

**DECOLONISATION OF LIFE SKILLS SUBJECT IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE
THROUGH THE USE OF XITSONGA FOLKTALES**

by

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ABSTRACT

Folktales, which are oral stories passed down from one generation to the next by an older person are not only folktales told for pleasure, but also for other objectives such as the transmission of moral values, life skills, indigenous knowledge and cultural gems, educational purposes, and child rearing. To date, most South African schools use English as Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) and a minority of schools use Afrikaans as LoLT with the view to teaching the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase. Life skills remains rooted in Western knowledge. Using a qualitative approach, the study examines the decolonisation of Life Skills in the Foundation Phase using Xitsonga folktales. The data of the study is collected from selected published Xitsonga folktales. A total of fifteen folktales were sampled and analysed. This research highlights the need for the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills using Xitsonga folktales, as well as the benefits thereof. This research recommends the promotion of indigenous knowledge and curriculum transformation in the Foundation Phase in South African schools, as well as the promotion of inclusiveness of Xitsonga mother tongue.

Key words: Decolonisation; Afrocentricity; Life Skills; Folklore; Heritage; Oral Literature; Foundation Phase; Beginning Knowledge; Creative Arts; Physical Education.

NKOMISO

Mitsheketso i swirungululwana leswi khale na khale a swi runguleleriwa switukulwana hi lavakulu ku nga ri hi xikongomelo xo xuxa ntsena, kambe ku ri ku dyondzisa vana mahanyelo lamenene, dyondzo ya vutshila bya vutomi, dyondzo ya rixaka, dyondzo ya ndhavuko xikan'we ni ku kurisa vana hindlela leyinene. Eka masiku ya namutlha, swikolo swo tala swi tirhisa ririmi ra Xinghezi tanihi rirmi ro dyondzisa no dyondza naswona swikolo switsongo swona swi dyondzisa hi ririmi ra Xibunu eka dyondzo ya xiyenge xa masungulo. Dyondzo ya Vutshila bya vutomi eswikolweni ya ha ya emahlweweni yi namarhale madyondziselo ya Xiyuropa. Hi ku tirhisa endlelo ra nkoka, ndzavisiso lowu wu kambisisa ku susiwa ka vukoloni eka dyondzo ya Swikili swa Vutomi eka Xiyenge xa Masungulo hi ku tirhisa mitsheketo ya Xitsonga. Vuxokoxoko bya ndzavisiso lowu byi hlengeletiwile eka mitsheketo yo hambanahambana ya Xitsonga leyi kandziyisiweke malembendzhaku. Ku tekiwe mitsheketo ya 15 leyi nga xopaxopiwa hi vurhon'wana. Ndzavisiso lowu wu kombisa xilaveko xa ku herisa ku tirhisiwa ka vukoloni hi ku tirhisa mitsheketo ya Xitsonga, xikan'we ni mivuyelo ya kona. Ndzavisiso lowu wu bumabumela ku tlakusa vutivi bya vanhu va Afrika na ku cinca ka kharikhulamu eka Xiyenge xa Masungulo eswikolweni swa Afrika-Dzonga.

Marito ya nkoka: Vukoloni; *Afrocentricity*; Swikili swa Vutomi; Mfuwo wa Rixaka; Ndzhaka; Matsalwa ya xintu; Xiyenge xa Masungulo; Vutivi byo Sungula; Vutshila byo Vumba; Dyondzo ya Vutiolori.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTORY BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the current system of education discourse, the call for decolonisation and curriculum change has been at the forefront of a stimulating heated debate in various African nations including South Africa, against the colonial system (Fataar, 2018). The concept decolonisation is understood as reclaiming the previously owned authorities, wealth and cultural values of the nation or tribe from its colonizer (McCubbin et al., 2023). The calls for decolonisation of education in the African continent in the context of decolonising struggles against colonial rule first emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. Decolonisation is based on the resisting of the imposed modern colonial education whose goal is to shape the colonised into subjects or 'things', thus taking their humanity and fully denying them the right to develop to their full potential and to govern themselves (Fataar, 2018). As a result, the knowledge of the colonised groups, those categorised as non-Europeans and indigenous groups is suppressed and regarded as valueless and uncivilised. The epistemologies or ideas of the colonial system pay little attention at university or school to the indigenous knowledge of the poor working class and literacies of urban Black female dwellers (Fataar, 2018). This is true even in today's world; when a person speaks a Western/European language fluently or writes fluently they are perceived as better educated than an African language person. Conversely the African language speaking person is viewed as inferior and thus undermined.

According to Manyau (2018), today many education systems in Africa are currently dominated by *Eurocentric* and *Edu-centric* knowledge, practices and teachings which promote few benefits to the societal problems that are faced by Africans. Higgs (2016:89) maintains that 'voices of African Indigenous people is neglected since the African education system stills continue to mirror colonial education paradigms inherited from the former colonial system.' The author also explains that colonial education is a 'hegemonic and disruptive to African cultural practices, indigenous epistemologies and ways of knowing.' Consequently, the author affirms that the human need in our time to decolonise the curriculum in Africa. A post-colonial

education system should be developed that aims to dismantle the colonial influences, to reclaim the voices of indigenous Africans through curriculum reform and to transform the whole education discourse to make it relevant to our African challenges (Higgs, 2016).

The origin of the agenda of colonisation began at a conference that was initially requested by Portugal and later organised by the German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, during the years 1884-1885 called the Berlin Conference or the Congo Conference (Oliver & Oliver, 2017:2). Ocheni and Nwankwo (2012) state that the goal of the meeting was to strategize how to seize and to colonise the African continent. The meeting had a significant impact on African society, where dependent countries were colonized by Western Europeans. According to Craven (2015:32) the fundamental reason was to 'scramble of Africa.' Subsequently, the Western powers imposed and took full control of African countries which negatively affected the African traditions, history and social, economic, and political systems. South Africa is amongst the countries which was colonised by European regimes, including its educational curriculum. The events such as the student protests at South African universities during 2015-2016, most notable the #RhodesMustFall# campaign which involved students at the University of Cape Town demanding the removal of the bronze statue of British imperialist, Cecil John Rhodes, from their campus, spurred and renewed the call for decolonisation of the old education system (Koopman, 2018; Le Grange, 2019). For the Black students in particular, the Rhodes statue was a symbol of or represented institutional racism and exclusion that they experienced in the universities (La Grande, 2019). In addition, Maluleka (2021:73) states that they viewed it as 'symbol of white supremacy thinking, white arrogance and white fragility and that has deep historical roots dating back to the colonial-apartheid era, which they needed to dismantle.' Moreover, students used this platform to voice their concerns with the lopsided demographics at the university, such as predominantly white academic staff and a growing black student community. Secondly, other demands included issues of access, change, racism, and social inequalities and they insisted that Africans should move away from Western approach of doing things (Sayed, Motala & Hoffman, 2017). Students during #RhodesMustFall campaign re-invoked the post-colonial, Kenyan

theorist, and novelist, Ngugi Wa Thiong 'o's (1986) expression, which was captured in one of the banners of the protesters, 'All Rhodes lead to the decolonisation of the mind' (Le Grade, 2019:27). In support, Du Plessis (2021:56) explains 'the calls for educational curriculum reforms were set forth through the #FeesMustFall protest strike by students in South African Universities which predominantly focus on the demands of decolonisation of the old education system and education freedom and other aspects.'

The demand to free access to higher education in South Africa was realised by the government and free education was rolled out in 2018 for all deserving first year university students whose household income was below the threshold of R350 000 per annum (NSFAS, 2018). Both the campaigns were linked to each other as they both fought for the same goal of transformation in South Africa universities. Subsequently, as the debate intensified, the nationwide students' protest resulted in the President of South Africa announcing free education for the poor, while the Minister of Higher Education, Dr Blade Nzimande, called upon all universities to Africanise at a Higher Education Summit held in 2015. At this meeting some universities appointed task teams (e.g., Stellenbosch University) while others appointed curriculum transformation committees (e.g., the University of Cape Town) to explore ways South African universities could decolonise the curriculum. All these development at universities served as an eye opener and a wake-up call to the Department of Basic Education to decolonise the school curriculum, which includes subjects like Life Skills (Le Grange, 2017; Koopman, 2018). The decolonisation of the curriculum is an important aspect that warrants attention given the epistemic and hegemonic system that most are still subjected to.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To date, little research has explored the advancement or implementation of African indigenous knowledge rather than Western colonial epistemologies, including that of South Africa (Kaupe, Keane & Seenawer, 2017; Beukes, 2015). This includes the promotion of publications, conferences and seminars. This is motivated by the suppression of indigenous cultures, because of Western colonialism and apartheid

notion. As a result, currently schools and universities are not free to use African indigenous languages as a medium of instruction. Hence, English and Afrikaans are the leading languages since the colonized era (Beukes, 2015). In summary, research indicates that African Indigenous Languages are disparaged and undermined in the educational curriculum both socially and economically (Chauke, 2018). This is a barrier for African's student in the preservation of the AILs and their freedom of speech or language use. The freedom of choice in practising their culture, AILs and traditions including inculcating knowledge to Africans, is ignored. Traditional education was perceived as better than the Western way of teaching in bygone times before colonisation; folktales were the primary source used to teach children about culture and the wisdom of their cultures; and education was practical which enabled children to face the world. Through folktales in particular children learn about their culture, traditions and Life Skills in general. Folktales educated children about social development, communication, art, presentation skills, decision-making, farming, the surroundings, hygiene and other responsibilities (Akanwa, 2014). The society, communities and institutions should implement the original way of teaching using African methods (e.g., folktales), because this is a major source in upbuilding society. Before the colonial era, Africans taught their children farming, hunting, bread-making, weaving containers, traditional carpets or mats and how to survive daily. Additionally, children are trained in day-to-day behavior, for example, how to treat others respectfully regardless of their different backgrounds, how to be hospitable and show kindness.

According to literature current generations underestimate the significance of folktales, and thus they do not learn about them (Shabangu, 2005). Many parents spend little time and effort with their children, not teaching them about their cultural heritage and imparting valuable knowledge about Life Skills. As a result, children are disadvantaged by not knowing their cultures and background, which further negatively affects their life stages and social life due to lack of Life Skills. Today culture and traditions are perceived as less significant in our modern era and are gradually fading away (Chauke, 2018). In the current generation, children spend more time unmonitored, utilizing gadgets, social media, watching television, and playing harmful and violent

games after school and during their leisure time. Technological devices such as wireless devices and cellphones can be useful but can also cause negative effects when children are unmonitored. For example, children as young as 12 years have access to the internet and to games or social media in today's world, (David-Ferdon & Hertz, 2009). Many parents do not make time teaching children about folktales and cultural values rather they keep them occupied with wireless devices.

Muammar, Sujinah and Affanday (2024) affirm that myths, legends, stories of animals, fairy tales, puppet stories and folk songs are often not being explored for their moral wisdom or moral values, even though there are valuable and moral values to be found in them while raising children. Hence, there is little research that has been done to explore the significance of folklore including folktale narratives in children's upbringing. Therefore, this research aims to contribute to this research gap exploring the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase with the use of Xitsonga folktales in children's upbringing. The study aims to critique of coloniality, resist expressions of coloniality and take actions to overcome coloniality. It further investigates ways on how to practically decolonise the subject Life Skills using folktales in children's upbringing and to highlight the significance of Life Skills found in indigenous folktales in Xitsonga culture.

1.3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1. Aim of the study

This research aims to investigate the decolonisation of the Life Skills subject in the Foundation Phase through the use of Xitsonga folktales.

1.3.2. Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of study:

- Explore the decolonisation of the Life Skills subject through Xitsonga folktales;
- Examine the benefits of Xitsonga folktales to the Foundation Phase learners;
- Highlight the relationship between folktales and children.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study addresses the following questions:

- How can Xitsonga folktales be used in the decolonisation of the Life Skills curriculum?
- What is the benefit of Xitsonga folktales to Foundation Phase learners?
- What is the relationship between folktales and children?

1.5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is envisaged that the study will make theoretical contributions and address the gaps in the available and unwritten body of knowledge related to importance of folktales in our common era. It will also stress the significance of using folktales as a tool to dismantle the colonised system by the Eurocentric epistemologies in South Africa. The study is motivated by the fact that limited studies have been conducted to investigate how to decolonise the educational curricula and the psychological impact the Eurocentric system has caused. Moreover, using the folktales explored by the study some proposed methods are proposed in decolonising the Western teaching method of the subject Life Skills in children's upbringing in the Vatsonga tribe.

Furthermore, the art of storytelling and the importance of these stories within Xitsonga folktales is on the verge of extinction since people have undermined this knowledge by choosing formal education and electronic gadgets such as internet, social media, or technology (Nkhwashu, 2011). Therefore, the study will investigate how folktales are used in the Foundation Phase as an effective way to teaching practical wisdom to children and the benefit to the communities, schools and to society.

The study is also important as it will highlight the use of folktales and the value to children when it comes to inculcating Life Skills knowledge such as good morals, traditional education, cultural religious, and social ideology and how to face challenges positively and effectively when they grow up and the broad society. Currently, many adolescents turn to drugs, stealing, violence and crime; they cannot make practical ways of resolving problems (Prajapati, Sharma & Sharma, 2017). Therefore, the study will supply practical ways on how to use abilities in solving day to day problems. It is also envisaged that the research findings will assist in providing parents, teachers, schools, communities, and societies in our modern era to inculcate traditional knowledge and morals and to preserve the Xitsonga heritage for the next generation through the use of folktales.

1.6. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

To be able to conduct research on the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase using Xitsonga folktales, it is necessary to clearly formulate key definitions or concepts used in the study. The major concepts that are regarded as the back bone of the study are folktales, folklore, and heritage. They are defined below with the purpose of helping the reader to make sense of what is presented in the subsequent chapters.

1.6.1. Decolonisation

According to Oelofsen (2015:131) decolonisation is a process whereby the colonised country loses its political independence through the other country(s) which is currently in power (the coloniser). However, this is not limited to the political systems, it includes other aspects such as the state institutions, economic system and educational curriculum. The phrase decolonisation has various definitions and many books have been written about it (Gopal, 2021) and most common debate for the definition is politically based. Decolonisation means 'to undo' or 'to change' or 'to unlearn' from the former colonisation ways of doing things, (Moeke-Pickering, 2010:26), that simply occurs between the coloniser and the colonised, or between the oppressive regime

and the victimised. This is clearly indicated in Fanon's (1986) publication 'Black Skin White Mask', whereby the author brought out that the blacks were the ones oppressed by the Whites race.

1.6.2. Life Skills

Life Skills are demarcated as the expertise that one acquires to take proper steps in facing life challenges and the various sources used in the development of children (WHO,1996); the abilities can differ in various traditions and cultures. The following basic tools are used in the development of children through the subject Life Skills: decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, empathy, how to manage stress, how to converse, self-awareness and self-esteem and interpersonal and relationship skills, among others (WHO,1996). This subject in South Africa is taught from early childhood (Foundation Phase) through to late childhood (young adults) in Grade 12. The module teaches learners content based of their different ages and exposure to life.

1.6.3. Folklore

The term folklore is generic as it characteristically comprises all the various genres such as folktales, fables, myths, legends, riddles, lullabies, rhymes, proverbs, folk beliefs or superstitions, songs and dances, magic witchcraft, and other kinds of artistic expression passed on by means of the spoken word, (Monaka, Moumakwa & Baitse, 2019). All these products form part of the collaboration of a number of people over generations, and comprise the basics of people's oral cultures that define and connect them to each other. Seboni (2010) further defines folklore as a literary phenomenon which is inseparable from other subjects in the humanities like ethnography, history or literature.

1.6.4. Heritage

According to Heath (2006), the phrase heritage is broad; it means anything which ancestors bequeath or to the landscapes, structures, objects and traditions of a specific group. The author further states that heritage includes things which are viewed as precious, amongst them are celebrations such as heritage weeks, conservation

initiatives defending buildings, places, and precincts, archaeological sites and relics, land and environments such as gardens, trees, moveable heritage (artifacts) and intangible heritage such as beliefs, customs, language and stories (Heath, 2006). According to Harrison (2010), heritage includes the physical treasured possessions of the culture which have been inherited and are kept safely for future generations with its historical and cultural values attached to them, which includes buildings and objects.

1.6.5. Foundation Phase

In the context of this research, Foundation Phase refers to the first phase of formal schooling in South Africa, and it involves teaching from the reception year, which is known as Grade R (5-6 years) to Grade 3. It focuses on subjects such as literacy, numeracy, and life skills. The Foundation Phase education forms a foundation or serves as anchor for all the learning that will later take place in the academic development of every human being (Mudau, 2016). According to the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) the subjects that are covered in the Foundation Phase include home language, first additional languages, mathematics, and the Life Skills subject which has four learning outcomes namely, beginning knowledge, creative arts, physical education, and personal and social well-being (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2011).

1.6.6. Beginning knowledge

According to CAPS beginning knowledge is defined as the general understanding of the human's surroundings which includes the historical, geographical, natural science and technology context. Beginning knowledge includes teaching children based on the social, natural, and technological science skills (Dixon et al., 2018; DBE, 2011). This will enhance positive education of children if is done physically and practically in classrooms.

