

DECLARATION

This study is the original work of the author, except where explicitly indicated to the contrary. This thesis has not been submitted in any form to any other institution.



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Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother, Nomatule Maggie Duka, who, despite the fact that she never went to school, sacrificed herself to make sure that all her children did, and to my late father, Sebenza Alfred Duka, for his contribution in nurturing me to be the woman I have become. Tata, I know you would be so proud of me today.

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ABSTRACT

‘Ulwaluko’ (the male initiation custom) has been practised for generations by many cultures in South Africa and in Africa as a whole. AmaXhosa are amongst the population groups in South Africa within whom this custom has survived pre colonially and through the colonial and apartheid eras up to the current democracy. While this custom was reserved for older, mature and senior boys in the past, there is evidence that nowadays immature and junior boys as young as 12 years are taken to the initiation school.

This study sought to understand how these newly graduated initiated men (amakrwala) cope with their multifaceted identities, as learners in a secondary school and as adults in the community. The study also seeks to explore a leadership style that can be sensitive to the needs of ‘amakrwala’ at school. This is a qualitative study which used interpretivism as the research paradigm. Phenomenology is the research design and phenomenological interviews were used as the data gathering tools.

The findings reveal that there are tensions that exist between modernity and tradition in socialising amakrwala. The school represents the modern space and the home and community are the traditional spaces. In the formal school environment there is minimal or no recognition of the new identity of the ‘amakrwala’. At school ‘amakrwala’ are seen as learners. Their identity and status remain unchanged from what they were before they went to the initiation school. However, in the community and at home, they are elevated from a childhood to an adult status and their identities are thus re-shaped.

Key words: Ulwaluko, amakrwala, experiences, secondary school, school leadership, school management.

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES	PAGE
Table 2.2.1 Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.....	18
Table 4.2.1 The profile of the research site.....	87
Table 4.2.2 The profiles of the participants.....	88
Table 4.3.2 Comparative analysis or the experiences of ‘amakrwala’ in the three different contexts, at home, in the community and at home.....	127

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

WHO	World Health Organisation
CONTRALESA	Congress of Traditional Leaders in South Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
LO	Life Orientation
LO'S	Learning Outcomes
AS'S	Assessment Standards
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Declaration by supervisor

Appendix B: Permission from the Provincial Department of Education to conduct
the study

Appendix C: Participant's consent form

Appendix D: Parent's consent form

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Declaration.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
List of Tables.....	vi
Acronyms and abbreviations.....	vii
Appendices.....	viii
Chapter 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY	
1.1. Introduction and Background to the study.....	1
1.1.1 Physical dimension of ‘ulwaluko’.....	3
1.1.1.1 Discarding of old clothes.....	4
1.1.1.2 Shaving of the head.....	4
1.1.1.3 Circumcision.....	5
1.1.1.4 Covering of the body and face of the initiate with white ochre.....	6
1.1.2 Psychological dimension of ‘ulwaluko’.....	6
1.1.3 Social dimension of ‘ulwaluko’.....	8
1.1.4 Education dimension of ‘ulwaluko’.....	9
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	11
1.3. Research question.....	12
1.4. Purpose of the study.....	12
1.5. Objectives of the study.....	12
1.6. Significance of the study.....	12
1.7. Definition of key concepts.....	13
1.8. Chapter outline.....	14
Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction.....	16
2.2 The home, school and the community as socialising agents.....	16
2.3 Theoretical framework.....	19
2.3.1 Hybridity theory.....	20
2.3.1.1 Relevance of the hybridity theory.....	24
2.3.2 Social identity theory.....	25
2.3.2.1 Relevance of the social identity theory.....	26
2.4 Historical and socio-cultural contextualisation of ‘ulwaluko’	27
2.4.1 The AmaXhosa male initiation custom.....	28
2.4.2 Understanding the practice of ‘ulwaluko’ over years.....	31
2.4.2.1 Control.....	31
2.4.2.2 Timing.....	35
2.4.3 Stages of the male initiation custom.....	37
2.4.3.1 Seperation stage.....	37
2.4.3.2 Transition stage	38

2.4.3.3	Incorporation stage.....	39
2.4.3.4	Rituals involved in male initiation custom.....	40
2.4.4	Education significance of 'ulwaluko'.....	42
2.4.4.1	Language implications.....	43
2.4.4.2	Responsibilities of an initiated Xhosa man.....	43
2.4.5	Ulwaluko and schooling.....	46
2.4.5.1	Exclusion of learners from participating fully in school activities.....	46
2.4.5.2	Contradictions between the two 'schools' (modern school versus the traditional school).....	47
2.5	Contextualisation of the concept of leadership.....	48
2.5.1	Leadership and management styles.....	49
2.5.1.1	The autocratic and benevolent autocrat.....	51
2.5.1.2	The participatory and consultative democrat.....	52
2.5.1.3	Laissez-faire leadership.....	53
2.5.1.4	Transactional leadership.....	53
2.5.1.5	Servant and affiliate leadership.....	54
2.5.1.6	Visionary leadership.....	55
2.6	Conclusion.....	55

Chapter 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction.....	58
3.2	Research paradigm: interpretivism.....	58
3.3	Overall research approach: qualitative.....	59
3.4	Research design: phenomenology.....	61
3.5	Sampling techniques.....	65
3.5.1	Sampling of research site.....	65
3.5.2	Sampling of participants.....	67
3.5.3	The criteria for inclusion in the sample.....	68
3.6	Data gathering Instruments: interviews.....	69
3.6.1	Structured interviews.....	70
3.6.2	Semi-structured interviews.....	70
3.6.3	Unstructured interviews.....	71
3.6.4	Challenges of unstructured interviews.....	73
3.6.5	Challenges of using phenomenology as an approach and conducting phenomenological interviews.....	74
3.7	Data analysis process.....	75
3.8	Negotiation of entry.....	76
3.9	Ethical issues.....	78
3.9.1	Confidentiality.....	78
3.9.2	Anonymity.....	79
3.9.3	Informed consent.....	79
3.9.4	Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study.....	80
3.10	Issues related to conducting a qualitative study.....	80
3.11	Phases of data collection.....	82
3.12	Limitations of the study.....	83

Chapter 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1	Introduction.....	86
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4.2	Presenting the profiles of the research site and the participants..	86
4.2.1	Profile of the research site.....	87
4.2.2	Profile of the participants.....	88
4.2.3	Participant's life stories.....	90
4.3	Presenting and analysing the data on the experiences of 'amakrwala'.....	106
4.3.1	Meaning attached to 'ulwaluko' by the boys.....	107
4.3.2	Experiences of 'amakrwala'.....	109
4.3.2.1	Experiences at home.....	110
4.3.2.2	Experiences in the community.....	114
4.3.2.3	Experiences at school.....	118
4.3.3	Comparative analysis of the three contexts.....	127
4.4	Conclusion.....	129

Chapter 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	Introduction.....	130
5.2	Summary of findings.....	130
5.2.1	Findings related to the meanings that 'amakrwala' attach to 'ulwaluko'.....	130
5.2.2	Findings related to the experiences of 'amakrwala'.....	132
5.2.3	Implications for school leadership.....	135
5.3	Recommendations for further studies.....	136
5.4	Conclusion.....	137
5.5	Reference list.....	138
5.6	Appendices.....	146