Amakrwala experiences as learners in a Buffalo City secondary school: Implications for school leadership and management

by

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction and Background to the study

This study seeks to investigate the experiences of the newly graduated initiates, 'amakrwala' as learners at a secondary school level. The study also focuses on the implications that 'amakrwala' experiences might have on school leadership and management.

The school, family and community are identified as the key structures for socialisation of any child (Finlayson, 1998; Pretorius, 1998). Literature reveals much about the home and the school as socialising agents. According to Mwamwenda (2004:46) "…a child learns the basic human behaviour which includes the language, norms and values from his family." Unlike in other cultures, where family is only limited to the biological parents, in the Xhosa culture family is regarded to be everyone who is related to the child, including aunts, uncles, cousins and nieces (Mwamwenda, 2004:327). It is through this interaction with other people that African children are not raised by their biological parents alone, but by the whole community. Hence the saying "it takes a village to raise a child".

In the modern era, part of the village that raises a child is a school. Schools are constructed by communities for the transmission of knowledge, skills, norms and cultural values to the children of that particular community or society. Schools, therefore, serve as the extension of the family where the child is given an opportunity

1

to mix with others, learns to co-exist, shares and broaden vocabulary and relationships (Pretorius, 1998). At school, children are also taught about the importance of respecting other people's norms and values and tolerating children with different beliefs and backgrounds (Mwamwenda, 1989; Pretorius, 1998). However, literature identifies some tensions in the home and school partnership. For example, some African children these days attend multi-racial schools that were created more to promote Western culture. Most African children are sent to these multi-racial schools at a very young age before they are even able to make sense of their own cultures and language. What they are taught at school might sometimes contradict what is taught at home. Values like talking back and arguing with the elders are seen as being disrespectful in the traditional African cultures, while they are seen as strengths in the Western cultures (Mwamwenda, 1989).

Schools draw their learners from different backgrounds; culturally, economically and socially (Banks and McGee Banks, 1995). These learners bring different characteristics to the school environment. One of the practices from the Xhosa culture is that at a certain stage of their lives Xhosa boys have to undergo the traditional male initiation custom, 'ulwaluko'.

The traditional male Xhosa initiation custom (ulwaluko) is described as the rite of passage from boyhood to manhood (Stinson, 2008; Meissner & Buso, 2007; Mavundla, Netswera & Toth, 2009; and Birx, 2006). Mtuze (2004:41) compares it to Christianity when saying, "It is the gateway to manhood, the same way that baptism is a gateway to Christianity." Stinson (2008) claims that there is no particular age that is specified for boys to undergo the initiation custom hence the age varies from 16 to

25years. On the debate on age Soga (1989:85) asserts that, *"ebede amakhwenkwe la abe neendevu kusalindelwe unyaka omhle nolungileyo emasimini."* Literally translated as "…boys would have to develop a beard first while waiting for a good harvest to go to the initiation school." In other words this implies that initiation was reserved for much older and mature boys. However, there is also evidence that boys as young as 13 years undergo the initiation ritual (Duka-Ntshweni, 2009).

Mavundla *et al.* (2009:2) state that "research conducted on 'ulwaluko' in South Africa, is mainly epidemiological in nature as it focuses on the prevalence of complications suffered following the procedure." However, there is another body of literature that examined the other dimensions of *'ulwaluko'* and found 'ulwaluko' to have physical, psychological, social and educational significance (Finlayson, 1998; Gitywa, 1976; Mwamwenda, 1989; and Papu & Verster, 2006). The following section examines the four dimensions of 'ulwaluko'.

1.1.1 Physical dimension of 'ulwaluko'

The physical dimension of 'ulwaluko' focuses on the physical processes that take place during the initiation process. Circumcision is the physical operation that is undergone by boys as part of the initiation process. Stinson (2008) explains this as an example of permanent bodily alteration which signifies membership to a particular group. The physical pain boys suffer is seen as a sign of bravery and prepares them for the future hardships they are going to endure as men in protecting their families and the community. The endurance of pain is not a new concept among the males of

3

the Xhosa culture as boys are taught from an early age that men do not cry, (Gitywa, 1976).

Gitywa (1976:180) further refers to the male circumcision as "an irreversible symbol of the social maturity of the individual which cannot be divested as in the case of derobing a priest or dethroning a king." This implies that when a young man comes back from the initiation school, the society expects him to behave in a more mature and responsible manner. This is so because the initiation school is seen as an important institution to create socially acceptable individuals. Certain processes are followed in preparation for the male initiation custom 'ulwaluko'. Amongst the processes the following are the main ones:

1.1.1.1   Discarding of old clothes

Before the shaving of the head, the boy must discard all his old clothes and give them to a younger brother or relative. He is then given a blanket he will use until the end of the seclusion period. This act is done to break all the ties with his previous life as a boy, (Gitywa, 1976:177).

1.1.1.2   Shaving of the head

According to Gitywa (1976) and Mhlahlo (2009), the shaving of the head is done on the day of circumcision by a circumcised elder brother or male relative. This is done in the kraal where the hair will be buried. The hair is buried to avoid it being used by birds to build their nests as there is a general belief that that may lead to madness.

This ritual is done to part the boy from his past life (boyhood) and prepare him for the new life he is about to enter, manhood.

1.1.1.3 Circumcision

This is the physical operation where the foreskin is cut off from the penis. Gitywa (1976:181) further states that after the operation, the severed foreskin is given to the initiate to bury in a secret place. Sometimes the foreskin is buried in an ant heap to be devoured by ants. Other people bury it in the centre of the lodge and a fire will be made on that spot and the initiate must make sure that it is burning all the time. This is done to guarantee that nobody will have access to the foreskin until it is destroyed by the heat. The foreskin thus represents a part of the initiate's life that is buried, i.e. boyhood, a place to which he can never return as an initiated man.

Nowadays the circumcision process has a dual dimension, for cultural and medical reasons. There is a lot of research that is being done on how circumcision reduces the chances of HIV infection amongst males (Mhlahlo, 2009). Medical circumcision is, therefore, encouraged amongst all males, regardless of their culture, to lower the risk of STD and HIV transmission (Mavundla, 2009). The removal of the foreskin This is in no way trying to replace the traditional Xhosa male initiation process, as this focus is only for medical reasons. According to Stinson (2008), these safety measures are seen as a "potential public health benefit in the fight against the HIV pandemic." Despite that, hospital male circumcision is still stigmatised in the traditional Xhosa culture as it is seen as a sign of weakness (Duku, 2006; Mavundla, 2009).

1.1.1.4   Covering of the body and face of the initiate with white ochre (*ingceke*)

The initiates are supposed to cover their bodies with white ochre which signifies their closeness to their ancestors for protection and guidance during the seclusion period, (Gitywa, 1976; Mavundla, 2009 and Mhlahlo, 2009). Traditionally, the acceptable and most popular way of undergoing circumcision amongst the Xhosa boys is to go to the bush. While this is done by the majority of Xhosa boys, there are some who prefer to go to hospital. They prefer the hospital because of their religious beliefs and sometimes for health reasons. There are instances where even though a boy has chosen the traditional route, he might end up in hospital when something goes wrong in the bush (botched circumcision). There is a lot of intolerance and discrimination against the men who are circumcised in hospital. Some arguments are based on the fact that, in the Xhosa culture, manhood is not achieved through the circumcision operation alone, but a man is expected to go through the whole initiation process. Through socialisation boys are promoted from boyhood to manhood, with its implications for the new roles and position within the home and the broader community.

1.1.2 Psychological dimension of 'ulwaluko'

According to Papu & Verster (2006) the psychological significance of the male initiation custom is characterised by a change in the character of the newly graduated initiates. Mtuze, (2004:46) describes boyhood as, "a happy go lucky go phase, where boys are free to do as they please as social norms are flexible enough to accommodate boyish pranks and nobody takes them seriously as they are regarded

as dogs." The change in character means that the initiated men should show more mature and responsible behaviour. This is totally different from the anti-social and irresponsible behaviour that is easily accommodated from boys. The fact that they are anointed by a responsible man in the community is aiming at transferring the good qualities of the anointer to the newly graduated initiate.

Papu and Verster (2006) state that this change is further symbolised by the new clothes that are worn by these young men as they are no longer allowed to wear the clothes they used as boys. The old clothes are discarded, some given to siblings as a sign of a previous life to which they are not allowed to return, while the new clothes are a symbol of their new life as initiated men. In the community, the newly graduated men are expected to dress in a specific manner, long trousers, jacket, a hat or cap and carry a stick wherever they go. When they go back to school, they should be in school uniform; neither hats nor caps are allowed. There is no special provision in the school policy that specifies how 'amakrwala' are accommodated in the school to allow them to practise their culture. The recognition of their newly acquired status is mostly limited to their peers.

The male initiation also instils the male identity and reinforces their dominance over women. According to Mtuze (2004), men are seen as heads of families who will carry the family name to future generations. Although their newly acquired status elevates them to be the superior sex, this does not mean they should be disrespectful towards women; instead they are given an extra responsibility to protect and take care of them as they are seen as future heads of families (Gitywa, 1976).

1.1.3 Social dimension of 'ulwaluko'

In the Xhosa culture the newly graduated initiates, with their newly acquired status, are expected to show a more decent, responsible and proper behaviour guided by the norms and values of the community (Gitywa, 1976:194; Papu *et al.*, 2006). 'Amakrwala' are not expected to associate themselves with boys and all their activities. They are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible way and, in exchange for this; they earn respect from the community at large. At home they are exempted from performing certain duties which are categorised by the society as 'women's roles' (Duka-Ntshweni, 2009; Mwamwenda, 1989). In support of the above argument, Gitywa (1976) also states that they are not even allowed to eat food that is traditionally specified for women like wild vegetables ('imifino') as that will be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

'Ulwaluko' is highly stratified in the Xhosa culture; hence one would hear elderly Xhosa men using phrases like *"izindl' ukutsha makwedini"* referring to whose lodge was burnt first (Mhlahlo, 2009:146). When the initiates finish their seclusion period in the bush, their lodges are burnt and an initiate whose lodge was burnt first is considered to be the most senior. This also means that, although 'amakrwala' can benefit from the privileges that are enjoyed by all initiated men, as newly initiated men they have to abide by the rules of seniority (Mtuze, 2004 and Purnell, 1995). 'Amakrwala' have to respect all those who were initiated before them irrespective of their birth age. Purnell (1995) states that the years of manhood are traditionally known as 'Izilimela' a Xhosa name for the June month. This name originates from a star that appears during the June month. The actual age of manhood would start

8

counting when he comes back from the initiation school as before that he is teased to be a thing, not a human being (Elliot, 1970).

Mhlahlo (2009:62) states that there is a relationship of superior and inferiority between the elders who are the custodians of the ritual and the initiates. This is so because the elders have the knowledge about the custom while the initiates depend solely on their experience and guidance going through 'ulwaluko'. On the other hand, a spirit of comradeship, trust and equality develops amongst the initiates who undergo the initiation ritual together. This is due to the hardship and pain they share together during their time at the initiation school, (Mhlahlo, 2009:63).

At home 'amakrwala' are socialised differently than at school. They are expected to stick together and not socialise with boys and women. They are supposed to keep their distance from women in general (Gitywa, 1976:204). On the other hand at school they are encouraged to work in groups which are randomly selected with a mixture of boys and girls. This might pose a challenge for these young men as the school activities are designed for all learners irrespective of their gender or social standing in the community. This might be an indication of a disagreement between the African traditional culture, represented by 'ulwaluko', and the Western formal culture, as represented by the school.

1.1.4 The educational dimension of 'ulwaluko'

Literature on the Xhosa initiation custom (Gitywa, 1976; Mbiti (1990:119) as cited in Mtuze (2004:46); Ngwane (2002) and Purnell, 1995) points out that the initiation rites have a great educational significance. They often mark the beginning of acquiring

knowledge which is otherwise not accessible to those who have not been initiated. Stinson (2008) states that the main focus of the initiation school is to teach the initiates about their culture, social responsibilities, respect, discipline, their conduct as men in the community, courtship and marriage. The learning does not end in the initiation school but continues through observation of the morals and ethics of one's community (Gitywa, 1976:20). Mhlahlo (2009:75) also states that, "Men who have been through initiation are distinguishable by their social behaviour and a particular vocabulary they learn during their time in the bush.". Finlayson (1998) further states that this language is also used to distinguish the newly initiated men from the uninitiated boys. Lastly Mtuze (2004:52) states that in the past "initiation was seen as the public affirmation of manhood, independence from one's father's house and a challenge to build one's own house." Looking at Mtuze's claim, one can assume that initiation was reserved for mature boys who were old enough to take on the responsibilities of adulthood.

Judging from the above discussion on the educational significance of 'ulwaluko', one can conclude that there seems to be no contradiction between the expectations of the Xhosa initiation school and the formal school. Both structures aim at developing a socially acceptable being. However, there is a body of literature that unpacks some elements that might lead to a tension between the expectations of the formal school and the Xhosa initiation school:

- Initiated men are not expected to socialise with boys (Gitywa, 1976:203) but at school they are expected to participate in group activities with other learners, including boys (Jones, 2007).

- Initiated men have a newly acquired status, 'amakrwala' (Mavundla, 2009) but at school the status remains the same; according to the South African Schools Act (SASA) No. 84 of 1996, there is no distinction between learners who have been to the initiation school and those who have not - they are all referred to as learners and should be treated as such.

- According to Gitywa (1976:204), initiated men are exempted from doing roles that are socially associated with women while schools encourage gender equity (Chisholm and September, 2005). All learners are encouraged to work in teams to participate in school activities.

1.2   Statement of the problem

The Xhosa culture is evolving. Mtuze (2004:52) has stated earlier that in the past "initiation was seen as the public affirmation of manhood, independence from one's father's house and a challenge to build one's own house." Looking at Mtuze's claim one can assume that initiation was reserved for mature boys who were old enough to take on the responsibilities of adulthood. However, there is evidence that nowadays boys as young as 13 years go to the initiation school (Duka-Ntshweni, 2009 and Papu & Verster, 2006). This highlights that boys who go to the Xhosa initiation school nowadays are still at a school going age. When they graduate from the initiation school, they acquire double identities: they are learners and graduates from initiation school. The leadership and management teams of schools are also expected to accommodate 'amakrwala' in their schools and be sensitive to their needs. It is against this background of double identities that this study poses the following questions

11

1.3   Research Questions

- What are the experiences of Xhosa 'amakrwala' as learners at secondary school level?

- What implications can 'amakrwala's experiences have on school leadership and management?

1.4   Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the experiences of Xhosa 'amakrwala' as learners at secondary school level to support school management teams in providing culturally competent leadership.

1.5   Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- To investigate experiences of amakrwala as learners at a secondary school

- To establish the implications that 'amakrwala' experiences can have on leadership and management of schools

1.6   Significance of the study

This study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge in the following ways: theoretically it seeks to close the gap in literature as there seems to be no studies that have focused on the experiences of the newly graduated initiates (amakrwala) at school level. It also aims at influencing school policies and management practices:

the findings might provide school management teams with skills to support 'amakrwala' in shaping their multifaceted identities. The findings might also open debates among parents, teachers and young boys both at home and at school to enable them to make informed decisions about the best time to go to initiation school

1.7   Definition of key concepts

Experience: This can be defined as direct observation or active participation in events or activities leading to the accumulation of knowledge or skill. (www.merriam-webster.com.) For this study, experience refers to how amakrwala perceive their treatment at school by both teachers and learners with their newly acquired status.

Initiation/ulwaluko: This is a rite of passage ceremony marking entrance or acceptance into a group or society. It could also be a formal admission to adulthood in a community. In the context of this study this is the formal passage from boyhood to manhood, a process that is undergone by young men learning about manhood for the duration of their stay in the initiation school (Stinson, undated, www.africanvoices.co.za).

Initiate: This is the name given to the person who is taking part in the initiation ceremony in the traditional rite (Davis, 1994).

13

Learner: Someone, especially a child, who acquires knowledge and beliefs from a teacher (SASA no 84 of 1996). In the context of this study this is referring to male students at secondary school level between the ages of 13 and 18 years.

Socialisation: Pretorius (1998) defines socialisation as the events through which the child acquires and internalises the values, attitudes, roles, skills and world view of his family, community and society.

Amakrwala: A Xhosa name given to newly graduated initiates. Gitywa, (1976:192) also refers to them as newly circumcised young men. He further explains that Ikrwala means 'a fruit that is nearly ripe', which signifies these young men's entry into the initial stages of manhood.

1.8   Chapter outline

Chapter One outlines the introduction and background of the study. The research problem, research question, the purpose and the significance of the study are also discussed. Key concepts that were used throughout the study were also defined.

Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework and the relevant literature is reviewed. The main focus is on the historical and socio-cultural contextualisation of the Xhosa male initiation custom, the importance of the initiation custom and the conceptualisation of the concepts of leadership and management.

Chapter Three deals with the research methodology used to conduct the research. This is a qualitative study which uses interpretivism as the research paradigm. Phenomenology is the research design and phenomenological interviews were used as the data gathering tools.

Chapter Four is about the presentation and the analysis of data. Profiles of the research site and the participants are presented and discussed. Data gathered is analysed under the following headings:

- meanings attached to 'ulwaluko' by boys; and

- experiences of amakrwala.

Chapter Five presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

The following chapter is going to review what other scholars have already written about 'ulwaluko'.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter reviews what other scholars have already written about the Xhosa male initiation custom, 'ulwaluko', and schooling. There is also a focus on the types of school leadership. This is done in an attempt to examine a leadership style that can be responsive to the needs of all stakeholders, including 'amakrwala'.   Hybridity and the social identity theories have been identified as theories on which this study is based. However, for the purpose of this study it is imperative to examine firstly the home, school and the society as socialising structures for any child. This study seeks to understand the experiences of amakrwala as high school learners. However, they are not only learners but are also members of a wider community. The following section focuses on the socialisation of 'amakrwala' at home, in the community and at school.

2.2   The home, the school and the community as the socialising agents

Pretorius (2005:135) defines socialisation as, "the events through which the child acquires and internalises the values, attitudes, roles, skills, events and world view of his family, community and society." The home, school and community are identified as the key structures for the socialisation of children (Finlayson, 1998; Pretorius, 1998). Pretorius (2005:39) further states that children are educated and socialised according to the norms of their society by their families. Amongst amaXhosa children

are also taught about the norms and values of their culture from an early age and their roles as boys and girls in their homes.

According to Pretorius (2005:81) schools are supposed to be places where a child "discovers his leadership potential amongst others, actualises leadership or becomes a loyal follower, experiences communal feelings, solidarity and accepts social responsibility". Schools are expected to help to enforce upon their pupils the fundamental values of the society and transfer culture and knowledge. They should also preserve, develop and pass the culture to the next generations. Schools are also expected to teach children to interact with others enabling them to make a smooth transition from the intimate family community to formal social relationships. While children learn to live with others, they are disciplined in a social context to acquire good social habits. As teachers are also part of the community, they play an important role in instilling a socially acceptable behaviour in their learners.

