selfish or self-centred in nature. African identity is deemed an important part of the *vhuthu* philosophical approach in this study. The 'I' identity in African culture does not signify total independence because a person is a person because of others. Although the 'I' or 'me first' perspective is discouraged in Tshivenḓa culture, there are instances where it rears its head as evidenced in various scenes from the selected novels. For instance, in *A si Ene* one observes that Maluṱa was selfish in eloping with Adziambei without caring about Muhanelwa's feelings. Muhanelwa had put all trust in Maluṱa that he would ultimately marry her. For Maluṱa to simply vanish without telling Muhanelwa that he was no longer in love with her, could be deemed as cruel and self-centred. African culture encourages people to take care of each other. However, this shows that it is not always the case that this is actualised, or something viewed as aspirational by all Africans.

Maluṱa (Madima, 1954:29) is advised when a suitor visits the bride's family, he is expected to obey all their demands, and provide them with whatever he has. According to the Tshivenḓa culture and traditions, the suitor is expected to obey the demands made by the maiden's family without resistance. Ultimately, Maluṱa does not live up to the Vhavenḓa's cultural and traditional expectations as he does not meet all the demands from the bride's family. To make matters worse, he flees with another girl, rather than leaving with his bride. This is akin to adding salt to an injury. In contrast, the bride-to-be, Muhanelwa, adheres to all the tenets of Tshivenḓa culture. Madima (1954:3) indicates that Muhanelwa is a girl full of Tshivenḓa traditions. The Vhavenḓa individuals are said to have satisfied their cultural expectations and traditions when they conform to the societal norms, values and standards (Realo *et al.*, 2002).

Magau (1980) highlights the aspect of the 'I' through the actions and utterances of his characters, such as: "*Vha tshi ralo tshifhungu tsha thukha. Vho ralo vhoṱhe vha luvha vha ri 'Ndaa"* (*Thovhele* took his seat and all men responded by saying, 'Ndaa').

According to Tshivenḓa culture, *Thovhele* (Chief/King) is the most prominent figure respected after the ancestral spirits. The name *Tshifhungu* is usually used to address commoners, but in reality, it shows the authoritative power an individual wields upon the entire community and society. Whatever Thovhele does in the presence of his/her subjects, they recognise it by usually expressing the words 'ndaa!', 'mboloma!', 'mbilalume' by men whereas women on the other hand could either ululate or say '*aa!*'. The Vhavenḓa have a way of calling Thovhele *Tshifhungu* which Milubi (2004) classifies under the figures of speech of metaphors and hyperboles in Tshivenḓa. The real definitions of *Tshifhungu* in Tshivenḓa refer to an individual who does not care about what is happening around them. Magau
(1980) equates the name *Thovhele* (King) to *Tshifhungu* in order to imply that chiefs in Tshivenḓa culture and tradition does not take a decision on his own, but rather involves his subjects in the decision-making process. Mabogo (1990) maintains that the concept of *u haṱula* (to judge) means to take an informed judgment. In this regard, *Tshifhungu* will only provide judgment after listening to all sides concerned.

In "*Ḽi a Kovhela*", Nkhanedzeni decides with his wife that he will distance himself from other members of the family's private issues. He indicates that he needs nothing from his uncle's family as he is not lazy and that he attained a level of education to the level that most of his peers did not. Nkhanedzeni's action is summarised in the Tshivenḓa proverb, "*U ṅala tshau ndi u laṱa*" (Milubi, 2004). This proverb depicts that the Tshivenḓa culture and tradition does not encourage individuals to distance themselves from problematic situations without finding ways to solve them. The Vhavenḓa individuals who live in isolation from their extended family are regarded as acting and behaving in an inhuman manner.

In "*Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa*", Magelegele acted and behaved as if Thambatshira (his son) was not his own son but his nephew, when Thambatshira visited him. Lopes and Mapker
(2016) reveal that most Vhavenḓa men who are urbanised tend to forget that they left families who need their support and help. This also leads to the disruption of the families back home. The process of lying and neglecting one's relatives denotes a lack of the

vhuthu. In Mugwena's novel, Khuthadzo is projected as calm, polite and respectful towards his aunt. This is in line with the Vhavenḓa's doctrine that the youth must show respect to the elderly persons (Realo *et al.*, 2002). Respect towards elderly people and others is an important aspect of the *vhuthu* philosophy. In Demana, Magelegele demands that his wife and son must be evicted from his family household, an inhuman act on its own. Although the Tshivenḓa culture vehemently dissuades divorce, Khorommbi (1996), however, reveals that a woman can be divorced and evicted in Tshivenḓa culture if she is found to be a witch.

In addition, Vhuṱanzi agreed to give a statement to the police as others were reluctant to do so. Vhuṱanzi is acting in accordance with the requirements of the *vhuthu* philosophical principles. In this regard therefore, individuals who withhold evidence to support investigation into crimes which were committed are classified as accomplices (Realo *et al.*, 2002). Vhuṱanzi is not one of those because he is ready to give evidence about what he had seen when the crime occurred. African identity necessitates taking a fearless stand against injustice and the willingness to supply evidence required by the law enforcement agencies such as police in situations where accidents and crime occurred.

Magelegele buys an expensive suit for Kgopelo without providing his son, Thambatshira, with any form of gift. This passage in Demana (2015) shows that Magelegele shuns the tenet of African identity of generosity towards one's children. The *vhuthu* philosophical principles cannot be maintained when individuals lack the aspect of African identity. The Tshivenḓa culture and traditions do not support the notion that a married man should neglect his own wife and children and look after another woman and her children. Vhuthu, implanted in Thambatshira by Khamusi, surely paved a way for him to act and behave according to humane principles later in life. Khamusi essentially played two significant roles in the development of Thambatshira, namely: (i) one's profession is universalistic in nature, and (ii) Khamusi taught Thambatshira to focus on the development of his own life instead of focusing on his father's rejection.

African identity entails "being-with" as opposed to the Western individualism (Ndubuisi, 2013). African identity is reflected when individuals proudly display their sense of originality and their preparedness to be actively involved in the establishment, development and maintenance of their culture and traditions (Buckingham, 2008). The Northern Sotho proverb included in Mugwena (2014), *Mphe mphe e a lapiša* (ever-borrowing from other people makes them unwilling to assist any further) or *Vhandalala fuvhuvhu u ḓo ḽa vhufa ha tombo* in Tshivenḓa, purports that an individual must work hard without reliance on others (Milubi, 2004). The writer uses a Northern-Sotho proverb which basically translates as saying that people must have their own means of survival and abstain from begging, borrowing and always relying on assistance from others.

