

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO ANTHROPNYMS OF THE SHONA SOCIETY**

**by**

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**DECLARATION**

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I, Livingstone Makondo, declare that **An investigation anthroponyms of the Shona society** is my work and that the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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**Signature**

**Date**

## **ABSTRACT**

Given names, amongst the Shona people, are an occurrence of language use for specific purposes. This multidisciplinary ethnographic 1890-2006 study explores how insights from pragmatics, semiotics, semantics, among others, can be used to glean the intended and implied meaning(s) of various first names. Six sources namely, twenty seven NADA sources (1931-1977), one hundred and twenty five Shona novels and plays (1957-1998), four newspapers (2005), thirty one graduation booklets (1987-2006), five hundred questionnaires and two hundred and fifty semi-structured interviews were used to gather ten thousand personal names predominantly from seven Shona speaking provinces of Zimbabwe. The study recognizes current dominant given name categories and established eleven broad factors behind the use of given names. It went on to identify twenty-four broad based theme-oriented categories, envisaged naming trends and name categories. Furthermore, popular Shona male and female first names, interesting personal names and those people have reservations with have been recognized. The variety and nature of names Shona people prefer and their favoured address forms were also noted. The study reckons that Shona first names came as a result of unparallel anthroponomastic and linguistic innovation exuded by the Shona people in their bid to tame their reality. The study uses an anthroponym-pragma-semio-semantic decompositional theory, approximation model, contextualized implicature, maxims of brevity and tactfulness as the best approaches for explaining the varied meanings personal names embody. The study argues that it has made significant contributions to the body of knowledge in disciplines such as semantics, semiotics, pragmatics, anthropology, linguistics, sociology, history, geography, religion, education, philology, morphology and syntax, among others.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to Otlina (my wife), Munyaradzi and Munashe (my sons) and Mutsawashe (my daughter) who generously accepted the deprivation of husband and fatherly love that came with the heat of this study.

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