In concurring with the above arguments, Cave and Chesler (1981) also highlight the link between education and socialisation as they describe these as "a process whereby persons are acculturated into a human community." They also argue that it is one of the school's major roles to preserve the cultural heritage for the society and to pass it on to the individual members of that community. Although culture is in many instance not recognised as a formal part of education, it is always found in all aspects of the society and the school system. It becomes clear from the above arguments that schools also play a very important role on teaching learners about their culture. In the Xhosa speaking communities, 'ulwaluko' is amongst the customs that learners are taught about in school.

Culture can also be seen as part of hidden curriculum which Jackson (1992) in Banks and McGee Banks (1995) refers to as the 'untaught lessons'. Banks and McGee Banks (1995) highlight the relationship between learning and the social interaction of learners and their peers and teachers. Teachers in schools are faced with a diversity of learners from different social backgrounds. These learners are further categorised according to age, social class, gender and ethnicity, (Banks and McGee Banks, 1995). Teachers are encouraged to use the learner diversity in a positive and constructive way to facilitate learning.

The home is supposed to provide the child's basic needs like food, shelter and security. When the child grows and starts interacting with others, the basic needs will increase to social needs like acceptance and belonging and later to esteem needs like respect, self esteem and recognition. At this stage the school and the community play a significant role in supporting the social development of the child. The table below illustrates Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Pretorius, 2005: 27):

Table 2.2.1   Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Need for self actualisation • to realise one's potential • to know and understand	**Highest needs or growth needs**
Esteem needs • for respect, recognition, prestige, status, self esteem	**Basic needs or deficiency needs**
Social needs • for love, acceptance, care • for interpersonal communication and social life • for belonging	
Safety needs • for safety, environmental security, peace of mind, protection	
Physical needs • for oxygen, water, food, rest and shelter	

In the above table, Pretorius (2005:27) indicates that children have basic needs for development. The lowest on the hierarchy are the physical needs which include food, shelter and a safe environment, all of which are supposed to be provided by the home. When a child grows older and leaves the home to start interacting with peers, he needs to feel accepted and a sense of belonging to the society. The social needs are thus provided by the society. His needs will further develop to esteem needs, which include developing self esteem and a need to be respected and recognised as an individual. Pretorius (2005) further refers to the highest growth need of an individual as self actualisation, a stage where one realises his potential and knows and understands who he is. In order for an individual to reach self actualisation, he must be supported positively on his basic needs by both the family and the society so that he can have high self esteem. All individuals are supposed to go through these needs including 'amakrwala'. The social need to be accepted and the esteem need to be respected are amongst the key issues that 'amakrwala have to deal with when they are incorporated back into the community.

2.3   Theoretical framework

This study seeks to investigate Hybridity and the social identity theories as theories on which this study is based. This study focuses on the experiences of 'amakrwala' as learners and how they manage their double identities, as adults in the community and as children at school.

2.3.1 Hybridity theory

This study is based on the hybridity theory, also referred to as the In-between space theory. Bhabha (1995) sees hybridity as a form of in-between space or the third space. Bhabha refers to the third space as a way of describing a productive space that might open up new possibilities. Rutherford (1990:211) states that "the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges; rather hybridity is the 'third space', which enables other positions to emerge." Bhabha, (1994) further states that the third space should provide a spatial politics of inclusion rather than exclusion, new signs of identity and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation. In this study, the school represents the third space, where 'amakrwala' can sometimes find contradictions between the community and school expectations.

Bhabha (1994), as cited in Meredith (1998), describes the in-between space as the 'new sign of identity', this theory seems to be relevant for this study as the focus is on the position of the newly graduated initiates, 'amakrwala'. When 'amakrwala' go back to school, they have double identities, as 'adults' and learners. In the society and at home, as initiated men they have acquired adult status which comes with respect, while their status has not changed at school where they are still referred to as learners. Hence this study is looking at how they balance in their 'in between space'.

Bhabha as cited in Meredith (1998:2) describes hybridity as "the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to translate the identity of the colonised within a singular universal framework but fails to produce something familiar but

20

new." He disputes the arguments that any culture can be pure and holistic because he argues that culture is open to ambivalence and interpretation by other people who do not belong to that particular culture. He developed the concept of 'hybridity' to describe the construction of cultural authority within conditions of political inequality.

Rowe and Schelling (1991:231) as cited in Pieterse (2006:1) describe hybridity as "the ways in which forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices." Pieterse (2006) thinks of hybridity as layered in history, including pre colonial, colonial and post colonial layers each with different layers of hybridity. He further claims that hybridity contributes as a theme by questioning the boundaries that are taken for granted. Pieterse (2006:2) also states that , "The hybridity view holds that cultural experiences past and present have not been simply moving in the direction of cultural synchronisation, but include the impact non western cultures have on the west and on each other."

The male initiation ritual is deeply embedded in the Xhosa culture and is practised well in a closed society, where everybody shared the same beliefs. The formal schooling is a multi-cultural environment where sometimes it becomes very difficult to cater for individual needs. Hence schools are governed by school rules and policies adapted for each school to accommodate the needs of that particular community. In the South African context, with the diversity of cultures, schools are expected accommodate all learners irrespective of their cultural beliefs.

Weng (2010:3) defines the third space as "a magic secret universe, rather than being next to the second in place or time." She relates this to her experience of teaching

Chinese in American Chinese schools which she says made her feel "caught between familiar and unfamiliar worlds, living between home and a foreign land, and floating between past and current experiences" (Weng, 2010:3). She also states that she felt that she was in-between the past and present, struggling to find her present, while she was not willing to let go of her past, which made her feel like she was floating in a 'third space'.

Amakrwala might be in the same predicament in the school environment. In the community they are expected not to socialise with boys. What should these learners do at school when they are given group activities in class with some of their classmates who are boys? How do they respond to their teachers when they are selected to the same soccer team with boys as team mates, and are expected to use the same change rooms and showers? At school these learners are expected to work as a team, irrespective of their social status. In this context, 'amakrwala' seem to be expected to occupy a different position at school, (as a learner) and at home, (as an initiated man). This is likely to position 'amakrwala' in a third space.

Wang (2004:149) as cited in Weng (2010) states that, "The third space is knotted by conflicting doubles", as the conflicts between Weng's past and present often made her worried and frustrated as she suffered from teaching Chinese in America. According to Aoki (2005:319) as cited in Weng (2010:8), the third space is an "ambivalent space between the different cultures and traditions."

Heinrich (2008) relates the in-between space theory with struggling between two cultures. She further states that when one is exposed to the second culture she gets

an opportunity to understand her culture better and in comparing the two cultures one can choose what she likes from the second culture. This would help an individual to develop her own culture. This new culture might at times make an individual feel like a stranger on both sides because one does not fit completely with the new culture, while the influence of the new culture also has an impact on the way she does things, which would make an individual to be in between the two cultures.

Heinrich (2008) relates this to an experience she had from emigrating from Leicester (predicted to be Britain's first plural city) to Amsterdam, Holland, where, with her British background, she perceived the directness of the Dutch people as rudeness. After staying in Amsterdam for six years and somehow developing her own culture, she felt like a stranger when in Britain as the directness which was part of her new culture tended to be offensive amongst the British culture.

From the above arguments one wonders about how being exposed to so many cultures in South Africa might affect 'amakrwala' in finding their true identity and being able to conform to the expectations that are imposed on them by the Xhosa initiation custom and the formal school environment. How do they feel when they are exposed to so many cultures, while most of them might not even have a strong background of their own culture? If schools are built by the government for the communities to serve the needs of that particular community, (Pretorius, 2005) whose culture are our schools really promoting?

'Ulwaluko' is part of culture and tradition while formal schooling is part of modernity, hence undergoing this ritual puts one in-between the past and present. The learners

obtain double identities from undergoing the initiation ritual. In the community they are elevated to the 'adult status' while at school they remain learners. Nyamnjoh (2002) as cited in Duku (2006) defines the African identity as a "melting pot of identities". This seems relevant when one looks at the many cultures that we have in South Africa and in our schools. Despite the differences communities need to work together, respect and accommodate each other.

2.3.1.1   Relevance of the hybridity theory for this study

The hybridity theory seems relevant for this study as 'amakrwala', with their new identity, find themselves in the third space when they get back to school. With their multifaceted identity they are between adulthood and childhood: adulthood as they are perceived in the community and learners as they are seen within the school environment. Heinrich (2008) links the in-between space theory with struggling between two cultures.

As this study reveals, there seems to be tensions as to how 'amakrwala' are treated at school and in the communities. There seem to be no clear roles and responsibilities for 'amakrwala' as sometimes some teachers refuse to acknowledge their new status. In this instance, it can be argued that 'amakrwala' find themselves to be floating in the third space, with no clear sense of direction. However, the home and the society seem to share the same norms and values on how 'amakrwala' are socialised. The following section examines the social identity theory and its relevance to this study.

2.3.2 Social identity theory

Social identity theory has also been identified as a relevant theory for this study. According to McLeod (2008) this theory was developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979 and is seen as Tajfel's greatest contribution to psychology. Tajfel defines social identity as a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership which gives them a sense of belonging to their social world. He further argues that people's own identities are built from their group membership, and a person might belong to more than one group and an individual identity will be formed by all the groups to which he or she associates himself or herself.

The social identity theory is also characterised by the categorisation that is common amongst people which leads to personal identity and the perceptions of the identities of others. It also puts pressure on the people as people want to belong to the group that is perceived to be the right one and your behaviour can only be assessed through the standards that are set from the groups.

The patriotism that develops amongst group members might lead to favouritism amongst the group members and discrimination towards people who belong to other groups. People also tend to compare themselves with others who belong to other groups in an attempt to make their group feel more superior. People also use these groups as a way of building their own self esteem.

2.3.2.1   Relevance of the social identity theory to this study

In describing the social identity theory McLeod (2008) draws attention to the following factors:

- a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership,

- people's group membership giving them a sense of belonging to the social world,

- people categorisation that leads to personal identity and the identity of others,

- pressure that is put on people as they want to belong to a group that is perceived to be the right one, and

- patriotism amongst group members which leads to discrimination against people belonging to other groups.

On their return from the traditional initiation school, literature reveals that the custom and the community elevate 'amakrwala' to a different social group from boys and women. According to African social stratification, (Mhlahlo, 2009 and Mwamwenda, 2004) initiated men are seen to be at the top of the social ladder. In their plight to get recognition and the group membership, some might feel obliged to do whatever it takes to guarantee their acceptance into the group. Hence some of them are seen to be engaging in new social practices which are seen to be acceptable in the 'adult' world of initiated men like smoking and drinking on their return from the initiation school.

The pressure to belong might sometimes include going against their principles and defying their parents. There is evidence that when 'amakrwala' return to the school

environment, they stick together and display 'patriotism' in defending their new identity. This is shown in practices like 'ukudodisana' (a special language which includes a special terminology that is only known by people who have been to a traditional male initiation school, used by amakrwala who meet for the first time to introduce themselves) which they engage in within the school premises in their effort to distinguish between 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' men. The following section deals with the historical and socio-cultural contextualisation of 'ulwaluko'.

2.4   Historical and socio- cultural contextualisation of 'ulwaluko'

There are different forms of initiation customs in the Xhosa culture. Mavundla *et al.* (2009:40) defines initiation customs as "events that are performed in a community in order to mark the passage into a new stage in the life of an individual." To support this statement Davis, (1994:1) also states that an initiation is a process that accompanies the movement of people from one social status to another. Each custom is accompanied by a symbolic act. In the Xhosa culture, 'intonjane*'* (rite of passage from girlhood to womanhood), 'ukuthwasa' (rite for traditional healers) and 'ulwaluko*'* form part of these customs. Xhosa male initiation, 'ulwaluko', is defined as the rite of passage from boyhood to manhood, (Mavundla, Netswera & Toth, 2009 and Birx, 2006).

Despite the transformation that the African culture has undergone from the colonization and the apartheid era to the current democracy, male initiation is one custom that has shown resilience (Ntsebeza, 2006:22).. Sotho, Pedi, Venda, Tsonga

and amaXhosa are amongst the cultures that commonly practise this custom in South Africa. The next section focuses on the male initiation custom.

2.4.1 The AmaXhosa male initiation custom

The male initiation, also referred to as male circumcision, is a custom that is practised by many cultures for various reasons in South Africa, and in Africa as a whole. AmaXhosa are among the cultures that practise this custom and it is referred to as 'ulwaluko'. Despite the changes from the colonial era to our current democracy, this custom has proven to be the most resilient, (Ntsebeza, 2006; Stinson, undated). Magubane (1998:33) further states that, despite the complications that may lead to fatalities, there is no indication that the Xhosa people will ever abandon this custom. Male initiation is defined by many scholars as the rite of passage from boyhood to manhood (Mavundla et al., 2009; Stinson, undated; Gitywa, 1976). The initiation custom is one of the most important rituals in a Xhosa boy's life as it moves him from a state of 'nothingness' to a human being. Elliot (1970) as cited in Mtuze (2004) confirms this by referring to boys as 'things', not persons, because traditionally they can only become human after undergoing the initiation process.

Boys are sometimes allowed to act recklessly but that have to change once they become men. Mtuze (2004) shares the same sentiment when he says, ''Boyhood is a happy go lucky phase in a boy's life, he is free to do as he pleases as social norms are flexible enough to accommodate boyish pranks and nobody takes them seriously as they are regarded as 'dogs'.'' To support this in Mandela's autobiography (Purnell, 1995) Mandela states that before they went to the initiation school, for their last

boyish prank they stole a pig, slaughtered it and had a 'braai'. No case was opened in the traditional court because this was done by boys.

As already indicated, male initiation is an important custom for Xhosa boys because it is after undergoing this custom that they become men (Mavundla et al., 2009). Being a man in the Xhosa culture comes with a lot of privileges and responsibilities. During traditional ceremonies an initiated man sits inside the kraal and does not stand outside like the boys do (Gitywa, 1976). The privileges go with responsibility as the newly graduated initiate (ikrwala) must give respect to the elders and the people that were initiated before him. According to Purnell (1995), the years as a man are traditionally known as 'izilimela', and that is more important than a man's actual age.

 Traditionally, circumcision was done during the winter months as it was seen as the best time for healing (Ngwane, 2002). Ngwane (2002:295) refers to this old custom as, "a subject of major theological repudiations by the missionaries and a source of logistical nightmare for the school calendar", hence it was later moved to the longer December holidays to accommodate boys who were coming home from the mines and, nowadays, the schools. According to Ngwane (2002) it was the duty of older initiated men to take care of the initiates while the younger initiated men were helping with cooking and the collection of wood and water.

Papu & Verster (2006) look at the initiation custom from a Christian perspective and have come to the conclusion that the custom is also supported by Christians although the church has to remain faithful to the truth of the gospel. Papu et al. (2006) also argues that the origin of the custom goes back to the Old Testament.

Robertson (1993) as cited in Papu et al. (2006) further argues that there is a slight difference in the aims of the circumcision ritual from a Christian perspective versus that of the Xhosa speaking people. In the biblical sense, circumcision is seen as the formal sign of membership of the covenant community while in the Xhosa context it is seen as a sign of entrance into manhood.

According to a research done by the World Health Organisation (2008:22), culturally, the majority of young men were taken to the initiation schools for the following reasons:-

- a gateway to manhood – traditional circumcision is seen as the only way through which a Xhosa boy can access manhood,

- a mark of identity – once a boy goes to the initiation school, he moves from a state of 'nothingness' and can become a member of the community of circumcised men,

- a social status – a man can only be accepted as a man once he goes through the initiation custom,

- the acquisition of rights – until a Xhosa boy goes to the initiation school, his rights and responsibilities rests with his father,

- the conferral of responsibilities – in the Xhosa culture, it only a circumcised man who can be entrusted with responsibilities and be expected to be accountable, and

- access to privileges – these privileges include the following:
  - right to take part in family courts
  - right to inherit
  - right to act on behalf of one's father when needed

-       right to drink beer in public ceremonies without being pushed aside.

2.4.2   Understanding of the practise of 'ulwaluko' over the years

As indicated earlier, the 'ulwaluko' custom has evolved. Control of the custom and timing are the two aspects that are evidence of the evolution of the custom. The following section uses the two aspects, control and timing, as points of reference in the discussion of the current and traditional practices of 'ulwaluko'.

2.4.2.1 Control

The debate here shows that in the olden days 'ulwaluko' was the preserve of the traditional leaders who decided on when are the boys ready to go to the initiation school. Nowadays families (including boys themselves) largely decide on when a boy is going to the initiation school. However the government also has policies in place to control 'ulwaluko'.

i)   Traditional practices

In the Xhosa culture this custom was preserved by chiefs as boys had to wait for a son of a chief before they could go to the initiation school (Mhlahlo, 2009; Soga, 1989). Boys were assessed and told by the elders to see if they were ready to go to the initiation school. Before the year 2000 the control of this custom was solely the responsibility of traditional leaders (Ngwane, 2002).

31

ii)   Current practices

'Ulwaluko' custom has drawn a lot of media attention in recent years as there have been media reports that boys as young as twelve years were going to the initiation school. There have also been a lot of fatalities that were claimed to be as a result of failed circumcision. In response to this the government had to intervene through the passing of the Application of Health Standards in Traditional Circumcision Act No. 6 of 2001. According to this Act a boy who is younger than 21 years must have a consent form signed by parents before he can go to initiation school. This Act was put in place to address the challenges that are facing the custom from a health perspective. On the other hand, while ulwaluko is practised by more than five cultures whose languages are part of South Africa's eleven official languages, the South African Schools Act is quiet about the male initiation custom in schools.

In addition to the Act discussed above, the Children's Act 35 of 2005 was introduced to prohibit children below the age of 16 from being subjected to traditional circumcision that is detrimental to their well- being. The Act also protects them from discrimination, exploitation and any other physical, emotional or moral harm, (Maseko, 2008). However there seems to be disparities between legislation and reality.

According to the South African Constitution, the initiates have the following rights:
- Section 27(1) guarantees the initiate's right to health care,
- Section 10 guarantees the initiate's right to dignity,
- Section 9 guarantees the initiate's right to equality,

- Section 11 guarantees the initiate's right to life,

- Section 12 (2) (b) guarantees the initiate's right to freedom and security of a person, and

- Section 14 provides for the initiation's right to privacy.

It is against this background that the South African government felt that an intervention was necessary to protect the constitutional rights of the initiates despite the objections from the traditional leaders. While it is the people's constitutional right to practise traditional circumcision, the state has a right to interfere when people do not comply with the Constitution (Maseko, 2008).

