

***Indigenous Protest Lyrics in Women's Musical Performances: Vhavenda Women in Vhembe:
A Case of Vhavenda Women in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province***

by

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DECLARATION

I, **Patricia Elelwani Anna Ramaite**, hereby declare that the thesis for the **PhD** degree at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university, and that it is my own work in design and execution and that all reference material contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

Signature; _____ Date: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late parents, Manaseh and Florance Munzhedzi Ramaite, and my late brother Moruakgomo.

Of our fathers we always know some fact or some distinction. They were soldiers or they were sailors. They failed that office or they made that law, but of our mothers, our grandmothers, what remains is nothing but a tradition. One was beautiful, one was red-haired, one was kissed by a queen. We know nothing of them except their names and the dates of their marriages and the numbers of children they bore.

(Woolf [1929] 1977: 45)

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------|--|
| ABET | Adult Basic Education and Training |
| AF | African Feminism |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| CF | Cultural Feminism |
| CP | Cultural Practices |
| DII | Daughter-In-law Issues |
| EA | Emotional Abuse |
| FA | Financial Abuse |
| GI | Gender Inequality |
| GR | Gender Roles |
| GV | Gendered Violence |
| HSREC | Health, Safety and Research Ethics Committees |
| IAAAF | Indigenous Annual African Arts Festival |
| IMOHP | Indigenous Music and Oral History Project |
| LSD | Lack of Service Delivery |
| M | Motherism |
| MII | Mothers-In-law Issues |
| P | Poverty |
| PA | Physical Abuse |
| RCW | Rivalry among co-wives |
| RI | Rape of Infants |
| ROP | Rape of Old-age Pensioners |
| RPR | Rivalry in Polygamous Relationships |
| RW | Rape of Women |
| RYG | Rape of Young Girls |
| SABC | South African Broadcasting Corporation |
| SPI | Social and Political Inequality Between Women and Men |
| SPR | Stress Related to Polygamous Relationships |
| Stiwanism | Social Transformation Including Women |
| TWF | Third-World Feminism |
| UE | Unemployment |
| W | Womanism |
| WE | Women Empowerment |

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the significance of indigenous protest lyrics of songs performed by three (3) performance groups of semi-literate and illiterate Vhavenda women, who reside in three villages in the Vhembe District Municipality, in the Limpopo Province. Its purpose was also to examine the role of feminism, and other forms of feminism, namely, African feminism, Cultural feminism, Stiwanism, Third-World feminism, in relation to the linguistic perspective of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics, and to examine their impact and relevance, as well as their relatedness to the stipulations in the South African Bill of Rights on gender equality, twenty years into South Africa's democracy. This study also explored the significance of women's indigenous protest music in interrogating culture, and Vhavenda culture in particular, in democratic South Africa. The study has a feministic perspective, and therefore employs a triangulation of several research tools. These are a combination of the qualitative data collection strategies, namely participant observation, interviews, focus groups, as well as quantitative data processing strategies. These include content analysis of interviews, focus group interviews, as well as protest lyrics. It is through content analysis and Discourse Analysis that the linguistic perspective of the study will be exposed. The findings of the study indicated that some of the lyrics that the performers coin are about gendered violence, which resulted from the humiliation and emasculation which African men endured during colonisation, Christianity, and the apartheid era which may account for the violent nature of the male section of the community, and the increase of violent crimes throughout South African communities, including the Vhembe region. Despite the fact that the participants are not conversant with feminist matters, the lyrics they formulate and improvise, are suggestive of ideologies pertinent to various forms of feminism, which are peculiar to African people, which for example, enumerate marriage and family as important social institutions among their communities. The study recommended that the participants should be encouraged to not only coin

protest lyrics against these atrocities, but to ensure that the lyrics they coin are also informative, in order to benefit all members of the communities. The study also recommended that in order to heal, the participants should go for professional counselling, or group therapy, particularly those that have experienced physical and emotional abuse, rape, and all forms of atrocities. This will also ensure that the feminist element of this study is accomplished. Making women aware of the fact that they should not be apologetic about expressing their emotions, as it is not a weakness, but a strength, will also enhance the feminist characteristic of this study. The Arts and Culture Department in the Vhembe District Municipality, and Phalaphala Fm radio station, both of which are responsible for bringing *tshigombela* and *malende* performers from all regions together, and promoting indigenous music of Vhavenda, should not only focus on conducting *tshigombela* and *malende* competitions, but should couple these activities with conducting road-shows, through which they educate communities about government policies, pertaining to women and children's rights. This will ensure that women are familiarised with different sections of the constitution, and government intermitant programmes, meant for rural and previously disadvantaged communities. This study will identify and discuss the Sociolinguistic aspects of how the *tshigombela* and *malende* performers employ different linguistically manipulated strategies to ensure that the lyrics they formulate ingeniously express their protest.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted through the qualitative research method. It is based on a sociolinguistic and feminist approach and, in order to ensure that all perspectives of the study are executed, a combination of the exploratory and explanatory design were employed. The purpose of the study was to explore the significant role played by protest *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics, performed by *tshigombela* and *malende* performers, in communicating and articulating gender roles, practices, women's issues and struggles, particularly, among rural *Vhavenda* women who reside in the Vhembe District. The research methods which were employed for the purpose of data collection were a combination of complementary qualitative data collection techniques, namely, participant observation, feministic interviews, focus group interviews, and quantitative data analysis strategies, which include content analysis of the interviews, focus groups discussions, as well as analysis of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. Content analysis and Discourse Analysis (DA) enabled the linguistic exploration of the study. Thus a triangulation of several research methods was employed in order to ensure that the objectives and research questions are realised, as well as to enhance the validity and reliability of the study.

The introduction of this study provides the background of the study entitled *Indigenous Protest Lyrics in Women's Musical Performances: A Case of Vhavenda Women in Vhembe, Limpopo Province*. It also gives perspective to aspects that anchor the study, such as the statement of the problem, the rationale, as well as the purpose of the study. Technical issues such as the objectives of the study, research questions, a brief literature review, as well as definitions of terms, form part of this chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND

South Africans live in a world predominated by the politics of domination, one in which emphasis is on the difference between the perceived superior and inferior members of society. Amongst others, we may cite racial domination, class, cultural, age and gender domination. Racial domination resulted from a long history of slavery, *colonialism*, *imperialism*, and lately apartheid. Sibisi (cited in Pityana, et al, 1991:130) attests that both slavery and colonialism were justified by pseudo-scientific observation, which maintained that ‘...blacks were not only morally and intellectually inferior’, but that their ‘cultural development’ was also limited, and they therefore ‘do not experience any true self-consciousness, but always see themselves through the eyes of others’ (Du Bois, 1994:2). In addition there is class domination which has its origin in the colonial era. Transcending the colonial legacy are cultural, age and gender politics of domination. These forms of domination are linguistically perpetuated, hence the enquiry into the linguistic perspective of this study. One of the most urgent and topical forms of domination today is sexism, which is another form of domination (Rogers, 1996), as ‘Patriarchal domination of the planet is the root of all problems’ (Rogers, 1996:415). bell hooks¹ (2000:3), an African-American feminist declares that:

Patriarchy is a ‘political-social system’ that proclaims that males are innately dominant, superior to everything and everyone allegedly weak, particularly females, and therefore males have been accorded the right to ‘dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence’ (hooks, 2000:3).

Following from the above-mentioned examples, we may conclude that the politics of domination maintains that being dominated upon, has become ingrained in the psyche of black South African women, particularly because they have been exposed to even more

¹ Note that bell hooks, a pseudonym she assumed, so that she can speak her mind, and ‘talk back’, prefers her name to be devoid of capital letter as a form of protest against sexism.

domination and discrimination, as a result of their gender, colour, and class, including the fact that they are from previously disadvantaged communities.

Inevitably, where there is domination by one over the other, there is bound to be protest. In South Africa, like in other parts of the world, there have been different forms of protests against different forms of domination from time immemorial. Of particular interest to this study are protest songs, and songs by [renowned South African] artists such as Mirriam Makeba, Letta Mbulu, Dolly Rathebe, Thandi Klaasen, and other ‘women of song’, some of whose songs have attracted scholarly attention (Drewett, 2004:59). Therefore, this study focuses on protest songs performed by women from rural communities, whose ‘works’ may not have enjoyed the fervent attention of many scholars. These works are referred to because the lyrics are ordinarily not written down, and thus have escaped the scrutiny of scholars.

It is ironic that one of the characteristics which best describes the *Vhavenda* refers to them as, ‘*Muvenda o fhola nthu sa thophi, ngeno nga fhasi a tshi fhisa*’, loosely translated, ‘A *Muvenda*, is like an indigenous pumpkin delicacy, whose surface appears to be cool and ready for consumption, while its deeper part is still scalding hot, for anyone to dip a finger’. This expression simply implies that, the *Vhavenda* are so shrewd that they are able to conceal negative emotions, and not to show any aggression, even when provoked, until they have strategically ‘built a case’ against the person that has aggrieved them, or until the time is right for them ‘to go for the jugular’. This implies that people might not be aware of the fact that the women who perform *tshigombela* and *malende* protest songs have issues about which they are aggrieved. This is due to the fact that in performance, they do not seem to articulate their grievances, or they seem to downplay their woes, and when they coin *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics about the status-quo, the prejudiced audiences, which may not even pay particular attention to the lyrics, (they only listen to the melody and the rhythm of the songs not the focus of this study), or focus on the dramatization and dance moves, and miss the gist of the issues presented, particularly the crux of the lyrics, as well as the moral of the songs.

Indigenous protest lyrics formulated by women in the Vhembe District, in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, are not less protest in ideology than those which may be regarded

as their luminary counterparts. A few scholars, such as, van Warmelo (1932; and 1989), Blacking (1967), Kruger (1999), who have come into contact with Vhavenda women who perform *tshigombela* and *malende* failed to comprehend the potency of the lyrics, and could not appreciate the powerfulness of the commentary that is embedded in the lyrics, including the moral of the lyrics. A case in point of this disdainful attitude is evidenced by John Blacking (1967:22), a British ethnomusicologist and social anthropologist, who refers to *malende* performances as ‘beer-songs’, thereby downplaying the momentous nature, implications of the rich language employed, and wisdom imparted by the lyrics, while in the process implying that these songs should not be taken seriously. As South Africans we may not be aware of the fact that the saying *wathint’ abafazi, wathint’imbokodo* (touch the women and you touch a boulder), has now come to represent the high degree of women’s courage and strength (Mchunu, 2010).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Rural women who reside in the Vhembe District Municipality have since time immemorial, been engaged in performances which feature in their repertoire elements of social and political commentary. Some songs deserve to be referred to as protest songs, which may protest about unfair treatment by members of the royal family, political leadership, or members of their families. Due to the often celebratory contexts in which these songs are performed, the message in the lyrics seems to be subsumed by the spirit of the celebration.

The audiences that patronise *tshigomela* and *malende* performances do not seem to listen attentively to the profound expertise in the coined lyrics, the powerful messages that these lyrics convey, and they therefore fail to appreciate the depth of the intellectual capacity behind the splendour of the performance. However, a careful analysis of their prowess in the coining of the lyrics and the gestures reveal in the most unambiguous manner the inherent themes.

Furthermore, such audiences do not only lack the appreciation of the implications of the lyrics, but they also have a limited grasp of the artistic and stylistic aspects peculiar to the

Tshivenda language, as well as indoctrination, which may be consequences to immersion in Christian and western cultural ideologies, which has resulted in the fact that there are members of the audience who shun their own *Tshivenda* culture.

These self-deprecating tendencies, which could be viewed as pointers to an inferiority complex, identity crises, self-hatred, and other negative traits, that result from centuries of humiliation and subjugation, have not been confronted, and dealt with, even in the democratic South Africa, which purports to give equal status to all cultures and languages. The fact that these issues have not been properly addressed, may be the reason why black South Africans in certain communities experience anger, which could also be the explanation of the tribalism and xenophobic attacks that foreign nationals, mostly from other African countries experience in South Africa.² These occurrences undermine the ideals that are enshrined in concepts such as the African renaissance, *Ubuntu*, and what Mphahlele refers to as Afrikan humanism (Vale and Maseko, 1998:273).

It is against this backdrop that this study views the lack of appreciation of the African culture, the moral of African indigenous music, including *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics, as counter-productive to the hard-earned democracy of South Africa, as well as other forms of progressive endeavours towards the unity of Africa.

Given the fact that women in the Vhembe District Municipality, unlike women in other parts of South Africa, do not seem to show any discontent associated with the abuse of their rights, poverty, unemployment and lack of service delivery in their communities, they may be misconstrued as apathetic about the government's performance, in as far as dealing with these issues, as well as other issues which plague citizens in the Vhembe district. The absence of any overt sign of discontent or strife, which in other communities would be shown through engaging in protest marches, blockading of roads by protesters, the destruction of government property, may also be misconstrued as apathy, pliancy, inarticulateness, weak-

² Moyo, A. The Impact of Xenophobia on Refugees and Asylum Seekers in South Africa. A Presentation by Anna Moyo Advocacy Officer for Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR). www.issafrica.org/Xenophobic_Anna_Moyo

headedness or even unassertiveness, on the part of people who reside in the most northern parts of Limpopo Province, people who are regarded as unsophisticated, or as ‘bumpkins’ by people who live in areas which are regarded as sophisticated. It is ironic that one of the characteristics which best describes *Vhavenda* describes them as, ‘*Muvenda o fhola nthu sa thophi, ngeno nga fhasi i tshi fhisa*’, loosely translated, ‘A *muvenda*, is like a hot indigenous pumpkin dish, whose top part appears to be cool and ready for consumption, when the deeper part of the dish is still piping hot’. This expression simply implies that, African people, in this case, from the *Vhavenda* ethnic group, are so shrewd that they are able to conceal negative emotions, and do not show any aggression, even when provoked, until they have strategically ‘built a case’ against the person that has aggrieved them. This implies that people might not be aware of the fact that these women have issues that dissatisfy them, because they do not articulate their grievances, or they seem to downplay their woes, and when they compose *tshigombela* and *malende* about the status-quo, the prejudiced audience, which may not even pay attention to the lyrics, only hears the melody and the rhythm of the songs, and misses the issues presented, as well as the moral of the songs. This is due to the fact that *Vhavenda* women’s stoicism could result not only from the fact that they culturally subscribe to the belief that women are expected to endure every woe that befall them, ‘without flinching’, but also from the fact that the Christianity faith which they adopted when they were forced to relinquish their African religions, particularly the ‘Beatitudes’ teach them to ‘rather endure suffering on earth, in order to go to heaven when they die, and live a life of eternal holly bliss’.

Furthermore, the apartheid system has rendered black South Africans sub-human, as it forced them to surrender to authority and not question anything, for fear of torture and arrest. This attitude of not wanting to ‘rock the boat’ also results from the fact that Christianity did not only teach them ‘to present the other cheek’, but it also taught men to keep women subdued, in order to prevent what is believed to be Eve’s disobedience in the garden of Eden. In this context, Eve is said to represent, or to be the foremother of all women descendents. These views, which are contradictory to the African view of women, are responsible for decades of abuse, conflict, as well as the disadvantaged lives that millions of women endure. Worst of all, the government and municipality officials in Vhembe District, for whom these grievances

are intended, dismiss the songs as mere old traditional songs, intended for cultural celebratory performance, and do not analyse the lyrics. Consequently, gender issues which are the subject of Vhembe women's protest songs are not given the attention they deserve.

Furthermore, at an estimated 5,6 million HIV/AIDS cases (Avert 2009 statistics)³, South Africa is now recognized as one of the countries with the highest number of people infected with the virus. As HIV/AIDS researchers try to explain both this figure and the failure of HIV/AIDS education programmes to reduce the rate of infection, they reveal a growing evidence of gendered violence. Not only do women risk a beating for suggesting the use of a condom to their spouses, or for refusing sex, as sexual relations tend to be characterised by the assumption that men should control sexual encounters. This is aggravated by the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Christian faith teachings in 1 Corinthians 7:3-5, that both the husband and the wife's bodies belong to each other, which is misrepresented to imply that 'the woman's body belongs to the man/husband'. According to Barrington H. Brennen (2004) miss-informed Christian men, in order to support the notion that husbands cannot rape their wives, conveniently refer to Biblical passages such as 1 Corinthians 7:3-5:

3 The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. 5 Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

This text is used to support some men's erroneous views that in no way can a wife say to her husband, 'not tonight, honey', and it is misconstrued to imply that the husband has the 'God-given right' to just 'take it', in spite of her feelings, sickness, or disapproval. These men disregard the fact that the text is simply speaking to the natural sexual role of spouses in healthy, mutually supportive relationships. Another text that causes conflict in marriages is the Genesis 3:14-19 pronouncement which God is said to have made in the garden of Eden, which humiliates, belittles and denigrates all women, and pronounces a curse on all women,

³ www.avert.org/aidssouthafrica.htm

and the fact that ‘their husbands shall rule over them’, not because of their own fault, but that of their first grandmother Eve ‘eating the forbidden fruit’. This has resulted in women being abused in their relationships because of ‘Eve’s disobedience at the garden of Eden’, some thousands years ago. The misrepresentation of these texts and many others, has also resulted in men infecting their wives, mistresses, or even several wives in polygamous marriages, with sexually transmitted diseases, because they believe that the women’s bodies belong to them, as well as the fact that ‘they rule over women’. Women’s woes are further aggravated by the misguided belief that engaging in sex with a female infant, or a female virgin cures AIDS. These are issues that women have to contend with, and with the culture of silence, the denial that HIV/AIDS exists, the promiscuous sexual conduct, as well as myths to the effect that it is anti-tradition to critique what is regarded as a cultural practice. Therefore, women in Vhembe formulate lyrics for *tshigombela* and *malende* in order to comment, and draw the audiences’ attention to this immoral status-quo.

1.4 RATIONALE

There are sexist ideologies which are resultant from slavery, colonialism, western civilization, apartheid, as well as prejudicial ideologies emanating from religious doctrines such as Christianity and Islam, which are a consequent of societal challenges. Moreover, despite the 1995 world conference on women in Beijing and the Southern African states having sent women representatives to the conference, and pledging to implement the Beijing Platform of Action, signed the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW), women’s issues are still not addressed. In particular, the plight of rural women remains unattended.

Even though catch-phrases such as 50/50, gender equality, democracy, women empowerment, etc., are bandied about in all South African communities, including among rural communities in Vhembe District, in Limpopo Province, ordinary, illiterate, semi-literate, literate, including educated professional women in remote rural areas, are still ignorant and uninformed about the government’s initiatives to transform gender relations among South Africans. These include not being able to reconcile gender issues and the

suffering that women in certain sections of South Africa experience, with stipulations in the Bill of Rights. Politicians, government officials, academics, as well as other people who are knowledgeable about political rights and the constitution of South Africa, have not bothered to go down to the level of these women, and men in the rural areas, to explain these issues in the language that the women from all walks of life can understand, or for lack of a better expression, they have not ‘unpacked’ the stipulations in the Bill of Rights. Neither have they sensitised them about their rights, nor have they ‘empowered’ them with strategies for seeking intervention and redress if they are ‘short-changed’ by those who may want to disadvantage them. The researcher in this study argues that the ideal situation for the success of the constitution of a democratic country lies in its authors ensuring that it does not only look impressive on paper, as well as in political rhetoric, but in the fact that it is elucidated and interrogated for the benefit of even the most illiterate, ignorant, politically shallow and inexperienced, who will be empowered and ‘liberated’ by the exposition of its stipulations. This kind of exercise will ensure that even among women from the rural areas of Vhembe, concepts such as the democracy, women’s rights, human rights, African Renaissance, NEPAD, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), are not reduced to enormous grand-sounding words, futile political-speak, but are easy to implement and incorporate into the everyday existence of all the citizens of the African continent, including women and men in very remote rural areas of South Africa, including Vhembe District.

It is important to observe that hidden in the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics are highly intellectual topical issues that need to be highlighted. The ideal purpose of the study should be to facilitate the appreciation, enlightenment and informative quality of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. This will only be possible if the broader community pays close attention to the prowess in the lyrical content of these indigenous songs. Not only are these lyrics a wealth of intellectual discourse that has so far remained in the margins of scholarship, but they also put other forms of feminism, peculiar to the African women, and *Vhavenda* women in particular, into perspective. Closer scrutiny of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics performed by these women, may possibly promote emancipation of women, by employing the lyrics as consciousness-raising strategies, peculiar to women in Vhembe. Furthermore, this study forms the basis for Africans Studies, African Indigenous Knowledge Systems, as

well as other forms of feminism peculiar to *Vhavenda* women, namely, Cultural feminism, Womanism, Motherism, Stiwanism, and Third-World feminism.

The views of African feminism, Black feminism, indigenous feminism, Cultural feminism, Third World feminism, and other feminisms, which will be discussed in Chapter 2, in contrast, or in relation to feminism as a concept foreign to Africa, or as white concept, will be explored in this study. It is therefore against this background that this study is crucial to undertake, as it will put women's issues, their status in their communities, and their culture into perspective. It is important to note that the researcher does not only regard African indigenous music, such as *tshigombela*, *malende*, *mafhuwe*, *tshifasi*, *dinaka*, *mtshongolo*, *xibelana*, *makhwaya*, *isixathamiya*, *mokgibo*, *tshikona*, *kiba*, etc., with the prestige given to jazz, classical music, blues, gospel music, *kwaito*, rap, etc., but will also explore indigenous protest music performed by women, in order to address issues of identity and how they relate to *Vhavenda* gender issues among women in Vhembe District. The study will also examine the relevance of *tshigombela* and *malende* indigenous protest lyrics, in addressing women's struggles against inequality and gendered violence. Furthermore, the study will involve a brief investigation into the history of the protest nature of slave songs, which evolved to Negro Spirituals, during the African-Americans' struggle for emancipation. To this end, the music of Mahalia Jackson, Nina Simone, and other women protest singers in America, as well as South African singers such as Miriam Makeba, Letta Mbulu, Dorothy Masuka, and others, will also be explored in order to locate protest music to its proper locus. To put this study in perspective, the above will be discussed in contrast, and in relation to indigenous African protest songs of *Vhavenda* women of Vhembe, namely *tshigombela* and *malende*.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There is a limited amount of research on indigenous music and performance by *Vhavenda* women, other black South African language groups, as well as national groups in other African countries. Hence, this gave rise to the necessity of research on *Vhavenda* women's protest lyrics in *tshigombela* and *malende*. It is therefore the aim of this study to explore the

essence of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics. This study also seeks to highlight women's issues which are alluded to in the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. This implies that, the study does not only scrutinise the protest lyrics, including those that express concealed protest, but it also sensitises the reader to the significance of the role that rural women play in communicating and articulating women's issues. Another purpose of the study is to explore whether other forms of feminism such as Cultural feminism, Womanism, Motherism, Stiwanism, and Third-World feminism can be identified in indigenous lyrics, particularly in *tshigombela* and *malende*.

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study has the following objectives:

- To investigate the Sociolinguistics aspects in relation to *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics.
- To analyse the significance of *tshigombela* and *malende*.
- To investigate whether the *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics are related to the ideologies espoused by African Feminism, Womanism, Motherism, Third-World Feminism, Cultural feminism, and Stiwanism.
- To analyse the language employed in *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics.

These objectives, amongst others, underpin the essence of the study.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The broad research questions that direct this study are as follows:

- What is the Sociolinguistic relevance of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics in the democratic South Africa?
- How do *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics relate to gender issues?

- Which ideologies dealing with women's issues are embodied in *tshigomela* and *malende* lyrics?
- What is the significance of the performance of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics among communities which reside in the Vhembe District Municipality?

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

FEMINISM

Feminism is a broad term with various definitions. It is, essentially, a dynamic theory which advocates the rights of women and equality of sexes. Feminism can be defined as a 'worldwide movement for the redefinition and redistribution of power, (a) a belief that women face some form of oppression or exploitation, a (b) commitment to uncover and understand what causes and sustains oppression, in all its forms, and a (c) commitment to work individually and collectively in everyday life to end all forms of oppression' (Maguire, 1997:79). Brayton, (1997:10) asserts that 'Feminism takes women as its starting point, seeking to explore and uncover patriarchal social dynamics and relationships from the perspective of women'. According to Tucker, (1993:104) feminists believe that women experience discrimination, low pay, poor jobs, and other indicators of inequality due to male domination of the family, the economy, and politics. Humm (1989:94) declares that the definition of feminism incorporates both the doctrine of equal rights for women, and an ideology of social transformation aiming to create a world for women beyond simple social equality. Smith (1987:49) cited in Mohanty, Russo and Torres (1991:106) defines feminism as 'the political theory and practice that struggles to free all women. Below are other forms of feminism:

AFRICAN FEMINISM

African Feminism is humanistic feminism; it is founded upon the principle of traditional African values that view gender roles as complementary, parallel, asymmetrical and autonomously linked in the continuity of human life (Badejo, 1998). McFadden (2002:4) defines feminism in Africa 'as being fundamentally the struggle by women against patriarchal control and exclusion. She (McFadden, 2002:4) adds that it is a struggle which

African women have engaged in as individuals and as ‘collectives’ of women for millennia, and the intensity of struggles and contestations over political and cultural identity which it has unleashed, among and between African women, across a multitude of issues and interests, as well as the struggle of groups of women (Disney, 2008).

BLACK FEMINISM

Black Feminism regards women as self-defined, self-reliant individuals confronting race, gender, and class oppression. It is an Afro-centric feminist thought which speaks to the importance that knowledge plays in empowering oppressed people (Collins, 1990). One distinguishing feature of Black feminist thought is its insistence that both the changed consciousness of individuals and the social transformation of political and economic institutions, constitute essential ingredients for social change (Collins, 1990). For the U.S. black women as a collective ‘the struggle for self-defined Black feminism occurs through ongoing dialogue whereby action and thought inform one another (Collins, 2000:30). Black feminism takes the core themes of black gendered oppression, such as racism, misogyny, and poverty, and infuse them with the lived experience of black women’s taken for granted, everyday knowledge (Burck, C. and Speed, B. 1995: 259).

MOTHERISM

Motherism subscribes to the ideology that men and women are complementary opposites in traditional African society, such that no gender dominates the totality of the social life of the people (Maduka, 2005). Men are dominant in socio-political spheres of life while women have the upper hand in spiritual and metaphysical segments (Maduka, 2005:16). Several African societies reflect systems with ranging degrees of dual-sex hierarchies in which men and women exist in parallel and complementary positions and roles within the society (Maduka, 2005:17). It is anchored on the matrix of motherhood, and has been the basis of the survival and unity of the black race through the ages (Acholonu, 1995). Cooperation with Nature is paramount to Motherism and the task of the Motherist is that of healing and protecting the natural cohesive essence of the family, the child, the society, and the environment (Acholonu, 1995).

PATRIARCHY

Feminists see patriarchy as the ultimate cause of women's discontent. Adrienne Rich (1995:34) defines patriarchy as the 'power of the fathers: a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male. According to feminists, patriarchy is the power of men that oppresses women and is responsible for their unhappiness. Feminists attest that the demise of patriarchy would bring about women's fulfilment, and allow them to become whole (Fallaise, 1998).

PROTEST MUSIC

Protest music (struggle songs, political songs, or liberations songs) is also one of the critical factors in dealing with the current socio-economic situation in South Africa, and the challenges of the day. Musicians therefore 'become the voices of the people, and music therefore creates alternative space for the oppressed to articulate their views' (Magaisa, 2003). Blacking, (1973:95) describes protest music as 'an instrument indispensable to the transformation of man and his world' (James, 2006:74), and Blacking (1973) believes that music can have the power to motivate people to action, and to raise the moral consciousness of society (Suzel Ann Reily (2004:2). Weinstein (2006) attests that the protest in protest songs means 'an opposition to a policy, an action against the people in power, that is grounded in a sense of injustice', and, 'It is this same sense of injustice that inspires the singer/composer to perform the song that also inspires the like-minded and engage audience members to listen' (Schumann, 2008:19). Protest music is not only about the challenges of the African people as they come face-to-face with urbanisation and new values, and the clash between traditional and modern life, and customs, but also about the issues that concern people's daily lives, for example Oliver Mutukudzi's social commentary touches diverse areas like AIDS, domestic violence, abandoned children, inheritance, etc., and is meant to educate (Magaisa, 2003).

THIRD-WORLD FEMINISM

Women in the third-world face horrible and inhuman conditions, therefore Third-World feminism deals with women in the third-world countries that are characterized by low levels of living, low income per capita, low education provisions, poverty, and starvation (Ritzer, 2007:55). Western feminists on the other hand make equality between men and women the focal point of their struggles. Third-World feminism stresses the satisfaction of material basic needs as a pressing issue in the context of the disadvantageous international economic order (Saunders, 2002:6).

VHAVENDA WOMEN

The Vhavenda people are an indigenous group which resides in an area located on the North and West of Makhado in the Limpopo Province, South Africa. The lush, mountainous and remote region they inhabit borders Zimbabwe, and it is where the Shashe and Vhembe rivers meet. Their culture, arts and crafts, and language have survived so strongly, and the language makes much use of metaphors and symbolism. Within their communities, *Vhavenda* women are the ones who ensure that everything in as far as values, beliefs, and culture, is observed and is not eradicated. ⁴ Makaulule attests that when a girl is born, she has a position of *Makhadzi* within her clan. In royal settings a *Makhadzi* lives with the royal leader, that is a *Khosi* (*Vhavenda* king), and is the one who guides, and ensures the decorum and prestige of the royal house are not compromised at all times, as well as the fact that there is order in the family, the clan, and in the community. In indigenous settings, her knowledge which is inspired by her living and dead ancestors, continues to develop within her, and she becomes a guide, as well as a mediator for the whole clan and the whole community.

WOMANISM

According to Alice Walker (Torfs, 2008:18) Womanists appreciate and prefer women's culture, women's emotional flexibility, and values (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. They are committed to the survival and wholeness of the people, male *and* female. Hayes (Vidulich, 1997) describes a Womanist as a woman who is 'committed to the survival of an entire people, male and female, of every race and ethnicity.

⁴ Mphatheleni - Mupo. www.gaiafoundation.org/mpatheleni_mupo

She adds that, ‘My rights are guaranteed, only when the rights of all are guaranteed’ (Vidulich, 1997:55). Womanism affirms black women's historic connection with men through love, and through a shared struggle for survival and a productive quality of life. The principal concerns of Womanism are survival, community building and maintenance, and the goal of community building is to establish a positive quality of life, that is, economic, spiritual, educational, for black women, men, and children (Williams, 1987).

1.9 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted an exploratory and explanatory design, and has a feminist perspective, as it has an emancipatory intent. The study employed a triangulation of several research methods in order to ensure that the objectives and research questions are realised. Having undertaken an extensive literature review, the study opted for a combination of mainly complementary qualitative data collection techniques, namely, observation, interviews, and focus group discussions. The purposive sampling method was preferred in this type of study, and the participants in the study were women from the rural communities of the Vhembe District Municipality. The methodology of the study will be discussed in great detail in Chapter 3.

1.10 DELINEATION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One deals with the introduction to the study.

Chapter Two deals with the literature review.

Chapter Three contains the Theoretical Framework.

Chapter Four comprises the methodology of the study.

Chapter Five consists of presentation of data, analysis and discussion of the findings.

Chapter Six entails the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Chapter one provided a perspective to this study, which is on the significance of the performance of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest music, and the topical arguments pertaining to women's issues. The background of the study, statement of the problem, the rationale, the purpose of the study, the objectives and research questions were presented in this chapter. The significant key concepts, namely feminism, and other forms of feminism, namely, African feminism, Black Feminism, Womanism, Motherism, Stiwanism, Cultural feminism, Third World feminism, etc., were defined. These and other key concepts will be discussed in detail in the literature review in Chapter 2, the Theoretical Framework in Chapter 3, data analysis and presentation of data in Chapter 4, as well as in the Conclusions and Recommendations in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

An extensive study of literature on different fields of protest music was conducted, in order to focus this study. This chapter consists of the literature review of the study, and it is divided into four sections, briefly outlined hereunder. The first section comprises slave songs, which the African slaves, who were captured and taken to America, sang to express their plight, their longing, aspirations, and hope for a better life. The slave songs evolved to Negro Spirituals, which were performed as protest songs during the struggle for emancipation and the civil rights movement. The second section consists of protest music performed during the struggle against apartheid, an era during which musicians became the voice of the people, and music created alternative space for the oppressed to articulate their socio-political sentiments and views. It is important to note that these protest songs were performed by both women and men, and therefore cannot be excluded in this study, as women in South Africa, including those who reside in the outskirts of South Africa, including those from Vhembe District, also participated in the struggle for freedom. This section also features Zimbabwean struggle songs, as well as protest songs performed in Kenya and Ghana. Literature review on protest music performed by women of song in the 1950s and 60s, who were political activists in their own right, is included in the third section. The fourth section includes research on protest lyrics of *Vhavenda* women, namely, the *tshigombela* and *malende*, musical genres, through which *Vhavenda* women express their socio-political views. In this chapter the question of the relevance of indigenous protest music is explored. In addition, this chapter will deal with the theoretical framework, which will include the Sociolinguistic conducts pertinent to protest music, such as linguistic taboos, code-switching, Discourse Analysis (DA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Also included in this chapter is feminist research which is pivotal in this study, as it deals with women's issues.

2.2 FROM SLAVE SONGS TO NEGRO SPIRITUALS

From time immemorial music and singing have played a critical role in inspiring, ‘mobilising, giving voice, giving courage, and a sense of unity’ (King, 1964:58). A case in point is the slave songs, which through the ages evolved to protest music during the African-American’s black freedom struggle, and eventually to Negro Spirituals. Historical research accounts indicate that slave songs are as old as the slave trade, which started with the discovery of the Americas in 1492, leading to the creation of new colonies with a great need for cheap labour. From the mid-sixteenth century European ships were carrying African slaves to Brazil, the Caribbean and North America in steadily increasing numbers (Du Bois, 1994; Bolton, 2006; Jones, 2007). Slave songs have been interpreted as thinly-veiled expression of protest against slavery and oppression. According to Du Bois (1994) the American slave songs, which he refers to as ‘the Music of Negro religion’,

were the rhythmic cry of the slave which was persistently mistaken and misunderstood, but notwithstanding, it still remains as the singular spiritual heritage of the nation and the greatest gift of the Negro people which stirred the nation with mighty power (Du Bois, 1994:116).

A characteristic of the early slave songs, which were subsequently referred to as Negro Spirituals, is the religious element, through which the singers ‘expressed their longing, aspirations, hope and joys that came from the Christian religion’ (Smith, 2008:9).

Protest music is a term which gained currency (first in the USA) in the 1960s for songs which voiced feelings of protest about social or political injustice, or about events which aroused strong emotions of hopefulness (See section 1.8 in the previous chapter). A famous example is ‘We Shall Overcome’ (Sheurer, 2009). Protest music is supposed to change our minds about something, or at least bring attention to an issue that the artist thinks deserves change (Mark Wheat)⁵.

Therefore, Negro Spirituals evolved from slave songs which were coined by African people, who were captured and forcefully shipped off to the Americas, to be sold into slavery.

3. Spiritual and the civil rights movement⁵ The Power of Protest
Music.<http://Minnesota/publicradio.org/collection/special/columns/music>

According to Jones (2007:2), ‘This stolen race was deprived of their languages, families and cultures, yet their masters could not take away their music’ (Thomas, 2001:14).

Consequently, over the years, the slaves and their descendants adopted Christianity, the religion and language of their masters. They therefore linguistically reshaped their songs into a personal way of dealing with their oppression, their nostalgia, their pain of having been uprooted from their homelands, as well as the agony of slavery (Thomas, 2001:14). These songs, which became known as Negro Spirituals, reflected the slaves’ need to express their plight and new faith. They memorized Bible stories and translated them into songs whose lyrics were cryptically coined with idioms, which were transplanted from Africa, thus enabling them to discreetly communicate with each other without the knowledge of their masters (Pershey, 2000) and (Mapunde, 2008). Some of the lyrics they coined ‘were linguistically coded messages of subversion against the slaveholders, and signalled escape’ (Mapunde, 2008:12). This was the case when the slaves planned to escape bondage, and seek freedom via the *Underground Railroad* (Thomas, 2001:14; Mapunde, 2008).

A study by Smith (2008:6), a researcher on Negro Spirituals, reveals that the slave songs were also referred to as ‘plantation songs’, which were a ‘product of suffering, the hardship, and the despairs of those in bondage as they gave utterance to their emotions in songs, the partings, after their beloved had been sold to other masters, and the sorrows, as well as the desolation of separations.’ Another researcher, Meltzer (1994:32), asserts that some slave songs ‘contained explicit instructions to fugitive slaves on how to avoid capture, and on which routes to take to successfully make their way to freedom’. Meltzer (1994) further adds that,

Wade in the Water allegedly recommends leaving dry land and taking to the water as a strategy to throw pursuing bloodhounds off one's trail. *The Gospel Train Song of the Free*, and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* are equally supposed to contain veiled references to the *Underground Railroad*, and many sources assert that *Follow the Drinking Gourd* contained a coded map to the *Underground Railroad* (Meltzer, 1994:32).

Research conducted by Thomas (2001:15) divulges that the majority of the slave songs during the slave period provided motivation and inspiration for the ongoing struggle for freedom, a struggle which included systematic efforts to escape from bondage, as well as numerous slave-led revolts and insurrections.

Thomas (2001:15) further highlights the fact that the motivation to sing the slave songs, or plantation songs was inspired by ‘the African tradition, stories of their ancestors’ bravery, victories in battle, and success in overcoming past hardships,’ which often enabled the slaves to marshal inspiration to face their life’s challenges at the time. Smith (2008:9) reveals that when memories of ‘the heroic stories of well-known African ancestors faded with time, the slaves regarded the Old Testament’s Christian biblical heroes, such as Moses, Daniel, David, among others, as their religious ancestral equivalents’ (Smith, 2008:9). Thomas (2001:13) draws implicit comparisons between the plight of enslaved Africans, and that of enslaved Hebrews in the Bible. It is against this backdrop that the slave songs cried out for freedom in heaven, because ‘their true intent had to be phrased in language which was disguised from their oppressors, for fear of punishment’ (Meltzer, 1994:32)

In research conducted by Castellini (2013:5) the slave songs are described as a ‘consummate example of linguistically hidden transcripts’, and that,

Among the recurring characters of what he termed the slave songs were the oppressive Pharaoh and God’s favoured Israelites suffering in foreign bondage. Other favourites referenced biblical heroes like the warrior Joshua, or faithful underdogs such as Daniel in the lion’s den (Castellini, 2013:5).

2.2.1 Slave songs as work songs

Research conducted by Pershey (2000) reveals that slaves were allowed to sing the slave songs during their working time, as was the case when they had to coordinate their efforts for hauling fallen trees, or carrying heavy loads (Meltzer (1994:32). It was under such oppressive circumstances that work songs were composed and flourished, with cryptic messages and African idioms thrown in as the need arose and the lyrics changed with the

status quo (Pershey, 2000). These work songs eased their pain as they faced hard labour and humiliation by the slave masters.

2.2.2 Slave Songs for Communicating Information

Slave songs served as a form of communication for slaves in pre-civil war America (Pershey, 2000). Pershey (2000) adds that slave songs served the multipurpose of worshipping, communicating, or signalling information about escape routes, safe houses, and persons to trust. The songs *Gospel Train*, *Get on Board*, *Little Children*, *Behold That Star*, and *This Little Light of Mine*, are well known examples of songs that gave secret messages about finding the way to freedom (Pershey, 2000).