4.2.2.2 Community and society

A community is defined as a combination of norms, values and standards shared by a group residing in a common geographical area (Khoza and Adam, 2005). A society is also a composition of a total entity which is also regarded as a general population of a particular nation state (Jackson, 2015). The section examines whether the various types of communities and societies depicted in the four selected novels adhere to the *vhuthu* philosophical principle or not.

In "*A si Ene"* the depicted Vhavenḓa communities and societies existed before the advent of the democratic government in South Africa. Nevertheless, the *vhuthu* principles are still exhibited in the novel. The *vhuthu* philosophical principles are not determined by whether communities and societies existed before or after democracy, but by the manner in which people acted and behaved in their livelihoods across epochs (Konadu, 2018). Again, the society within which Madima's (1954) characters lived at the time he wrote the novel was exclusive in nature, meaning that it concentrated only on isolated ethnic groups (where Africans were grouped into Vatsonga, Basotho, Vhavenḓa, etc.) in South Africa.

In Magau's (1980) novel, one notes that the elements of community and society exist side-by-side. A community here entails a number of families brought together and

controlled by a single traditional leader. For example, every Saturday the tribal council of the community would hold a special meeting in which they discuss matters of community development. The *vhuthu* philosophical principles are enshrined where people live within a common society and/or community and are burdened by similar challenges. In this instance, both communities and societies are established, developed and maintained through a process of each member's active participation.

Mabogo (1990) defines *khoro* as a place outside the living quarters of the king's homestead where most of the initiating rituals take place. It is also in this area where conflicts among community members are listened to and adjudicated. In a nutshell, *khoro* is a Tshivenda traditional kind of a court which in the western culture is called the court of law (for example the magistrates court, the high court, the supreme court of appeal and so on within the South Africa legal system).

Secondly, they were instructed to invite a large number of attendees to participate at the Dovhoni tribal council. *Vhuthu* philosophical principles are naturally and culturally established, developed and maintained once the community and society is brought together. All people as required by the chieftainship avail themselves without failure. In Magau's novel, it is evident that the Vhavenda subjects are usually invited to the forthcoming community meeting through a word of mouth. Usually, every *mukoma* (petty headman) is instructed to inform his/her own people that they would be required to attend a mass meeting at the chief's kraal. Apart from this word of mouth strategy used to invite people, the researcher observed that in most Vhavenḓa communities, ringing the bell (hitting of steel hanging over a tree (*u lidza tsimbi*) is the most utilised method to tell everybody that they must attend the *khoro*.

In Mugwena's (2014) novel, the aspects of community and society have also received attention. One learns of this advice: "*Muthu a vhone a sa ḓo itwa khuhu a lwa na mashaka vhane vha ḓo mu thusa*" (Take care not to create animosity with relatives as you might need their assistance in the future) (Mugwena, 2014). By this, Vele is

avoiding telling her brother that she saw his wife at the compound of a traditional healer, Malapule. She is of the belief that Sophy consulted Malapule in order to acquire *gaputshete* (love potion) in order to wield control over him. *A sa ḓo itwa khuhu* is an indirect speech used in Tshivenḓa to mean being controlled, especially by a woman. This statement simply warns Africans not to heavily rely on the instructions they get from the traditional healers as that might lead to conflictual situations with other members of the family, community and society in general. The statement also suggests that individuals who are under the spell of *gaputshete* usually fight with those closest to them such as siblings, wives, and children and so on. In this regard therefore, traditional healers who supply people with *gaputshete* destroy the family life in most of the Vhavenḓa's communities (Khorommbi, 1996).

Demana (2015) categorises communities into two types, namely; violent communities and non-violent communities. Violent communities are characterised by a series of antisocial behaviours. Violent communities experience a high degree of social disintegration, substance abuse, delinquency, gangsterism, crime and so on. Madombidzha was identified as a community depicting the characteristics of a violent community in Demana's novel. At Madombidzha, young people abuse substances, drop out of school, become delinquents, and disrespect elders. The non-violent communities include haMusekwa, Dzanani, Tshirolwe, Ngweṋani, ha Mudimeli, ha Tshivhasa, ha Tshikonelo and others. Buckingham (2008) maintains that areas in which delinquency manifests are exposed to a high level of criminal activities and as such are not safe for human existence. The communities which adhere to the cultural and societal expectations are those which experience a high degree of safety and security, they are usually supplied with adequate and quality service delivery, they eliminate levels of stigmatisation, deprivation and discrimination practices and are democratic in nature (Maakrun and Maher, 2016).

4.2.2.3   Liberalisation

The aspect of liberalisation was outlined as the process through which individual characters emancipate themselves from oppression by others. In *A si Ene*, for example,

Adziambei caused Fanyana's death in order to free herself from his control. Emancipation may thus assume any form, even killing an opponent although this is totally against the *vhuthu* principles. Madima (1954) highlights that in certain circumstances, individual characters in his novel were able to oppose those who were above them. For example, Adziambei refused a forced marriage between herself and the man who had already paid her bride price. Women should be powerful enough to challenge the attributes contained within the patriarchal system which treats them as things rather than individuals who have a say in how they should run their lives.

In Magau's novel, there are characters who sought freedom from oppression. Mawelewele was happy after he was cleared from the allegations levelled against him. Mawelewele's case emanates from his failure to pay contribution towards building a local school. Lugisani protected Mawelewele by reminding the *khoro* that in the previous meeting, it had not been concluded that people should start paying. In his argument, Lugusani indicates that it was wrong for both Mandiwana and Mukhotho to collect people's money before it was finally agreed to do so. Lugisani said the practice amounted to crooked behaviour. Thus, instead of Mawelewele being found guilty and fined, *khoro* then found him innocent.

Ḽi a kovhela highlights the motif of emancipation when Khuthadzo frees himself from the oppressive circumstances meted by the members of his family in his pursuit of education. Khuthadzo fights for his emancipation even to a point of becoming financially stable. Segere liberated himself from the oppressive nature of his relationship with Grace when he asked her to hand over his bank cards in order for him to take control of his own finances (Mugwena, 2014). When his wife inquired why he wanted his bank cards, he simply said he wanted them because they belonged to him. He also mentioned that should his wife want anything necessary within the family household, she should inform him and he would buy it. Thus, taking control of one own's life and fighting for freedom from oppressive forces form part of emancipation.