There is evidence of discrimination against boys who choose to be circumcised by medical doctors in hospital instead of by 'ingcibi' and who take the traditional route of going to the initiation school. This has drawn a lot of media attention to the custom in recent months when a teenager from King William's Town took his father to the Bisho High Court for forcing him to re-do the circumcision three months after he had done the operation in hospital, (JASA, 14 October 2009). The victory of this young man in court has opened a new debate on issues of our culture that were seen to be violating human rights in the past. Issues concerned with 'ulwaluko' were traditionally preserved for the traditional leaders within the Xhosa culture. The judgement suggests that now they can be debated in courts outside the traditional realm.

Health issues have also been raised as some of the challenges that are facing the male initiation custom. According to Stinson (2008) the circumcision ritual can sometimes put the young men's lives at risk of contracting STDs and HIV/AIDS.

Some of the young men end up in hospital or die from circumcision wounds, while others lose their manhood. These incidents drew a lot of media attention to the custom in recent years and have turned the ritual into a health issue. Stinson (2008) have identified five main factors that might contribute to these fatalities:

- inadequate training of the traditional surgeon (ingcibi),

- use and re-use of traditional surgical instrument (umdlanga),

- youth being sexually active at an early age exposing them to STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases),

- inefficiency of the traditional nurse (ikhankatha) to give aftercare during the initiation period, and

- dehydration caused by change in climatic factors and the use of plastic building material when building the initiates' lodges especially during the hot summer months.

When complications occur in the initiation school, taking the initiates to the hospital for medical assistance is seen as the last resort. According to research done by Crowley and Kesner (1990), there is evidence that some initiates die in hospital while others leave the hospital with penile deformity and lifelong physical scars of abuse they have endured in the initiation school. Those who survive in hospital also face being stigmatised by the community; their manhood will be questioned as going to hospital is seen as a sign of weakness. When the wound does not heal, it is assumed that the initiate has done something wrong and, therefore, is being punished by the ancestors. This is also seen as a sign of elimination of the weaklings from the society (Mentjies, 1998). No complications or loss of life was reported about the boys who

choose to be circumcised in hospital. From the above debates one can deduce that the control of the custom no longer solely rest in the hands of the traditional leaders; it is also guided by legislation since 2001.

2.4.2.2   Timing

As indicated earlier, traditionally 'ulwaluko' was the preserve of traditional leaders. They did not only decide on who goes to the initiation school but also decided on the age and the duration of the initiates' stay in the initiation school. It is however revealed in this section that nowadays the decision on when and how long should the initiates stay in the initiation school is decided by their parents.

i)   Traditional practices

Stinson (2008) argues that no particular age is specified for boys to undergo the initiation ritual hence the age varies from 16 to 25 years. Mentjies (1998) further states that the 16-25 age group is currently an acceptable age for a boy to undergo the initiation custom amongst the Xhosa speaking communities. Also on this issue, Soga (1989:85) states that; *"…amakhwenkwe la ebesoluswa ebede abe neendevu kusalindwe unyaka omhle nolungileyo emasimini..."* This implies that in the past the initiation school was for mature boys. Moreover, as discussed above, the boys were assessed and told by the elders to see if they were ready to go to the initiation school and the control of this custom was solely the responsibility of traditional leaders (Ngwane, 2002).

Ngwane (2002) states that in the past the initiates would stay in the bush for up to six months but that has changed now because of work and school demands. Traditionally circumcision was done during the winter months as it was seen as the best time for healing (Ngwane, 2002), hence the years of manhood are referred to as 'izilimela'

ii)   Current practices

Currently, the Application of Health Standards in Traditional Circumcision Act No. 6 of 2001 states that any boy who is younger than 16 years cannot go to initiation school. This Act is trying to put an emphasis on the average age of initiation, to reduce the number of fatalities as a result of the exposure of very young boys to the initiation custom. According to the Act the official age for a boy to undergo the initiation ritual is 18yrs of age. A minimum age for which the parents needs to obtain special permission to send a boy who is younger than the official minimum age to the initiation school is 16 years. However there seems to be disparities between legislation and reality. There is evidence that nowadays boys as young as 13 years old go to the initiation school and no official permission is sought (Duka-Ntshweni, 2009; Papu & Verster, 2006).

Currently the period that the initiates stay in the bush varies from three to six weeks. This period accommodates boys who are still of a school going age, who can only undergo the custom during school holidays. Nowadays most boys go to the initiation school either during the July or the December holidays. The following section focuses on the stages of the initiation custom.

2.4.3 Stages of the initiation custom

In the Xhosa culture, 'ulwaluko' is seen as a process, not an event, Purnell (2005). This process goes beyond the physical operation (circumcision), hence the three stages of 'ulwaluko' are described below. According to Gitywa (1976:178); Papu & Verster (2006) and Stinson (2008), the initiation process is divided into three stages, namely, separation, transition and incorporation. Papu & Verster states that, "Among the Xhosa speaking tribes if a man is to consider himself as a man he must have gone through these stages." Below the three stages will be explained as described by Papu & Verster (2006).

2.4.3.1   Separation stage

The stage before separation is characterised by a wild behaviour from boys who are about to go to the initiation school. According to Mhlahlo (2009:151) this roaming around the village or township in torn clothes is called 'ukukhonya'. When the moment of circumcision arrives the boy is escorted by initiated men to the circumcision spot, where he is circumcised (Mhlahlo, 2009:152).

The separation stage is also referred to as the surgical operation stage where, after the operation, the initiate is separated completely from the community and taken to his lodge (ibhuma or ithonto). Gitywa (1976:180) refers to this stage as an "irreversible symbol" of social maturity of an individual. This means that once a boy undergoes the male initiation custom he is expected to act as a responsible adult; he

can no longer go back and do the things he did as a boy. The next stage after separation is the transition stage which will be discussed in the next section.

2.4.3.2   Transition stage

This stage, also known as the seclusion stage, takes place immediately after the operation (Papu and Verster, 2006). The newly initiated man is isolated from the world to allow a smooth transition from boyhood to manhood. The isolation of boys from the society and family, especially their mothers, is supposed to break the maternal bonds so that they are taught about survival as men without the influence of their mothers. Gitywa, (1976:180) emphasizes the importance of this ritual amongst the Xhosa people by saying, "Circumcision is an irreversible symbol of the social maturity of the individual."

It is during the transition or seclusion stage that the young initiate is taught about manhood, and the norms and values of his culture. During this period the initiates are under the full supervision of the ancestors through the guidance of a traditional nurse or *'ikhankatha'* (a respectable man in the community who is chosen by the elders to take care of them). They should show respect by abstaining from the use of any drugs and sexual intercourse (Magubane, 1998).   Initiates are also supposed to be taught about bravery as men are supposed to fight wars to protect the nation and their families. As part of their training they are not supposed to show any sign of fear or pain during the operation otherwise they will be ridiculed for the rest of their lives (Gitywa, 1976:181). To disguise the pain they must cry out; "Ndiyindoda!" which means "I am a man!" Mavundla, (2009) refers to the "endurance of the pain as an

essential part of the ritual" as it "serves to test the individual's bravery." The seclusion stage is followed by the incorporation stage which is the final stage of the initiation process.

2.4.3.3   Incorporation stage

The incorporation stage is the final stage which is also referred to as the coming-out ceremony. This is a time of celebration for the family as their son is graduating and is ready for full incorporation back into the community. During the coming-out ceremony, the newly graduated initiate will be anointed by a well behaved and respected man in the community. According to Gitywa (1976); Mhlahlo (2009) this is done with the hope that the good qualities of the man will rub off onto the young man. The young man will also look up at the old man as a role model.

 This is a special time for the whole family, especially for the mothers as they are not allowed to make any contact with their sons during the initiation period. In some cultures like the Sotho tribes, if an initiate dies in the initiation school, he will be buried there and his family will not be told until the coming out ceremony. When the others come back, his new blanket will be folded and given back to his family.

The following section focuses on important rituals that take place during the initiation process. 'Ukungcama' and 'ukojiswa' are amongst the important rituals that are linked to the initiation process and will be discussed in the next paragraph.

2.4.3.4   Rituals involved in the initiation custom

The Xhosa people have a strong belief in rituals as there is a general belief that rituals are used to communicate with the ancestors. Ancestors are the elders of the family who passed away and whose main role is to protect and give guidance to the whole family. It is believed that ancestors can also punish people who fail to do the rituals that are expected of them. The initiation custom is characterised by a number of rituals. These rituals are all important as each has a specific meaning attached to it. A ritual called 'umguyo' or 'umgubho' is held by boys the night before a boy goes to the initiation school. This serves as a farewell from boyhood as the boy will come back from the bush with a new identity as a man. On the day of the initiation everything the boy used from blankets to old clothes is be taken away to be given to siblings. According to Mhlahlo (2009) the boy will then go to the kraal where his hair is shaved and this is done to cut any ties that may link him to his past as a boy as now he is moving to a new status of manhood. This is referred to as the shaving of the head. The whole process is called 'ukungena'.

The communication between the living and the ancestors in the Xhosa culture is done, amongst other forms, through the sacrifice of animals and the brewing of the traditional beer; 'umqombothi'. A goat is slaughtered for the ritual of 'ukungcama' and a strip of meat that is cut from the right foreleg (umkhono) called 'isiphika' will be slightly roasted with no salt for the initiate to eat (Gitywa, 1976:179) This ritual is done to present the boy to the ancestors and to ask them to protect the initiate during the seclusion period. The boy will then be accompanied by men to the bush where the actual operation, 'ukwaluka', will take place. The boy must wash his body with

cold water in a stream just before the operation to cool his blood to avoid excessive bleeding and to cleanse the boy of any impurities that he might have just before the ritual (Gitywa, 1976: 180). After the actual operation and bandaging by the traditional surgeon, 'ingcibi', the initiate is accompanied to his lodge where he is supervised for the first three days by the traditional nurse, 'ikhankatha'.

The first eight days are the most crucial in an initiate's life as they can lead to a successful or a botched circumcision. During this time the initiate is deprived of well cooked meal and water and only fed on half cooked whole grain mealies without salt. This is aimed at facilitating the healing process of the wound and to teach him about endurance as a man. During this period the initiate is confined to his lodge and can only go out at night to relieve himself. The end of this period is marked by the ritual of 'ukojiswa', which is performed to allow the initiate to eat normal food and be allowed to go out of his lodge during the day to go hunting or visit other fellow initiates in the neighbourhood (Mhlahlo, 2009).

Gitywa (1976) also states that the coming out ceremony, 'umphumo', is also characterised by a number of rituals like washing at the river, where the initiates wash their bodies under the supervision of ikhankatha and other young men from the village. After washing the white ochre they are now referred to as amakrwala. The anointing of amakrwala is done by respectable men in the community, burning of the lodge and the ceremony of 'ukuyalwa' (giving some words of wisdom to newly initiated men) where the newly graduated initiate is given back to the parents and the society at large as a new man called 'ikrwala'. A brief report will also be given about the young man's behaviour in the bush.

2.4.4 Educational significance of 'ulwaluko'

While looking on the educational value of the initiation process, Mbiti (1990) as cited in Mtuze (2004): Duku, (2006) states that initiation rites have a great educational purpose. They often mark the beginning of acquiring knowledge which is otherwise not accessible to those who have not been initiated.

Stinson (2008) and Mhlahlo, (2009) states that it is in the initiation school that boys are taught about manhood, enabling them to "make the shift from childhood behaviour to the more complex behaviour expected in adulthood." In the initiation school the young men are also taught about their cultural responsibilities, expected conduct as men in the community, courtship and marriage. Initiated men are expected to behave in a socially acceptable manner in the community. Stinson (2008) further states that, "Men who have been through initiation are distinguishable by their social behaviour and a particular behaviour they learn during their time in the bush." South Africa's former president, Dr Nelson Mandela, in his autobiography (Purnell, 1995) refers to the circumcision ritual as not just a surgical procedure but a lengthy and elaborate ritual in preparation for manhood. Other scholars like Finlayson (1998) and Kallaway (2002) who have looked at the male initiation custom have found the following educational value:

2.4.4.1   Language implications

According to Gitywa (1976); Finlayson (1998) and Duku (2006), there is a special language that is known as 'isihlonipho sabakhwetha' that is used in the initiation school. This language is used for the following reasons:

- a sign of respect to the ancestors,
- to distinguish the initiated from the uninitiated,
- use the terminology for self identification, and
- differentiate between the authentic and the unauthentic men.

Apart from the special language that they are taught, they are also taught about the responsibilities that are expected from them as initiated men when they go back to the community.

2.4.4.2   Responsibilities of an initiated Xhosa man

Stinson, (2008), as already quoted before, states that in the initiation school the initiates are taught about their culture, social responsibility, courtship and marriage. Initiation is also aimed at developing other character traits like courage, strength, fortitude and forbearance and that is done through deprivation and exposure to a harsh regime (WHO, 2008:20).

According to Ngwane (2002), "…the initiation transformed the otherwise socially marginalised boys into political subjects, it amounted to making public figures out of

private dependants and the production of social subjects whose loyalty rested with the chief." Buso & Meissner (2007) state that initiation gives men greater rights and responsibilities. They further argue that an initiated man gains a higher standing in society and can now sacrifice to his ancestors on behalf of his family. Cultural responsibility, social behaviour, procreation and the ability to enter into legal binding agreements are some of the responsibilities that are discussed in the next session.

i. Cultural responsibilities and social behaviour

Upon their return from the bush the newly initiated men should behave in a socially acceptable manner and refrain from anti-social behaviour as that is tolerated only amongst boys. According to Woods and Jewkes (1998:33), as cited in the WHO case study, the initiates are taught that defining characteristics of masculinity are respect for others and non-violence. Mwamwenda (1993:300) concurs by stating that amongst their lessons initiates are also taught that "children settle their problems with sticks while adults use the law." This seems to imply that initiated men are discouraged from using any form of violence to settle their scores. Contrary to this, there is a concern about the level of violence that is used to enforce the teachings in the initiation schools as it is reported that physical abuse is the norm, administered to the initiates by those who have undergone the custom before them (Crowley & Kesner, 1990). This could sometimes encourage the abuse of power against those who are seen to be weaker in strength.

ii.   Procreation

The next logical step after initiation in the Xhosa culture is marriage. Marriage and fatherhood are some of the privileges that are reserved for men who have been to the initiation school. Traditionally man were (and still are) seen as heads of the families whose main responsibility was to support their wives and children. A man who has not been to the initiation school will always be seen as a boy even if he is fifty years old and no woman would like to carry the stigma of being a boy's wife. This is confirmed by Mtuze (2004), when he says that in the past, initiation was seen as the public affirmation of manhood, independence from one's father's house and a challenge to build one's own house.

Mtuze (2004) also supports the above view by saying, ''The uncircumcised is considered a boy all his life, may not take part in the councils and deliberations of men and is looked down by women and may not marry.'' Holomisa, chairman of the organization of traditional leaders, Contralesa (as cited in Male circumcision in Africa, www.circlist.com/rites/african) strongly discourages any Xhosa man who does not want to undergo the ritual.

iii.   Ability to enter into legal binding agreements

Purnell (1995) also emphasises the importance of 'ulwaluko'. He states that an uncircumcised man cannot be heir to his father's wealth, cannot marry or officiate in tribal rituals as this ritual represents the formal incorporation of boys into the society.

The importance of the male initiation custom in the Xhosa culture cannot be over emphasised.

2.4.5 'Ulwaluko' and schooling

The first section of this chapter examined the home, the school and community as the key structures for the socialisation of a child. It has been established that while there seems to be commonalities in the way 'amakrwala' are treated at home and in the community, there seems to be some tensions in the school environment. The following section examines some of the tensions.

2.4.5.1 Exclusion of learners from participating fully in school activities

Duku (2006:165) raises a relevant argument about how this tradition sometimes excludes learners from participating fully in school activities. She cites an example of how an uncircumcised student leader in Dimbaza, was refused participation in initiation related debates that were meant to guide policy development at school. The issue of initiation comes with big challenges in the school context. Duka-Ntshweni (2009) reveals that there is evidence that some of these young men are struggling to fit into the school and society at large. At school they do not want to take part in extra mural activities. They are sometimes undermined by older boys and they have to constantly demand respect and remind everybody that they are now men. Some of them even drop in their school performance and end up repeating grades. The changing times sometimes put a strain on the traditional way of doing things, hence

the contradictions between traditional and modernity are discussed on the next section.

2.4.5.2   Contradictions between the two 'schools' (modern school versus the traditional school)

As indicated earlier, traditionally the initiation custom was build around the chief. The fact that local boys had to wait for a son of a chief before going to the initiation school is a clear indication of this (Soga, 1989:85). Stinson (2008) states that, "Initiation was seen as the formal incorporation of males into the Xhosa religion and tribal life." The young men were taught about their responsibilities in the community so that they could plough back into the community. In the Xhosa culture men were seen as heads of the families and they had the final word in decisions to be taken around their households. When a son returns from the initiation school, he was expected to help the father with decision making, sometimes without involving the mother. This meant that initiated men were automatically given more power and status in the community than women, regardless of their age.

However, Ngwane (2002:278) cites that when formal schooling started, it posed a threat to the society:

> ... unlike the initiation ritual, its own graduates marched to the opposite direction at the end of their tenure, from the community to the wider world. The school did not produce the kind of subjects the local community could retain, but instead, a brood of bilingual subjects the reach of whose journey was to be beyond the horizons of the traditionally possible.

47

The school was seen as the medium through which the young people were lost to their communities from the way they saw things to how they dressed. The formal school also gave voice to the women who were now able to challenge certain decisions taken by men (Ngwane, 2002:278).

It is evident that there are similarities between the first space, which is the home, and the second space, which is the community in which 'amakrwala' find themselves on their return from the initiation school. However, there seems to be tensions in the third space, which is the school environment. Hence the following section makes comparisons on the different types of leadership styles to suggest an approach which can be culturally responsive and be responsive to the needs of 'amakrwala'.

2.5   Conceptualisation of Educational Leadership and Management

Debates on school leadership and management styles will be examined with the aim of ascertaining their relevance/suitability for supporting 'amakrwala' and cultural competence in schools. The link between this study and leadership is how school leaders and managers can provide a cultural competent environment which would also accommodate the needs of amakrwala.

According to Gardener (1993), the term 'leadership' is commonly used in schools as a synonym for top management. This assumption discourages the other members of the organisation as they automatically assume that all crucial decisions are the responsibility of a few individuals. Gardner (1993) further defines leadership as the ability of a leader or leadership team to persuade the group to pursue the objectives

of the leader or the team. Wasserberg (2000:158) as cited in Bush (2003) refers to the role of a leader as the ability to unify people around key values. In Ryan's (2008) view, Leaders should have the ability to look at the future and the current situation at the same time. Leaders should not only create the vision and strategy of the organisation, they should also be able to sell it to all the stakeholders so that they own it.