1.6.7. Creative (innovative) arts

Creative arts are defined as the combination of understanding and experience that a person has acquired and initiative-taking in solving problems differently and effectively (Turkmen & Sertkahya, 2015). Creative arts examples include dance, drama, music, and imaginative arts such as storytelling or performance arts in folktales (Dixon et al., 2018; DBE, 2011). Innovative Arts intends to lay the groundwork for balanced creative, cognitive, expressive, and social development, and the education system divides Innovative Arts into two parallel and mutually reinforcing channels: Visual Art and Performing Arts (Dance, Drama, Music, etc.) (Dixon et al., 2018; DBE, 2011).

1.6.8. Physical education

The wholesome process of skills development which contributes to the social, interpersonal skills and emotional well-being of children includes the physical activities that aid in helping a child to grow up healthy and fit such as sports activities or recreation (DBE, 2011). The benefit of physical education is that it will enhance capabilities and children's confidence and positive attitudes (Dyson, 2014), This includes rhythm, perceptual and locomotor development and balance (Dixon et al., 2018).

1.8. DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One constitutes the introduction, background to the problem, the problem statement, significance of the study, division of the chapters, research questions and aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter Two entails the literature review and conceptual framework that highlight the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills through the Xitsonga folktales as a tool for children's upbringing. Curriculum transformation using folktales and the types of folktales and the theoretical framework of the study are discussed.

Chapter three focuses on the research methodology and research design which covers the methods, research approach, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis and the ethical considerations. Fifteen folktales are collected and analysed

using the theories developed by Molefi Kete Asante and Afrocentric theory. The importance of the study and the reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the study are elaborated.

Chapter four deals with data presentation and analysis and themes identified using the best selected fifteen of the Xitsonga folktales.

Chapter five presents the findings, recommendations and concludes the research study.

1.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the introduction and background of the study. The problem statement and aims and objectives as well as the research questions are discussed and the significance of the study. The definitions of key concepts are explained, and the chapter divisions are outlined chronologically. The following section presents the literature review of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, the study introduced the background of the study, the problem statement along with the aims and objectives, and research questions. The classification of key concepts were elaborated and their significance in the study. The focal point of the study is to decolonise the Western education system in teaching and learning in the Foundation Phase in South Africa. This commencing chapter presents the literature review of the research and the broader knowledge and insight needed to close the gaps in the use of folktales in decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase. The basic structure, folktale types, and foundation of folktales narratives are discussed. The advantages of folktales in raising children in the 21st century and going forward will be discussed. The call for decolonisation through the use of folktales and its determination of curriculum transformation in South Africa will be outlined.

2.2. UNDERSTANDING KEY CONCEPTS IN THE STUDY

2.2.1. Colonization

The term 'colony' is a French word which is originally derived from the Latin word *colonia* and *colonus*, which primarily refers to a farmer or to inhabit or reside (in a land) or to cultivate or culture. (Mishra & Hodge, 2005). According to Griffiths, Coleman, and Madden (2016), colonization is defined as a taking over or presiding in other populace's space with no approved consent and further afflicts people with the aim of personal gain and greediness. The word has added to its connotation a glimpse of what took place in many African countries including South Africa during the post-colonial reign. The foreign resident refers to the Western citizen who occupied the land(s) of Africans as it were figuratively as the original farm (Africa) owners. They

dominated the countries, ruled the lands and influenced them economically, socially, psychologically and politically and the African cultures along with their traditional norms orientating them to a Western focus. Therefore, African humanitarism and the freedom to practise their original cultures and educational system were viewed as extraneous standards.

2.2.2. Decolonisation

As already broadly discussed in the background of the study in Chapter 1, the concept decolonisation is understood as a complex and multifaceted concept that refers to the process of undoing the effects of colonization which aims to restore and transform that which was taken unlawfully or unfairly from Africans by the Western or European colonizers. As alluded by Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, African suffered oppression and humiliation in the hands of their colonizers, hence the call for decolonisation.

2.3. OVERVIEW OF LIFE SKILLS AS A SUBJECT IN FOUNDATION PHASE

Today many schools, including the Foundation Phase, use English and Afrikaans to teach rather than the official indigenous African languages. Hence, there is heated debate on the how to decolonise the curriculum which includes the subject Life Skills in South Africa. Life Skills is defined as different method used in order to assist the young to face the future challenges with excitement and confidence, (Jones & Lavalley, 2009). This includes the importance of interpersonal abilities and social skills such as paying attention in practical ways such as showing reverence, teamwork, social contact, and communication. According to Subasree & Radhakrishnan (2014), Life Skills teaches positive behaviour that includes a combination of understanding, behaviour, perceptions, and moral standards which denotes the possession of particular skills and knowledge to do something positively or achieve an objective. Additionally, the Life Skills differ from one individual to the next based on various trained experiences, knowledge and age (Subasree & Radhakrishnan, 2014). Life Skills consists of five vital theoretical frame works, namely social-cognitive theory, problem-behaviour theory, cognitive problem- solving theory, social cognitive theory,

and multiple intelligence theory, (Subahree & Radhakrishnan, 2014); all the combinations of these theories are vital in enhancing children's Life Skills development. The subject Life Skills is studied in South Africa from Grade 'R' to Grade 4, with the main goal of providing children with a basic awareness of the world around them. The subject Life Skills includes basic introductory knowledge such as Beginning knowledge, Creative arts, Physical education and the personal and social well-being of children or learners (DBE, 2011).

The primary language for teaching this subject to children is English or Afrikaans, as these are the most commonly used languages in most schools in South Africa today due to the colonial reign. As a consequence, the majority of children struggle to apply the subject Life Skills, because they are not educated in their native language. Various challenges exist in raising children or youth who are not empowered to develop the nation and contribute to the advancement of society due to lack of practical training in their native languages. Violence, alcohol abuse, racism, and teen pregnancy have all increased in Sub-Saharan Africa, which includes South Africa (Panday, Mokiwane, & Letsoala, 2009); yet the subject Life Skills is being taught at schools. This illustrates that the European way of doing things has failed.

Even though technology was not yet available or invented, Africans had an amazingly effective and dependable method of teaching children with similar skills for generations. African children were taught in everyday activities by their parents, grandfathers, blood relatives, or even local residents on how to be willing to take responsibility and look into the future with confidence and pride. Children's skills that were being taught included basic knowledge of self-responsibilities, self-worth, self-pride which differ based on their stage, for instance, farming, hunting, fishing, defensive skills, cooking, cleaning, breeding, shepherding, and so forth. Therefore, the study explores how the African ways of teaching the subject Life Skills can still be effective through the use of Xitsonga folktales.

Decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase through the use of mother tongue will help the children to comprehend and understand their origins and teach children how to preserve their culture and norms at their early stage of life. Additionally, it will also assist children on how to face the future with confidence. As a result, this research will explain why the South African educational system should be

reconstructed and be responsive to the needs of South African children, in order to cater for the diverse requirements used to inculcate numerous kinds of education according to the nations' customs.

However, despite the plea and efforts by various groups campaigning for the transformation, research indicates that it has remain unchanged of a long time. According to Heleta and Chasi (2024), there has been little progress or shift from the Eurocentric definitions of official knowledge and the school pedagogy and the school curriculum still reflect European ideology.

Therefore, in the study the researcher will critique the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase through the use of Xitsonga folktales. The utilisation of critical skills and creativity in Life Skills as taught through the native language in the Foundation Phase can be of great tool in re-instilling the genesis of African roots. The author strongly believes children can benefit through the use of folktale narratives in current education and by eliminating colonial or post-apartheid education in schools.

2.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLKTALES

Folktales are part of the traditional narratives, prose and folklore which were orally transmitted by ancient people from generation to generations and are deemed as fiction (Mota, 2009). In Vatsonga folktales are narrated often by grandparents, parents, or the elderly. In Xitsonga folktales were often narrated close to the fireplace in a relaxed manner at night and commonly by women and rarely by men. The different types of folklores are myths, legends, riddles, proverbs, idioms, and other oral traditional narrative prose; However, folktales are faintly different and unique from other folktales, (Bascom,1 965). This chapter will predominantly focus on folktale narratives.

There are alternative reasons why Xitsonga folktales were normally narrated commonly at night; the main aim was for children not to neglect their daily chores (Shabangu, 2005). Children are intrigued and amused by nature; hence they request to hear the same story time and again. This is a common observance. Moreover, the other reason why folktales were not narrated during the day was that children may not in turn neglect their schoolwork or other daily activities while enjoying the tales daily.

2.5. THE STRUCTURE OF THE XITSONGA FOLKTALES

The Xitsonga folktales are unique from all other forms of novels and tales' anthologies. When transcribing them, the author needs to write within their originality, the style in which they were used when narrated orally by our ancestors in ancient times (Shabangu, 2005). Moreover, the Vatsonga Xitsonga folktales consist of the introduction, body, and ending. The formation and styles of Xitsonga folktales are as follows:

According to Shabangu (2005:4), the narrator of the folktales will start the introduction by saying these words, *Garingani wa garingani!* or *Garingani wa garinga!* or *Xitori na xitori!*. Precisely the *xitori na xitori* is used by other Xitsonga people to narrate but is not originally the Vatsonga way of narrating folktales. The narrator must repeat the introduction numerous times. The children or listeners will also respond with the words *Garinga* or *Garingani* as a way to show that they are eager and ready to follow the tale to be told to them. Hence, the main manner for the narrator is to introduce the folktale repeatedly by saying *Garingani wa garingani*, to prepare the minds of the listeners, to capture their attention and to ensure that everyone is seated and ready to follow the story. When the narrator is ready and can see that all are seated, the narrator is satisfied and the tale can be narrated to the children.

The Xitsonga folktales include setting, plot and characters of folktales, conclusion, types of folktales, and the significance of folksongs in folktales (Shabangu, 2005).

According to Shabangu (2005), the setting of the folktales in Xitsonga does not normally give more detail or the exact place where the tale has taken place or sometimes not even names of the characters. Instead, it is usually narrated by its kind of environment and its setting of the place of the tales or characteristics (descriptive or imaginative) of the tale characters. Some folktales have human characters while others are animals. Moreover, the main reason of the above-mentioned setting is that the tales might not have taken place in real life. Additionally, the characters of the animals of the folktales are personified into human characters; hence, its importance is imparting knowledge to teach children good morals, educational truths, honesty, wisdom and what is good and bad. In some instances, the story might be narrated as

if it had taken place in a place and time. The Xitsonga expressions such as, 'Long, long time ago there was...', or 'Once upon a time there was an... (*Khale ka khaleni a kuri ni...*, However, the details of the time and which part of the country remains unknown.

Folktales are one of the significant ways of instilling cultural heritage and traditions of the Vatsonga because their norms and practices are based on the cultural and traditional way of doing in that tribe and the society as a whole. For example, when the folktales are transmitted, at the conclusion of the folktale, the narrator will say what they enjoy eating or the lesson learned with the expression, *Pthu choyoyo! xa mina I tindluwa* (Shabangu, 2005:8). With the above phrase the audience may also mention what they will enjoy after the beautiful tale which commonly includes traditional food, such as beans *tindluwa*, samp mixed with beans *tihove* or mealies *swifaki*. When the audience hear the expression, *Pthu choyoyo*, the audience will automatically know that the story has ended and might show their expression by clapping hands or sharing what lessons they enjoyed in the tale. Normally the Xitsonga folktales were narrated at night as previously mentioned.

2.6. THE PRACTICE OF FOLKTALES IN CHILDREN'S UPBRINGING

The use of folktales has been an integral part of many African people for decades. Folktales are categorised as a type of folklore. Although there is variety in the way folklore is defined, it is typically considered as traditional stories accumulated over millennia and transmitted through generations by word of mouth (Monaka, Moumakwa & Baitse, 2019). Folktale involves social customs, beliefs and common practices that are orally passed from one generation to the other by mouth (Makgopa, 2008). According to Chauke (2018) Xitsonga folktales supply a better understanding of the world-view of Vatsonga people as it enhances a different and interesting knowledge about different historical, linguistic, and cultural norms. Folktales were being used as a pillar of the society in bringing solidarity before laws that govern people. Today folktales are still of immense importance in society in children's upbringing (Akanwa, 2014). Additionally, folktales were viewed as natural laws that united the society and in children's upbringing while instilling acceptable moral values such as honesty,

trustworthiness, being industrious and acquiring other good moral standards. Folktales also serve as communication strategies to the people around the child which includes family and friends or society in general, because they allow personal interaction and transferring of knowledge between individuals.

The Vatsonga are a Bantu ethnic group which is primarily found in Southern Mozambique and South Africa, and they communicate in Xitsonga, a Southern Bantu language. However, Vatsonga people are also found in Zimbabwe and Northern Swaziland in small numbers. Moreover, Vatsonga of South Africa share some history with the Tsonga people of Southern Mozambique, but they are culturally and linguistically distinct among the Vatsonga Tsonga of Zimbabwe and Zambia (Mushwana & Chauke, 2015). In South Africa, Xitsonga is one of the South African languages and is mostly spoken in the province of Limpopo in which it shares linguistic space with the neighbouring Tshivenda and Northern Sotho languages (Madlome, 2022).

The Vatsonga have used several ways to transfer their cultural patrimony and traditions in instilling good morals to their children, and one of the examples which was used was through folktales. Lubambo (2019) also confirms that folktales have been used as the basis of instilling morals, teaching children about their cultural heritage, its norms, and practices from one generation to the next and losing such historical teaching is the same as losing our own originality. Additionally, whenever children were being taught and have grasped the meaning and the lesson of the folktales, they benefitted daily and in future made wise decisions. The study is important as it will encourage parents, school teachers within the Foundation Phase, communities, and the elderly to continue inculcating folktales in upbringing their children. It is also noteworthy that when children apply what they have learned from the tales they will benefit as well as their whole family and the society. Folktales can equip children with educational background, and it enhances them with reading skills, Life Skills lessons from either the written genre or oral and how to write.

Therefore, in order for one to teach folktales to children, one needs the cultural background and insight of that cultural heritage, its practices, and norms (Shabangu, 2005). According to Maluleke (2012), traditional and cultural practices signify the values and beliefs and the overall historical background that members of a community have held for generations.

2.7. TYPES OF THE FOLKTALES IN XITSONGA

They are various forms of folktales that were orally transmitted from one generation to the next in diverse cultures, such as, animal tales, human tales, tales of magic, romantic tales, jokes and anecdotes (Marzolph, 2020). The study will focus mainly on human and animal tales by Shabangu (2005), Rikhotso (1993) and Rikhotso (1994), Marolen (1982), Ngobeni, 2004 and Mavikane (1990).

Animal tales are tales that portray animals with human characters; they are described as animals that talk, they possess pride and wisdom (Khoza, 2006). Some examples of animal tales are *Mfutsu ni Mhungubye*, *Nyimpi ya swiharhi ni swinyenyani* and *N'wamfene na N'wayingwe*, (Shabangu, 2005).

Human tales are folktales that are based on human perspectives in instilling morals in children (Gomez, 2016). Some examples are human characters described by Shabangu (2005) *Ndabambi a teka Siwela*, *Tshukudu na Dzimamuhulu*, *N'anga ya Mpari* and *Muzondi na Nyoka*.

Legend(s) tales are prose narratives which are believed to have taken place in the past, originally consist of familiar human characters (Fee & Webb, 2016). However, legends are often exaggerated so to fit in and to make the narrated tales more interesting. The legends tales have often been modern, but sacred, and their main characters are human, (Fee & Webb, 2016). Furthermore, the legendary tales may include matters/people pertaining to human migration, wars, and triumphs, as well as the exploits of old/ historical legends, chiefs, and kings and lords, and the inheritance of kingdoms and empires. Similarly, with myths, legend tales are perceived as real stories. According to Masuku et al (2016:8), legends consist of tales of human characters with historical facts, hence the legend is recognized as

mystical or semi-mythical and the main character is often crowned as victorious and accomplishes the extraordinary. The examples of legendary folktales in Xitsonga are folktales, such as, Banana, *Tintshava ta Ka mahlathi*, *Mufimi wa tinyoxi* and *Xivagini* (Rikhotso,1994). Since legend folktales are valuable in each culture and race, legendary folktales can be narrated to children to teach them vital lessons with regard to hard work and victories. However, from the fifteen selected tales of the study, legends tales are not being discussed. The legendary folktales are narrated like a story and some or most of them do not have folksongs in them as they describe the real history of people who have outstanding experiences.

'Myths are storytelling stories that are believed to be true records of what happened in the ancient history in the society in which they are told. They have been recognized on belief, educated to be presumed, and can be referenced as authority in response to ignorance, doubt, or disbelief. Myths embody dogma; they are usually sacred, and they are closely correlated with theology and ritual. Their main characters are... animals, gods, or cultural heroes whose deeds actually occur in a previous planet, when the earth was distinctive from how it is now, or in an alternate world, for example the sky or the underworld.' (Bascom, 1965b:4.)