Due to the fact that in church the slaves could legitimately congregate, socialize, and safely express their feelings, it was in church where they could sing songs that had dual meanings, such as *Deep River*, which was used to plan meetings to discuss escape, and *Wade in the Water* which meant that a slave's absence had been discovered (Pershey, 2000). Therefore, singing the song would communicate the message to other plantations with the hope that the runaway would hear it, know that the bloodhounds were after their scent, and escape into the river, in order to conceal their whereabouts, and hide any scent and tracks (Pershey, 2000).

Slave songs were often performed as interactive songs, which used the call and response form. A leader sang the main verse, the call, and a group sang the response (Du Bois, 1994; Thomas, 2001; Smith, 2008). According to research (Pershey, 2000; Thomas, 2001; Bolton, 2006; Smith, 2008), an individual would coin the lyric of a new verse, to be answered by the group's chorus. This impromptu ingenious linguistic skilfulness in musical form was perfect for sending information and updated messages during the struggle for emancipation (Bolton, 2006).

Further research (Jones, 2000; and Thomas, 2006) attests that other songs, such as *Scandalize My Name* or *You Fight On*, were sung to communicate social relations, character development, and how to relate to others.

2.2.3 Slave songs as Sorrow Songs

Slave songs were also called sorrow songs, and were sung to express deep suffering, endurance, and yearning for freedom in the peaceful kingdom of heaven, as they offered emotional release and psychic relief. Bolton (2006) declares that,

There is also a duality in the lyrics of Spirituals. They communicated many Christian ideals while also communicating the hardship that was a result of being an African-American slave. The Spiritual was often directly tied to the composer's life. It was a way of sharing religious, emotional, and physical experience through song (Bolton, 2006: 43).

These songs therefore expressed the harsh life that the slaves experienced far away from countries of their origin. They also articulated the nostalgia they experienced, which they could not openly express, for fear of the wrath of the slave masters who did not tolerate any form of connection they had with their countries of origin (Bolton, 2006).

2.2.4 Slave Songs Adapted for the Civil Rights Movement

The slave songs were not only used as codes employed by the *Underground Railroad*, to help slaves escape to the north, but as Negro Spirituals, they also served as the integral part of the Civil Rights Movement, led by Martin Luther King.⁶ King explained in his 1964 book *Why We Can't Wait*, that civil rights activists 'sing the freedom songs today for the same reason the slaves sang them, because we too are in bondage and the songs add hope to our determination that 'We shall overcome someday' (Castellini, 2013:6).

Research by Kolchin (1995) further proclaims that King claims that freedom songs invigorated the movement in a most significant way, and served to give unity.

Mahalia Jackson⁷ who was dubbed the 'Queen of Gospel', and Nina Simone are two of many African-American women who championed the Civil Rights Movement through singing the Negro Spirituals. In 1963, when King delivered his famous '*I have a dream*' speech, in

⁶ American Negro Spirituals Research Foundation, Clemmons, New York.

<http://muskrat.middlebury.edu/It/cr/faculty/clemmons->

[It/Francois/programs/moreprograms/America%20negro%20Spirituals%20class.pdf](http://muskrat.middlebury.edu/It/cr/faculty/clemmons-It/Francois/programs/moreprograms/America%20negro%20Spirituals%20class.pdf)

⁷ Mahalia Jackson. www.theroot.com/multimedia/martin-luther-king-jr-playlist

Washington DC, Mahalia Jackson inspired the crowd by singing an old slave song, now regarded as a protest song, *We Shall Overcome* (Smith, 2008:10). This song was used to unite African-American communities during the Civil Rights Movement, and was genuinely inspirational. Another slave song entitled, *Keep Your Eyes on the Prize* performed by activist Alice Wine, was adapted for the Civil Rights Movement.⁸ Alice Wine adapted the language employed in some lyrics, specifically to express the plight of Civil Rights activists, and the message was about continuing the struggle despite adversity, about transcending oppression, and persevering, despite any obstacles that might arise in the struggle.

Nina Simone, is another Civil Rights Movement singer who was angered by the death of four black children in a bomb blast in the basement of a church in Birmingham, Alabama. In protest she formulated and sang the song *Mississippi Goddam*. Nina Simone ‘speaks not only of love, but of the black person’s pain and passion whipped to a swelling of rage, filling the sung phrases with her own spirit of rebellion’ (Smith, 2008:10).

2.3 PROTEST SONGS AND POLITICAL STRUGGLES

2.3.1 Protest Music and Politics

For ages, music has been used as a medium to express ideas, feelings, and emotions. Hope, love, fear, anger, frustration, pride, violence, have all been expressed through the medium of music (Adams and Fuller, 2006:939). Horne (Kruger, 1999:122) ‘draws the Marxist-structural connection between music and politics, and attests that a true protest song should address specific issues that are pertinent. Kruger (1999:122) believes that ‘protest songs should provoke the listener: shock us, unsettle us, amaze us, inspire us, make us angry, make us sad or make us optimistic’, and failure to do any of the above implies that ‘they hardly deserve to be called protest songs.’ Research conducted on protest music reveals that ‘Musicians become the voice of the people, and music therefore creates alternative space for the oppressed to articulate their views’ (Magaisa, 2003:55).

⁸Alice Wine- www.folkmusic.about.com/od/folksong/qt/Keep.Your.Eyes.htm

Further research in the political struggle against apartheid (Olwage, 2004) reveals that:

The liberation music of the apartheid era was coined and performed as a response to a history of oppression, which was introduced by the first European settlers in 1652, and dates back to long before the implementation of apartheid, which at that time enforced the segregation of racial groups in South Africa (Olwage, 2004:114).

Olwage (2004) adds that the performance of protest songs was a communal act of expression that shed light on the injustices of apartheid, therefore playing a major role in the eventual reform of the South African political arena. By attempting to understand the role that music played in the struggle against apartheid, and the eventual dismantling of the apartheid government, we can begin to understand the power that music can hold in a political context (Magaisa, 2003:55). Schuman (2008:180 and Olwage's (2004) research explores the connection between music and politics, as exemplified by the case of South Africa, and examines the resistance to apartheid through the lens of music. In light of the research conducted it can be concluded, therefore, that protest music was used by political movements, as a dominant musical medium of popular political expression, either within the country or in exile (Olwage, 2004). Schuman (2008:180) confirms that 'in South Africa, music played a significant role in putting pressure on the apartheid regime'.

The forced removals under the Group Areas Act and Bantu Resettlement Act (1954), which resulted in the destruction of Sophiatown, led to a transition to violent resistance, and music being often talked about as a 'weapon of the struggle' (Olwage, 1994:169). The song called *Sobashiy'abazali* (We Will Leave Our Parents Behind) became one of the most popular songs sung at Freedom fighters' training camps (Olwage, 1994:169). The lyrics evoke the sadness of leaving home, as well as the persistence of freedom fighters, as they vowed to 'follow freedom, by leaving South Africa, and going to foreign countries'

Erlmann (1982) and Clark and Worger (2004:153) confirm that during the struggle against apartheid, the power of music expedited the forging of political change, resisting oppression, strengthening community, and uniting people of different races and status.

According to Cook (1998:75) ‘indeed, the meaning of the liberation songs emerges out of the act of performing them, it is a communal expression and movement that not only symbolizes unity, but enacts it.’ Cook (1998:75) also endorses the fact that in this sense, ‘protest music was able to bridge especially powerful divides, and songs were often used as a mode of communication that was inaccessible to police and government, they also functioned as a way of communicating across communities of African people of different ethnic groups’.

Wood (2000:127) and Van Vuuren (2003) conducted research on songs performed during strikes in the mines and bus boycotts, and affirm that struggle songs played an important role in accelerating the strikers’ objectives.

2.3.1 Protest Songs against the Land Act

Van Niekerk (1999:59) conducted research on songs that campaign against the Natives Land Act 27 of 1913, which promoted territorial segregation of whites and blacks in South Africa. In this campaign acts of passive resistance were accompanied by resistance songs and poetry (Van Niekerk, 1999:60) and (Coplan, 1980), such as the popular song, *Umteto we Land Act*, which protested against the injustices of the Land Act (Coplan 1980:168).

2.3.2 Protest Songs against the South African Struggle for Freedom

Research conducted by Schumann (2008:1) discloses that ‘in the early apartheid years in South Africa, music went from reflecting common experiences and concerns of apartheid, to eventually function as a force to confront the state, and as a means to actively construct an alternative political and social reality’. Makky’s (2007:5) findings corroborate the fact that in pre-1960 apartheid, songs such as *Meadowlands* and *Senzeni Na?* became struggle anthems, sang to protest against the strife and discontent of a repressed nation while simultaneously expressing hope for the future. Protest songs started taking on a new militancy as students and the youth took to the streets in the 1970s and 1980s, in what has been termed ‘the people’s war,’ with the aim of making South Africa ‘ungovernable’ (Beinart

1994: 236). Manzini (*Amandla!* 2004)⁹, an anti-apartheid activist, aptly points out that ‘these songs expressed not just the mood, but the political momentum of the time. The more radical the situation became, the more militant many of these songs became’ (*Amandla!* 2004). Consequently, protest songs played a significant role in ‘putting pressure on the apartheid regime’ (Schumann, 2008:27).

Research conducted by Nkabinde (1997) reveals that,

There are various songs through which Africans express their grievances to the apartheid rulers. Most of these songs are sung ‘a capella’, and are improvised usually from the slogans the protest singers chant especially in political gatherings. In 1955 *Asihambi* meaning ‘We won’t go’, became the defiant slogan of the people of Sophiatown, who refused to be removed, but despite efforts to resist the removals, 2 000 armed police succeeded in moving 110 families (Nkabinde, 1997:7).

Todd Matshikiza, who used to be a music columnist for *Drum* magazine, offered an explanation for the composition by Miriam Makeba and the Skylarks, entitled *Senzeni Na?* meaning, ‘What have we done to deserve this?’ in response to the removals from Sophiatown (Nkabinde, 1997:7). There were also anti-pass songs performed during the passive resistance campaign of the 1950s. According to Anderson (1981,) cited in Nkabinde (1997:4), these included:

Mayibuye iAfrica, (Return Africa), as well as,

Thina Sizwe esimnyama

sikhalela izwe lethu,

elathathwa abamhlophe,

abawuyeke umhlaba wethu.

We Africans!

We cry for our land,

The Europeans took our land,

They must return our land Africa’.

⁹ Nelson Mandela 2004 AIDS Concert

2.3.3 Struggle Songs about Socio-Political Issues

In his research on Zimbabwean singer Oliver Mutukudzi, Sibanda (2004:59), contends that Mutukudzi's songs 'are not political and that the lyrics should be understood at face value'. His music, however, 'provides substantial evidence that he conceives of his utterances and is fully aware that Zimbabwean audiences will expect the lyrics in his music to address topical socio-political issues' (Sibanda, 2004:59). Bakhtin (1999: 95) and Sibanda (2004) confirm that 'the real meaning of any song lies beneath a surface interpretation of the lyrics.' Similar sentiments are expressed by Bakhtin (1999:95) and Byerly (1998) who contend that 'the expressiveness that reveals the emotional aspect of coined lyrics is significant in that there is no utterance that is devoid of this particular feature.'

2.3.4 Protest Music and the Use of Word Play

Schumann (2008:19) elucidates that 'when the state-controlled media was still relatively tolerant of dissent in the 1950s, songs openly addressed issues affecting musicians and the general population, mirroring their concerns'. But as the might of oppression increased in the 1980s, 'politically subversive meanings were hidden in the lyrics', hence, 'later, apartheid premises were undermined through lyrical fusion, and song texts presented more militant challenges to the state' (Schumann, 2008:19).

During the struggle against apartheid, many artists were determined to continue to voice their views musically, and by the 1970s, a great number of musicians employed lyrics that integrated hidden meanings into their songs. With the 1976 student uprisings beginning in South Africa, protesting against instruction in Afrikaans, the political struggle regained momentum (Marre and Charlton 1985:39). Lyrics were now often undeniably political, but frequently couched in metaphor, such as the example by Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu of Juluka (Marre and Charlton 1985:39), from their first album *Universal Men*, a song whose lyrics describe two fighting bulls, one is large and strong with huge horns, and another one is small with small horns. According to the lyrics, as the bulls fight, the small bull beats the big one. The song is based on a Zulu proverb, whose message is: 'the bull does not gorge

with his horns, but with his fighting expertise' (Marre and Charlton 1985:39; Freedom Sounds, 2004).

In the 1980s the protest musicians employed lyrics with a great deal of 'word play and hidden meanings' (Schumann, 2008:27). This conception is suitably illustrated through the use of the concept 'slave' in Lucky Dube's song *Slave*, in which the lyrics 'liquor slave' and 'legal slave' are used interchangeably during recording, and live performance (Schumann, 2008:27).

However, the 'improvised nature of the songs, as well as the dynamics of group singing in South Africa, opened the way for the texts to be slightly altered depending on the circumstances' (Scott, 1990:162). According to Scott (1990: 162), 'those who have earlier been privy to the more seditious interpretation will appreciate the hidden meaning of the innocuous version'. Yvonne Chaka Chaka gives an account of her experiences of what transpired after she had recorded a song entitled *Winnie Mandela*, which the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) refused to play. The title was changed to '*winning my dear love*' (Freedom Sounds 2004)¹⁰. She reminisces that 'in live shows the public knew all these songs, the lyrics would go *Winnie Mandela*, and people knew what the song was all about' (Freedom Sounds 2004). According to Allen (2003),

Both the semi-improvisational, mosaic-type structure of the lyrics, and the inference that there are deeper levels of meaning that may be reached by the listener, are distinctive characteristics of lyrics in traditional and popular, musical and poetic forms throughout southern Africa (Allen, 2003: 235).

Vail and White (1991: 887) affirm that many societies across southern Africa recognise the lyrics of songs and poetry as pertinent media for deliberating about 'the impact of power'. They also confirm that songs are a media through which power may be openly criticised' (Vail and White, 1991:887), through the concept of poetic license, which enables the 'performer to be free to express opinions that would otherwise be in breach of other social conventions' (Allen 2003: 319).

¹⁰ All Music-www.allmusic.com/album/people-get-ready-mw00007388746

2.3.5 Indirect Reference to Politically Sensitive Issues

Sibanda (2004:40) who conducted research on protest music among the Shona people of Zimbabwe attests that, like with other African people, there is a strong tradition coining lyrics that make indirect reference to socio-political issues in music making. Obscure lyrics are common for a number of reasons; one of them being that, in African custom, direct reference to potentially sensitive issues is impolite (Sibanda, 2004:40). In his study, Berliner (Sibanda, 2004:40) unearthed the fact that Shona singers often express their feelings about personal, social or political issues through allusion, rather than through lyrics that make direct reference to the issues at hand. This is because according to Shona mores, ‘direct reference to personal feelings or troubles might embarrass the singer’, therefore, to these singers ‘the indirect ways of dealing with social and political problems seem to be more appropriate’ (Sibanda, 2004:77). In fact, it is believed that obscurity is ‘didactically effective’. Sibanda (2004:77) implies that ‘people learn more when they have to derive conclusions and comprehension for themselves’.

Allen (2004:1) reflected on Biko’s message, and examined the significance of music in African societies, and its adaptation to political ends. Allen (2004:1) observes that music had special appeal in post-colonial Africa, as well as the fact that it is central to the effective expostulation of political issues (Allen, 2004:1). Sibanda (2004:79) asserts that ‘you don’t get to sing a song when you have nothing to sing about’, because ‘music functions as a scathing political site in Africa’. This perspective is illustrated by Mtukudzi, who Sibanda attests showed extraordinary courage in expressing himself freely through music, when free speech was not tolerated in Zimbabwe (Allen, 2004:1). Allen (2004:2) and Sibanda (2004) argue that ‘many people articulate their ideas, beliefs, and feelings through the creation of music, performance, or consumption, and ‘music potentially provides a revealing window into the African people’s experience’.

2.3.6 Protest Songs to Express Defiance

The song below was sung by Vuyisile Mini in 1964, who was executed as a result of his political activities. During the treason trial, Nelson Mandela recalls singing *Nants' Indod' Emnyama* with Mini himself in the Johannesburg Prison (Schumann, 2008: 24). Another fellow prisoner Ben Turok, (Reddy, E.S. 1974) cited in Vershbow (2010) describes Mini as walking defiantly to the gallows while singing:

Naants'indod'emnyama,
Verwoerd bhasobha,
naants'indod'emnyama

Behold the advancing blacks,
Verwoerd.
Beware of the advancing blacks.

Turok's recollection (Reddy, E.S. 1974) cited in Vershbow (2010) recalls:

And then, unexpectedly, the voice of Vuyisile Mini came roaring down the hushed passages. Evidently standing on a stool, with his face reaching up to a barred vent in his cell, his unmistakable bass voice was enunciating his final message in Xhosa to the world he was leaving. In a voice charged with emotion, but stubbornly defiant he spoke of the struggle, waged by the African people (Vershbow, 2010:12).

It is evident from Turok's assertions that Mini (Vershbow, 2010:12) was defiant, and not even the prospect of execution was going to make him abandon his stance against the struggle for freedom.

Struggle songs such as the one below were sung to express the black people's anger, and the spirit to fight on.

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>Thina Sizwe, thina sizwe esintsundu</i> | We the nation, we the black nation |
| <i>Sikhalela, sikhalela izwelethu</i> | We mourn, we mourn for our land |
| <i>Elathathwa, elathathwa ngabamhlope</i> | Stolen from us, stolen from us by the white man |

There were songs that depicted typical police brutality in the South African prisons pre-1994 (Drewett, 2003:157). The very direct and confrontational lyrics has the effect of wanting to reach a public that did not necessarily have the ear for subtle messages, and, beyond the politically active white community, those who were either ignorant of, or indifferent to the situation in their country's prisons (Drewett, 2003:157). For instance, Lucey's preferred style of coining lyrics was: 'I believed in an in-your-face, tell-it-like-it-is approach' (Drewett, 2003:157). Consequently, Lucey's promising career as a protest singer was brutally ended by a security police branch policeman, because they believed that Lucey's songs about the injustices of the apartheid system were too challenging (Thorsen, 2004:218), including coining lyrics about Lungile Tabalaza, who was killed in detention (Coplan, 1985).

The South African *toyi-toyi*, born out of a history of black people using song and dance as socio-political commentary, not only provided more than just a voice for the masses, but also communicated messages of socio-political awareness for both participants and observers (van Schalkwyk, 1994:4). The aggressive and rebellious characteristic of the *toyi-toyi* 'personified the political frustration of a nation' (van Schalkwyk, 1994:5). It was a vehicle for the expression of group power and identity through song, slogans, praise and dance. Black South Africans did not only feel a sense of emotional relief during performance, but they also gained a notion of collective identity (van Schalkwyk, 1994:5). The music of the time helped to sustain the momentum and impetus of the struggle for liberation and freedom (Mbeki, 2006).

Mandela¹¹ himself correctly captured this phenomenon:

The curious beauty of African music is that it uplifts as it tells a sad tale. African music is often about the aspirations of African people, and it can ignite the political resolve of those who might otherwise be indifferent to politics. Politics can strengthen music but music has a potency that defies politics (Mandela, 2004).

Anderson 1981:31) professes that one of the best known songs from the struggle for freedom was sung by South African women in the campaign against passes: *Strijdom, wa thint'*

¹¹ Nelson Mandela, in *The Hidden Years*, 3rd Ear Music

abafazi, wa thint' imbogodo, u za u ku fa (Strijdom once you touch a woman, you've struck a rock, you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed). According to Byerly (1998:32), 'protest lyrics and social commentaries, especially those which employed shrewd strategies in order to deceive the censors, became prominent in local releases.'

Protest lyrics can be used as a vehicle for social collaboration or social mobilization (Byerly, 1998:28). It is important to appreciate that music comprises various voices that could exhibit intricate 'social discourses challenging the social dynamics in the country' (Byerly, 1998:28). The purpose of music is to confront political and legal issues, which could be achieved not merely through the content of the protest lyrics, but also through the 'tireless struggles of musicians to create environments where their performances could be heard' (Byerly, 1998:28).

2.3.7 Protest Songs as a Strategy Employed to Accelerate Change

Gray's (2004:85) research pronounces that history has to take into cognizance that struggle songs encompass a 'spectrum of communal perceptions and responses to the unfolding events that black South Africans endured between 1912 and 1994'. Biko (1978) highlights the fact that:

Any suffering we experienced was made more real by song and rhythm which led to a culture of defiance, self-assertion and group pride and solidarity. This is a culture that emanates from a situation of a common experience of oppression, and is responsible for the restoration of our faith in ourselves and offers a hope in the direction we are taking from here (Biko, 1978:57).

Gray (2004:85) endorses the fact that in order to perceive the comprehensiveness of the liberation struggle, one should be heedful of the significance of the songs of the time. Gray (2004:87) highlights the importance of recognising protest songs as a particular strategy that was used to accelerate change in South African society.

Most importantly, 'even though some of the songs in that era may have seemed to be non-confrontational, the lyrics were still about socio-political events of the time' (Gray, 2004:89). Gray (2004:85) affirms that 'between 1912 and 1994 liberation songs by black South

Africans were used as a strategy to accelerate political change and transformation in South Africa'. These sentiments are echoed by Sibanda (Allen, 2004:7) who through analysis of Oliver Mtukudzi's music, concludes that, 'notwithstanding his public statements to the contrary, Mtukudzi crafts his lyrical compositions to elicit particular responses from his audiences, and that these responses are often politically charged.'

Schumann (2008:31) concurs with Sibanda (Allen, 2004) that 'The creator of a song may have no political intent, but because the song is heard in an environment that is politically unstable, it may gain intent from the listener, or even from the latent social influences of the creator him/herself.' Sibusiso Nxumalo (*Amandla!* 2004), an anti-apartheid activist recalls that the circumstances which were reflected in the lyrics, had to articulate a new urgency, as 'when the singing of struggle songs intensified, the government responded by moving large numbers of troops into the townships, and declaring a state of emergency'. Therefore, 'the lyrics started taking on new overtones, changing a word here, changing a word there, putting in an AK[47] here, taking out a Bible verse there' (*Amandla!* 2004). Hugh Masekela corroborates these sentiments and adds, 'It's a tool that we used, because you can't beat these people physically, you can scare them with the songs' (*Amandla!* 2004)¹².

2.3.8 Protest Music and Non-Verbal Expressive Conventions

Sibanda (2004:38) maintains that 'One of the most common affective techniques in Shona music that is also fundamentally characteristic of Mtukudzi's performance style is his use of what Frith (1988:120) terms non-verbal devices, because they do not use actual words or speech, but devices such as emphases, sighs, hesitations, changes on tone.' However, these devices actually use sounds that intensify the gist of the the message that the lyrics convey. These sentiments are echoed by Nketia (1986:178) who attests that African musical traditions are renowned for employing 'explosive sounds or special interjections, and vocal grunts', which heighten the potency of performances. These expressive devices are acknowledged emotional expressions which are appreciated by seasoned indigenous music audiences, as they are able to distinguish between sounds that are quintessentially used in language to

¹² Nelson Mandela AIDS 46664 Concert.

communicate protest, joy, sadness, surprise, shock, irritation, dismissiveness, and anger. Both Sibanda (2004:40) and Nketia (1986:178) concur that ‘such non-verbal devices, as well as the lyrics, work harmoniously, in bringing out sub-surface messages in songs.’

Kahari (1981:83) makes reference to the Zimbabwean traditional genre called *bembera*, which is an ‘exaggerated praise, or a sort of ironic hyperbole, a public denunciation of a person who is suspected of having bewitched one's child.’ Kahari (1981:83) further states that ‘The singer's objective is then to try to persuade the witch to undo what he has done.’ These kinds of songs are full of indirect allusions to and about the position and status of the person concerned.

Yanasekuru Dzepfunde translated ‘Mr Grandfather-yes-man’ is a protest song which expressed disapproval of the Africans who were used by the Whites to thwart the attainment of real and genuine independence for Zimbabwe (Kahari, 1981:96). In elucidating this view Kahari (1981:97) expounds,

The whole song is an appeal to the Shona community to regard with contempt men without a backbone, men who agree to everything they are told by the White authorities. There appears to be no limit to what the yes-men can agree to—even in cases which go against their traditional values such as being given orders to take part in birth control. Sometimes they are instructed to live like rats.

Kahari (1981) goes on to explain that Mr Grandfather yes-man took pride in yielding to the their white masters’ every whim. It is important to note that ‘Mr Grandfather-yes-man’, could also have been ‘Mrs Grandmother yes-madam’, and the song could also have been performed by women, protesting against other women, who would have been accused for perpetuating the same character traits as ‘Mr Grandfather yes-man.’

Kahari (1981: 96) affirms that before the revolution, in Zimbabwe ‘Internally the protest song went underground and, because they were so easily metaphoric they found their way onto the radio simply because the Government did not understand what was being sung.. Kahari (1981:92) further explains that, ‘Both in form and content, the protest songs became subtle

and sophisticated, when the government became ‘more alert to overt political statements, and the language had to become highly metaphorical in consequence.’ That is, the protest song became so subtle as to avoid detection by the authorities and it was, as it were, the songs had become ‘an invisible newspaper read by the Blacks in the country’ (Kahari, 1981:92).

2.3.9 Protest Songs against Corrupt Leadership

Focusing on Kenya during the past fifty years, (Allen, 2004:7) Mutonya reveals that music is a fundamental indispensable strategy through which ordinary Kenyans ‘express their wishes, identities and aspirations, and constitutes one of the most salient sites of struggle between rulers and their subjects.’

Between the 1930s and the late 1950s, during the Kenyan struggle for independence from colonial rule, protest songs and dance functioned in an emancipatory manner because they enabled people to ‘share their burdens, triumphs and gladness of heart by singing about the common oppressor and exploiter, the colonialist’ (Matonya, 2004: 23). Even during the Mau Mau, songs were used to ‘nag, cajole, and implore the Kikuyu community to fight for their dignity and identity’ (Barber, 1997: 23). Matonya (2004:20) further confirms that in Kenya music has ‘consistently functioned as one of the ‘most salient sites of struggle between rulers and ordinary people’.. The song below by Joseph Kamaru (Allen, 2004:6) is not the only instance of serious political issues being contested through protest music in Kenya.

We pray for our President, Daniel Arap Moi.

Moi cannot stop corruption, so help him God.

Moi cannot even stop the formation of opposition parties.

So God help the President before he is thrown into the lion’s den.

Matonya (2004:26) validates the fact that in 1982, Kenya experienced her first attempted military *coup d’etat*, which lasted only a few hours, and ‘resulted in the death of hundreds of Kenyans, as well as the destruction of property, precipitated a deluge of songs.’ It is ironic that performers had initially formulated praise songs that eulogized their indigenous royal leadership, and political leaders. After the coup, the same musicians coined protest songs

which demonized the same leaders. Below is a song which chastises politicians who selfishly assume power in order to enrich themselves:

Kenya ya Ngai! (Kikuyu: Kenya Belongs to God),
Is this my Kenya which I suffered for?
We voted you into power to represent our interests,
and now you intend to sell Kenya,
where shall you sell this Kenya of God?

One of the most salient critiques of the state of Kenya issued by a musician in the early 2000s was Eric Wainaina's album *Sawa Sawa* (Kiswahili: All is Fine) which is about issues that are relevant to people, and expresses sentiments that people identify with (Matonya, 2004:30). According to research, Wainaina laments the level of corruption in Kenya, and the song, *Nchi ya Kitu Kidogo* (Kiswahili: The Country of Something Small), is commonly translated as 'The Land of Corruption' (Matonya, 2004:30). This song not only appealed to the Kenyan public, *Kitu Kidogo* had come to epitomize the desire for Kenyans to live in a corruption-free society (Matonya, 2004:30). In the song Wainaina (Matonya, 2004:32) skillfully employs different slang words for bribe in order to portray the humorous indictment of the situation in Kenya, and he sings:

Ukitaka chai ewe ndugu nenda Limuru
(If you want tea [bribe], brother, go to Limuru)
In other lyrics, he advises:
Ukitaka soda ewe Inspekta burudika na Fanta
(If you need a soft drink [bribe], Police Inspector refresh yourself with a Fanta.)

2.3.10 Protest Songs against Forced Removals

South African people with political awareness rejected the fundamental policies of apartheid such as the Group Areas Act. Wood (2007:127) notes that the apartheid government 'continued to enforce racial segregation with forced removals of communities such as in

Sophiatown in 1955', and a well-known popular song memorializes this events (Nolutshungu, 1982:149) as follows:

*O tla a utlwa makgowa a re,
a re yeng ko Meadowlands.
Meadowlands, Meadowlands,
ons duck nie ons phola hier.*

You will hear the whites say,
Let's go to Meadowlands, Meadowlands,
Meadowlands, we are not leaving,
we are staying here.

The *patois and tsotsitaal*¹³ incorporated into the lyrics of the song *ons duck nie, ons phola hier*, are significant in the sense that people in Sophiatown and similar areas, who were conversant in the tsotsitaal, were able to 'get the message' and the use of these mediums of communication did not trivialize the plight of the people who were being forcibly removed (Wood 2000:127). Therefore, such songs were sung wherever people experienced forced removals, hence, even in democratic South Africa, black people, who are homeless, still sing this song against the democratic government, when the 'red ants'¹⁴ are sent to forcibly remove the 'shack dwellers', 'land-grabbers', as well as 'building-highjackers'.¹⁵

2.3.11 Protest Songs to Enforce Normal Behaviour

Saighoe (1997) maintains that no society has attained a perfect record of conformity to acceptable patterns of behaviour by its members. Saighoe (1997) further adds that every society has its socio-political arrangements, which help enforce normal behaviour. He goes on

¹³ South African urban street language

¹⁴ A red uniformed group of men, who work for a security company that is summoned to evict illegal dwellers, or rent defaulter, when all other efforts of evicting them have been exhausted, and failed.

¹⁵ Molefe, O and Davis, R. 2012. *Cosatu's Cape Town march: neither bark nor whimper*. www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2012-03-07/cosatus-capetown-march-neither-bark-nor-whimper. Accessed 12/11/2013

to say that among the Dagaba of Ghana, like in other African societies, music is employed as a tool for protest, as well as a corrective measure. If a member of the community's behaviour brings them under the censure of the community, the community's protest is registered through songs (Saighoe, 1997:24). The protest lyrics may be coined in such a manner that they are in the form of ridicule, admonition, reproach or just plain insults (Saighoe, 1997:24).

The practice of protesting through music is not unique to the the Dagaba, or to the West African societies. It is a universal phenomenon in African societies. According to Firth (1946) cited in Sighoe, 1997:25), the use of song is a form of mechanism by which ridicule by the community is mobilised and launched against offenders among the Tikopia (Firth, 1940) cited in Sighoe, 1997:25). Furthermore, the Bewaa protest songs performed by the Dagaba, also serve as an avenue for checking people who, for one reason or the other, are expected to lead exemplary lives, but do not live up to the expectations (Saighoe, 1997:25).

According to Merrium (Saighoe, 1997:25), the impact of the protest on those efferred to by the protest song can be tremendous. Merrium (1997:25) further explains that the reason why performers who formulate protest songs and 'painstakingly manipulate the reciprocal give and take relationship between the lyrics and the melody, is in order to make the song a desirable and effective communication tool.'

2.3.12 Protest Songs to Blow off Steam

Among the Mapuche of Chile (Merriam, 1964:198) songs are improvised in order to take advantage of the occasion to 'blow off steam'. Merriam (1964:198) adds that the 'songs afford the performers release for suppressed emotion.' This view is echoed by Titier (1974), cited in Saighoe (1997:25). These protest songs are said to function as a 'release mechanism, coupled with what is clearly freedom of expression,' and a means of 'disseminating information, which leads to redress of grievances and solutions of problems' (Merriam, 1964:198) Merriam (1964) adds that the lyrics of such songs give the freedom to express thoughts, ideas and comments, which cannot be pronounced boldly in normal language situations.

On the sexism that she experienced during United Democratic Front (UDF) meetings, Russell (2003:238) explains that she had never before been with mobs of people, of all colours in this country. She (Russell, 2003:238) adds that it was peaceful as they sang protest songs, and they were able to ‘let off steam’, but she got sick and tired of the fact that only men organized and addressed the gatherings, and there were no women on the platform, except for Cheryl Carolus. This made her uncomfortable, and she wanted ‘to let off steam’ about the domination of men, even on issues that concerned women (Russell, 2003:238). The men spoke about ‘women’s rights and feminism, but they did not really understand it’ (Russell, 2003:238).

2.3.13 Political Protest Music and Linguistics Prowess

Due to the fact that protest musicians of all ethnic backgrounds were heavily censored if their lyrics were too controversial, or extremely politically charged, many performers were forced to alter, or modify their lyrics (Byerly, 1998:10). Byerly (1998:18) avows that protest musicians ‘expressed political sentiments in poetic tones over synthesized musical accompaniment’, and through the skillful use of ‘linguistic gymnastics, crossing over between various languages within single songs, albums or performances, musicians showed themselves to be culturally and socially competent, within and across particular societies’ (Byerly, 1998:26).

Not only did the lyrics employed in the protest songs demonstrate the performers’ ‘knowledge, sensitivity, insight, and skill in relation to the unspoken rules and ethics contained within the communication skills of speech communities’, but they also displayed their communication expertise, especially among ‘multicultural and multilingual speech communities such as the ones in South Africa’ (Byerly, 1998:26).

To this end, Byerly (1998:26) reveals that,

Humour, cynicism, criticism and irony could all be expressed through the careful revival, reconstruction, manipulation, and superimposition of varied themes, rhythms, and harmonies. The deployment of creative instrumentations and the resourceful use of code-switching between the country’s numerous languages further added to a lively musical and

lyrical discourse, that managed to outwit even the most stringent scrutiny. Traditional music styles were revived to suggest tongue-in-cheek nationalism, folk themes were aggrandized to imply one thing while meaning another to the astute audience, and the ironic use of melodies could mislead the analyst expecting obvious meanings where suggestions were more obtuse. The innovation of new themes and styles created whole new genres of non-traditional sounds.

Gray (2004:91) further confirms that ‘struggle songs were linguistically manipulated in such a way that the lyrics of the songs would be pertinent to various circumstances that confronted black South Africans at that time’. The protest musicians were capable of ‘recognising the urgency of not only being ‘linguistically versatile, but also being efficient in switching between relevant and appropriate speech genres and codes’ (Chushman, 1995:9). This was due to ‘Linguistic competence played an enormously important role in cross-cultural communication within music in the apartheid era’ (Byerly, 1998:26).

2.3.14 The Power of Music, and Politics

South Africans sing various songs through which they express their grievances to their rulers (See 2.2.10). Most of these songs are sung *a capella*, and are improvised usually from the ‘slogans’ chanted by the performers, especially in political gatherings (Nkabinde, 1997:6).

Woods (2007) delineates that it was the insurrection of the subjugated masses, which derived its power from, among other things, the performance of political songs, that resulted in democracy. The performance of political songs vividly shows the measure of resolve and cohesion of groups, as well as the measure of energy needed in order for performances to be effective. Woods (2007:16) further maintains that, ‘whenever they heard them (protest songs), then it sent shivers down their spine,’ and recounts Tutu’s sentiments that, ‘Without these protest songs, our struggle would have been a great deal longer, a great deal bloodier, and perhaps not even successful’ (*South African Freedom Songs*)¹⁶. These sentiments are further echoed by Ronnie Kasrils (*South African Freedom Songs*) who pronounces that the protest songs had a powerful influence on the struggle of the 1980 and affirms that,

¹⁶ Kasril, S.R. derived its power from, among other things, the performance of political songs

In South Africa we did not defeat apartheid by out-shooting it, song and *toyi-toyi* featured as a weapon. While the performance of political songs is a liberating act, it is captivating, both in the enjoyment of singing and in the ideology of the lyrics being sung. In some political songs originating in the church there is no overt political layer, in fact, the word layer of one song ironically endorses the *status quo*, for example in the words of the song '*Makube njalo kude kube kunaphakade*', (May it be so until eternity) (Kasrils, 1995).

It is inferred that another layer of unsung words is present in the minds of the singers, which indicates that context also gives political meaning to the freedom song (Kasril, 1995). It is the power of the freedom songs that reinforced the resolve of the oppressed majority of South Africa (Kasril, 1995). Makky (2007:2) affirms that, 'Song is embedded in South African culture, and it is not surprising that this medium would serve as a principal vehicle in defeating the apartheid government, as songs were used to hide protest slogans, banned materials, secrete information, etc.'

In African countries, including South Africa, protest songs played a significant role towards achieving freedom from the European oppressors (Kahari, 1981:93). There are songs that played a pivotal role, not only in sustaining the South African people, but songs that also gave them resolve during the struggle for freedom. A typical example of songs which served these purposes, is *Nkosi Silelel' iAfrika* (God Bless Africa), which was composed in 1897, by Enock Sontonga, a South African. During the apartheid era, when the black majority of South Africa was oppressed and disenfranchised, it acquired the tone of a political protest song. According to Kahari (1981:96), 'Before the revolution its tone was one of determined resolution, during the war it became the song of resistance, and on Independence Day, the song of triumph.' He (Kahari, 1981:96) reinforces the fact that *Nkosi Silelel' iAfrika* 'is a typical example of the many songs that have assumed at least three tones in the course of its travel.'

2.3.15 Struggle Songs in Post-Apartheid South Africa

Protest songs and chants continue to play a hugely significant role in the struggle for social justice and service delivery in South Africa. According to recent research (Maree, 2011),

however, *Awulethu Umshini wami*¹⁷ as a song has a discursive presence, and like the proverbial phoenix, has risen from the smouldering fire of South African politics, and no song has accentuated its resurgence in post-apartheid South Africa more than the sound of the liberation struggle song, *Umshini wami*, which Jacob Zuma, who became democratic South Africa's third President, reintroduced into public consciousness at the trial of Schabir Shaik in 2005 (Gunner, 2009).

The song catapulted Jacob Zuma into public debate (Gunner 2009:38), and gained prominence as Jacob Zuma's signature song, due to its subsequent performances in varying contexts, such as his court trials, and associated succession struggle with Thabo Mbeki for the office of President (Maree, 2011:21). Gunner (Maree, 2011:21) further reports that,

There are aggravating concerns regarding gender equality, as the singing of *Umshini wami*, which during the struggle was embraced by both women and men, was now sung to reinforce the division in the South African society regarding the issues of rape and violence against women.

The singing of *Umshini Wami*, however, demonstrates a re-establishment of patriarchal values, which contradicts South Africa's principles of liberal democracy. It is also suggestive of the historical notions of battle, enemy, oppressor and oppressed, which prevailed during the apartheid era. During Zuma's rape case the struggle song was sung in circumstances that subotaged the struggle for gender equality. Maree (2011:22) further validates that,

despite constitutional recognition of women's rights, and great advances in South African society at large, an intolerance of women's rights became manifest in the singing of *Umshini wami*, and therefore this implies that, many men do not respect a woman's right to say no to sex (Maree, 2011:22).

Suttner (2009:46) reinforces the fact that concerns about the intolerance of women emancipation and women's rights are exacerbated by the fact that 'The *Umshini wami* song was also accompanied by bodily movements which could be construed as simulating a sexual act, an association which apparently is common to warrior songs.' According to post-

¹⁷ *Bring Me My Machine Gun*

apartheid research (Suttner, 2009: 229, ‘What has become known as ‘Zuma’s signature song’ has flouted the concerns regarding gender equality and the status of women.’