4.2.2.4　Resistance and accommodation

The concepts of resistance and accommodation were individually analysed in this study because they are viewed as antonyms. Simmons *et al.* (2007) contend that resistance is viewed as people's courage, preparation and actions against those in power over them. Resistance occurs when individuals strongly oppose the manner in which they are being treated by others (Aghion *et al.*, 2003). On the other hand, accommodation is closely associated with the aspect of forgiveness. The attribute of forgiveness has already been addressed in this chapter. In *A si Ene* (Madima, 1954), Muhanelwa resisted the status of being regarded as an unmarried woman even when Maluṱa eloped with Adziambei. She still belonged to his extended family household. Secondly, Adziambei strongly objected to her parents marrying her previous suitor on her behalf because she did not love him. Although the Vhavenḓa maidens are expected to conform to the wishes of their parents and other members of the community, Adziambei confronted this culture when she indicated that she had the right to choose. She thus resisted the patriarchal imperative where females are expected to be subservient to males. In *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho* (Magau, 1980), the chief's kraal becomes a place of resistance for characters like Lugisani who speak for the oppressed. Sophy resisted patriarchal oppression by consulting a traditional healer in order to suppress her husband with *gaputshete* (a love potion). Khorommbi (1996) says *gaputshete* is a form of sorcery which derails the thinking capacity of individuals who consume it or are under its spell. Therefore, the Vhavenḓa women who feel they cannot stand patriarchy as propagated by their husbands rely on this love potion in order to become principal decision-makers in the family. Thus, *gaputshete* is an effective strategic solution needed to overcome patriarchal oppression of females by their counterparts. Abused women who are mainly controlled by their husbands make use of *gaputshete* to overcome that control. It is yet to be confirmed whether *gaputshete* indeed forces husbands into compliance in reality. However, there is strong belief that men under the spell of *gaputshete* will no longer argue, beat their wives and or oppose their decisions, all they do is succumb to the needs and requirements of their wives (Khorommbi, 1996).

4.3 SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the expositions of *vhuthu* philosophical principles and the Afrocentric theoretical perspective. It was revealed that the 'un-*vhuthu*' behavioural patterns are those that undermine other people's livelihoods. Hence, the chapter also indicated that the *vhuthu* philosophical principles denounce any level of activity in which people are found to be rebellious and delinquent. This is in tandem with the Afrocentric theoretical perspective which posits that individuals are regarded as practising the *vhuthu* philosophical principles when they adhere to African cultural and traditional practices. The Afrocentric theoretical perspective opposes the European belief system that views *vhuthu* unphilosophical. The researcher concludes the chapter by affirming that the selected Tshivenḓa novels depict *vhuthu* in varied forms. In short, *vhuthu* encapsulates love, peace, truth, happiness, optimism and ascribes inherent goodness and value to each being. *Vhuthu* is extremely important in Africa and the world at large as the world needs a common guiding principle of human values. In essence, since time immemorial, the principles of *vhuthu* guided the African society. *Vhuthu* is the core of human values, and without *vhuthu*, people resort to greed, selfishness, immorality, pride and cruelty. The following chapter presents the summary, findings, limitations, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

OF THE STUDY

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary, findings, limitations, recommendations and conclusion of the study. Firstly, the summary of the study is presented. Secondly, the findings are discussed, followed by the limitations, recommendations and conclusions of the study.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study was to examine the depiction of *vhuthu* in selected (four) Tshivenḓa novels, namely; *A si Ene*, *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho*, *Ḽi a Kovhela* and *Thonga i Pfi Ndo Vhaḓa*.

The objectives of the study were:

- to identify aspects that depict *vhuthu* from the selected four Tshivenḓa novels in order to highlight its existence and/or manifestation in the texts.
- to investigate the benefits of *vhuthu* from the readings of the four selected Tshivenḓa novels in relation to how people ought to relate with each other.
- to investigate the shortcomings of *vhuthu* depicted from the four selected Tshivenḓa novels in order to provide recommendations on how they could be addressed.
- to establish the relevance of *vhuthu* in present-day society.

The summary of the study is presented as follows:

Chapter one presented the general introduction to the study. This introduction addressed the background of the study, the origin of the concept of *vhuthu* where it was stated that the concept dates back to the pre-colonial periods. *Vhuthu* was defined as an African philosophy which was anchored by the awareness that people are people through other people. *Vhuthu* was classified as one of the world-renowned philosophies around the globe. The philosophy was also located within the Tshivenḓa

culture and traditional practices, namely; *thevhula*, *davha* and *dzunde*. The philosophical perspective of *vhuthu* was shown to purport valuing others, showing them kindness and compassion. Overall, the chapter offered an orientation to the study with the intention to demonstrate how *vhuthu* is depicted in some of the Tshivenḓa novels.

Chapter two presented the literature review in view of the topic of the study. The *Vhuthu* philosophy was discussed in light of its existence in African communities since time immemorial, during and after the colonial periods, respectively. The chapter also highlighted how *vhuthu* is evinced by the Vhavenḓa people in how they relate to their chieftaincy and how the Tshivenḓa's language encapsulates the tenets of *vhuthu*. Other aspects such as, the 'I' and an African identity, community and society, morality, spirituality, liberalisation, resistance and accommodation were discussed.

Chapter three presented the research methodology employed in the study. The qualitative approach was used in this study. A research design is a plan applied in order to answer research questions (De Vaus, 2001), hence the descriptive design was adopted in this study. The descriptive design helped the researcher to answer questions such as what *vhuthu* is all about. Elements covered within the research methodology of this study included sampling and sampling procedure, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria and ethical considerations.

Chapter four analysed and interpreted the selected Tshivenḓa novels in view of the *vhuthu* philosophical principles and the Afrocentric theoretical perspective. The following aspects of vhuthu, namely; humanism, identity and individualism, solidarity; unity and nation-building, culture and morality, treatment of strangers and forgiveness, spirituality, African renaissance and management, undergirded the analysis of the novels. The

Afrocentric theoretical perspective was discussed in light of the 'I' and African identity, community and society, morality, spirituality, liberalisation, resistance and accommodation.