Myths in folktales can include both human tales and animal tales and supernatural tales and they are perceived as fiction tales. However most African genres rarely have tales that include myth, including Xitsonga folktales. Myth is also described as a tale that is believed to have taken place in human history (Jaja, 2014). The author further elucidated that there has been an argument amongst various authors concerning the definition of myth. For example, Alagoa (1978:9) defines myths as man-made tales that enlighten human's realities or live existence. However, Anyanwu (1987) describes myth as not just a mere human sense of thinking, but the solid evidence of reality and that people cannot live without myths. Therefore, through myths humans get answers to their unanswered questions about life and its origins.

Dixon (2017) and Hurriez (2002) define a myth as a tale concerning supreme beings' adventures, cherished narratives, didactic tales, a specified set of storytelling norms

involving fantastic beings that relate to people in a time span. Therefore, people can use the term myths in different ways, hence the common use can either refer to myths as made-up stories, untruths, and false facts, widely held beliefs with little to no supporting evidence, or stories created and repeated by some distant relative to explain a phenomenon, the world surrounding, or the natural world.

Folktales were passed on from one generation to the next orally through our grandparents (Marzolph, 2020). This also motivated the researcher's confidence that since folktales were known and used in ancient times, they had a special value and that is why they were transmitted to children during that time. The researcher will highlight the themes, outcomes and lessons from the following selected folktales by Shabangu (2005), Rikhotso (1993) and Rikhotso (1994), Marolen (1982), Ngobeni, 2004 and Mavikane (1990).

2.8. CURRICULUM TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION THROUGH THE USE OF FOLKLORE

The term transformation is defined as a change of content, causes or change of focus in a positive transparent way both internal and external (Van Eeden, 2008; Coulter, Hedges and Vanfossen, 1996). It is noteworthy that transformation can be viewed differently amongst different setting or individuals. In the study, transformation is referred to the change that takes place in the educational environment or curricula between the student and the teacher in teaching and learning channels and the assessment or evaluation of the student's progress thereafter.

Curriculum transformation has been in the forefront and experienced innumerable challenges since the 1994s, during the Government of National Unity to date (Gumede & Biyase, 2016; Van Eeden, 2008). The fundamental reason for curriculum adjustment was to address inequality and an ineffective and poor education system, to accommodate previously disadvantaged people and to decolonise the new mechanism of education amongst South African people, which was implanted by the Eurocentric or Western epistemologies, (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). Therefore, a new policy was required to re-address these issues and other related educational concerns pertaining to quality and effective education for South Africans. Ultimately the need was identified and the Constitution of Republic of South Africa (Act 106 of 1996) was

consulted for curriculum transformation many times, (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). This involved the implementation of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in 2015, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS, 2002) and currently The Revised National Curriculum Statement which is the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) (Gumede & Biyase, 2016). Although it is true that traditional educational wisdom found in folklores in South Africa remains confronted with barriers and is not recognized for its benefits in education, the economy, schools and society, transformations in the education system remains a priority for the majority of Africans. In the study the researcher will present how transformation has been used through the use of Xitsonga folktales including Xitsonga proverbs.

According to Mushwana (2020), proverbs can be used in the tourist environment to invite more guests to come again by being hospitable. One proverb the author underpinned was taken from Junod (1973:30), *Mpfhumba a nga humi ntsena*, meaning that, 'A visitor doesn't go empty handed' (Mushwana, 2020). The above proverb can encourage hospitality and encourage warmth and kindness to the guest by giving them extra care and 'send-off gifts' which will encourage them to visit again because of the beautiful experiences and memories shared during their tour/holiday. Other scholars, such as Nkuna (2015), have proven that proverbs can also be used in promoting good dealings when it comes to business affairs and in promoting African languages. Some of the points the author brought out were based on the importance of engaging with supervisors, how to handle finance and other elements in the working environment using Xitsonga proverbs. For example the proverb, *Mutirhi u vonakala hi matlhari* means that if you see someone having/ carrying tools along with him, it commonly gives the impression that he/she is heading to work. Therefore, the proverb promotes commitment to one's job or task (Nkuna, 2015) This proves that the folklore including folktales can contribute to a value to the benefit of children through curriculum reform in South Africa if implemented in various settings, for example, at school, in the society or when doing business. In the study the researcher will mainly focus on folktales as the main objective of discussion.

2.9. THE DECOLONISATION OF THE SUBJECT LIFE SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF XITSONGA FOLKTALES

The study will outline how folktales can be used in teaching Life Skills in the Foundation Phase. Life Skills in Xitsonga were taught to children in various ways and on a daily basis. Another way of enhancing children and youth with insight into Life Skills was through the use of folktales as previously discussed. Folktales were taught to children for educational purposes and not only for entertainment. Some of the examples are from the folktale, Xinyanyana (Rikhotso, 1994:49); the lesson drawn from the tale is the importance of cleanliness or hygiene. From the statement, *a pfuka ni mixo a kukula emutini ku basa* meaning that 'she woke up early in the morning and cleaned the house very well/ sparkling clean'. Today the subject Life Skills also teaches the importance of hygiene, for example, children need to wash their hands before they eat, and stay in a clean and neat environment to avoid germs, contaminated water and other viruses that are caused by poor hygiene or sanitary, (Postma, Phiri & Snel, 2001). An example of this is during the COVID-19 pandemic where people including children were constantly reminded of washing their hands with soap and water, maintaining self-care and a hygienic lifestyle and using alcohol-based sanitisers and hand wipes to clean the surfaces and hands (Harari, 2020). This shows that being hygienic is not something new as the folktales and people of old knew the importance of cleanliness.

Folktales also educate children about their surroundings such as different types of animals, food, trees, clothing, animals' behaviours, seasons of the year and days of the week. From the folktale Marimela Kule (Rikhotso, 1994:1), the tales illustrated various African vegetables that are still used today for a healthy meal such as *Makhalavatla, tinyawa, marhanga na matimba*, in translation: 'watermelon, red beans, squash, wild canes/sugarcane'. The mentioned food are well known as healthy eating even in this era, since they have countless health benefits, for instance, 'watermelons' *makhalavatla*. According to Maoto, Beswa and Jideani (2019) watermelon is healthy for the heart, as it is anti-inflammatory and is beneficial to cancer, sugar diabetes and dietary concerns. From tale by Marolen (1982:23), the foods mentioned are: *se Xirindzi a tolovele ku yiva timanga, a yiva ni mavele ni makwembe*, meaning that; 'so Xirindzi used to steal the peanuts, mealies and pumpkins. These above-mentioned food

varieties have other health benefits and they can be used in cooking or baking. Alternatively, they can be used as processed food or for dietary purposes, such as, smoothies, snacks and various purees for infants or toddlers providing essential nutrients and minerals that will boost children's growth (Mateescu et al., 2022).

Animals such as dogs use their sense of smell to search for food, illegal drugs, specific objects or even to identify people (Holcova et al, 2021). In the Munghobozi tale by Mavikane (1990), we learn, *yo nuhetela vuthala , yo ri ntlha, hi ndlela leyi a ga huma hi Yona na van'wana vanhwana* which means that, 'it sniffed for witness, then it ran off on the same road they used with the other ladies'. Life Skills teaches children about animals, the manner in which they behave and how they are trained for personal use or human protection, for example, police dogs.

Marimela Kule (Rikhotso, 1994:1), has highlighted the seasons of the year in the following: *hi nkarhi wa ximumu a vari na ntolovelo wo hubuta bya ha ri vurhonga , va ya ensin'wini*, translation: 'during summer seasons as usual, they will wake up early in the morning, and go to the farm'. Life Skills imparts to children knowledge about basic farming and seasons, such as, summer as it brought out from the tales. It also teaches different times of the day, such as, morning, afternoon, sunset, evening, and midnight. Through Xitsonga tales children differentiate between seasons (summer, autumn, winter, and spring) and different times of the days as mentioned above. The tale further stated, *Dyambu ri kala ri rhenga*, meaning 'the sunset' (Rikhotso, 1994:4).

The tale Madya-yexe (Rikhotso, 1993:11) teaches how to go about preparing slaughtered meat for a meal or cooking process:

Nuna luya a sala a humasa mhuti emabyanyini

Kutani a sungula ku yevula,

A sungula ku tshivela ndzilo,

A teka masweko a vekala,

A tsemelelela nyama a hoxa embiteni,

Kutani a tlhandleka mbita ya yena,

Nyama liya yi byabyama,

Yi vupfa, yi nuhela yi nkhusee...!, (Rikhotso, 1993:11)

Translation:

[The man took out the antelope that was on the grass(dead)

Then he started removing its skin

Then he lights off the fire

He puts the pot on

Then he cut the meat into piece and put it inside the pot.

He then put the meat on the fire (Antelope)

The meat started boiling.

The meat was ready to be eaten and was having a divine aroma...!], (Rikhotso, 1993:11)

The tale above illustrates the basic ways of making a meal or cooking food. The process is arranged chronologically for children to understand the basic ways how the food is being prepared and made ready to be enjoyed. However, today not every household still cooks with firewood as explained from the folktale, rather cooking is done through the use of electric, coal or gas stoves. However, the practical process is still similar when preparing the food. Life Skills also educates children on basic ways of cooking and baking which can motivate them to pursue the career of chef or baker in the future. Folktales can also teach children numerical figures, colours, age differences and the various types of animals.

Folktales can assist in building confidence in children, since many tales require responses for example in folksongs. Folktales can enhance participation in children at school and in social life in general. Folktales can help children improve their comprehension skills; when the tale is narrated, children pay attention so that they can fully enjoy the tale without interruptions. This will help them later in school when the teacher is teaching in class, at home, and at work, as well as make wise decisions and pay more attention to details when they are given an assignment to do.

2.10. CONCLUSION

This chapter's focus was the literature review of the study. This chapter has highlighted the main key concepts of the study and the overview of the subject Life Skills based on the Foundation Phase. The importance and holistic structure of the folktales in Xitsonga and the various types of folktales are elaborated in detail. The chapter further demonstrated need for curriculum transformation within the South African perspective through the use of folklore and folktales in Xitsonga. The decolonisation of the subject Life Skills through the use of Xitsonga folktales was discussed as well as the theoretical framework of the study.

The next chapter will present the research design and the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the literature review of the study was presented. Various secondary scholarly literature such as research articles, dissertations and books were consulted in order to do the literature review and provide the conceptual framework that highlighted the decolonisation the subject Life Skills using Xitsonga folktales, the use of folktales, the types of folktales and the theoretical framework of the study. The main aim of conducting a literature review was to build an understanding of the topic under investigation, develop the theoretical framework and familiarise the researcher in the area of research to provide answers to the research problem. This present chapter elucidates the research methodology and design of the study, sampling techniques, methods of collection data as well as data analysis.

3.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM

The research paradigm used in the study is interpretivism. Because interpretivism explains truth through a method of understanding, rather than hypothesis testing, by utilizing and integrating the participants' subjective experiences, notions, and beliefs of their respective social and cultural context, it views social truth as embedded in their social surroundings and is not intended to generalise findings from it.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This research study is pursued through qualitative research methods. Hennick, Hutter and Bailey (2011) regard qualitative research as those research strategies such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing, total participation in the activity being investigated and document analysis. Rudolph, Leedy and Ormrod (2015) maintain that qualitative research approach entails the use of detailed and systematic examination of contents of a particular body of material with the purpose of identifying patterns, and themes. Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) point out that qualitative researchers rely on giving the feeling and voices of the participants under

study. Notably, qualitative researchers believe that studying participants in a social setting and gaining greater knowledge is something that can be attainable from studying participants. The qualitative method used did not draw data from participants face to face. The study instead adopted a content-based approach through the data collected from published Xitsonga narratives and books.

3.4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored in Afrocentric theory and challenges the Eurocentric or colonial approach of teaching the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase in South Africa. Afrocentric theory was originally developed at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by a group of African philosophers who were called the Temple of Circle of scholars (Moloi, 2020). Molefe Kete Asante is the founder of this theory; however, the origin of Afrocentrism theory has been traced to other scholars with a similar approach in African social and political affairs, such as Edward Wilmont Blyden, Martin Delany, Henry Highland Garnett, and Mary Ann Shadd in the 19th century and Cheikh Anta Diop, Marcus Garvey, N'aime Akbar and Mulana Kerenga in the 20th century (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Carter G Woodson is one of the scholars who contributed to the development of Afrocentric theory with the observation that African Americans in the United States (US) were treated differently from white Americans (Asante, 1991). This is clearly explained in the article *Mis-education of the Negro* (Woodson, 2023). Other scholars who contributed to Afrocentric theory along with Asante are C. Tsheloane Keto, Karamu Welsh Asante, Abu Abarry, Ama Mazama, Theophile Obenga, Terry Kershaw and Mualana Kerenga from the US (Oyebade, 1990).

Molefi Kete Asante developed the Afrocentric theory as a way of discrediting the Eurocentric ideology, while on the other hand promoting African studies (Moloi, 2020; Jackson II & Hogg, 2010). Molefi Kete Asante is also a professor and a chair in the Department of Africology at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, (Asante, 2020; Chawane, 2016). Moreover, he indicated that Africans needed to be liberated from enslavement to Western mentality, which meant that blacks (Africans) should be granted free will and be treated equally and fairly when it came to the practice of their

culture, history, traditions, social heritage and norms. African culture and way of life was denigrated by European powers, which included changes in social norms and values that were moulded from the Western point of view (Jackson II & Hogg, 2010). This included the perspective that African languages are inferior.

The rationale of the theory is the emancipation of the African nations and the promotion of equality and African knowledge and the centrality of education from an African standpoint rather than the Western or European approach (Moloi, 2020). This presupposition best fits and undergirds the study which outlines the importance of decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase using Xitsonga folktales. Therefore, the Afrocentric theory has been used in the study as theoretical framework to decolonise the Western epistemologies of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase with the use of Xitsonga folktales.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection is perceived as one of the fundamental parts of the research, (Makofane & Shirindzi, 2018). According to Johnson & Christensen (2012) data collection is a strategy for physically getting information to be analysed in a research study. From the study, the researcher did not utilise human participation as tool for data collection. Data collection was co-ordinated through corpus/desktop method of data collection since the research did not contain physical human interaction or people. Therefore, books were perused and analysed throughout the study and additional resources through articles, dissertation, and theses. English is used as medium of written communication for interpretations of the themes and folktales summaries throughout the investigation; however, Xitsonga language examples from the selected fifteen folktales are given,

3.6. POPULATION AND SAMPLING

One first aspect considered in the study is the population. In research, a population means the total number of individuals, groups or organizations that could be used in a study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Sampling consists of a selected target of people/population that a researcher aims to research and/or those who will be used in the conducting the research (Makofane & Shirindzi, 2018). Since the study never

planned to involve human participants, a population was selected from Xitsonga folktales that depict moral values and Life Skills attributes of the Vatsonga tribe. Therefore, the research data is generated from the sample of folktales by Shabangu (2005), Rikhotso (1993) and Rikhotso (1994), Marolen (1982), Ngobeni, (2004) and Mavikane (1990).

Siririka (2007) substantiates that sampling involves the procedure a researcher uses to select people, places, or things to study. The study employed purposive or purposeful sampling to selected Xitsonga anthologies which have portrayed the Life Skills attributes of Africans, namely, the Vatsonga ethnic group. A total of fifteen folktales were chosen, because they have valuable information that was appropriate in giving answers to the earlier formulated question.

The following fifteen folktales were selected, because they are informative and give practical ways needed in answering the research questions and research objectives:

1. *Ndabambi a teka Siwela* (Shabangu, 2005:20)
2. *Tshukudu na Dzimamuhulu* (Shabangu, 2005:31)
3. *Muzondi ni Nyoka* (Shabang, 2005:9)
4. *Mfutsu na Mhungumbye* (Shabangu, 2005:14)
5. *Marimela-Kule* (Mavikane, 1990:1)
6. *Ndhichi ya Madambi* (Mavikane, 1990:16)
7. *Vakhidi* (Mavikane, 1993:21)
8. *N'wampfundla na N'wamfenhe* (Rikhotso,1994:71)
9. *Swihandza Matala* (Rikhotso, 1994:16)
10. *Muheti wa mati* (Rikhotso,1993:33)
11. *Xinyanyana* (Rikhotso,1994:49)

12. *Madya Yexe* (Rikhotso,1993:11)

13. *Mughobozi* (Mavikane, 1990:48)

14. *Nuna la nga laviki vana va vafana* (Maluleke,2017:23)

15. *N'wanghala na N'wampfundla Evukon'wawanini* (Ngobeni, 2004:20)

3.7. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is an important phase in research because it affords the researcher with the opportunity to process and organize data into simple understandable units with the intention of examining them. Merriam (2009) asserts that the main goal of conducting data analysis is to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Data analysis or interpretation involves searching for vital information to answer the research question and to reach a specific conclusion, this is accompanied by the summative, dependable, and direct investigation (Vijayamohanan, 2015).

Content analysis, like other qualitative research methods, prompts the examination and interpretation of data in order to convey meaning, gather insights, as well as establish empirical evidence. The advantages of using content-based data is that it is cost effective as the data is collected in documents, such as books or online sources such as articles, (Bowen, 2009). Furthermore, it is more effective too since the data has already been collected by other authors. Again, the research approach was found fitting to the study since it allowed the researcher to access the subjective meaning of people's words in documents.