Zuma is famous for performing *Awuleth' Umshini Wami*, an isiZulu armed liberation song, that some believe inappropriately legitimises the use of political violence. Furthermore, researchers such as Gunner (2009:46), contend that, ‘The nonverbal elements which were portrayed during the performance of *Umshini wami* carried the implication that Jacob Zuma’s period in office would be characterised by a return to traditional African values.’ This gave hope to those who were lobbying for the restoration of patriarchal values, which is contradictory to South Africa’s constitutional stipulations that women and men are equal (Gunner, 2009).

2.3.16 Performance of *Umshini Wami* and Power Relations

Furniss and Gunner (1995:3) argue that apart from being commentators, performers are often also involved in power relations themselves, in terms of supporting or subverting those in power. The songs of association, as well as *Umshini wami* expressed socio-political tension in society. Furniss and Gunner (1995:3) argue that,

The double-entendre reflected in *mushini wami*, on the one hand *umushini* can refer to a gun, and on the other it may refer to the woman’s sexual organs, and the phrasing of the song is made to have connotation of a man impolitely summoning a woman to come so that he can have a sexual relationship with her (Furniss &Gunner, 1995:3).

The situational irony is further reinforced by the fact that in democratic South Africa, Zuma’s supporters remained resolute in their stance that rape was according to their culture not a crime, and that only since the end of apartheid has government tried to turn it into a crime. Consequently, these developments heightened the rate of gendered violence in contemporary South Africa (Maree, 2011:224).

2.4 WOMEN OF SONG

2.4.1 ‘Love Songs’ and ‘Revolutionary Songs’

During the apartheid era, people who spoke out against the system were persecuted, jailed or killed. Many artists who survived the wrath of the brutal laws of the times went into exile. Miriam Makeba and Letta Mbulu were two of the prominent ones who left the country while Dolly Rathebe, Thandi Klassen, Abigail Kubeka, Mabel Mafuya and Mara Louw, among others, remained and continued singing against the apartheid regime (Allen, 2003).

According to research conducted by Muller (1999) and Allen (2003:237) Makeba, known affectionately and reverently as ‘Mama Africa’ was effectively the voice of the South African freedom struggle, and ‘she exemplified an artist in the service of others and continued that service virtually to the end, literally to her last breath’. Jacobson (2008) validates that Miriam Makeba died as she lived using her exquisite, expressive voice to fight for humanity for the duration of her life as she spoke out against racist regimes through song. Makeba is also one of the major artists who took up the anti-apartheid struggle on the international stage in song (Ewens, 1991; Molefe and Mzileni, 1997; Muller, 1999; and Allen, 2003). Jacobson (2008) discloses that Makeba’s very last performance in Italy, during which she collapsed and later died, was in honour of activist Roberto Saviano. Her music remained as rooted and political as it had been when she began recording in the United States in the 60s (Coplan, 1985; Ewens (1991; Molefe and Mzileni, 1997).

In one of her anti-apartheid albums, which she produced with Harry Belafonte, in 1965, Makeba sang the song *Khawuleza, khawuleza mama*, ‘Hurry up, hurry up mother!’ This is one of the South African songs she popularised. It is sung in the townships, the reserves, and locations near Johannesburg (Molefe & Mzileni, 1997). In those days home-brewed African beer was illegalised by the regime (Schumann, 2008). Therefore, in order to keep watch of the arrival of the police, ‘the children would play in the streets, and when they saw police cars, they would sing *Khawuleza, mama!* So as to warn the women about the imminent police raids’ (Allen, 2003:237). The women would then hurriedly hide their home-brewed beer. This protest song was inspired by the arrests of women who brewed African beer in order to supplement their meagre income, as well as the fact that for Makeba, the lyrics of the song were coined based on anecdotal evidence, as she was only 18 days old when she was

imprisoned with her mother Nomkomendelo, whose ‘crime’ was brewing and selling African beer (Schumann, 2008).

Allen (2003) indicates that after Makeba was forced into exile from her native country in 1960, she used her stature as a renowned international artist to speak out against apartheid.¹⁸ As a result, such efforts earned her the title ‘Mama Africa’, as she became an enduring symbol in the fight for equality (Scott, 1990). Cowell (2008:112) comments that,

Ms. Makeba wrote in 1987: ‘I kept my culture. I kept the music of my roots. Through my music I became this voice and image of Africa, and the people, without even realising.’

Allen (2003) is contradicted by Makeba who maintains that her music was never intended to further a political agenda. In an interview with *The Guardian*¹⁹ she professes that,

My music was far more personal than that. ‘I am not a political singer,’ she said. ‘I don’t know what the word means. People think I consciously decided to tell the world what was happening in South Africa. No! I was singing about my life, and in South Africa we always sang about what was happening to us.’

Makeba’s views are echoed by Mary Thobei (Allen, 2003:234), who explains that, ‘our songs all had meaning’ (Schumann, 2008:22). Schumann (2008:17) further affirms that ‘through music and song Makeba, and other South African women of song, played a significant role in putting pressure on the apartheid regime.’ Other protest songs popularised and sung by Mirriam Makeba are *Indoda e-Myama Verwoerd*, which implied, Verwoerd, be careful, the black man is advancing, and *Ba Hleli Bonke e Tilongweni*, she referred to the political leaders, who were all sitting in jail (Molefe, and Mzileni, 1997). Scott (1990:160), in his work on the arts of resistance, asserts that ‘oral traditions, including music, due simply to their means of transmission, offer a kind of seclusion, control, and even anonymity that make them ideal vehicles for cultural resistance.’

¹⁸ Makeba, M. and Hall, J. 1989. *Makeba: My Story*. New American Library, 1987. Newsmakers, Issue 4Gale Research.

¹⁹ Miriam Makeba. www.nytimes.com/2008/i/world/Africa/htm Accessed 23/01/2012.

In a 1976 interview (Schumann, 2008:28), Makeba comments, 'I could not afford the luxury of just being a singer who sings about happy things and love.' This is attributed to the fact that in South Africa, the normal divide between 'love songs' and 'revolutionary songs' did not necessarily hold, since, the struggles for ordinary life, and the political struggle were regarded as related.' Similarly, the singer, Vusi Mahlasela politicised his 'love songs' in other ways, referring to the political unrest of the late 1980s on a textual level, Schumann (2008:28), comments, 'So who are they who say no more love poems now? I want to sing a song of love for that pregnant woman who jumped fences, and still gave birth to a healthy child.'

Dorothy Masuka is a jazz singer who was born in Bulawayo, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and her family moved to South Africa when she was twelve. She wrote and performed *Hamba Notsokolo*,²⁰ one of the biggest South African hits in the 1950s, and still very popular among her songs. *Notsokolo* has multiple connotations, and in isiZulu or IsiXhosa it refers to a woman (the prefix No- is used before women's names in the two languages), and in this song it refers to a woman who is poverty-stricken, one who struggles for survival, and in this particular song, it refers to one who struggles for political freedom. The political implications of this song may have eluded the powers that be.

Masuku regards herself as a composer at least as much as a singer and she also took on serious themes in her songs. When she performed *Dr. Malan*, which included the line *Dr. Malan has difficult laws*, the most notorious and feared South Africa's Special Branch started paying attention to her music (Schumann (2008). According to research (Allen 2003: 237), in 1961, Masuka wrote and recorded the song *Lumumba*, in response to the outrage over the execution of the newly elected Congolese leader. The South African Special Branch who had been on her track, confiscated the master tapes and began searching for Masuka (Allen 2003:237). Consequently, she went back to Bulawayo and remained there on the advice of Troubadour,

²⁰Dorothy Masuka www.gatewayofafrica.com/artist/biography.html

her recording company. After the incident, Masuka was declared *persona non-grata* by the South African authorities and was forbidden from re-entering the country (Schumann, 2008).

This stance by the South African government made *Hamba Nontsokolo* to become increasingly popular. Another protest song sung by Masuku is *uDr. Malan Unomthetho Onzima* (Dr. Malan's Government is Harsh), which sold well and was even played on the SABC's African re-diffusion service before it was banned (Allen, 2003: 236).

2.4.2 Cryptic Lyrics

Research conducted by Anderson (1988: 32) divulges that, 'The ability of cryptic lyrics to accommodate multiple interpretations is particularly useful in a repressive political climate. On occasion, a song's surface meaning thinly veils a coded message, whose interpretation can be reinforced by the performance context'.

To illustrate the sentiments expressed above, Allen (2003: 235) affirms that, 'One press report claimed that Mafuya's recording '*Udumo Lwamaphoyisa*' (A Strong Police Force) was adopted by 'look-out boys' to warn shebeen queens and illicit drinkers of police presence and the possibility of liquor raid'. Mafuya's '*Udumo Lwamaphoyisa*' actually referred to the police's notoriety, which resulted from unjust arrests, unexplained prison deaths, and all forms of police brutality against black people. On the other hand, the 'look-out boys' interpretation implied that there was a huge police presence, and it warned people, including shebeen queens, to be in their best behaviour, in order to evade arrest. This has the same implications as Makeba's *Khauleza mama* (See 2.3.1).

Numerous songs were coined to protest against the Group Areas Act (1950), the Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act (1951), the removal of people from Sophiatown, and their relocation to Meadowlands in Soweto (Schumann, 2008:24). Examples of such songs are, the Sun Valley Sisters' *Bye Bye Sophiatown*, Miriam Makeba's *Sophiatown is Gone*, and Strike Vilakazi's *Meadowlands*, popularised by Nancy Jacobs (Vershow, 2010). The special branch relied on literal translation, (*We're moving night and day to go to Meadowlands. We love Meadowlands*) and interpreted the song as supportive of their removal programme

(Schumann, 2008:24). The inhabitants of Sophiatown sang this song as their belongings were being hauled away by government trucks (Coplan, 1985:165). However, in reality the lyrics expressed the devastation of the evacuation. Their interpretation ‘caught the ironic tone of the song, and carried the opposite meaning as that of the government, and *Meadowlands*’ became a protest anthem against the Sophiatown removals’ (Allen, 2003:235).

According to Allen (2003);

The semi-improvisational, mosaic-type structure of the lyrics, and the inference that there are deeper levels of meaning that may be reached by the listener, are distinctive characteristics of lyrics in traditional and popular, musical and poetic forms throughout Southern Africa (Allen, 2003: 235).

Thus, Vail and White (1991: 887) confirm that in many societies across Southern Africa, ‘songs and poetry are accepted as appropriate media for expressing the impact of power’.

2.4.3 Protest Songs Advise Course of Action

Many of the protest songs did more than just inform, and sometimes they quite openly advised a course of action, for instance, during the bus boycott in August 1943, the protest song ‘*Azikhwelwa*,’ meaning ‘We refuse to ride’, vibrated through Alexandra and beyond (Schumann, 2008:19). According to Anderson (1988:32), ‘possibly the best-known protest songs from the 1950s were those sung by women in the campaign against passes. One of the most famous songs sung in August 1956 was ‘*Hey Strydom, Wathint’a bafazi, way ithint’imbodoko uzaKufa*’, which translates, ‘Strydom, now that you have touched the women, you have struck a rock, you have dislodged a boulder, and you will be crushed’ (Anderson (1988:32; Pieterse 1989). The course of action here was that the pass laws were going to be openly defied, that is, black women were not going to carry them. In this song, as in Masuka’s ‘*uDr. Malan Unomthetho Onzima*,’ the politician, Dr Malan is addressed directly. Similarly, one of the most popular songs of this era, composed by the political activist Vuyisile Mini who died in the gallows, was later performed and recorded by Miriam Makeba (Pieterse 1989: 126).

Naants'indod'emnyama,

Verwoerd bhasobha,

Behold the advancing blacks,

Verwoerd.

Beware of the advancing blacks.

However, according to Hugh Masekela, music was an important weapon in the struggle (Freedom Sounds, 2004). By singing this song even as he walked to the gallows, Mini implied that even in death, he was defiant and he still held on to his political convictions. The course of action was therefore that the struggle should continue.

2.4.4 Mournful Tones in Protest Songs

Two struggle songs '*Senzeni Na?*' and '*Thina Sizwe*' acquired a mournful tone, and they particularly demonstrate the downheartedness which was characteristic of the status quo during the apartheid era (Stapleton (1987:192; cited in Schumann, 2008:26). Though melancholic, they both still maintain the accusatory, confrontational tone of some of the protest songs (Allen 2003: 237). According to Sibongile Khumalo (Schumann, 2008:27) the effect of the song '*Senzeni Na?*,' meaning 'What have we done?' is not so much achieved by the text itself, as by its repetition. Musician Khumalo (Schumann, 2008:) reiterates,

Can you imagine that a one phrased song, *Senzeni Na?* 'what have we done?', repeated over and over and over... You have no other option but to stand up and go and fight'. Hence, 'Indeed, Soweto's youth, and numerous artists heeded that message' (Schumann, 2008:27).

These mournful lyrics are symbolic of the trauma that the black South African majority experienced when they were killed in great numbers. Notwithstanding the unanswered rhetorical question *Senzeni na?* (What have we done?), freedom songs enabled them to gather strength and soldier on.

Makkay (2007:6) maintains that,

The peaceful resistance during the time *Senzeni Na* was used in protest is apparent because the song lacks the definitive aggression found in the music of later anti-apartheid struggle songs. Also, its lyrics may seem

unforgiving, but they are not as demanding and violent as protest songs from the more militant years of the anti-apartheid movement that were imminent.

Makkay (2007:6) further adds with regard to *Senzeni Na* that ‘with its uneasy mix of pain and protest, it fully implicates the Boers, the agents and architects of apartheid.’ Vusi Mahlasela compares *Senzeni Na* to *We Shall Overcome*, the anthem of the United States Civil Rights Movement, and he admits that it is one of the really sorrowful protest songs (Makkay, 2007). It is therefore the sadness in *Senzeni Na* that sets this struggle song apart from other, more militant ones.

2.4.5 Protest Artists Have a ‘Third Eye’

Another musical warrior is Letta Mbulu, who is regarded as an important singer whose music was blatantly laden with politically conscious lyrics, and whose contralto was a vital part of the chorus against Pretoria's brutal policies.²¹ Mbulu's album title track *Not Yet Uhuru* – released in the early 1990s, in South Africa, was sung to reflect on the dire poverty and the miserable condition that the majority of black South Africans lived in. Mbulu, just like Miriam Makeba and Busi Mhlongo, performed songs about the South African status-quo (Allen, 2003: 237).

Mbulu is eloquent about using music to raise political consciousness (Cowell, 2008:112), and she describes her vision of the role of artists in political movements in the following manner, ‘Artists have a third eye that other people don't have. We can see things they can't see. If you can sing the right song with the right lyrics, you can change people's mindsets’ (Cowell, 2008:112).

²¹ Fernandes, N. 2002. *Song can change people's mindsets*

[.http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/Mumbai/song-can-change-people'-mindset/articleshow.cms](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/Mumbai/song-can-change-people'-mindset/articleshow.cms)

Mbulu also performed another powerful protest song titled *Ke feletswe ke madule*, which translates, ‘I have become homeless, or I have been evicted from my house’ (Molefe and Mzileni, 1997). This song highlights the realities of poverty and homelessness in South Africa. These sentiments are supported by Schumann (1998:22), who comments that ‘Musicians sang about the individual struggles of ordinary people’.

2.4.6 Proverbs in Protest Lyrics Reflect Reality

Proverbs are a combination of words to create a particular meaning, which can seldom be guessed from one’s knowledge of the individual words making up the proverb (Underhill, 1980:39). According to Dalfovo, (1997:42),

Proverbs may be described as sayings originating from experience, being expressed in a pithy, fixed and metaphorical language and conveying a message’. The meaning developed in a proverb differs from the literal meaning of the words used. Although proverbs lack in transparency, they express reality and thus reflect reality in communities in which they are spoken and are important in documenting archaic words, i.e. words that are no longer in regular use, but which may occur occasionally in particular contexts (Dalfovo, 1997:42).

2.4.7 Protest Music and Linguistic Prowess

Resistance consisted of expressions of refusal to accept or conform to a situation, while protest consisted of expressions of determination to be pro-active mobilizers of social change (Chushman (1995). Protest musicians formed networks among members of different communities, and Chushman (1995:9) substantiates how in South Africa, ‘protest music was instrumental in helping blacks to share their common experience of subordination and to carve out space in which they could protest and share their plight.’

According to Byerly (1998:14),

Humor, cynicism, criticism and irony could all be expressed through the careful revival, reconstruction, manipulation, and superimposition of varied themes, rhythms, and harmonies. The deployment of creative instrumentations and the resourceful use of code-switching among the country’s numerous languages, further added to a lively musical and lyrical discourse that managed to outwit even the most stringent scrutiny. Traditional music styles were revived to suggest tongue-in-

cheek nationalism, folk themes were aggrandized to imply one thing, while meaning another to the astute audience, and the ironic use of melodies could mislead the analyst expecting obvious meanings where suggestions were more obtuse (Byerly, 1998:14).

Furthermore, the protest musicians recognised the urgency of linguistic versatility, and being efficient in switching between ‘relevant and appropriate speech genres, codes’ (Byerly, 1998:26), and the use of *patois* and *tsotsitaal*. This was because ‘Linguistic competence played an enormously important role in cross-cultural communication within music in the late-apartheid era’ (Byerly, 1998:26). Therefore, in one of her record sleeve Makeba, (1988), confirms that,

In our struggle, songs are not simply entertainment for us. They are the way we communicate. The press, radio and TV are all censored by the government. So we make up songs to tell us about events. Let something happen and the next day a song will be written about it (Makeba, 1988).

In order to avoid arrest and censorship, the lyrics of the struggle songs had to communicate the struggle’s course of action. They therefore had to rely on their linguistic prowess in being cryptic, code-switch, multilingual, use of *patois*, or *tsotsitaal*, in order to ensure that the appropriate message has been communicated.

2.5 RELEVANCE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN’S PROTEST MUSIC IN THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA

In his 2006 Celebration of Heritage Day speech, former President Thabo Mbeki²² affirmed that,

Music permeates all walks of life and has been a power instrument and tool commonly invoked in various occasions and circumstances,

²² Mbeki, T. 2006. Heritage Celebrations speech.

good and bad, joyful and sorrowful. We have sung in sadness as we endeavour to muster strength of dealing with harsh realities of pain and death. In different social contexts and situations, music has served and serves (Mbeki, 2006:3).

Mbeki (2006) further remarked that in a post-colonial and post-apartheid era, democratic South Africa, which is confronted with a different set of challenges ranging from matters of morality, criminal abuse of women and children, to poverty and destitution, society must ask what the role of our music is.

The *Women's Charter and Aims* in 1954²³ claimed that: 'The level of civilization which any society has reached can be measured by the degree of freedom that its members enjoy', as well as the fact that 'the status of women is a test of civilization'. Forty years later, in 1994, *The Women's Charter for Effective Equality (1994)*²⁴ acknowledged that 'domestic violence and sexual violence are still pervasive, and women continue to live under the threat of violence, and continue to experience violence'. Therefore, if the 'test for civilization' espoused in the *Women's Charter and Aims (1954)* were to be used to gauge how South Africa ranks, then the latest statistics pertaining to violence against women specifies that South Africa would still not be considered a civilized nation.²⁵ However, women activists in the country maintain that the rate of gendered violence is in reality considerably higher since in their estimation only one rape is reported for every nine that are committed (Meldrum 2006:11). South Africa with a democratic constitution is considered low in the scale of civilized nations (Amien, 1995)²⁶.

Following the demise of apartheid, most musicians, including Afrikaans, followed public sentiments by embracing the new South Africa. However, the dream of the 'rainbow nation'

²³ Discrimination against women persists around the globe hampering development

²⁴ *Discrimination against women*. www.unwomen.org/2012/07/discrimination-against-women-Persist-around-globe-hampering-development.

²⁵ Updated raw figure total of Reported sexual related crimes from the SAPS 2010 is 66 332

²⁶ Article 14 Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing Declaration, 1995.

soon developed cracks.²⁷ Criticism started to emerge, and has grown in frequency and intensity in recent years, particularly with ‘violent crime putting South Africa in the top category of most dangerous country in the world, poverty, government corruption, and the AIDS pandemic.’²⁸ Therefore, women who perform indigenous protest music, such as, *tshigombela* and *malende*, including veterans of the anti-apartheid movement, are once again protesting against what they consider to be a government failing to uphold the promise of peace, democracy and freedom for all, that Nelson Mandela made upon his release, and subsequently during his term of office as the South African president.

2.5.1 Recycling of Old Liberation Songs

The biggest challenges facing South Africa post 1994 lie in the government’s economic situation, its inability to attain sustainable development, and to combat poverty and inequality (Maloka, 2014). It is against this backdrop that the AbM²⁹, and other embattled communities, believe that protest marches should still constitute an important medium through which they communicate their grievances to government officials and the wider public (Kameldien, 2014). These marches are said to be a consequent of the growing citizen frustration and tensions, arising from high levels of economic inequality, hence, a wave of demonstrations, protests and marches, frequently organised by the social movements, has spread across South Africa (Kameldien, 2014). During these marches, community members deliver memoranda to local and national offices. This is due to the fact that community protests in demand for service delivery have become a response to what is regarded as the South African government’s failure to fulfill its technical functions (Kameldien, 2014).

Consequently, protest songs and dance mark most marches organized by particularly the AbM, and other embattled communities. Activists perform the *toyitoyi*, and sing powerful songs to highlight their grievances (Kameldien, 2014). Not only do the protesters formulate

²⁷ Grundlingh, A. *Rocking the boat? The Voelvry Music movement in South Africa: Anatomy of Afrikaans anti-apartheid social protest in the eighties.*

http://sun25.sun.ac.za/portal/Arts/Departementel/geskiedenis/docs/rocking_the_boat.pdf

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Abahlali base Mijondolo – shack-dwellers, and those who reside in informal settlements.

new lyrics, but they also recycle old ones (Willems, 2014). Furthermore, the lyrics of old struggle songs have also been altered and given new meanings, to suit the changed political context of the 2000s (Maloka, 2014). It is ironic that South Africa's distinctive *toyi-toyi* dance – a hallmark of anti-government demonstrations under *apartheid* – still plays a key role during social movement marches (Willems, 2014).

The lyrics that are adapted and recycled to correspond with different grievances and different protest circumstances, lament the conditions faced by poor communities, as well as the failure of government to safeguard their rights (Maloka, 2014). These lyrics also call on the post-apartheid government to remain serious about improving the living conditions of the poor (Willems, 2014), including dealing with the high rate of unemployment, housing, electricity, water and sanitation challenges, as well as corruption and municipal maladministration, poor health facilities and crime that has gone out of hand (Kameldien, 2014).

2.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF PROTEST SONGS AMONG VHAVENDA WOMEN

2.6.1 Purpose of *Tshigombela* and *Malende*

While there are misconceptions that *tshigombela* and *malende* are only performed during beer drinking gatherings, these performances are of cultural significance in guiding society to morality and resourcefulness. Although these music genres frequently generate fun and humour, the purpose of these performances is also be to serve the perpose of moralising, ridiculing, or admonishing those who are not resourceful, but sluggish and work-shy, and may expect to 'live off' others, or even make a habit out of asking for handouts, such as sugar, salt or mealie-meal from their neighbours, which actions are generally regarded as unbecoming (Mugovhani, 2012; Mutshotsho, 2011; Netshirembe, 2012). Hence, from time immemorial *tshigombela* and *malende* have been *Vhavenda* women's vehicle, not only to portray a celebratory mood, but most importantly, to keep people's morals in check (Ralushai, 2010).

It is custom among the *Vhavenda* in rural Limpopo that wherever women meet and are dressed in traditional attire, at a cultural celebration, the work place, as service workers in

government departments, in communal work, *dzunde* (for royal leadership) or *davha*, (for commoners), the women burst into *tshigombela* and *malende* songs. In most cases these songs are a form of protest against injustice meted out to women, be it by their husbands, employers, co-wives, mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, or the ‘powers that be’. Protest songs could also be performed in order to register concern about immoral practices within the community (Ramadolela, 2010).

This study focuses on *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics performed by *Vhavenda* women. Very limited documented research has been done on the two genres, and as such, for data on protest music, the study has to rely on other genres, and other forms of protest music, which could also be referred to as freedom songs, struggle music, or political songs. In order to situate this study, literature review on the American slave songs, which evolved into Negro Spirituals, political struggle songs, performed during the apartheid era, as well as protest music performed by women of song in the 1950s and 60s, such as Mirriam Makeba, Dolly Rathebe, Letta Mbulu, and Thandi Klassen, were referred to.

2.6.2 Relevance of Indigenous Protest Music

The *tshigombela* and *malende* performers may not be aware of the fact that they are social and political activists, and that they express their political and social views through their lyrics (Kruger, 1999:127). Furthermore, protest songs are frequently situational, or they may be abstract, expressing, in more general terms, opposition to injustice and support for peace.

Schuman (2008:180) argues that *Vhavenda*, like many other African nations, protested more effectively through singing than in any other way (Coplan (2002:2). Protest lyrics have always transcended any political or social boundaries known to humanity since time immemorial (Kruger, 1999). It is customary for *Vhavenda* musicians, even today, to begin a song spontaneously during a gathering, after communal work had been accomplished by the villagers, without any cue or request from anyone, sometimes ridiculing royal leadership (Coplan, 1985:196).

Further credibility to the relevance of *tshigombela* and *malende* songs is given in an observation by Mbeki (2006) that in a post-colonial and post-apartheid era, the democratic South Africa, which is confronted by a different set of challenges ranging from matters of morality, criminal abuse of women and children, to the poverty and the destitution that continues to afflict many of our people, we must ask ourselves what the role of our music is (Mbeki, 2006).

2.6.3 Description of Tshigombela

Tshigombela is an indigenous Venda traditional women's musical ensemble. It is a group performance, with drum accompaniment, and hand-clapping (Mugovhani, 2012:3). *Tshigombela* can be performed for entertainment. In the past *tshigombela* performance did not only play a vital role in the system of political checks and balances (1965:35), it was also a platform for communication with rulers. Through *tshigombela* performance, performers are able to raise women's issues. Therefore, a closer look at the lyrics will reveal a myriad of issues, and protest (See Chapter 4). It is important to note that through *tshigombela*, there is interdependence that exists between the royal leadership and their female subjects.

Traditionally *tshigombela* was supposed to be performed at the royal court of a ruler (Mugovhani, 2012). Mugovhani (2012:4) asserts that the performers were traditionally girls and unmarried young women, namely *thungamamu*, aged between 12 – 15 years, and *khomba*, between the ages of 16 to 21 year. The performance has the characteristic circle formation of Vhavenda dances (Burnett-van Tonder 1984, 1987). The current trend is that there is no longer an age limit to *tshigombela* performance, membership is open to all ages, as long as one has the energy to dance, the prowess to coin lyrics, sing in accompaniment, or to drum.

Blacking (1962; 1965) described *tshigombela* as a 'game' for unmarried girls. His choice of the term is derived from the term *mutambo* (pl. *mitambo*, from *-tamba*, to play). The problem with these terms is that they attribute to *tshigombela* the quality of mere amusement, whereas, *tshigombela*, like *malende*, 'gradually introduced young dancers to cultural values, associated with authority pertaining to royal leadership' (Kruger, 1999:128). The indigenous goal of

indigenous music was to play an important role, not only in imparting norms and values, but also in redressing transgression, as well as the ills of society.

Blacking (1962) further refers to *tshigombela* as a social institution which helps to maintain the social dichotomy between the royal families and the commoners. This assertion is accurate, and is clearly demonstrated in a popular *tshigombela* song: *Tshigombela ndi tsha mahosi, Musiwana u tshi wanafhi?* This translates as ‘tshigombela performance is authorised by the royal leadership’ (*mahosi*), a commoner (*musiwana*) has no authority over it, at all’ (Mutshotsho, 2010; Ramadolela, 2010; Netshirembe, 2012). These informants which confirm that in the past the performance of *tshigombela* was supposed to be authorised by *Khosi*, the royal leadership, not by commoners. This assertion results from the fact that *tshigombela* was performed under the auspices of *Khosi*, and consequently functioned as a symbol of political power. Hence, the *tshigombela* ensemble would be sent on a musical expedition (*bepha*) by the royal leadership, to other rulers, or headmen, to confirm or consolidate the ruler’s clan, or ties with headmen in the neighbourhood, or even to exact a tribute (Blacking, 1967:22). Therefore, *tshigombela* performers required authorisation from their royal leadership to perform (Kruger, 1999:127).

Mugovhani (2012:4) confirms that,

Tshigombela was conceptualized for a number of functions and/or objectives; first it serves to entertain at the royal court, secondly, for musical expeditions, thirdly to keep the girls away from mischief by engaging them in this ‘game’ or ‘play’, and lastly but not least to enhance the image of the ruler as the patron and sole custodian (Mugovhani, 2012:4).

The purpose of the ‘game’ was also to ensure that the young girls learnt *Tshivenda* values and culture. It is important to observe that oral tradition played an important role in imparting knowledge in the *Tshivenda* culture.

2.6.4 Description of Malende

Malende is an indigenous Venda call and response singing, with drumming, dancing and clapping. The soloist is usually the leading singer (caller) and dancer, while the majority of the musicians offer accompaniment by singing and clapping, with some of them on the drums. This usually occurs whenever a number of people are gathered after completion of a

task and are enjoying drinks, usually African beer (Mugovhani, 2012). *Malende* performance is for entertainment purposes, and it is one of the few traditional performances whereby males and females could participate together, while people enjoy *mahafhe*, indigenous beer while relaxing (Stayt, 1931), after a hard-day's work.

Malenda was originally performed by both women and men. But due to the reduction of the livestock that each household should keep, the introduction of the money economy, as well as the mandatory migratory labour system, men were forced to flock to the big cities and mines, in search of employment because they could no longer feed their families. Consequently, very few men remained in the villages, and *malende* was thus performed by mostly women, and one man who would serve as *tshivia-mbudzi*³⁰.

Although malende was originally a performance whereby women and men performed together, the current trend is that it is predominantly performed by women. In most cases a group of women will be accompanied by one man, referred to as *tshivia-mbudzi*. *Malende* is one of the social ceremonies, that accompany particularly the organisation of work-parties, *dzunde* (communal work done for royal leadership), and *davha*, (communal work done for a commoner), discussions about marriage arrangements between families, successful bride price negotiations, and celebrations of a birth, or of the return of a young person from initiation school (Mutshotsho, Ramadolela, and Netshirembe, 2012). The songs vary in style and themes, and are sometimes meant to generate fun, while moralising, or even mocking people who have bad habits such as 'asking for handouts from their neighbours, such as salt, sugar or mealie-meal.'³¹ Looking closely at the *malende* lyrics, one is able to detect a great deal of protest (See Chapter 4, analysis of lyrics). Like *tshigombela*, *malende* performance gradually introduces young dancers to cultural values, associated with authority pertaining to royal leadership (Kruger, 1999:128).

³⁰ A man whose responsibility is to slaughter livestock presented to performing women, because in the Tshivenda culture, women are not supposed to slaughter a goat themselves

³¹ www.era.anthropology.ac.uk/era_resources/era/VendaGirls/Definition/DefMalende.html

Spencer (1985:69) describes *malende* as a communal dance, which is in the form of play, and the participants ‘play along’ as one of them breaks into song, other singers coin relevant accompanying lyrics, drumming, ululating, and making appropriate sounds of approval (Schuman, 2008). It is at occasions such as these that prowess and creativity in the coining of lyrics, as well as dance moves is demonstrated (Spencer, 1985:69).

2.6.5 The Role of Tshigombela and Malende in Society

When both *malende* and *tshigombela* are performed, people who are guilty of having transgressed accepted social morals, become the subject of new lyrics, which are coined to expose, ridicule, and call them to order (Netshirembe, 2012). This practice still prevails, as in certain circumstances, families related by marriage exchange gifts, including beer, and this culminates into singing and dancing (McNeill, 2007). During these occasions, the in-laws sing a series of songs that express the formation of a strong bond between the two families (Mutshotsho, 2010). Some of the lyrics may have hints of criticism for the in-laws. It is at these occasions that no one is immune from criticism, hence, even royal leadership will receive their fair share of criticism, as lyrics that call them to order will be coined (Mutshotsho, 2010; Ramadolela; 2010; and Netshirembe, 2012). This was the case in 1957, with the Magidi³² *tshigombela* troupe that set out on an expedition to Tshivhambe³³, only to realise that they had not brought the one pound (R2) that they were supposed to present to the hosting *Khosi* (Reily, 2006:49). Even though damage control was later exercised, the oversight resulted in the *tshigombela* troupe not being served any beer (Reily, 2006:49). New protest lyrics relating what transpired were coined when the *tshigombela* musical expedition went back home.

2.6.6 2.6.6 Lyrics that Make No Direct Reference to the Transgressor

According to Netshirembe (2012) when women have grievances, they wait for the right moment after all work has been accomplished at a *dzunde* (communal work performed for royal leadership), or *davha* (communal work performed for a commoner). After the convener,

³² One of the villages in Sibasa.

³³ One of the villages in Duthuni, under the leadership of Khosi Vho-Ligege

or host has given them food and drinks, they start singing *malende*. Most of the songs they sing refer to the transgressions, without making direct reference to the transgressor by name (Mutshotsho, 2011; Netshirembe, 2012; Ramadolela, 2009). It is important to realise that the lyrics of such songs are coined in such a manner that it is clear to whom the song is directed. In *tshigombela*, as with *malende*, the performers go to the extent of coining fitting names that aptly describe the transgression as well as the transgressor, and not divulge the transgressor's name, in order not to cause any confrontation, or being accused of having referred to the transgressor directly (Netshirembe, 2012). This also applies when women coin lyrics, especially the ones that comment on 'the powers that be'. They ensure that they are 'couched in innuendoes, and make no direct mention of the actual people about whom they speak' (Sibanda, 2004:43).

2.6.7 Tshigombela and Malende are a Means of Communicating with Rulers

Tshigombela performance did not only play a vital role in the system of 'political checks and balances' (Blacking, 1965:35), but it was also a platform for communicating with *mahosi*, royal leadership. This is evident from the singing that *tshigombela* performers usually render to introduce their performance:

Ri a dzhena Vhamusanda, kha vha ri vulele.

(We are entering Honourable chief, allow us in).

Through the performance of this song, the royal leadership is implored to 'open' the royal homestead for *tshigombela* performance (Ramadolela, 2010, Netshirembe, 2012), and welcome the performers. This does not only express the dancers' request for permission to perform, but by implication, it is an indication that they also wish to 'beseech royal leadership to pay attention, as they wish to communicate with them (Kruger, 1999:128). Communication takes various forms, which could be paying homage, praise or criticism, as well as cultural celebration (Kruger, 1999:128). It is important to comprehend the fact that the royal homestead is the same locality where the royal court is presided over by the male section of the community, as well as where the performance of important rituals such as initiation schools take place (Nemudzivhadi, 1985:28). Most importantly, the gesture expressed in the song referred to above is to express allegiance to the royal leadership.

Therefore, the performance of *tshigombela* also displays political support for royal leadership of the time, who in turn ought to see to the needs of his subjects, failing which, new protest lyrics will be formulated to register the performers grievance against royal leadership. The protest lyrics will be to the effect that the royal leadership is incapable of satisfying the needs of their subjects (Kruger, 1999:128). It is ironic that the coined protest lyrics will replace the complimentary ones, which they would have coined in praise of the same royal leadership's generosity (Mutshotsho, 2013; Netshirembe, 2013).

2.6.8 Protest Songs as Expressions of Criticism against Royal Leadership

According to Mugovhani and Tshishonge (2012:114), indigenous music formed the very basis of the *Vhavenda* children's discovery of themselves and their place in society as they grew into adulthood. Mugovhani and Tshishonge (2012:115) attest that, 'Through music, the children learnt how to behave in various situations. They add that indigenous Venda music has always been closely integrated with Venda cultural norms and values' (2012:115). In addition, *malende* is sometimes performed to 'subtly ridicule royal leadership, that is, *Khosi* or *mukoma* (headman), or anyone with unbecoming behaviour, 'without any cue or request from anyone' to intone a song (Mugovhani and Tshishonge, 2012:117) See song 3 – Appendix XII).

Furthermore, *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics were sometimes shrewdly coined in order to reprimand individuals, or certain members of the community, who deviated from society's norms and values (Mutshotsho, 2011; Netshirembe, 2011; Ramadolela, 2010). This perception is echoed by several researchers, and interviewees in this study, who attest that protest songs were also performed as an expression of sanctioned criticism against the ruler or institutions of society, and against dominating and harmful practices in society (Blacking 1967:22; Groenewald & Makopo 1991:76-77; Kaschula 1991:1; Kebede 1982:39; Pollard 1980:5; Rycroft 1991:9; Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2011; Netshirembe, 2011).

Among traditional Xhosa societies, for example, songs that are disparagingly referred to as 'beer drinking songs' and songs performed at social dance gatherings (*umtshotsho* and social

intlombe songs) mostly had the potential to reprimand those who deviated from socio-cultural prescriptions (Ntshinga 1993:34). Among Vhavenda society, even royal leadership subject themselves to criticism, which would be expressed in music (Blacking, 1967:22, Mutshotsho (2010), Ramadolela (2010), and Netshirembe (2013). Similarly, praise poets in particular, were given great poetic licence, and could reprimand a ruler without provoking any anger (Junod 1927:425). See section 2.5.14.

2.6.9 Protest Music against Women Abuse

Violence is viewed as one of the methods by which men oppress and subjugate women, and intimate violence is believed to be sanctioned by society and maintained by political, social, and economic factors within our society (Stordeur & Stille 1989:31). Black men are mostly migrant labourers, who would have been arrested for pass laws, ‘trespassing’, or for all kinds of offences that black people were said to be guilty of, and they suffered all kinds of abuse in the hands of their apartheid masters (Coombes, 2003:12). During the apartheid era, they would sometimes be subjected to mass stripping of clothes, fumigation, and would be hosed down, as a way of dehumanising them (Coombes, 2003). There is research that maintains that abusive men learnt abuse from their apartheid masters, and that they mete out abuse to women as an outlet for the negative internal built-up of emotions, and the abuse they experienced up during the apartheid era (Moffett, 2006; and Murrell, 2007; Molefe, 2012). However, these issues will not be discussed in this study.

In practice, *Malende* songs whose lyrics protest against women abuse by men were coined. Women who intone these songs bemoan the ill-treatment they receive from their husbands and in-laws (See songs 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15 - Appendix XII) (Mutshotsho, Ramadolela, and Netshirembe, 2012).

2.6.10 Protest Lyrics which may Appear to be Civil

Unlike political activists who are potent protesters, and use lyrics which are a direct criticism to the system, *Vhavenda* indigenous protest performers, skilfully employ lyrics which are couched in proverbial and indirect terms (Netshirembe, 2013). Some *malende* lyrics, which

could be regarded as mundane, and interpreted literally by the *malende* audiences, actually employ innuendo to refer to grievous occurrence that may have befallen a male member of the community, who may have been caught in a compromising position, with somebody's wife (See song 6 – Appendix xii), (Ramadolela, 2009; Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2011; and Netshirembe, 2013). The connotations of 'dog' within these lyrics, are of someone with loose morals. It is important to note that in some sections among *Vhavenda*, equating someone to a dog, is the worst kind of insult, implying that they would have committed the worst transgression (Mutshotsho, 2013).