Management, on the other hand, is the ability to implement the vision and strategy of the organisation. To achieve that, managers must organise, develop plans and give direction to the organisation. They are also responsible for leading and motivating staff members to deliver their best. Finally, they have to set performance standards so that people know what is expected of them. Both leaders and managers should have good interpersonal skills for the success of the organisation. While we understand that not all managers are leaders, their common desire is the achievement of the goals of the organisation (Tayeb, 1996). Hence the following section will discuss different leadership and management styles in an attempt to identify a leadership and management style that can be sensitive to the needs of 'amakrwala'.

2.5.1 Leadership and management styles

The leadership style affects the way people feel about working with a particular leader. In order for a leader to achieve the best results in the organisation he/she must create a positive climate that will enable people to give their best. There are

various types of leadership and management styles and some of the commonly used are summarised in the following table.

Leadership Style	Features
Autocratic	Tells people what to do
Benevolent autocrat	Sells his ideas to others
Participatory Democrat	Shares the decision making process with others
Consultative Democrat	Consults with others before making his decision
Laissez-faire	People do as they wish
Transactional leadership	Compromise between stressing organisational demands and individual needs
Servant leadership	Placing the organisational and people's needs above the leader's desires.
Affiliative leadership	People come first
Visionary leadership	Come with me
Coaching leadership	Try this

Table 2.5.1 Leadership Styles

Table 2.5.1 above gives a summary of the commonly used leadership and management styles and they will be further discussed to try and look for a leadership style which might somehow accommodate the needs of amakrwala in schools. The following section is going to compare the different leadership and management styles in an attempt to identify one that might be sensitive to the needs of 'amakrwala'.

2.5.1.1   The autocratic and the benevolent autocrat

The autocratic leader decides alone and expects total compliance. He has little or no confidence and trust in his subordinates. He uses threats to ensure that his orders are followed. This is a type of leadership that rules by fear. The autocratic leader is concerned about protecting his power and usually takes any opposing argument as a personal attack. This might lead to disillusionment amongst the team members as they might feel unimportant and as if their contribution in the organisation is not needed. Initiative, new ideas, individual and group development can be sacrificed (Rabinowitz, 2012). Despite the negative characteristics highlighted above, autocratic leadership has its advantages. This can be a decisive and effective leadership which provides a stable and secure environment where everyone knows exactly what they are supposed to do.

In the initiation school the initiates are taught about the responsibilities they have as leaders of their communities and heads of their households. When they come back from the initiation school they are usually consulted at home for certain decisions that are made. As initiated men they are not told what to do, instead issues are negotiated with them. The autocratic leadership style would contradict what they were taught because it would take them back to the receiving position they had as boys. This might sometimes lead to conflict between them and the authorities as they might challenge the authority to demand the recognition of their new status.

Another type of the autocrat is the benevolent autocrat. The benevolent autocrat is similar to the autocrat as he also sees himself as the superior figure who makes all

the important decisions in an organisation. The difference is that he does not force his decisions on people; instead he/she convinces them to go along. He sometimes allows his/her subordinates to make some decisions. The leader also uses rewards and punishment to motivate people.

The benevolent autocratic style might give 'amakrwala' some sense of responsibility by involving them in some decision making. This might give them some leadership experience in a controlled environment. Although 'ulwaluko' elevates 'amakrwala' to an adult status, most of them are still children who still need some parental guidance.

2.5.1.2   The participatory and the consultative democrats

In the democratic style of leadership everybody's view or voice is heard. We have two types of democrats, the participatory and the consultative democrats. The participatory democrat involves all the stakeholders in decision making and takes the majority decision as final. The weakness of that system is that the majority decision might not always be the best and, if something goes wrong, the leader will take the fall as an individual. The consultative democrat, on the other hand, consults and communicates with all stakeholders but he/she will have the final say. He/she understands that as the leader he/she is the accounting officer.

The participatory democratic leadership style can succeed with responsible people, who know what they are supposed to do. It might be difficult to manage a school with this type of management alone, as learners need some strong guidance and control from the management and staff. The consultative democratic style might be a better

option though with the management of 'amakrwala' as getting them involved in some decision making might instil a sense of responsibility amongst them.

2.5.1.3 Laissez–faire leadership

The laissez-faire leadership style is where the leader takes a "hands off" approach and it allows the subordinates to work on their own to achieve a set of goals. This approach involves little direction and lots of freedom from the leader. This style could work well with highly skilled and capable people who know what they are supposed to do and have the motivation and drive to do it. It can be a disaster where team members do not have the experience or lack the motivation they need to complete a particular task (Cherry, 2012).

Although 'amakrwala' are elevated to an adult status, most are still children who might not be able to drive themselves to do what needs to be done to succeed at school. The laissez faire does not seem like a type of leadership that can be sensitive to the needs of 'amakrwala' as they need a lot of guidance and support from the teachers as well.

2.5.1.4 Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership is based on transactions between leaders and followers. According to Burns (1985) as cited in Rabinowitz (2012), transactional leadership "sees human relations as a series of transactions." People are expected to do only what they are told and paid to do; they are not encouraged to share their ideas. This

style of leadership is similar to the autocratic leadership style in the sense that the leadership expects complete compliance on the side of the subordinates. The transactional leadership style, like the autocratic leadership style, might not be sensitive to the needs of 'amakrwala'.

2.5.1.5 Servant and affiliative leadership

Woodruff (2004) as cited in Cerit (2009) describes servant leadership as an attitude of leading others from a perspective of placing the organisational purpose, the needs of the organisation and the needs of people over the needs and desires of the leader. Laub (1999) summarises the characteristics of a servant leader as someone who puts value on people as individuals, the ability to sacrifice one's self for others. This is done through developing people and building strong relations with them.

The servant leadership style has received a lot of criticism from Johnson (2001) and Bowie (2000) as cited in Cerit (2009) who associates the term "servant" with slavery. In Johnson's (2001) view, servant leadership seems to be unrealistic, encourages passivity and cannot always work in every context. Bowie (2000) also associates servant leadership with being naïve, passive, weak and unrealistic.

The affiliative leadership style is similar to the servant leadership style where leaders put emphasis on personal relationships above task completion. This is done to keep people happy and in harmony with each other. Although both the servant and affiliative leadership styles seem to be putting people's interests first, they cannot be used as the only style of leadership in schools. This is especially with putting

emphasis on human relations above task completion while the success of any organisation depends on task completion.

2.5.1.6   Visionary leadership

The visionary leader moves people towards a shared picture of success. The vision of the organisation is clearly defined for all stakeholders and they are motivated and inspired to work together towards achieving it. The coaching style is slightly related to the visionary style because here also people are motivated to give their best and improve their performance. To achieve good results leaders need to be patient and also listen to the needs of the people. They should also bear in mind that individuals will progress at a different pace. Human beings also need to be given feedback, recognition and praise when due.

2.6   Conclusion

Based on the critical examination of the leadership styles done above, one would pose the following question: What leadership style can be sensitive to the needs of 'amakrwala'? Could it be the autocratic or transactional leadership, where one person makes all the decisions? Could it be the servant, the visionary or the affiliative leadership style, where the leader puts the people first? Maybe the democratic leadership style, where all the stakeholders' views are taken into consideration?

The answer to the above question is that there is no perfect leadership style; the leadership style depends on the circumstances on the ground. In most cases a

successful leader will be the one who does not have a rigid leadership style, but is flexible and will use a combination of different styles depending on the need. We are looking for a leadership style in schools that will engage newly graduated initiates, acknowledge their new identity, find out about their expectations and accommodate them. What the school expects from them must be clearly explained to them. They must also be made to understand that as initiated men they should behave in an exemplary manner, respecting others and, in return, others will respect them (Bush, 2003).

Literature indicates the benefits of stakeholder participation in education. All stake holders, teachers, parents and learners should be involved in the crafting of the vision and mission of the school. The vision and mission of the school should be clearly discussed with all the stakeholders in the school so that everybody knows where the school is going. All stake holders should be made wary of their diversity, acceptance and respecting each other's differences and integrating that to the school's leadership and leadership style. However in practise this does not always happen. Learners can also be given an opportunity to come up with ideas on how the school's goals can be achieved.

The school leadership and management teams could take advantage of the new status of 'amakrwala' and give them extra responsibilities in the school as that is what is also expected of them in the community. In implementing this, the manager must apply caution though as this might create some conflict amongst other learners as they might feel that 'amakrwala' are given a preferential treatment by the teachers.

The literature reviewed in this chapter examines 'ulwaluko' from a traditional as well as a modern perspective. The hybridity and the social identity theories on which this study is based are also discussed. The historical and the socio-contextualisation of 'ulwaluko' is also done. The tensions between the traditional 'ulwaluko' and modern schooling are also raised. There is also a discussion on the socialisation of children in the three contexts, home, community and school. Lastly, an analysis on a leadership style that could be responsive to the needs of 'amakrwala' in schools was made. The following chapter discusses the research methodology that was used for this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology that are used in this study. This is a qualitative study which used phenomenology as a research design. Interviews were used as the data gathering instruments and the different types of interviews are briefly discussed below. Deliberations are also made on the reasons the researcher believes this to be the best approach for this study. Discussion on sampling and data analysis is also made. In the following section the research paradigm will be examined.

3.2   Research paradigm: interpretivism

Groenewald (2004:6) define a research paradigm as a basic set of beliefs that guide action. William (1998) further states that a paradigm "provides a conceptual framework for seeing and making sense of the social world." This study has adopted the interpretivism research paradigm as it deals with the interpretation of the experiences of 'amakrwala' as learners at a secondary school level. According to Gephart (1999), the interpretivism paradigm deals with the social world as culturally derived and historically situated. Through this study the researcher has tried to get into the world of being *'ikrwala'* and understand things from their perspective.

The interpretive research paradigm aims at understanding a human phenomenon. Ajjawi & Higgs (2007:613) argues that:

> the interpretive research paradigm is based on the 'epistemology' (the philosophy and theory of knowledge, which seeks to define it, distinguish its principal varieties, identify its sources and establish its limits) of idealism where knowledge is viewed as a social construction whose central goal is to interpret the social world.

Crotty (1998) further states that "Human beings are unique individuals who construct meanings in their own way influenced by their context and personal frames of reference as they engage with the world they are interpreting." Through using the interpretivism paradigm, the researcher will be able to interpret the experiences of 'amakrwala' and see things from their perspective. The next section discusses the overall research approach.

3.3   Overall research approach: qualitative

This study has followed a qualitative research approach which is concerned with exploring people's everyday behaviour and life histories and also provides a deeper understanding of social phenomena, (Silverman, 2000). Bryman (1992) as cited in Silverman (2000) argues that "Qualitative research follows a theoretical rather than a statistical logic." The focus of this study is on investigating the experiences of Xhosa 'amakrwala' as learners at secondary school level.   The qualitative research approach seems to be appropriate for this study as Bless, Higson-Smith & Kagee, (2006) state that the qualitative research approach makes the use of words and

descriptions to record the aspects of the world. The use of language provides a more meaningful way of recording human experience.

According to Wertz (2001), qualitative research methods have made a seminal contribution to psychology over the past century by eminent researchers such as William James, Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, Abraham Maslow and Hebb Simon. These methods were formalised in recent decades and made available to the academic curriculum for training researchers. The development of various qualitative research methods since the 1970s in education settings has led to what is termed as 'the qualitative revolution'.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) further state that qualitative research is a multi-method in focus which involves studying of things in their natural environment in an attempt to make sense of or interpret phenomena according to the meanings people bring to them. The researcher aims at capturing aspects of the social world for which it is difficult to develop precise measures expressed as numbers (Neuman, 1994). Golafashani (2003) as cited in Bashir, Afzal & Azeem, (2008) defines qualitative research as a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand the phenomena under investigation in its real world without manipulating its context. Phenomenology as a research design is discussed on the next section.

3.4 Research design: phenomenology

A research design is a plan or blueprint of how one intends to conduct research. It provides a set of guidelines and instructions on how to reach the goals the researcher has set for himself or herself (Mouton, 2001).

Denscombe (1998) and Arminio, Jones & Torres (2006) state that phenomenology focuses on how life is experienced by people who live it; and it encourages the researcher to put aside personal beliefs and look at life through the eyes of the participants. In support of the above statements, Welman & Kruger (1999) as cited in Groenewald (2004) describe phenomenology as the understanding of social and psychological phenomena from the perspective of the people involved.

Groenewald (2004) further associates phenomenology with the way ordinary people live on a daily basis focusing mainly on their lived experiences. According to the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, phenomenology studies the structure of various types of perceptions, thought, memory, imagination, desire and action. These experiences are classified through description, interpretation and analysis of the experiences.

Finlay (2006:8) states that, "Phenomenological research is phenomenological when it involves both rich description of the life world or lived experience, and where the researcher has adopted a special open phenomenological attitude which refrains from importing external frameworks and sets aside judgements about the realness of the phenomenon." Hammond *et al.* (1999) as cited in Cope (2003:2) also state that

phenomenology is description of things as one experiences them. Bogdan and Tailor (1975) as cited in Cope (2003:8) states that "The phenomenologist views human behaviour in what they say and do as how they interpret their world." A researcher therefore needs to capture the process of interpretation and try to see the world from the participant's point of view.

Phenomenology seems to be an appropriate design for this study because it allows the researcher to dig deep and focus on the feelings, interactions and experiences of 'amakrwala' as learners at a secondary school level (Hesse-Biber & Leary, 2004). According to van Manen (2006:62) the aim of using phenomenological research is to borrow other people's experiences to be able to understand what they are going through.

Cope (2003:11) states that:

> Phenomenological inquiry emphasises that a prior theoretical proposition and hypothesis should be bracketed in order to describe phenomena from the perspective of those who experience it. It is only then that an investigator can develop an authentic and holistic appreciation of a phenomenon in its own right, without being influenced by any theoretical presuppositions about what it should be rather than what it is actually like.

Giorgi (1986) as cited in Kuhn (2003) defines phenomenology as the study of how things appear to consciousness or are given in experience. In other words, how they are interpreted by the people who experience them, which might not necessarily be the way they are. Kvale (1996) as cited in Kuhn (2003) further states that

"Phenomenology attempts to get beyond immediately experienced meanings in order to articulate the pre-reflective level of lived meanings, to make the invisible visible and elucidating both that which appears and the manner in which it appears." The researcher should try to describe the phenomenon as accurately as possible and avoid using pre-conceived ideas or given frameworks (Kruger, 1998). The focus on phenomenology is on what the participants have to say about their experiences. The researcher is then free to ask questions from what emerges from the participants' information (Grant, 2005). The focus of this research is on the experiences of 'amakrwala' as learners and the researcher believes that through the phenomenological approach the participants will be able to share their feelings.

According to Wertz (2011) the phenomenological approach was developed by Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the 20th century (around 1913) for use in philosophy and the human sciences including psychology. In psychology this method aims at describing experiences and conceptualising the process and structure of mental life including the meaningful world that is lived through experience. Wertz (2011) further states that with phenomenology, the researcher must not have pre-existing theories, nor try to test hypotheses, or try to explain human experiences with reference to 'neurological or environmental' causes. The phenomenological approach should describe "what the experience under investigation is, with modes of apprehension and the significance of the lived situations" (Wertz, 2011). Wertz, (2011) further states that:

> Phenomenological knowledge, in articulating and offering insight into
>
> implicit and unknown characteristics of human experience, does not
>
> passively repeat the discourse of the research participants, draw on

common sense interpretations, or test prior psychological explanations
but aims for original knowledge that reflects disciplined psychological
knowing.

Pascal (2010), in acknowledging Husserl as the father of phenomenology, also encourages the issue of bracketing one's pre-conceived ideas about particular phenomena when undertaking phenomenological research. According to Pascal (2010), Husserl states that bracketing involves keeping away from one's own subjectivity and prejudgements and analysing the object as it appears. Pascal (2010) further states that Husserl's point of view was challenged by one of his students, Martin Heidegger, claiming that human beings are subjective naturally and therefore can never be separated from what they know. It was at this point that Husserl and Heidegger developed differing positions about phenomenology and the new concept was known as 'Heidegger's ontological difference'. The issue of bracketing was a challenge for the researcher as she already had some pre-conceived ideas about 'amakrwala' and how they were perceived generally at school. She had to be objective and keep an open mind and focus on what 'amakrwala shared with her as their experiences.

Pascal (2010) believed that human beings exist within a certain social context and therefore it is impossible to separate them from their experiences. Watts (2001) as cited in Pascal (2010), interprets Heidegger's meaning as, "... so I can never create myself anew, as I have to work with what I have been and what I am now, in order to become what I want to be in the future… ."   In order to address the issue of bracketing, Grant (2005) suggests that a researcher should lay out her pre-existing

ideas. This is done to make them to be as clear as possible to the researcher so that she might know every time they emerge during the research.

This study was approached from a phenomenological point of view in an attempt to get rich descriptions of the individuals' experiences. The researcher had to be cautious of her pre-existing knowledge about 'amakrwala' and only listen and record what was said by the participants during the interviews.

3.5   Sampling techniques

According to Wisker (2008) sampling is the selection and choosing of a group with whom you will carry out your research. Sampling as defined by Kumar (2005) is a process of selecting a few from a bigger group to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information regarding the bigger group. Tenge (2006) also describes sampling as choosing a fraction of a whole, of individuals to participate on a study based on their particular knowledge of the phenomenon for the purpose of sharing their knowledge.

3.5.1. Sampling of research sites

For this study purposive sampling was used because the focus was mainly on male learners who have recently graduated from the initiation school. Kumar (2005) states that purposive sampling allows the researcher to go only to those people who, in her opinion, are likely to have the required information and the willingness to share it. Babbie and Mouton, (2001) as cited in Mhlahlo (2009), refer to purposive sampling

as a type of sampling that is based on the researcher's knowledge of the population, its elements and the aims of the research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) further argue that in purpose sampling participants are "handpicked on the basis of the researcher's judgement on their possession of a particular characteristic being sought."

In this study the researcher has purposely chosen a high school in an urban township in the Buffalo City Municipality as a research site. The researcher used this site because it has 'amakrwala' and the entire population is Xhosa speaking. Moreover, the initiation custom is part of their culture and is not a foreign custom to both the learners and teachers.

The researcher used this site because Nicolas (1991) as cited in Oatey (1999) states that for phenomenological interviews to be successful the interviewer must develop a very good relationship between herself and the participants to enable them to share their experiences freely. Building a relationship of trust with the participants was a challenge and it took some time before some of the participants would open up and share some of their experiences freely. This could be because the researcher is a woman and issues of male initiation are not discussed with women in the Xhosa culture. Although the research was not conducted in the school where the researcher is working, somehow the participants knew she was a teacher. This might have caused uneasiness for the participants as they might have thought that the information shared with the researcher might be used against them by their teachers.