3.8. RELIABILITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS AND VALIDITY

According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2013) reliability is defined as the consistency and accuracy used within the same measures and of the same value on the same repeated approaches and still produces the same results. Moss (1984) supports when he showed that reliability method will also be determined through the error free channel during the measurements and should be quantified through its

consistency and feedback. The author further added that the existence of reliability creates the space for validity, therefore validity exists because of reliability.

The main ground for reliability is to evaluate the content analysis to see if it is reliable and stable. In the study the author has followed the credible channel and reliable sources to collect the research data using theses, articles, books and journals. The relevant referencing has been provided as proof of the data collection and cited according to the University of South Africa's policy and regulations. Secondary research has been used which makes it easier to validate and dispute the data collection in case of questioning or clarity required.

Validity can be tested in two ways, for example, through the creating a coding approach which will give guidance in content analysis and if the coding or theory that has been developed is tested as trustworthy within the programmed coding system as it will be regarded as exceptional and valid for the future coding method (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999). The second method was to evaluate the decisions made by the coders against the same standards. If it is found that the standard has corresponded with the decision which was made prior to the assessment, the coding will therefore, be perceived as trusted and valid and dependable for use (Potter & Levine-Donnerstein, 1999).

This researcher has thoroughly examined reliable sources of evidence within the policy and regulations of the University of South Africa. Secondary resources have been used which makes it easier to validate and dispute the data collection in case of questioning or clarity required. The author's supervisor has checked the study and ensured that minimal quality standard was met accordingly to the required standards. Proper citations are acknowledged throughout the study.

Trustworthiness is defined as the confidence, quality and dependability of the data that has been collected by the researcher (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013), and this can be examined through the assessment of the four steps namely: Credibility, Dependability, Transferability and Conformability. Connelly (2016) also supports this statement, that trustworthiness will also depend on how the researcher has followed the vital methods and processes for ethical research.

The study has followed all the necessary steps in collecting data, for example, the ethics application was submitted and approved for this research to be conducted. The author has been transparent and honest in her personal and academic details provided and concurs that this research was primarily done and collected by her with using secondary sources, such as dissertations, books, articles and journals. Proper citations (Harvard approach) are presented accordingly to the guidelines of the University of South Africa's policy.

3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations are important to both qualitative and quantitative methods. Research ethics is a complex construct, essentially concerned with the principles of right and wrong conduct (Tisdall, Gallagher & Davis, 2008). It influences how we should approach research (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010:143).

The present research does not involve any human participants. Instead, data is collected through text documents. However, the researcher abide by the University of South Africa ethics on plagiarism by using quotations and references if ideas of people were used otherwise it could constitute as plagiarism or document theft.

As indicated in the above paragraph, the researcher ensured that all people, ideas, thoughts, or words are properly acknowledged and ensured that all documents were cited accordingly.

Lastly, the researcher abode by the university policy on research ethics and ensured that the research study only took place after obtaining ethical clearance from the University of South Africa.

3.10. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the research design and methodology of the study. The research methods are discussed including the source of the population and sampling of the data collection used in this research of the study. The data collection and data analysis were explained as used in the study. Inclusive is the reliability and validity

measures and how they co-relate in the study as well as the study's trustworthiness. The importance of ethical considerations of the study ensuring that the study complied to the rule and guideline of Unisa Policy were outlined.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the data presentation and analysis of the data collected. The four learning outcomes of Life Skills will be elaborated as part of the data analysis of the study. The 15 selected folktales will be summarized for discussion.

Folktales were generally passed on from one generation to the next orally through our grandparents (Marzolph, 2020). This has intrigued the researcher's confidence since folktales were known and used in ancient times when they had a special value when transmitted to children during that time. Below is a list of the selected Fifteen (15) folktales by Shabangu (2005), Rikhotso (1993) and Rikhotso (1994), Marolen (1982), Ngobeni, (2004) and Mavikane (1990).

1. *Ndabambi a teka Siwelele* (Shabangu, 2005:18)
2. *Tshukudu na Dzimamuhulu* (Shabangu, 2005:31)
3. *Muzondi ni Nyoka* (Shabangu ,2005:9)
4. *Mfutsu na Mhungumbye* (Shabangu, 2005:14)
5. *Marimela-Kule* (Mavikane, 1990:1)
6. *Ndhichi ya Madambi* (Mavikane, 1990:16)
7. *Vakhidi* (Mavikane, 1993:21)
8. *N'wampfundla na N'wamfenhe* (Rikhotso, 1994:71)
9. *Swihandza-Matala* (Rikhotso, 1994:80)
10. *Muheti wa mati* (Rikhotso, 1993:33)
11. *Xinyanyana* (Rikhotso, 1994:49)
12. *Madya Yexe* (Rikhotso, 1993:11)

13. *Mughobozi* (Mavikane, 1990:48)
14. *Nuna la nga laviki vana va vafana* (Maluleke,2017:23)
15. *N'wanghala na N'wampfundla Evukon'wawanini* (Ngobeni, 2004:20)

4.2. Summaries of folktales

4.2.1. *Ndabambi a teka Siwelele (Ndabambi weds/marries Siwelele) (Shabangu, 2005:18)*

One of the good days King Ntswembu decided that his daughter, Siwelele, is old enough to participate in a beauty pageant and in handing her for marriage. The king resolved this in his heart since it was harvesting season and many beautiful women/ladies were taking part in the harvest. It was convenient for him and other kings to make use of that particular season. It was common that the kings were resting during that time. Therefore, the king invited all the kings along with the strong men to take part in the contest for the beautiful princess's hand in marriage. Moreover, the king requested that all should come along with their strong and sharp Cane Lasher knives to chop down the big tree, and that whoever wins in cutting down the tree, he will hand his daughter as a gift in marriage.

A crowd of strong men and kings came with excitement, willing to win the competition and to marry Siwelele because she was so beautiful. Amongst the crowd there was a man with physical limitations (disabled). The son of Pfhopfhopfo, his name was Ndabambi. These many kings and various strong young men individually tried their best in chopping down the tree, but they all failed. The trick of the competition was that, while these strong young men and kings were busy cutting down the tree, a few beautiful ladies would come over as a form of distraction, to greet them and offer these men some mageu in a calabash to drink as a refreshment. Many of the strong young men and kings accepted the offer. They drank the mageu, hence, later when they continued cutting down the tree, they got too full, lazy and weak to continue with their assignment. Thus, they lost the competition.

However, Ndabambi mentioned earlier took his Cane Lasher knife and attempted in chopping down the tree. Many laughed and mocked him since his fingers were twisted or disfigured. He ignored them and continued, remembering what his father taught him about hard work. The beautiful ladies came along as usual to offer Ndabambi the drink and he refused and never even looked at them rather, he continued chopping the tree. The crowd shouted his name with excitement as they saw the tree shaking and was about to fall, still he remained focused until the tree fell down. The crowd celebrated him including the king for his job well done. He was showered with gifts and he received his beautiful wife, Siwelele, and returned home a rich man.

4.2.2. *Tshukudu na Dzimamuhulu (Tshukudu and Dzimamuhulu) (Shabangu, 2005:31)*

In this folktale, a woman called N'waswimirhana had a daughter named Tshukudu. They both made a living through making mageu and traditional beer. N'waswimirhana loved her daughter so much and treated her like a princess. Tshukudu had friends, however, her friends were not loyal friends. In fact, they were so jealous of her and believed that she was dearly loved and spoiled by her mother and was chosen to be a king's wife when she grew older. One day Tshukudu and her friends went to the river to bath and on their way back, Tshukudu realised that she has forgotten her basket of water behind. Her friends refused to escort her back to fetch it.

Tshukudu returned and on her way back she met with Dzimamuhulu (an ogre) who kidnapped her and made her his wife. Tshukudu's friends ran away back home and kept secret what happened to her. When Tshukudu realised that she was not the only one being kidnapped and being made a wife of Dzimamuhulu, she learned how to become a traditional healer as a way to her survival and to escape to the ogre. She then managed to escape along with other women who were previously kidnapped with her. The ogre, Dzimamuhulu, was later killed by the community and Tshukudu was rewarded and well known to the community for her fine deeds.

4.2.3. *Muzondi ni Nyoka (Muzondi and The Snake) (Shabangu, 2005:9)*

Long time ago there was a king named Magelevendze who lived in the mountain full of caves. There was also a man called Xiporo and his wife, Zondeka, who lived in the surrounding area. The couple had only one child whose name was Muzondi. The king Magelevendze and his people loved to worship their gods, including the snake, Birimamba, that resided in the caves. In the normal state, when Birimamba was happy, the community would see specific signs through the changes of weather. They saw a fog in the morning, and in the evenings after they have fed him his meal (animal manure and meat with its blood), which indicated his joy or contentment, they prospered in everything they did.

After many months things changed. As a result, the community began to become anxious and to suffer negatively and economically with the drought. Because of all this, the community began to assume that it was due to the lack of satisfaction of Birimamba. The economy was continually drastically deteriorating. The king Magelevendze went to the traditional healer named Matswororo to seek for answers in this matter. And Matswororo confirmed that the snake Birimamba was angry that is why the community was experiencing so much suffering. He instructed the king on what he should do to restore the disaster caused by the community. He indicated that the only son of his parents should go to the entrance of the Birimamba cave and play the drum. The snake in response should jump up and rejoice and everything would go back to the way they used to be, prosperity to the community.

The king Magelevendze made the announcement to the community and informed them as he was instructed by Matswororo. He promised many gifts and his daughter, Sponono, to the man who succeeded in getting positive feedback from Birimamba and in saving the community. Many withdrew their sons to engage in such acts as they were fearing for their lives. However, Muzondi who was the youngest of all the requested men, succeeded in the assignment and was later rewarded with a wife, the king Magelevendze's daughter, Sponono, and many gifts such as herd of cows. Muzondi took his wife and gifts to his village and started his family there.

4.2.4. *Mfutsu ni Mhungubye (The turtle and the jackal) (Shabangu, 2005:14)*

Once upon a time there was an argument between the Mfutsu (the turtle) and Mhungubye (the jackal) about who could run faster. When N'wampfundla (the rabbit) approached them, he could not stop laughing at their quarrels; he also tried to reprimand them but with no success. Therefore, N'wampfundla (rabbit) decided to come up with a solution to their quarrels. N'wampfundla (the rabbit) suggested that he would go to the king of animals, N'wanghala (the lion) for permission first. Later if N'wanghala (the lion) approved that the competition will succour in resolving the matter. The lion king N'wanghala approved and the competition went as per N'wampfundla (the rabbit)'s plans.

The day arrived and the game began. During the competition the Mhungubye (the jackal) seemed way faster than Mfutsu (the turtle). However, in the middle of the contest, Mhungubye (the jackal) got distracted and when he saw a sheep passing by the street, he looked and desired the sheep and fell off the trap. He chased the sheep, killed it and enjoyed his meat. Sadly, he fell asleep under the tree and began to snore.

In the meantime, Mfutsu (the turtle) went ahead of the Mhungubye (the jackal) and won the competition. When Mhungubye (the jackal) woke up, he only heard the sound of celebrations, then he remembered that he was still in the middle of the competition. But it was unfortunately too late for him to win. Mfutsu (the turtle) had already won and as a result he was picked up by the crowd as they celebrated with him. Mhungubye (the jackal) became very shy and disappointed and went away so embarrassed.

4.2.5. *Marimela-kule (Farming far, far away) (Mavikane, 1990:1)*

The folktale narrates about a man who had a wife and two daughters. His first daughter was sick and eventually got very ill and she was unable to do anything at home. When the family went to the farm to harvest some crops, the younger daughter worked half day, then returned home with crops carried on her head to look after her older sick sister and prepared the meal for the rest of the family, before they returned from the farm. When the little sister arrives home, she would sing a song asking for her sister to assist her load off the crops from her head and her older sister always assisted her. Within the village it was well known that there were ogres who killed people and, in some instances, they even killed children.

One day when she returned home, she sang the song to her sister and the sister did not respond. She spoke in a strange voice that sounded like ogres/trolls. Then, she threw off the calabash which was on her head and ran off back to the farm screaming and singing for her parents. The parents were hesitant that she was the one singing after them until she arrived and reported to them that she had ogre/trolls killed her sister. Without wasting time, they ran back home together only to find out that their other daughter was consumed by the ogres and they were all gone. Full of sadness the father knew the cave where the ogres resided.

He plotted to kill all of the trolls/ogres as a revenge for killing his daughter. He cunningly trapped and killed them all. Henceforth, none of them lived. When the man departed back home, the whole community came over to comfort the family for their loss and celebrated with him for killing all the ogres/trolls in the community.

4.2.6. *Ndhichi ya Madambi (A basket for Madambi) (Mavikane, 1990:16)*

This tale narrates about a young girl called N'warihati. One day she invited her friends to go with her to the river to swim and do laundry. While they were enjoying themselves swimming, mistakenly N'warihati's basket fell onto the moving water of the river, floated away and continued moving along. She attempted to pull it closely to herself but failed, and decided to chase after it on the river bank. On her journey while chasing after her basket she came across some groups of boys within the forest. She asked whether they might have seen her floating basket by the river and they told her they did not see it. N'warihati continued in her journey and met some other groups of girls and asked the same questions with no luck. She proceeded and met two groups of women, and later males. She kept on asking if they might have seen her floating basket, with no success and anxiously she continued her search.

Consequently, she came across a very old woman. The old woman indicated to her that she had seen the basket. However, in order for her to show it to N'warihati, N'warihati would have to assist her with a very difficult assignment which included helping her taking a bath by the river until she was clean. According to the old woman her trick was to see if N'warihati was a humble, patient person and was willing to assist others. N'warihati did her assignment as requested by the old woman and she was

greatly rewarded for her kindness and humility with many gifts which included her missing basket. Some of her gifts included the white heifer cow and bull calf, beautiful beads, clothes, flock of goats, a child and more.

Many of N'warihati's villagers and friends, upon hearing the part of her story, praised her for the good deeds and celebrated her success and riches she received from the old woman of the forest. However, one of her disloyal friends, named Makhegu, became envious of N'warihati and attempted to do just as she had done to attain her riches (going back to the river and attempting to meet up with the old woman who made N'warihati rich). Furthermore, Makhegu failed the test as she was not fully informed of the critical plans N'warihati went through in order for her to receive the gifts from the old woman. N'warihati concealed some detailed information knowing that that her friends were not loyal to her. Unlike N'warihati, Makhegu was not humble to do the work as instructed by the old woman as N'warihati was. Makhegu had to run for her life from the forest after she failed her test, the old woman cursed her. When Makhegu arrived home, her mother could not even recognise her as she lost her hand and a lot of weight from the trauma she went through during her visit to the old woman.

4.2.7. *Vakhidi (Swimmers)* (Rikhotso, 1993:21)

Long time ago, some young girls decided to invite their other friends to go together to the river to fetch water and to swim. When all the girls finished swimming, they dressed and embarked on their way back. One of the young girls as she came out from the river noticed that her wrapper was nowhere to be found (she was never mentioned in the tale). She then walked around looking for it, then she met some older women. With a song she sung to them and knelt down while asking if they might have seen her lost wrapper. Unfortunately, they had not.

The young girl then proceeded on her search and met some young boys who were busy breaking shell nuts. When she asked them, they indicated they had not seen her wrapper. Finally, still on her search the girl met another older woman. Instead of the older woman immediately answering the young girl whether she had seen her wrapper, she specified the young girl should first assist her in taking a bath, which the girl did. Then the older woman invited the young girl to her home and on their arrival,

the older woman said to the girl, 'Can you see that dove on top of that tree? That's the dove that took away your wrapper.'

The dove also confirmed that it had indeed taken away the girl's wrapper and specific instructions on what the girl needed to do in order for it to hand back the wrapper to her. The girl had to look after its little squabs until the old women came back from hunting. The girl had to assist in feeding the squab with some food at home. And the girl did just so. The dove returned back with some grasshoppers/locusts and used them to feed its squabs. The dove went out for the second time and this time it came along with the girl's wrapper and gave it to the girl. Joyously, and with excitement the girl took her wrapper and went back home celebrating that she has found it.

4.2.8. *N'wampfundla na N'wamfenhe (The Rabbit and the baboon) (Rikhotso, 1994:71)*

The tale narrates about N'wampfundla (rabbit) and N'wamfenhe (baboon) who were so hungry. The N'wampfundla (rabbit) suggested that they go somewhere where he knew there were many frogs for them to eat. With excitement the N'wamfenhe (baboon) went as per the suggestion and they found so many frogs. With excitement they ate all the frogs. Their tummies became extremely full, and they could barely lift up their feet or get up from where they were seated. N'wampfundla (rabbit) suggested to N'wamfenhe (baboon) to play a game of operations/stitching with each another. N'wamfenhe (baboon) indicated that it would like start operating N'wampfundla (rabbit), however, insisted on operating the N'wamfenhe (baboon) first. They both reached an agreement to start with N'wamfenhe (baboon).