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study were:

5.3.1 *Vhuthu* philosophical principles

Various *vhuthu* philosophical principles were drawn from the actions and behaviours of the characters in the selected four Tshivenḓa novels in this study. The principles that were discussed in this study were: humanism, identity and individualism, solidarity; unity and nation-building, culture and morality, treatment of strangers and forgiveness, spirituality, African renaissance and *vhuthu* as a management tool. Humanism was found to be an equivalent of *vhuthu*. Humanism addresses the nature in which people can relate with each other in a harmonious way. *Vhuthu* is accordingly achieved when people live in peace with others and share a communal space.

A si Ene (Madima, 1954) addressed the principle of humanism through Muhanelwa who was described as a kind maiden. Magau's (1980) novel touched on the aspect of hospitality as exhibited by Mandiwana's welcoming of his visitor, Tshikweṱa. Mugwena (2014) revealed that the *vhuthu* philosophical principle of humanism even to marriage life where a mate already with children, has his or her children adopted by the spouse as their own. Identity and individualism were found to be antitheses because the former endorses independence whereas the latter endorses interdependence (Ndubuisi, 2013).

Madima (1954) highlighted areas in which his characters identified with the Tshivenḓa norms, values and standards. The aspect of culture was displayed through *u tshina thondo* (initiation for girls), where the notion of interdepence is inculcated. In *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho*, the vhuthu principles were displayed by the serving of justice to the innocent and powerless. Mogapaetsi (2014) thinks African people can adhere to the *vhuthu*

principles if they align themselves with the culture and traditions of Vhaveṇḓa. It was also found that embedded within the *vhuthu* philosophical principles is a strong work ethic which must be geared towards nation-building. In Magau's (1980) novel, Lugisani embodies this aspect when he calls his community to work together towards community development. In *Ḽi a Kovhela*, although it is admitted that conflict is inevitable where people live together, reconciliation, however, was the principle by which the characters lived. This was representative of the Vhaveṇḓa's life and worldview, where in instances of conflicts, amicable solutions to societal and relations problems are sought.

It was also highlighted that the *vhuthu* philosophical principles find expression in culture and morality, where societal values, norms and standards determine people's actions and behaviours. Culture and morality, in this instance, were projected as pillars of the *vhuthu* principles, proving themselves to be beneficial to society and thus improving societal life. A culture exists when the morality of its members is enhanced (Ramose, 1999). Khuthadzo's friend was captured as advising that she must always greet people, even when there are no responses. Pfariso advises Khuthadzo to do the same whilst promising him that he will support him the challenges that Khuthadzo might experience. Morality and humaneness were also exhibited in Madima (1954) during the *lobola* negotiations. The Ṋematswiriri family brought a gift basket referred to as *mufaro* as a token of respect to the family from which they sought a bride (Matshidze, 2013). The study also showed that the *vhuthu* philosophical principles are evinced in how people treat strangers and their willingness to forgive. In *Bulayo ḽo Ṱalifhaho*, Magau showed how the Vhaveṇḓa treat strangers through Dilika, and the headman, Lidzebe, who welcomed visitors unreservedly. Khorommbi (1996) affirms that Vhaveṇḓa have their own special way of welcoming visitors. Magau also showed that forgiveness is one of the distinctive features of the *vhuthu* philosophy, when Mamidze, Mukhotho and Mandiwana pardoned (although they paid fines) instead of being arrested. Asking for forgiveness is an African way of saying: 'I am sorry, I will not repeat my mistake'. In *Ḽi a Kovhela*, Mugwena shows how Vho Makhadzi would regularly visit relatives and long-lost friends to see how they are doing. This is one of the pillars of *vhuthu.* Indeed,

treatment of strangers and forgiveness are the most important *vhuthu* philosophical principles required to direct individuals in their attempt to live peacefully with others.

Spirituality was another aspect that was discussed, as reflected in the selected Tshivenḓa novels. Spirituality is the main aspect of people's existence as they pay alliance to their spiritual control (Mbigi, 2006). The researcher found that both the African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Christianity pervade the selected Tshivenḓa novels. In Madima (1954), the Christian faith is embraced by Muhanelwa whereas in Magau (1980), ATR has a notable following. African renaissance, as propounded by Thabo Mbeki, emphasised the need for Africans to unite and work together towards the development of the African continent (Van den Heuvel, 2006). Of the four selected Vhavenḓa novelists, Madima (1954) is the only one who hinted at the necessity of African renaissance whereas Demana, Magau and Mugwena did not.

The study further highlighted that the *vhuthu* philosophical principle also functions as a management tool, where different organisations, institutions and private companies employ it to address their problems. Madima (1954) depicted this through Maluṱa, who, as a result of *vhuthu*, had a good working relationship with his employers. From a traditional and cultural point of view, Magau showed that the Vhavenḓa address leadership challenges guided by the *vhuthu* philosophy. In Mugwena (2014), Segere is an embodiment of honesty and vhuthu at his workplace.

5.3.2 Afrocentric theoretical perspective of *vhuthu* in the analysis of the selected four Tshivenḓa novels

This section shows how *vhuthu* falls within the ambit of the Afrocentric theoretical perspective through its discussion of the 'I' and African identity, community and society, morality, spirituality, liberalisation, resistance and accommodation. The 'I' aspect within the Afrocentric theoretical perspective was found to be an irrational component of the

Afrocentric theoretical perspective, as opposed to the 'We'. Individualism is strongly denounced by the Afrocentric theoretical perspective. This sense of individualism was exhibited by Maluṱa in Madima's (1954) novel when he eloped with Adziambei without considering Muhanelwa's feelings. Magau (1980) confronted the notion of individualism through Lugisani who always called for harmony and unity in the community. In *Ḽi a Kovhela*, Nkhanedzeni and his wife prefer isolation from their extended family as opposed to being connected to them. It was for this reason that Lopes and Mapker (2016) say most Vhavenda men who are urbanised abandon their families, an antithetical behaviour to *vhuthu*. It was emphasised that although vhuthu encourages interdependence, it does not however, endorse laziness; a strong work ethic must characterise a people who live according to the *vhuthu* philosophy. This, they must do for the purposes of community development and nation-building (Buckingham, 2008; Ndubuisi, 2013). Magau repeatedly showed how a strong work ethic in a community whose philosophy is lynched by *vhuthu* can prosper.