The researcher was aware, though, of the challenges she might encounter from investigating a topic that is male-dominated where sharing information with a female is seen as a taboo. The researcher had to refer the participants to the consent form where it is stated that the information shared with the researcher is confidential and will at no time be divulged to anyone.

3.5.2. Sampling of participants

Thomson (2008) provides criteria for the selection of participants for a phenomenological study. These criteria are as follows:

- participants should "have had experiences relating to the phenomenon being researched"
- participants should all be "verbally fluent and able to communicate their feelings, thoughts and perceptions"
- "participants should have a sense of commitment to the research"

Five 'amakrwala' between the ages of 15 and 18 were selected for this study. According to Mertens (2005) a sample of 4 to 6 participants is recommended for phenomenology. The ages 15 to 18 were chosen as the age group for the majority of high school learners. The sample met Stones' (1988) first criterion as all the participants have recently graduated from the initiation school and have experienced being 'amakrwala' and learners. The sample also met the second criterion as well because, although the research question was prepared in English, it was verbally explained in IsiXhosa to all the participants. The participants were also encouraged

to respond in the language of their choice, which was predominantly isiXhosa. To meet the third criterion, though, a lot of encouraging and motivation was done by the researcher to keep the participants committed to the research.

The researcher used amakrwala who have graduated in December 2010 from the initiation school. This group was appropriate because by the time the interviews were done in May they already had about three month's experience as learners and amakrwala at school. Initially the first interviews were done according to the different age groups to avoid possible intimidation due to age differentiation as ulwaluko is such a stratified custom. It was observed during the first interview that the participants were reluctant to share their experiences; hence the researcher resorted to doing individual interviews. The following paragraph indicates the criteria that was used for the inclusion of participants in the study.

3.5.3 The criteria for inclusion in the sample.

Participants had to be male learners who have undergone the Xhosa initiation rite of passage from boyhood to manhood during the 2010/ 2011 period. All participants had to belong to the Xhosa ethnic group as the focus of the study was on young Xhosa men who have recently graduated from the initiation school. The young men who went to the initiation school at this period were chosen because their experiences as "amakrwala" were still fresh in their minds. It was explained to the participants that participation in the study was voluntary and they were free to withdraw from the study at any stage. This point was among the ethical issues (as will be discussed later in this chapter) that were explained to the participants before

the interviews. The importance of using a digital recorder for the collection of data during the interviews was also discussed with the participants before the interviews and consent was obtained. The following section is focusing on interviews as they were used as data gathering tools in this study.

3.6 Data gathering instruments: interviews

According to Zhang and Wildemuth (2006), "Interviews are a common tool to give the researcher a chance for a face to face interaction with the respondents." Wisker (2008) further supports this view by stating that interviews are the best tool when a researcher is looking for information based on emotions, feelings, experiences and sensitive issues.

Phenomenological interviews seem to be the best approach to capture human experience. They are highly unstructured and the course of the dialogue is largely set by the participant as the interviewer only provides the context in which the participants feel free to describe their experiences in detail (Cope, 2003). The participants were informed, though, at the beginning of the interview about the objectives of the research. Thompson *et al.* (2008) further state that the researcher should not impose any pre-existing framework on the interview process and should allow the participants to be the experts of their own experiences.

In qualitative research interviews are divided into three categories, structured, semi structured and unstructured interviews (Fontana and Frey, (1994) as cited in Zhang, 2006). A brief description of the different categories is done as follows:

3.6.1 Structured interviews

Structured interviews have a set of questions that are asked in the same sequence to all respondents. According to Wisker (2008) structured interviews are usually characterised by closed questions with clearly guided responses. The focus is mainly on the prescribed set of questions and expected answers and any additional information is ignored (Freebody, 2003). Although this might make analysis simpler, it might sometimes not gather feelings. Researchers are expected to adhere to a particular set of rules that is used to access people's experiences and their inner perceptions, attitudes and feelings of reality (Santiago, 2009). As the study is using the phenomenological approach, the researcher had to allow the participants to share their experiences from their perspective. Hence the structured interviews seemed not to be appropriate for this study. Semi-structured interviews are discussed on the next paragraph.

3.6.2 Semi structured interviews

Semi structured interviews are characterised by open-ended questions that allow the researcher flexibility to change the sequence of the questions based on that particular context (Wisker, 2008). Although this type of interview is more relaxed and friendly than the structured interviews, researchers are expected to cover each question in the protocol. The closed type of questions can also be used. According to Freebody (2003), they allow the researcher the benefit of using both structured and unstructured questions by establishing a core of issues to be covered and also allowing the interviewer to move freely around that core.

According to Hesse-Biber & Leary (2004) and Finlay (2006), in phenomenology the researcher is given an opportunity to dig deep and focus on the feelings, interactions and experiences. This makes structured and semi structured interviews inappropriate for this study as the researcher is using the phenomenological design, hence the unstructured interviews are discussed on the next section.

3.6.3 Unstructured interviews

The researcher intended to approach this study from a phenomenological point of view; therefore, unstructured interviews seemed to be the appropriate tool to gather information. According to Zhang (2006) the origin of unstructured interviews is in the field of anthropology and sociology. They were used to elicit people's social realities. There are various definitions of unstructured interviews. According to Zhang (2006) unstructured interviews can be defined as:

> ... an interview in which neither the questions nor the answer categories are predetermined. They rely on social interaction between the researcher and the informant to elicit information.

Punch (1998) describes unstructured interviews as, "a way to understand the complex behaviour of people without imposing any prior categorisation which might limit the field of enquiry."

Santiago (2009) states that, during unstructured interviews, the participants can relax and share their feelings as they would in a normal conversation. This might expose information that the researcher would not have covered when using the more

structured types of interviews. The researcher used a checklist highlighting areas that she wanted to cover during the interview.

Zhang (2006) regards unstructured interviews as:

> ... natural extensions of participant observation which relies entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction, typically an interview that goes as part of ongoing participant observation feedback.

From the above definitions one can conclude that in unstructured interviews researchers come to the interview with no pre-determined theoretical framework. They depend on their conversation with the respondents and can generate questions based on the respondents' narrations. As a result unstructured interviews might generate data with different structures and patterns. Zhang (2006) further states that unstructured interviews are aimed at "exposing researchers to unanticipated themes and to a better understanding of their respondents' social reality from their perspective."

Wimmer and Dominick (1997:156) as cited in Oatey (1999) argue that the open ended questions allow the researcher to ask probing questions from the initial response of the respondent. Through this technique the researcher is able to get rich data and it entirely depends on her how deep she can dig. The advantage of unstructured interviews is that where people want to share experiences it gives them the freedom to respond to the questions as they wish and that makes them feel in control of the interview (Oatey, 1999). Through this approach, the participants were

able share experiences that the researcher would not have thought of asking when using the structured interviews.

The interviews were one hour sessions and follow up interviews were done with each participant. A data gathering machine was used for data collection and the data was later transcribed into notes. Although the interviews were conducted in English, the researcher explained some areas in isiXhosa when the need arose. The participants were encouraged to respond in isiXhosa so that they could freely express their deepest thoughts. The next section discusses the challenges of unstructured interviews.

3.6.4 Challenges of unstructured interviews

Oatey (1999) states that one of the major disadvantages of open questions is that they might lead to confusion. He asserts that confusion might be due to the misunderstanding of the question by the respondent or misunderstanding of the respondent's response by the interviewer. Patton (2002) states that unstructured interviews can pose a major challenge, especially to inexperienced researchers. They can be time consuming as it takes time to gain trust, develop rapport and gain access to the interviewees. He further states that, especially for novice researchers, it might sometimes be difficult to "exert the right amount and type of control over the direction and pace of the conversation" (Patton, 2002). Another challenge regards the analysis of the data systematically. It becomes difficult to find the patterns within the data as questions that are asked in unstructured interviews greatly depend on the context (Patton, 2002). It might also be difficult for the researcher to set aside pre-

existing information as Heidegger (2008) claimed that human beings are subjective naturally and therefore can never be separated from what they know.

3.6.5 Challenges of using phenomenology as an approach and conducting phenomenology interviews

A major challenge was that of being a female researcher as it made it very difficult for the participants, who were all males, to share their experiences freely. This was a problem as phenomenological interviews are aimed at allowing the researcher to dig deep and focus on the feelings, interactions and experiences of the participants (Hesse-Biber & Leary, 2004). The researcher felt that most of the participants had difficulty in responding to questions where they had to express their feelings. This could arise from the way males are socialised in the Xhosa culture where they are discouraged from sharing their feelings openly, for example, where males are discouraged to cry even when they feel pain.

According to the Xhosa culture it is also seen as taboo to discuss with women issues that are related to male initiation (Mhlahlo, 2009). Another challenge was that, in order for phenomenological interviews to be successful, there must be a very good relationship between the interviewer and the participants to enable them to share their experiences freely (Nicolas, 1991 as cited in Oatey, 1999). It took a long time before a relationship of trust could develop between the researcher and the participants.

Phenomenological interviews are not a once-off occurrence: follow up interviews are necessary in order for one to get rich data. This has proven to be costly as the researcher had to meet the participants more than once and on more than one occasion the participants just did not turn up. The researcher had to re-schedule the interview appointments. The data is analysed in the next section.

3.7. Data analysis process

Social research is done as an attempt to answer a particular question or questions about a particular phenomenon (Blaikie, 2003). This is done through the collection of data. Blaikie (2003) further argues that once the data is collected it must be analysed. This is done to see how far data has gone in answering the research questions. In qualitative research, data analysis is an ongoing process; it occurs throughout the data collection process (Mertens, 2005). As indicated earlier, for this research the data was collected through unstructured interviews. Field notes and a tape recorder were used. The data analysis followed the thematic approach which involves the following:

- reading of the field notes from interviews,
- translation of the data from isiXhosa to English,
- transcription of data from the tape recorder,
- categorising the information into themes, and
- member checking.

In the thematic approach the data is categorised into themes. The themes came from the data that is collected from the participants throughout the interviews and is not imposed by the researcher. In the thematic approach the data collection and analysis takes place concurrently (Mertens, 2005). Upon completing the data analysis, the findings were shown to the participants (member checking). This gave the participants an opportunity to see if their experiences or views were correctly documented.

Gillham (2000) further suggests that to facilitate data analysis the researcher must write down all the information. This includes the main question, prompts and probes that were used during the interview. The steps that were followed during this study are discussed in the following section.

3.8. Negotiation of entry

The following procedure was followed to negotiate entry to the research sites:

Stage 1:   Gaining entry into schools

The researcher obtained a letter from the university stating the intention for the research. Permission was requested from the Eastern Cape Department of Education to conduct the research and was granted (Appendix B). A meeting was arranged with the school principal to discuss the focus of the research. After the meeting, consent letters were written to parents asking for their permission to interview their children.

Stage 2:   Permission to conduct the research at school level

In order for the research to take place the researcher had to meet with the stakeholders, namely, the principal, learners and parents, to discuss the aim of the research.

- Principal

  The researcher had a meeting with the school principal to discuss the focus of the research. The researcher also asked the principal to grant her permission to conduct the research in the school. She also stated to the principal that the research will not interfere with the learners' school work as the interviews would take place after school at a time that would be agreed upon by her and the participants. With the assistance from the principal, the learners who were 'amakrwala' were identified.

- Learners

  The purpose of the research was explained to the learners who were identified to participate in the research. They were then asked to participate in the research. The ethical issues were also explained to them. The researcher negotiated the times that would suit them best for the conduction of the interviews. Participants were then provided with the consent forms that indicated that their participation in the study is voluntary.

▪ Parents

The researcher, through the learners, organised meetings with the individual parents at their homes to discuss the focus of the research. Parents were then supplied with consent letters, which they signed to grant permission for their children to participate in the study (Appendix D). The participants also signed their consent letters after the permission was granted by their parents, (Appendix C)

3.9. Ethical issues

A code of ethics has been developed and is recognised throughout the world to protect the rights of research participants from being violated, either intentionally or unintentionally, by researchers (Bless et al., 2006). Ethical issues can relate to the methodological principles underlying the research design, and they also relate to protecting the rights and privacy of individuals, (Blaxster et al., and 2006). They arise at all points in the research process and researchers are warned that they should recognise the complexity of ethical issues at all times. The following ethical issues, as discussed by Bless et al. (2006) and Wysocki (2004), were considered and explained to all the participants.

3.9.1. Confidentiality

Confidentiality can be defined as the protection of the participant's right to privacy, (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). This means that the researcher used the

information that was provided by the participants without divulging their true identity. The researcher also ensured that no clear link could be made between the findings and the identities of the participants. The true identities of the participants were not divulged to anyone; instead the pseudo names were used throughout the process of data gathering.

3.9.2. Anonymity

Anonymity is linked with confidentiality as the participants' identity is disguised to protect their true identity. When the researcher writes the findings, pseudo names are used to protect the true identity of the participants. Cohen et al. (2007) argues that with face to face interviews it is difficult to guarantee anonymity as the participants will be known to the researcher. Although the participant's true identity is known to the researcher, anonymity to the public can be guaranteed.

3.9.3. Informed consent

Informed consent gives individuals an opportunity to decide whether they want to participate in a research or not (Cohen, et al., 2007). This can be done after they have been informed about the facts on how their participation might affect them. Cohen et al. (2007) further states that consent can only be asked from a person who is capable of making his own decisions. Participants should be fully informed and under no circumstances be forced to participate in a study.

In this study the participants were informed beforehand about what the research was about and how the research might affect them, looking at the risks and benefits. They were also informed that they had a right to decline to participate if they felt uncomfortable.

3.9.4. Voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study

In this study, no participant was forced to participate. The participants were assured of their freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without giving any explanation.

3.10. Issues related to conducting a qualitative study

There are a number of aspects that need to be considered when conducting research. In conducting a qualitative research, validity, reliability and verification are some of the concepts that have to be taken into consideration, Buckler, Dolowiz and Seeney, 2008).

3.10.1 Validity: refers to whether your data collection tools are measuring what you think they are (Buckler, *et al*. 2008). A pilot study was conducted by the researcher. As a result of the pilot study the researcher was ensured that the measures and tools that were planned for this study would indeed respond to the research questions.

3.10.2 Reliability: refers to how accurate your data gathering methods are. A reliable technique allows you to repeat the measurements using the same technique and get the same result each time, (Buckler, Dolowitz and Sweeney, 2008). Cohen et al. (2007) regards reliability as "a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched." To ensure reliability, the tools were discussed with the supervisors.

Stenbank (2001) states that the concept of reliability is best suited to a quantitative study. Patton (year) further suggests that credibility, neutrality/ conformability, consistency/dependability, applicability/transferability are the most suitable terms in the qualitative paradigm.

Furthermore, Patton (2001) states that the credibility (validity and reliability) of the qualitative research depends on:

- techniques and methods used to ensure the integrity, validity and accuracy of the findings,
- what the researcher brings to the study in terms of experience and qualifications, and
- the assumptions that form the basis of the study.

Although some authors feel that the issue of validity and reliability are inappropriate for a qualitative study, Welsh (2002) argues that data analysis in qualitative research must be carried out in a transparent and thorough manner.

3.10.3 Verification

Morse et al. (2002) define verification as mechanisms used during the process of research to incrementally contribute to ensuring reliability and validity. It helps the researcher to identify when to stop and modify the research process to achieve reliability and validity and ensure vigour. The researcher realised that the study had reached the saturation stage when she got the same responses and nothing new from the participants.

3.11   Phases of data collection

Phase 1:   Conducting a pilot study

A pilot study is defined by Simon (2008) as "a model of your full research in a smaller scale." He classifies the reasons for doing a pilot study into two categories, to obtain data to help you plan your study and to see where Murphy's Law will strike. According to Simon (2008) Murphy's Law says that 'anything that can go wrong will go wrong' and a pilot study will help you to fix those problems before starting the main study. It also gives room to inexperienced researchers to make mistakes without the fear of messing up the real project (Shuttleworth, 2010, and Hundley & van Teijlingen, 2001).

According to Nyatanga (2005) and Hundley and van Teijlingen (2001), the pilot study does not guarantee the success of the main study but helps to improve the validity of the research tools and also establishes whether the sampling frame and technique are effective and in giving feedback. Shuttleworth (2010) also states that problems that were reported during a pilot study might sometimes stigmatise the whole study, which might create problems for the researcher. This might sometimes discourage researchers from reporting methodological errors, which might lead to the same mistakes being repeated by later researchers.

The pilot study was conducted in March. This pilot study helped the researcher to determine whether the techniques the researcher intends to use for the main study might work. For the pilot study the researcher used three amakrwala with the same characteristics as the ones that were used for the main study. Some lessons were learnt from the pilot study, like it was difficult to get participants to open up and talk about their feelings. Follow up interviews were necessary to enable participants to open up more. The researcher also established that appointments were not always honoured by the participants.

Phase 2:   Conducting the main study

 This study is aimed at investigating the experiences of amakrwala as learners at secondary school level.

3.12   Limitations of the study

The researcher being a woman might have limited the level of participation from 'amakrwala'. This may be due to the strong belief that issues related to male circumcision are not discussed with women. It was also difficult to get some 'amakrwala' to participate in the study as some people would look at her with suspicion upon the introduction of her research topic as if they were wondering what a woman wanted to know about issues of male circumcision. The researcher had to convince the participants that the study is not focusing on what happens in the initiation school, but on their experiences as learners and 'amakrwala' both at school and in the community.

The fact that the researcher told the participants that she was also an educator might have also limited the level of honesty from the participants especially when asking questions related to their relationship with their teachers. She constantly had to re-assure some of the participants about the confidentiality of everything they discussed. Throughout the interviews the researcher emphasised her identity as a researcher, rather than an educator.

The researcher's Xhosa background and her cultural capital might have sometimes prevented her from probing more on issues that seemed too obvious. Sometimes the researcher felt that she was being too careful while asking certain questions because of a fear of offending participants or making them to feel uncomfortable.

Looking at the background of the learners and the nature of the study, the researcher had to conduct the interviews in isiXhosa to make sure that the participants understood what was actually asked. They were also encouraged to respond in

isiXhosa so that they could express their deep feelings. Translating everything back into English and making sure that it did not lose its meaning also posed a challenge and was time consuming. The researcher was assisted by a Xhosa and English language specialist who made sure that some important Xhosa narratives were not watered down during the translation.

The following chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present and analyse data that was collected through qualitative means. Five 'amakrwala' participated in this study. Phenomenological interviews were used as information gathering tools. As part of a phenomenological study, participants' life stories were also presented and analysed. The data from the interviews responded to the following research question:

What are the experiences of amakrwala as learners at secondary school level and the implications thereof for leadership and management?