N'wampfundla (rabbit) continued with the operation of N'wamfenhe (baboon)'s private parts. When he finished it, it was N'wampfundla (rabbit)'s turn. N'wampfundla (rabbit) chose to reject the offer to be operated by N'wamfenhe (baboon) and ran away from the baboon and laughing out loudly. He disappeared into the bush while saying that the baboon would see to it all by himself. N'wamfenhe (baboon) was so disappointed, anxious and very furious, because he could not relieve or ease himself from pressure. Nwamfenhle' s stomach was too full of the frogs which he ate earlier that day. Sadly,

N'wamfenhe (baboon) tried moving away from the well of frogs to get assistance, however later he died due to pressure.

4.2.9. *Swihandza-Matala (Digger of the landfill/garbage dump)* (Rikhotso,1994:80)

Long long time ago when the stones were still soft, Tihuku (chickens) and *Swikhwezana* (eagle) used to be friends. One day the chickens decided to ask for a pair of scissors of the eagle and promised to bring them back. The eagle was delighted to lend the chickens the pair of scissors with the hope of receiving it back as they were old, good neighbors. The chickens used the pair of scissors. One day the pair of scissors got lost. The chickens anxiously went to the landfill/dumping area and continued to search for them, digging everywhere with their claws looking for the eagle's pair of scissors with no luck.

Day and night the chickens went to the landfill/dumping digging around with their claws searching for the lost pair of scissors. Then the eagle approached the chickens demanding the scissors back. The chickens indicated that they would return them as soon as they find them at the landfill. The eagle patiently waited, however, there was no hope for return of the scissors.

The eagle conspired to go out after the chicks of the chickens, snatched them all and flew far away with them as a revenge. This triggered hatred between the eagles and the chickens to date. The chickens were still seen digging down with their claws in search for the lost scissors and the eagles continued with the snatching of the chicks of the chickens.

4.2.10. *Muheti wa Mati (The one who finished the water)* (Rikhotso, 1993:33)

Once upon a time, a man was walking through the bush and saw the ripped nkwakwa tree (monkey orange tree). Enthusiastically, the following day he took along his pregnant wife and with them a small amount of water in a calabash jar. The wife got too thirsty and needed to drink more water, however, the water was finished. The husband suggested that since the wife was thirsty, they should go to the natural spring and have some water to drink. Upon their arrival, the wife consumed all the water

alone and then became unable to rise and move. The spouse chose to abandon her because she was still enjoying the water and consumed it entirely.

While the woman were still seated there, various types of animals including the elephant came over and asked her why the water was finished. All the animals were also thirsty and needed water to quench their thirst. The woman failed to answer all of them and as a result the female elephant punched the pregnant women with its horn in her belly and the water came out again and filled the natural spring of water. Her children survived, sadly their mother died. The animals were so pleased that they were able to enjoy the water from the cistern again. The children of the woman later grew up together and looked after one another many years after their mother's death.

4.2.11. *Xinyanyana (A small bird)* (Rikhotso, 1994:49)

Once upon a time, there was a woman who enjoyed waking up early in the morning and cleaning her yard. During evening she would go to sleep. A bird would fly around in the evening and mess the yard with grasses. When the woman woke up in the morning, she would find the yard very dirty again with grass all over. This shocked her to see the yard dirty after all her hard work of cleaning the yard daily. The woman would clean the yard and the same thing repeated the following morning. The woman informed her husband of her distress about the unusual grass she would find in her yard each morning. They both decided not to fall asleep one night but to monitor what normally filled their yard with so much grass at midnight. Through their observations they saw a bird as usual messing the whole yard with grass while singing. One night the woman grabbed hold of the bird, put it in the pot, and closed it up.

Those two parents later gave instructions to their daughter early in the morning on their way to the farm that she should not open the pot. However, when they were gone, their daughter opened the pot out of curiosity and the bird flew. She tried running after it but failed to catch it. When her parents came back the daughter explained everything that happened so the mother decided that they go out on the search together for the bird. They went to different places and met different animals and people on their search for the bird but the journey was unsuccessful in tracing the bird again.

4.2.12. *Madya yexe (The one who eats alone/stingy person) (Rikhotso, 1993:11)*

Long, long time ago, a man went out to hunt. During the hunt he found an antelope and killed it. He then hid the antelope close to the farm under some grass where his wife was harvesting their crops. When it was sundown, the wife suggested that they go home because it was getting late. However, the husband insisted that he wanted to rest a little at the farm since he was not feeling well. He indicated that the wife would find him at the farm when she returned in the morning.

The wife then decided to go home and left her husband behind per his husband's suggestion. After she left, the husband took out his hidden antelope that he killed earlier. He removed skin of the antelope, preparing it for him to cook it. Cooking was easier because the farm had cooking utensils right. He cooked and enjoyed his meal while singing alone.

When the wife arrived home, she was concerned about her husband who was left behind at the farm in poor health. She decided to go back and check on him again on how he doing. As she was approaching the farm, she could smell aromatic cooked meat coming from where she had left her husband. She decided to sneak out and hide behind the tree to see where the smell was coming from. The woman was shocked to see her husband busy enjoying himself with the cooked meat alone in the dark and even singing and looking healthier. The wife then saw other raw meat which was part of the antelope that her husband had hanged beside the tree at the farm (with the hope of cooking it again the following day). In anger she sneaked out and snatched it secretly.

The wife took the meat and returned home. On her way back, she was very disappointed why her husband pretended was sick and simply ate the meat alone at the farm without sharing it with his family. When the wife arrived home, she dug a hole, hid the uncooked meat within her yard and waited for her husband to return home. She invited all the women of the community and reported everything that the husband had done. When he arrived home, he was so embarrassed with his act of unselfishness and greed that he caused to his family.

4.2.13. *Mughobozi (A gossip) (Mavikane, 1990:48)*

Once upon a time, there were two kings, King Nyengani and King Hawani. These two kings both had beautiful young women under their rulership. However, king Nyengani had the most beautiful daughter of all. Her name was Mughobozi. Mughobozi's Aunt N'wamhamba was the one who enhanced Mughobozi's beauty even more with cosmetics. The two kings' young women met for the beauty contest and Mughobozi took the award because she was prettier than all of them. This stirred anger among all the women including the young women of king Hawani. As a result, they schemed evil thoughts against Mughobozi because they hated her and felt jealous of her beauty. Then, one day, they invited her to go along with them to the forest to dig for some pelagic clay by the caves.

They started digging by the cave and ensured that it was very deep and they continued to dig in rotation to see who could dig the deepest. When it was Mughobozi's turn to dig further, they decided to cover her up with sand inside the hole and she got trapped inside (with the possibility of killing her). They all returned to their various homes and left Mughobozi behind. In the evening Mughobozi's mother was concerned about her daughter and asked around sadly with no success. Mughobozi had one loyal dog there at her home (at king Nyengani's palace); the dog loved her so much and she used to feed it daily. When the dog realised that she was missing, the dog went looking for her. The dog would sniff around until it traced Mughobozi and helped her to come out from the cave.

Later, the dog bugged her until someone came to the rescue of Mughobozi who was unable to walk back home as she had fainted inside the cave where the other young women left her. Later Mughobozi and the dog were found and taken back safely. The king rejoiced that beautiful daughter was found; she was cared for medically to ensure that she was in good health. King Nyengani then prepared a huge celebration where people enjoyed themselves with food and alcohol. In the evening when all the men were intoxicated, the king went to the young women's palace and killed all of them in revenge for what they did to his daughter.

4.2.14. *Nuna la nga laviki vana va vafana (A man who does not love boy children) (Maluleke, 2017:23)*

Long long time ago, there was a man who married a beautiful wife. One day he said to his wife, 'I do not like baby boys and please do not give birth to one for me'. The wife conceived and gave birth to the baby boy. Terrified on what would happen to her son because the husband was clear that he did not want a boy child, she decided to take the baby and went to the mountain of *Xifufudzi* and hid him away from his father. The woman would go there often to feed her son with porridge and to breastfeed him.

On one of the days after she returned from feeding her son, a lion came after she had left and took the child for himself. The lion cared for the little baby boy and trained him how to run faster. The lion later also took the child to school for education purposes. The boy grew up to be the best runner at school and many were so fascinated at his running skills. Many would often ask him why was he staying in the mountains unlike other normal people. He told them the whole truth what led him to stay in the forest. Then, they decided to take him and cared for him at their home.

4.2.15. *N'wanghala na N'wampfundla evukonwanini (The Lion and the rabbit went together to the Lions' wife's family re-union) (Ngobeni, 2004:20)*

Long time ago, there was a lion and a rabbit. One day the lion invited the rabbit to accompany him to his wife's family re-union. The rabbit was so happy and honoured the invitation to be the groomsman. However, the lion asked the rabbit to be on his best behaviour when they arrived there and, to avoid being embarrassed in front of his in-laws and the rest of the family by the rabbit. Before they left their house, the rabbit took along a bag with him and the lion asked him what the bag was for. He mentioned it was for him carry leftovers (food remains) after the ceremony. On their way, they passed through a cave full of bees; while the lion was not observing, the rabbit took all the bees and put inside his bag and secured them inside. Their journey continued.

When they arrived at the family re-union, the family welcomed them and offered them food and alcohol. They also provided them with a live dance in the house. The rabbit

as the groomsman would ensure that the lion was well taken care of by offering him a lot of alcohol. However, the rabbit was not drinking as much as the lion; he would just pretend that he was also indulging in alcohol like the lion. The excitement and celebration were at its peak and everyone was dancing and enjoying themselves. Then, the rabbit sneaked out when he noticed that everyone was enjoying themselves and drunk. He opened his bag of bees which he collected earlier on their way with the lion and went out and locked them all inside. People started crying and screaming inside; unfortunately, they could not come out since the door was locked by the rabbit from the outside.

The rabbit was laughing at all of them from the outside as they were crying for help due to bees' stings. Then, N'wachavalalankova arrived and overheard people screaming for help, he opened the door and all came out, bruised and swollen from the bee stings. During that time the rabbit noticed that he was in trouble, ran off and disappeared into the bushes. The lion was very furious and knew that the only person who could have done all of that was the rabbit and he was looking forward to kill him if he found him. Sadly, that was the end of the relationship of the lion, the rabbit and the family, as they never wanted to see the rabbit again after all that had happened.

4.3. ANALYSIS OF FOLKTALES ACCORDING TO THE LIFE SKILLS OUTCOMES

Life Skills curriculum, as outlined in (CAPS) has the following learning outcomes:

- Personal and social wellbeing.
- Creative arts
- Beginning knowledge
- Physical well being

Outcome	Grade 1 hours / week	Grade 2 hours / week	Grade 3 hours / week
Beginning Knowledge	1	1	2
Creative Arts	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2
Personal and Social Well-being	1	1	1
TOTAL	6	6	7

Table 1: Time allocation for Life Skills outcomes

These four outcomes are distributed accordingly throughout the academic year. The hours are allocated according to the age groups per grade within the Foundation Phase. According to CAPS the hours allocated for Grade R, 1 and 2 per term is 60 hours and for Grade 3 70 hours per term, (DBE, 2011). Therefore, there is balanced hours allocated for each grade based on their learning experience of the particular grade and years of the students (DBE, 2011). As indicated in Table 1 above, Grade 1 and 2 Life Skills subject learning outcomes are allocated equally per week namely, Personal and social wellbeing (1 hour), Creative arts (2 hours), Beginning knowledge (1 hours) and Physical education (2 hours) (DBE, 2011). Whereas, in Grade 3 the same learning output is allocated differently compared to the Grade R-2 weekly. For example, Beginning knowledge (2 hours) and Personal and social wellbeing (1 hour), Creative arts (2 hours) and Physical education (2 hours). The main reason for the hours division is to ensure the overall development of children in the Foundation Phase based of their grades and ages as per the curriculum (DBE, 2011). Each term of the various levels or grades in the Foundation Phase has various topics to select from. Therefore, the teacher needs to select the best possible activities from the recommended resources by the National Curriculum statement (NCS) and examine

one(s) which will be suitable for the children within their levels and learning environments (DBE, 2011). The sections that follow analyse different folktales according to the four outcomes mentioned above.

4.3.1. Personal and social wellbeing

According to CAPS, Personal well-being focuses on teaching children about their personal life such as taking good care of themselves both externally and emotionally, (DBE, 2011). For example, children can look at their personal well-being by looking after themselves when they take baths and are hygienic, oral hygiene, improving their healthy eating habits, emotional needs and personal rights etc. On the other hand, social well-being will focus in teaching children about behaviour around other people including the diverse cultures, applying the positive attitude and good morals towards people and in making firm decisions about life and health matters (DBE, 2011).

Physical and social well-being is a combination of empowering children with the welfare and social lives in a nutshell. Additionally, this learning outcome will assist children in the Foundation Phase to learn about their rights as children and the constitution within South Africa (DBE, 2011). Xitsonga folktales contribute in teaching children about other aspects of personal and social well-being and will be discussed below.

Within Xitsonga folktales, there are several folktales that encourage and teach learners about their personal and social wellbeing within the society where they live. This includes amongst other obedience from parents/elderly,

4.3.1.1. Obedience

In the tale Ndabambi a teka Siwelele, Ndabambi was the young and only son of Pfhophpho. Ndabambi was not an ordinary young man like others, because he had physical disabilities (twisted hands). The monarch invited all young strong men, including kings, to the contest in exchange for his daughter Siwelele's hand in marriage to the winner. This is evident in the following lines:

*Kutani Ntswembu a rhumela yena rito eka tihosi tin'wana,
Leswaku n'wana wa yena Siwelele u ta nghenela tsima,
Kutani Siwelele a nga tekiwa hi n'wana wa hosi,
Kumbe a tekiwa hi jaha lero tiya swinene.
Leri nga kotaka ku tsema muri hi xihloka ri nga wisangi (Shabangu, 2005:19).*

Translation:

'Then Ntswembu sent out the invite to all the kings
That his daughter has now grown to join the marriage contest
He wanted Siwelele to get marriage to the son of the king
Or to get married to a strong man'
The one who will chop down the tree with the bush knife without resting.'

It was acknowledged that during the contest Ndabambi's situation compared to the others appeared inferior and he was mocked by the kings and strong men because of his appearance. This is evident in the quoted lines below:

*Ivi majaha laman'wana va n'wi hlekula,
Va vula leswaku loko swi tsandze vona,
Yena a ta swi kutisa ku yini a ri mutsoniwa hi ndlela liya, (Shabangu,2005)*

Translation:

'Then other young men mocked, and
Saying that if they have failed how will he succeed?
How will he be able to cut down the tree with his disabilities'

Nevertheless, Ndabambi was not discouraged with what others said to him. When all young men and kings failed to chop down the tree, Ndabambi boosted his courage and went to cut down the tree. This included having a positive attitude during his assignment. In the midst of him chopping down the tree, he remembered what his

father taught him and this motivated him to reach goal. This was brought out from the tale as follows;

A tsundzuka ntsena switshundzuxo swa tata wakwe,

Hiloko a xi khoma xihloka xi tiya ... (Shabangu, 2005)

Translation:

'Then he remembered what his father taught him,

He firmly got hold the bush knife'

This demonstrated that Ndabambi was an obedient child of his parents. He endured terrible treatment from the people who knew him and possibly knew of his physical limitations prior the contest because some of the strong men were from the same community. Thus far, they mistreated him. Instead of him discouraged to discontinue the contest, Ndabambi closed his ears to his competitors' negative influence and focused on the positive side. What his father taught him was his priority even in difficult times. Therefore, children can learn a valuable lesson from this tale, that being obedient to their parent's instructions will bring them blessings. The tale highlights the obedience to parents; however, it can also be applicable to being obedient to guardians or elderly, because they too are eligible for teaching children the rightful course in their life.

4.3.1.2. Building up positive self-esteem

The folktale, Ndabambi a teka Siwelele addresses one of the vital aspects to children today in many countries. Ndabambi was a disabled man and from the tale, Ndabambi experienced disrespect and discrimination amongst his own village people. Surely this was not easy for him because he did not choose to be disabled. Therefore, this folktale can also teach young children not to disrespect people with physical limitation. According to Kaplan (1999), impairments or disabilities can be defined as a person's prolonged or temporary mental and physical impediments from functioning what ordinary individuals generally do. This means that people with disabilities will require additional or more care in assistance in performing some general tasks. For example,

a person who is crippled will require a wheel chair to enable him to move around on a daily basis. And in the instance for someone who is partially visually impaired, he or she will need some prescribed medical spectacles or contact lens to enable him to see. Children have rights and it is important that they are taught about their human rights and basic constitutional rights based on their age groups.

From *Ndabambi a teka Siwelele*, children can learn the importance building their personal positive esteem. Life Skills also teaches children ways on how to build a positive self-concept or self-esteem. This tale conveyed that Ndabambi was well taught by his father and that contributed to his confidence. As quoted:

Kambe tatana wa yena a n'wi laye kahle ku tsema murhi (Shabangu, 2005)

Translation:

'He was well instructed by his father on how to cut down the tree.'

Ndabambi's confidence was enhanced through his father who spent time teaching him how to cut the tree in a particular way. Probably in repeated sessions since he was disabled boy until he mastered the skill. That helped him in accomplishing his task even though people thought he was unable. When the crowd laughed at him, it was as if they were giving him more strength to endure cutting down the tree with enthusiasm. This was quoted below:

Ndabambi a endla onge anga voni nchumu, (Shabangu, 2005)

Translation:

'Ndabambi pretended like he did not see anything'

Ndabambi was shrewd, he knew how to handle pressure in a positive way. Thus, he pretended he did not hear all the negative comments from his competitors. The importance of teaching children Life Skills can benefit the young to build up positivity and willingness to complete their specific task. When children have positive learning attitudes, they can benefit in several ways both emotionally and physically and that will encourage them to want to learn more.