Demana (2015), on the other hand, revealed that a community may be a violent community or a non-violent one. Violent communities are characterised by behaviours that are anti-social in nature, which is accompanied by a high degree of socialdisintegration, substance abuse, delinquency, gangsterism, crime and so on. A nonviolent community is the exact opposite of the afore-mentioned community. Buckingham (2008) maintains that areas in which delinquency manifests are exposed to a high level of criminal activities and are as such not safe to human existence. On the contrary, communities that adhere to cultural and societal norms of *vhuthu* experience a high degree of safety and security, and are usually supplied with adequate and quality service delivery, eliminate stigmatisation, deprivation and discriminatory practices and are democratic in nature (Maakrun & Maher, 2016). This study also showed that the characters in all the selected novels sought to emancipate themselves from oppression. It was also revealed that the characters assumed either a resistant attitude to oppression, or were accommodative of it, preferring forgiveness over protest. A character such as Sophy was so determined to resist patriarchal oppression (by her

husband) that she eventually resorted to consulting a traditional healer, seeking *gaputshete* (a love potion) to weaken and silence her husband.

5.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Each study has constraints, limitations or weaknesses. It is critical to mention these limitations and indicate their impact on the current study. It was merely coincidental that the four authors of the selected Tshivenḓa novels are all men. In Tshivenḓa literature, there are hardly, if any, novels written by women, particularly on the theme of *vhuthu*. There is a dire need for the Vhavenḓa women to produce literary works. It is envisaged that should women write in large numbers, future studies on *vhuthu* will focus solely on the novels written by Vhavenḓa women in Tshivenḓa.

Although the depiction of *vhuthu* is directed to all and sundry, it is crucial to acknowledge that the youth stand to gain immensely from a study of this kind. This is the case because in the current epoch in the South African context, it is largely the youth who act and behave in an *unvhuthu* manner. Robinson (2003) believes that the youth of today are usually involved in a series of antisocial behavioural patterns. It is thus important that novels written by young authors become part of the analysis on *vhuthu*. It is a pity that presently one cannot speak of novels written by the youth in Tshivenḓa. Old authors are still publishing a large number of novels on an annual basis. On its own, this is not bad, but it would be preferable to also have the youth writing as much as possible on a variety of themes, including *vhuthu*. This implies that the Tshivenḓa society must also encourage the youth to take part in writing novels as this will bring forth the way the youth systematically view this philosophy.

5.5 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the findings of the study. These conclusions were derived from the *vhuthu* philosophical principles and the Afrocentric theoretical perspective. The researcher attempted to satisfy the requirement of the fourth objective of the study: to establish the relevance of *vhuthu* in present-day society.

The four selected Tshivenḓa novels showed that some *vhuthu* principles were not accordingly adhered to by people, that is, the youth of today no longer greet elderly people by means of *u losha*. On the contrary, the youth disrespects elderly people. *Vhuthu* principles cannot exist where people disregard other people's rights, freedoms and dignity. Also, in some incidents, authors indicated that traditional leaders are no longer respected by their respective followers and subjects. Instead, their power and prestige are now replaced by formal courts of law occupied by magistrates and judges. The word 'My Worship' is more directed towards these officials than towards the traditional leaders. The four selected Tshivenḓa novels identified that youth in the current South African context have become delinquents, rapists, thieves and cold-blooded killers. This indicates that *vhuthu* is diminishing within the communities in the society as compared to the previous era when

Madima, Magau and Demana's novels were written. In the present-day context, *vhuthu* is almost totally absent in the communities. In a nutshell, the above expositions and conclusions show that *vhuthu* philosophical principles are no longer found in abundance in present-day South Africa.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

Firstly, the four selected novels were analysed in terms of the related concepts of *vhuthu* and Afrocentricism. There is certainly more to the texts than just these two philosophical worldviews. As a result, it is recommended that future scholars should pay attention to other aspects of the novels, such as characterisation, plot and the use of literary devices. They may as well dwell on the integration of other theoretical frameworks, including postmodernism, poststructuralism and others. Secondly, the novels were written by men. This means that the themes of the study portrayed the philosophy on *vhuthu* only from a male, (and patriarchal) perspective. Consequently, there is a need for studies on *vhuthu* based on novels written by Vhavenḓa women. This could include monolithic or comparative studies, among others.

Related to this issue of gender is the fact that the selected novels were all written by older men. Again, this implies that vhuthu was covered only from one older generational perspective. Society, however, is comprised by both young and old people, who do not think the same way because they live in somewhat different socio-political contexts and therefore, have a different understanding of life. From this perspective, it may be recommended that future studies should combine texts written by both older and younger people. This may go a long way towards yielding a broader understanding of *vhuthu*. In addition, the study looked at the novels written only in Tshivenḓa. There are hardly studies that compare texts written in different languages such as Xitsonga, Sepedi and others. In this way, it may be difficult to understand how as a multicultural society, we come to a deeper understanding of *vhuthu* and other philosophies.

Textual Analysis was used both as a data collection tool and data analysis strategy of the selected texts. Future researchers may well venture into other techniques of data collection and analysis. With respect to the former, one may single out semi-structured interviews with the authors of these novels, particular where these are still alive. Finally, novels are not the preserve of *vhuthu*, other genres such as plays, poetry and short stories may also reflect *vhuthu*. In this sense, future scholars may be called upon to examine these important genres in terms of how *vhuthu* as a philosophy of life is reflected and internalised.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aghion, P., Burgess, R., Redding, S & Zilibotti, F. 2003. The unequal effects of liberalization: Theory and evidence from India. *Canadian Institute for Advanced Research*. Leverhulme Trust and STRICERD.

Andrus, AK. 2012. *A textual analysis of media frames: The coverage of the shooting of Trayvon Martin*. Department of Journalism and Media Studies: University of South Florida St. Petersburg.

Asante, M.K. 2007. *Afrocentricity: The theory of social change*. New York: Amulefi Publishing Company.

Babbie, E. 2004. *The practice of social research.* Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Babbie, E. 2008. *The basics of social research.* United Kingdom: Thomson Wadsworth. Bainbridge, J. 2011. *Media & journalism: New approaches to theory and practice*. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997. (Act 75 of 1997). *The Official Site of the South African Government.*

Bauer, MW. & Gaskell, G. 2000. *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Berg, BL. 1998. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bhengu, MJ. 1996. *Ubuntu: The essence of democracy*. Cape Town: Novalis Press.

Biko, H. 2013. *The great African society: A plan for a nation gone astray*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

Black, T.R. 2002. *Understanding social science research.* London: Sage Publications.

Buckingham, D. 2008. Introducing identity: Youth, identity and digital media. *The John D and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning Journal*. Vol. 10:1-24.