4.2   Presenting the profiles of the research site and the participants

In presenting the profiles in this section, Table 4.2.1 focuses on the profile of the research site, which includes the pseudo name, location and the population. The following Table, 4.2.2 presents the profiles of the participants highlighting key areas that are relevant for this study.

4.2.1 The profile of the research site

The profile of the research site is summarised in Table 4.2.1 below.

Pseudo name	Year established	Location	Community Economic Status	School learner population		Amakrwala population (2011)	Amakrwala per grade in 2011	
				Male	**Female**		**Grade**	**Amakrwala population per grade**
Masizakhe High School	1989	Urban Township, Buffalo City Municipality	Majority of parents unemployed	281	187	33	8	11
							9	9
							10	8
							11	2
							12	3

Table 4.2.1 above shows that the research site is a high school which is situated in an urban township in the Buffalo City Municipality. A pseudo name has been given to the research site to protect its true identity. It was reported that the school is about 21 years old with a current enrolment of 468 learners. It was further reported that approximately 60% of the learner enrolment consists of male learners.

Table 4.2.1 further indicates that in 2011 the school had a total population of 33 'amakrwala'. The research site is surrounded by informal settlements and the majority of parents are unemployed. According to this table the majority of 'amakrwala' (85%) are found in the lower grades - Grade 8, 9 and 10 - whilst the minority is in Grade 11 and 12 (15%). The next table, Table 4.2.2, presents participant's profiles.

4.2.2 The profiles of the participants

Participant's Name	Age during initiation	Age during the study	Grade during the study	Position in the family	No of male figures staying with the participant who have undergone the initiation ritual before him	Other siblings	Type of family	Procedure followed before going to the initiation school	Circumstances for going to the initiation school	Location of the initiation school
Siyanda	15	16	9	3 of 5	None	Two sisters and two brothers	Child headed (Sister).	Permission not granted ('Uzibile') (going to the initiation school without the parent's consent)	Own decision	Urban
Zamani	14	15	9	3 of 5	None	Two brothers and two sisters	Guardian (Grandmother)	Permission granted	Own decision	Urban
Sipho	17	18	11	2 of 4	1- step father	Two sisters and one brother	Traditional nuclear family	Permission granted	Family decision	Rural
Sinoxolo	17	18	11	1 of 3	2- elder cousins	Two sisters	Guardian (Grandmother)	Permission granted	Own decision	Urban
Themba	16	17	10	2 of 3	2- father and elder brother	Two brothers	Traditional nuclear family	Permission granted	Own decision	Urban

Table 4.1.2 above shows the profiles of the young graduate initiates interviewed (2011).

Table 4.2.2, above, shows that five respondents participated in this study. These respondents range between the ages of 15 and 18. Pseudo names are created for all the participants in this study to protect their true identities. They are all learners from the same high school. According to the Table, Siyanda and Zamani are currently in Grade 9, Themba in Grade 10 while Sipho and Sinoxolo are in Grade 11. The Table further shows that only 20% of the participants stayed with their biological fathers when they went to the initiation school, while 20% stayed with step fathers. The other 40% had no father figures at home while the remaining 20% reportedly had elder cousins as male figures in their homes.

Table 4.2.2 further shows the different types of family settings from which the participants come. It indicates that 40% of the participants come from traditional nuclear families. The traditional nuclear family is where the participant stays with married biological parents, (Bengtson, 2001). The Table further shows that 40% of the participants stayed with guardians, mainly grandmothers, both paternal and maternal. The remaining 20% of the participants came from a child-headed family. A child-headed family is where the children are staying alone in a household headed by a person younger than the age of 18, (Van Breda, 2010). This happens because parents were either deceased, staying in other units with other partners or away from home because of work commitments.

The Table also shows that 80% of the participants allegedly received permission to go to the initiation school, while 20% were not granted permission. The 20% that were not granted permission come from child-headed families. The Table further

shows that 80% of the participants indicated that going to the initiation school was their own decision while 20% stated that it was a family decision.

According to the Table, only 60% of the participants went to the clinic or hospital to do the routine test as required by law. This is a compulsory requirement according to the Application of Health Standards in Traditional Circumcision Act no 6 of 2001. Although Zamani was granted permission to go to the initiation school, it was too late for him to get the necessary documentation and the initiation ritual was performed without it. In Siyanda's case he did not go to the clinic as the pressure to go to the initiation school only mounted when he saw his friends going to the initiation school. Lastly the Table shows that 80% of the participants went to the initiation school in the township while the remaining 20% went to the rural areas.

Table 4.2.2 also shows that there were two settings in which the initiation schools were situated, namely, the urban and the rural settings. The urban setting refers to an initiate whose initiation ritual took place in the township while the rural setting refers to an initiate whose initiation ritual took place in a village.

4.2.3 Participants' life stories

The participants' life stories are included in order to get a better understanding of their backgrounds and the circumstances under which they went to the initiation school. The participants are given an opportunity to share their feelings and expectations before they went to the initiation school. They also shared their

experiences on their return from the initiation school. The following section focuses on the participants' life stories.

i. Siyanda's life story

Siyanda is 16 years old and in Grade 9. He stays with his elder sister and brother while their mother stays in a different unit with the father of her two younger children. The three of them had different fathers who have all passed away. Siyanda went to the initiation school on the 9th November 2010 without his mother's consent. Contrary to the traditional norms where the father gives consent in matters related to the male initiation custom, Siyanda needed his mother's consent as she is a single parent. He was 15 years old at the time. He said that he asked permission to go to the initiation school and his mother said he can go to the initiation school only on the 10th December 2010 when she had money. He felt that the 10th of December was too far away and so he joined his friends who were going to the initiation school on 9th November 2010. At that time Siyanda claimed that he joined the last one who was going to the initiation school, as all his friends were already in the initiation school. His 18 year old elder brother who was still a boy at the time was also taken to the initiation school by elders on the 10th November 2010 (the next day). He further stated that this was done to protect the dignity of the elder brother because traditionally the younger brother is not supposed to go to the initiation school before the elder brother. In manhood they would be treated as equals. The emphasis is not on who went to the initiation school first, but who came back first. The saying 'izindl'ukutsha madoda' (whose lodge ('ibhuma') was burnt first) is a common phrase

that is used by amaXhosa men to instil and emphasise their seniority amongst themselves.

When asked why the rush, Siyanda said he went to the initiation school because there was no man in their home. He wanted to be the 'man' of the household. He felt that the fact that they were staying with their elder sister made people not to respect their home. *"Abantu abakuthathi serious xa uyinkwenkwe, mam, awubonakali"* *("People don't take you seriously when you are a boy"):* those were his words. He felt that now that they are both initiated men, at least they would be able to restore their family dignity. When asked what he meant by people not respecting their home, he said,

> When we were boys we would bring a lot of friends home, and we would not listen when our sister tried to call us to order. Sometimes a fight would erupt and our sister would have to go and call the neighbour, who would come to our home and insult and sometimes beat us. He would not even give us a chance to explain what happened. Sometimes it felt so bad to be beaten up for something you didn't do, he would just say, 'shut up kwedini, andithethi nawe njandini (shut up boy, I'm not talking to you, dog)'. People would just come into our home and tell us what to do. Nobody can treat us like that anymore now that we are initiated men.

ii. Zamani's life story

Zamani is staying with his paternal grandmother. His father passed away and his mother is staying with her parents in a village. He is the third child of five children. His

elder brother and sister are staying on their own in another unit. He and his two younger siblings are staying with the grandmother. He was 14 years old when he went to the initiation school in November 2010. During the interview, he also mentioned that his elder brother is 23 years old and is still a boy. He said that according to his grandmother's plans, he was supposed to go to the initiation school in June 2011.

He further states that in November 2010 all his friends went to the initiation school and he felt that he could not be left behind by his friends. He then asked his grandmother if he could go and she refused. He said, "I cried so much that an elder cousin brother took pity on me and offered to buy me the new clothes." When asked what it meant to him to be an initiated man he said, "I went to the initiation school so that I can participate fully in the rituals that are done at home. As a boy you are not allowed to get into the kraal whenever there are traditional ceremonies, boys are chased away and that used to worry me a lot. Now I am happy because I can be part of the rituals that are performed at home."

iii. Sipho's life story

Sipho is the eldest of his mother's three children. He stays with his mother, step-father, his two younger brothers and sister and two step-sisters who are older than him. He was 17 years old when he went to the initiation school in November 2010. He says that initially he thought that he would go to the initiation school in June 2011 but when his mother asked him to go in December 2010, he obliged.

Sipho states that as a child born out of wedlock, he had to go to his mother's home village to do the initiation ritual. This was done because, although he stays with his mother and step-father, he uses his mother's clan name and his uncles were in charge of his initiation. He does not have a relationship with his biological father. He relates well with his step-father although he claims that his step-father is a very reserved person so they do not talk much. When asked what manhood meant to him he said, "*It means that I am a new person now, not the old Sipho I was in 2010. It means that I am a grown up now and I should always try to be in my best behaviour, so that I can set an example for the young ones.*"

iv. Sinoxolo's life story

Sinoxolo introduced himself as follows, "I am my mother's first born and my father's second child but first son. My parents did not get married. My mother is married to someone else and has two girls. I stay with my paternal grandmother." Although his parents are not married, Sinoxolo claims to have a good relationship with his father. He says that he was 17 years old when he went to the initiation school; it was his idea because he felt he was ready. When asked how he knew he was ready this was what he said:

> The reason I wanted to go to the bush is that here at school people of my age, others even younger than me, who have been to the initiation school treated boys without respect. They would send you to fetch water for them, you couldn't refuse, otherwise you would be in trouble with all of them. They gang up against you and you would not fight back, because if you did, they would all beat you up. They treated you like you were not a human being. Even in the

township, all my friends went to the initiation school in December 2009. I then asked permission at home if I could also go to the initiation school in December 2010. Besides the pressure, I also knew from an early age that I would have to go to the bush at the age of 17 as I did not want to be an ikrwala when I go to university as people still look down at you when you are an ikrwala, and you will not be respected.

For Sinoxolo who was away from home for almost 20 days, home coming was an exciting experience. This was what he said:

> After the lodge ('ibhuma') was burnt down we were accompanied home by young men who were doing stick fighting and singing. When we approached the house a group of women and girls were singing and ululating. This made me feel very proud that I made it. Now I was coming home as a man and people would treat me with dignity, like a human being. My elder cousin brothers used to tease me a lot; pushing me around and saying, *'yide woluke mfondini ungazukuthunywa kangaka.'* I felt very special that as a man, now I will be part of important decisions in the house.

After they (together with his cousin with whom they were in the bush) were taken to 'indlu yesibane' and received some words of wisdom from the elders, he could feel that he was not a boy anymore, he was a man. He started developing some doubts about his new status, though, as they were told upfront that manhood is not for the faint hearted. They were told that as men they should not be lazy and men should not stay in a dirty place. They were told that manhood is not a child's play, *'indoda izimela ngenkqayi elangeni makwedini.'* He further states that, "… and now I can see

95

that at home nobody fusses much over me anymore, yes they support me but I must fend for myself in most cases."

Sinoxolo states that almost all of the elders emphasized the importance of education. They were told to get education so that they could get decent jobs, get married and have their own families as without a family they would be regarded as 'half men'. They were also told that as men they should protect their dignity by setting the correct example. In order for them to succeed in life, they should treat other people with respect and, in turn, people would do the same to them. It was also highlighted to them that it was important for them as men not to undermine other people but to treat them equally.

After the words of wisdom everybody was happy, singing and dancing '*kwindlu yamakrwala'.* When asked to describe his emotions and feelings as he was sitting on the grass mat, he said, "*I was overwhelmed to see so many people who came to see me; it meant that I was important in my community. I was filled with joy and pride. I was holding back tears, men don't cry."*

Another special moment he remembers is when they were given new clothes. He stated that his father bought the clothes but they were given to him by young men from the neighbourhood. It was a long sleeved shirt, a pair of heavy weight trousers, a long sleeved jacket with buttons, and shoes with laces. There were a lot of things that the young man said when they were helping him to dress. He remembers one of them saying jokingly, '*uyabona ke Sino, le mpahla kufuneka uyihombele mfondini, uhambe ngesidima ungabe ubhampa apha estratweni, uhamba ukhaba ibhola'.*

(Look Sino, you need to be a gentleman when you are wearing these clothes, you will need to walk properly and stop playing around in the streets). When asked what the new clothes meant to him, he said, *"To me it meant that I was starting a new life, it felt like I was a new person. By giving away the old clothes that I used as a boy, it meant that I was leaving behind my old life, all the naughty things I used to do as a boy, and focusing on the new me."*

He was told that 'ikrwala' is a lucky person; unfortunately he did not see much of that on the first day until all the festivities were finished and everybody went home. Firstly, he was surprised by the amount of money and gifts he received. The first few days he was treated like a king by everybody. After cooking, his mother or an elder sister would bring him food on a tray. Before he went to the initiation school, he used to do everything at home from cooking to taking plates to the elders. He also used to sleep on a sponge in the lounge, but now he was allowed to sleep on his elder cousin's brother's bed in one of the shacks at the backyard. He asked if he could go and sleep in the shack as he was tired of sleeping on the floor. This move saved him from being shouted at by his grandmother all the time. He claimed that "If you make a small mistake, they would shout at you for a long time but after initiation they could only talk about it in the morning."

Although manhood seemed to have brought a lot of benefits to Sinoxolo's life, sometimes he is not sure that going to the initiation school when he did was the right move. He stated that the downside of being a man is that his father refuses to give him pocket money now saying that as a man he has to work for money; he cannot sleep and expect to have money when he wakes up. He claims that when he was a

boy his father used to give him money whenever he asked. When asked about how this change makes him feel he said, "It makes me regret having gone to the bush now because I am still at school and I am in no position to work and earn my own money. At times like this I start having some mixed feelings. This means that now I'm a grown-up, I must work hard and take responsibility for my life, and as a man I must be prepared to stand on my own."

When asked how he relates with his mother and siblings, he said, "I have two sisters, one is nine years while the little one is about 18 months old. The nine year old used to call me by name but now she says 'bhuti'. I don't know who told her to call me that, I guess she knows how amakrwala are called because I am not the first one to go to the initiation school in my family. My mom calls me by my name or says 'ndoda', the way she used to call me before I went to the initiation school". When asked how long the 'royal treatment' lasted, he laughed and said:

> Yho mam, only two weeks. My grandmother told me that they were happy that
> I came back safe and they wanted to make sure that I felt welcomed, but now I
> had to take my share of the house chores. These included cooking and
> cleaning the house and the yard. Before I went to the initiation school, I did my
> best to run away from any kind of responsibility, at home they seemed to
> understand me, it was no big deal. My grandmother told me that nobody was
> going to cook for me, when I'm hungry I should cook food and when I do that I
> should also make sure that the food was enough for everybody.

In response to the question, how did you feel when you went out of the house to the street for the first time? These were the participants responses:

Sinoxolo:

> Amongst the new clothes that we were given to wear, there was a 'khetshemiya' (black doek) and umnqayi (stick). We were told that we were supposed to wear the doek and carry the stick wherever we went for at least a week. I didn't leave the yard for the duration of that first week because I could not picture myself walking the streets in those clothes looking down.

When asked who told him that he should look down and why? He said, "Nobody told me, I knew that long before I went to the initiation school because all amakrwala do that, I guess it is some form of respect." He continued and said,

> The first time I went out I was sent to the shopping mall, my cousin refused to go with me and I ended up going alone. I was a bit nervous because I was not sure about what to expect. Nothing much happened on that day. I then went to see my friends who were also amakrwala. The down side of these visits was that now I had to watch the time as I was told that the sun must never set on me away from home. So by 16:00 I had to be at home.

When asked to share more about his experiences as "ikrwala" on the streets; this was how he responded:

> There were some challenges. For instance, there is something called 'ukudodisana' which means that when you walk on the streets and come across amakrwala that you don't know they will call you and ask you to introduce yourself. The introductions are done using a special terminology that will only be known by a person who has been to the initiation school. When

99

they ask you questions, you are obliged to respond to those questions otherwise you will be stigmatised as an illegitimate man. You can either carry your stigma indefinitely or buy a bottle of brandy so that they can push that matter under the carpet. This can turn ugly at times as some people might resort to violence to protect their dignity. As a result the police arrest any group of amakrwala they find doing it.

Sinoxolo further explained that the brandy would be drunk by all the amakrwala who were there when the error happened. The person who brought the bottle would tell the others about the venue and the date. It could either be at his home, if his parents were comfortable with that, or one of the amakrwala could offer an alternative venue. He further emphasised that the bottle was only bought by those who were seen to be unfit as men.

v.   Themba's life story

Themba is currently repeating Grade 10. During this study in 2011 Themba was 17 years old. He was 16 years old when he went to the initiation school in 2010. He is his mother's second son and his father's fifth child. His parents are married and he is the first born in their marriage and also has a younger brother. As the older child in the family, while growing up he had the responsibility of taking care of his younger brother and all the house chores. He explained his childhood as a difficult one as his father was drinking heavily and would verbally abuse his mother. As a result, from an early age he felt that it was his responsibility to protect his mother. This was how Themba further explained the circumstances that led him to go to the initiation school at the time:

Some weekends, especially month ends, my father wouldn't come back home at all. My mother would cry a lot, I did not know which was worse than the other because my mother would still cry because of the verbal abuse when he did come home. This made me to be very angry at my father. The sense of helplessness at home made me to be very influential amongst my friends, to almost a bully. The negative feelings I had towards my father made me to always want to be in charge, to always have things done my way. In my early teens I ended up being friends with older guys, which nearly destroyed me. As my friends were older than me they were already exposed to girls, alcohol and drugs and I felt pressured to excel in everything we did.

In 2010 Themba was doing Grade 10 while his two best friends were in Grade 12 and they decided that they were going to the initiation school in December 2010, and their parents agreed. Again he felt pressured to join them as he felt that he could not stand the thought of having to call them 'bhuti' if he was left behind. When he asked his parents for permission to go to the initiation school, they both flatly refused stating that he was too young, as he was only 15 years old at the time. The more they convinced him not to go, the more determined he became of going with or without their permission. With this attitude his behaviour deteriorated, he did not only get drunk during the weekends, but sometimes he would not even come home for the whole weekend. He would use his father's behaviour to justify his as they were altering weekends in not coming home. Whenever his father tried to reprimand him, he would defend himself by saying he was following in his footprints.

When asked how the pressure he had before going to the initiation school affected his school work, he said:

> *Very badly. Going to the initiation school was like an obsession to me, it was the only thing on my mind. At that stage even going to school felt like a burden and something I had to do to please my parents. I never struggled with my studies before and for the first time in my school career, I failed the June examination. This came as a big shock to me as I always regarded myself to be amongst the gifted learners.*

Around June 2010 his parents gave in as they felt that taking him to the initiation school might be the only way to save him from his destructive behaviour. Themba also stated that when his parents were discussing the suitable date for him to go to the initiation school, he suggested the one that was chosen by his friends which was a day after they finished their matric exams. He chose this date despite knowing that for him he would still have two outstanding papers to write after that day. "I went to the initiation school without finishing my exam, and I failed Grade 10." He said that with a sad look on his face.