Children in the Foundation Phase can learn from the Xitsonga folktales in imitating good qualities that will assist them in handling their given task positively and diligently. Teachers need to be well equipped and trained in assisting children to implement these kinds of skills.

4.3.1.3. Respect for people with disabilities

Moreover, for the communities to promote equality and respect for people with disabilities, young children in the Foundation Phase need to be taught on how to treat people with physical limitations. This will also impart the knowledge to children to understand and respect them and to build united communities and an environment where everyone feels safe and conducive for all without mockery or discrimination due to their differences of colour, race or disabilities.

Children can learn the importance of being kind to others and be willing to assist such people with physical limitations when they need help and this will assist in promoting peace within the family and communities. Therefore, this will foster good relations and break the barrier of viewing the physically limited people as if they are not normal people due to their unique appearance or limitations.

Children can learn how to embrace the disabled and learn more from other special qualities and skills they have. Children or people living with disabilities can also benefit in sporting activities similarly to those of the children in the Foundation Phase. For example, Celenk (2021) argued that the progress of people with disabilities who engage in sports activities are more likely to be more active and show positive progress rather than those who do not engage in any sport activities. This frankly shows that children with or without physical limitations can still enjoy the same privilege, respect and live equally in South Africa if the positive knowledge is shared to them through life skills subjects using the Xitsonga folktales.

Children can learn to respect not only people with physical limitations, rather they can also learn to respect people from various cultures, race, colour and background. This will help in building better communities, equality and unity amongst children and universal peace.

The *Marimela Kule* folktale teaches the importance of caring and love for others. For example, the tale brings out how a young girl was able to take care of her older sister when she was sick. Their parents regularly went out to the farm to look for food. Therefore, the young girl had a responsibility to care for her older ill sister. Sometimes she went with her parents in the morning to the farm; however, she would return earlier with food so that she could cook for the whole family before her parents returned from the farm. This is supported by the following quotation:

Makwavo wa yena a hamba a vuya

Ku ta swekela makwavo wa yena loyi a vabya.

Na kona a a lulamisa swakudya swa vatswari va yena ,

Leswi va nga ta dya loko va kotsokile nimadyambu (Mavikane,1990:1)

Translation:

‘She would come back early.

To cook for her sick sibling/sister

And also prepares a meal for her parents,

So that they can eat when they are back from work in the evening’

The above phrases brought out that children can be taught to work and do chores at home. In many cultures including the xitsonga culture, young women or girls are taught how to cook, clean and fetch water. This serves as a way of preparing the child for adulthood or future marriage and being a responsible person. As described in the above quote, it is common for children to learn such skills.

The folktales also indicated that the young girl returned to the farm to care for her ill sister who was lying in bed. Children too can care for their ill siblings, family members or relatives today. Depending on their various ages, children can be taught the importance of caring for the sick at home. For example, bringing medications or a glass water closer to the sick person or a pillow for comfort on the couch or the bed. This will make the sick more appreciative for the care and support displayed to them by the child. Caring for others can also contribute to young children in making it their personal careers, such as the future nurses, caregivers, doctors or specialties in

various medical fields. This will benefit not only themselves and those around them but society as a whole.

During the corona virus pandemic, many hospitals experienced burn out due to the shortage of health workers and many lost their lives in the battle of saving others who contracted the virus (Deonarain, 2024). In support of this, De Bles et al. (2024) confirm that research has shown that there has been an escalation in the high rate of health workers with mental health issues such as depression, and anxieties including absenteeism in the Netherlands and also South Africa. Numerous health workers resigned during burn out at work (De Bles et al., 2024). Therefore, if children are taught these folktales, they will have a positive effect on their personal decisions in the future and benefit the communities too. Children will also learn how to extend their love in helping others promoting peace and unity within the communities and across the globe.

4.3.1.4. Healthy eating

Life Skills teaches the importance of health promotion to children. How children need to look after their health and bodies, which includes eating healthy meals and staying hydrated, is taught. From the *Marimela kule* folktale tale highlighted food that the family harvested from their farm was mentioned previously, which was used by the young girl to cook for her ill sister and the rest of the family when they went to the farm. The folktale mentioned some of the different types of African meals that children still enjoy in the 21st century for their health benefits. as quoted:

A tala ku vuya na swifaki

Makalavatla, tinyawa, maranga ni matimba, (Mavikane,1990)

Translation:

‘She used to come home with corns.

Watermelons, beans, squash, and sugarcane’

The subject Life Skills teaches children the importance of eating healthily and one of the ways is to eat nutritional food. The food mentioned above from the tale are

watermelon, corn and squash. These types of food are commonly used for general purpose and also for diet reasons for many who are health conscious or those who want to lose weight. Corn is one of the most consumed vegetables according to Plate and Gallaher (2005) and can be used for making tortillas, cornflakes, baking and oats. The Vatsonga tribe and many Africans also make use of corn for various dishes such as maize meal for cooking pap, samp, flour, braai corn and freshly cooked corn.

Thus, this clearly indicated that folktales can be a good source to teach children when it comes to healthy eating habits. The Marimela kule tale also highlighted the importance of drinking water and this is shown in the following quote:

Xigono hi ku twa xi nga ha tiyiseli hi torha,

Xo huma le bakweni, (Mavikane, 1990:6)

Translation:

'The ogre could not contain his thirst,

Then, he went out from the cave'

The above statement highlights what is common today, when a person is thirsty and dehydrated, they need water to survive. During various sports activities people use water which helps them to stay hydrated. However, water is not only used for drinking purposes. Life Skills teaches children other benefits of using water, such as, bathing, cleaning, using the water to flush toilets, watering plants, brushing teeth and washing clothes. Many folktales in Xitsonga including the, *Ndhichi ya madambi*, *Vakhidi* and *Muheti wa mati* brought this out, because they used the water not only to refresh themselves, but also to bath or wash their bodies. Consequently, from the tale *Ndhichi ya Madambi*, the young girls decide to go to the river to take a bath and to wash their clothes. This is collaborated by the following quotation;

N'warihati a rhamba na Vanhwanyana – kulobye,

Va kongoma enambyeni

Nwarihati a teka sambelo a famba na rona,

A rhwele hi rona leswi aya ku ya swi hlantswa, (Mavikane, 1990)

Translation:

'N'warihati invited his peers,
Then, they all went to the river,
N'warihati took along her washing basket,
She used it to carry her clothes that she was going to wash'

As quoted above, it was common in ancient times for the village dwellers to go to the rivers and streams to wash clothes, bath and take the cattle for drinking water. Therefore, this folktale can still teach children in the Foundation Phase today various uses of water as indicated above. Water has other usages and positive benefits in humans which children can further explore through Xitsonga folktales such as water the plants and the importance of the water cycle.

4.3.1.5. Water sustainability

Life Skills also teaches children the importance of protecting and the sustainability of water. This was demonstrated by the tale, *Muheti wa Mati*. The pregnant woman was too thirsty and drank all the water from the natural spring. When the different animals went to the natural springs of water, their norm was to drink the water. However, the water was no more which made them furious, as quoted:

Loko wansati a hari kwale xidziveni,
Ku ta fika mhunti yi kuma mati ya herile
Kutani yi ku Vhulavhula, Imani a nga het mati? (Mavikane, 1990)

Translation:

'While the woman was still at the water spring
The antelope arrived, the water was finished,
Then he asked, speak, who finished the water?'

The antelope was furious with the woman who finished the water. The woman was selfish to drink all the water for herself. As a result, she could not even move or get up after drinking all the water from the natural spring. Her husband had to leave her behind and return home. This was shown below;

Nuna wa yena a ku;

Leswi u nga kotiki ku famba

Mina ni ta ku sukela kwala,

Kunene wanuna luya a famba, (Mavikane, 1990)

Translation;

'Her husband said,

Since you cannot be able to walk anymore,

I will leave you behind,

Then the men walked away'

The tale can teach children to avoid greed and to love others. The vital lesson here is to use water wisely and share with other who do not have. The woman in this tale was pregnant, however, when she had an opportunity to drink water from the water spring, she failed to drink only what she needed. Rather, she drank all the water and the water was already finished when animals needed to drink, Children need to learn the lessons of saving water both at home and school, for example, when washing their bodies, or flushing the toilet. South Africa has many communities where people do not have sufficient water supply to their home (Thompson et al., 2012). It is envisaged that South Africa in the future will experience more water scarcity due to poor maintenance of water resources and climate change.

Currently in many places such as Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga many people do not have basic water supplies and they rely on rain water from the streams and rivers. For example, in the N'wamitwa and Mawa villages in Tzaneen, many villagers or people currently buy water to drink, for cooking and for washing their clothes from those who have waterholes at their homes, which is more cost effective, because many cannot afford to buy due to the high rate of unemployment in South

Africa. Therefore, they will rather risk their lives and go to the streams and rivers to get water. The tale *Muheti wa mati* can remind children about being considerate towards others and the importance of sustaining the water supply. This will lift the burden of other communities who have lack of water supply.

4.3.2. Creative arts

According to CAPS, creative arts introduce children to the four main forms of arts namely, drama, music, visual arts, and dance (DBE,2011). The main focus of this outcome is to impart basic skills to children in using their imaginative skills, explore creativity and what will enhance their world view of arts and to further show appreciation for the beauty of arts around them. From Xitsonga folktales it is observed that many folktales demonstrate more music and imaginative arts and less dance in the tales.

The narrator who is commonly an elder person within the family, has to ensure that he/she is in good mood to share the story so as to entertain the children as he/she narrates the story. Children sense the emotions of the narrator before he narrates the tale, and the feeling can be contagious and prompt them to listen attentively to the tale. This will prevent the children losing interest in the tale before it reaches the climax or even its conclusion. Thus, the narrator needs to have a narration skill or love for children for them to enjoy the session because this will help the children to visualise what they are learning about.

4.3.2.1. Cultivating the culture of music

Xitsonga folktales are one form of creative arts and its content is different from other anthologies such as novels or short stories. Folktale's format is usually written in stanzas and commonly aligned in a left-hand margin, which makes it easier to read and to follow through. Folk songs in most of the tales are centered within the page or some written in italic, or written differently than the rest of the text of the tale. Folk songs are often repetitive during the narration and also rhyme as the narrative tells

the story. This was demonstrated in various tales including *Marimela kule*, *Ndichi ya Madambi* and *Xinyanyana*.

Ndzi vitana manana Marimela-kule vanamane,

Ndzi vitana manana Marimela-kule vanamane,

Le kaya xi dlele xikulukumba, Marimela kule, (Mavikane,1990)

Translation:

'A calling my mother who farms far far away women,

A calling my mother who farms far far away women

At home the older one has died'

The above quote of *Marimela kule* tale highlights the rhyme in folktales. The rhyme makes the song more enjoyable and easier for children to remember and learn the words quickly when the tale is narrated. The song is also repetitive, which will help the children to recall what the song is all about and most importantly its lesson. Some children when they grow up might follow the route of the media studies or singing careers such as hip-hop music. Therefore, understanding and enjoying the rhyme of the folk songs from the folktales, children can practice the same method in conducting music, cultural music and drama.

During the narration of the tale children are invited to sing the folksongs and even dance or clap as requested by the narrator as part of the fun. Folktale and folk songs can assist children to use their sentiments in various ways as they listen to the folktale, for example they can feel sad, curious, and happy when the folktale is narrated. This will help them in imitating the good example and heroes which they found from tales in a positive way in their lives.

4.3.2.2. Enhancement of emotions

The above folk song brings out some sad memories, because the young girl was singing an agonising song because someone whom she loved and she was caring for

was killed, her sister. This folk song was sung while she was running back to the farm to report the sad news to her parents.

Folk songs in the Xitsonga tales are also narrated in between the story telling to motivate the audience to follow through as he/ she narrates the tale. Folk songs have various meaning in each one of them and can also portray different emotions when a reader including children listen to them. For example, folk songs can bring sad memories as indicated in the previous quote in the tale *Marimela kule*, it can be used for communications, revealing identity to the next person or as mockery. This was demonstrated also from the tale *Muheti wa mati*.

The pregnant woman drank all the water of the cistern and finished it all. As a result, she was later killed when the animals punched her belly with the horn in the attempt of reclaim the water back into the cistern. The children survived, a boy and girl (a pair of twins). The children later grew up and cared for one another.

The twin brother used to go out to hunt for the meal for them to eat. The twin sister would remain at home. For the safety of his twin sister and for her protection, the young man decided to teach his sister the song which he would sing each time he came back home. The sister would have to memorise the song, so as to recognise her brother's voice and open the door for him. The young man also warned his twin sister that she should not open the door for strangers. Moreover, the song was used as a form of true identification between themselves. Each time the young men would sing the song from outside the house/door and the young women would respond if the voice matched that of her twin brother. This is presented below:

Mufana loyi a hamba a ya eku holoteni,
A siya makwavo wa nwhanyana endlwini,
Hi masiku loko a famaba a byela makwavo ,
loko ndzi sukile , usala u goga rivanti ,
Hikuva u nga humelelela hi makhomba,
Kutani ndzi ta hamba ndzi yimbelela nghoma ,
Kutani loko u yi twa, tiva leswaku hi mina,

U ndzi pfulela ndzi nghena,

Loko , rito u nga ri tive u nga pfuli.., (Rikhotso,1993)

Translation:

'The boy used to go hunting,

He would live his sibling in the house

Each time he went out he would say this to his sister,

As soon as I leave the house make sure you lock yourself from the inside.

For your own safety,

Then from now on I will sing a song for you,

When you hear it, this will reveal to you that it is I,

Open for me to come in,

If you hear the voices of stranger, don't open'

This folktale demonstrates how the two siblings love each other. Through singing of the song, the young sister will have to pay more than normal attention to her brother's voice each time he sang. This will prevent from opening the door for strangers or be killed by strangers in her brother's absence. The reader of the folktale too can sense the emotions of the song whether for sorrow or rejoicing. Children too as the tale is narrated to them can sense the emotion as the narrator sings along.

This folktale can teach children today not to talk to strangers or entertain strangers more especially in the absence of their parents or guardians. According to Seedat et al., (2009) South Africa has a high rate of child abuse including molestation of children younger than 19 years. According to research the perpetrators are mostly relatives of the victim or someone they know from their area (Seedat et al., 2009). The Xitsonga folktales such as these can also assist the guardians and parents to be on the lookout, to take full responsibility for their children's safety at all times and to ensure that they are aware of where their children are and constantly check what they are doing and with whom.

4.3.2.3. Imagination for learners

Xitsonga folktales are imaginative, therefore when the narrator tells the tale, children will use their individual visual images to engage in the lesson of the particular tale. In a rare case some Xitsonga texts display images throughout the book, such as *Thu..Choyoyo!*, (Mtsetweni, 1995), which makes it easier for children identify animals directly from the book as the narrator shares with in the story. However, in the case where folktales do not contain images, when the narrator recites the story, the children will have to imagine, feel, see, touch and be part of the tale with their imagination. The children's tales fundamentally highlight the lessons such as being brave, cowardly, smart, kind or obedience. The Xitsonga folktales use common objects and equipment that are known to children to visualise the scenery as they listen to the tale. Moreover, when children are able to understand what the narrator is saying, they will have to use their imaginative skills or such objects to follow through and get the message of the tale. The folktales should be clear and not complicated for children to understand without much interruption as the narrator tells the story.

In the *Mughobozi* folktale, the author gave a beautiful illustration on how children follow the tale and imagine the scene. For example, when the dog was on the lookout for Mughobozi who was missing and how it behaved. as quoted:

yo nuhetela vuthala, yo ri ntlha.

Hi ndlela leyi nga huma ha yona na van'wana vanhwana...

Loko va ya le ku celeni ka tsumani,

A yi endla ingaku yo khomile hi rihuhu,

Ritshuri ri sala hala ndzhaku ka yona kulo mpoti!

Yi kongoma kwale a ku ceriwa kona tsumani, (Mavikane, 1990)

Translation:

'The dog sniffed for evidence, and run off,

It followed the same route where the girl went along with other girls,

When it arrived, it's started shivering,

When they went to dig the red sand/red clay,

As the dog run, only traced of dust left was seen,

The dog went where the girls went to dig for the red sand/red clay'

The above quote gives a clear description on how the dog behaved when it was in search for a missing person, Mughobozi. It was swift and utilised its sense of smell in order to trace the missing person. When it arrived where the young girl was, it could identify the place and start digging in search for her and it was successful in rescuing her from the valley of death. Life Skill teaches children about the different types of careers, one being a policeman.

Children at the Foundation Phase level will learn how to identify different careers and along with their dress and grooming as per each specific job title. However, as they continue to grow, they will also explore the types of jobs police do and tools they use in order to protect the nation, which are weapons, paper spray or even police dogs. Similarly, to the Mughobozi tale above, the police dogs are used to search for criminals, drugs or evidence in the police investigation processes. Therefore, children can learn about the importance of dogs around them.