2.6.11 Protest Songs about Forced Removals

There are protest songs which lament the fact that life in the past, that is, before the apartheid era, in a certain environment or ambience, was better, compared to the current times or status quo (Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2012; and Netshirembe, 2013). A case in point is song number 2 (See Appendix xii), which is melancholic, as it expresses a longing for a village where the performers used to reside in, in the past, which they were forcibly removed from. The lyrics are in call and response form, and do not seem to be accusatory, as nothing in the lyrics seem to 'point a finger', or to blame anybody for the forced removal. The two-lined lyrics are repeated several times. The repetition of these two lines reinforces the melancholy and the longing. The women's artistic prowess in coining these lyrics is displayed, as women who lead and intone such songs improvise by introducing new lyrics related to the status quo, and the accompanying performers, respond in melancholic tones, to complement the lyrics, and to reinforce the sad tone of the song (Ramadolela, 2009; Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2012; and Netshirembe, 2013). The lyrics of these songs are coined to suit the occasion, the status quo, as well as to voice issues affecting women at a particular time (Ramadolela, 2010). This could be lamenting a 'honeymoon-like' period in their lives, or a period in their lives when life was easy, that is, when they were contented. The implication of such lyrics could also be a reference to an era when there was political tranquility (Mutshotsho, 2012).

2.6.12 Protest Music against Abuse of Culture

Although music is a powerful tool used to express the performers' feelings and aspirations, it is also a reflection of social relations and culture (Adams and Fuller, 2006). The role of culture in protest music becomes crucial in relation to women, and rural women in particular, as they have continued to uphold the cultural values that were part of the pre-colonial society, some of which were strengthened, others annihilated during the colonial period, the apartheid era, as well as the cultural disarray resulting from the contact *Vhavenda* women have had with people of other cultures, through the years (Ralushai, 2010). However, the women's position has been weakened by the way political forces, disguised as cultural obligations, are abusive. By implication, the abuse of women has been given a 'cultural dress' (Swantz (1985:4). According to Ralushai (2010) and Ramadolela (2010), in some quarters among *Vhavenda*, there are certain portions of chicken, beef, mutton and goat meat which it is alleged, are not supposed to be consumed by women. Therefore, women who insist on partaking of these portions are viewed with abhorrence and disgust, as it is alleged they have 'defied *Vhavenda* culture' by consuming what is regarded as 'sacred portions' (Ralushai, 2010; Ramadolela, 2009; Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2012; and Netshirembe, 2013). People who subscribe to this belief are convinced that consumption of these portions of meat by women, and girl-children, may result in certain mysterious afflictions, or bad-fortune (Ralushai, 2010). These are the issues, and many others, which portray the negative aspects of culture, that women sing about in order to ridicule the abuse of culture as prescribed by men (Ralushai, 2010; Ramadolela, 2009; Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2012; and Netshirembe, 2013).

Allen (2004:2) believes that 'Power and resources are allocated unevenly, and much else is deeply contested, including foundational identities and basic human rights.' Therefore, 'As this is the case in much of Africa, people find other ways of voicing who they are, and who they want to be, what they believe in, and what they want' (Allen, 2004:2). However, music constitutes one of the primary media through which such needs, aspirations and feelings are expressed. Music can function as a site of both individual and group agency, as it is one of the 'fundamental mechanisms through which people indicate what they personally enjoy, approve or disapprove of, identify with, recognise as true, or acknowledge as ethically appropriate' (Allen, 2004:4).

2.6.13 Protest Songs and Polygamous Relationships

In *Vhavenda* circles, when life was still easy and tranquil, *shango li tshe lo sina*, it was believed that having many wives enhanced the status of the husband, for he was regarded as wealthy. His social standing was viewed as being above that of a monogamist (Ramadolela, 2010). In the absence of the husband, the first wife controlled the family, she was even accorded the responsibility of settling disputes within the family (Netshirembe, 2012). The younger wives used not to resent or abhor their lower positions as second and third wife. They were proud to be members of a big family (Ramadolela, 2010; Mutshotsho, 2013; Netshirembe 2013). Styte (1931:42) paints a hyperbolic and satirical picture of *Vhavenda* people by saying that, ‘every *Muvenda* man desires to possess as many wives as possible’. With the dawn of the new South Africa, the constitution gives women who are married in customary marriages, whose husbands may want to engage in polygamous marriages, the prerogative to give or deny their husbands permission to do so.

Some men, sometimes out of ignorance, notwithstanding the constitutional stipulations in the Customary Marriage Act, 120, which require them to seek their first wife’s permission before they take another wife or wives, do not only defy the stipulations in the constitution, but they also have concubines outside these polygamous marriages (Mutshotsho (2010); and Netshirembe (2013). They instead take new wives, irrespective of the poor economic situation, the high rate of HIV infections and the possibility of spreading HIV among the number of wives they already have (Ramadolela (2010); and Netshirembe (2013), (See song number 17 - Appendix XII). Therefore, women whose husbands insist on having more than one wife, or adding another wife, or concubine, to the number that already exists, are the subject of *tshigombela* and *malende* songs, whose lyrics ridicule polygamy that goes wrong, as well as the disadvantages or repercussions of being one of the wives in a polygamous marriage that has gone wrong (Ralushai (2010); Ramadolela (2009); Ramadolela (2010); Mutshotsho (2012); and Netshirembe (2013), (See songs number 10 and 11 – Appendix XII).

2.6.14 Protest Music and Poetic Licence

Poetic licence is sometimes euphemism, used to denote the distortion of fact, alteration of the conventions of grammar or language, or even rewording of pre-existing text made by an artist to improve a text (Toplin, 2002). Vail and White (1991:887) have noted that ‘it is a convention of the form that power may be openly criticised’. Poetic licence may be described as ‘The liberty taken by an artist or a writer in deviating from conventional form or fact to achieve a desired effect’ (Allen, 2003:319). It may also refer to the ability of an artist to apply smaller distortions, such as a poet ignoring some of the minor requirements of grammar for poetic effect (Toplin, 2002). Vail and White (1991:887) further declare that the concept of poetic licence ‘gives one the freedom to express opinions that would otherwise be in breach of other social conventions’. Praise poets in particular, were given poetic licence, and could reprimand anyone, including royal leadership, without sanction, and without provoking any anger (Junod, 1927:425; cited in Ntshinga, 1993:34; Mutshotsho, 2011; and Ramadolela, 2011).

Blacking (1967:22) argues that music audibly and visually demarcated social and political groupings, and that songs played the role of ‘Expression of sanctioned criticism against the ruler or institutions of society, and against dominating and harmful practices in society’ (Blacking, 1967:22) cited in Groenewald & Makopo (1991:76).

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Music encourages performers to explore different perspectives, and in composing the lyrics of a song, they take on the role of a character, for example, a person being oppressed, discriminated upon, or excluded. Assuming the role of the character ensures that the performers explore that character’s point of view, background or situation. Music is also

regarded as a universal and common language understood by all, regardless of culture, religion or socio-political context. These sentiments are endorsed by Kahari (1981:80), who attests that, 'It is an accepted truism that song is the newspaper of the non-literate societies of Africa,' and 'a versatile genre capable of universal application.'

Oppressive laws, displacement and dispossession of the black majority of South Africa, forced removals, the struggle for land, and gendered violence, have always had deep resonances in protest songs (Kahari, 1981:84). Kahari (1981:89 also refers to traditional 'complaint songs of political oppression and humiliation from the Boers (the Europeans)'.

Music has a lot in common with language, and the linguistic structure influences the musical structure (Nthala, 2009). Nettl (1983:23) cited in Nthala (2009:32) reports that music has been studied as a symbolic system, analogous to language, and the methods of language study have been applied to music. Due to the fact that music creation is an inspired activity that finds its way into the thinking of a performer, the performer manipulates and rearranges units of a given vocabulary (Nthala, 2009). Moreover, indigenous songs are analogous with 'explicit packages of narratives laden with instructional content, and conveyed through riddles, metaphors, proverbs and other literary expressions' (Nthala, 2009:32).

3.2 SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Language and Society and Sociolinguistics and are terms that are often used interchangeably to refer to an interdisciplinary field of research in which linguistics and sociology, and other human sciences, join together to study verbal and other human conducts (Wardhaugh, 2006). Sociolinguistics is the study of how language serves, and is shaped by the social nature of human beings. In its broadest conception, sociolinguistics analyses the many, and diverse ways in which language and society entwine (Wardhaugh, 2006).

Sociolinguistics is unified through its concern with how people use language to create and express identities, relate to one another in groups, and seek to resist, protect, or increase various kinds of power (Wardhaugh, 2006:10). Wardhaugh (2006) acknowledges that a language is essentially a set of items, that Hudson (1996:21) cited in Wardhaugh, 2006:10) refers to as ‘linguistic items,’ such entities as sounds, words, grammatical structures, and so on. Wardhaugh (2006:10) adds that,

social theorists, particularly sociologists, attempt to understand how societies are structured and how people manage to live together. To do so, they use such concepts as ‘identity,’ ‘power,’ ‘class,’ ‘status,’ ‘solidarity,’ ‘accommodation,’ ‘face,’ ‘gender,’ ‘politeness,’ etc.

Sociolinguistics is a sub-field of Linguistics, and ‘a scientific study of language, which concerns itself with investigating the relationships between language and society with its goal being a better understanding of the structure of language’, as well as how language functions in communication (Hudson, 1996:13). Hudson (1996:4) further describes sociolinguistics as ‘the study of language in relation to society, particularly, attitudes and attachments that account for the functional distribution of speech forms in society’, while Fairclough (1992:43) describes sociolinguistics as the ‘descriptive study of the effect of any and all aspects of society, including cultural norms, expectations, and context, on the way language is used, and the effects of language use on society’. Spolsky (1010:7) avers therefore that, ‘The terms *sociolinguistics* and *sociology of language* both suggest a bi-disciplinary approach, a blending of sociologists and linguists in a combined effort to see how language and society are related.

Some of the linguistic devices which will be referred to in this chapter are linguistic taboo, euphemism, repetition, sarcasm (irony), echoing of words, and code switching.

3.2.1 Divergent Perspectives on Music

According to Fox and Williams (2001:352; Fox, W.S. and Williams, J.D. 2001), ‘The political implications of music have long been pondered twenty-five centuries ago, Plato

warned in *The Republic*³⁴ that any musical innovation is full of danger to the whole state, and ought to be prohibited.’ Phillips (2001:1) elaborates on Plato’s advocacy for the proscription of music, and declares that,

Plato and Augustine rejected the edifying power of music, out of fear of its influence over the soul. While the *Republic* clearly shows Plato’s respect for the power of music, it also reveals his belief that such power is easily abused and potentially dangerous. In particular, music is dangerous because its emotional appeal challenges the dominance of reason. To ensure that the rulers of his ideal state are not swayed by excess emotion, Plato subjugates music to the control of the state and he intends to neutralize its influence by imposing strict criteria for official acceptance of the arts.

In contradiction to Plato and Augustine’s divergent perspective on music, Victor Hugo (Phillips, 2001:1) asserts that ‘On the other hand, music expresses that which cannot be said, and on which it is impossible to be silent.’

In retrospect, Plato (*Rep.* 398d-399a)³⁵, pronounces that he ‘forbids all music that does not express the violent or voluntary tones of voice of those who are moderate and courageous’. He further adopts a mitigating tone, and expands, ‘In other words, music is useful when it serves the purposes of the state by encouraging people to be resolute in the face of difficulty, and is considerate in relationships with other people.’ It is important to note that Plato’s latter perspective on music is evocative of what the proponents of protest music subscribe to.

3.2.2 Indigenous African Music

Mapaya (2014:2007) asserts that ‘The European explorers and missionaries encountered indigenous music, also referred to as African music, as early as the nineteenth century.’ Agawu (1992; cited in Mapaya, 2014:2007) confirms that it was only in 1947, in South

³⁴It is a Socratic dialogue, written by Plato around 380 BC, concerning the definition of justice, the order and character of the just city-state and the just man.

³⁵ Jannaway, C. 1995. *Images of Excellence: Plato's Critique of the Arts*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Africa, and later through the introduction of the Society for Ethnomusicology, in the United States in 1955, that African indigenous music began to attract scholarly attention.’ Mapaya (2013; cited in Mapaya, 2014) further adds that before the introduction of the Society for Ethnomusicology in the United States, African music was documented and studied primarily for other than musicological reasons. By implication, the study of indigenous African music served as a way through which insight into the culture, or the religiosity of African people was to be interpreted.

Indigenous African music often depended on whether the subject under discussion was sociological, ethnological and/or of anthropological interests. Mapaya (2014:2007) asserts that, ‘Yet, through all these encounters, indigenous African music emerged with its fundamentals intact.’ In response to the question ‘what indigenous African music is?’ (Mapaya (2014:2007) expounds,

The concept, indigenous African music, interchangeable with traditional African music, refers to an aggregation of regionally, customary, culturally and ethnically constituted musical practice. At the centre of this phenomenon lies the stoicism of cultural experts who have maintained its philosophical, spiritual and intellectual foundations and integrity.

In line with this observation, Nzewi (1997) speaks of the culture-exponent, the culture-owners and the culture-bearers among African people, who the imposition of what is termed modern scholarly musical orientation, bias content and philosophical orientation, have disabled their initiative to formulate independent opinion, and who are further, not mentally emancipated to respect or accept their indigenous musical expertise.

3.2.3 Linguistic Taboos and Euphemism

Wardhaugh (2006: 238) maintains that taboos and euphemism are about ‘meaning,’ specifically about how cultural meanings are expressed in language. Among indigenous cultures, language is used to avoid saying certain things, as well as expressing issues that may otherwise be unpalatable. Wardhaugh (2006: 238) argues that ‘Certain things are not said, not because they cannot be, but because ‘people don’t talk about those things, or it may

be because ‘if those things are talked about, they are talked about in very roundabout ways.’ According to Wardhaugh (2006) language employs linguistic *taboos* and *euphemisms*, in order to avoid referring to certain matters directly. Hudson (1996: 239) describes taboo as the ‘prohibition or avoidance in any society of behaviour believed to be harmful to its members in that it would cause them anxiety, embarrassment, or shame.’ It is also described as ‘an extremely strong politeness and constraint.’ As a result, in language, ‘certain things are not to be said, or certain objects can be referred to, only in certain circumstances’ (Hudson (1996: 239). Furthermore, these things can only be referred to by certain people, or through deliberate circumlocutions, that is, euphemistically (Ball, 2010: 191).

Euphemisms are indirect words or phrases that people often use to refer to certain things or concepts that are embarrassing or offensive. They are also used to make something that is unsavoury for public consumption, seem more acceptable than it really is.

3.2.4 Code-switching

Schau, Dellande, and Gilly (1987) describe a ‘code’ as a neutral term which denotes a linguistic variety (language, dialect, vernacular). A code is regarded as a verbal component that can be as small as a morpheme, or as comprehensive and complex as the entire system of language (Ayeomoni, 2006). It is a communications system used within a given community and reflects social norms (Heller, 1995). Code-switching, therefore, is a sociolinguistic communication strategy, where a communicator toggles from one code to another (Eastman 1992; Heller, 1988) during discourse. Communicators may switch codes in part, as in mixing or blending codes within a single speech exchange (Gumperz, 1982), or in total, as in an entire shift from one code to another (Poplack, 1988). Hymes (1974) cited in Ayeomoni (2006:91) defines code-switching as ‘a common term for alternative use of two or more languages, varieties of a language or even speech styles’, while Bokamba (1989) cited in Ayeomoni (2006:91) defines code-switching as ‘the mixing of words, phrases and sentences from two distinct grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries, within the same speech event.’

Code-switching is a commonly employed communication strategy that has been previously theorized to increase communication richness and efficacy (Nilep, 2006). The phenomenon of code-switching involves any switch from one language or dialect to another in the communities where linguistic repertoire includes two or more such codes. Other cases simply involve switching from one language to another in bilingual or multilingual communities (Mohr, 1989:110).

Code-switching would prove particularly effective in South Africa given the sheer range of local dialects and cultural differences available to draw from Nilep (2006:17). Musicians have taken advantage of this, making use of the subtle nuances unique to specific sub-cultures, to add veiled messages of resistance to their music (Byerly, 1996). These messages could then in turn be deciphered by listeners who shared the same cultural references. In numerous cases code-switching has not only been used to ‘save face’, but on the contrary, to express an ‘in your face’ sentiment. This includes using a particular language to make a dig at a certain group, or to target that group through the use of their linguistic code-switching, as well as satire in music’ (Byerly 1996:174).

Eyerman and Jamison (1998) recognise the social contribution of musicians who have redefined themselves through protest music. They argue that musicians become ‘organic intellectuals’, adopting a new social identity through the political awareness of their music (Eyerman and Jamison, 1998:165). These ‘activist performers’ pave the way for social change through their ability to merge culture, politics, and linguistic prowess, and appear as ‘political and cultural agents’ working to shape the emergence of a ‘new cultural formation’ (Eyerman and Jamison, 1998:165).

Muila (in Veit-Wild, F. 2009: 684) refers to the varieties of urban slang of South Africa *isicamtho* and *tsotsitaal*, which emerged from a mixture of Afrikaans, English and African languages, as code-switching in its own right. Veit-Wild (2009:689) contends that the most vibrant and dynamic elements of *isicamtho* and *tsotsitaal* in urban culture and in music, which could be termed a playground for technological and linguistic code-switching,

contains a condensed form of social critique of living conditions in the townships, and informal settlements.

3.2.5 Linguistic Perspective - Expressive Conventions in Music

In order to create vocal harmony and to put emphasis on the reproving lyrics of the protest songs, the women use techniques that are fundamentally characteristic of indigenous music performance, similar to what Frith (1988:120) refers to as ‘nonverbal devices’, which include, ‘emphasis, sighs, hesitations, changes on tone’, etc. Nketia (1986:178) asserts that such devices are not uncommon within African musical traditions in which ‘explosive sounds or special interjections, and vocal grunts’, are used in order to enhance the significance of performances. These devices function as recognisable emotional indicators, either because their emotive content is widely understood by humans, or because the African audience’s familiarity with the language enables them to distinguish between sounds that are typically used in their language ‘to express, sadness, surprise, shock, irritation, dismissiveness, and anger’ (Sibanda, 2004:40).

3.2.6 Repetition

Tshigombela and *malende* performances also employ repetition (See songs - Appendix XII). According to Mutshotsho (2013), repetition is used in order to strongly convey the message, as well as to emphasise the gist, or the moral of the song. For instance, if the subject of the song is to call a wayward person to order, the gist of the song will be repeated several times, the intention being that the message ‘strikes home’ (Netshirembe, 2012; Ralushai, 2010; and Ramadolela, 2010). Repetition will be further reinforced by the performers’ gestures, dance and moves, with the purpose of strengthening the moral of the song (Mutshotsho, 2011).

3.2.7 Sarcasm

Sarcasm is strategy that the protest music performers mostly employ, in order to address delinquent behaviour within the community. Netshirembe (2011) maintains that Vhavenda people are able to address unpalatable truths through the use of sarcasm, and this Netshirembe (2011) explains is due to the fact that they avoid direct confrontation, at all costs. Therefore, the intoner formulates appropriate lyrics that indirectly refer to the delinquent behaviour,

without referring to the transgressor by name. The accompanying performers are most of the time, able to ‘decipher’ the intoner’s intention, or line of thought, and go along with the intoner’s message, by improvising with appropriate accompanying lyrics, in order to reinforce the message that the intoner intends to send to the delinquent. This kind of improvisation happens even in impromptu performances, without the performance group having discussed the song that they are going to perform, beforehand (Netshirembe, 2012). In situations that the accompanying performers are unable to quickly decipher the intoner’s intention, they repeat the lyrics sung by the intoner, and employ echoe-words, calculated pauses, grunts, and ululation, until they ‘grasp’ the intoner’s intention, which enables them to formulate appropriate lyrics for that particular song (Ramadolela, 2010). These improvised lyrics will be used even in future, for similar circumstances, until they are altered to suit different circumstances, or transgressions (Mutshotsho, 2013; Netshirembe, 2013).

3.2.8 Name-giving

Due to the fact that the Vhavenda people always endeavour to avoid direct confrontation, and controversy, they resort to what may be regarded as ‘name-giving’ (Mutshotsho, 2013). In this case one who has transgressed will be given a name that describes their transgression, for example they may be called ‘*Vhakoma Vho-Vivho*’, translated Headman-Mr Jealousy, because it would have been deduced that they have acted in a manner that shows that they are jealous of another member of the community’s achievements (Mutshotsho, 2013). ‘Headman’, for example, being the sarcastic manner of ridiculing them, because of their transgression (Mutshotsho, 2013; Netshirembe, 2012). It is important to note that giving them an important title is the performers’ way of making the lyrics funny and interesting, and the audience more curious and interested. This should not be confused with name-calling, as it is intended to be neither rude, nor to have negative connotations. These lyrics are also not confrontational (Netshirembe, 2012).

3.2.9 Echoeing

Echoeing, *u honedzela*, in *Tshivenda* is a technique that *malende* performers mostly employ to add to the sound of the lyrics, in order to create a musical effect (Mutshotsho, 2013). Echoeing, like repetition, also reinforces the message conveyed by the lyrics, or rather, the

moral of the song. In other words, it is echoing of certain lyrics, particularly those that can be regarded as conveying the ‘punch-line’ of the message, that the performers wish to convey (Ramadolela, 2010). Netshirembe (2013), explained that echoing occurs mostly when the performers have reached a climax of the song, that is, the most exciting part of the performance, allowing the intoner to reinforce the message of the lyrics, while the accompanying performers echo the lyrics, and/or utter sounds that are similar to the lyrics (Ramadolela, 2010). Mutshotsho (2013) concurs that echoing, like humming, gives the intoner the opportunity to pronounce and reinforce the moral of the song, while the accompanying performers echo the words that carry the message of the lyrics, and at calculated intervals, they make pauses in order to allow the intoner the opportunity to pronounce and reinforce the message of the song.

3.2.10 Onomatopoeic Effect

Onomatopoeic effect is employed in indigenous protest music, in order to enhance the lyrics, create sound effect (Netshirembe, 2013), and enables one ‘to see sounds’ out of actual words.³⁶ The merrium-webster dictionary³⁷ define onomatopoeia ‘the use of imitative and suggestive words for rhetorical, dramatic, or poetic effect’, the ‘naming of a thing or action by a vocal imitation of the sound associated with it, and the use of ‘words whose sound suggests the sense’. Onomatopoeia plays an important role in creating fun into the lyrics, as the articulated lyrics are similar to the sounds the performers make. For instance, where the intoner employs lyrics that refer to ‘a dog’ or ‘a pig’, the accompanying performers will respond by imitating sounds of ‘a barking dog’ or ‘a grunting pig’, respectively (Netshirembe, 2013).

3.2.11 Discourse

There are multiple definitions of discourse and discourse analysis in literature, which may differ not just from one field of study to another, but with intellectual persuasion (Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Sunderland, 2004) cited in (Fairclough, 1994:124). Discourses, as defined by

³⁶ www.merrium-webster.com/dictionary/onomatopoeia.html Accessed 03/06/2014.

³⁷ Dictionary.reference.com/onomatopoeia Accessed 03/06/2014

Foucault (1978) cited in Wambui (2013), both reflect and shape the way we experience and interpret the world around us, and consequently the way we act upon it. Hajer (2005, p. 1), defines discourse as ‘an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena’ while Fairclough (1994:124), identifies discourses as ‘ways of representing aspects of the world’. As defined by these scholars, discourses can be summed up as the structuring principles of society (Weedon, 1987), and because discourses are constitutive of the way of talking and writing about a particular issue, they frame the way people understand and act with respect to that issue (Watson, 1994).

The word ‘discourse’ is the general idea that language is structured according to different patterns that ‘people’s utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life’, (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002:12). Jørgensen and Phillips (2002:12) assert that ‘Language is structured in patterns or discourse, thus, there is not just one general system of meaning, but a series of systems or discourses, whereby meanings change from discourse to discourse.’ Bucholtz (1999) cited in Holmes and Meyerhoff (2003:44) professes that, ‘Discourse is language in context, that is, language as it is put to use in social situations.’

The study of discourse is the study of any aspect of language use, and the analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use (Alba-Juez, 2009:6). Thus, when analysing discourse, researchers are not only concerned with ‘purely linguistic facts, but they pay equal or more attention to language use in relation to social, political and cultural aspects’ (Alba-Juez, 2009:10). For this reason, discourse is not only within the interests of linguists, but it is a domain that is also studied by communication scientists, literary critics, philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, social psychologists, political scientists, and many others. Therefore, language is not independent, as it shares certain characteristics with other social and cognitive phenomena (van Dijk, 1998).

3.2.12 Discourse Analysis (DA)

Discourse Analysis (DA) is the analysis of language patterns (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Discourse analysis (DA), or discourse studies, is a general term for a number of approaches to analyzing vocal (including lyrics), written, or sign language use or any significant semiotic

event. DA, whose aim is to study and analyse the use of discourse, is also a modern discipline of the social sciences that covers a wide variety of different sociolinguistic approaches (Van Dijk, 2002:352). Contrary to much of traditional linguistics, Discourse Analysts not only study language use ‘beyond the sentence boundary’, and do not only look at the basic level of what is said, but they also take into consideration the surrounding social and historical contexts (Gee, 2011). Bucholtz (1999) cited in Holmes and Meyerhoff (2003:44), elaborates that,

DA is neither a single theory nor a single method, but it is a collection of perspectives on situated language use, that involve a general shared theoretical orientation and a broadly similar methodological approach. Although the forms that DA takes vary widely, those that emphasize discourse as a social, cultural, or political phenomenon have in common a theory of discourse, not merely as the reflection of society, culture, and power but as their constantly replenished source.

Holmes and Meyerhoff (2003:45) attest that discourse analysts often differ, particularly on issues such as ‘the limits of context, how much background knowledge is necessary and admissible in order to understand a particular discursive form. The analysts also interrogate issues of ‘the place of agency, and whether speakers are entirely in control of discourse’ (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2003:45). Other issues that discourse analysts differ on include, ‘the role of the analyst, whether it is the researcher’s role to discover the participants’ own perspectives, or whether to offer an interpretation that may shed new light on the discourse’ (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2003:45). In response to these questions, discourse analysts are able to discern that their disciplinary traditions determine their operation within different frameworks, and are influenced by the development of their chosen theoretical perspective (Holmes and Meyerhoff, 2003:45).

3.2.13 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Meyer (2001:3), cited in Smith (2010:8) states that, ‘The distinctive feature of work in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is that it is interdisciplinary, studying not only texts themselves, but how they are created by society and how they interact with that society, its

history and traditions.’ A central notion in most critical work on discourse is that of power, and more specifically, the social power of groups or institutions. Martin (2004:179) confirms that CDA, which centers its discovery procedures on the analyst's interpretations of discourse, is best known for its work on language and semiosis. Thus, CDA is a type of ‘discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text, which includes songs and talk in the social and political context’ (Van Dijk, 2002:355). Therefore, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality, and this view is further expounded by Martin (2004:182), who assert that,

Discourse is a major instrument of power and control and Critical Discourse Analysts feel that it is indeed part of their professional role to investigate, reveal and clarify how power and discriminatory value are inscribed in and mediated through the linguistic system. CDA is essentially political in intent with its practitioners acting upon the world in order to transform it, and thereby help create a world where people are not discriminated against because of sex, colour, creed, age or social class.

It is against this background that CDA has expanded and incorporates cultural criticism into its discipline, and ‘has enlarged the range of texts available for analysis, including texts from mass culture, such as fiction, films and television shows, music lyrics, advertisements, newspaper and magazine articles’ (Martin, 2004:182).

3.2.14 Semiotics as a Linguistic Perspective of Protest Lyrics

Language is either verbal or non-verbal. Much of the gendered language in our societies comes in form of the non-verbal. Usually we perform gendered acts unconsciously and do not regard them as gender semiotics. Semiotics, as an aspect of language study, deals with a signaling system which could be an index, an icon and/or a symbol (Essien-Eyo and Ottoh, (2011:79) cited in Ottoh-Agede and Essien-Eyo (2014:15). According to Chandler (2002:1) cited in Ottoh-Agede and Essien-Eyo (2014:15), semiotics involves the study ‘not only of what we refer to as signs in everyday speech, but of anything which stands for something

else.’ Ottoh-Agede and Essien-Eyo (2014) add that, in semiotics, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects.

In our contemporary society, semiotics is not studied in isolation because it is the study of how meanings are made and how reality is represented. Therefore, semiotics entails meaning-making constructs and representations in any form, texts and/or media which could be found in every interactive piece (Chandler, 2002:2).

Volosinov (1981) contends that only individual words are truly semiotically neutral. It is the manner in which words are used to express different ideologies, or to create and maintain distinctions and boundaries in the form of language, or as utterance, that they become imbued with semiotic significance. By implication, the moment words and sounds are arranged in proximity ‘to express any speech form of communication, they immediately lose their neutrality’ (Sturrock 1986:22). According to Schroeder (1998),

Semiotics provides us with a potentially unifying conceptual framework and a set of methods and terms for use across the full range of signifying practices, which include gesture, posture, dress, writing, speech, etc. Semiotics is about ‘visual signs’, includes words, images, sounds, gestures, and ‘body language (Schroeder, 1998:225).

Frith (1988:121) elaborates that, ‘lyrics, including nonverbal devices, such as emphases, sighs, hesitations, changes on tone, as well as expressive sound conventions in music, are not mere futile concepts, but are expressive in the elucidation of ideologies.’ When women perform *tshigombela* and *malende*, they use gestures, posture, decorum and dress, not only to complement their performance, but also to reinforce meaning, as well as the messages they wish to convey. Therefore, certain words will be strung together, and certain sounds will be produced by both the intoner, as well as the accompanying singers, in order to ensure that the desired effect is achieved (Mutshotsho, 2010; and Netshirembe, 2012; Ramadolela 2012). In order to reinforce certain issues, the performers employ echoe words, repetition, grunts, and ululation (See sections 2.6.6, 2.6.7 and 2.6.10) (Mutshotsho, 2012; Netshirembe, 2012; and Ramadolela, 2010). According to Frith (1988), repetition and echoe-words are also

expressive sound conventions in music, and their purpose is to reinforce the moral of the song. Adams and Fuller (2006:938) assert that ‘Music has historically been a medium for human, social, and linguistic expression, which can take many different forms, from triumph and hope to utter frustration and despair’. Adams and Fuller (2006:209) further elucidate that, ‘Regardless of the catalyst that creates it, music serves to stimulate the mind, stir the soul, and elicit emotions.’

Magaisa (2004: 3) argues that ‘we may speculate that there must have been disgruntled individuals and communities who also wanted to be heard’ by singing protest songs. Moreover, music is regarded as a ‘reflection of the cultural and political environment’ from which it is engendered (Adams and Fuller, 2006:938). This view is supported by Kwaramba (1997), who says music was used as a medium of communication, as well as a means of expression by the people, and as such, music would be created in such way that the targeted person would ‘get the message’. Mutshotsho (2012) concurs that even in praise singing, as well as praise poetry, praise poets, most of whom are men, subtly insinuate their grievances, at the same time heaping praise at the royal leadership. Similarly, women do the same through *tshigombela*, and *malende*. When they have grievances, they formulate protest lyrics to protest against the status quo, delinquent behaviour, which may include issues such as the abuse of women, disputes which occur among women in polygamous marriages or relationships, and other issues that concern women (Mutshotsho, 2009). It is important to appreciate the fact that the tradition of protest music has not diminished, despite ‘years of suppression under colonial and apartheid rule, and Christianity’ (Magaisa, 2004:3), as well as democracy in South Africa.

Mapunde (2008:3) maintains that ‘language, speech, poetry, drama, oral literature, theatre, are all irrevocably interwoven with music and are musical units which also define as well as determine the idioms, forms and structures.’ Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (2005:79) add that not only does language and gender entail the use of linguistic devices to accomplish social ends, but it also ‘foregrounds aspects of interpretation, nature and role of gender ideology in thought processes; and the consideration of analytic linkages between form (linguistic structures) and their function from a gender perspective.’

The notion of ‘writing between the lines’, discussed by Jansen (Strauss 1952) cited in Jansen (1988:193), in relation to the counter-censorship strategy, is one drawn from Leo Strauss (1952) in his analytical approach to the art of writing. Both agree that language has a tradition of being used by the non-conformist to undermine, in a subtle, yet perceptive way, the staid authority. These non-conformists then, with the aid of language within language, become opponents of orthodoxy and ‘bureaucratic conformity’ (Jansen, 1988, 193). South African musicians in the 1980s used this same device of undercover commentary, becoming ‘ideological saboteurs, through the manipulation of language as a social text’ (Jansen, 1988, 193). Under the stringent censorship policies of the time, musicians were no longer creatively free, working instead in an atmosphere of heightened awareness. As a result, they start ‘paying attention to what it was that they were actually saying’ (Mohr, 1982:66). This may have started out as a necessity to avoid persecution, but it ended up being an incentive to become increasingly resourceful. Instead of simply submitting under the crush of censorship, musicians began inventing ways of fooling the censors.

Language in the lyrics was ingeniously arranged as a primary tool against censorship, and part of the revolutionary language utilized by musicians in the 80s, in order to debilitate the apartheid government, were innuendo, satire and irony. Byerly (1998:172) refers to it as ‘cross-cultural mediation through lyrics’, and Drewett (2004:189-207), terms it ‘an aesopian strategy of textual resistance’, but both agree that the 1980s exhibited a trend of manipulating language to include hidden missives of protest. David Kramer, in Mohr (1989: 67) asserts that,

There was a cultural war going on at the same time as there was the obvious political thing, but the cultural war was more subtle. The song impassions the listener to look beyond the surface of these segregated towns, to question why the gates are closed and the world outside is ‘barking’, rising up in opposition. This kind of musical storytelling, delivered with what Kramer calls ‘observational humour’, was popular because people recognised its authenticity.

The manipulating of lyrics also became powerful as a form of political protest because of its indirect approach (Mohr, 1989:69). Another example of word play and symbolism in lyrics is found in the music of Bayete (Mohr, 1989:73). The Bayete group's African rhythm was a fusion of jazz harmony and improvisation, as well as the use of subversive language to voice protest in the 1980s. The lyrics of their song *Hypocrite* allude to the *Hippo police*, a nickname for the South African Police (SAP), and a word-play on *hippo* implies that they are hypocrites (Mohr, 1989:79). *Hippo* also referred to the huge and strange-looking vehicle which was used in the 70s and 80s, to ferry the large numbers of protesting youth to the various South African jails, where they were imprisoned. The Hippo was capable of going into the townships, irrespective of the fact that the streets were baricaded in order to frustrate and prevent police access.

3.2.15 Feminist research

According to Stanley and Wise (1983), cited in Wadsworth (2001), the essential and common belief shared by all feminists, whatever their orientation, is the premise that women are oppressed. Therefore, it is against this backdrop that feminism is rooted on the common acceptance that there is indeed a problem, that there is something inappropriate in the treatment of women in society (Wadsworth, 2001). Feminist research is research which is carried out by women who identify as feminists, and which has a particular purpose for knowing a 'why', particular kinds of questions, topics and issues to be known about a 'what', and an identifiable method of knowing a 'how', which distinctly draw on women's experience of living in a world in which women are subordinate to men (Wadsworth, 2001:23).

Feminist research is distinguishable by its diversity, its interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary nature, as well as the fact that it uses different methodologies (Wadsworth, 2001). Another one of its distinguishing characteristics is that it is constantly being redefined by the concerns of women coming from very different perspectives (Wadsworth, 2001:25). Thus, feminist research requires that issues such as 'antiracism and diversity, democratic decision making, and the empowerment of women including traditionally marginalised women are addressed' (Wadsworth, 2001:25).

Moreover, feminists have also criticised traditional quantitative research in which people are transformed into ‘object-like subjects’ (Unger, 1983) cited in Wambui (2013:1), with the interests and concerns of research participants completely subordinated to those of the researcher (Campbell & Schram, 1995). In such research, participants’ voices, particularly of women, are subdued, silenced or severely circumscribed by the powerful voice of the researcher, and their experience may be occluded, ironicised, invalidated or even obliterated (Woolgar, 1983).

Methodologically, feminist research differs from traditional research, and actively seeks to remove the power imbalance between research and subject, due to the fact that it is politically motivated, endeavours to alter social inequality and it begins with the standpoints and experiences of women (Oakley, 1998). This implies that, in feminist research, respect for the experience and perspective of the other is upheld, with many feminist researchers expressing commitment to ‘realizing as fully as possible women’s voices in data gathering and preparing an account that transmits those voices’ (Olesen, 1994: 167). Furthermore, feminist research is characterized by ‘non-hierarchical relations’ between the researcher and the participants. Thus feminist researchers employ a wide range of methods, both qualitative and quantitative (Brayton, 1997).

It is important to note that feminist research does not claim to speak for all women, but generates knowledge grounded on the realities of women's experiences, in the social world (Olesen, 1994). In feminist research, the researcher participates in a social system, rather than remaining detached from it. Feminist research typically relies on interviews to complement observations, as well as to gain a more comprehensive perspective of the subject under study (DeWalt & Dewalt, 2002; Vanderstoep & Johnson 2009). Accordingly, feminist researchers emphasise the significance of qualitative data, and of working with women in their natural environment (Bartky, 1995). Owing to the fact that ‘A feminist approach attempts to give a voice to women, and to redress the male-oriented perspective that has predominated in the development of social sciences’, feminist researchers believe that there are ‘many routes to knowledge, and emphasise the importance of experience in understanding women’s realities’ (Neuman, 2000:82).

Jonker and Pennik (2012:31) describe methodology as ‘a certain route the researcher takes in order to achieve a certain result, which include knowledge, insight, design, intervention, and solutions. Neuman (2000:82 affirms that,

Feminist methodology is particularly concerned with how, or whether, knowledge produced about social life can be connected with the social realities of women in the context of any methodology that is dominated by men, and that neglects consideration of the gendered nature of social life, as well as the atrocity suffered by women, irrespective of colour, race, class, level of education, and so on.

Therefore, feminist methodology takes into consideration the fact that through employing traditional methods, ‘the writing of social reality is grounded in language that reflects male power, the male perspective, and male control of the definitions of the world’ (Ehrlich, 1995:45). This implies that through traditional methods, women employ language that is not their own to articulate their reality and experiences (De Vault, 1990; Anderson, 1988). Listening to women articulate their realities and experiences, the researcher should be heedful of how women reflect upon their experiences, feelings and meanings, which are discerned through the manner in which they employ language (Anderson, 1988).

The term ‘feminist methodology’ is also sometimes used to describe an ideal approach to doing research, one which is respectful of respondents and acknowledges the subjective involvement of the researcher (Letherby, 2003). Oakley (1993) concurs that qualitative methods are more appropriate for feminist research as they are best suited for articulating women’s experiences, and adequately address their needs by allowing subjective knowledge.

Harding (1987) argues that the question as to whether there is a feminist method has been deliberated, and the general consensus of feminist scholars is that feminist research should be not just on women, but for women and, where possible, with women (Fonow & Cook, 1991). Consequently, feminist research is expected to adopt critical perspectives toward

dominant intellectual traditions that have in the past ignored and/or justified women's oppression (Acker et al., 1983). Feminist research is seen as being concerned with issues of broader social change and social justice and committed to changing the condition of women (Acker et al., 1983; Fonow & Cook, 1991). Accordingly, feminist researchers promote participatory research where the relationship between researcher and the researched is non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian, non-exploitative and non-manipulative (Oakley, 1981).