In responding to the question, why he wanted to go to the initiation school so badly, he said:

> *I wanted to be respected both at home and in the community. It also seemed to be a good feeling to hear the younger boys referring to you as 'ubhuti'. The pressure also comes from girls. As a boy you cannot keep a steady relationship as girls always prefer initiated men. In my case, our girlfriends*

were friends and all our girlfriends automatically thought that we were all going

to the initiation school; I could not let them down.

Like other 'amakrwala' Themba had a long list of expectations before he went to the initiation school. These were some of his expectations:

- Respect - he expected to be respected by everybody, at home, in the community and even at school, including by his parents and teachers.
- Less accountable - he thought as a man he would do as he pleased, come home at anytime and be able to bring girls home freely and his parents would not have a say over what he did.
- Exposure to more liquor - he thought that being an initiated man would give him licence to attend traditional ceremonies where he would enter into the kraal and drink officially with other initiated men.

When asked if any of his expectations were met he laughed and said:

Yes, I had many girlfriends as girls take a special interest on 'amakrwala'. I could even date older girls as my age was no longer an issue now because I was a man. Being an initiated man also gave me some free access to the local shebeens. I also learnt that manhood was about more than just privileges, but more responsibilities.

Themba's home coming

Themba stated that the home coming was the most exciting moment of the initiation process as it meant that he had really made it as a man. This was how he described the moment:

> The thought that I was coming home was very exciting. When you are in the bush mam, you miss basically everything. I missed sleeping comfortable on a bed, I missed the warmth of my home, I missed TV, drinking water, I missed all the small things we take for granted here. I remembered one guy we were together at the bush said what he could not wait to go home and brush his teeth. The person I missed the most was my mother as she was the only person I have not seen throughout the whole process.

In Themba's opinion, coming back from the bush alive felt like he ran and won the race. He further explained that:

> When you are in the bush your life is generally at risk, it is not only about the circumcision wound; you are more vulnerable to the evil spirits as well. There are also wild animals whose habitat you have invaded and the fact that you are on your own so far away from home can be very daunting. There is also the risk of fire that can accidentally burn down your 'house'.

Themba further stated that it felt so strange how one could so easily get used to the darkness in the bush. He also said that:

Coming home, everything looked so bright, people looked strange and it felt like I have just been released from prison. Seeing so many people at home made me feel so special. People looked so happy and the fact that they composed special songs about my name made me feel like they really missed me.

Themba further stated that on his arrival he was accompanied to the kraal where he was surrounded by men. He said he noticed that inside the kraal men were seated according to their levels of seniority; elders and middle-aged men inside while abafana were outside the kraal. He further reported that:

We all settled down and a middle aged man stood up and told the elders that they have brought the young man home. An elderly man stood up and thanked the ancestors and the traditional nurse (ikhankatha) for taking care of me when I was away from home. A third man was a middle aged dignified and respectable man in the community who gave me some words of wisdom. His emphasis was on how as an initiated man I needed to respect and always do the will of my parents.

Themba reported that from the kraal he was taken to 'indlu yesibane' (a house that is used by young men who have been to the initiation school) where he was met by 'abafana' (young men who have been to the initiation school). After settling in the house a group of women arrived to give him some words of wisdom. Amongst the things they shared was more emphasis on the importance of education. They told him that as an initiated man and a student; he needed to excel in his school work and he should be more responsible around the home. They further stated that his priority should be on serving his parents and making his family proud wherever he went.

They also highlighted the importance of going to church as God was playing an important role in each person's life. They urged him to make a difference by having a positive influence on future generations.

When the elderly women left, he was left with 'abafana' and they shared their expectations from him as an initiated man. In Themba's opinion, the things they shared with him were not very constructive, instead they did exactly what he was urged not to do by the elders who had just given him some words of wisdom not so long ago. They emphasised that as an initiated man he needs to get girlfriends to test his manhood. They also told him that now he was free to sit and drink with them. They also encouraged him that now he was not accountable to anyone, he could do as he pleased. He felt that there was a contradiction between what the elders had told him and what he was being told now. This point reminded him of how the elders expressed their disappointment on today's young men and urged him not to be like them. This made him to be very uncomfortable as the words of wisdom were still so clear in his mind. He, together with his traditional nurse, were given liquor as a sign of welcoming him to manhood. Themba felt obliged to drink.

4.3 Presenting and analysing the data on the experiences of 'amakrwala'

This section reports and analyses the data. The following themes emerged from the interviews:

    4.3.1   Meanings attached to ulwaluko

    4.3.2   Experiences of amakrwala

- at home

- in the community

- at school

4.3.1 Meanings attached to 'ulwaluko' by the boys

The following section discusses the participants' expectations before they went to the initiation school. All participants describe ulwaluko as a compulsory ritual that all Xhosa boys undergo to become men. Their understanding of 'ulwaluko' is in line with what Mavundla *et al.* (2009) refers to as "a right of passage from boyhood to manhood." It is reported by the participants that they attached the following meanings to 'ulwaluko': respect, ability to protect their families and the ability to enjoy social privileges. The meanings they attached to 'ulwaluko' are amongst the reasons the Xhosa boys are taken to the initiation school, as per a research done by the World Health Organisation (2008). The next section will focus on respect as one of the meanings attached to 'ulwaluko'.

a.   Respect

Most participants (80%) expected to be respected by everybody at home, in the community and at school. The majority of the participants (80%) reported that they could feel that they were treated differently both at home and in the community. They felt that the level of respect was lower at school as they alleged that some teachers encouraged girls to call them by name by uttering loose statements like, *"akukho bhuti apha eskolweni",* which means there is no big brother at school. The

remaining 20% seemed not to be bothered by how people related to them. The ability to protect the family is amongst the reasons that were attached to 'ulwaluko'.

b.   Ability to protect the family

It became evident during the interviews that a boy has no value amongst amaXhosa. This is supported by Mtuze (2004) when he refers to boys as 'things' that are seen to be at the lowest rank of human beings. The participants indicated how on numerous occasions they were made to feel small because they were boys. Amongst the participants, 20% felt that by going to the initiation school they would be able to defend their home dignity. Zamani could have felt this way because he was from a child-headed family; hence he felt that as an initiated man he would be able to protect his family. Although Themba came from a traditional nuclear family, raised by both his parents, deep down he felt the need to protect his mother from his abusive father. As stated by Pretorius (2005), according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the provision of safety and security is one of the basic human needs. In this instance, the participants felt the need to provide safety and security in their homes, instead of the homes providing it for them.   Zamani felt, therefore, that as an initiated man he would be able to stand up against his father 'as a man' whenever he was abusive towards his mother. The following section focuses on the initiated men's ability to enjoying social privileges.

c.   Enjoying social privileges

It came out during the interviews that about 40% of the participants felt strongly that the ritual would give them an opportunity to participate fully in traditional rituals that were done in their families and in the community at large. The participants further indicated that when you are a boy you have no value in the society, while initiated men get all the respect. To concur with this Zamani and Siyanda stated that during traditional ceremonies boys are chased away from the kraal, where the meat and liquor are. The other 20% of the participants attached being an initiated man to having the freedom to do as you wished and being less accountable at home. This also included the freedom to bring girls into the house and expecting parents not to query that as they saw themselves as grown-ups now or almost equals. It was established during the interviews that the majority of the participants (80%) went to the initiation school mainly because of peer pressure; while Sipho stated that he was persuaded by his mother. The next section discusses the experiences of 'amakrwala'.

4.3.2 Experiences of amakrwala

The participants report different experiences regarding 'ulwaluko'. Their experiences are examined in three different contexts; namely, at home, in the community and at school.

4.3.2.1 Experiences at home

During the third stage of the initiation process, incorporation, the home is the first place where these newly graduated initiates are welcomed back to the society, (Papu & Verster, 2006). This stage is usually characterised by celebrations and festivities that include the whole community.

a. How were they welcomed?

The majority of the participants (80%) reported their home coming to be the highlight of the initiation ritual. They further report that home coming ceremonies ('umgidi') were held in the various homes and were characterised by drinking of liquor and lots of food. Although the participants had different experiences in the different households, their experiences were characterised by feelings of pride, joy, excitement, being a special person and also being a winner. This was what Sinoxolo said about his home coming:

> After the lodge ('*ibhuma'*) was burnt down we were accompanied home by young men who were doing stick fighting and singing. When we approached the house a group of women and girls were singing and ululating. This made me feel very proud that I have made it. Now I was coming home as a man and people will treat me with dignity, like a human being.

To concur with this Themba had this to say about his home coming:

The thought that I was coming home was very exciting. When you are in the bush mam, you miss basically everything. I missed sleeping comfortable on a bed, I missed the warmth of my home, I missed TV, drinking water, I missed all the small things we take for granted here. I remembered one guy we were together at the bush said what he could not wait to go home and brush his teeth. The person I missed the most was my mother as she was the only person I have not seen throughout the whole process.

Themba further stated that for him home coming felt like he ran and won the race. He cited the difficulty and danger that were posed on one's life in the bush as the reason why home coming felt like such an achievement.

The majority of participants, 80%, felt proud when they saw all the people from the community who went there specifically to welcome them. They reported that this made them feel like they were important and they mattered to the community at large, not only to their families. Sinoxolo explained his feelings as follows: "I was overwhelmed to see so many people who have come to see me; it meant that I was important in my community. I was filled with joy and pride. I was holding back tears, men don't cry."

The participants were also made to feel very special by all the attention they received. Themba further explained his feelings as follows, "It was unbelievable, they even composed a song about me, *'Sathan'udanile, uThix' uvumile, uThemba yindoda halala' (*The Devil is disappointed, God has allowed Themba to be a man), I never felt so special in my life."

In Siyanda's case, their mother did not prepare anything for their home coming ceremony, (*umgidi)*. This could have happened because she could not afford it or she was punishing them for going to the initiation school without her consent. Their mother did not even buy them new clothes; the clothes they wore as 'men' were donated by the community members. For their home coming, nothing much happened as they were just washed and taken home by men of the neighbourhood. Their home coming was characterised by mixed feelings, feelings of excitement and doubt as they were not sure of what to expect from the future. Despite their circumstances, they were still excited for making it into manhood.

b. Relationship with siblings

The participants reported that they felt that their new status was respected by their siblings. They were not calling them by name, instead they referred to them as 'ubhuti' (big brother). The respect was also shown where the elder siblings would bring food to them, instead of calling them to get their own food. They reported that they could feel that their status was elevated from childhood to adulthood.

c. Relationships with parents

The participants reported that they had a good relationship with their parents. They felt that they were treated with more respect compared to the way they were before they went to the initiation school. They felt that their parents were engaging with them in discussions instead of just telling them what to do. They further reported that at home they were now being consulted when big decisions had to be made.

d.   Significance of the new clothes

On their return from the initiation school, the 'amakrwala' were given new clothes as part of recognising their new status. The majority of the participants associated the new clothes with their new status. They saw the new clothes as a final symbol that differentiated them from boys.

Different responses were given by the participants in responding to the question about what the new clothes meant to them. Sinoxolo described in detail how his new clothes looked. He further stated that *"To me the new clothes meant that I was starting a new life, it felt like I was a new person. By giving away the old clothes that I used as a boy, it meant that I was leaving behind my old life, all the naughty things I used to do as a boy, and focusing on the new me."* Themba responded as follows; "*When I saw the new clothes, I felt my mother's love. I knew that she bought the clothes and I was reminded once again of how much she cares. The clothes were so dignified and so beautiful; different from anything I've ever worn as a boy. I felt so proud."*

Different participants associated the new clothes with the beginning of a new life (Mavundla *et al.*, 2009). This included throwing away the naughty things they did as boys. Although Siyanda did not have much to share about their home coming, to him the clothes they were given to wear were as good as 'new'. In his opinion they were 'new' in the sense that they were never worn by a boy before, as they were donated to them by initiated men. To them they signified that they had reached manhood.

4.3.2.2   Experiences in the community

When the festivities of the home coming ceremonies were finished at home, 'amakrwala' had to present themselves back to the community with their new status as initiated man. This section discusses their experiences.

a.   How were they welcomed?

Going back to the community after being away for such a long time posed a challenge for most participants. They all indicated that they were very nervous as they were not exactly sure about what to expect. The fact that they knew that everybody expected them to do things differently from talking to walking added more pressure. Perhaps they were scared to fail the tests that would prove if they were legitimate men or not that were still ahead of them in the community.

The participants indicated that they all felt welcomed by the community at large. They were overwhelmed by the attention the received from everybody. Siyanda explained his feelings as follows;

> *It felt like suddenly people start noticing you, when I was a boy, people would pass me without even greeting as if I was nothing. Since I came back from the initiation school people are so warm towards me, especially elders. They do not only greet me, they even take time to ask how I was doing, which is something I never experienced as a boy.*

b.   Relationships with peers

Although all the participants reported that they related well with other 'amakrwala', they reported that the common practice of introductions that is done amongst 'amakrwala' known as '*ukudodisana'* which they encountered on the streets, posed a challenge to them. Although it was reported that the practice affected all the participants (100%), it seemed that they did not attach the same meaning to it. Some of the participants (60%) explained 'ukudodisana' as a process whereby 'ikrwala' gives a bottle of brandy to other initiated men to introduce himself as a man. They further claimed that in their case the bottles were given out during their coming out ceremony.

While 60% of the participants seemed to attach the same meaning the brandy bottle, the other 40% seemed to have a different understanding. Sinoxolo explained 'ukudodisana' as introductions done using a special terminology that will only be known by a person who has been to the initiation school. He further stated that as 'ikrwala' you are obliged to answer those questions as failure to do so might lead to you being stigmatised as an illegitimate man. It has become a norm that when someone fails the test, he must buy a bottle of brandy so that the issue can be swept under the carpet or face being stigmatised indefinitely.

It also came out during the interviews that the location of the initiation school also influenced the way a newly graduated initiate is treated by his peers. For example, Sipho stated that he went to an initiation school in the rural area, his mother's home, a village which is about 50 km from his home. When he came back home, he had to give a bottle of brandy to introduce himself to the amakrwala from his unit. He

explained that this is a norm that is done by all newly graduated amakrwala in the township. He further explained that if he had not done that, other amakrwala would have refused to acknowledge him as one of them. It was also established that the discrimination amongst amakrwala also happens between the different units in the same township where the introductions and the exchange of brandy bottles is also experienced. This shows that some 'amakrwala' will do anything to be accepted by their peers, which is what Pretorius (1998) refers to as 'acceptance', which is one of the basic needs in the development of human beings.

The participants were further asked about what amakrwala would do to an ikrwala who refused to be part of their meetings and this is how they responded:

Sipho: "*There is a lot of bullying and intimidation amongst amakrwala. They can make one's life a living hell, but you have to be strong and fight for what you believe in.*"

Sinoxolo: *"I did not attend those things. When I met them and they asked if I could join them at a given venue for the introductions, I gave them my home address and told them that anyone who wants to know me will find me there. They never came. Nobody can ever force you to do something you don't want. They might call you names like 'ilulwane' (a bat), which means you are something in-between. Most amakrwala do that because they want to be accepted amongst their peers. I didn't want to be part of that because I was told to respect 'ubukrwala bam' because if I can be chased by the police at that stage, I will be chased for the rest of my life".*

c. Relationship with adults

The community members formed part of the home coming ceremonies during which words of wisdom were given to 'amakrwala'. It was reported that all participants were given words of wisdom by both elder men and women. They were encouraged to put education first as it was the only chance of improving their lives. Themba stated that the elders also expressed their disappointment at the way their predecessors were conducting themselves to the extent that it was alleged that some were behaving worse than boys. They were accused of dedicating their lives to drugs and alcohol. They were, therefore, urged to be different, to behave well and set a good example for the younger generation. It was also emphasized to them that being initiated comes with a high level of responsibility. They were urged to respect their parents and always do their will.

During traditional ceremonies in the community, they were welcomed into the kraal by elders. They were shown where to sit and were given an opportunity to observe the proceedings. They reported that they felt respected and they were made to feel like they really mattered.

It has been established that the participants' relationships with adults both at home and in the community were characterised by respect, guidance, encouragement and caution. These two 'spaces' reinforced what the participants were taught in the initiation school about having socially acceptable behaviour.

4.3.2.3   Experiences at school

It has been established that the participant's experiences at school were characterised by tensions between them, their peers (amakrwala), other learners and the teachers. Amakrwala seemed to be caught between familiar and unfamiliar worlds. The majority seemed to see teachers as figures of authority whose main role was to enforce school rules, with little regard or no recognition of their new status and that was the opposite of their experiences at home and in the community. They also seemed to be accusing teachers of sometimes encouraging other learners to be disrespectful towards them.

a.   How were they welcomed?

The majority of the participants (80%) reported that they were excited about their first day at school especially when they met other amakrwala and former school mates they had not seen in almost over two months. This is what Sinoxolo had to say about his first day, "*On the opening day I went to school in full uniform. My cap was the only item on my head that showed people I was 'ikrwala'. We were all so excited and I felt so proud of myself for making it into manhood.*"   In responding to the question, what were your expectations as you were coming back to school as ikrwala, he said he expected people to be shocked because he did not tell them that he was going to the initiation school in December. He was also thinking about the friends he had last year who were still boys because he knew that they could no longer be friends. He further stated that the reason for this was that there was a general expectation that, as an

initiated man, he should spend most of his time with other initiated men, not boys. When asked how this made him feel, he said, "Nothing, really its no big deal, mam."

Amongst the five participants, Themba was the only one who had mixed feelings about going back to school. This was how he explained his feelings:

> *I went to school the day before the schools open to collect my report. My teachers were very angry at me for not finishing the examinations. My class teacher even showed me how well I did on the papers I wrote and told me that I would have passed easily if I had finished the examination. The excitement I felt for being a man was clouded by lots of regret and sadness. I regretted the fact that I did not wait for five days to finish my examinations because now I would have passed Grade 10 and still be a man.*

Themba reported that both his friends passed Grade 12 with flying colours and he had to sadly bid them farewell as they left the township for university. A big part of him was very angry and felt betrayed in their friendship as they were pursuing their dreams while he was left behind to repeat Grade 10. A bigger challenge was awaiting him at school; all his former classmates were in Grade 11 and he felt so old amongst the learners in his class. According to Themba, his first day at school was characterised by more sadness than joy.

b.   Relationships with their classmates

When asked how he related to his classmates, Sinoxolo responded as follows: "I try to be humble in class and relate with everyone the same way. I talk and share jokes

freely with both boys and girls. I try to treat everybody with respect and in turn they respect me. When I went to the initiation school, it was not to demand respect and bully everybody, I did it for myself."