The dog that was in search for Mughobozi prior to the acknowledgment of Mughobozi's missing had a special relationship with her. The tale brought out that Mughobozi along with her brother loved playing with the dog at the palace and Mughobozi specifically was the one who used to feed the dog daily. When the dog noticed that she was not coming to feed as usual, the dog went around to many places where Mughobozi used to visit, yet the dog could not find her. As a result, the dog noticed that she was missing and went out in search of her using its sense of smell.

Children can learn to care for the dogs as well at home by feeding them daily if it is safe to do so or under an elder's guidance. Dogs can also serve as protection against their enemies or thieves. The tale gave the evidence concerning the dogs; however, this can be extended to other animals or pets at home such as cats, parrot (birds), chicks or cows. Moreover, folktales can teach children in the Foundation Phase their

behaviour, attitude and the importance of caring and loving animals. The *Mughobozi* tale brought out another example when the dog begs as a sign for help. As quoted,

hiloko a ringeta ku famba,

a swi n'wi nonohela ku famba

U yile a ya fika kusuhi ni le kaya.

A khandziya murhi lowu a wu ri kusuhi na le kaya .

Mbyana na yona yi sungula ku rila:

Wo-o-o-o-o-o! wo.o.o.o.o.o!

Makwavo wa Mughobozi o huma a khomile xigiya,

A kongoma kwale mbyana a yi twakala ku rila kona, (Mavikane, 1990)

Translation:

'as she tried moving forward

And it was so difficult for her to walk ahead,

She climbed the tree somewhere close to by home,

The dog also started crying:

Wo-o-o-o-o-o! Wo-o-o-o-o-o!

Mughobozi's brother quickly went out with his weapon oh his hand,

And went where he heard the sound of the dog'

The dog served as a protection for Mughobozi as she was struggling to walk back home due to lack of strength. The dog noticed that Mughobozi was unable to walk or shout further for help, therefore the dog barked on her behalf. As a result, her younger brother heard the sound of the cry of the dog and rushed there immediately with the weapon to rescue her and proper medications were given to Mughobozi to heal from the trauma she faced from her friend.

This folktale can teach children many lessons about the dog 's behaviour, for example many households in South Africa today own a dog or dogs. Dogs can bark for various

reasons, and the householder if attentive can tell the difference. The dog's bark can be a sign for help similar to the Mughobozi tale. Dogs can bark differently when they see strangers at the gate of the house (commonly aggressive), when they see other dogs (commonly aggressive) or when they generally need attention from the owner.

The folktale can assist children in the Foundation Phase to understand the dog's behaviour and how they can also assist them when in dangers. The folktale used the common animals which children are able to relate to and are familiar with its attitude and bark. Therefore, the tale was able to help them to visualise the scene and grasp the message of the tale without seeing the visual image of the tale. This shows that folktales are able to reach the heart of the children and help them to make wise decisions based on what they have heard and not seen.

4.3.3. Beginning knowledge

According to CAPS, beginning knowledge as outcome in the Foundation Phase is designed to introduce history and geographical information, (DBE, 2011). This is conducted through using various methods of teaching and it should be enjoyable for children to learn. The Xitsonga folktales play a vibrant role in the beginning knowledge of children. The folktales teach children about nature, various food, seasons, days of the week, saving water, hygiene, different types of animals, wild animals, different types of reptiles, what to wear, different types of weather, different types of activities children admire, who are they, different types of transportation and the difference between floating and sinking (DBE, 2011). The author acknowledges that many of the Xitsonga folktale convey various lessons children can learn.

4.3.3.1. Types of food

Life Skills teaches the importance of good health promotion to children. Children need to look after their health and bodies, which includes eating healthy meals and staying hydrated. The folktale *Marimela kule* also brought out the different types of African meals that children still enjoy in the 21st century for their health benefits. as quoted,

A taka ku vuya na swifaki

Makalavatla, tinyawa, marahnga ni matimba, (Mavikane, 1990:1)

Translation:

‘She used to come home with corns.

Watermelons, beans, squash, and sugarcane’

Life Skills teaches children the significance of eating healthily and one of the ways is to eat nutritional food. The food mentioned above from the tale are watermelon, and squash. During the subject Life Skills, children are not only taught how to identify these food varieties, they also to learn how to categorise them in their various colours and shapes and to draw them at school during art lessons. Thus, this will contribute in helping them to distinguish the difference between vegetables and fruits and their benefits in eating them.

4.3.3.2. Learn about the surrounding and nature

The Marimela kule folktale also has lessons about nature.as quoted:

Wanuna loya a tiva baku

Leswi swigono a swi tumbela kona (Mavikane 1990:3)

Translation:

‘The man knew the cave

Where the ogre used to hide in’

From the tale, children learn about caves which are part of their understanding about nature. Cave has a lot of historical analogies, mostly and commonly they are known as places for safety or residents for animals, such as bats and spiders or insects, reptiles and people in ancient times etc. Furthermore, children can also learn other historical aspects of caves such as the Sudwala Cave based in the tourism place near Nelspruit, South Africa and on how it was used as a place of safety from their enemies, (Le Roux, Bezuidenhout & Nemanwele, 2023). Caves are also used for tourism purposes.

4.3.3.3. Learn about nature

Xitsonga Folktales can also teach children in the Foundation Phase different types of birds. This was evidenced in the *Xinyanyana* and *Swihandza Matala* folktales. For example, the folktale *Swihandza Matala* brought out the characteristics of the birds, how they behaved or demonstrated the size of the bird so that the children can tell the difference. The folktales gave a clear description of hen/chickens and their behaviour. as quoted:

Tihuku ti sungula ku handza e taleni ninhlikani,

Ti hanza ti hanza, ti thanza,

Loko ri pela ti ya etlela e eswihahlwini,

Loko ri xa ti ya emahlweni no handza etaleni, (Rikhotso, 1995)

Translation:

‘The hens were digging in a landfill,

The dug, dug and dug,

When it was sundown they went to sleep by in the nests],

In the morning they continued to dig at the landfill’ (Rikhotso, 1995)

The above folktale highlights normal behaviour of chickens or hens. They are always digging everywhere on the ground or yard including the pathways looking for food. This is their daily routine more especially for those that are not in a closed shelter such as within the building or farm house. Chickens will dig the whole day and during sundown they will find themselves a hiding place to sleep such as on top of the tree, roof top, under the specific shelter or above it.

The following day they will continue with the same routine. The chickens are usually not heavy and big in size like other birds such as eagles, however, chickens are much bigger than the sparrow. Therefore, children can learn from the chickens and attitude of doing things which are different from other birds. The other characteristics of the

chicken is that they cannot fly for a long time like a sparrow or eagle. This will assist children in differentiating different types of birds around them.

Children in the Foundation Phase can learn more about the eagles. These are very strong and well-built and can carry the chicken for miles in the air. Unlike the chicken, the eagle is able to swiftly capture their prey, such as rabbits, squirrels, chickens and other animals (Kochert et al., 2002). The eagle's size is bigger than the normal chicken, its claws are stronger and larger. Children can learn vast knowledge about birds and their characteristics as they continue to learn the folktales and benefit from them.

4.3.4. Physical wellbeing

According to CAPS, physical wellbeing centres broadly on the welfare and the development of children (DBE, 2011). Physical wellbeing can also be identified as Physical Education (Goudas & Giannoudis, 2008). Furthermore, it influences the attitude and the decision-making of children when it is being taught. Physical education's main focus is on the aspects that promote physical fitness and motor skills in children (Matthew & Mendhe, 2023).

4.3.4.1. Playing with others

Xitsonga folktales promote fitness. For example, the tale *Ndhichi ya Madambi*, (Mavikane, 1990:16) promotes fitness when it comes to swimming, playing the game of touch-touch 'Xiswathe' and running around. The tale gives a background on how children were enjoying themselves in the river when swimming.

vo sungula ku khida no swathana

Loko va ri karhi va tsutsumisana,

Va huma exidziveni va ta erigiyagiyeni,

Va hundza hi le matambeni va bvomutela exidziveni,

Sweswo – sweswo va vuyelela.

Swathe khadlayi!, (Mavikane, 1990:16)

Translation

'They started swimming and playing touchy -touchy,
While they were also running,
The went out from the water and went to the edge of the river,
They then pass through the large stones and dived in the river,
They continued to do so,
Touchy touch Khadlayi'

The above quote highlights how the children enjoyed playing games such as '*Xiswathe*'. The game is fun and encourages fitness; when it is played children run around randomly and avoid being touched by the other peer(s). The *Xiswathe* game motivates fitness in children because as they enjoy running around and avoiding being touched, they are in fact exercising indirectly. This will boost their physical well-being and mental health and improve their heart condition as they play.

The above quoted folktale also brought out how the swimming lesson can be done; it focusses on the steps of swimming. The children would stand on top of the big stones and dive into the water and swim continually. Life Skills also teaches children the various types of physical exercises, for example passing a baton, high and long jump, javelin, and swimming (Amato, Calitz & Shaw, 2022). It further explains the precautions that children can follow when playing such sports activities. For example, children in the Foundation Phase will require strict monitoring by their teachers or elders during such sporting activities since they lack experience in such cases for safety.

Physical education is very important because it encourages children to look after themselves, promotes good health in children and boosts their confidence and self-esteem. Children in the Foundation Phase can learn swimming not only for fun, but also for saving their lives and others. For example, during swimming at the rivers, beach or pools, they can assist those who are unable to swim or act as life guards for tourists in pools, rivers and the sea. Therefore, children can learn a variety of skills

and this can highlight potential hobbies or career choices to follow through as they have learned physical activities at school at a young age. During natural disasters such as tsunami outbreaks children in the Foundation Phase who can swim can save their own lives and find a place for safety. Similarly, they will be safe at swimming pools at their house or visits or vacations during school holidays or with family members.

4.3.4.2. Exercising

Another folktale that promotes physical education is the Mfutsu na Mhungubye (Turtle and the Jackal) to see who was greatest. The location was booked where the competition was going to be held and other observers were invited to witness (many other animals) the race. as quoted:

I vi swihari hinkwaswo swi tivisiswa,

Swi tiyisisa siku na nkarhi ni ndhawu,

Ndhawu ya kona ayi tolovelekile, (Shabangu, 2005:14)

Translation:

‘Then other animal were informed,

They were informed of the date, place, and place,

It was in a well-known place’.

It is common setting that when there are children’s sports activities the audience or supporters are invited to cheer those taking part in the physical activity or race as the runners warm up and engage in sports for their race. This is also shown in the tale, as quoted below.

Kutani siku ra phikizano ri ku ndzi fikile,

Ivi swihari swi ya yimetela le zivukweni ra nambu,

Kasi Mhungubye ni Mfutsu swi ya teka tindhawu ta swona,

Le nkanyini lowu va nga twanana wona wa xihoza,

I vi endzaku xitswiriri xi ba,

Ha vumbirhi va suka bi tekitekisana, (Shabangu, 2005:15)

Translation:

'The day for the race has arrived,

Then the animals were stood at the edge of the river,

The jackal and the turtle took their positions,

Under the morula tree where they pre-arranged to race at,

After the whistle,

They Both of them started to race'

The above tale is in support of physical activities which is usually being taught to children in the subject Life Skills. The physical activities also include that children warm-up (locomotion) so that they can stretch their muscles in preparation of the activities. This helps the body to gradually adjust and to build up their muscles before they can start with the sporting activities to avoid damaging their muscles in their bodies. This was portrayed in quoted folktale above, as many animals came to witness the race of the two animals. The two animals did not just arrive and start running. However, they waited in their various positions in preparation for their race and only ran when the whistle or instructions were given for them to start with the race. The same instruction is conducted during various sport activities such as soccer or marathons. The runners are instructed to run only after the whistle blows.

Through Xitsonga folktales children can also learn the basic knowledge and rules of sporting activities such as marathons and the do's and don'ts. Running before the whistle blows disqualifies one for not obeying the rules of the game. Therefore, during the Life Skills lesson when sporting activities take place, children will have learned the importance of obedience, to follow the instructions from the teacher, to play safe for their own benefit and to enjoy the sessions.

4.3.4.3. Running as part of exercising

The tale *Nuna la nga laveki vana va vafana*, (Maluleke, 2017), narrates about the father who did not want a boy child. One day his wife gave birth to the baby boy and hid him in the mountain for fear of her husband. She would go and visit him there to feed him daily in secret. One day the lion found the child in the cave, took child for himself and cared for him as his own son. The lion taught the child how to run faster. When the child started attending school, the boy was the fastest runner. as quoted:

Nwana luya a suka a ya dyondza xikolo,

A kuma va ri kari va tsutsuma

Hiloko va n'wi pfumelela na yena,

Se a tsustuma ku siya hinkwavo, (Maluleke,2017:23)

Translation:

'the child started attending school,

He found them running (racing)

They also allowed him to join them,

He run faster than all of them'

The above tale highlights another important physical activity of running or racing. Running is a fun and enjoyable activity for children and Life Skills teaches this. Running improves the life span of a person of the same age group with at least three years compared to those who do not engage in physical activities and it will also contribute in fighting cancer, cholesterol, and sudden death (Lee et al., 2017). Major (2001) indicates that running also affects the mental health of the runner and is cost effective since anyone can engage in it at their time or convenience anywhere. Therefore, when children in the Foundation Phase are taught to exercise at the early stages of life, they practise a healthy balanced lifestyles and good mental health.

4.3.4.4. Dancing as part of physical education

The tale *N'wanghala na N'wampfundla evukon'wanini* (Ngobeni, 2004:20) brought out a very interesting point about dancing. Dancing in Life Skills is commonly associated with physical education (Burkhardt & Brennan, 2012), dancing using physical objects such as chairs, sticks or ropes when making some dance moves or clapping hands; tapping the thighs to the beat of the song is also considered exercising. Dancing has a lot of benefit to the body and the heart of a person when is done moderately and is fun to play in such activates. From the folktale the animals were enjoying dancing until they began to sweat and roll on the floor. This is presented below:

A tsaka ku clula mpimo

N'wanghala a tsumbuteka ehansi,

A nghunytelaa swi tlhela a swi nyoxa,

A wa hi mukapa,

A beriwa ni mavoko ni minkulungwana,

N'wanghala a badle ni nyuku hi ku chongola, (Ngobeni, 2004:22)

Translation

'He overjoyed,

As he was dancing and dust was all over his feet and surroundings,

He was even tweaking so well,

He was even doing break falls,

And they were clapping hands and cheering on him,

The lion was sweating as he was busy dancing'

The above tale highlights various dance moves that the lion used as part of the physical movements throughout. For example, when he was dancing, his feet threw up dust meaning that the dance was consistent and fast and required a lot of energy in making such moves. Secondly his heart rate increased and he benefitted from the cardio body movements during the dance. The tale also mentioned that he carried

out some break falls as they were cheering him. Break falls require someone to be physically active in order to do the dance, because it involves training the body muscles to do them successfully. Otherwise performing or practising break falls can be damaging to a person's muscles or cause serious injuries if done without proper experience or training.

Dancing break falls can be associated with sporting actives such as rugby, pole vaulting and high jump and martial arts. The mentioned physical activities require adequate training. According Zobian et al. (2019) many who carry out break falls during martial arts activities encounter serious injuries such as breaking a lower limb and knee problems. It is true that in martial arts training, break falls are practised as a way of self-protection during the fight as a trick to twist the hand of the offender or escape, however precaution and training is necessary to do it successfully.

4.4. CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the summaries and the learning outcomes of the selected folktales for the study. Various examples and folktales quotations were given and directly translated according to each folktale and illustrated along with the correlations they have with the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase. The folktales' themes and sub-themes are discussed and analysed according to the data gathered. The lessons found in the subject Life Skills correlate with those found in the Xitsonga folktales and were discussed accordingly.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter has presented and analysed data for the study. The selected folktales were analysed to highlight how children can draw various Life Skills lessons from them. This present chapter outlines the research findings explored from the data presented and analysed. The recommendations of the study are also discussed and concluded.

The main objective of the study was to explore the valuable lessons that can be drawn from the folktales in Xitsonga. The attention was to identify potential ways on how to decolonise the subject Life Skills through the use of Xitsonga folk tales in the children's upbringing. The study aimed at answering the following research objectives as outlined in Chapter one:

- Explore the decolonisation of the Life Skills subject through Xitsonga folktales.
- Examine the benefits of Xitsonga folktales to the Foundation Phase learners.
- Highlight the relationship between folktales and children.

The principal goal was also to respond to the research questions as follows:

- How can the Xitsonga folktales be used in the decolonisation of the Life Skills subject?
- What are the benefits of Xitsonga folktales to Foundation Phase learners?
- What is the relationship between folktales and children?

In order to address the research objectives and answer the research questions above, the researcher made use of the Afrocentric theory which was deemed vital for the study as it promotes the use of Indigenous African languages, inclusive of Xitsonga. The study is conducted through the use of the qualitative approach. The study is

underpinned through desktop/corpus research; no human participants were involved in this investigation. Hence, written work was opted for the study. The study focused on purposeful sampling and the data was analysed based of the themes that were gathered from the selected folktales. The following section will present the summaries of the findings, recommendations and conclusion of the study.