Qualitative research and Qualitative Feminist Methods

Qualitative research is described as a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people elucidate and make sense of their experiences, as well as the world in which they live (Holloway, 1997). It refers to a study process that investigates a problem where the researcher conducts the study in a natural setting and builds a complex analysis by way of rich description and explanation, as well as a careful examination of data (Creswell, 1998). Although there are different approaches within the wider framework of qualitative research, most of these have the same aim of understanding the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures.

It is possible to conduct feminist qualitative research using a range of research methods, which include, 'interviews, focus groups and conversational analysis, diaries, letters, documents and texts; questionnaires, statistics, Content Analysis; Oral History, Ethnography, Discourse Analysis and-participant and non-participant observation' (Jayaratne 1983:145). Jayaratne (1983:145) notes that semi- and unstructured interviews are methods widely used in feminist research as they are claimed to 'convey a deeper feeling for or more emotional closeness to the persons studied' (Jayaratne 1983:145). Feminist researchers make every effort to conduct interviews in a way that does not further oppress the participant (Oakley, 1981). They attempt to actively involve the participant in the research process as much as possible, and reject the use of the word 'subject' that implies the participant is an insensate object to be experimented on, and observed like an animal confined in a zoo (Oakley, 1981).

Focus Groups

Feminist qualitative researchers are often drawn to focus group methods because they are particularly useful in offering two key features often suggested as essential in feminist research (Krueger, 2002). Focus groups are a *contextual* method which does not focus on the individual devoid of social context, or separate from interactions with others. Not only are focus groups a relatively *non-hierarchical* method which shifts the balance of power away from the researcher, towards the research participants, but they also have the potential to help women to collectively change their consciousness by fostering collective identities and solidarities (Morgan, 1997). Montell (1999:54) concurs that focus group interviews ‘facilitate such connections (collective identities and solidarities), because they can go beyond uncovering already existing meanings produced by already constituted subjectivities’. In this way, participants gain access to new information, new ways of thinking, to the sense that they have the right to speak and the authority to act, that is, they have a sense of emancipation (Goss & Leinbach 1996; Morgan, 1997).

3.3 CONCLUSION

Protest music has a long history in traditional societies, and it tells us about the relationship between political leaders and the public, and between men and women. Protest music can also be described as a mode of communication of emotions, thoughts and feelings. It is also the manner in which the history of the different eras is told, for instance, from slavery, to the post-apartheid era. The reasons for coining protest lyrics and performing protest music, range from performing against repressive laws, to reprimanding individuals, or certain sections of the community, who deviate from society’s norms and values, or even subtly ridiculing rulers or anyone with inappropriate behaviour. In this chapter, protest music performed in South Africa, during the struggle for freedom, as well as protest music performed in Zimbabwe, Kenya, Ghana, were dealt with. The slave songs, which evolved to protest songs performed during the struggle for emancipation, and adapted to Negro Spirituals, were discussed in this study, as they are a typical example of protest music which was performed by African slaves, who were forcibly taken from the African shores, to America. These slave songs evolved with time. Most importantly, this chapter revealed that protest songs which may be regarded as songs for entertainment purposes, are actually the performer’s way of communicating crucial issues, which should not be taken for granted. This chapter also dealt with the Theoretical Framework, which included language devices pertaining to music, namely code-

switching, semiotics, onomatopoeic effect, linguistic taboos, sarcasm, echoing, repetition, name giving, Discourse Analysis (DA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and other linguistic aspects pertinent to protest lyrics. The theoretical framework also included feminist research, which is crucial in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology used, how the study was undertaken, research design, study population and the number of participants in the study, how the data was obtained, as well as how the results were generated. The methodology of the study is qualitative in nature, and employed qualitative data collection tools, namely, interviews, observation and focus group discussion, as well as quantitative data processing tools, which included content analysis and Discourse Analysis of the protest lyrics, of the lyrics of the eighteen songs performed by the three groups which participated in the study (See APPENDIX XII). The research design is both exploratory and explanatory in nature.

4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This study adopted an exploratory and explanatory design, and has a feministic perspective, which has an emancipatory intent, which is essential in feminist research (Neuman, 2000). Exploratory design entails ‘gaining insight into a situation, phenomenon, or individual’. The purpose of exploratory research is for the researcher to be acquainted with the situation in order to formulate a problem (de Vos, et al 2005:109). The objective of explanatory research is to explain, as this kind of study ‘builds on exploratory research, but goes on to identify reasons why something occurs’ (de Vos, et al 2005:109). As this study has a feministic inclination, it therefore warrants that the research design be appropriate for this kind of study, and has to be flexible enough to provide an opportunity for the consideration of different aspects of feminist issues under study. According to Babbie (2007), one of the purposes of social research is to explain issues. Amongst others issues, this study explored and explained the relevance of protest music twenty years into South Africa’s democracy, as well as the appreciation of the feministic disposition of the indigenous protest music, namely *tshigombela* and *malende*, performed by women who reside in the Vhembe District Municipality.

Due to the fact this study has a feministic perspective, it therefore necessitates the employment of feminist methodology, ‘which is a commitment to using a whole constellation of methods reflectively and critically, the end goal being the production of data and analysis that serve feminist purposes of social justice through rigorous research’ (Letherby, 2003:5).

The study employed a triangulation of several research methods in order to ensure that the objectives and research questions were realised. Undertaking an extensive literature review, the study opted for a combination of mainly complementary qualitative data collection techniques, namely, participant observation, focus group interviews, as well as what scholars such as Bartky (1995) and Hesse-Biber (2010; 2011) refer to as feministic interviews. The study employed quantitative data analysis strategies, namely, content analysis, Discourse Analysis (DA) of interviews and focus groups discussions, including of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. Due to the fact that there is a close relationship between DA and CDA, CDA will not be employed as a data processing strategy, in order to avoid replication of the research findings.

4.3 SAMPLING

Purposive sampling method was preferred in this type of study (De Vos, 2002), and it was selected based on pre-defined criteria, which sought to locate the ‘knower’ in the production of knowledge (Littlewood, 2004). The population of the study comprises women from rural communities in the Vhembe District Municipality. These women participate in the annual Phalaphala Fm³⁸ - Vhembe District Municipality indigenous music festivals and competitions, the University of Venda’s Indigenous Music and Oral History Project (IMOHP) cultural activities, as well as the University of Venda’s annual indigenous music Heritage Month celebrations. The sample consisted of three groups from three villages, namely, Gokolo, Tshikweta, and Malavuwe. These participants are rural women whose ages range from 25 to 70 years. Out of each group, a sample of three songs per genre was employed. Particular attention was given to *vharanga-phanda* (group leaders), who are

³⁸ A radio station based in Polokwane, Limpopo Province.

responsible for the integrity of the groups and *vha u sima dzinyimbo* (leaders of songs), are experts in extemporisation.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

The following three main research data collection tools are appropriate for a study such as this one. They are participant observation, interviews and focus group discussion methods.

Participant Observation is a data collection strategy employed in both qualitative and feminist research. It involves the systematic collection and examination of verbal and non-verbal behaviours as they occur in a variety of contexts (Kothari, 2004; Baker, 2006), and often requires the researcher to play a number of roles and use a number of techniques, including their five senses, to collected data. To be explicit, it is the gathering of primary data by the investigator's own direct observation of relevant people, their actions and situations without asking the respondents (Dawson, 2005). Participant observation occurs when there is intensive social interaction between the researcher and the research participants, in the latter's environment (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002:92). This study therefore used participant observation to understand the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the participants.

Interviews are described as a data collection encounter, in which one person, (an interviewer) asks questions of another, (a respondent) Babbie and Mouton (2012). Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2007) concur that interviews are research conducted by talking with people, which involves gathering research participants' reports and stories, learning about their perspectives, and giving them voice. Kvale (1983:174) defines interviews as a data collection tool whose purpose is to 'gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena'. According to Reinharz (2011:19), 'Interviews are appealing to feminist researchers because they can offer access to ideas, thoughts, memories and stories expressed in the words of the participant, rather than the researcher.' There are three types of interviews, namely structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2008:165). In this study, semi-structured interviews were employed.

Like focus groups, observation and literature reviews, semi-structured interviews are employed to gather qualitative data. The interviewer formulates and employs an interview guide, consisting of questions and topics to be covered during the interview. Even though the interview guide is followed, the interviewer is able ‘to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide’,³⁹ when it is appropriate. The semi-structured interview, therefore, not only gives interviewers some choice in the wording to each question, but also in the use of probes, which are an invaluable tool for ensuring reliability of the data (Hutchinson & Skodol-Wilson 1992). Treece & Treece (1986) assert that probes are essential as they enable the researcher to clarify all unclear or ambiguous words and phrases.

The **focus group discussions**, which is also called group interviewing, is essentially a qualitative method (Babbie, 2007:308). It helps women to ‘collectively change their consciousness by fostering collective identities and solidarities’ (Damaris, 2001: 21). According to Goss & Leinbach (cited in Damaris, 2001:21), ‘participants gain access to new information, new ways of thinking, to the sense that they have the right to speak and the authority to act, in short, a sense of emancipation’. Most importantly, the focus group consequently creates the practicability for a dialogue among equals, which is potentially empowering under certain conditions, if people come to ‘recognise the patterns in their shared experience’ (Montell, 1999:52), as in the case of women’s consciousness-raising groups in the 1960s. Through focus groups, the researcher is able to observe how people make private opinions public and how that process defines the formation of their stated opinion (Morgan and Krueger, 1998: Babbie, 2007).

4.4.1 Data Collection Procedures

³⁹ Interviewing in qualitative research <http://fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/pdf/0-19-874204-5chap15.pdf>.

Accessed 25/05/2015

Observation, non-hierarchical interview, and focus group discussion methods were casually undertaken in the study, ensuring that core issues were covered. This study was conducted in three phases. The first phase occurred over a period of five years, which entailed the audio-recording of *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. Then as the first line of analysis protest songs were identified. In the second phase, which commenced in 2010, literature review of indigenous protest music of people in South Africa, other African countries, the United States of America and European countries, was conducted in the third phase. More performances of women of Vhembe performing groups were also observed and audio-recorded, in order to explore the amount of protest registered in the latest lyrics. These were followed by interviews with *vharangaphanda* (group leaders), as well as *vhasimi vha dzinyimbo* (leaders of songs). In the third phase focus group interviews were conducted. Other people interviewed were cultural activists.

4.4.2 Sampling

The term sample implies the simultaneous existence of a population, of which a sample is a smaller part (de Vos, 2004:198), which is studied in an effort to understand the population from which it was drawn, and this implies that information about an entire population is obtained by examining only a part of it (Kothari, 2004). In simple terms, a sample is a small portion of the total number of people who constitute the participants of the study. The purposive sampling method was utilized, and this type of sampling is chosen with a 'purpose in mind' (De Vos, 2004), based on predefined criteria.

For the purpose of the interviews, initial contacts and briefings of the research process were made with the group leaders of the three groups from Gokolo, Tshikweta and Malavuwe. These were leaders of *tshigombela* and *malende* performing groups, whose songs articulated gender issues, protest against lack of service delivery in their villages, HIV/AIDS, as well as all kinds of social ills. The respondents were asked about their experiences, interpretation of performances and gender issues expressed in the protest lyrics.

4.4.3 Research Setting and Data Collection

The research setting of this study cannot be reduced to just one location. Throughout the study, the research setting changed depending on the purpose of the performances. The Phalaphala fm's⁴⁰ indigenous music performances took place in different municipalities within the Vhembe District, namely, Thulamela, Makhado, Mutale, and Musina. Data was also collected during the activities of the Amplifying Community Voices programme, organised by the University of Venda's Centre for Rural Development, performances at cultural celebrations in the respective royal residences, at the Indigenous Annual African Arts Festival (IAAAF) at the University of Venda, Heritage Month celebrations, as well as other University of Venda's cultural activities. Other opportunities for data collection were during celebrations organised by different *mahosi* (royal leadership), in their *misanda* (royal residences). The interviews as well as focus group discussions were held at the University of Venda. Further follow-up data collection activities were conducted at the groups' respective villages, at *misanda* (royal residences), which served as the rehearsals venues for all indigenous musical performances.

4.4.4 Data Analysis

Content Analysis and Coding

Data analysis refers to 'the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data' (De Vos 2002:339). In the study, recorded data in the form of lyrics, interviews and focus group discussions were captured in *Luvenda* (Venda language) in order to ensure reliability and integrity of the research findings. Additionally audio and video recordings of performances were analysed in order to determine themes. Data was translated into English before analysis.

The key feature of content analysis is that the many words of the text are classified into much smaller content categories (Weber 1990). Content analysis starts with identifying and quantifying certain words or content in text with the purpose of understanding the contextual use of the words or content (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This quantification is an attempt not to infer meaning but, rather, to explore usage, hence, the focus is on discovering underlying meanings of the content (Babbie, 1992).

⁴⁰ A radio station that broadcasts in Tshivenda, based in Polokwane

Through content analysis, themes emerged and others formulated. These included gender inequality (GI), gendered violence (GV), gender roles (GR), social and political inequality between women and men (SPI), lack of service delivery in rural areas (LSD), poverty (P), unemployment (UE), African feminism, AF, cultural practices (CP), women empowerment (WP), Motherism (M), Stiwanism (S), Cultural feminism (CF), Third-World feminism (TWF).

Discourse Analysis

Gee (2011:x) describes Discourse Analysis as ‘the study of language-in-use, and thus any theory of Discourse Analysis ‘offers a set of tools that pervades and organises the investigation of language-in-use.’ Fairclough (2001:4) maintains that language ‘affects our understanding of the world around us, since it is intended especially to mobilise us.’ Therefore, this study employed some tools proposed by Gee (2011), which are chosen taking into consideration the fact that he pronounces that ‘anyone engaged in their own Discourse Analysis must adapt the tools to the needs and demands of their own study’ (Gee, 2011: x).

This study employed Discourse Analysis of the women’s responses during interviews, focus group discussions, as well as *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. The tool which was employed in this study was adapted from Gee (2011) and Fairclough’s (2001) strategies, and encompasses the following features:

- Language and Social context of the lyrics;
- Relationship between language and power;
- The general target audience;
- Language use in relation to social, political and cultural aspects;
- Power relations and sexism and how they are manifested in the lyrics;
- Power and how it involves control;
- The use of irony or metaphor for certain communicative aims;
- The use of linguistic politeness;
- Aspect of power, domination, and social inequality;
- Male violence against women;
- Oppression, injustice and inequality;

- Sexism; and
- Social inequality.

The features above were employed in the analysis of data.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The process of data analysis began during the data collection stage, as the researcher facilitated discussions and generated data from interviews, complementing them with the participant observation notes, and typing the recorded information. The researcher also ensured familiarity with the data, by listening and watching recorded tapes of the participants' *tshigombela* and *malende* performances, feminist interviews, as well as focus groups discussions. The data analysis process included summarizing the discussions immediately following the interviews of group leaders, and focus group discussions. In order to ensure that important details were not forgotten, or overlooked, notes were made soon after participant observation, feminist interviews, and focus group discussions had been accomplished. Throughout the research process, including during the summing up process, the research questions and the objectives of the study were interrogated. Significant themes of the study began to emerge very early in the study, some of which had already been identified during participant observation.

CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION OF DATA, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted through the qualitative research method, based on the theory as postulated by Harding, (2012), and is both exploratory and explanatory. The purpose of the study was to explore the perspective in which the *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics articulate gender roles, practices, women's issues and struggles, particularly, among rural *Vhavenda* women in the Vhembe District Municipality. The purpose of the study was also to provide an exposition of feministic influence on African women's performance of indigenous protest music. The study further explored the relevance and the relationship of *Vhavenda* women's indigenous protest music, as well as the contentious issues surrounding lyrics in indigenous protest music. In so doing, the study also examined the significance of indigenous protest music in interrogating culture, the *Vhavenda* culture in particular, in democratic South Africa, a country which claims to uphold the principles that promote gender equality.

This chapter focuses on the presentation of data, data analysis, as well as the discussion of the different perspectives that emerged during participant observation, interviews and focus group interviews. The lyrics of the protest songs performed by *tshigombela* and *malende* performers are also analysed through content analysis and Discourse Analysis, in this chapter.

In order to explore the perspective of the manner in which the *tshogombela* and *malende* protest lyrics articulate gender roles, practices, women's issues and struggles, particularly, among rural *Vhavenda* women, the exploratory-explanatory qualitative research is employed in the form of participant observation, interviews as well as focus groups. This chapter also presents the themes which emerged from the itemisation of the content of the interviews, focus group interviews, and data accumulated during participant observation before and

throughout the study. Pseudonyms are used to protect the identities of the participants involved in the study.

The study employed a triangulation of the qualitative methods of data collection, and the quantitative methods of data analysis, in order to ensure that the objectives and research questions were realised, as well as to enhance the validity and reliability of findings in an exploratory-explanatory study (Babbie, 2007). Even though there is limited documented data on the *tshigombela* and *malende* genres, an extensive literature review on protest lyrics of other genres, was undertaken. The shortage of literature on *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics in South Africa, specifically literature and research focusing on the feministic perspective of these genres prompted the researcher to undertake this study, in order to augment the limited South African research and literature on the feministic perspective of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics. Furthermore, the explanatory-exploratory nature of the study serves to provide the groundwork for further accumulation of knowledge.

The study also opted for a combination of mainly complementary qualitative data collection techniques, namely, participant observation, focus group interviews, and interviews, what scholars such as Bartky (1995) and Hesse-Biber (2011) refer to as feministic interviews. Quantitative data analysis strategies, such as content analysis of interviews, focus group discussions, and *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics were employed. Discourse analysis of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics was also done. Denzin, and Lincoln (1998) maintain that quantitative data analysis of data that was qualitatively acquired, has the potential to reveal the intricacies peculiar to viewpoints, and are therefore appropriate to explore the feministic perspective of indigenous protest lyrics in women's musical performances. A combination of these methods enabled triangulation of the various perspectives of individual participants during participant observation, focus group interviews, as well as interviews.

5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The three group leaders who were interviewed are rural women, and each one of them represents their respective group. Two of them are old-age pensioners. One of the participants

is literate, and the other one is illiterate. Two of the elderly participants have been performing with their groups from the 70s, and have been group leaders in their respective groups for more than twenty years. The third one has performed with the group for about ten years, and has been a group leader for about three years. The three of them have participated in the annual *Phalaphala fm tshigombela* and *malende* competitions, the University of Venda's annual Heritage celebrations, as well as cultural celebrations in their respective villages.

5.3 PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

5.3.1 Participant Observation

According to Kothari (2004:96), 'not only is participant observation a scientific tool for data collection', but it is also 'a complex research method because it often requires the researcher to play a number of roles and use a number of techniques, including their five senses, to collect data' (Baker, 2006:176). Participant observation was also employed as a means of collecting and cross-checking the data gathered during interviews and focus group discussions.

Participant observation is a data collection strategy employed in both qualitative and feminist research. It involves the systematic collection and examination of verbal and non-verbal behaviours as they occur in a variety of contexts (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2008). Themes and sub-themes which emerged during interviews and participant observation will be discussed in this chapter. The themes also emerged during focus group discussions. As the participants interacted with each other before, during and after performances, the following observations were made:

In their interaction with each other, the participants customarily referred to each other as 'my younger or older sister', 'co-wife', 'my daughter', 'daughter-in-law', and interchangeably, 'my mother-in-law'. This implies therefore, that they have developed close relationships towards one another, and that they accepted the roles that society imposes on them as women. Whenever the participants came together to perform, they were always loud, with animated discussions accompanied by jokes, and humorous laughter, related to their different song choices, as they discussed which songs to sing. At the beginning of our interaction, the

laughter, which resulted in tears for some participants, the jokes, and jibes, revealed a tremendous amount of issues that women grapple with. This could have resulted from the fact that the participants were tense or apprehensive, as they were not familiar with the research process. It could also have resulted from the fact that women conceal their emotional issues and problems behind laughter. But this also helped them to relax, and adjust to the research process. The more the research process unfolded, the more they were able to relax, and become accustomed to the researcher who would be dressed in *minwenda*.⁴¹ Moreover, the group leaders and other older women in the groups ensured that the research process unfolded. However, the playfulness, laughter, and all logistical issues related to which participants ‘would intone which songs’, as well as the dance movements that they would employ, form part of the study.

The brief rehearsals and the pitching of the song by the intoners before the accompanying voices joined in, elicited themes because the lyrics sung at the beginning of the song would be the ones which carried the message that the participants wanted to convey. The participants also referred to different songs from which the themes emerged. This also involved the improvisatory creation of new lyrics by the intoners. When this happened during rehearsals and performance, the accompanying singers automatically responded with their own lyrics which complemented the newly created lyrics. This implies that the accompanying performers have developed an intelligent ear to be able to follow the intoners’ line of thinking.

It is important to understand that the intoners and the accompanying singers would, prior to the performances, discuss the different ways in which there would be improvisation to the tune that the participants were already familiar with. But, in order to enhance the emphasis of the lyrics, substantial improvisation of lyrics, voice, and intonation occurred during performance. When this occurred, it would be clear that reference or even emphasis of a specific theme was being made. Other strategies for emphasis of themes were repetition, as well as the use of echo utterances such as ‘mawee!’, ‘ahee!’, ‘ahayee!’, etc. Such utterances implied that other participants had comprehended the message that the intoner wanted to

⁴¹ Vhavenda women traditional attire

convey, and went along with the intoner's choice of lyrics. The accompanying performers reinforced the intoner's lyrics by echoing, repeating them or even by ululating. Other accompanying performers would ululate to endorse the intoner's choice of improvised lyrics, and the audience would join in the ululating.

It is important to note that even though the participants' informal discussions on the choice of lyrics and other related issues happened amidst lots of laughter, and humour, serious themes that emerge in that phase, are not only genuine, but are also earnest.

These were reinforced as discussions and singing ensued. The following are some of the themes which emerged through observation, focus group discussions and interviews, and were coded as follows: physical abuse (PA), emotional abuse (EA), financial abuse (FA), poverty (P), unemployment (UE), rape of infants (RI), rape of young girls (RYG), rape of women (RW) and old women (age-old pensioners) (ROP), rivalry among women in polygamous relationships (RPR), stress related to polygamous relationships (SPR, Mothers-in-law issues (MII), daughter in-law issues (DII).

Participant observation yielded information which participants would normally have been reluctant, or unable to communicate. It is important to comprehend that feminists affirm that participant observation is part of an inclusive action-oriented research method designed to empower women and to expedite social, political, and economic transformation, particularly since one of the aims of this study is consciousness-boosting. Moreover, participant observation enabled the study to discern themes which were eventually reinforced throughout the data analysis process. Therefore, similar themes and others emerged during interviews and focus group discussions.

5.3.2 Interviews with group leaders

Due to the fact that the participants' identity had to be concealed in order to protect them from further victimisation, the three group leaders of the participating groups chose pseudonyms which were to be used during interviews, and focus groups, namely *Mudzi*, *Matavhi* and *Maitazwitoma*, which are related to their clan names.

Below is the background of each of the three participants, the responses to the study and what the research meant for the participants, coupled with other questions included to give perspective to the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at the participants' respective villages and at the royal leadership's residence where *tshigombela* rehearsals are conducted (See APPENDIX IV).

***Mudzi**⁴²**

Mudzi chose this pseudonym, as, like her clan's *tshikhodo* (praise poem), it describes her role in her performing group, which is that of a root, and an anchor. She and a few women in her village founded the group. They informed their village *mukoma* (headman), who welcomed and supported their venture. More women from her village joined them, and there were times when the group could have had about fifty members. A great number of the members died, mostly in the 80s and 90s. She was not sure whether there could be about 30 remaining members, as the group is interchangeable because not all of them are able to participate in most performances, as some of them are employed and most performances occur while they are at work.

Mudzi regards herself as *mu kegulu* (an old woman), as she has grandchildren. Her husband is an old-age pensioner, who spent the better part of his productive years working for the timber plantation in what used to be known as Eastern Transvaal, now referred to as Mpumalanga. He now stays with his young wife, and comes to pay *Mudzi* a visit once in a while. She regards him as the head of her family. He is the father of her children, their grandchildren adore him, and he brings them treats when he comes 'home'. She says he is the one who built their homestead, and she would not have been able to do so without him. *Mudzi* adds that he is not like most men nowadays, who do not want to take care of their families, and expect the government to clean up their mess, by taking care of their families. She emphasises the fact that in *Tshivenda* culture having another wife is not prohibited, and she adds that even though he stays with the young wife, he does not neglect his first family, and *Mudzi* further indicated that there is no way that he can be replaced as the head of the

⁴² * Asterix to imply that it is not her real name.

household, he was a good father to his children who are grown up, and he knows his responsibilities. *Mudzi* said that younger women nowadays fight over a man, and do not understand that in her culture a man can marry as many wives as he can afford.

Mudzi has been with the performing group since its inception when she was still employed as a domestic worker in the Sibasa suburb, which used to be known as White Area, because its residents were mainly white people who were employed by the South African Embassy, in the former independent Republic of Venda. She and other women who worked as domestic workers in the same suburb would compose *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics as they walked back home, after they had knocked off from work. Even though she is now retired, and looks after her grandchildren, she is still involved in *tshigombela* and *malende* performance.

Mudzi learnt *tshigombela* and *malende* performance as a young girl, from watching others perform. Other than songs that salute *Khosi* (royal leadership), or political leaders, most songs that she cites are about issues that affect women. These include women abuse, poverty, lack of service delivery, physical abuse, financial abuse, unemployment, rape of infants, young girls, women and old women (age-old pensioners), rivalry among women in polygamous relationships, mothers-in-law issues, daughter in-law issues, abuse of rights by young people.

There are women who are gifted in composing lyrics, and are able to string words together and bring out a brilliant effect in the performance. Some lyrics are rehearsed, and others are impromptu as they emerge from the status quo at the time of their performance. The lyrics they coin are about real life issues, some of which are the women's personal experiences, or even those that they hear about from the media, such as the rape of infants, young girls, women and old women (age-old pensioners). *Mudzi* expressed shock at these incidents which she says were unheard of during her youth; immoral and brutal acts perpetuated by people in big cities, now assimilated by men in her neighbourhood. *Mudzi* said that the lyrics they sing show that they are against all kinds of abuse that is meted out to women and intend to call men to order, and to tell them to change their evil ways. The problem, however, is that they do not conform. Their lyrics are not openly confrontational because the performers

believe that people do comprehend what they are singing about, even though they use proverbs and idioms, for a *mu Venda* child the message is not hidden. The message is not hidden because the Vhavenda coin their lyrics using proverbs that remind the men that their culture does not condone abuse of women.

Using straight-forward, unpalatable, and uncensored language in public, and in the presence of *mahosi* (royal leadership) would not only be disrespectful, but against Tshivenda culture. She says their lyrics change with the status quo, and when the intoners feel like changing. Sometimes it is like they have experienced a brain wave, or are inspired to introduce new lyrics, and the accompanying performers are skilled at picking up on the new lyrics, and responding accordingly.

Mudzi's group has participated in the annual *Phalaphala fm/Vhembe* Municipality competitions, the University of Venda's Heritage celebrations, as well as the cultural celebrations that take place in her village. At all these occasions, they sing against moral decay, the rape of infants, young girls, women, and old women. The lyrics they formulate also teach girls to go to school in order to confidently face the future, because times have changed, as in the current South African economic situation, the rate of unemployment is extremely high. Therefore, expecting men who are unemployed to provide for their children, causes stress for them, hence the femicide that is perpetuated by men in most areas of South Africa, and the abuse that is meted out to young women, with illegitimate babies nowadays. In addition, *Mudzi's* group creates lyrics against young girls who deliberately fall pregnant in order to solicit financial support from the fathers of the children. They sing against teenage pregnancy, and the tendency of young girls who deliberately fall pregnant in order to access the child support grant. Their audiences respond positively, and they seem to understand the message or moral of their lyrics, though the performing group did not see any change or reduction in the crimes committed against women. When they perform *tshigombela* and *malende* *Mudzi* says she experiences emotional release because she feels they have said what needs to be said, she feels as if they have educated or empowered the public. Therefore, she experiences some kind of relief, as if something has been lifted off her shoulders. There is tension that builds up each time they prepare to go out to perform, for bigger audiences,

particularly those that include ‘important people’, people in high places, politicians, and at institutions of higher learning. When they perform for such audiences, she feels that these are the people who should do something to improve their situation concerning poverty, shortage of water, unemployment of the youth, crime in their communities, etc. After performing for them, she says she feels a sense of relief.

The kind of response they receive from these ‘important people’, politicians in particular, has been the same, year in and year out, they always tell them that they are doing a good job, and promise them that water shortage, unemployment and poverty will be dealt with, but nothing has happened, and she says their situation has worsened. The ‘important people’ encourage them to sing, and say they enjoy their music. But the immoral behaviour that has worsened shows that the message has not penetrated deeper to all communities. She says they expect the audiences to stop all forms of abuse, and live in harmony with their families.

Mudzi does not believe that women would be better off without men, and says men have a role to play in taking care of their families and building communities. She says life would go back to the way it was if men would also strive towards taking their place in the family, and society, just like in the olden days, where men took their responsibilities seriously. She added that women and men should work together towards building better communities, and employ the principles which prevailed when ‘a child was raised by the community’. She believes that life can only go back to what it was in the good old days, when men support women, and deal with those men who abuse women in order to stop the abuse. If men can stand up and unite, they can put a stop to the abuse, especially of children and women.

Mudzi believes that even with so much violence against women, women and men need each other, and she cannot imagine the world where women are by themselves, without men. She thinks it would be chaotic, in fact she believes that it is impossible.

Matavhi*

Matavhi is the youngest of the three group leaders interviewed. According to her ID, which she says is not a true reflection of her real age, she is in her 50s. She believes that she could

be a few years older, the same age as two of her childhood friends she went to school with. According to their IDs, they are older than her, and this could be their correct age, as their parents were literate, and hers were illiterate too, and would not have been able to record her exact birth date.

Her husband was retrenched from the tea-plantations after the 90s wages strikes, and he remains jobless. He survives through doing odd-jobs for people in their village.

Matavhi joined her group long after its inception. Her mother used to sing in the same group, and she and a great number of the performers who founded the group are old pensioners, who can no longer dance, but only participate in drumming and singing accompaniment. Some of them play the role of consultants, as the performers consult them about the lyrics of the old songs that they want to sing, particularly when they prepare for competitions, and performances at the University of Venda.

Matavhi worked as a *gomelelo* (drought relief) employee of the former independent Republic of Venda government, until the Venda *coup* in the early 90s. She has not been able to find employment since then.

She became group leader when their group leader fell ill, and was hospitalized for three (3) months. Due to the fact that the other members of the group had observed that *Matavhi* had good leadership qualities, and was one of the intoners in her group, she was given the responsibility of leading the group; until such time that the leader of the group returned. She is still group leader, as the real group leader has not returned to the group.

The one song that brings sad memories is *Mahaya ashu ro vha ro dzula*, which is about the ‘good old days’ and is also her group’s favourite. She says some members of her group say the song reminds them of how during the apartheid era, they were forcibly removed from their villages where they lived harmoniously, and were able to survive from the land. They were dumped in arid land where they starved and suffered from all kinds of terrible experiences, as they remained landless. The lyrics are about the unfortunate state of affairs,

a life of hardship and poverty, when people think of ‘the good old days.’ The same song is interpreted differently by different members of her group.

The lyrics in *Matavhi*’s group are generated during discussions about what is happening in the whole country and the world over. Among her group there are members who are gifted in coining, and ‘recycling’ lyrics, but not everyone has that gift. Those who cannot intone relate their experiences to those who can intone, and those are able to use those experiences to create new and appropriate lyrics. One of the ladies in the group keeps a record of their lyrics in a note book, and as they change lyrics, she records them.

On whether women can do without men, and live by themselves, *Matavhi* feels that women and men should co-exist, as each one has a role to play within the family and society, in order to build the nation. She says that *Tshivenda* culture does not condone the abuse of women, girls and infants, in fact it even has proverbs that clearly spell out that men should not abuse women. *Matavhi* says that in the household the husband is the head, and according to her culture *Matavhi* is superior, she is *Makhadzi* (great aunt) in her paternal household, where she was born, because she is the one who takes decisions on behalf of her family. Even the men in her family respect her decisions. No serious decisions that affect the family are taken in her absence,

Matavhi was drawn to performing by the brilliant dance moves when she watched women perform, and she learnt *tshigombela* and *malende* performance as a child. She does not regard herself as a gifted intoner, but she refers to other women in her group as highly gifted. The performers have ‘jelled’ so much that each one of them seems to know what the other one is thinking, as they ‘think on their feet’, and are able to complement the intoner’s lyrics, and infuse appropriate musical sounds if the intoners decide to introduce new lyrics, even without having had prior discussions with the rest of the group.

Matavhi believes that the group sings protest lyrics in order to voice their grievances and feelings, as well as to ‘let off steam’. She regards these lyrics not only as an outlet of their talent, but also of their aggression that the older section of their group do not want them to

display publicly. Their aggression is concealed in the lyrics by performance and laughter as they interact with each other. Some women become so emotionally charged that they cry, particularly when the lyrics are against disturbing issues, other women laugh in order to conceal their emotion, even when they sing against horrifying experiences. Some of the songs are against all forms of abuse that women are exposed to.

Matavhi feels that there are numerous abusive immoral acts meted out to women, and she believes that the situation would change if their lyrics directly confronted the immoral issues happening in the district; issues such as femicide, gendered violence, financial abuse, etc. But the elderly members of the group are not in favour of confrontational lyrics, as they say it is against culture for women to be confrontational. They believe that the lyrics are straightforward enough for people to understand their message/moral, such as women abuse, poverty, lack of service delivery, physical abuse, financial abuse, unemployment, rape of infants, young girls, women and old women (old-age pensioners), stress related to polygamous relationships, rivalry among co-wives, mother-in-law issues and daughter-in-law issues. The elderly section of the group believes that if women were extra careful all these terrible experiences would not happen to them.

Women who have personally experienced abuse re-live their trauma and undergo emotional release when they create lyrics related to their experiences. Most of the lyrics are about what women experience personally. The elderly section of the group tells the younger women that they too experienced abuse, and they advise them to be strong, as time will heal. *Matavhi* says that, just like the indigenous music of other language cultural groups, the *tshigombela* and *malende* genres are still relevant today in an era that promotes cultural awakening, where all cultures, including *Tshivenda*, which was marginalized in previous years, are appreciated. She believes that the lyrics they compose are still relevant, particularly with all the immoral occurrences that happen every day in South Africa. She says they want people to listen to their message, and learn how important it is to practice good morals, to treat women and girls with respect, to stop women abuse, to build the nation. They do not only sing about women abuse, but they also sing to condemn women who abuse their husbands and children, as this is against *Tshivenda* culture. She said according to *Tshivenda* culture a wife is supposed to

treat her husband and in-laws with respect, and take care of them. Girls were raised to be caring, and to have values. The group also sings against the tendency of young girls who leave school, and repeatedly have babies in order to access the government child support grant. *Matavhi* says her group is completely opposed to this practice, and they encourage girls to go to school, be educated and become professional people and help build the community. She cited a song titled *Zhangantavhila* as one of the songs they sing against such kind of behaviour. *Matavhi* says women in her group are not educated, because of the poor conditions they found themselves in when they grew up. They therefore do not want their children to find themselves in the same situation.

The radio teaches them about women's rights and the fact that physical abuse of women is a criminal offence. Our constitution allows polygamy, but they know that the first wife has to give permission for the marriage of the second wife. They want men to respect their first wives, and not treat them like objects, and discard them as though they are worthless. *Matavhi* said they were also aware of the fact that some women abuse their rights, and treat their husbands and children badly. She and the group do not condone that kind of behaviour and these are the kinds of situations they compose lyrics about.

Radio and television expose them to opportunities for different poverty alleviation for the unemployed, illiterate and indigent. They want to be given opportunities to participate in empowerment of poor communities.

The radio and television also informs the public about all kinds of strategies that make life better for poor rural communities. The women say there is no valid reason why a child today cannot acquire education, because there are so many opportunities. But there are children who do not appreciate or take advantage of these opportunities, and this is why the women in her group coin lyrics about lazy young people who sit around and abuse drugs, instead of going to school and improving their lives. *Matavhi* says the radio and television also teaches them that women and men are equal, although their generation was raised on different values, they do not even have a conception of how women could be equal to men. She said that their grandchildren may be able to adopt that kind of culture. But she also does not believe that

women should be segregated from men. She says according to the laws of nature, the two cannot do without each other.

Maitazwitoma*

Maitazwitoma is the mother of four girls, and a grandmother of twelve. Her husband was a migrant labourer, who left their home during his productive years, and only came back home to die. She took care of their children and struggled through the years. She spent the better part of her years working in the tea plantation, and later as a service staff employee at the government offices, until her retirement a year before. *Maitazwitoma* grew up poor, and life did not improve even when she got married. She now depends on the old-age pension. She got married at an early age ‘to escape poverty,’ because she thought life would be better, little did she know that it would be worse. She regrets not going to school, and not taking advantage of the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) opportunities, as some of her friends did in the 80s. Two of her childhood friends pursued their studies, and ended up being teachers. Their lives improved, and they are held in high esteem in the community. She respected her husband’s wishes, when he denied her permission to go to school, because he wanted her to take care of their children.

When she joined the *tshigombela* and *malende* performing group, it enabled her through song, the opportunity to release all her frustrations that come with poverty and raising her children under difficult conditions. Not only is she brilliant at coining relevant *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics, but her dance prowess also comes in handy, and enables her emotional release. She is the one who composed many of the lyrics of the songs performed by her group. She is still a brilliant intoner, although her dance moves are no longer ‘anything to write home about’.

Maitazwitoma believes that the genres they perform are still relevant; hence they are motivated to perform by the University of Venda, where her group participates during the annual Heritage Month celebrations. Her group has in numerous years performed in the *Phalaphala fm/* Vhembe District Municipality indigenous music competitions. She believes that *tshigombela* and *malende* performances are still relevant, particularly with moral decay so rife in the country nowadays, the crime, the rape of children, women and old women,

physical abuse of women. She believes women are no longer safe in this country and old women have to lock themselves up even in daylight, for fear of being robbed and raped. She points out that the radio announces the brutal deaths of toddlers and children as young as six years, who are raped and killed by serial rapists, and young girls by their boyfriends. The radio even has a regular weekday slot for announcement of deaths. She says the reason so many people die nowadays, unlike in the past, is because of HIV/AIDS. She has coined lyrics about the denials among our people who do not learn about HIV/AIDS, and blame witchcraft for the HIV/AIDS related diseases the death of members of their families, rather than facing reality.

She says *tshigombela* and *malende* are still relevant in this day and era, when there are so many opportunities for young people, but girls as young as 12 deliberately fall pregnant and leave school in order to secure the government's child support grant. *Maitazwitoma* says she has composed songs and lyrics that caution young people against such behaviour. She has also composed lyrics against abuse of women.

Her chosen name means 'one who strives to improve one's life is better than an idle person'. She says her singing *tshigombela* and *malende* is 'the bit' that she does to empower and conscientize communities. She believes that her lyrics are informative and educational, and if only the young and the old would listen and learn, the world would be a better place. She feels that these genres are still relevant, particularly because government officials abuse their power, and take advantage of poor communities, by abusing government resources. There are so many job opportunities announced in the media, yet rural communities are not given these opportunities, hence a huge number young people are unemployed.