Burton, J. 2010. *WHO health workplace framework and model: Background and supporting literature and practice*. Switzerland, Geneva: WHO Headquarters.

Carroll, J. 2012. The extremes of conflict in literature: Violence, hormicide and war. *ResearchGate*. Vol. 12 (1). 414-435.

Claasen, N., Van der Hoeven, M & Covic, N. 2016. *Food environments, health and nutrition in South Africa: Mapping the research and policy terrain*. Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS). Working Paper 34, Centre of Excellence in Food Security: University of Western Cape.

Cohen, L.; Manion, L & Morrison, K. 2000. *Research Methods in Education.* London and New York: Routledge Falmer, Taylor & Francis Group.
Copson, A. 2015. *What is humanism*? The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of Humanism. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Dane, FC. 1990. *Research Methods*. Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

De Clercq, F. 2008. Teacher quality, appraisal and development: The flaws in the IQMS. *Perspectives in Education*. Volume 26 (1), March 2008. 7-18.

De Vaus, DA. 2001. *Research design in social research*. London: SAGE Publications

Demana, I.P. 2015. *Thonga i pfi ndo vhaḓa*. Mumbai: ITEPA Business Enterprise, Repro India Ltd.

Dussap, A & Merry, P. 2000. Project management T-Kit. *Council of Europe and European Commission*. Strasbourg Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.

Ejizu, C.I. 2011. *African traditional religions and the promotion of community-living in Africa.*www.goggle.co.za.*01 Oct 2020 — n.d "Samuel Awuah-Nyamekye...*

Enslin, P & Horsthemke, K. 2004. "Can ubuntu provide a model for citizenship education in African democracies", *Comparative Education*, Vol. 40 (4).

Etieyibo. E. 2014. Postmodern thinking and African philosophy. *A Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions*. Vol. 3 (1):67-82.

Fearon, JD. 1999. *What is identity (as we now use the word)?* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Frey, L., Botan, C & Kreps, G. 1999. *Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Gade, C.B.N. 2012. What is ubuntu? Different interpretations among South Africans of African descent. *South African Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 31 (3): 484-503.

Goddard, D., Norris, L., Norris, N & Thomas, G. 1999. *Language teachers' proficiency or teacher proficiency*? *NALSAS*, Simpson Norris (Pty) Ltd: Australia.

Gray, D.E. 2004. *Doing research in the real world*. London: SAGE Publications.
Gunter, M.A., Estes, T.H. & Mintz, S.L. 2007. *Instruction: A models approach*. New York: Pearson Education.

Hailey, J. 2008. *Ubuntu: A literature review*. A Paper Prepared for the Tutu Foundation. London: Management Programme at the Centre of Charity Effectiveness at City University's Cass Business School in London.

Heathwood, C. 2012. Could morality have a source? *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy (JESP)*. Vol. 6 (2). 1-19.

Hedrick, T.E., Bickman, L. & Rog, J.D. 1993. *Applied research design: A practical guide.* Newbury Park: Sage Publications, International Educational and Professional Publisher.

Hicks, S.R.C. 2004. *Explaining postmodernism: Skepticism and socialism from Rousseau to Foucault*. Tempe New Berlin: Scholargy Publishing.

Huffman, T.N. & Hanisch, E.O.M. 1986. *Settlement hierarchies in the Northern Transvaal: Zimbabwe ruins and Venda history*. African Studies Institute. South Africa, Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

Hutchens, J & Suggs, M. 1997. *Art education: Content and practice in postmodern era*. Washington: NAEA.

Jackson, R.L. 2015. Afrocentricity as metatheory: A dialogue exploration of its principles. *Mckinlytgreen*. May 2015.

Joubert, R. & Prinsloo, S. 2011. *The law of education in South Africa*. Hatfield, Pretoria: van Schaik Publishers.

Kabeer, N. 1999. The conditions and consequences of choice: Reflections on the measures of women's empowerment. *The United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*. Geneva: Switzerland.

Kamwangamalu, N. 1999. "Ubuntu in South Africa: A sociolinguistic perspective to a panAfrican concept". *Critical Arts*. Vol.13 (2).

Kerlinger, F.N. & Lee, H.B. 2000. *Foundations of behavioral research*. Fort Worth: Harcourt College Publishers, A Division of Harcourt College Publishers.

Khorommbi, N.L. 1996. *Echoes from beyond a pass between two mountains (Christian mission in Venda as reflected in some contemporary Tshivenda literature)*. South Africa, Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Khoza, R.J. & Adam, M. 2005. *The power of governance: Enhancing the performance of state-owned enterprises.* Hyde Park: Pan Macmillan and Business in Africa.

Konadu, K. 2018. The cultural identity of African and the global tasks of Africana studies. *African Studies Review, 37, no. 3, (December 1994)*

African Studies Quarterly. http://www.africa.ulf.edu/asq/v7/v7:4a3.htm, pp. 33-40.

Kostoulas, A.I. 2011. *Developing multicultural awareness through English: Reflections of culture and multiculturalism.* Athens: International Conference Art and Education.

Kotatko, P. 2017. Fictional names, fictional characters and persons referred to in narrative fiction. *Organon.* Vol. 24 (3). 303-338.

Kovala, U. 2002. Cultural Studies and Cultural Text Analysis. *Comparative Literature and Culture.* Vol. 4 (4). (2002).

Kumar, R. 2011. *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Labour Relations 1995 (Act 66 of 1995).

Lamont, C. 1997. *Philosophy of humanism.* Amherst, New York: Humanist Press.

Larsson, T & Olsson, J. 2008. *Attitudes towards English as a foreign language in a multicultural context: A study carried out from the perspectives of identity, social context and future use.* Lararutbildningen: Malmo Hogskola.

Liamputtong, P & Ezzy, D. 2005. *Qualitative research methods.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act, 2011 (Act 4 of 2011). by MP Sekgala · 2017 · Cited by 1 — LTLIA: Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs' (**2011**) ... https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/**publications**-opinion-files/1967.

Lopes, C & Mapker, S. 2016. *Challenging patriarchy: Conversations on violence against women.* Heinrich Boll Shiftung: Heinrich Boll Foundation Southern Africa.

Louw D, 1998. Ubuntu, an African assessement of the religious other. Paper to 20th World Congress of Philosphy, Boston.

Louw, D. 2001. "*The idea of ubuntu philosophy". Paper presented at seminar on African Renaissance and Ubuntu Philosophy*. Centre of Development Studies, University of Groningen: Netherlands.