5.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.2.1. Objective 1: Exploring the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills through the Xitsonga folktales

Data collected and interpreted have discovered correlations between the Life Skills subject taught in English in many South African schools today and the gems that are found in Xitsonga folktales. The data elucidations and evidence revealed that the identical lessons discovered in the English subject Life Skills may also be found in the many of the Xitsonga folk stories. Xitsonga folktales according to the investigation can teach children the following lessons which are also found the subject Life Skills in English.

The study has found that Xitsonga folktales contribute to the teaching and learning of the Vatsonga children. Children learn valuable lessons such as patience, bravery, obedience, wisdom, morals, respect, readings, writing, mathematics and arts. During the narration of the tales children develop listening skills, which is one of the important qualities that children can apply in various circumstances when they are young and in later stages of life.

Xitsonga folktales assist the development of the child's thinking abilities, because when they are narrated, children will have to look for potential opportunities to practise their lessons learned. Similarly, in the subject Life Skills, the main objectives contribute in assisting children to make wise decisions when they grow up with regards to their health matters, social status, economical and physical well-being. Life skills in the Foundation Phase teach children about their surroundings and in practical wisdom in life. The data analysis has proven that the same lessons found in the subject Life Skills

can be drawn also in the Xitsonga folktales. For example, the tale *Ndabambi a teka Siwelele* highlighted the importance of respecting people or good moral habits when it comes to treating people living with physical limitations or disabilities. The tale taught children many lessons, not only to respect people with physical limitations, but also people in general or who are different according to their race, colour, sex, religion, culture or marital status.

Since folktales lessons are not always direct in teaching some valuable lessons, the teacher needs to be strategic or well trained to assist the children learn about such lessons vividly by practical examples which assist children benefitting from such education.

The South African curriculum should be in favour of teaching children in the Foundation Phase particularly and strictly with the native language(s) in order for them to progress more effectively. The Vatsonga children will benefit greatly if this is implemented in all schools including other African languages in South Africa and Africa broadly. This will also contribute to curriculum transformation for the previously disadvantaged and in bringing equity and freedom to the South African black people of South Africa.

5.2.2. Objective 2: The benefit of Xitsonga folktales in the Foundation Phase

According to the data that was gathered and analysed, folktales have various benefits for children from many years ago and can still take advantage of the knowledge found today in the 21st century. The data analysis has proven that Xitsonga folktales were recited verbally since ancient days. These folktales were not only for entertainment but also for imparting valuable Life Skills knowledge to the young generation.

Folktales were narrated mainly in the evening in Xitsonga culture and the main reason was to ensure that children are relaxed and have completed their daily chores. This was perceived as an exciting time for family to bond and enjoy spending time together while sharing valuable life lessons to them. Today many households hardly spend time together with children due to busy personal lifestyle, career choice, economic pressure and high unemployment rate. Furthermore, parents prefer taking their kids to crèches or after care while they are busy with their secular work, which robs them of the time to instil Life Skills in their children.

When narrating folktales to children the atmosphere was commonly relaxed and allowed everyone to focus mainly on tale to be narrated. Children are always enthusiastic for such moments as they enjoy learning and listening to stories. The data analysis has confirmed that Xitsonga folktales were not only for entertainment but also for imparting valuable Life Skills knowledge to the young generations. The reason why the folktales were recited by older ones including grandparents evidences the vital lesson of sharing the wisdom of the mature because they are more experienced in Life Skills lessons. The following are a few of the advantages that children can obtain from the Foundation Phase by utilising the Xitsonga folktales.

5.2.2.1. Xitsonga folktales in teaching hygiene

The folktale, Xinyanyane, teaches youngsters about the significance of personal hygiene from an early age. The tale brought out that a woman used to wake up early in the mornings and clean the dirty yard. This will motivate the young of the importance of maintaining a healthy and clean environment to avoid diseases and infections that come with poor hygiene. This was especially visible during the national viral outbreak, when every individual, including children, were encouraged to wash their hands frequently and use soap and water, as well as alcohol-based sanitizers. This served as a safeguard to people from infectious diseases and the virus.

Today, the subject Life Skills teaches pupils about hygiene in English and not through the folktales and in Xitsonga. Life Skills teach children about personal hygiene at home, children will acquire fundamental skills such as cleaning their rooms, washing their clothes, making their beds, gathering up their toys and packing them appropriately, and so on. The above-mentioned folktale demonstrates how folktales can be used to teach Life Skills. Children are able to comprehend the value of hygiene when folktales are taught and when the teacher focuses on the central lessons from the story. Moreover, when the children learn in their mother tongue, they will benefit greatly because of lack of language barriers and they will practise and embrace their mother tongue as they learn the importance of hygiene.

5.2.2.2. Xitsonga Folktales in teaching morals

Today, Life Skills teaches youngsters the worth of having solid values, including respect for people of all races. Respect is one of the most wonderful qualities that children can have, and it will benefit them as well as those around them. Life Skills teach children to appreciate people of diverse colours, ethnicities, ages, educational backgrounds, and religions (ADejaeghere & Murphy-Graham, 2022). Presently it is common in South Africa to have multi-racial or ethnically diverse pupils of various colours and backgrounds attending and studying together in the same grades or schools, which was not frequent during the apartheid era. However, according to Nzimande (1993), many parents in South African decided to send their children to multi-racial or to white schools for better education as this was perceived as better than the formal black for the majority.

Folktale's education can bring children together to embrace the value of respect to one another regardless of their cultural differences. As a result, it will further foster togetherness and break the cycle of discrimination, racial boundaries and inequality in children and schools.

Xitsonga folktales can move children to be kind, sympathetic, loving and put the interest of others first in their lives. For example, in the tale Mughobozi summarised in Chapter four, children learn the importance of displaying love to their friends and telling the truth, because scheming evil thoughts towards their friends can have negative consequences. In the tale the young girl attempted to murder Mughobozi and as a result they were all punished later on. Children too can draw a very important lesson not to intentionally hurt anyone because that can lead them to face the consequences or even imprisonment and disrupt the peace and unity within their families, communities and societies as a whole.

Xitsonga folktales foster positive moral teaching to the children in the Foundation Phase and children can learn more lessons from them if they are narrated to children both at school and at home. Today many children lack good morals and as a result there is too much violence and gangsterism at many schools (Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014), hence others go to school with weapons or commit serious crimes at school. Children are not taught to practise good morals at home which later results in

disobedient children in the community. This further leads to more violence and crimes in the country which contradicts the familiar saying 'Charity begins at home' and *ubuntu*.

5.2.2.3. Xitsonga folktales benefit in building self-esteem in children

Folktales can help children in building their self-esteem; as the tale is narrated children pay close attention to the tale and its lesson. Not only are they being entertained, however they will also learn the importance of being narrators themselves. After they have learned the tales, they will enjoy sharing the tales amongst their peers and friends at school. Therefore, sharing such folktales will boost their own self-esteem and confidence. It will also enhance their thinking and communication skills in their social lives. An example of this is found in Chapter four from the summary of Ndabambi a teka Siwelele tale. Ndabambi was well groomed and assisted by his father to acquire a positive self-esteem which later assisted him in winning the reward regardless of his physical limitations. This is true in our days as seen in children who are raised with parents or families who always appreciate and motivate them to do better regardless of their failings, physical limitation, physical appearance, childhood background, less advantages socially and economically. They progress better when they receive the needed loving support and motivation to do better without being criticised.

Another point drawn from Ndabambi was that his self-esteem kept him going even when it was not easy; he believed in himself because his father also believed in him. Same applies today; children through learning Xitsonga folktales draw various lessons to equip them to succeed. In order for children to love learning this, Life Skills teachers should get their heart involved and be trained to read and embrace teaching children in their mother tongue. More efforts is needed. Instead of simply teaching children, today many potential employees or educators seek teaching as an opportunity for putting bread on their table rather than doing it out of love for children and teaching skills. This is more affected due to high unemployment in South Africa. Therefore, people compromise or give up from applying for the jobs within their primary qualification due to lack of jobs and apply for jobs that are not ideal for them or which do not really love doing. As a result, teachers' poor educational skills affect negatively

the transmission of educational knowledge of children in school (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2016). As a result, many children including youth drop out from school due to teenage pregnancies and financial constraints at home (Spaull, 2015).

5.2.2.4. Xitsonga folktales in teaching healthy food varieties

The Xitsonga folktales teach children the different types of food. Some tales such as *Madya Yexe* and *Marimela Kule* presents the varieties of food that were used for eating in those days. Today, those mentioned food types will not only contribute to the children's knowledge; it will help them to know the types of food they should eat in order for them to stay healthy and active. The little sister used to come home with corns, watermelons, beans, gem squash, and sugarcane. These types of food have many health benefits such as gem corn. Consuming whole grain corn can assist in preventing heart disease, diabetes, enhance digestive system and more (Siyuan, Tong & Liu, 2018). Corn is also used for dietary purposes and as lunch or breakfast by many Africans for example, corn flakes or sweet corn. Similar with sugar cane, sugar is extracted from it. Sugar globally is used in many ways whether refined and organic; it can be used for cooking, baking, making drinks such as juice and sweets. It is also important to note that sugar can have a negative effect if overly consumed or for those with diabetes.

Children are so keen in learning the different types of food because they also help them to identify various colours. Children in the Foundation Phase are also taught to do art work such as drawings, making shapes and cutting boards/papers of these types of fruits and vegetables during the lessons, which helps them to be more familiar with their surroundings and the basic knowledge of farming on how to grow food and to sustain them. This knowledge is can also be found in many Xitsonga folktales as indicated above and children can benefit when they are recited to them.

5.2.3. Objective 3: The relationship between folktales and children

Folktales have been a source of valuable education for children from long time ago in many cultures including the Vatsonga tribe. Primarily tales were narrated for children to learn about culture, norms and values. The Xitsonga folktales are structured in a simple manner to entertain and educate children in many ways. In Xitsonga culture folktales' main target were children and sometimes youth based on their age

differences and lessons of the tale. In Chapter four, four outcomes were highlighted and discussed namely, creative arts, personal and social wellbeing, physical wellbeing and beginning knowledge. The mentioned outcomes have confirmed the relationship between children and the Xitsonga folktales in the Foundation Phase through the use of the subject Life Skills.

Folktales are able to reach the hearts of the children and motivate them to act in a positive manner, for example, children can learn the importance of extending love for others, being kind, being hospitable, how to stay in a clean environment and how to respect others. These lessons were demonstrated in the summarised folktales in Chapter four: from the tale *Muzondi na nyoka* children can learn the importance of showing bravery. The *muheti wa Mati* tale teaches children the importance of sympathy and sharing with others. It was also discovered that the Xitsonga folktales do not specifically provide direct locations of the tale because they are fiction, meaning that they are not true in nature. Nonetheless, children still benefit when they listen to the stories in making wise decisions about their life and how to be responsible children in the future. The Xitsonga folktales are categorised differently, for example, children can learn from the tales with human characters and those of animals personified. Some tales are based on animals' characters only, legends and myth. Therefore, these are designed to rejuvenate the interest from children when listening to such tales, because some animals are always presented as always wise, smart or stupid in such tales, such as the rabbit in the tale *N'wapfundla na N'wamfenhe*. The rabbit in many tales is viewed as very wise and more cunning than any other animals in many of the folktales, (Khoza, 2006).

To date, Life Skills is being taught in English (second language) in many South African provinces with the main aim of preparing children with the necessary knowledge and skills for them to face the future with confidence and being personally independent and responsible matured adults. The research findings after scrutiny have proven that the same educational tool that is being used to transfer knowledge to children today in English in the Foundation Phase can be substituted with folktales in the language(s) that children will understand better and are able to speak without language barriers, their mother tongue. Folktales have been found as a great source of teaching life skills to the Vatsonga children. This very same tool of using folktales to teach children about

life skills has been recognized as one of the primary tools in bringing families together for quality time. By imparting valuable life lessons to children for centuries, it can still be practised today in both school and at home to educate children for various life skills.

The South African educational policies and circulars need to be re-evaluated more especially in the implementation of African language subjects in the Foundation Phase so that children can learn freely other subjects, because many children study in English and struggle to understand the language due to the fact that it is not their native tongue. Therefore, children in the Foundation Phase instead of learning the subject Life Skills, they will have to focus on understanding the actual meaning of the words or narration before they can understand and practise what they have learned. Moreover, this consumes more time in learning and development of their thinking abilities and further delays the progress of study in general.

It is notable that the decolonisation of subjects does not only affect the primary phase or Foundation Phase level only, but also the university level of education as indicated in Chapter one of the study during the *'fees must fall'* protest at Rhodes' University. The study has proven that Xitsonga folktales have valuable lessons in teaching children about Life Skills with the help of the four key areas namely, personal wellbeing, creative arts, beginning knowledge and physical and social wellbeing approaches.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that future research be conducted based on the importance of folklore in general, how it can be used in teaching and learning of children in various grades at school and to explore other African language gems (proverbs, riddles, poetry, etc.) on how they can be implemented in decolonising other subjects at schools and in bringing peace and unity especially in this violent world. This is motivated generally because schools are no longer seen as safe places since violence is common between children and teachers in various schools demonstrating that traces of pre-colonised and post-apartheid curriculum and pedagogy in many schools does not solve African children's needs (Vally, Dolombisa & Porteus, 1999; Mncube & Madikizela-Madiya, 2014). Other folklore such as proverbs has a great impact on how

a person lives and in teaching children the importance of embracing their cultural values, norms and their origins which will contribute to identity formation and respect for one's life and that of others.

It is also recommended to explore other ways in which the curriculum transformation can be implemented in the Foundation Phase, other phases or educational levels in the light of a lack of implementations strategies.

Xitsonga folktales benefit in learning a vernacular language (Xitsonga). Xitsonga is the mother tongue of many children in South African and it is customary to tell the folktales to them in that language. Children can appreciate the beauty of their mother tongue or home language and learn correct grammar when the stories are told to them more especially with a familiar language. Youngsters are able to distinguish between the story's present and future tenses. Children are able to learn about the proverbs, idioms, and other vital aspects of the home language(s).

Youngsters can also learn pronunciation, particularly when folk songs are used in the story. When folk songs are sung in the stories, they become more familiar and rhyme helps children memorise the songs, which will later enhance their proficiency and understanding of the message of the tale. It is also important for children in the Foundation Phase to learn folktales in their mother tongue because it grants them the opportunity to think and learn without language barriers. They will develop into good story tellers and future authors themselves from young age (e.g., writing story books, novels, actors, lectures and teachers etc.).

Other than Life Skills, Foundation Phase learners also learn other subjects such as mathematics. Through the analysis of the selected folktales, the study has found that the learning of other subjects like mathematics can be enhanced.

In the *Ndichi ya madambi* tale, children can learn basic numerical figures. The folktale included the following statement:

Ku fika un'wana wa vumbirhi, a huwelela:

Ko fika wa vunharhu, wa vunune , wa vuntlhanu,

Va kala va fika eka khume, (Mavikane, 1990)

Translation:

‘The second one arrived,

The third one, the fourth one and the fifth one,

Until they reached up to ten’

The above quote can teach children the importance of learning numerical figures. For these reasons, children in the Foundation Phase experience this kind of learning for the first-time. Teachers, guardians and parents can assist them in learning the basic knowledge of numerical figures through the use of folktales such as counting or comparing, subtracting, and addition. Other benefits include assisting children to draw, make shapes, counting using various available objects at home such as fruit or toys. Therefore, it is recommended that future research be conducted on how can folktales can contribute in teaching and learning the home language (vernacular) and mathematics in the Foundation Phase or other school grade(s).

5.4. CONCLUSION

The study has addressed the three research questions and objectives mentioned in Chapter one: to discover the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills, through the use of Xitsonga folktales; the benefits of Xitsonga folktales in the Foundation Phase; and the relationship between the folktales and children. The main aim for this research was to investigate how Xitsonga folktales can be used in the 21st century in teaching the same lessons which are found in the English Life Skills curriculum. Based on the research findings, there is a call for decolonisation of teaching and learning through the use of the indigenous languages in schools including universities. For example, at Rhodes university, the call for decolonisation occurred as black students complained about the unfairness of how they were treated and equality in the use of languages to teach and learn.

This main purpose of the study was to explore how folktales can be used in the decolonisation of the subject Life Skills in the Foundation Phase. Life skills is one of the most vital subjects in preparing children for the future and life in general. The

primary school is crucial in teaching and learning for children through folktales. This research has proposed other alternatives on how this can be conducted. The researcher chose to use the qualitative approach in the investigation because the study did not involve human participants, rather secondary data, such as theses, dissertations, articles, journals and books. Fifteen folktales were carefully selected in various Xitsonga books of folktales to assist with the data collection and analysis in answering the research objectives as indicated in Chapter one.

The summary of the findings included that Xitsonga folktales are still a great source of educational knowledge today. They can teach children various lessons which are found in the subject Life Skills in the CAPS curriculum (DBE, 2011) today which primarily emanate from the four learning outcomes, namely personal and social wellbeing, creative arts, beginning knowledge and physical education. The Xitsonga folktales are also able to teach children in the Foundation Phase the importance of aspects of mother tongue (first language), daily necessities of life such as hygiene, cleanliness and diet and values such as morals and respect.

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