Maitazwitoma receives a great deal of positive response from the audiences, who show their appreciation by singing along, ululate, and presenting her with money, when she intones her songs, and when she dances. Her only concern is that there has so far been no reduction in the issues of crimes, women abuse, and teenage pregnancy. She wonders whether people take heed of the lyrics of their *tshigombela* and *malende* performance, or if they think they are simply for amusement.

She believes that even though some men treat women badly, women should not give up on them, things will work out for the better, and she is hopeful that life will improve.

5.4 CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

In this study, content analysis of focus group interviews was employed. The focus groups interviews are essentially qualitative in nature, and content analysis as a data analysis strategy, is quantitative in nature. In focus group interviews, a group of research participants were interviewed together, in order to prompt a discussion, as well as self-disclosure among participants. Focus groups consist of a smaller number of interviewees drawn together for the purpose of expressing their views on a specific set of open questions.

Three *tshigombela* and *malende* performing groups participated in focus groups interviews. These were conducted at the University of Venda. Below is the focus group schedule:

Table 1: Focus Group Schedule

| | Focus Group 1 | Focus Group 2 | Focus Group 3 |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| Date | 15 August 2013 | 16 August 2013 | 17 August 2013 |
| Place | UNIVEN | UNIVEN | UNIVEN |
| Time scheduled | 10.00 hrs | 12.00 hrs | 12.00 hrs |
| Duration | 2 hours | 1 and half hours | 2 hours |
| Number of participants | 15 | 17 | 16 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Total number of members | 33 | 30 | 35 |
| Years of operation | 30 | 33 | 30 |
| Group profile | Old-age pensioners, early and late middle-age unemployed, service staff members, domestic workers | Old-age pensioners, early and late middle-age unemployed, service staff members, domestic workers | Old-age pensioners, early and late middle-age unemployed, service staff members, domestic workers |
| Levels of literacy | Semi-literate and illiterate | Semi-literate and illiterate | Semi-literate and illiterate |

Due to the fact that in the interviews with group leaders and the focus group discussions semi-structured questions were employed, follow-up questions and prompts were used in order to acquire more data than what would have been elicited. The actual focus group interviews allowed for an examination of the overarching research questions of this study, which were as follows:

- What do you want to achieve by performing *tshigomela* and *malende* songs?
- Are protest songs still relevant in the democratic South Africa?
- Are there particular ways in which language is used to formulate your lyrics?
- Are you aware of any ideologies that are incorporated into *tshigomela* and *malende* lyrics, which deal with women's issues?
- Does the language employed in *tshigombela* and *malende* indigenous protest lyrics help in empowering women?
- What is the sociolinguistic relevance of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics?

As indicated earlier, semi-structured focus group interviews were used in the study. In order to ensure that all the participants comprehend the questions in order to respond accordingly, it was not advisable to specify all of the questions in advance. The questions were adjusted and augmented based on the participants' responses.

As the interviewing process progressed, relevant additional issues which emerged during the focus groups interviews were raised. The wording and order of questions was not the same

for all groups. The participants discussed freely about issues because open-ended questions were employed. Follow-up questions were employed in order for participants to elaborate and clarify when it was appropriate. In situations where the researcher felt uncertain about the participants' response, the responses were rephrased in order to confirm whether the researcher's perceptions were accurate. The participants restated the views in their own words and clarified their thoughts.

Semi-structured questions were posed in order to prompt discussions among the participants. Due to the fact that the participants are not conversant in English, the questions were posed in Tshivenda (See APPENDIX X, which is in English and APPENDIX XI for the Tshivenda version). Other than the basic introductory questions which elicited the participants' introductory views and background information, the questions did not follow a particular pattern, and the manner, and order in which they were posed was guided by the different group's responses. The focus group questions were semi-structured, and the discussions elicited numerous views. As a result, more questions were posed in order to ensure that the discussions focused on the issues under discussion, and to redirect the discussions which threatened to deviate from the gist of the issues to be discussed, as well as to allow a train of the views to be unearthed. As soon as the focus group discussions were completed, the audio and video recordings which were conducted in *Tshivenda*, were transcribed and translated to English. They were therefore read and re-read in order to identify emerging themes. Some of the themes that emerged from the content analysis of the focus group interviews were consistent with those that had emerged from participant observation and interviews of group leaders. Most importantly, the purpose of content analysis was also to investigate the feminist perspective of *tshigombela* and *malende* performance lyrics. The following tables elucidate the participants' views towards the focus group interview questions.

Table 2: What do you hope to achieve by composing these particular lyrics?

| Responses | Frequencies |
|---|-------------|
| To curtail abuse in communities | 46 |
| To call men who abuse women to order | 44 |
| To express one's feelings where engaging the perpetrators is not possible | 14 |

| | |
|--|----|
| To entertain the audiences | 46 |
| To ensure that the youth in the community learn values from these indigenous songs | 23 |
| To ensure that culture is perpetuated and remembered by the youth | 21 |
| It is our way of exercising freedom of expression | 6 |

The sentiment of curtailing abuse ranks high in this category (95 %), as signified by the response to the question whether the participants coin the lyrics in order to appeal to their communities to curtail abuse. The majority of participants (91 %) also wish to call the perpetrators of abuse to order, although among all the three groups (when the connotations of ‘calling to order’ was elucidated), the participants emphasise the fact that their lyrics are not intended to use aggression, they explained that they would rather ‘appeal to perpetrators to stop the abuse of women’, and do not ‘call the men who abuse women to order’, as the aggression in the latter is against their culture. On this category of questioning, the participants do not feel strongly about composing lyrics to ensure that they ‘impart values’ (47%), or whether to ensure that ‘culture is perpetuated’ (43%). Expressing their feelings is also not regarded as crucial by the participants, hence only a few (29%) of them responded positively to that question. The participants say they perform in order to ‘entertain their audience.’ Only 12% feel that their performance is regarded as freedom of expression. This could imply that in their way of doing things they did not seem to understand what ‘exercising freedom of expression’ is. About 95% of the performers confirmed that they sang to entertain their audiences.

Table 3: Do you perform *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics to express any of the following negative emotions?

| Yes | No | Emotion | Frequency |
|-----|----|-------------|-----------|
| X | | Anger | 43 |
| X | | Frustration | 44 |
| X | | Despair | 42 |
| X | | Hatred | 10 |
| X | | Anxiety | 42 |
| X | | Depression | 9 |

| | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|----|
| X | | Shame | 13 |
| X | | Self-condemning | 3 |
| X | | Sadness | 3 |
| X | | Fear | 46 |

Anger, frustration and fear are three emotions that the performers mostly experience, as their frequencies are 89%, 91% and 95%, respectively. These frequencies reinforce the findings made during the participant observation and interview of the leaders. The participants said that they experienced a lot of anger, frustration, as well as fear due to the high rate of the abuse of women and sexual violence perpetuated against female infants, girls, women and female old-age pensioners. The performers also experienced despair and anxiety as on a daily basis, they suspect that something horrendous would happen to them. About 95% of the participants say that the negative emotions that they compose songs about are not perpetuated by the menfolk in their lives, or those that they are related to. It is therefore important to note that the negative emotions that they experience are not towards these men, but towards those who are guilty of committing all these horrendous acts. The few participants who experienced hatred (20%), depression (18%), sadness (6%), are those who personally experienced abuse, rape, and all kinds of horrendous acts. They were not very vocal about what they personally experienced, and pressuring them to express their emotions during focus group discussions would have been even more traumatic to them. It is also quite possible that their partners would have been the ones who perpetuated the abuse, and there could have been other participants who participated in the same focus group discussion, who could have been aware of what had befallen them, and that made them uncomfortable. This was obvious from the way they expressed their being uncomfortable during discussions. The 6% who experienced guilt also condemned themselves because they blamed themselves, and believed that they had contributed to their own, their children, or their charges abuse, and they believe that if they had been vigilant it would not have happened.

Table 4: Which of the following perceptions pertaining to women's issues are referred to in your lyrics?

| Response | Frequencies |
|--|-------------|
| Equality of men and women in communities | 3 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Economic empowerment of women in communities | 45 |
| Political empowerment of women in communities | 9 |
| Educational empowerment of women | 39 |
| Women emancipation | 39 |

About 94% of the participants do not have issues on equality of men and women; hence only 6% who belong to the younger generation are in favour of gender equality. In this category of questions, the participants would like to achieve economic empowerment. This is signified by 94% whose performances advocate economic empowerment of women, when 81% advocate educational empowerment and women emancipation respectively. Only 18% of the participants aspire for political empowerment of women. They possibly regard political empowerment from the point of view of party politics, and not the political power related to indigenous royal leadership. It is evident from this analysis that unlike in Western feminism, the participants do not negate men, they rather accommodate them. Therefore, men are central to their lives and so their continuous presence is assured, and belongs to the school of thought that opines that radicalism in feminist assertions is un-African, that Africa has dignified and powerful women who do not owe their empowerment to feminist ideologies.

This reasoning is related to Motherism, in which men and women are complementary opposites in traditional African society, such that no gender dominates the totality of the social life of the people. Men are dominant in socio-political spheres of life, while women have the upper hand in spiritual and metaphysical segments. In this case, the Discourse Analysis of these participants alluded to the fact that there is no power, domination, and social inequality, as women and men complement each other. The participants also do not have issues with political equality between women and men; they assert that in politics, men should be leaders. The Discourse Analysis of the focus group discussion on this issue reveals that the participants believe that leadership ‘naturally belongs to men’, except for a few participants who cited examples of women traditional leaders (*khosi*), such as *Ha Bohwana*, *Ha Budeli*, and *Ha Modzhadzhi*. There women who raised the issue of political leadership in a democracy, but could not sustain their argument because they did not have much support from the group.

Table 5: Gendered violence can be eradicated in situations where:

| Responses | Frequencies |
|--|-------------|
| Women do not want to have relationships with men. | 5 |
| Women do not want to have anything to do with men. | 6 |
| Women without men should take over the development of their communities. | 5 |
| Women can do without men. | 6 |

The purpose of this question was to determine whether the participants would prefer to live a life without men, because it would appear that their woes derive from their relationships with men, or from the existence of menfolk in general. Their responses in this category of questions do not advocate life without men, and they feel that they and men should co-exist in order to have a ‘balance in the world’. They believe that the development of their communities should be the responsibility of both men and women. The older women in the groups emphasise the fact that according to their culture women and men were predestined to co-exist, and this truth cannot be over-ruled or invalidated. They also said that whatever happened between men and women, men still play an important role in women’s lives. This stance is corroborated by the participants’ responses to whether ‘Women do not want to have relationships with men’, ‘Women do not want to have anything to do with men.’, and whether ‘Women can do without men.’, which elicited between 10% and 12%, respectively, in agreement with these statements. This is contrary to between 88% and 90% who felt that women and men have to co-exist, and need each other.

Table 6: Do your lyrics advocate the following issues?

| Responses | Frequencies |
|--|-------------|
| Women’s rights are about human rights | 47 |
| Women’s rights advocate the fact that women deserve to be respected too | 48 |
| Women and men are equal in South Africa | 3 |
| South Africa is a democratic country, and women’s rights are supposed to be enforced | 9 |
| Racial, class, ethnic, and gender discrimination should be eradicated | 9 |

About 98% of the participants believe that women's rights are human rights, and 100% believe that women deserve to be respected too. They added that Tshivenda culture also subscribes to this principle. They further said that it is only with the advent of democracy that young people have become disrespectful towards adult and elderly people because they believe they have rights. Even though the participants believe that human rights are women rights, 81% feel that these rights should not be enforced, and only 19% feel that there should be laws to enforce these rights. The 81% of the participants feel that the issue of right as stipulated in the constitution is the reason why relations between women and men have become unpleasant. These women argued the fact that women and men co-existed before democracy, the women further argued that though there were issues of rape, femicide, etc., which was perpetuated by men, these were on a small scale. The participants believe that men were angered by the fact that women receive more support from government than the men. The participants also feel that men's anger stems from the fact that they seem to believe that their power and authority in their communities and their households has been diminished, as the government 'lays down the rules', including how they should run their households. If they insist on administering punishment on their charges, they could be arrested for having contravened the country's constitution. Furthermore, the women also support the men's sentiments on the issue that parents have lost control over their children, who believe that now that they have rights, their parents, teachers, and all adult members of their communities have no authority over them, and can therefore not discipline them.

The issue of equality between men and women was a very controversial one particularly among the elderly members of the participants. They believe that the principle contradicts culture, and should not have been determined by the government. Their contention is that in all communities, and families, the issue of seniority is determined internally, as in some families there are women whose status renders them superior to men, and vice-versa. They feel that government has interfered with the African family structures. They believe that if men have always believed that they are superior to women, even though in their paternal households women are responsible for taking decisions over most crucial issues, the government seems to have 'set the cat among the pigeons', as this has resulted in great conflict among women and men, the participants said that the violence in South Africa can

be blamed on the fact that men feel that they have been emasculated by the constitutional stipulations.

On the issue of whether ‘racial, class, ethnic, and gender discrimination should be eradicated’, the participants feel that these are non-issues, as they do not aspire to be anything that they are not. They feel that they are proud of themselves as *Vhavenda* women, and they respect other races and ethnic groups. Their contentions on this question are similar to those discussed in the previous question, particularly on the issue of gender equality.

Table 7: Do the following ideologies on women emancipation have any influence on the composing of *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics sung by the women of Vhembe?

| Ideologies | Frequencies |
|---|-------------|
| The lyrics are about freedom and independence of women | 3 |
| The lyrics advocate meaningful union between black women and black men | 44 |
| The lyrics advocate men to change from their sexist stand | 5 |
| The lyrics advocate the emasculation of men because of their self-pride | 1 |
| The lyrics appeal to men to live harmoniously with women, and to abandon their self-perception as superior partners in the collective struggle for a better society | 40 |

The responses in the preceding table clearly signify the accommodationist inclination that African women, and *Vhavenda* women, have towards men. Instead of annihilating the menfolk in their communities, they choose to accommodate them. About 92% would rather have a meaningful union between women and men, instead of emasculating men. Only 6%

of the participants want to celebrate their freedom and independence, whereas 94% of the participants believe that freedom and independence are achievements, which should be celebrated by both men and women. About 83% of the participants said they compose lyrics that appeal to men ‘to live harmoniously with women and abandon their self-perception as superior’, just as they appeal to women to be humble, as the *Tshivenda* culture frown at anyone, men and women, who regard themselves as superior to others.

These sentiments concur with womanism, which is black-centred and accommodationist, and promotes acceptance to live harmoniously with men who have to abandon their self-perception as superior partners in the collective struggle for a better society, without emasculating their self-pride.

Table 8: Do your lyrics advocate the following?

| Responses | Frequencies |
|--|-------------|
| Your lyrics are about women being given the opportunity to play an active part in social transformation. | 48 |
| Your lyrics are about trying to build a harmonious society. | 48 |
| Do you believe that the transformation of society is the responsibility of both men and women and it is also in their interest? | 47 |
| The lyrics are about warring with men, the reversal of roles, and doing to men whatever women think that men have been doing to them from time immemorial. | 1 |
| Do you believe in complementarity between men and women? | 46 |
| The lyrics advocate that women should be given an opportunity to play an active part in social transformation. | 48 |

In this category of questions the participants feel strongly that their lyrics subscribe to women and men working together towards social transformation. Most importantly, these participants believe that women should play an active role in social transformation. These

responses which range from 95% and 100%, confirm that women believe in complementarity between men and women, and that ‘transformation of African society is the responsibility of both men and women’, instead of ‘warring with men’, or the principles that advocate ‘the reversal of roles, and doing to men whatever women think that men have been doing to them from time immemorial.’ These sentiments are concomitant to the principles of Stiwanism, which denotes a worldview that advocates that women should be given an opportunity to play an active part in social transformation.

Table 9: Comments on what women wish for when they perform a *tshigombela* and *malende*

| Features | Comments made |
|---|--|
| Healing relationships between women and men. | The fact that women operate in men’s space is not what has resulted in men feeling that they have been emasculated. The real strife is not between men and women, but it is anger that is misdirected towards women, because men had to find a scapegoat against which they have to vent their anger, and frustration. |
| Healing relationships between women and women. | African men have also learnt some devious strategies such as divide and rule, through which they pit women against one another. If men are given what is due to them it will help them to heal, and this will result in the healing of society as a whole. |
| Women abuse and violence against female infants, girls, women including older women and old-age pensioners should be seriously addressed. | The lyrics that the performers formulate are against violence towards female infants, girls, women including older women who are old-age pensioners. This kind of violence is a foreign phenomenon, which results from the frustration which men experience because of colonisation, Christianity, apartheid, and democracy which have reduced them to helpless children, who have to take instructions about how they should conduct their lives, their households and raise their children, from the government. Due to the fact that they cannot identify and face whatever causes their frustration, they end up lashing out and taking out their frustration on those that are close to them, or those that are weaker than them, who are their wives, children, or any other female person who they lay their eyes on. |

| | |
|---|--|
| Men should find a way of healing and shouldering their responsibilities as men, fathers and husbands. | Just like colonization, apartheid destroyed the relationship between women and men, when it relegated women to inferior positions in society; democracy has introduced laws that usurped women and men's positions in their communities, as well as their ability to do things for themselves. |
| Women should be given their status back, as well as the respect they deserve as women. | The tradition of protest music has not diminished, despite years of suppression under colonial and apartheid rule, Christianity, as well as democracy in South Africa. Peace and harmony will only be achieved when both women and men are given back what is due to them, that is, their land which was taken from them from colonial times. Handouts in the form of government grants have reduced women to poor and helpless government property. |

The preceding comments on the findings of this study support Third World feminists articulated by a transnational feminist such as Mohanty (2001). Third World feminism takes into account the African philosophy of life which stresses marriage as a social institution. Not only is it entrenched in African historical and cultural experiences, but it also promotes the view of the complementarity between a man and woman by stressing the Male-Female principle in the creative order.

The focus group discussion responses to tables 2-9 are suggestive of the fact that the participants do not subscribe to western forms of feminism. Proponents of African forms of feminism surmise that Africa has dignified and powerful women who do not owe their empowerment to feminist ideologies. It is therefore against this backdrop that African forms of feminism, unlike western feminism do not repudiate men, but rather embrace them. The women who participated in the focus group discussions do not profess to be feminists, but they believe that men play a central role in their lives, and therefore their continuous existence and survival is assured.

5.5 DISCUSSION

During participant observation, interviews of the three group leaders, as well as focus group discussions of the three groups of participants, it was observed that even though the participants were not familiar with the term 'feminism', the *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics were manifest with gender issues, and identified with feminist ideals. The participants in this study have no inclination of what feminism is. However, the majority of lyrics they formulate are manifest in protest which is tantamount to feminist tendencies. Therefore, during interviews, and focus group discussions participants who were skilled in formulating

lyrics, exhibited a feminist inclination in the manner that they explained the kind of experiences that women went through, and what the motives of coining such lyrics were. They used these lyrics to illustrate the kind of experiences women were exposed to. In earlier sections of this study the fact that it is unlikely that the participants subscribe to Western feminism was elucidated. Despite the fact that the participants are not conversant with feminist matters, their lyrics are suggestive of ideologies pertinent to other forms of feminisms, which are peculiar to African people.

The participants' insights were invaluable to the research objectives, research questions, women's issues as well as experiences. Although the initial contacts were informed about the criteria for participation, it was not anticipated that the women would be interested in speaking about how the performance of indigenous music would relate to gender issues, gendered violence, cultural discrimination against women, gender roles, etc.

The Discourse Analysis of the interviews, focus group discussions, and *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics, on the issues discussed in this study, reveals that the participants elicit a great deal of linguistic politeness, particularly on issues that they believed are natural, and cannot be changed.

5.5.1 Views on Patriarchy

In this study, the elderly informants such as Ramadolela (2010), Mutshotsho (2012) and Netshirembe (2012), whose views are deeply entrenched in indigenous convictions, believe that what the Western feminists regard as patriarchal tendencies practiced by men should be regarded as the norm. These informants argued that doing away with patriarchy may have negative implications, such as those that have resulted from the introduction of children's rights by the democratic government of South Africa. According to the three informants, because of children's rights, power has been usurped from the parents, and handed over to the children. Although a limited number of younger participants believe that the issue of patriarchy has disadvantaged women, the elderly participants reinforced the views of the three informants referred to above, and said they believed that women occupy a significant status within their own paternal families and should cherish the position of *Makhadzi*

(paternal aunt), a position that is higher than those of the men in the paternal family, which entitles them the position of chief decision makers in both royal and common families.

The issue is that according to Tshivenda culture women are not placed in subordinate positions, where they are viewed more as property than as equal partners in a relationship. The participants in this study believe that Christianity, the world wars, apartheid, and now democracy have done more damage to *Vhavenda* communities (Mutshotsho, 2010).

5.5.2 Vhavenda Women's Stoicism

For the participants in this study, like other Vhavenda people in other communities, the stoic disposition of the women does not permit them to yield to the harsh conditions in which they find themselves. In most of the rural villages where the performers reside, most of the menfolk are migrant labourers, hence women have to take charge of their livelihood. They are militant, strong and resilient in order to ensure that their families survive. Not only are they irrepressible, but they are further endowed with the ability to sensitise fellow women and guide them in the right direction. Hence, wherever hopelessness among the women is sensed, lyrics which galvanize their spirits are composed.

The Discourse Analysis of interviews and focus group discussions reveal that due to the fact that the participants' were raised to become stoics, they do not seem to have issues with aspects of power, domination, and social inequality, and power and how it involves control. Their stoicism enables them to be self-reliant, and not dwell on complaints against anyone who is not fulfilling their obligations.

5.5.3 Coexistence between Women and Men

The participants do not antagonize men in the face of conflict. Whereas feminists who subscribe to western ideologies, would prefer to remain single, or as lesbians, or even to create separate spaces for women and men, the women in this study embrace the marital institution as valuable and necessary to both women and men. Consequently, the elderly members of the communities emphasise the need for women to get married and stay married.

Therefore, the participants in this study, particularly those that are married, are committed to the institution of the family and certainly do not want to do without their men, despite unfavourable issues, referred to in the lyrics of the songs they perform, that may affect their relationships. Therefore, *tshigombela* and *malende* performance is not only a strategy they employ to voice their grievances against all forms of abuse, but also to inspire unity within their communities, including relationships between women and men. However, even though the participants do not refer to themselves as feminist, they do not want to be mistreated and are readily willing to address issues that may result in the protection of women and children within society.

The participants in this study do not regard themselves as biologically inferior to men and that the essential differences between women and men are ordained by God. These women are also not deprived of public life or banned from the political landscape. They participate up to the highest levels of governance regardless of societal status.

As a result of the majority of the male workforce engaged in migrant labour in the bigger cities, the women involved in the study come from backgrounds where they are expected to perform all traditionally male tasks in addition to female tasks. These include providing warmth both materially and spiritually, and generally taking care of the home and children, while participating in communal activities as is normally expected of all families. Some of these mothers become permanent pillars of the home, as some husbands never return home for various reasons, which will not be discussed in this study.

5.5.4 Communalism against Individualism

Members of the group are accustomed to teamwork and generally working together as a community, a feature which was prominent in traditional African society as opposed to individualism or egotism. It is against this background that the participants do not frown on polygamous relationships, where a man is married to several women. They believe that if the man is able to treat his spouses with respect, as well as provide for his children, their marriage arrangements are a private matter, which should not concern anyone outside the family.

5.5.5 Inclusion of Both Women and Men in Developmental Issues

As indicated in other sections of this study, the majority of people who reside in the three participating groups' villages are women. As a consequence, women participation in the social and political transformation of the country in all departments of government is vital for the development in the villages. These sentiments subscribe to Stiwanism, which is a form of feminism, proposed by Ogundipe–Leslie (1994:229). Stiwanism (Ogundipe–Leslie, 1994:229) is an acronym for the 'Social Transformation Including Women in Africa', and it thus proposes the inclusion of African women in contemporary Africa, in order to ensure the equal partnership of women and men in social transformation. In South Africa's new dispensation, Stiwanism is a positive solution to the strained relations between women and men, which emanated from the murders, rape of women in black communities, including rural villages. The songs that women formulate are about promoting unity and working together as communities.

5.5.6 Motherism as a Viable Option for Vhavenda Women

The participants in the study embrace motherhood, and the fact that as mothers they are nurturers, which includes the nurturing of their children, protecting the home and the environment, as part of their responsibilities. The lyrics of songs 1, 4, 9, and 18, attest to the fact that the performers embrace motherhood and are nurturers.

Contrary to popular belief, according to their culture, *Vhavenda* women had a voice, and enjoyed the respect bestowed to all paternal aunts in royal families, as well as among commoners, not only within the home of birth, but also within the extended families. The paternal aunts took important decisions which were respected by their respective families.

5.6 DATA ANALYSIS OF SONGS

Three performing groups participated in the study which engages in participant observation, group leaders as well as focus group interviews. Three songs each of *tshigombela* and *malende* were selected for analysis from numerous songs that the groups performed. All in all the lyrics of eighteen (18) songs were analysed before and during participant observation

and performances. Both the linguistic and thematic perspectives of the study were discerned through content analysis of the songs, as well as Discourse Analysis of the interviews, focus group discussions, and the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics. The lyrics are in *Tshivenda* language, and for the purpose of making this study accessible to speakers of other languages, the lyrics were translated into English. The protest lyrics, which are about all kinds of issues that women's *tshigombela* and *malende* performing groups in Vhembe sing about, concur with the themes which emerged during participant observation, interviews of group leaders and research informants, as well as focus group interviews. Thematic analyses of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics, which were formulated to protest against physical, sexual, emotional, financial abuse, poverty, abuse of women's rights, unemployment and lack of service delivery in their respective communities, gender stereotypes, and all other forms of gendered violence, was conducted. The purpose of this analysis was to ensure that the aims, objectives, as well as research questions, of the study were accomplished.

Video recorded performances were scrutinized to see how they related to the themes. The frequency of a particular theme was then taken as an indication of its relative importance (Fiske 1990:136), and as indicative of the attitudes of members of the groups. Even though some groups performed similar songs, with similar themes, the lyrics were different. These similarities or coincidences capacitated the content and thematic analysis, as well as the reinforcement of the themes. The content analysis of the lyrics below does not follow any particular order in which the lyrics of the song are arranged. Furthermore, in order to avoid further victimization of the women in participating groups, the groups' identities were not divulged. The lyrics are in APPENDIX XII.

The royal residence is the location where all important rituals are performed, and it is the same location that all other male dominated activities would be suspended, for the duration of the dance, in order to allow *tshigombela* performing women to address the royal leadership, as well as the male section of the community openly (Kruger, 1999:128). According to *Tshivenda* tradition, *tshigombela* is performed in the royal residence. The introductory song is titled, *Ri a dzhena*, loosely translated, 'We, *tshigombela* dancers, wish to be ushered into the royal homestead'. The announcement is followed by the questions:

‘*Vhamusanda, vha do ri fha mini?*’ (What will the royal leadership serve us?) The first question is followed by another, *Vha do ri fha kholomo mbili* ‘Will he serve us the meat of two oxen?’ The *tshigombela* lyrics of the following song illustrate the interdependence that exists between the royal leadership and their subjects:

Ri a dzhena, tshigombela

Vhamusanda vha do rifha mini?

Vha do ri fha kholomo mbili?

The implications of these lyrics are that the performers expect to be served food and drinks after the *tshigombela* performance. However, it is important to realise that food and drinks are not merely rewards, but are also a ritual for formalising the status of the performing group, as well as the interdependence between the royal leadership, and the subjects. The content analysis, thematic analysis, as well as the Discourse Analysis of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics follows below:

Salani No Dzula - Are You Going to Stay (with Your Abusive Father)?

The intoner of this song is a woman who has stayed in an abusive marriage for far too long. She has had enough of her husband’s abuse, and has reached a stage where she feels it is time to leave. Even though she has decided to leave her abusive husband, she is concerned about leaving her children behind with their abusive father. The lyrics are an indirect appeal to her children, and a way of coaxing them to depart with her, as they might want to stay with their father, who might abuse them too. The woman laments the fact that when she left her home on the day of her marriage, she crossed the flooded Mutale River, by implication she risked her life, hence crossing the river again on a homeward-bound journey, will be a daunting exercise. *Vhavenda* women in these performing groups, like in other African culture, regard marriage as a lifelong commitment, and going back home signalizes disgrace and failure. Worst of all, the intoner laments the fact that she has no one to go back to at home, as her mother and aunt, people who would give her support, have died. The names that she has given to her children are all suggestive of her suffering and pain that she experienced as an abused wife. The names reverberate her suffering in an abusive marriage.

The intoner also concedes that hers is not a unique situation, as many other women find themselves in similar abusive relationships. The lyrics also highlight problems that come with having daughters, instead of sons. Girls might grow up, get married and find themselves in abusive marriages. These include having illegitimate children, being uncooperative with household chores and generally being disrespectful to parents.

The intoner of this song has named one of her children *Tshililo*, and another one *Matamba*. *Tshililo* implies weeping, distress, suffering, all of which are suggestive of the agony and suffering she undergoes in her abusive marriage. *Matamba* means insults, and has connotations of ‘name calling’. This is suggestive of the fact that her husband does not only abuse her physically, but also verbally. Another one of her children is named *Thabelo*, which implies pleading, praying, begging for mercy. This name has connotations of situations which result in this woman, and many others in similar situations, being at the mercy of abusive men. The Discourse Analysis of these lyrics implies that the intoner has reported her abuse to the police so many times that her frequent trips to the police station make her feel as though she has become one of the employees at the police station, as depicted by ‘*ushumela mapholisani*’.

Table 10: *Salani no Dzula*

| Word/ Phrase | Meaning | Frequency | Theme |
|--|---|-----------|-----------------------|
| Tshililo | Cry for help; cry as one suffers from physical abuse, in order to be rescued from her abusive marriage | 3 | Abuse |
| Iyowee! | Oh dear me! Call for help. It is an echo utterance which brings about effect in the message conveyed by the song | 28 | Abuse |
| Ni a sala naa? | Are you (children) staying with your abusive father? She is indirectly making an appeal to her children to join her as she goes back home | 33 | Abuse and desperation |
| A tshi vhona zwiita vhanwe/ Ni tshi vhona zwiitavhanwe | Most women experience abuse; they believe that their daughters, and every girl-child, is bound to experience abuse too, when they get married | 4 | |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---------|
| Ndo wela Mutale wo dala | A desperate woman having to go through even more difficult situations | 2 | Despair |
|----------------------------|---|---|---------|

In the content analysis above there are a high number of phrases whose frequencies confirm that the lyrics in the song are against physical abuse, which according to the lyrics, features highly in marriages. These lyrics are a cry for help, and paint a grim picture of the life that most women go through. According to the lyrics, every woman is faced with this kind of life, as depicted by the phrases *Musidzana u lidza nzhivha*, and *Musidzana u lisa mbilu*. The Discourse Analysis of both these phrases imply that being a woman, or belonging to the female species, is heartbreaking, as one is destined for abuse in marriage, and a miserable life. These lyrics imply that there is no way that a woman can escape this kind of life. Not only do women experience power abuse, they also experience physical abuse, meted out by men. The last line in this song reinforces the heart-break, as reflected in *Haa ni a sala naa? Iyowee ni a sala naa?* According to the Discourse Analysis of these lyrics, they depict a breaking-point, hopelessness, and inevitably eternal gloom, which emanate not only from the power abuse by men, but also the physical abuse that puts them and their children, at the mercy of the abusive husbands.

***Mutondi* – Generous and kind woman**

In this song the intoner has created lyrics about a generous and kind married woman, who takes care of her in-laws, but to no avail. She is despised despite her generosity. The rhetorical questions in these lyrics that she asks herself are suggestive of the dilemma in which the woman finds herself. This is because of the ungratefulness of the people around her. She has tried everything in her power to please them, but instead the situation has worsened. In her effort to fulfil her marital obligations to her in-laws, the situation has not improved. She has polished their shoes, ironed their clothes, cleaned and decorated the house with cow-dung, and numerous other favours, to no avail.

These lyrics express the tendency of in-laws, including *Vhavenda* in-laws, who simply expect their daughters-in-law to work hard in their marriage, in order to satisfy the needs of the in-laws, while the latter do not show any appreciation of their daughter-in-laws efforts, and

generosity. This tendency is a form of abuse that women in the villages experience when they join the family that they are married into, particularly in extended families whereby, if their husbands are migrant labourers, they usually stay with their parents-in-law, and other members of the extended family, whom they take care of. The table below outlines the frequencies of the content analysis, which illustrates the words in the lyrics, which demonstrate the desperation that these women experience because of the ungratefulness of their in-laws.

Table 11: *Mutondi –Generous and selfless woman*

| Word /Phrase | Meaning | Frequencies | Themes |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------|--|
| Ahee | Calling to everyone who may want to pay attention and be sympathetic to her plight. | 7 | Desperation experienced by women in marriage. |
| Mutondi | This generous woman does everything in her power to be kind and caring to her in-laws, but they do not appreciate her efforts, however hard she tries to make them feel effectuated. | 7 | Married women are expected to work selflessly. |
| Ndi nga vha tonda nga mini? | What should I do to prove my generosity? Rhetorical question with no answers. | 2 | Ungratefulness of in-laws. |
| Zwi sokou fana | Whatever the woman does, does not impress the in-laws, it does not make any difference, as reflected in <i>Zwi sokou fana</i> . | 4 | Ungratefulness demonstrated by the in-laws. |

The Discourse Analysis of the rhetorical question ‘*Ndi nga vha tonda ngani?*’ reinforces the fact that efforts of generosity and selflessness expressed by the woman in this song, are met with ungratefulness and contempt. The intoner’s own response to the rhetorical question, *Zwi sokou fana*, translated ‘it makes no difference’, which is suggestive of *Mutondi*’s futility of her generosity and selflessness, further reinforces her in-laws’ ungratefulness and contempt. This response also echoes her hopelessness.

Munyadziwa - The Downtrodden /Subjugated

Munyadziwa is a name given to a subjugated woman, one who is looked down upon by everyone. The intoner cautions *Munyadziwa* against immoral behaviour. The lyrics also warn *Munyadziwa* not to sleep around, as she will lose her virginity, and fall pregnant. The intoner’s tone is earnest as these are real life issues that she cautions *Munyadziwa* about. She further cautions her against behaving like an animal, which does not have a fixed sexual

partner. The intoner has used the following phrases ‘*Ni vho nga phukha hone ni muthu. Inwi a ni tsha khetha, Ni dongola dzothe dzothe*’, which may imply that *Munyadziwa* has several sexual partners. The double-intender in these lyrics could also be suggestive of the fact that *Munyadziwa* is being sexually taken advantage of by different men, who abuse her sexually. These lyrics also counsel young women, of marriageable age against the danger of falling into the trap of allowing men who may take advantage of them, use them sexually, and not marry them.

The Discourse Analysis of the rhetorical questions express the frustration about issues of sexual abuse meted out by men, as a way of exerting power over women. This view is expressed in *Inwi a ni tsha khetha*, (you no longer exercise your choice of men). *Munyadziwa*’s name is suggestive of one who is taken advantage of, and would therefore be allowed no power to exercise her choice of men, who instead of treating her with respect, take advantage of her. The intoner sounds helpless, and does not seem to know what to do to change *Munyadziwa*’s situation. The Discourse Analysis of *Ni vho nga phukha hone ni muthu*, which translates, you have animal characteristics (of not having a fixed sexual partner), reinforces the intoner’s helplessness, as well as the view that it is as if *Munyadziwa*’s is an inevitable situation, that most women go through, that is, being taken advantage of by men.

Munyadziwa represents women who are treated with disrespect by abusive men. They are subjugated and accused of having inherited the biblical Eve’s curse. To those who subscribe to the story of the biblical Eve, who was cursed in the Garden of Eden treat women with contempt, and in these men’s eyes, all women perpetuate Eve’s curse.

Ndi yo Lala Fhi? – (A woman asking) Where will I Sleep Tonight?

The lyrics are about a woman who is chased out of the house by her husband, late at night. She finds herself in a predicament as she has no place to sleep, and she does not have anything to keep her warm. Her only option is a pit or a hole in the ground, to sleep in for the night. The lyrics in this song are suggestive of the hardship and trauma experienced by women in abusive marriages and relationships. In these circumstances the woman, and other women in

similar situations, are not only exposed to the harsh weather conditions of the night, but are also exposed to even more traumatic experiences, where they could be raped and even killed by thugs, who prowl the neighbourhood at night. These lyrics echo the situation in which African women, and *Vhavenda* women in particular, are made to believe that marriage is for life, as advocated by *Vhavenda* culture. The harsh reality is that this woman has to go back home, and start life afresh, as a disgraced woman, who has been sent away by her husband.

The Discourse Analysis of the rhetorical questions *Ndi yo lalafhi? Ndi yo fukani wee?* translated, *Where will I sleep? What will I cover myself with* (in the cold night)? is suggestive of the desperation that women in abusive marriages and relationships experience, due to power and culture abuse. The repetition of *Zwi a ndina*, and of the echoe word *wee* further reinforce the woman's desperation.

Vhamusanda Vha Ri Vusa Nga Matsheloni –The Chief Wakes Us Up Early in The Morning

The lyrics in this song are directed at the royal leadership, as the protest song is performed in order to draw the royal leadership's attention to the fact that expecting his female subjects to wake up very early in the morning to perform chores at the royal household, on behalf of the royal wives is abusive. The theme of these lyrics is 'Abuse of subjects by royalty.' Other implications of these lyrics are that the royal leader himself might not be aware of the fact that the women in his village are being exploited by the royal wives, and the purpose of these lyrics, therefore is to draw his attention to their plight. The lyrics in this song are proof that in *Tshivenda* culture, even royal leadership is not immune from reproach by their subjects.

Mbilu Ndi Mbili Mazwale Wanga – I am Undecided (mother-in-law)

This song is sung by a woman who has experienced a great deal of abuse that she is at the 'cross roads', and she is undecided as to whether to leave her marriage or not. The lyrics are in a form of a call and response, going on in her mind. It is as though she is appealing to her mother-in-law to help her decide whether to stay on in her marriage, or to go back home to

her parents. Her indecision results from the stoicism that *Vhavenda* women are renowned for; staying even though the circumstances in their marriage are difficult.

For the intoner in this song and other women in similar situations, as indicated in earlier sections of this chapter, *Vhavenda* women are expected to marry for life, hence, her ‘two hearts’, as expressed in *mbilu ndi mbili*, which is suggestive of her indecision.

The table below illustrates the play of words that occurs in the woman’s mind, as she struggles to decide whether to leave her marriage, or whether to stay. The woman who formulated these lyrics is in an advantageous situation, unlike in other abusive situations, where the women have no support from their in-laws. In this situation the woman has a supportive mother-in-law; hence she calls on her to help her make a decision. The conclusion that the intoner comes to is that a woman has to have a strong heart, in order to be able to endure marital challenges. These are the principles that are deeply entrenched in *Vhavenda* women from an early age. The intoner in this song refers to her mother-in-law, as ‘my mother-in-law’, *mazwale wanga*, and not simply mother-in-law. This endearing reference, reinforced by the repetition of *wanga*, further demonstrates the close affinity that she has with her mother-in-law.