Sipho had a slightly different view on the matter. Although he agrees with Sinoxolo about respecting his fellow learners, he is completely against any personal relationship with boys. He said, "*I don't know what an initiated man would talk about with a boy at a personal level as boys do not know what manhood is all about. We can work together in group works here in class but that is how far it can go.*" It seemed that Sipho felt degraded about any association with boys. He also stated that he tried to keep healthy relationships with girls but warns against being too friendly with them as they can sometimes also be disrespectful.

Siyanda and Zamani also indicated that they were relating well with their peers in class. They indicated that they enjoyed the fact that they no longer had to do the boys' chores like fetching some water from the tap or buying stuff from the tuck shop during break time; instead now they can send boys around to do some chores for them.

Themba indicated that he related very well with his classmates. He also stated that he felt that because he was slightly older than most of his classmates, they respected him automatically. He did not have much to talk about to them at a personal level as the people he could relate to were in Grade 11.

c.   Relationships with teachers

When Sinoxolo was asked about his expectations in relation to the treatment he hoped to receive from school in general, he said, "*I knew that teachers would call me by name and others would refer to me as 'kwedini', nothing would change and I did not have a problem with that.*" In response to the question about teachers' attitudes, Sinoxolo smiled and said, *"Teachers are treating me very well so far; I see a great change in myself. In 2009 I was always in trouble, I was very naughty. 'Kulo nyaka noko ndiwabambile amahashe am'. I try my best to always do what is right."* He said that he loved cracking jokes in class and that would sometimes annoy his teachers. He decided to stop doing that now because as an initiated man he had to act in a dignified manner so that he could be respected. When asked whether his expectations were met, he said, *"Yes and no, this is not easy at all, I am a fun-loving person, and the expectation that I should always be dignified can sometimes be too much for me. I still love cracking jokes and having people laughing when I'm around. This can sometimes be disruptive in class."* He said that he had noticed that teachers talk to him differently now. They reprimand him in a dignified manner and have stopped calling him names like they used to do when he was still a boy. When asked how that made him feel, he said, *"Honestly, it doesn't matter to me, really, because I feel that as school children we are supposed to be treated the same way."*

When Sipho was asked about the way teachers related to them, he looked a bit uncomfortable and said, *"The way I see it, most teachers do not support having amakrwala here at school. They always emphasize to other learners that there is no 'bhuti' here at school. That attitude spills over to the learners because girls start*

calling us by name because they know that they have the backing of the teachers." When asked how he thinks teachers were supposed to treat them, he said, *"I don't mind when they say 'akukho bhuti apha eskolweni', but I feel degraded when they refer to all of us as boys. Like when they would give a general instruction that says, 'all boys must take the desks out of the classroom'. I would prefer them to call us by our names or say 'abafana' as 'umfana' is a Xhosa name that is used to call young men who have been to the initiation school and can also be used to address all males."* When asked what he thinks the school can do differently to accommodate amakrwala in the school, he said; *"In the school system, there is nothing that identifies a person as a man when you come back from the initiation school. There is no form of acknowledgement where, for instance, you are introduced to the teachers and the whole student body. Doing the formal introductions of all 'amakrwala' at the beginning of the term to the entire student body and teachers would make a difference."*

Siyanda and Zamani felt that teachers were sometimes too harsh towards them; they did not always treat them the same way as they did other learners. To support this statement they claimed that, *"Sometimes teachers would get into class and punish amakrwala for something they did not do. Sometimes when they had to punish the whole class, they would give harsher punishments to us."* They admitted, though, during the interview that amongst them there was a group of naughty amakrwala who always got them into trouble.

Themba stated that the first couple of weeks were very difficult for him at school as all the teachers could not hide their disappointment when they saw him in the same

class. Most teachers did not know the full story so they assumed that he went to the initiation school without his parents' consent and they gave him long lectures on how irresponsible he had been. He further stated though that he currently had a very good relationship with his teachers.

> *Having to repeat Grade 10 was a turning point in my life, I have decided to turn my life around and focus more on my school work and that has paid off as I am doing well at school again now. My parents think it's the initiation school that helped, but I know that the behavioural change was a personal choice I had made.*

When asked if the teachers were treating him any differently now compared to the way they treated him before he went to the initiation school, Themba responded as follows: "*I have always managed to stay out of trouble at school. My teachers liked me because I have always done very well academically; as a result even when I was out of control at home, I do not think the teachers were aware. I also think the fact that I could participate well in class activities and remembered topics discussed in previous lessons put me at an advantage.*"

Themba also felt that teachers demand more responsibility from initiated men.

d.   Participation in extra mural activities

Only 20% of the participants claimed to be still taking part in the extra mural activities that they were involved in before going to the initiation school. Sinoxolo indicated that he was involved in choral music at school before he went to the initiation school but

he did not sing that year as he was too busy attending to the businesses of amakrwala during the first term. In Sipho's case, he said that he felt obliged to attend the meetings that were attended by other amakrwala as he did not want to be disowned by his peers as a man. He further stated that he stopped playing cricket for a while as he was still enjoying the company of his fellow men.

Zamani indicated that he stopped playing soccer that year as the team the coach put him in was dominated by boys. He claimed that this was making him feel uncomfortable as he felt that playing with boys would lower his dignity. This could probably be influenced by the fact that Zamani was only 14 years old when he went to the initiation school. At that age people could easily mistake him for a boy as one would find boys that are much older than him.

e.   How amakrwala would like to be understood

When asked how they would like to be understood as amakrwala, Sinoxolo accused people of always generalising when they talk about amakrwala. He felt that it was a personal decision for an ikrwala to do good or bad things; it had nothing to do with their manhood. While he agreed that drinking alcohol was a common trend amongst amakrwala and some would come up with all sorts of excuses to have access to liquor, he also stated that not all of them were like that. He felt that it was so easy for people to judge amakrwala from the outside while, if they could walk in the shoes of 'ikrwala' for one day, they would understand why amakrwala sometimes behaved the way they did.

Sinoxolo cited the example of 'ukudodisana' (which was explained earlier) as a positive practice that was meant to protect the institution of 'ubudoda' from chance takers who might have received manhood in an illegitimate manner. This might sometimes have negative consequences as it was reported that sometimes it ended up in fights that might put people's lives in danger. A bottle of brandy (umdliwo) is demanded from those who fail the test. He did not want to comment on whether he saw the bottle of brandy as something positive or negative; instead he insisted that 'a man had to pay for his sins', his failure to prove that he was a legitimate man.

When asked if 'ukudodisana' ever happens within the school premises, he said, *"Yes, amakrwala will gather in the toilets during break times. It can be a very traumatic experience for some especially those who become soft targets. This can happen when ikrwala comes from an area that is outside other 'amakrwala' and all questions can be pointed at him."* He also stated that when a person was seen to be a soft target, amakrwala could gang up against him and come up with all sorts of excuses to make him to pay 'umdliwo' over and over again. He further stated that sometimes you even get amakrwala who moved from one school to other schools under the pretence of *'ukudodisana'* while all they were after was liquor. In his words, *"Those people don't care about the values of manhood, they are self centred and would do anything to get liquor."*

Themba stated that generally people have a negative attitude towards amakrwala. He felt that in most cases those attitudes were justifiable. In his opinion this happens because of the irresponsible way in which they sometimes behave; he even stated that they sometimes behave worse than boys. This frustrated him as he claimed that

there are a lot of good 'amakrwala' out there who behave in a responsible and dignified manner. He wished that people would stop generalising and treat 'amakrwala' as individuals.

Ill-discipline was also reported to be rife amongst 'amakrwala' at school. This seemed to be contrary to the expectations of high level of discipline and responsibility expected from an initiated Xhosa man (Mwamwenda, 1989 and Buso & Meissner, 2007). It is reported by the participants that 'amakrwala' were also taking part in some of the behavioural traits that were hindering the smooth running of the school like:

- late coming

- not doing homework

- bunking classes

- smoking in the toilets

- bullying boys

- demanding respect from other learners

- non-participation in extra mural activities.

Some of these behavioural problems might result from the tensions between the leadership and 'amakrwala' at school. It could be that they are only looking for attention in their plight for the recognition of their new status. Maybe they are only longing to have the same relationship with their teachers as they have with their parents and other adults in the community.

4.3.3. Comparative analysis of the experiences of 'amakrwala' in the three different contexts, home, community and school

Expectations of 'amakrwala'	Home	Society	School
Respect	Automatic	Automatic	Teachers and learners respond differently
New identity	Name change New clothes	Name change New clothes	Name change not compulsory All learners wear school uniform
Responsibility attached to ikrwala	Discussed and specific	Discussed and specific	Enforcement without discussion
Role change	Discussed	Introduction and induction	Enforcement without negotiation

Table 4.3.3 above makes comparisons between the ways in which 'amakrwala' are welcomed back at home, in the community and at school. There is evidence that 'amakrwala' are guided and inducted well into their new status both at home and in the community. To mark their new identity, they are given new clothes to celebrate their new status and the importance of wearing a cap or hat on their heads wherever they go is emphasised. Their new identity is recognised by everybody at home and the whole community at large. In the community they will be referred to as 'ikrwala' while at home they are called 'ubhuti' by their siblings. Sometimes even the elders refer to them as 'ubhuti omtsha'.

There is not enough evidence to support the claim that there is any form of induction which is given to 'amakrwala' about their new roles and responsibilities as initiated men at school. It emerged from the interviews that there is no real acknowledgement of their new status in the formal school context. On the first day of the term, when all learners assemble for orientation, it was reported that the school principal welcomed all the learners at school and nothing specific was said about 'amakrwala'. Seemingly 'amakrwala 'are expected to just fit into the school system like other learners. Moreover, in the school system, there is no clear recognition of their new status; they are referred to as learners, as they were even before they went to the initiation school. At school they are expected to wear the full school uniform; no caps are allowed.

The name change is not compulsory at school. When 'amakrwala' come back to school, teachers will call them by name and some learners will do the same. It was reported that there is a statement that 'akukho bhuti aph' eskolweni' which is

commonly used by teachers. In their (amakrwala's) opinion, this creates a platform for girls and uninitiated boys to disrespect them

4.4 Conclusion

During this study it was discovered that although the participants came from the same cultural background, their home backgrounds were not the same. The differences in their profiles seemed to have affected their perspective of manhood. Participants from the child headed families, who had no father figures in their homes were the youngest of the sample and seemed to be too eager to be recognised as initiated man. This could be because they reported "…being man of the household, so that they can be taken seriously" as one of the key reasons for them to go to the initiation school when they did.

It has been established that there seems to be a common understanding between the home and the community about the roles and responsibilities of initiated men. However, there seems to be tensions in the way 'amakrwala' are treated in the school environment, hence the call to schools to move towards a leadership style that will be sensitive to the needs of these learners as they also form a part of the school community.

CHAPTER 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1   Introduction

This study examined the experiences of amakrwala as learners at a secondary school in the Buffalo City Municipality. In trying to understand their experiences the study also looked at their understanding of ulwaluko and the meanings they attach to the custom. The study also sought to argue for a leadership style that could create a culturally sensitive and responsive environment in schools by finding ways to accommodate amakrwala as learners. This chapter also provides the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations for further studies.

5.2. Summary of findings

5.2.1 Findings related to the meanings that 'amakrwala' attach to 'ulwaluko'

The key reasons why the participants decided to undergo the initiation custom were found to be respect, the need to protect their families and to enjoy social privileges. These issues are also identified by Pretorius (2005), as he discusses Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In fulfilling their esteem needs, human beings need to be respected. 'Amakrwala' need to be respected. They identified acknowledgment and recognition of their new status as a sign of respect. It emerged that at home and in the community amakrwala felt that they were respected as their new status was recognised. Pretorius (2005) cites that the recognition of one's status leads to a higher self esteem and a higher self-concept. When a human being reaches that

level of development, he can easily recognise his full potential. On the other hand, the feeling of non-acceptance might lead to a lower self-esteem and inferiority. That might further lead to frustration and engaging in unacceptable and disruptive behaviour.

Moreover, the participants were of the opinion that their new status was going to elevate them to a higher social standard in the community. For some, it seemed that being initiated was going to elevate them to be equals with every initiated man regardless of their seniority or age. This is contrary to what Mandela says about the rules of seniority in manhood in his autobiography (Purnell, 2005), where he states that the newly graduated young men are expected to respect men who were initiated before them. The majority of the participants expected the respect to be one-way traffic. They seemed not to take into cognisance what their responsibilities were in earning the respect.

The need to be protected and live in a safe and secure environment is amongst the basic needs in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Findings revealed that, because of their socio economic backgrounds, some of the participants felt a strong need to provide security for their families. This was the case with the participants from the child-headed families. They were convinced that going to the initiation school would give them the right to take over the male roles in their homes and claim back the dignity they deserve as human beings.

Enjoying social privileges is one of the social needs which show that a person is accepted and belongs to a certain community. The participants believe that their new status would afford them the following social privileges:

a. full participation in traditional rituals at home and in the community,

b. doing as they wish, with less accountability to parents.

It became evident during the interviews that the participants mainly participated in the initiation custom for personal gain. They seemed to be more interested in what being initiated men would do for them, with little emphasis on the responsibilities that would be expected from them. The next section is going to discuss the findings related to the experiences of amakrwala.

5.2.2 Findings related to the experiences of amakrwala

During the study the experiences of amakrwala were examined in three social contexts, namely, the home, the community and the school.

(i) The home and the community shared similar approaches in socialising 'amakrwala'

Data collected indicates that there seemed to be shared beliefs and practices in the first two spaces, the home and the community. The socialisation of amakrwala in the two contexts was characterised by celebration, induction, support and incorporation.

Findings reveal that at home and in the community amakrwala were properly welcomed on their return from the initiation school. Participants report that during their home coming ceremonies they were given attention by families and community members and that gave them a sense of belonging and acceptance. They felt that their new status was celebrated and their new identity recognised. Most participants thought that the new clothes they were given were symbolic of their new status. Moreover, data collected reveal that elderly members of the community guided and supported 'amakrwala' on how to manage their newly acquired status. Guidance included words of encouragement and wisdom during the home coming ceremonies, and lessons taught in the initiation school about the responsibilities and accepted behaviour for initiated men in the society. On this issue, Purnell (2005) states that the initiation custom is a process, not an event, which Xhosa young men have to go through to reach manhood. The transition period from boyhood to manhood seems to be much smoother at home and in the community than it is in the formal school context.

(ii)   Socialisation of amakrwala at school level seems to be characterised by tensions between tradition and modernity.

Data reveals that there seemed to be tensions on how 'amakrwala' were treated between the first two contexts and the third space, the school. The school seemed to have no policies or strategies in place for responding to amakrwala who are also learners.

Participants report that the reception they received at school was far different from how they were welcomed at home and by the community. Participants also state that no special attention was given to them; instead there was a general welcoming assembly for all learners at the school. The findings show that amakrwala felt that their new status was not recognised at school. They further report that they were expected to wear school uniform and were told that their caps were not allowed on the school premises. They also claim that this was not done in a formal way, but they were just told randomly by teachers when they saw them with caps within the school premises. They report that no formal guidance was given to them about the school's expectations of them as amakrwala.

Findings also reveal that the participants believed that some teachers were against having amakrwala at school. Their argument is that teachers treated amakrwala in a discriminatory manner. Listed below are some of the things that amakrwala allege that teachers say and do to make them feel discriminated against:

- giving them harsher punishments than other learners for the same offence,
- always putting them on the spot when something goes wrong in class,
- encouraging girls and boys to disrespect them in class by uttering statements like, "You are all learners here, *akukho bhuti apha eskolweni*'' and
- expecting them to do chores like sweeping the classrooms when they know that they are initiated men.

From the discussion above one wonders whether the teachers are not associating being an initiated man with a more responsible and disciplined individual. However, if

there are neither induction policies nor codes of conduct for amakrwala, as is the case in the research site of this study, it would be impossible to address the issue discussed above.

In this study, the school represented modernity while the home and the community represented the traditional spaces. At school 'amakrwala' seem to find themselves floating between two identities, 'adulthood', as they are seen in the community, and 'childhood', as they are treated at school. The following section explores the possible school leadership and management styles that can be sensitive to the needs of amakrwala.

5.2.3 Implications for school leadership

The study reveals that when amakrwala come back to school it becomes difficult for them to manage their new identity. They spend most of their time trying to balance their multifaceted identities as adults and as learners. Ulwaluko is a cultural aspect that 'amakrwala', as learners, bring to school from home; therefore, they need a leadership style that will be sensitive and responsive to their needs.

The school becomes the third space with its rules and regulations that are sometimes not responsive to the different cultures. The school leadership has to deal with learners who have newly acquired a status of adulthood at home and in the community. In order for schools to be able to accommodate the needs of amakrwala, they must find cultural responsive leadership styles. For instance, a consultative democratic leadership style might be able to engage amakrwala in negotiating their

new roles and give them a clear sense of direction on what is expected of them at school.

Authorities, on the other hand, should do their part in regulating the custom, as there are still a lot of young boys who go to the initiation school without the consent of their parents. The Application of Health Standards in Traditional Circumcision Act No. 6 of 2001 makes it illegal for boys who are under the age of 18 years to go to the initiation school. With the Act in place and proper monitoring and supervision from the authorities, maybe South African high schools will not be full of amakrwala, as the majority of them are usually in Grade 12 when they turn 18. The next section focuses on recommendations for further studies.

5.3 Recommendations for further studies

Time frames and budgetary constraints limited this study to one township school. This might make it difficult to generalise the findings as the sample was very small. A comparative study of the experiences of 'amakrwala' in more than one school, also including sites from the rural areas, would give a clearer picture of the experiences of 'amakrwala'.

The Xhosa male initiation custom is not only limited to schools that have a Xhosa background, but 'amakrwala' are spread across schools with different cultural backgrounds in the country. A different study could look at the experiences of amakrwala from the former Model C schools where the population of both learners and teachers come from different cultural backgrounds.

5.4   Conclusion

Pretorius (2005:103) describes South Africa as a, "cultural kaleidoscope or dynamically ethnic mosaic: a country with a rich diversity of cultures and accompanying multilingualism, where human rights and language issues are always at the centre." With multicultural education as an educational approach, schools are encouraged to move to leadership styles that are going to reflect the diversity of our cultures.

'Ulwaluko' is a compulsory cultural practice that all Xhosa boys have to undergo to reach manhood. 'Amakrwala' have become a permanent human resource component in South African secondary schools as boys participate in the initiation custom during their high school life. It is imperative for schools to move towards a cultural sensitive leadership style to accommodate the needs of such learners. Schools should take the responsibility to support, guide, and lead 'amakrwala' towards a socially acceptable behaviour.

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