Maakrun, J. & Maher, M. 2016. Cultural interface theory in the Kenya context and beyond.

Issues in Educational Research. Vol. 26 (2). 298-314.

Mabogo, D.E.N. 1990. *The ethnobotany of the Vhavenda*. South Africa, Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Magau, A.W. 1980. *Bulayo ḽo ṱalifhaho*. Heerengracht, Cape Town: Van Schaik Publishers.

Mamburu, D.N. 2004. *Evaluation of the poverty relief programme in the Limpopo Province within the context of the Reconciliation and Development Programme from a social work perspective.* Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Mangena, F. 2016. African ethics through ubuntu: A postmodern exposition. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*. Vol. 9 (2): 66-79.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G.B. 1999. *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Matshidze, P.E. 2013. *The role of makhadzi in traditional leadership among the Venda*. Kwa-Zulu Natal: University of Zululand.

Mbigi, L. 2006. A vision of African management and African leadership: A southern African perspective. In: Van den Heuvel, H., Mangaliso, M & van deBunt, L.2006. *Prophecies and protests: Ubuntu in global management*. Pretoria: Rozenberg Publishers- Unisa Press.

Metz, T. 2011. Ubuntu as a moral theory and human rights in South Africa. *African Human Rights Law Journal*. Vol. 11 (2011). 532-559.

Milubi, N.A. *Ngoma ya vhatei*. South Africa, Polokwane: NAM Publishers.

Modupe, D.S. 2003. The Afrocentric philosophical perspective: A narrative outline. In Ama Mazama (Ed.), *The Afrocentric Paradigm*. Trenton: Africa World Press. pp. 55-72.

Mogapaetsi, T. 2014. *Sexual harassment in the workplace: lessons for Botswana from a South African legal perspective*. Potchefstroom: North-West Univiersity.

Mpe, N.F. 2001. *The role of personality traits and family processes in an attempted suicide among black adolescents*. Unpublished Masters Thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Mphahlele, E. 1959.*Down Second Avenue*. Faber & Faber, London.

Mugwena, A. 2014. *Ḽi a kovhela*. Granger Bay, Cape Town: Cambridge University Press.

Mukhari, S.S. 2016. *Teachers' experience of information and communication technology use for teaching and learning in urban schools*. Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Pretoria: Pretoria. *Mukhari, Shirley Sympathonia (2016) Teachers' experience of information and communication technology use for teaching and learning in urban schools, University of South Africa, Pretoria, http://hdl.handle.net/10500/22045*

Munyaka, M & Motlhabi, M. 2009. Ubuntu and its socio-moral significance. In: Marove, MF. 2009. *African ethics: An anthology of comparative and applied ethics*. South Africa, Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Murithi.T. 2006. "Practical peacemaking, wisdom from Africa: Reflections on ubuntu", *Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol.1 (4).

Mzamane, M.V. 2009. Building a new society using the building blocks of Ubuntu/Botho/Vhuthu. In: Brown, D. 2009. *Religion and spirituality in South Africa: New Perspectives*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Ndubuisi, F.O. 2013. The philosophical paradigm of African identity and development. *Open Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 3 (1A): 222-230.

Neuman, W. 2000. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston: Allan Bacon.

Ntamushobora, F. 2012. The philosophical presuppositions of Ubuntu and its implications for reconciliation. *Working Paper Series: Daystar University Centre for Research, Publications and Consultancy*. Working Paper Series. 1-14.

Nussbaum, B. 2009. Ubuntu: Reflections of a South African on our common humanity. In: Marove, MF. 2009. *African ethics: An anthology of comparative and applied ethics*. South Africa, Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Nyathu, N. 2004.*The ubuntu dialogue: Decolonising discourse and dualism in organisation studies*. Warwick: Warwick University.

O'Connor, M., Toric, D & Fardsaver, A. 2014.*Teaching in a multicultural classroom ESL culture and racism*. Melbourne: University of Melbourne.

Prinsloo, E.D. 1995. Ubuntu from a Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspective and its influence on leadership. *Ubuntu School of Philosophy*: Pretoria. **AOSIS Publishing Postnet Suite #110, Private Bag X19, Durbanville, Cape Town, Western Cape, ZA, 7551, Tel: +27 21 975 2602, Tel: 086 1000 381**

Ramose, M.B. 1999. *African philosophy through Ubuntu*. Harare: Mond Books.

Realo, A., Koido, K., Ceulemans, E & Allik, J. 2002. Three components of individualism. *Europeans Journal of Personality*. Vol. 16:163-184.

Resource Booklet. 2007. Supporting grandparents raising grandchildren. *Resource Booklet: A Work in Progress*. Canada: University of Victoria. January 2007.

Robinson, T.M. 2003. *The socio-emotional influence of sexual problems on young women: a social work investigation*. Unpublished Masters Thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria. Pretoria.

Routmann, R. 2005. Writing essentials. Heinemann: Portsmouth.
Sanni, J.S. 2016. Religion: A new struggle for African identity. *Phronimon*. Pretoria: UNISA Press.

Sapire, H. & Saunders, C. 2013. *Southern African liberation struggles: New local, regional and global perspectives*. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Sapsford, R. & Jupp, V. 2006. *Data collection and analysis.* London: Sage Publications.

Shuttle, A. 2009. *Philosophy for Africa*. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Simmons, B., Dobbin, F & Garrett, G. 2005. Introduction: The diffusion of liberalization. *Pagination*. Vol. 30 (1). 1-63.

Singleton, R., Strait, B.C., Strait, M.M. & McAllister, R.J. 1988. *Approaches to social research*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sirkin, R.M. 1999. *Statistics for the social sciences.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications. Sparks, A. 1990. *The mind of South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

Steyn, J.C., de Klerk, J & du Plessis, W.S. 2011. *Education for democracy*. Durbanville, South Africa: Wachwa Publishers CC.

Swartz, S. 2006. A long-walk to citizenship: Morality, justice and faith in the aftermath of apartheid. *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 35 (1).

Tesch, R. 1990. *Qualitative Research: Analysis types and software tools*. New York: Falmer.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996).

The National Health Promotion Policy and Strategy. 2015. South Africa: Department of Health*., Publisher: National Department of Health*

Tranter, S. & Percival, A. 2006. *Performance management in schools: Unlocking your potential*. Harlow, England: Pearson Longman Publications.