Table 12: *Mbilu ndi mbili mazwale wanga*

| Phrase /Word | Meaning | Frequency |
|---------------|---|-----------|
| Mbilu | She has two hearts, meaning two minds, which implies that she finds it difficult to decide whether to leave, or stay. This is a belief by <i>Vhavenda</i> people, like people in other cultures, that matters of love are decided from the heart. | 4 |
| Mbili | <i>Mbili</i> refers to the fact that her heart is divided into two, which results in her indecision. | 4 |
| Mazwale wanga | <i>Mazwale</i> is mother-in-law, and <i>wanga</i> is my, which shows that she adores her. The repetition of <i>mazwale wanga</i> is suggestive of the fact that her mother-in-law is her support structure, as well as the fact that they have a strong bond. | 3 |

Ndi a Givha-Givha Na Vhafunzi

In the 80s and the early 90s the people in the former Republic of Venda were plagued by ritual murders. They protested against this ghastly practice, to no avail. When the apartheid policies of separate development, and other policies which separated the South African people according to their ethnic groups, were dismantled, the Republic of Venda reverted to

South Africa. Therefore, the citizens of the former republic believed that the issue of ritual murders would be done away with under the new democratic government. In 1994 South Africa celebrated its political revolution, and when South Africans achieved political freedom and democracy, certain social maladies and crimes, including ritual murders reared their heads, and they have not been dealt with even in the new dispensation. This factor is registered in the *malende* song *Ndi a givha-givha, Na vhafunzi vha do givha-givha*.

Malende performing women formulated these lyrics in order to express their renewed fears for ritual murders, to conscientise society, as well as to galvanise the government, particularly the police, about these ghastly deeds which plagued them during the 80s and early 90s. They are still practiced, notwithstanding the fact that Venda is now part of democratic South Africa, whose constitution and policies are against these gruesome killings and violation of human rights. Even though the performers do not refer to the perpetrators by name due to fear of being victims of the ghastly ritual murders, *malende* performers formulate lyrics by using riddles and innuendos, to refer to the ritual murders' ghastly deeds.

***Zhangantavhila* - delinquent and good-for-nothing child**

One of the policies which came with democracy in South Africa is the introduction of children's rights. Like other policies introduced during the new dispensation, the manner in which it was introduced to the communities leaves much to be desired. It is not only the illiterate and rural communities that are flummoxed, but this policy, which was misinterpreted by both its architects and its proponents, does not only cause havoc among the youth in South African communities, but has wrecked the discipline and the order that existed before democracy, in families, schools, as well as communities. Consequently, drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, criminal activities and immoral behaviour among the youth have reached alarming proportions. The values, culture and morality of society have been dismantled into what young people simply regard as 'rights'. The relationship between parents and their children has irretrievably been damaged, and there are no signs of adequate government intervention.

It is against this backdrop that the lyrics in a *malende* song titled *Zhangantavhila* express the frustration that women experience while raising children by themselves in the absence of their fathers, who are absent migrant labourers and seldom come home. Women who are left alone with their children find it difficult to instill discipline on children who have a misconception of ‘rights’, and mistake it for a ‘do as you please’. Applying corrective measures may land the parents in jail, after having been charged for child abuse. The indigenous music performers have coined the lyrics (See Appendix XII) to express their disgust at the fact that their children are out of control, and looking at the status quo, their future is already doomed. Therefore, *malende* performers have composed the lyrics of a song they have titled *Zhangantavhila* (a worthless and good-for-nothing individual), to express their disgust at how recklessly their children live their lives, in the name of exercising their rights. Due to the fact that young people have been made to believe that they have rights, they have taken control over every aspect of their lives, except the financial part, which they expect their parents to satisfy without question.

These children do not need their parents’ permission to undergo what is regarded as ‘legal’ abortion, even those of school-going age. Therefore due to ignorance, they drop out of school, abuse drugs and alcohol in the name of reclaiming their rights. When children’s rights were introduced, parents and their children were not informed that rights go with responsibilities. According to the lyrics, *Zhangantavhila*, a very spoilt, delinquent young girl, of school-going age who will not perform any of the house chores assigned to her. If her boyfriend summons her through a wolf-whistle while she is still cooking or performing her chores, she simply drops everything, and goes after him. When her parents admonish her for her wayward behaviour, she sulks and may drop whatever chores she is doing, and go to bed. Instead of doing her school homework, or studying, the girl goes to bed; hence her performance at school is dismal, and disgraceful. Consequently, not only does she fail her examinations at the end of the year, but she also falls pregnant. It is evident that with these ‘rights’ that the children have, they have also lost their ambitions and will to study, and even acquire careers. The theme of this song is that government took decisions, and introduced policies, without consulting the people it claims to represent, particularly rural communities, who have their own unique ways of doing things.

Zhangantavhila refers to something that is repulsive that people cannot find suitable words to describe it, because of the extent of its repulsiveness. This is suggested by the use of *lone* (it), to refer to this child in disparaging terms. It is a name of an imaginary creature that the intoner has created to express the performers' disgust, and this is suggestive of the resultant disgust. Creating imaginary names to refer to controversial issues, or unscrupulous people, is a skill that the performers acquire through their years of performing. Through their creativity and skilful play of words, they successfully coin pertinent names for the unscrupulous characters.

Mmbwa Yanga Tshamato – My dog Tshamato

Among Vhavenda women, indigenous protest performers employ messages which are couched in indirect proverbial terms to be able to publicly convey issues that may be unpalatable to the ear. In some situations, they use this strategy to avoid being accused of spreading false rumours, or even making false accusations. This could be because they want to avoid confrontation, being taken to task, or answering questions the response to which might incriminate them about controversial issues. The *malende* song, which could be regarded as mundane, whose literal translation is 'my dog *Tshamato* was killed for having eaten *magerere*, a locust delicacy'. The lyrics actually employ an innuendo to refer to a seriously immoral occurrence that may have befallen a respectable male member of the community, who may have been caught in a compromising position, with somebody's wife. The connotations of 'dog' in these lyrics refer to someone with loose morals. It is important to note that in *Tshivenda* culture, equating someone to a dog is the worst kind of insult, as this is suggestive of the fact that they would have committed extreme transgression.

Mahaya Ashu Ro Vha Ro Dzula – We Lived Peacefully

Through *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics, performers are able to express some form of nostalgia, and remember their dearly departed fore-bearers, or their old departed traditional leaders, who had the welfare of their subjects at heart. The lyrics protest against the current dispensation, which promised them a better life for all, change and transformation, yet they live in abject poverty. The lyrics of the song *Mahaya ashu ro vha ro dzula* express the nostalgia for a peaceful life, a life of abundance they had lived before democracy. When

malende performers performed this song during the apartheid era, it was in protest against forced removals. The message was that, before they were forcefully removed from their villages, before colonialism, and Western culture invaded their shores and culture, life was good. The lyrics of this three-lined song are repeated several times, and the intoners introduce new lyrics, and add echo utterances, such as ‘*ahee*’, ‘*yowee*’, ‘*wee*’, ‘*mmawee*’, etc. for emphasis. The accompanying singers will repeat the lyrics in somber tones, which is suggestive of the nostalgia and the anguish they experience in their current life, which is plagued by poverty, violence, sickness, HIV/AIDS, deaths, moral decadence, as well as all negative experiences which come with the new life of political instability.

The same lyrics could also imply that in their home of birth, the women had a peaceful and affluent life, lived comfortably, unlike in their marriage. By implication, the lyrics could also express a longing for home by a woman who left her home and joined her husband at her marital household, who is no longer happy in her marriage, and longs to go back to her parents’ home. In contrast, it could also be sung by a woman, who because of marital problems has gone back home, and is now longing to go back to her marital home. Most importantly, the lyrics express nostalgia for the good old times. This is appropriately captured by a Tshivenda proverb *Ngwana wa lila, wa shaya wa lila*. Literally translated the proverb implies that, in human nature, there are things in life about which people will complain if they lack them, and they will still complain and show dissatisfaction, if they have them. This view reinforces the contention that African women and *Vhavenda* women in particular, unlike Western feminists and separatist feminists, are pro-marriage.

Kha Vha Vha fare - arrest the criminals

These lyrics are reverberations of the 80s and early 90s songs which used to be sung to warn criminals against criminal activities. In those days the mighty hand of the law left no stone unturned, if a criminal acts were committed. In those days, when Advocate Ailwei Mushavhanamadi used to be police spokesperson, who announced investigations on the local *Phalaphala* radio, arrests of criminals were effected without delay, and communities had confidence in the police. Hence, the lyrics are suggestive of the fact that the relations between the communities and the police were strong, as communities could directly communicate

with the police. This is suggested by *Ri amba na Vho-Mushavhanamadi, kha vha vha fare havha vhanna*, loosely translated, we appeal to you Mr Mushavhanamadi to arrest these male criminals. The criminals are men, as suggested by the word *vhanna* (men), and the lyrics urge Mushavhanamadi to arrest them because they rape women; they shoot when confronted; they commit ritual murders, and worst of all, they are a scourge of the communities.

After twenty-years of democracy, these lyrics have resurfaced emphatically because crime, including violence, has reached alarming proportions. The following reflects the content analysis of the *malende* song *Kha vha vha fare*, and demonstrates the anguish, anger, militancy, and the powerful resolve expressed by the women who performed these *malende* protest lyrics.

Table 13: *Kha Vha Vha Fare* – Arrest the Criminals

| Word /Phrase | Meaning | Frequencies | Theme |
|---------------------------|---|-------------|--|
| <i>Yowee</i> | A cry for help, and an appeal to the police service to do something about the plight of the women who are victims of crime. It is an echo utterance that communicates to whoever will be listening that the matter requires urgent attention. | 5 | Appeal to the police to do something bout crime and violence against women |
| <i>Ahee</i> | Echo utterance that reinforce the message of the song, as well as enhance the performance | 8 | Singing against crime and violence against women |
| <i>Vha a reipa</i> | Rape is one of the crimes through which women are violated. Most protest songs performed are against rape. | 2 | Protest against rape and sexual violence |
| <i>Vha a viya</i> | These criminal are also involved in ritual killings. They have declared a reign of terror on the women. | 2 | Protest against ritual murders |
| <i>Kha vha vha valele</i> | They should be locked up as they have terrorized women in the communities. Locking them up will ensure that women are safe, as they serve their sentences. | 3 | Protest against gendered violence |
| <i>Kha vha vha fare</i> | The criminals should be arrested. This call has intensified with the surge of crime in the ‘new South Africa’, and no arrest made for the crimes committed. There is anger and frustration against criminals. In the current dispensation, there is anger and frustration, due to the fact that nowadays criminals are treated with kid-gloves. | 9 | Protest against gendered violence |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|
| <i>Vha a ri shonisa</i> | There is moral decadence within communities which results from all the ghastly happenings that the women experience and they wish to uphold high moral standards. | 2 | Protest against gendered violence and moral decay |
| <i>Ri tshi ri nga afha</i> | The women compose songs about crime that knows no boundary. The three groups which participated in the study, and those that did not participate, all coin lyrics about crime. The police are at a loss about what to do to curb crime. | 3 | Protest against the high rate of crime, and the fact that it is widespread |
| <i>Ri tshi amba</i> | The criminals have taken over these communities. The intoner says that woe unto those that complain, or report the crimes, as the criminal activities will be intensified. | 2 | Protest against crime and the ruthlessness of criminals |

AIDS i a Vhulaha – AIDS Kills

In the 80s and 90s HIV/AIDS was a taboo subject, to which people referred in hushed tones. The death of people from HIV/AIDS related diseases was attributed to witchcraft. In more recent years, the subject of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest performances in Vhembe are not only about political and social issues, such as different forms of gendered violence, crime, poverty, corruption and lack of service delivery by the democratic government, but also about HIV/AIDS. The performers compose lyrics to teach and caution communities about the impact of HIV/AIDS. The *tshigombela* lyrics *AIDS i a vhulaha* (See APPENDIX XII), are examples of such compositions. Even though there were variations in the lyrics performed by the three groups, they had a similar message, which was about educating communities about HIV/AIDS, and how to avoid it. The lyrics in current *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics no longer ridicule people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, but have become more sympathetic and considerate. The following table presents the content analysis demonstrating the horrendous fear that communities and the *malende* and *tshigombela* performers in particular, express in the *AIDS i a Vhulaha*. The moral of the lyrics is to educate young girls who may contract HIV through rape by men who ply them with liquor until they are uncontrollably drunk, in order to take advantage of them.

Table 14: *AIDS i a vhulaha*

| Word/Phrase | Meaning | Frequencies | Theme |
|--------------------|--|-------------|---|
| AIDS | In the nine-lined song, the word AIDS has been repeated nine (9) times to express the fear that the performers have for HIV/AIDS. Each and every line in these lyrics is punctuated by the word AIDS, and in one line it appears twice. This is an indication that the AIDS scare is high. The lyrics are a protest against <i>vha mutakalo</i> government's Department of Health and Thabo Mbeki, for not doing what it promises to do in its fight against HIV/AIDS. The performers still refer to his name, whenever they coin new lyrics about HIV/AIDS because when he was still President of South Africa he denied that HIV leads to AIDS. He was also skeptical of the effects of the Anti-retroviral research in those years. | 9 | Protest against the men who subscribe to the myth that having sex with infants as well as young children who go to shebeens and end up drunk, and being raped by HIV positive men cures HIV/AIDS, who believe that this ritual will cure them of HIV. |
| <i>I a vhulaha</i> | The resonant message is that HIV/AIDS kills, and it appears fifteen times in an eight-lined song. The repetition of this phrase is the message that the lyrics intended to convey, which is a call to avoid reckless sexual activities. | 15 | Protest against the irresponsible attitude of people who spread false information about cures for HIV. |
| <i>Wee</i> | It is one of the echo utterances that the performers use to reinforce their message. Due to the fact that these | 8 | People should heed the message |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------------|
| | lyrics are about a daunting subject, <i>wee</i> is employed to emphasise repercussions of not heeding the performers' advice. | | conveyed by the lyrics. |
|--|---|--|-------------------------|

The significance of these lyrics is that HIV/AIDS kills, irrespective of people's social and financial standing or age. The song singles out girls, in particular, as the ones who are in serious danger, hence these views are reinforced by the use of the words *I a vhulaha*, and *ndi tshivhulahi*, (it is a killer). The lyrics caution people against contracting HIV, as well mothers to ensure that their children are not raped by men who believe that having sex with an infant or a virgin will cure them of HIV. The protesters appeal to former President Thabo Mbeki, who was still in office at the time these lyrics were coined, and the Department of Health to do something about the plight of people dying of HIV/AIDS related diseases.

Vha mmbulahiselani nga muhadzinga? – Why do you want to have me killed by a woman who is in a relationship with my husband?

These *malende* protest lyrics (See Appendix XII) are about a woman lamenting the agony experienced by all women whose husbands have taken a new wife, '*muhadzinga*', or have acquired a concubine, referred to in disparaging terms, as '*mugwegwede*'. In the lyrics the protest singers allude to the fact that once a man acquires a new wife, woman, or wives, the first wife may die of jealousy or a broken heart. According to the lyrics, the jealousy and the heart-break results from the fact that the man who has taken a new wife will end up showering his new-found with more love and gifts. The song voices the frustrations experienced by women in polygamous marriages, and those whose husbands are involved in multiple relationships outside their marriages. The employment of disparaging terms, such as *mugwegwede* and *mufarekano*, to refer to the other woman, are suggestive of the abhorrence that the protest lyrics reflect on the issue of polygamous relationships. The Discourse Analysis of the lyrics of this song is suggestive of the anger that the intoner expresses, which is further reinforced by the lyrics in the last line *Vha vho toda u sala vha tshi gonya mbete*, which literally means they want to get into bed once I am gone, by implication, they want to have sex. The intoner is at issue with the power game played by men by pitting them against each other. It is important to note that issues of extra-marital affairs are not endorsed in

Tshivenda culture. The ideal situation is for a man to marry another wife, instead of having an extra-marital relationship.

***Vha na vhanna vhavho* – Women who have husbands/ married women**

The lyrics of this protest song are also about rivalry among co-wives, concubines in polygamous relationships and mistresses. This song, and other similar ones, may be dismissed as dumb, and that they are performed by ‘slow witted women’, and women who do not have anything better to do with their lives. However, people who apply their minds are able to decipher some of the veiled protest, ridicule, and sarcasm in the songs. The intoner or the woman who may have coined these lyrics could be unmarried, divorced or single, not by choice, and envies other women in the company of their spouses or boyfriends. Her observation is that they despise her because she is not in a relationship with the opposite sex, and she feels offended by their interaction with their spouses and boyfriends, which she maintains is arrogant and condescending, and is intended to spite her, and all other women who are in her situation. This kind of attitude reinforces the findings that the participants in this study do not subscribe to the separatist feminist ideologies, as well as Western feminists, who advocate separate spaces for women and men, or women not having anything to do with men. Due to the fact that the women who coined these lyrics have issues that they protest against, they are feminists who subscribe to other feminisms, which may be a combination of Cultural feminism and Womanism, and not Western feminism.

***Pfunzo* - education**

The lyrics of the song titled *Pfunzo* (education) advocate the value of education, as well as the fact that education is the first asset that young people should strive for, and take advantage of the fact that once they have acquired it, nobody will take it away from them. The intoner who composed the lyrics is perplexed by the lack of enthusiasm shown by black youth in democratic South Africa, who do not take advantage of all the incredible educational opportunities, wide career choices, and wide range of institutions of learning open to them. They choose to settle for less, and drop out of school in a democratic South Africa which promises better opportunities for all. The lyrics protest against young girls who choose to get married, instead of getting an education, as well as parents who allow their children to drop

out of school. The theme of this song is that education should come first, above everything else; its significance is reinforced by the repetition of the word *pfunzo*, (education) fourteen (14) times in a ten-lined verse.

Matakadza-Mbilu, Ndi Nwana – Heart-felt joy results from having a baby

Due to the fact that *Vhavenda* have extended families, it is a common phenomenon for the in-laws to be involved in their son's family matters. This involvement is usually from the husband's side. Ironically, it is mostly the mothers-in-law who have issues against their daughters-in-law. A case in point is that what exacerbates this antagonism, is particularly where the daughters-in-law remain childless, or if they do not bear the heir that the family-in-law expects them to produce.

These *malende* lyrics attest to the fact that some sections of the African communities and in this case *Vhavenda* men in particular, believed that all the problems resulting in childlessness emanated from women. By implication, even though in African culture there are remedies that boost men's virility and/or fertility, when a woman fails to fall pregnant, the families did not believe that men, too, could be responsible for the delay or the failure. Therefore, women tortured themselves, as well as others who were childless, believing that the responsibility of procreation remained with them only, disregarding that pregnancy result from a joint effort, by the female and the male. Furthermore, there is a misconception that all challenges and unsuccessful marriages, including the inability to conceive a baby, lie squarely with the woman. It is ironic that there is a section of women which still subscribes to these claims, and blame childlessness on women, and coin protest lyrics such as *Matakadza-mbilu ndi nwana*, and other similar ones. For the purpose of analysis in this study, whose aim is to discern whether *Vhavenda* women are 'feministically' inclined, the fact that they are pro-children, as portrayed in the lyrics of *Matakadza-mbilu ndi nwana*, implies that they subscribe to other feminisms, namely cultural feminism, Motherism and Womanism, and not Western feminism, which are anti-child, and anti-male and female marriages.

Vhanwe rho malwa nga vhazwala – Some women are married to their cousins

The lyrics of this song illustrate that women do not only protest against physical, emotional, financial and other forms of abuse, that women experience, but also against lack of fulfilment

in their relationships. The intoner of these lyrics is a married woman who is protesting against abusive treatment meted out towards her, by her husband and mother-in-laws. Through her lyrics, she contends that they are abusive towards her because she is not related to her mother-in-law. According to *Tshivenda* culture, a man can get married to his maternal uncle's daughter, that is, his mother's niece. In this particular case, the intoner could be in a polygamous marriage in which one of the co-wives is her husband's cousin who is not only treated well by their husband, but is also not abused in the same way as the intoner of this song. Her interpretation of her ordeal is that she does not stand a chance of having a favourable relationship with her husband and mother-in-law, because she is not related to them by blood. The repetition of these lyrics has a melancholic effect on the audience, which results in the audience being sympathetic to the intoner's plight.

5.7 LINGUISTIC DEVICES

Expressive sounds, such as non-verbal devices which communicate emphases, sighs, hesitations, changes on tone, explosive sounds or special interjections, and vocal grunts, were employed in this study in order to reinforce the innuendo, the implications of the lyrics, as well as the significance of performances. These linguistic devices served the purpose of expressing discerned and acknowledged emotional display during performances. The fact that the *tshigombela* and *malende* audiences are mostly Tshivenda speakers, not only enabled them to distinguish between sounds that are typically used in their language 'to express different emotions, such as joy, sadness, surprise, shock, irritation, dismissiveness, and anger', which the performers and the audience were able to experience at different times during performances, but they were also able to comprehend and respond accordingly. Their response was in the form of hand-clapping to enhance the performance, applauding the performers, as well as through ululation. It is important to note that ululation is an African, and *Tshivenda* linguistic device, which both the performers and the audience employ to enhance the performance, as well as to show appreciation of the performance.

Other linguistic devices identified during the performance of the protest lyrics were recitation of the clan - poetry of particularly the outstanding performers. Echo utterances such as *wee*,

yowee, ahee, haee, ihii, etc., were also employed in the performances, not only for the purpose of embellishing the performances, but also to exhibit the required or intended emotional repercussions for the audience to process. Frequently repeated words, particularly those that captured the quintessence of the theme, and sounds, tinged with humour were employed by the performers. These linguistic devices were dealt with in earlier sections of this chapter. Some songs were actually dramatized, and the audiences were taken along on the journey that enabled them to appreciate the performance, as well as the lyrical interpretation.

5.8 CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING

It is important to note that the purpose of this study was not only to collect data, but also to empower women, by means of employing consciousness-raising strategies. On the numerous occasions that the researcher interacted with the performing groups, the groups also underwent empowerment and consciousness-raising sessions, in the form of information sharing, elucidation of government policy, as well as alleviating fears the participants have on health issues.

The consciousness concerning how individual women who participated in the study underwent change empowered them. Such consciousness stimulated them to embark on a path of personal freedom, even if it initially existed primarily in their own minds. Due to the fact that they went through the consciousness-raising process in groups, it is believed that they are going to change the world around them. At the end of the focus group sessions, the participants reported that they had acquired knowledge and consciousness, which will enable them to empower other women in their communities through songs.

Britton (2006:147) professes that consciousness-raising seeks to provide services including empowerment programmes, face-to-face and group counseling, shelter and intervention services, as well as legal assistance. The researcher has established a working relationship with the participants of this study, and will therefore ensure that the services referred to above, are made available to them.

5.9 LIMITATIONS

There are limitations to every study, and this one is no exception. There is no research on *tshigombela* and *malende*, as protest lyrics, but very limited research only on the two Tshivenda musical genres. Thus, for the purpose of literature review, this study relied on protest music of other genres. It is important to realise that there were also no previous studies of content analysis of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics. Thus, the study employed content analysis of lyrics of other genres, and in other languages. Some of the issues that women raised in the songs are sensitive and require immediate attention. Therefore, giving attention to these discussions, side-tracked the issues that the study was dealing with. Furthermore, concepts like feminism even though explained in *Tshivenda* were alien, and incomprehensible to the research participants' world. During focus group interviews, the divergent conception of the democratic South Africa posed a challenge as certain issues that the elderly section of the participants subscribe, to contradict the Bill of Right and the constitution. The difference in experience, age as well as educational levels, also posed a challenge as the elderly participants are not capable of comprehending equality of men and women. Thus, in feminist research inability of a section of the research participants to comprehend equality between women and men, affected the discussion, particularly during the focus group interviews.

The fact that the study relied only on women's views on issues that affected women, and men were not given a platform for their own empowerment and consciousness-raising, implies that the men's abusive tendencies reported by women during interviews and focus group discussions, are likely be perpetuated.

This study would have been able to reveal /expose more women issues by individual participant through the use of questionnaires. But this was not possible, due to the illiteracy of most of the research participants.

5.10 CONCLUSION

The focus of this chapter was the presentation of data, data analysis, as well as the discussion of the different perspectives that had emerged during then data collection process of the study through observation, interviews and focus group interviews. The lyrics of the protest songs performed by *tshigombela* and *malende* performers were also analysed. In light of the fact that the study was geared towards capturing data which presented an authentic reflection of women's issues, peculiar to the women in Vhembe District, in relation to *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics, participant observation was done in the first phase of the study, as well as throughout the data collection process. Throughout these different stages, themes emerged which were employed in the data gathering phase, as well as the data analysis process. Three participants, who are group leaders of the participating groups, were interviewed, and more themes emerged, as was the case during the focus group interviews. Content analysis of the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics was done. Thematic analyses started from participant observation, progressed to interviews of the three group leaders, and eventually proceeded through to the focus group interviews, as well as the content analysis of the *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics. The purpose of this analysis was to ensure that the aims, objectives, as well as research questions, of the study were accomplished. The frequency through which a particular theme occurred, was then taken as an indication of its relative importance. The interviews and the focus group discussions, which were audio and video recorded were transcribed and translated into English. This data was read and re-read in order to deduce themes which emerged from participants' view-point. During the data analysis process, other views, thoughts and beliefs emerged from the data, and these increased the number of themes which emerged in the first phase of the study. As the process of data analysis proceeded and unfolded, with the emergence of more sub-themes, related sub-themes were merged, to form larger themes.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this study, indigenous protest lyrics in women's musical performances with special reference to *Vhavenda* women in Vhembe, were explored, with particular reference to their feministic, as well as linguistic perspectives. For centuries music has been an instrument for profound political expression. Therefore, the potential for music to directly influence the political and social development of society has long been recognised by researchers, who assert that protest music unsettles even the most fundamental political and social conventions. Based on the findings presented in chapter four of this study, it is affirmed that the overall objectives of this study have been accomplished, and the research questions have been addressed. This study did not only interrogate the significance of indigenous protest music in a democratic South Africa, but it also explored the perspective in which *tshogombela* and *malende* protest lyrics articulate culture, gender roles and practices, women's issues, including feministic ideologies, particularly, among rural *Vhavenda* women who reside in Vhembe District Municipality.

The exploratory-explanatory qualitative research method was employed in the form of observation, interviews as well as focus group discussions. Therefore, the conclusions drawn from this study were discerned through participant observation, interviews of three group leaders, forty-eight (48) women from three groups who participated in the focus group discussions, four (4) interviewees who were informants in this study. In addition, conclusions were drawn from the following: literature review pertaining to protest lyrics perspective, feministic ideologies peculiar to African women who reside in rural communities, an analysis of the linguistic lyrical coinage, and related issues. The focus group discussions, reinforced with sessions designed to raise consciousness, led to a deeper understanding of how the system of government in South Africa operates so that illiterate people in the rural areas, and

women in particular, are empowered as regards their rights, and government policies on rural development. The conclusions of this study are summarized below.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

Women's relationships with one another

By referring to each other as 'my younger or older sister', 'co-wife', 'my daughter', 'daughter-in-law', and interchangeably, 'my mother-in-law', women have developed close relationships with one another, and they have accepted the roles that society has assigned them as women. This also implies that as Africans, they cannot afford to be individualistic or egotistic. They are expected to serve their, families, clans, and community.

***Vhavenda* and impromptu performance and lyrical coinage expertise**

The participants in this study confirmed that protest lyrics have always transcended any customary, political, or social boundaries, as can be witnessed in gatherings of whatever nature, *Vhavenda* are likely to spontaneously break into a *malende* song, without any cue or request, and those present will accompany the song, through drumming using drums, or even any household utensil that can produce a drumming sound when beaten, hand-clapping, ululating, and dancing will ensue. Those present are also skilled in discerning what the issues at hand are about, and they complement the songs with relevant lyrics, and echoe-utterances.

Lyrical themes

The lyrics composed by the performers are about real life issues, some of which are about the women's personal experiences, or from the media, such issues as the rape of infants, young girls, women and old women (age-old pensioners), which, according to the performers, were unheard of in their rural youth, but immoral and brutal acts perpetuated by people in big cities. These horrendous deeds which they thought only happened in far-away places now plague their villages and neighbourhoods.

Nobody is spared from protest lyrics

In Tshivenda culture, even royal leadership is not immune from reproach by their subjects. Vhavenda are not tolerant of any form of dictatorship. Hence, any royal leadership which behaves in any manner that contradicts the expectations of their position is not spared. They face the wrath of their subjects, as *tshigombela* and *malende* performers coin lyrics which are heavily laden with innuendos bearing connotations of the royal leader's unbecoming conduct.

The performers also compose lyrics protesting against young girls who deliberately fall pregnant in order to solicit financial support from the fathers of the children, who may be married men. They also sing against young girls who deliberately fall pregnant in order to access the government's child support grant.

Men who rape infants are not spared either, as pertinent lyrics to protest against their transgressions are formulated.

Women's values are not weaknesses

The researcher noticed that each and every gathering of the performers was accompanied by loud, animated discussions, interspersed with jokes and humorous laughter, sometimes resulting in tears for some participants while discussing which songs to perform and tweaking their lyrics to suit the occasion. The jokes and jibes revealed a tremendous amount of women's issues with which they grapple everyday life. Normal characteristics of women such as loud laughter or tears, may be regarded as a waste of time by those uninitiated into women's psyche, or be mistaken for emotional weakness.

It is important to note that what may be regarded as weaknesses are in fact values in feminine culture, which embrace humility, gentleness, meekness, peace, emotionality, a nurturing spirit and caring for others. These are virtues which are celebrated by Cultural feminism.

Lyrics are not openly confrontational

Even though the participants perform protest songs, the lyrics they coin are not openly confrontational because the performers believe that people do comprehend what they sing

about, even though they use proverbs and idioms loaded with innuendos. Moreover, women are customarily not aggressive and according to African custom, direct reference to potentially sensitive issues is considered to be impolite.

The harmony of the songs and the dance moves may sound and look entertaining, but most importantly, for the women, social and political issues are conveyed in the lyrics, which may be mistakenly perceived as trivial and unassuming. In fact, they are of utmost urgency and priority. While many types of hidden transcripts are expressed through ‘clandestine, private modes, which include jokes or gestures’, and the lyrics are employed to shrewdly slip the momentous message.

Exceptional lyrical improvisation and prowess not given cognizance

The musical prowess demonstrated by the intoners’ improvisatory creativity when they introduce new lyrics during performance, as well as the manner in which the accompanying singers spontaneously respond with their own lyrics to complement the newly created lyrics, illustrates the fact that the accompanying performers have developed an intelligent ear to be able to follow the intoners’ line of thinking. Regrettably, such exceptional talent usually goes unnoticed as indigenous music performance, performed by these rural women is not rated in the same category as western music, and other musical genres, which have become popular in the new South Africa. Consequently, the momentous messages in the protest lyrics are disregarded. Therefore, the crucial message, meant for the powers that be, is unheard and unheeded.

Linguistic devices and performance

By utilizing multiple linguistic devices the performers enhance and fortify the messages of their improvised lyrics on specific themes. Other strategies for emphasis of themes were repetition, as well as the use of echo utterances such as ‘*mawee!*’, ‘*ahee!*’, ‘*Yowee!*’, ‘*Ihii!*’, ‘*Nandi naa!*’, ‘*asizwo*’, etc. Such utterances were indicative of the accompanying participants’ perception of the intoner’s line of thought, hence they have become skilled in beefing-up the intoner’s choice of lyrics, with their own apt improvisation. The accompanying performers also reinforced the intoner’s lyrics by echoing, repeating these

lyrics, or even by uttering praise to the group, the intoner, or even the person who is the subject of the song. Other accompanying performers would ululate to endorse the intoner's choice of improvised lyrics, and the audience would join the ululating.

Expressive sounds, such as non-verbal devices, which communicate emphasis, sighs, hesitations, changes of tone, explosive sounds or special interjections, and vocal grunts, were detected from the recorded lyrics. These were employed in order to reinforce the innuendo, the implications of the lyrics, as well as to acknowledge the significance of the message which is cunningly expressed in the performances. These linguistic devices also served the purpose of expressing discerned and acknowledged emotional display during performances. The *tshigombela* and *malende* performers also coin lyrics using proverbs and idiomatic expressions to the effect that culture does not condone gendered violence.

Another linguistic strategy employed in lyrical creativity is the skill of coining pertinent names to suit the transgressions that people are guilty of, such as *Zhangantavhila*, which are suggestive of delinquent or immoral behaviour, perpetuated by a good-for-nothing character. Other names such as *Munyadziwa*, refer to the plight of women, who are victims of misconceptions such as 'women are a downtrodden species', and ought to be ill-treated, and be subjected to gendered violence. *Mutondi* implies one who is generous and good-natured.

Not only do intoners use double-entendre, which can be fathomed by those whose ear is capable of 'perceiving' the thought process the performers engage them in. The intoners also employ poetic licence, in the manner they combine words and phrases to coin decorous lyrics, which also enables the performer to be free to express opinions that would otherwise be in breach of other social conventions, pertaining to socio-political issues. The performers have perfected the use of poetic licence, through which they are capable of humourously chiding anyone, from royalty to commoner.

Other linguistic strategies are question and answer, call and response, and play on words, such as in the case of *mbilu mbili*, (a woman who has two hearts), and is pondering on whether she should quit or stay in an abusive marriage, and remains undecided.

Lyrics for women empowerment and education of communities

The participants in the study were able to realise that *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics could be performed in order to denigrate unacceptable behaviour, and then go on to empower and educate their communities about good and healthy lifestyles, civic, social and political education.

Misconception about *Tshivenda* culture being abusive

This study is a valuable contribution to ensuring that culture is not demonized by those who believe that everything that has to do with *Tshivenda* culture should be abusive, as abusive tendencies are perpetuated in the name of culture. *Tshivenda* has proverbs to the effect that abuse of women and gendered violence, in particular, is not tolerated, as it does not have any positive effect to the development of one's household. One such proverb is *Tshibonda a tshi fhati mudi* which is the subject of many a *tshigombela* and *malende* performances.

Aspects regarded as culture imposed by Colonialism, Christianity and apartheid

Through focus group discussions the research participants were able to discern that some abusive aspects regarded as African, and *Tshivenda* culture in particular, were in fact imposed on the African people by colonialism, Christianity and apartheid, particularly those practices which expect women to be excluded in decision-making, socially and politically. The Christian religion has numerous stipulations that reduce women to the other, or the one not to be trusted, and even the one to be excluded from important decisions. In actual fact colonialism imposed a combination of all the cultures of the European nations that landed on South Africa's shores. Christianity brought with it a combination of the cultures of the missionaries that represented the different denominations that came from Europe, as well as the Jewish culture. Furthermore, apartheid did not only impose its Dutch culture, but it also employed extremely brutal mechanisms in its mission to appropriate Africa. Such inhumane strategies, employed to disempower the black men, are the same strategies that they use against their womenfolk, and these are the strategies that the black men learnt from their apartheid masters.

Feministic perspective

Like the participants in this study, there are people, including women folk singers who do not identify themselves as feminists, but whose ideologies are feminist in nature, yet these women were excellent feminist role models throughout their careers. The women in this study do not even have an idea of what feminism is, even when it was explained to them in *Tshivenda*, which incidentally does not have an equivalent for the concept. The intention of the study was not to impose feminism on those performers, but to expose the fact that even though these woman do not subscribe to the Western feminist ideologies, their way of life has traces of other feminisms, namely Motherism, Womanism, Cultural feminism, Third-World feminism, and Stiwanism.

Vhavenda women are not anti-men

Like the Womanists, and the Motherists, the participants in this study do not subscribe to Western feminism, which advocates the view that women would be better off without men. They believe that men have a role to play in taking care of their families, building their clans and communities. The elderly participants maintain that if life were to go back to the way it was, then men would also strive towards taking their place within the families, clan and society, just like in the olden days, where men took their responsibilities seriously. The women maintain that women and men should work together towards building better communities, and apply the principles which prevailed when 'a child was raised by the community'. These contentions are similar to principles guided by Stiwanism.

The participants contend that even with so much violence against women, women and men need one another. The participants reported that they cannot imagine a world where women are all by themselves, without men. They maintain that it would be chaotic, in fact they did not foresee it happening. These sentiments concur with ideologies of Womanism, and African feminism, which take into account the African philosophy of life which uphold marriage as a social institution, as well as procreation and taking care of children.

Womanism thus makes it clear that the needs and the struggle of the Vhavenda women differ from those of European women, and women who subscribe to the western culture, and by recognising and accepting male participation in the struggle for emancipation it again differs from feminism in its methodology of ending female oppression. It is therefore unquestionable

that Womanism is rooted in African culture, and *Tshivenda* culture in particular, which accounts for the centrality of family, community and motherhood in its discourse, and as an ideology. The participants are not familiar with the term Womanism, African feminism, Motherism, but their ways of life are similar to the ideologies of other feminism. They were definitely not exposed to feminism.

Segregation, classism, and abuse of others are sign of being uncultured

In the *Tshivenda* culture being cultured implies having the ability to respect all creation, including animal, as well as plant life. These women, who embrace everyone, and respect all cultures, maintain that people who look down upon other cultures are uncultured.

Vhavenda women hold high positions in decision-making

According to the participants in *Tshivenda* culture, both among royalty and commoners, women hold superior positions in the family and the clan, as they are referred to as *Makhadzi* (paternal aunt) in their paternal households in which they were born. They are the ones who take major decisions on behalf of their families, and clans. Even the men in their families respect their decisions. No serious decisions are taken in their absence. Among royalty, *Vho-Makhadzi*, and several of her sisters, decide who the heir to the throne is, after the royal leader's demise.

There is abundant research evidence that corroborates the participants' affirmations of women's power and authority in pre-colonial religious, political, economic and domestic spheres. These sentiments confirm that women and men are equal, in terms of what they do in the maintenance and survival of the clan, community and family, as responsibilities are distributed equally between the sexes. Accordingly, women's sexual and reproductive capacities do not determine their inferior or second-class status. It is against this backdrop that equating sexual difference with sexual inequality is a misrepresentation of the African social structures and the importance of the dual-sex organisation. Therefore, the notion of 'patriarchy' is consequently seen as an imported and imposed concept.

The controversy surrounding the issue of children's rights

The introduction of the children's rights policy, which rural communities is not well-conversant with, has resulted in delinquent children abusing these rights. Consequently, the rate of drug abuse and teenage pregnancy has reached alarming proportions. Single women feel that their children are out of control. In response, *Tshigombela* and *malende* performers have coined lyrics for songs such as *Zhangantavhila*, expressing their disgust at the reckless manner in which young people behave, while abusing their rights, and in the process infringing on other people's rights.

Men's anger against their diminished powers

The women who participated in the study reveal that women and men co-existed before democracy, and even though there were incidents of gendered violence perpetuated by men, these were on a small proportion compared to the current situation. Femicide and rape have reached alarming levels in South Africa, in Vhembe District. The participants asserted that the increase in the levels of these atrocities stems from the fact the men are angered by the fact that women receive more support from government than they do. The participants also feel that men's anger is aggravated by the fact that they seem to believe that their power and authority within their households and communities has been diminished, as the government is the one that 'lays down the rules', including how they should run their households. If the parents insist on administering punishment on their children, they could be arrested for having contravened the country's constitution, in relation to the children's rights. Furthermore, the women in the study support these sentiments on the issue that parents have lost control over their children. These children believe that now that they have rights, their parents, teachers, and all adult members of their communities have no authority over them, and can therefore not discipline them. These women have even coined songs against the young people's wayward ways.

The participants in this study argue that they were not consulted as to why and when legislation on such issues as children's rights, and abortion were formulated. They were not even consulted on how they were to be implemented. These women attested that the government treats them with contempt simply because they are not educated. They further

asserted that the government notifies communities on the radio about decisions that it has taken about their children, without having consulted the parents.

Escalation of violence in Vhembe

There are schools of thought that maintain that the increased level of gender-based violence may be as a result of men's resistance against the constitutionally enforced gender equality between women and men in South African. There are also contentions that the indelible scars left by colonialism, Christianity, and apartheid are still deeply-rooted, so much that it is difficult for democracy to root out, and annihilate the deeply-entrenched un-African ravages of these heinous atrocities.

In 2014 South Africa celebrated twenty (20) years of democracy, as well as national commitment to gender equality. Even though women have long been involved in political activities in South Africa, and they played a significant role in the transition to and consolidation of democracy, it is evident that there is an escalating rate of gendered violence that threatens to annihilate the post-apartheid achievements, which sabotages the advocacy for gender equality as stipulated in the South African constitution.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Deliberations and debates about musical thought, particularly protest music, are important in that they are essential in nation building. Musical thought includes performing, listening to and talking about music as processes of making sense of the world. This study provided insight into how *tshigombela* and *malende* performers, government policy-makers, government policy implementing departments, the Department of Arts and Culture, the Department of Justice, scholars in Gender Studies, and NGOs dealing with people affected by gendered violence, can form a united front in addressing all issues pertaining to gender relations and gendered violence, particularly in rural communities. The purpose and method of consciousness-raising has changed over the decades to include song writing and performance as potential sites (O'Byrne, 2008:35). Consciousness-raising can be effective

for various purposes, not just in understanding one's worldview, but specifically in relation to gendered violence and patriarchal domination, based on feminist ideologies of nonviolence.

It is important to take into consideration that consciousness-raising principles also inform audiences about other feminist stances that include community development, sensitivity to ecological issues, poverty alleviation, women's emancipation, etc. The decision to include these issues in their respective songs represents the willingness of the performers not only to express their own beliefs, but also to suggest that their audiences also question their belief systems in order to make informed decisions. The recommendations based on the study are made below.

6.3.1 Recommendations of the study

Expression of emotions

The *tshigombela* and *malende* performers' laughter and the tears evident during various sessions with the researcher should be encouraged, as these will enable the performers to express their emotions. The women should not be apologetic about expressing these emotions; they should be aware that tears are not a negative expression of emotions, or a weakness, but a strength, and a way by which they can release negative and unhealthy energy.

Composing songs about how to heal from past tragedies

The lyrics that the performers compose are about real life issues, some of which are the women's personal experiences, or even those that they hear about from the media, such as the rape of infants, young girls, women and old women (age-old pensioners), including femicide. The participants should be encouraged to not only coin protest lyrics against these atrocities in order to educate communities, but they should also go for counselling and open up to professional people about their personal tragedy.

They should also form support groups, through which they are able to share experiences, with the aim of healing. Once they have gone through the process of healing, they should create lyrics about their healing process, in order to empower others.

Lyrics should not use hidden messages

The introduction of Outcome-Based Education (OBE), a system that elevated English at the expense of African languages, has resulted in the youth being unable to understand and speak their own African languages. Therefore, the youth do not comprehend the hidden messages in lyrics, proverbs, idioms and innuendos. Therefore, the performers should compose lyrics that are clear and straight-forward.

Challenges emanating from children's rights

The performers are perturbed by the fact that they can no longer raise their children according to their culture, as the government has taken over control. In response to fact that the issue of children's rights is a thorny one for parents raising teenagers, particularly in the Vhembe region, the District Municipality should conduct road-shows and educate communities on children's rights. In fact, the government should go back to the drawing board and consult parents about issues and policies on children in order to make effective what people believe to be 'the government for the people by the people'. The government should not take decisions on behalf of children, without having consulted the parents, and the adult section of the community. Therefore, policies on abortion, the age of consent in as far as sex is concerned, should be revisited with proper consultation. Among rural communities, parents find these policies appalling, because according to Tshivenda culture, children are not encouraged to engage in sexual activity, hence they would not even be considering abortion. Decisions should not be taken on behalf of illiterate people, as being illiterate does not necessarily imply that people do not have the ability to exercise their reasoning capacity.

Both the youth and their parents should be educated on these rights, and made aware of the fact that these rights go hand-in-hand with responsibilities.

Once rural communities of Vhembe have been properly consulted, the *tshigombela* and *malende* participants should create lyrics on the principles in which children's rights are to operate, in order to educate communities on the correct implementation of these rights.

In order to address the issue of unemployment for the *tshigombela* and *malende* performers, the municipality should employ them during the road-shows, so that they can educate other communities in Vhembe through songs.

Applying old African principles for preventing teenage pregnancy

In order to curb the high rate of teenage pregnancies, the Tshivenda principles which were employed in the past which taught young girls how to prevent pregnancy, should be revisited. The *tshigombela* and *malende* participants should compose lyrics to educate the youth about these practices which enabled girls not to engage in sex until they were married. Lyrics to the same effect will also reduce the rate of HIV/AIDS infections.

Parents should exercise their parental responsibilities

Simply coining lyrics about delinquent children, and not doing anything to remedy the situation does not benefit communities, the situation has not improved, from observation, and statistics, regarding school dropouts, teenage pregnancy, violent crimes such as rape of infants, girls, women, old-age pensioners. Moreover, schools are plagued by increased students' delinquency, which has fueled drug abuse and bullying.

Therefore, the pathetic state of affairs which prevails in African communities, including villages in Vhembe, should be addressed, and parents should exercise their own parental responsibilities and stop blaming the government for the state in which their relationship with their children finds itself. Parents should exercise their parental responsibilities such as exercising disciplinary measures on their children. They should ensure that their children's lives are orderly, by employing other disciplinary measures, other than physical punishment, which the government has outlawed.

If parents feel that the government has overstepped its role in as far as issues that concern their children, South Africa is a democratic country, they have the right to engage it in order to draw its attention to these issues, as well as demand that the government make redress to the situation.

The performers should create songs about the parents taking back the control of their children, and encourage communities to fight against drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, bullying, school dropouts, as well as other criminal activities that they experience in their villages.

Myths about the cure for HIV/AIDS

Tshivenda culture does not condone the abuse of women, and in fact it even has proverbs that clearly spell out that men should not abuse women. Worst of all the rape of infants and girl-children that are virgins is the worst crime against humanity. The *tshigombela* and *malende* performers should create lyrics to educate communities against the myth that engaging in sexual activity with infants or girl-children who are virgins does not cure people of HIV/AIDS.

Educating rural communities about the history of colonialism

Rural women are not really aware of the effects of colonialism, western culture, and Christianity, on African culture and on their communities. Therefore, educating them about these ideologies, taking them back to the time that the colonialists landed in their region, and how these processes unfolded and impacted on Africans, will help women to develop awareness, and the ability to relate to some of the issues such as land, forced removals, relationships among African people of different ethnic groups, African, particularly *Vhavenda*, men and women, and many other issues that affect *Vhavenda* people.

The *tshigombela* and *malende* participants should coin lyrics about redressing the damage that was done by colonialism, Western culture, Christianity, and apartheid. Therefore, this process will facilitate the decolonization of minds among the *tshigombela* and *malende* performers, and their communities.

Recognition of status of Makhadzi (paternal aunt) in the family

Women should be reminded about the status of *Makhadzi*, or paternal aunt, in her family, be it as a commoner, or in the royal family. They should be reminded that she takes important decisions, and the family respects those decisions, without questioning her judgment. Rural

communities that no longer give women the respect they deserve should be reminded about this issue, and the fact that the status that women deserve should be given back to them.

Values of the community should be upheld

The principle of ‘You teach a woman you teach a nation’ should be applied by educating women about the values of the *Tshivenda* culture. They should be taught how to weigh other cultures against their own culture. This will enable them to realise how invaluable their culture is, compared to others, which is contrary to what they have been made to believe. The performers should compose lyrics that acknowledge and educate their communities, and the youth, in particular, about the values of their own culture.

Tshigombela and malende to be given air-play in the media

If the democratic Republic of South Africa recognises all cultures as equal, the media should also give the same amount of air-play to *tshigombela* and *malende*, as they do to similar genres in other ethnic languages. The Department of Arts and Culture should also provide financial assistance for the development and the promotion of these *genre*, as well as bursaries to students studying them.

There are no Tshivenda proverbs that teach people not to be confrontational

The women should be made aware of the fact that even though *Tshivenda* culture has expressions that encourage women to be tolerant, and not be confrontational, it also encourages people to sit down, discuss and settle issues. The expression *U amba livhi ndi u itela uri livhuya li wane vhudzulo*, echoes those sentiments. But the conditioning by the Christian faith, which a great number of the participants subscribe to, teaches that women should be humble at all times, it also teaches ‘giving the other cheek’, when one is given a raw deal. Western culture encourages people to smile even when one is in an uncomfortable situation, and that it is ‘un-lady-like’, or a sign of being uncouth, to show negative emotions in public. These assumptions have been investigated, and instead proverbs in Tshivenda language encourage people to speak up if unhappy about issues.

Victims should not be blamed

The elderly section of the performing groups believes that if young women had been extra-careful, all these terrible experiences such as rape, would not have happened to them. Consequently, women no longer report rape cases, or any other criminal activities that they experience. The elderly section of the performing groups should be educated that rape, or any criminal offence, is a criminal offence, and is wrong, and should not be blamed on the victim. Women should be encouraged to report such cases. Therefore, lyrics should be composed to educate communities about these issues, motivating communities to report these crimes.

Boys too should be raised to be caring and nurturing

In the past girls were raised to be caring, nurturing, and to have values, and boys were not. Instead, boys and men should be taught to have affectionate emotions, as this will teach them not to run away from their responsibilities, and not to commit all these atrocities that they expose women to.

Furthermore, women and men should work together towards building better communities, and apply the principles which prevailed before democracy, when ‘a child was raised by the community’.

Tshigombela and *malende* performance should be employed to educate and unite men and women, improve their relations and unite communities. This unity will help to eradicate gendered violence as well as abuse, especially of children and women.

The fact that women maintain that women and men were destined to be together should not be the reason why young women force themselves upon men who may not be interested in them, or deliberately fall pregnant in order to stay attached to the fathers of their babies. Women should also desist from staying with men who no longer love them, as this has resulted in an alarming rate of gendered violence, as well as femicide in the Vhembe region.

6.4 CONCLUSION

While exploring the linguistic and feministic perspectives of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics performed by Vhavenda women, who reside in the Vhembe District Municipality, this study has not only exposed the linguistic prowess in the manner in which the performers coin lyrics to raise issues that affect them, and their communities, but it also increased awareness of numerous government policies whose purpose is to empower women and poor communities, among the participants, which rural communities, and rural women in particular, were not aware of. It is evident that other than gendered violence experienced by women, the majority of issues that pertain to the women in this study, are not women's issues *per se*, but community issues, because the strong sense of communality in these communities, renders the separation of women's issues from community issues very difficult. This study will not run away from the fact that the principal struggle of the women in this study is centred on the satisfaction of their basic needs, which are understood to be basic rights. Even though the participants in the study were women, the findings expose the fact the struggle for basic needs is not only a struggle waged by women, but it is a community-wide struggle. Hence, questions were asked during the interviews and the focus groups discussions to determine whether the participants would prefer to live a life without men, because it would appear that their woes derive from their relationships with men or from the existence of menfolk in general. Their responses to these questions demonstrate that they do not advocate for life without men, and they maintain that women and men should co-exist in order to have a 'balance in the world'. They believe that the development of their communities should be the responsibility of both men and women. The older women in the groups emphasise that according to their culture women and men were predestined to co-exist, and this truth cannot be over-ruled or invalidated, because men play an important role in women's lives, and in their clans. Most importantly, a decolonization of minds is recommended, in order to annihilate all ideologies which were imposed by colonialism, western culture, Christianity and apartheid. Even though these research participants were not exposed to issues pertaining to feminism, these sentiments subscribe to the ideologies pertaining to other feminisms, namely Stiwanism, Womanism, Motherism, Cultural feminism, as well as Third-World feminism, which are contradictory to Western feminism.

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APPENDIX I

Letter to Musanda (royal leadership)

P.O. Box 902

SIBASA

0970

15 May 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a doctoral student at the University of Venda, in the School of Human and Social Sciences, and I am conducting research on *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics for my dissertation.

I kindly request your permission to work with *tshigombela* and *malende* performers from your village. The extensive knowledge they have on the two performances will come in handy in my studies.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Sincerely

.....

P.E. Ramaite

APPENDIX II

P.O. Box 902

SIBASA

0970

15 May 2011

Aaa,

Nne ndi mutshudeni wa ngudo dza vhudokotela Univesithi ya Venda, tshikoloni tsha Human and Social Sciences, hune ngudo dzanga dza u todulusisa dza vha dza nga ha mugwalabo une wa wanala kha nyimbo dza *tshigombela* na *malende*. Nga u ditukufhadza ndi humbela u tendelwa u shumisana na vhafumakadzi vhane vha tshina heyi mitshino hafho shangoni lavho. Ndi na fulufhela uri ndivho ine vha vha nayo i do takulela idzi thodulususo nthu.

Ndi a livhuwa.

Wavho mulanda

.....

P.E. Ramaite

APPENDIX III:

THE MAP OF VHEMBE



APPENDIX IV

CONSENT FORM - ENGLISH INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Who we are

Hello, I am Elelwani Ramaite. I am a researcher from the University of Venda.

What we are doing

We are conducting research on the importance of indigenous protest lyrics in *tshigombela* and *malende*, performed by women in Vhembe and its impact on the eradication of women abuse, and the recognition of the status of women in rural communities. We are conducting this study with women who perform *tshigombela* and *malende*, to find out more about women's issues and their struggles against all forms of abuse in their communities in democratic South Africa.

Your participation

We are asking you whether you will allow us to conduct interviews and focus group about your knowledge and opinions on the lyrics. If you agree, we will ask you to participate in one interview, a focus group session for approximately an hour each, as well as participate in discussions and conversations with other women. We are also asking you to give us permission to tape record and video record all activities, so that we can accurately record what is said.

Please understand that **your participation is voluntary** and you are not being forced to take part in this study. The choice of whether to participate or not, is yours alone. If you choose not to take part, you will not be affected in any way whatsoever. If you agree to participate, you may stop participating in the research at any time and tell me that you do not want to continue. If you do this there will be no penalties, and you will not be prejudiced in any way.

Confidentiality

Any study records that identify you will be kept confidential to the extent possible by law. The records from your participation may be reviewed by people responsible for making sure that research is done properly, including members of the University of Venda's and Human and Social Sciences' School's Health, Safety and Research Ethics Committees (HSREC). All of these people are required to keep your identity confidential. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

All identifying information will not be available to others. We will refer to you by a pseudonym (another name) in any publication.

Risks/discomforts

At the present time, we do not see any risks in your participation. The risks associated with participation in this study are no greater than those encountered in daily life.

Benefits

There are no immediate benefits to you from participating in this study. However, this study will be extremely helpful to us in researching what women's struggles are in order to find solutions to these issues. Participants will be able to interact with other women who have similar issues, and will have an opportunity to formulate strategies that will enable them to change their lives.

If you would like to receive feedback on our study, we will record your phone number on a separate sheet of paper and can send you the results of the study when it is completed.

Who to contact if you have been harmed or have any concerns

If you have any complaints about ethical aspects of the research or feel that you have been harmed in any way by participating in this study, please call the University of Venda's HSREC at 015 962 8000.

If you have concerns or questions about the research you may call the project leader at 015 962 8047, or at cell number 071 559 7670.

CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in research on the significance of protest *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics in expressing gender issues and women's issues. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop participating at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally in the immediate or short term.

I understand that my participation will remain confidential.

.....

Signature of participant

Date:.....

I hereby agree to the tape and video recording of my participation in the study.

.....

Signature of participant

Date:.....

APPENDIX V

CONSENT FORM - TSHIVENDA

FOMO TA U HUMBELA THENDELO YA U SHUMISANA NA VHONE

Ndi nne nnyi?

Ndi pfi Elelwani Ramaite, ane a vha mutshudeni wa Univesithi ya Venda ane a khou ita thodisiso (research). Ndi shuma na Daniel Tshishonge, Thifulufheli Mamidze na Humbulani Kwindi, vane vha vha vhathusi kha thodisiso yanga.

Ri khou ita mini?

Ri khou ita thodisiso nga ha u gwalaba hune ha vha hone kha nyimbo dza tshigombela na malende, dzine zwa imbiwa nga vhafumakadzi tshitirikini tsha Vhembe. Tshihuluhulu tshine ra khou todisisa tsone ndi thaidzo dzine dza kwama vhafumakadzi, dzine vha gwalabela dzone, na uri thaidzo dzine vha imba ngadzo, vha kha di tangana nandzo naa, na nanwaha, ho no fhela minwaha ya fumalo, Afurika Tshipembe lo vhotholowa, nahone ho no vha na milayo ine ya tshiredza vhafumakadzi kha thaidzo dza u shengedwa mutani.

Tshipida tshine vhone vha ita tshone ndi tshifhio?

Ndi humbela uri vha ri tendele ri vha vhudzise mbudziso vhe vhothe, na musi vhe kha tshigwada na vhanwe, na u ri anetshela nga nyimele yavho, zwi tshi tshimbilelana na thoho ya thodisiso hei. Ndi dovha hafhu nda humbela thendelo yavho u shumisa tshidoba-maipfi (theiphi rekhodo), u dzhia ipfi lavho, na khamera u vha dzhia zwifanyiso zwavho, u itela vhutanzi ha hei thodisiso.

Ndi humbela uri vha zwi pfesese uri u shela mulenzhe havho kha hei thodisiso a si ha khombe-khombe. Arali vha pfa vha sin a dzangalele la u shela mulenzhe a hu na thaidzo, no hone u hu na vhukando vhune vha do dzhielwa hone. Arali vha tshi tama u shela mulenzhe, zwi a livhuea, fhedzi arali vha pfa vha si tsha funa u isa phanda, vha swikise vhutanzi ha uri a vha tsha funa u isa phanda. A huna na vhukando vhune vha do dzhielwa, nahone a vha nga lavheleswi nga lito li si lavhudi na khathihi.

Mafhungo othe ane vhone vha do a amba ane a do vha o nwaliwa, kana o dzhena kha tshidoba-maipfi a do vhewa ha nga sumbedzwi vhanwe vhathu, nga ndani ha vha komiti dzine dza shuma na vhathu vhane vha ita thodisiso. Na hone vhothe havha vhathu vha tea u sa divhadza na muthu na muthihi nga dzina lavho, zwe vhone vha bula kha thodisiso, kana nga ha u shela mulennzhe havho. U kona haya mafhungo arali vhone vha tshi zwi takalela ri nga shumisa dzina lavho la khole-khole.

Khombo kana u sa farea zwavhudi musi vha tshi shumusana na vhatodisisi.

Kha tshifhinga tshine ra vha khatsho, a hu na, Na khombo na nthihi, kana u sa farea zwavhudi hune vha nga tangana naho. A ri lavheleli uri hu nga vha na khombo ine ya nga da nga u shela mulenzhe havho.

Mbuelo

Ahu na mbuelo ya masheleni ine vha do I wana nga u shela mulenzhe havho. Fhedzi, thodisiso hei ya zwa thaidzo dzine vhafumakadzi vha tanagana nadzo i do vhuwela nga maanda. Hezwo zwi do thuso uri hu wanale thandululo dza madandetande ane vhafumakadzi vha Afurika Tshipembe vha tangana nao. Vhane vha do shela mulenzhe vha do shumisana na vhanwe vhafumakadzi, vhane vha vha na thaidzo dzi no fana na dzavho. Izwo zwi do thusa uri vha do thusana u eletshedzana nga ha ndila dza u disa thasululo dzine dza do shandukisa vhutshilo havho.

Arali vha tshi tama u talutshedzwa nga nga ha thodisiso hei musi yo no khunyelela, ri do dzhia lutingo lwavho uri ri kone u vha kwana nga murahu.

Vhakhwamiwaho arali vha songo farea zwavhudi

Arali vha na thaidzo nga ha usa tshimbizwa nga mulayo ha zwi tshi elana na u kandekanywa ha pfanelo dzavho kha thodisiso hei, kha vha lidzele lutingo vhane vha vha khoro ine ya shuma nazwo kha lutingo lwa 015 962 8000, vha Univesithi ya Venda.

Arali vhe na mbudziro nga ha iyi thodisiso, kha vha lidzele lutingo murangaphanda wa thodisiso kha lutingo lwa 015 962 8074, kana kha lutingo-khwalwa lwa 072 184 8932.

Thendelo

Ndi tenda uri ndi do shela mulenzhe kha thodisiso dza nga ha u gwalaba nga nyimbo daz tshigombela na malende na mafhuwe, na u amba nga ha zwi no kwama vhafumakadzi. Ndi a zwi pfesesa uri u shela hanga mulenzhe a si zwa u kombetshedzwa nga muthu. Ndi dovha hafhu nda pfesesa uri arali ndi si tsha tama u shela mulenzhe ndi do litsha, na uri iyo tshewo a I nga ndzhenisi khakhathini na vhatodisisi.

Ndi pfesesa uri hei thodisiso a si ine ya do nyitela mbuelo nga tshifhinga tsha zwini, kana tshi daho.

.....

.....

U saina ha muthu a shelaho mulenzhe

.....

Datumu

U TENDA U DZHENELELA KHA THODISISO

Ndi a tenda uri ndi do dzhenelela kha thodisiso nga ha u gwalaba hune ha wanala kha nyimbo dza tshigombel, malende na mafhuwe zwi tshi tshimbilelana na thaidzo dzine vhafumakadzi vha tanagana nadzo vhutshiloni havho na mitani yavho. Ndi a zwi pfesesa uri ndi khou shela mulenzhe hu sin a u kombetshedzwa, na uri arali na pfa ndi sit she na dzangalelo la u shela mulenzhe kha tshipida tshinwe na tshinwe, ndi do litsha u shela mulenzhe. Ndi pfesesa na uri heyo tshewo ya u sa tsha toda u shela mulenzhe a I nga iti uri ndi dzhielwe vhukando na khathihi.

Ndi a zwi pfesesa uri hei thodisiso a si ya u bindula lwa masheleni.

Ndi dovha hafhu nda zwi pfesesa uri dzina langa na zwe nda amba ndi tshi shela mulenzhe a zwi nga andadzwi kha vhathu vhane vha si vhe na vhukwamani na iyi thodisiso.

.....

U saina nga ane a do shela mulenzhe

.....

Datumu

Ndi a tenda uri hu shumisiwe zwine zwa doba maipfi na zwi no dzhia zwifanyiso musi ndi tshi khou shela mulenzhe.

.....

U saina nga ane a do shela mulenzhe

.....

Datumu

APPENDIX VI

RESEARCH QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

- Why are you singing these particular songs, and what are you hoping to achieve?
- Do you think protest songs are still relevant in the democratic South Africa?
- Are you aware of ideologies that deal with women's issues? If so, which one is more appropriate to your situation?
- How do *tshigombela* and *malende* indigenous protest lyrics conscientize Vhembe women?

QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCHER

- What is the relevance of African feminism, Motherism, STIWANISM, Indigenous feminism, Cultural feminism, Third-World feminism and other feminisms to African women who reside in rural communities, such as Vhembe?
- Do African feminism, Black feminism, Motherism, STIWANISM, Indigenous feminism, Cultural feminism, Third-World feminism, have any influence on the choice of *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics sung by the women of Vhembe?
- What is the socio-linguistical relevance of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics?

APPENDIX VII

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

- How do the women in the three performance groups compose their lyrics?
- What kind of discussions do they engage in pertaining to the choice of lyrics?
- What influences their choice of lyrics?
- Do the lyrics fall into particular themes?
- Are there themes which are more dominant than others?
- What other issues are incorporated into the lyrics which are not part of the research questions and objectives?
- How do women improvise their performance in order to drive the point home /make their message clearer?
- What are the roles played by these women during performances?
- What kind of feministic tendencies do the lyrics portray?
- Do the lyrics portray any militancy?
- Do the lyrics contain any anger?
- Are there specific sociolinguistic aspects contained in the lyrics?

APPENDIX VIII

INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS - ENGLISH

- When did you start performing?
- Where are these performances held?
- Which people participate in these performances?
- Is there a particular dress code that should be observed by performers?
- Who taught you how to dance?
- Which songs do you enjoy most among the ones your group performs?
- What are the songs about?
- Do you use a score during you performance?
- How are your lyrics formulated?
- What do you protest about? Explain.
- What are the reasons for the formulation of your protest lyrics?
- Are your lyrics openly confrontational? Explain.
- How often do you change your lyrics?
- Who do you perform for?
- How do your audiences respond to your performances? Explain.
- What kind of feedback/response do you expect to receive from the people that your protest songs are meant for?
- Do your audiences' responses meet your expectations?
- Is there any emotional release that you experience during/after performance?
- What do you expect from your audience during performance?
- What are your views on women's rights?
- Are there any songs that address issues pertaining to the abuse of women?
- What are the performers' views on gendered violence?
- What other gender issues do the performers sing about?
- Are there people who engage in the issues you sing about after your performances?
- Is the language used in the lyrics straight-forward/literal?
- Why do performers use figurative language in the phrasing of the lyrics?
- Are the lyrics confrontational?

APPENDIX IX

MBUDZISO DZA VHATSHINI VHA TSHIGOMBELA NA MALENDE

- Kha vha talutshedze uri vho thoma lini u tshina iyi mitshino.
- Mitshino iyi i tshiniwa ngafhi?
- Mitshino iyi i tshiniwa lini?
- Ndi vhatshini-de vhoteaho u tshina iyi mitshino.
- Huna ndila ya kuambarelana?
- Iyi mitshino vho I gudiswa nga nnyi?
- Ndi dzifhio nyimbo dzine vha funesa u dzi imba?
- Nyimbo dzine vha imba dzi amba nga mini?
- Nyimbo dzine vha imba dzi vha dzo nwalwa fhasi naa?
- Nyimbo dzine vha imba dzo sikiwa hani/ kha nyimele yo itaho hani?
- Mato a nyimbo dzavho a shandukiswa lini, musi ho itea mini?
- Vha imba vha tshi gwalabela mini?
- Ndi nga mini nyimbo dzavh dzi dza u gwalaba?
- Mato a nyimbo dzavho a vha o katela na u tokonya vhataleli naa?
- Mato a nyimbo dzavho a shandukiswa lini/ kana zwo tou ita hani?
- Mitshino iyi vha tshinela vho nnyi?
- Vhataleli/vhathetsheshelesi vha u tangedza nyimbo na mato a nyimbo dzavho?
- Vha lavhelela uri avha vhane u gwalaba havho ha livhana navho vha ite mini?
- Avha vhathetsheshelesi vhane migwalabo ya vha yo livhana navho vha ita zwifhio zwine vhone vha vhona hu u pfesesa u gwalaba ha vhatshini?
- Hu na zwifhio zwine zwa ita uri vphupfiwa havho na thaidzo dzavho zwo bviselwa khagala nga u imba?
- Ndi vha imbi-de vhane vha sima nyimbo dza tshigombela na malende?
- Izwi vha tshi imba hu na vhatshini-de vhane vha vha vhudzisa ngaha dzinyimbo uri dziamba mini na?
- Ndi zwifhio zwine vha nga talutshedza nga pfanelo dza vha fumakadzi?
- Kha dzinyimbo vha vhona ungari ndi zwifhio zwine zwa sumba uri vha fumakadzi vha khou gwalabela u sa farwa zwavhudi?

- Kha nyimbo idzi hu na dzine dza amba nga khakhathi dza mitani na?
- Ndi zwifhio zwine vhatu vha imba nyimbo dza u gwalaba ngazwo?
- Afha muvhunduni wa havho hu na madzanganona ane a amba nga pfanelo dza vhafumakadzi?
- Vha mitanganoni ya madzangano eneo hu ya kwamiwa na mafhungo a nyimbo dzine vha imba vha tshi khou gwalaba?
- Vhone vha ya ima na na mafhungo a u lwela pfanelo dza vhafumakadzi?
- Vhone vha nga ranga na phanda tshiiimiswa tshine tsha lwela pfanelo dza vhafumakadzi?
- Zwi nga vha zwo teana arali vha vhidzwa upfi mulwela pfanelo dza vhafumakadzi?
- Nyimbo dzi no sikiwa luambo lwadzo lwu tou vha khagala naa?
- Ndi nga mini hu tshi shumiswa mavhuvhisi kha nyimbo dza malende na tshigombela?

APPENDIX X

FOCUS GROUPS INTERVIEWS

- Who had power and privilege in your community, and how did that affect you and your family?
- What is the role played by *tshigombela* and *malende* performance in your community?
- When and with what goals was your performance group founded?
- How would you describe your background as a performing group?
- Are *tshigombela* and *malende* part of the way you were socialized?
- What other activities do you engage in with the performance group?
- How do the songs you perform relate to gender issues?
- What kind of emotions do you experience when you perform *tshigombela* and *malende*?
- What values do you teach by performing *tshigombela* and *malende*?
- What lessons do *tshigombela*, and *malende* lyrics teach the girls and women in the communities you perform for?
- Are you a gender activist?
- How would you describe feminism?
- Do you dislike men?
- Do you envisage a community without men, where only women work towards the development of their community?
- Would you rather not have children?
- Seeing that there is so much violence perpetuated by men, would you rather recede where women do not have anything to do with men?
- In the media many statements are made about gender issues, gendered violence, the emancipation of women, etc. In this part of the interview I would like to discuss with you what you think about this and how it influences your own ideas and struggles. In this discussion I would like you to focus on the *tshigombela* and *malende* and songs that you compose and perform, and how they relate to gender

issues, the emancipation of women, as opposed to songs performed in the media, that ridicule women.

- Are there any oppressive customs that you compose songs about?
- Are there any particular lyrics in the *tshigombela* and *malende* lyrics that you have composed to address these issues?
- What does emancipation of women mean to you?
- What does feminism mean to you personally?

APPENDIX XI

QUESTIONS FOR THE RESEARCHER

- What is the relevance of Black feminism, Motherism, Stiwanism, Indigenous feminism, Cultural feminism, Third-World feminism and other feminisms to African women who reside in rural communities, such as Vhembe?
- Does Black feminism, Motherism, Stiwanism, Indigenous feminism, Cultural feminism, Third-World feminism, have any influence on the choice of *tshigombela* and *malende*, lyrics sung by the women of Vhembe?
- What is the sociolinguistical relevance of *tshigombela* and *malende* protest lyrics?

APPENDIX XII

TSHIGOMBELA AND MALENDE LYRICS

NYIMBO DZA TSHIGOMBELA NA MALENDE

1. PFUNZO

Pfunzo ndi lone ifa la u thoma pfunzo
Ahee yowee pfunzo, hee pfunzo
Vhana vha musalauno a vha laiwi pfunzo
Wa vha laya wo di laya pfunzo
Pfunzo ndi ene munna wa u thoma pfunzo
Vhana vha musalauno a vha laiwi pfunzo
Wa vha laya wo di laya pfunzo
Pfunzo ndi lone ifa li sa sini pfunzo
Vhana vha musalauno a vha laiwi pfunzo
Wa vha laya wo di laya pfunzo

2. RO VHA RO DZULA

Mahaya ashu ro vha ro dzula
Ref: ahehe ro vha ro dzula mahaya ashu

3. VHAMUSANDA VHA RI VUSA NGA MATSHELONI

Vhamusanda Vho-Mushavhanamadi
Vha ri vusa nga matsheloni-tsheloni
Vha ri hulungisa⁴³ ndu dzavho
Ngeno vhatanuni vhavho vho lala

⁴³ U hulunga is the African, in this case, Vhavenda's method of plastering and decorating the floors and walls with decorative soil and cow-dung.

4. MATAKADZA-MBILU

Matakadza-mbilu

Ndi nwana

Tshutshu bebi

Vhakegulu vha zwino

Ndi ndenwa

Vha lilela mikapu

Ya vhana

Inwi vhone vho-luvhengo

Mudanalwo ahee mudanalwo

5. MAGARABA

Magaraba hae

A vho vha havho vho vhuya naa

Ref.: vho vhuya mulovha

Nne vha hashu a vho ngo vhuya

Avho vha havho vho vhuya naa

Nne ri do fa nga ndala na vhana

Avho vha havho vho vhuya naa

Ref.: vho vhuya mulovha

6. MMBWA YANGA TSHAMATO

Mmbwa Yanga Tshamato.

Mmbwa yanga Tshamato yo fa.

Ref.: Yo vhulahwa yo la magerere

Ndi tshi amba thoho i a rema.

Magerere yo vhulahwa yo lani naa?

Ref.: Yo vhulahwa yo la magerere.

7. MBILU NDI MBILI MAZWALE WANGA

Mbilu ndi mbili mazwale wanga
Mbilu ndi mbili mazwale wanga
Inwe i ri ndi gode dzanga
Mbilu ndi mbili mazwale wanga
Inwe i ri ha fhufhuma ri a fhunzhela
Mbilu ndi mbili mazwale wanga
Inwe i ri vhadzi ndi mbilu

8. NDI A GIVHA-GIVHA

Ndi a givha-givha Na vhafunzi vha do givha-givha
Na magwitha ri do vula iyo pisalema
Vhadzia u via ri do tangana henengei Matatshe

9. SALANI NO DZULA

Ndo wela Mutale wo dala; iyowee ni ya sala naa?

Ref.: Salani no dzula; ni ya sala naa? (mavholovholo) salani

Ndi tshi vhona zwiita vhanwe; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Mawe nwana ndi wa mutuka; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Musidzana u lidza nzhivha; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Nne mme anga a vha tsha tshila; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Vho liwa nga khwali na khanga; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Matamba ni a sala naa? iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Ndo wela Mutale wo dala; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Ndi tshi vhona zwiita vhanwe; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Nwana wanga ndi wa mutuka; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Musidzana u lisa mbilu; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
A tshi vhona zwiita vhanwe; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Mashudu ni a sala naa?; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
U shumela mapholisani; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Ha ni a sala naa?; iyowee ni ya sala naa?

Nne mme anga a vha tsha tshila; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Vho liwa nga mavu mutshena; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Musidzana a songo tamba; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
U mona na ndu a lila; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
A tshi vhona zwiita vhanwe; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Nne Mashudu ndi mukololo; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Mukololo wa ha Dagada; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Nne nwananga u pfi Thabelo; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Tanzhe langa la musidzana; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Nne nwananga u pfi Tshililo; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Tshililo tsha vhatungufhali; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Tshililo ndi wa vhukati; iyowee ni ya sala naa?
Haa ni a sala naa? iyowee ni ya sala naa?

10. VHANWE VHO MALWA NGA VHAZWALA

Vhanwe vho malwa nga vhazwala yowee!
Nne ndo malwa nga mutsinda.
Vhanwe vho malwa nga vhazwala yowee!
Inwi vhone! Nne ndo malwa nga mutsinda,
Vhanwe vho malwa nga vhazwala yowee!
Yowee, nne ndo malwa nga vha havho.

11. VHA MMBULAHISELANI

Vha mmbulahiselani nga mugwegwede
Ref.: Vha vho toda u sala vha tshi funana
Ha ri khou vhulahwa; vha vho todou sala vha tshi funana
Vha mmbulahiselani nga muhadzinga
Vha vho toda u sala vha tshi funana
Vha mmbulahiselani nga mufarekano
Vha vho toda u sala vha tshi gonya mmbete

12. KHA VHA VHA FARE

Ri amba na Vho-Mushavhanamadi kha vhavha fare havha vhanna

Ref.: Kha vha vha fare heha iyoweha kha vha vha fare heha

Kha vha vha fare vha vha valele yowee aha

Kha vha vha fare vha a shonisa wee ahe

Ri tshi amba vha a ri via ahee

Kha vha vha fare vha a shonisa wee ahe

Ri tshi amba vha a ri thuntsha wee ahe

Kha vha vha fare vha vha valele aha

Kha vha vha fare vha a reipa yowee ahe

Ri tshi ri nga afha vha a ri reipa yowee ahe

Ri tshi ri nga afha vha a ri tzipa yowee ahe

Ri tshi ri nga afha vha vho ri via yowee

Kha vha vha fare vha vha valele aha

13. MUTONDI

Ahee mutondi

Ref.: La vha zevhezevhe

Ahee mutondi

Ndi nga vha tonda ngani avha vhathu

Ahee mutondi

A hu na mulalo hafha mudini

Zwi sokou fana

Nda dzhia tshienda nda pholishela

Zwa sokou fana

Ndi nga vha tonda ngani avha vhathu

Ahee mutondi

Nda dzhia zwiambaro nda ainela

Zwi sokou fana

Nda dzhia vhutoko nda shula muta

Zwa sokou fana

Kha vha nnditshe ndi yo betshela
Ndi do vhuya matshelo
Mmbwa i huvha hani
Ahee mutondi
Mmbwa ya Vho-Ralinala
Ahee mutondi
Vhubva a vhu tambiya
Ahee mutondi
Mmbwa i huvhani
Ahee huwe
I huvha Vho-Ralinala

14. VHA NA VHANNA VHAVHO

Vha na vhanna vhavho vha a tonga
Ref.: Ahee vha a tonga hee
Vha vho tou nga vho tou vha beba
Nangwe ndo fuka saga

15. NDI YO LALA FHI

Nne ndi yo lalafhi
Ref.: Zwi a nndina; hee zwi a nndina
Ndi yo fukani wee
Ndi si na na saga
Ndi yo lala muedzini

16. MUNYADZIWA

Inwi Munyadziwa wee ni na phungo ngoho (mani)
Inwi Munyadziwa haee, inwi Munyadziwa wee
Inwi Munyadziwa koto
Ni songo tamba nga shedo
Li nga do phulea nga fhasi

Na vho do zwimba na thumbu
Na vho nga nwana wa dula
Inwi Munyadziwa wee no nndina badi
Ni vho nga sa phukha mara ni muthu ngoho
Inwi a ni tsha khetha vha hashu
Ni dongola dzothe dzothe

17. AIDS I YA VHULAHA.

AIDS i ya vhulaha.
AIDS i ya vhulaha wee; i ya vhulaha; AIDS i ya vhulaha wee
Shavhani i ya vhulaha
AIDS ndi tshivhulahi; i ya vhulaha; AIDS i ya vhulaha wee
Ndi amba vha mutakalo; i ya vhulaha; AIDS i ya vhulaha wee
Na vhanna vha vho pata na vhushie; i ya vhulaha; AIDS i ya vhulaha wee
Na vhana vha vho kangwa zwipotoni; i ya vhulaha; AIDS i ya vhulaha wee
Thi nga tendi i tshi swika wee; i ya vhulaha; i do wana vhasidzana wee
Ndi amba Vho-Mbeki haye; i ya vhulaha; AIDS i ya vhulaha wee

18. ZHANGANTAVHILA

Hoyu nwana ndi ndenwa
Ref.: Li nga Zhangantavhila
Hoyu nwana ndi ndenwa
Kuswie kuswie lo neta
Wa li kaidza lo lala
A vhea khali o shavha
Ha lila khombole lo tuwa
U vhala bugu ndi khofhe
Ngei tshikoloni ha divhi
Ripoto ya hone ndi nwana