Tshawane, N.J. 2009. *The rainbow nation: A critical analysis of the notions of community in the thinking of Desmond Tutu*. South Africa, Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Tshikhudo, P.P. 2005. *Irrigation and dryland fruit production: Opportunities and constraints faced by small-scale farmers in Venda*. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Tutu, D. 1999. *No future without forgiveness*. New York: Doubleday.

Van den Heuvel, H. 2006. Introduction: Prophecies and protests, signifiers of Afrocentric management. In: Van den Heuvel, H., Mangaliso, M & van deBunt, L.2006. *Prophecies and protests: Ubuntu in global management*. Pretoria: Rozenberg Publishers-Unisa Press.

Van Niekerk, E & Hay, J. 2009. *Handbook of youth counseling*. Sandton: Heinmann Publishers.

Van Niekerk, J. 2013. *Ubuntu and moral values*. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.

Vorster, J.M. 2009. An ethics of forgiveness. *Verbum et Ecclesia JRG*. Vol. 30 (1): 364383.

Warren, C.A.B. & Karner, T.X. 2009. *Discovering qualitative methods: Field research, interviews and analysis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weiland, K.M. 2020. Crafting unforgettable characters: A hands-on introduction to bringing your characters to life. *Writing Prompt*. Suzan Peek, Julia Mathison: Western Nebraska.

Whitley, B.E. 2002. *Principles of research in behavioral science*. Boston, Burr Ridge: McGraw Hill.

APPENDIX A (1): Ethical considerations

106A President Street

MAKHADO

0920

19 February 2019

The Manager

Educum Publishers

JOHANNESBURG

2000

A SI ENE UNDER ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT ON *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES, FOR YOUR ATTENTION: MAFUNE, V.K.

1   You are informed that a novel by Madima, E.S. (1954) which you published is under the assessment on *vhuthu* philosophical principles at the University of Limpopo. The title of the study is, *The Depiction of Vhuthu African Philosophy in Selected Venḓa Novels* for a doctoral study by myself.

2   The most important ethical considerations which were considered around the study are as follows:

2.1   The study shall not harm your reputation and credibility and that of the author by leveling unnecessary criticisms which might lead to the novel being under utilised by readers.

2.2   The materials in the content of the novel shall only be utilised for academic purposes and nothing else.

2.3   There is no element of deception included in this ethical consideration requirement as the research goes through numerous scrutiny processes by the university's ethical committee before it is given a go-ahead, and that,

2.4   Should you be interested in being provided with the research findings and conclusions of the research study, I shall make them available to you.

I thank you for consideration, understanding and consideration.

Yours truly

K.V., Mafune

APPENDIX A (2): Ethical considerations

<div align="right">

106A President Street

MAKHADO

0920

19 February 2019

</div>

The Manager

Van Schaik Publishers

P.O Box 5197

CAPE TOWN

8000

***BULAYO Ḽ O Ṱ ALIFHAHO* UNDER ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT ON *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES, FOR YOUR ATTENTION: MAFUNE, V.K.**

1   You are informed that a novel by Magau, A.W. (1980) which you published is under assessment by me in an effort to identify the *vhuthu* philosophical principles in a doctoral study at the University of Limpopo. The title of the study is, *The Depiction of Vhuthu African Philosophy in Selected Venḓa Novels*.

2   The most important ethical considerations which were considered around the study are as follows:

2.1   The study shall not harm your reputation and credibility and that of the author by leveling unnecessary criticisms which might lead to the novel being under utilised by the readers,

2.2   The materials in the content of the novel shall only be utilised for academic purposes and nothing else,

2.3　There is no element of deception included in this ethical consideration requirement as the research goes through numerous scrutiny processes by the university's ethical committee before it is given a go-ahead, and that,

2.4　Should you be interested in being provided with the research findings and conclusions of the research study, I shall make them available to you.

I thank you for consideration, understanding and consideration.

Yours truly

K.V., Mafune

APPENDIX A (3): Ethical considerations

<div align="right">

106A President Street

MAKHADO

0920

19 February 2019

</div>

The Manager

Cambridge University Press

Beach Road,

Granger Bay

CAPE TOWN

8005

Ḽ I A KOVHELA UNDER ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT ON *VHUTHU* PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES, FOR YOUR ATTENTION: MAFUNE, V.K.

1   You are informed that a novel by Mugwena (2014) which you published is under the assessment on the *vhuthu* philosophical principles at the University of Limpopo for a doctoral study by me. The title of the study is, *The Depiction of Vhuthu African Philosophy in Selected Venḓa Novels*.

2   The most important ethical considerations which were considered around the study are as follows:

2.1   The study shall not harm your reputation and credibility and that of the author by leveling unnecessary criticisms which might lead to the novel being under utilised by the readers,

2.2 The materials in the content of the novel shall only be utilised for academic purposes and nothing else,

2.3 There is no element of deception included in this ethical consideration requirement as the research goes through numerous scrutiny processes by the university's ethical committee before it is given a go-ahead, and that,

2.4 Should you be interested in being provided with the research findings and conclusions of the research study, I shall make them available to you.

I thank you for consideration, understanding and consideration.

Yours truly

K.V., Mafune

APPENDIX A (4): Ethical considerations

106A President Street

MAKHADO

0920

19 February 2019

The Manager

ITEPA Business Enterprise

P.O Box 38

VHUFULI

0971

***THONGA I PFI NDO VHAḒ A* UNDER ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT ON *VHUTHU*
PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES, FOR YOUR ATTENTION: MAFUNE, V.K.**

1   You are informed that a novel by Demana, I.P. (2015) which you published is
       under my assessment in search of the *vhuthu* philosophical principles for a
       doctoral study at the University of Limpopo. The title of the study is, *The
       Depiction of Vhuthu African Philosophy in Selected Venḓa Novels*.

2   The most important ethical considerations which were considered around the
       study are as follows:

2.1   The study shall not harm your reputation and credibility and that of the author by
       leveling unnecessary criticisms which might lead to the novel being under utilised
       by the readers,

2.2   The materials in the content of the novel shall only be utilised for academic purposes and nothing else,

2.3   There is no element of deception included in this ethical consideration requirement as the research goes through numerous scrutiny processes by the university's ethical committee before it is given a go-ahead, and that,

2.4   Should you be interested in being provided with the research findings and conclusions of the research study, I shall make them available to you.

I thank you for consideration, understanding and consideration.

Yours truly

K, V., Mafune